

Silencing the Press: An Analysis Of Violence Against the Media in Sri Lanka

Tamils Against Genocide



[Tamils Against Genocide \(TAG\)](#) - an international non-governmental human rights organisation, incorporated in the United States in 2008 and United Kingdom in 2012. TAG is devoted to advocacy, research and litigation against genocide and its accompanying human rights violations as well as the provision of support to victims of war crimes and human rights abuses from Sri Lanka.

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Summary

Since the beginning of the reign of the United People's Freedom Alliance coalition government in 2004, Sri Lanka has gained the infamous reputation of being one of the "*most dangerous countries in the world for journalists*" alongside Afghanistan, Somalia, Eritrea and North Korea. What remains largely unsaid or unexplored is that some journalists and media workers are more vulnerable to state-backed attacks than others.

In this report, we assess risk of extreme violence to media workers in Sri Lanka by analysing the available data on 'disappearances' and deaths. We ask who is being targeted, when and where. The data is analysed in historical and political context and in consideration of the nature of the relationship between the state and press more broadly.

We find as follows:

- It is predominantly Tamil media employees and those journalists who speak out about violations of Tamil rights who have become the targets of violence in Sri Lanka.
 - o Being a state-critical journalist in Sri Lanka is in itself dangerous, but the threats to life amplify vastly if one is a media employee of Tamil origin working in a majority Tamil-speaking region of the country.
 - o Being critical of the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) is less pertinent as a risk factor than being critical of the government's conduct pre, during and post-war, towards the Tamil population.

We note that:

- Domestic and it follows, International, media coverage of attacks against Sinhalese media personnel is greater than against Tamil media personnel.
- As international condemnation mounts against the Sri Lankan state for its breaches of international humanitarian and human rights law, the GoSL is increasingly focussing its attention on dismissing negative stories from international news sources.

We argue that the GoSL's attacks upon the media from 2009 are a continuation of its policies during the conflict – of producing a war without witness, setting the conditions in which to perpetrate crimes of International humanitarian and human rights law against the Tamil people with impunity.

Analysing the who and the why of Sri Lankan state attacks against the media matters and ought to be heeded by policy makers in their decision making. The findings presented herein serve to strengthen the argument that an Independent International Investigation is needed.

Introduction

The state of media freedom in Sri Lanka

The silencing of dissenting media voices in Sri Lanka has a long history, dating back several decades. Since the current ruling coalition, the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) came into power in April 2004, the relationship between state and media deteriorated sharply. Attacks on media institutions in the island have significantly increased from the day the coalition government under the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapakse (Sri Lankan Freedom Party) took control over the island's affairs a year later.

The forms of violence applied in Sri Lanka by state or state-backed proxies to mute journalistic dissent have been manifold. Whether through direct or indirect threats, including libel suits, fines, hostile acquisitions, imprisonments, abductions, torture, bombings or cold-blooded executions of journalists and media personnel, the GoSL has proven itself to be ceaselessly creative in its methods to implement a state diktat on opinion. Parallel to the UPFA's ascent, the country slipped in Reporters Without Frontier's 2004 Press Freedom Index twenty-one ranks, from #89 in the previous year to #110.¹ Barely a month after winning the election, the UPFA's reign was heralded by the assassination of a Tamil journalist of the Tamil-language newspaper Veerakesarai in Batticaloa. His murder, as are many more since, is attributed to state-backed paramilitary forces and remains unresolved to this day.²

Over the last years of the UPFA's rule, Sri Lanka has gained a reputation as one of the 'most dangerous countries in the world for journalists alongside Afghanistan, Somalia, Eritrea and North Korea.'³ What remains largely unsaid, however, is that some journalists are more vulnerable to state-backed attacks than others. Since 2004, 44 murders or disappearances of journalist and media personnel were reported by Journalists for Democracy (JDS), an exiled group of Sri Lankan journalists from all ethno-religious background.⁴ The ethnic breakdown of victims estimates deaths/disappearances of 37 Tamils, 5 Sinhala and 2 Muslim journalists.

The data remains incomplete. Many media workers went missing during the final stages of the war in Mullivaikal in 2009 - their stories and fates are actively being sought after and collected by JDS and others. Fresh video evidence supports our view that a policy existed whereby some media workers were summarily executed after surrendering to the Sri Lankan army. Our primary data on killed and disappeared journalists during the final stages of the war in Mullivaikal in 2009 identifies four Tamil media workers who are categorised as missing in action and two who we understand to have been summarily executed on surrender. Based on these new estimates, the number of killed or disappeared journalists since 2004 climbed to 48 (See Appendix B for the comprehensive list). Analyzed upon ethnicity, the total number of killed or disappeared Tamil journalists turned out to be 41. The number of Sinhalese and Muslim journalists remains 5 and 2 respectively. The data collected, albeit incomplete, enables analysis that can help to better understand the risk to the private media industry in Sri Lanka. The nature of the Sri Lankan state both illuminates, and is reflected in the findings here.

¹ http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=classement&id_rubrique=550

² <http://cpj.org/killed/2004/aiyathurai-nadesan.php>

³ <http://asiapacific.ifj.org/en/pages/stop-the-war-on-journalists-in-sri-lanka>

⁴ <http://www.jdslanka.org/index.php/killed-media-workers>

In what follows, we set instances of extreme violence against the media in context of the broader relationship between press and state. We then present a statistical overview based on JDS's data and our primary data of the identified Tamil journalists either missing or summarily executed during the final war. We hope this statistical overview aids in breaking down the violence against the media and in establishing who the principle targets are and for what reason they are targeted. We present our findings and conclusions based on this data analysis. In brief, we find the threats to life amplify vastly if one is a media employee of Tamil origin working in a majority Tamil-speaking region of the country. Being critical of the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) is less pertinent as a risk factor than being critical of the government's conduct pre, during and post-war, with regards to the Tamil population. We contend that violence against the media contributes to the denial of justice for crimes committed against the Tamil population in Sri Lanka.

The Press and Sri Lankan State

The abduction and killing of journalists and media employees is the most extreme form of anti-media action taken by the GoSL and its allies. The backdrop to this violence is the historic and contemporary wider relationship between press and government in Sri Lanka. Deaths and disappearances need analysing with this context firmly in mind: they are not isolated, discrete acts.

Throughout the Sri Lankan conflict, the state sought to control the media industry and its output through non-violent as well as violent means, including through the exercise of central regulatory control, legislation, surveillance and the threat of violence. In a 2003 report on the Sri Lankan media published during the Norwegian-led peace process, the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), a leading donor-funded think tank in Colombo, described:

*"A deeply entrenched partisan media culture envelopes almost all Sri Lanka mainstream media. ... Editors, publishers, and news directors especially in government media institutions are often prey to partisan agendas. In both public and private operations, there is a pattern of appointing senior managers who are favourable to or related through family connections to dominant political players. Additionally, successive governments have used security and anti-terrorism legislation to suppress pursuit of information critical of the government or the military. ... The most evident problem in Sri Lanka's media is the lack of adherence to the internationally recognised basic standards of accuracy, impartiality and responsibility."*⁵

Under President Rajapakse media freedoms have seen their sharpest decline, and attacks on the media their sharpest rise. Soon after the return to full-scale armed conflict in 2007, a group of international media organisations, including the International Federation of Journalists and International Press Institute, stated following their joint visit to Sri Lanka,⁶

"[We] found that there has been a serious deterioration [with the end of the peace process] in the security situation for the Sri Lankan media with threats, abductions and attacks committed by all parties to the conflict, and particularly paramilitary and militia groups. ... Moreover, even in cases where evidence exists of the identity of the alleged

⁵ Deshapriya and Hattotuwa, *Study of the media in the North-East..*, pp8-10

⁶ Article 19 (2007). *Press Freedom and Freedom of Expression in Sri Lanka: Struggle for survival*, 19 February 2007, Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/475418ad0.html>

killers, the relevant authorities had apparently taken little or no action. ... [We] found that censorship exists, although it is applied largely through indirect means. Those refusing to toe the Government's line may be labeled as spies or traitors. The willingness of politicians and others to denounce the media reinforces self-censorship and makes the free expression of opinion a life threatening activity."

Putting to one side extreme violence to which we shall return, since the end of the war in 2009 the Sri Lankan authorities have intensified their efforts to restrict the circulation of information via the internet and mobile phones.⁷ GoSL practices include, but are not limited to⁸:

- The arbitrary blocking of websites. During President Rajapakse's tenure, a number of GoSL critical online outlets that provided alternative platforms to the government friendly or censored national media spectrum, such as Lanka-E-News and TamilNet⁹, have been blacklisted and are not viewable from within Sri Lanka. The BBC Tamil service had its radio transmission to Sri Lanka disrupted during the Geneva-based UNHRC session in March 2013 in what was assessed to be an attempt to interrupt the radio station's coverage of the proceedings, which were critical of the Government. These three incidents are merely sample examples of state interference, of state attempts to engineer and restrict the free flow of government related information and news.¹⁰
- The introduction in late 2011 of new laws and regulations. The latter have been justified as necessary to prevent the distribution of pornography, but the powers enabled are broad and, importantly, serve to make lawful the authorities' surveillance and monitoring of electronic communications.¹¹
- In March 2012, the GoSL also announced that mobile phone SMS news alerts on matters related to "national security and security forces, the police" must be approved by the Media Centre for National Security (MCNS) prior to dissemination.¹² Signs of a sophisticated surveillance regime had emerged earlier; for example, during the 2010 Presidential election the authorities arrested opposition supporters organising protests or disseminating news critical of the government based on the content of text messages.¹³

Securing the compliance of media proprietors is another method for silencing critical media reporting. This can be achieved through pressuring media owners into selling their operations to government loyalists. The Sunday Leader, an English language weekly that had long been a fierce critic of President Rajapaksa and his government, is one example. In September 2012 its then editor, Frederica Jansz, was sacked after the newspaper was bought by an associate of the family of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, and she refused instructions to stop carrying articles critical of the

⁷ Freedom House. 2012. *Sri Lanka: Freedom on the Net 2012*. Available at: http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/2012/sri-lanka#_ftn14

⁸ The following list is largely drawn from Dr Suthakaran Nadarajah's evidence before the UK Immigration and Asylum Chamber, in the case of GJ and Others (post-civil war: returnees) Sri Lanka CG [2013] UKUT 00319 (IAC) accessible at http://www.bailii.org/uk/cases/UKUT/IAC/2013/00319_ukut_iac_gj_srilanka_cg.html

⁹ <http://lankaenews.com/English/news.php?id=4301>.

¹⁰ <https://en.rsf.org/sri-lanka-sri-lanka-censors-bbc-s-programmes-27-03-2013,44271.html>

¹¹ See discussion in Centre for Policy Alternatives (2011). *Freedom of Expression on the Internet in Sri Lanka*. pp 7, 11, 37-39. Available at: <http://cpalanka.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/FOE-REPORT-NOV-2011-FINAL-CPA.pdf>

¹² Groundviews. March 12, 2012 *New censorship of SMS news in Sri Lanka*. Available at: <http://groundviews.org/2012/03/12/new-censorship-of-sms-news-in-sri-lanka/>.

¹³ Freedom House, *Sri Lanka: Freedom on the Internet 2012*.

Rajapaksas.¹⁴ Since being fired, Jansz received death threats and fled Sri Lanka, adding to the large and growing number of journalists from varied ethnicities in exile.

The regulatory environment in which Tamil media workers in Sri Lanka must operate is itself ethnicized and highly and discriminately restrictive. Media is centrally regulated, thus given the ethnic break down of Sri Lanka, the result is one ethnic group exerting power of censorship and regulation over others. Nor historically has the government shown the least appetite for devolving media control to the Provinces. Media powers are not included in List 1 of the 13th Amendment – the list of those functions/responsibilities to be devolved to the Provincial Councils.¹⁵

The most recent, non-violent development in the area of media freedom is the GoSL move to introduce a “code of ethics” for the media. IFJ-Asia Pacific have criticized the establishment of such a code, noting that “*Media commentary in Sri Lanka though sees this initiative by the GoSL as the prelude to enforcing an intrusive set of norms that could considerably worsen the environment for free journalistic practice.*”¹⁶

The aggregate result of the many and varied tools for pressuring the media to toe the state line is that it is immensely difficult and risky to report on abuses by the authorities. This continues to have particularly tragic consequences for the victims of state-violence, specifically Tamils, whose plight has traditionally been underreported or misreported in the country. The repression of the media in country, by varied means, violent and otherwise, leaves the GoSL’s corruption of state and power largely unchallenged. Lack of media freedoms sets the conditions for state impunity for the commission of crimes against International Humanitarian and Human Rights Laws.

Breakdown of the Media in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is host to a pluralistic media landscape with dozens of TV stations, print and online newspapers, and citizen journalist sites covering a variety of political and social spectrums. The country’s media landscape reflects the vast public interest and appetite for information. Today, there are several state owned media and privately owned media outlets, who all compete for a numerically small audience. The market is highly competitive and advertisement dependant. Each year, the GoSL’s Department of Government Information publishes a media directory called ‘Guide to Media’. It collects the data of major media outlets in the country and lists them according to print, radio and broadcast categories. The listing, however, does not include all media, specifically it does not cover print papers and online papers that are locally rather than nationally distributed and/or specialized in their coverage. It similarly does not provide any information on radical left-wing, right-wing media or student outlets, which are often alternatively published. Above all, the government has never recognized in its directory media organs that were either directly linked to the LTTE or established within the former LTTE de-facto state. Unlike the GoSL, other organisations, mainly foreign and human rights advocates, acknowledged the Tamil media industry within the de-facto state and/or linked to the LTTE. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) in its reporting of killed journalists since 1992, for instance, included the journalists killed who had worked within the LTTE de-facto state and those directly linked to the LTTE. In 2007 the UN agency, UNESCO, also condemned the killing of one journalist and two media workers of the LTTE radio station, Voice of

¹⁴ BBC News online 21 September 2012 *Sunday Leader editor Frederica Jansz sacked*. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-19680426>

¹⁵ http://hrli.alrc.net/pdf/13th_amendment.pdf

¹⁶ <http://asiapacific.ifj.org/en/articles/sri-lankan-government-must-reconsider-move-to-introduce-ethics-code-for-media>

Tigers (VOT), during an air strike on VOT HQ in 2007¹⁷. Consequently, the picture we can draw from the information obtained through the GoSL's directory on the country's media landscape is not complete, but does provide us a basic idea of the state of mainstream media in Sri Lanka.

We have ethnically profiled Sri Lanka's media institutions upon the information obtained by the 'Guide to Media' and have analysed them according to leadership as well as by the language medium of the media. Sri Lanka offers newsprint publications, radio and television broadcasting in all its major languages, i.e. Sinhala, Tamil and English. Whereas Sinhala and Tamil language media is almost exclusively in the control of each respective ethnic group (except Tamil language TV programs), English media is often co-produced by all ethnic/racial and language groups. Nonetheless, most English language media institutions are run by a predominately ethnic Sinhalese management and editorial board - which is why we have chosen to classify these as predominately Sinhalese also.

Of the 55 print media listed in the GoSL's report, 47 (85%) are run by Sinhalese, 7 (13%) by Tamils, and 1 by Sri Lankan Muslims (2%). In TV broadcast there is, according to the guidebook, a virtual monopoly of Sinhalese led broadcasting media with less than a handful of Tamil broadcasters or bilingual/monolingual Tamil shows, which are mostly also incorporated into larger Sinhalese led broadcasting companies and channels. There are today five exclusively Tamil language TV stations. Two of them are state-owned, Nethra TV and Vasantham TV, and the remaining, Sakthi TV, DAN Tamiloli, Vettri TV, are privately owned. All of them are either uncritical of the GoSL or openly supportive of the GoSL in their coverage. Similarly, there are 20 national radio broadcasters listed by the GoSL of which only one is Tamil. All together, however, there are 9 exclusively Tamil radiobroadcasting stations in the country, of which the majority remain unlisted by the GoSL.

Other than these individual media entities there are joint initiatives of journalists to form collective media enterprises. Mainstream media outlets mainly Sinhala media in Sri Lanka jointly formed formal and informal media groups and associations. Their Tamil counterparts are relatively few. Sri Lanka Tamil Media Alliance is one of the well-established collective initiative of the Tamil Journalists. Mainstream Sinhala media outlets in most circumstances refused to support Tamil journalists in face of the state oppression. In 1998 Virakesari journalists S. Srikajan and P. Manikavasakam were detained by the armed forces. Free Media Movement (FMM), a collective enterprise of mainly Sinhala journalists and media personnel, denied their support to their release under the suspicion that Tamil journalists are closed to LTTE. This incident eventually culminated in the birth of the Sri Lanka Tamil Media Alliance. The Assassinated Tamil journalists T.Sivaram and I. Nadesan had contributed to the growth of the SLTMA.

Who are the victims of extreme violence, who are the perpetrators?

The UPFL's ruling history is dyed in the blood of 48 journalists or media personnel who have either died or disappeared since 2004. The vast majority of those, 41, are media workers of ethnic Tamil origin, 5 are ethnic Sinhalese and 2 Sri Lankan Muslims¹⁸. Although the majority of Sri Lankan Muslims are Tamil-speaking in Sri Lanka, in this report we take care to distinguish Sri Lankan Muslim media workers from ethnic Tamil media employees; the predominantly pro-state media coverage

¹⁷ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/press-freedom/unesco-condemns-killing-of-journalists/countries/sri-lanka/>

¹⁸ <http://www.idslanka.org/index.php/killed-media-workers>

from Sri Lankan Muslim media personnel has largely shielded them from anti-media state-violence. Given that ca. 87% of the victims of state repression against the media have been Tamil, one can speak of the appliance of ethnically discriminate violence by the state. State repression against the national media mirrors the state's wider ethno-chauvinist policies¹⁹. The rate of assassinations and/or abductions of Tamil media workers to that of non-Tamils is almost 9:1, yet the island's Tamil population only makes up approximately 12% of the country's inhabitants, according to Sri Lanka's last census (2012). Tamil journalists and media personnel thus appear as significantly more vulnerable and susceptible to facing a violent death connected to abductions.

The central ethnic nature of the violence against media personnel all too often goes unnoticed or fails to be commented upon. Often ethnicities of murdered media workers remain unspecified by human rights organisations who correspondingly fail to highlight the fundamental ethnic dimension to the killings. This is true for broader forms of violence, beyond killings and disappearances.²⁰

With the erosion of ethnic/racial labels in reporting about violence against media personnel, core reasons for why media personnel are scrutinized and dealt with by the State elude us.

Although media repression has been championed by a diversity of actors in the country, the majority of recorded cases, 85%, indicate that the GoSL or its paramilitaries were behind the killings and/or abductions. The state is the prime aggressor and source of violence against journalists and media personnel in Sri Lanka. Of the remaining killings/abductions that occurred since 2004, ca. 8% of the killings are attributed to the LTTE, ca. 2% to the UPFA coalition's Sinhala right-wing party Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) and ca. 2% remain uncategorized. According to JDS, among the 37 killed Tamil media workers since 2004, 2 killings were attributed to the LTTE and rest of the 35 are attributed to the GoSL. Out of five killed Sinhala journalists, the sole death attributed to the LTTE was a journalist who was among the civilian deaths in an attack on a civilian bus²¹. Similarly one Muslim journalist whose killing attributed to the LTTE was killed in a suicide bomb attack on an opposition party gathering. The data of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) on journalists killed in action since 1992 attributes four deaths of journalists to the LTTE²². According to them, however, some cases lacked an adequate judicial investigation to verify the perpetrators of attacks. Analysed by gender, 92% of media workers killed and/or abducted were male and 8% female (of whom all were Tamil).²³ With regard to the media repression of the LTTE, Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF) noted, "Within its controlled area the LTTE controlled the news media with an iron hand". The report equally reveals that "since the signing of the ceasefire agreement, information has circulated more freely in the eastern and northern parts of the country. Tamil language newspapers are circulating more or less freely, and LTTE's publications are being distributed²⁴".

¹⁹ <http://www.epw.in/special-articles/sri-lanka-sixty-legacy-ethnocentrism-and-degeneration.html>

²⁰ After the UPR at the HRC for Sri Lanka, November 2012, TAG released an article deploring the lack of the word "Tamil" in proceedings. <http://www.tamilguardian.com/article.asp?articleid=6309>

²¹ The Kabithigollawa bus bombing which the government attributed to the LTTE and the LTTE denied. One former LTTE member was arrested and sentenced by a Sri Lankan court to five years for aiding and abetting the attack.

²² <http://cpj.org/killed/asia/sri-lanka/>

²³ <http://www.jdslanka.org/index.php/killed-media-workers/40-killed-media-workers/80-media-workers-killed-in-2005>

²⁴ Suthaharan, Nadarajah. *Sri Lanka's Vernacular Press and the Peace Process*, part of the Sri Lanka Strategic Conflict Assessment 2005, p.53

Where is the violence perpetrated?

Understanding the crimes at hand requires some spatial analysis. Sri Lanka may be one of the most dangerous countries for journalists, but it is far from spatially evenly dangerous: of the lethal attacks and/or abductions of media personnel that happened since 2004, ca. 75% have taken place in the majority Tamil-speaking regions of the island. Most of those occurred in the Mullaithivu (ca. 33%) and Jaffna District (ca. 26%) respectively²⁵. Of the killings and/or abductions that occurred outside of the majority Tamil-speaking regions, the majority took place in the Colombo District (ca. 14%), which similarly has a significant, and for the region disproportionate, Tamil-speaking population.

Tamil dominated space emerges as the prime site of media crimes. The landscape of violence is neither evenly nor universally distributed throughout the island. Being a state-critical journalist in Sri Lanka is dangerous, but the threats to life are greatly amplified for media employees of Tamil origin working in a majority Tamil-speaking region of the country.

Dissecting the data, assessing risk.

The GOSL media directory reveals that there is a preponderance of Sinhalese led media institutions, subsequently also Sinhalese journalists and media employees. This is of course only reflective of the demographic reality of the state. Mindful of the limitations of the directory, the government's data nevertheless speaks to an overrepresentation of Sinhalese and an underrepresentation of Tamils, Sri Lankan Muslims and other minorities in the country's media industry. How is it possible then for a largely underrepresented community within the industry to be so overwhelmingly overrepresented in regards to media employees' killings and abductions in the country? In other words, how is it possible that the vast majority of media employees who have been 'disappeared' or killed are of Tamil ethnicity? If Sri Lanka was an evenly dangerous country for all journalists from all ethnicities, how is it possible then that only one ethnic group has borne the brunt of extreme violence including death? This leads us to questions regarding the profiling and targeting of media institutions and employees.

What is it that makes a particular media worker the subject of state violence? Is it the politics of the media group, of the individual, or is it her/his ethnicity? Can all three criteria operate at the same time and intersect, or does one criterion dominate over the others?

48 killings and abductions of media employees occurred within the span of 9 years of rule of the UPFA government. The majority of those were, as already outlined, Tamil media employees. In the following, we outline each of their institutional affiliations as well as the political lines taken by each media organisation in order to deepen our understanding of who among the media is at risk and why.

Of those media institutions targeted, one print media was particularly heavily affected by the killings and abductions of media employees, namely the Eezhanatham paper. The paper was established in the early 1990s and later relocated to the Vanni when the Sri Lankan Army occupied Jaffna in 1995.

²⁵ JDS data analyzed (number died/disappeared in Region (percentage): 16 in Mullaithivu (33%), 13 in Jaffna (26%), 7 in Colombo (14%), 3 in Batticaloa (6%), 3 in Kilinoichchi (6%), 1 in Trincomalee (2%), 1 in Mannar (2%), 1 in Vavuniya (2%), 1 in Anuradhapura (2%), 1 in Kegonigollewa (2%), 1 in Matupula (2%).

The Eezhanatham paper was directly linked to the LTTE and functioned throughout the war, in a similar fashion to state-owned media in the South, but as a pro-Tamil, pro-LTTE media outlet. Since the UPFA came to power, the paper lost 14 of its employees who either died or are believed to have been killed during the last stages of the war. Almost 30% of all media employees murdered or abducted during the UPFA government's reign in Sri Lanka were affiliated to this particular media institution.

The Tamil daily, Uthayan, located in Jaffna as well as the LTTE radio broadcaster 'Voice of Tigers', previously based in Kilinochchi, were the second and third most heavily affected media organisations throughout the period in question. Each of them lost 5 of their employees (10% respectively), whereas the Tamil paper Yarl Thinakural lost 4 of its employees (8%). Namathu Eelanadu was affected with 2 of its employees killed (4%) within the last 9 years. The first journalist to die soon after the UPFA takeover was a veteran Tamil journalist of the paper Veerakesarai. The newspaper is listed as the oldest Tamil paper in the country. It was founded by Estate Tamils and primarily served to represent the concerns of the Estate Tamil population.

All of the above mentioned newspapers had a relative or absolute pro-Tamil political coverage, which equally also meant they were critical in their reporting of the GoSL and its treatment of Tamils. The remaining media organisations that were affected were, in the majority, also Tamil, such as Puthiya (2%), Thinamarasu (2%), TamilNet (2%), Sudar Oli (2%) or Sakthi TV (2%). Almost all of these media institutions, except those that came under the fire of the LTTE (pro-GoSL, Thinamarasu, and pro-UNP, Sakthi TV), were decidedly pro-Tamil. The 13% of murders and abductions that targeted non-Tamils were against media employees of the English language paper 'The Sunday Leader', the online Sinhala/English paper 'LankaeNews', the Sinhala paper Lakbima, Divaina and the state-owned Sri Lankan Broadcasting Company. The Sunday Leader was at the time of the murder of one of its journalists a GoSL critical paper similar to LankaeNews. The latter was affiliated with the leading Sinhala oppositional party, UNP, similar to Sakthi TV and Sirasa TV. Divaina on the other hand is one of the leading Sinhala right-wing papers of the country.

Cases in point

Amongst the murders of journalists that took place in the Colombo District, the death of prominent Sinhalese reporter such as Lasantha Wikramatunge and the disappeared cartoonist Prageeth Eknaligoda, gained much needed international media attention. Wikramatunge who was murdered in broad daylight in a Colombo suburb and Eknaligoda who was abducted in the capital city were both ethnic Sinhalese and critical of the GoSL. They were, however, not the first to face their executioner in the capital city. Tamil journalist David Selvaratnam and Sivaram Dharmeratnam (Taraki), who were both critical of the government and pro-Tamil rights, were murdered by government forces just a few years before the two Sinhalese journalists in the very same city. The extraordinary amount of coverage given to the murder/abduction of the two Sinhalese journalists in comparison to the relatively minimal coverage given to many Tamil media employees is linked to a number of criteria such as, for instance, a successful national and international awareness campaign, manner and period of death/abduction as well as the obvious: their ethnicity. Violence against Tamil journalists and media employees has indeed hardly ever led to as much international outrage or sympathy as did Lasantha Wikramatunge's death and Prageeth Eknaligoda's disappearance. The killing and disappearance of Tamil media employees were as marginal in their coverage as were Tamil deaths throughout the conflict in general. Considering the normalcy of catastrophes inflicted upon the Tamil population over decades and the sheer number of Tamil deaths they have caused, it appears to be rather the order of the day to see Tamils appear on kill-lists, abductions-lists or

bombing-lists than, in comparison, Sinhalese. The fact that 87% of the media personnel who suffered death or abduction (and possible death) since 2004 have been ethnic Tamils, speaks to a highly racialized targeting practice, one that renders Tamil media employees at much greater risk than non-Tamils. The risk of state-violence is heightened for Tamil media employees who are critical of the GoSL and even more so for those who simultaneously advocate for greater Tamil rights.

Although there are a number of GoSL critical outlets within the Sinhala language medium, they are mostly likely to be allied to one of the many Sinhalese oppositional parties. Being GoSL critical is less pertinent - as proven by a number of openly critical journalist and media who have circumvented any state engineered attacks despite being critical of state policies - than being critical of the government's conduct of war and genocide against its Tamil population.

This is perfectly exemplified by the abductions and deaths of the two Sinhalese journalists Egnaligoda and Wikramatunge, who challenged the government's policies towards Tamil rights and lives. Both Egnaligoda and Wikramatunge were known for their general government critical contributions, but what was even more striking about them was that they were explicit in their criticisms of the conduct of war by the Sri Lankan state. Both men reported on the final periods of the war and worked to expose the brutality of the state's war machinery. Wikramatunge spoke out about the ceaseless violence inflicted upon Tamil citizens during the war, whereas Egnaligoda focussed upon the use of chemical weapons by the Sri Lankan Army against Tamil citizens. It is assessed that both men were considered to be enemies of the state not merely for being anti GoSL, but because they were perceived as pro Tamil. Given the depth of nationalist hysteria in a period where the Sinhala (and Muslim) public was eagerly supportive of the war efforts of the state, speaking about war crimes and Tamil repression was something that was non normative, polarising and 'unpatriotic'

Post-war changes

With the end of Sri Lanka's civil war in May 2009 the modes and landscape of anti-media violence have shifted. Although there has been a notable absence of murder and disappearance of media employees in the post-war, anti-media violence still occurs all over the island. Today's forms of media repression, violence and censorship are, as above already stated, relatively soft and less pronounced than those during the war and cease-fire period. In the post-war era there has, however, been an increase and virtual institutionalisation of intimidation against Tamil journalists, particularly those who express Tamil political aspirations through their work. These forms of repression are today far more difficult to take notice of and record than extreme forms of violence used by the GoSL to threaten media dissent. Sri Lanka's war against free media is today in fact more sophisticated than it has ever been before.

With independent media heavily relying on advertising revenues, they appear vulnerable to commercial influence. As the Government forms one of the largest advertisers in the country, many Sri Lankan media institutions are dependent and susceptible to political pressure from the Government. Self-censorship of media institutions is thus a widespread feature of Sri Lanka's post-war media landscape.

Physical violence is, however, not absent in the post-war environment. Physical intimidation of the Tamil media continues. In February this year, for instance, a newspaper distributor of the Tamil daily *Thinakkural* was attacked and in Jaffna by an alleged Sri Lankan Military Intelligence squad. The newspapers the distributor was carrying and his motorbike were both destroyed by the men. Attacks such as these don't happen in isolation, but follow a pattern of violence against other media outlets

in the Tamil region. A few months after the Thinakkural attack, in April 2013, Uthayan newspaper distributors were brutally attacked in their office in Kilinoichchi by Sri Lankan military personnel. Just days later, Sri Lankan Military Intelligence broke into the paper's Jaffna main office and burnt its printing machine and copies of the newspaper. In October 28th 2013 members of the Jaffna Press Club and Tamil journalists were threatened at gunpoint when they tried to report the demolition of Tamil houses in the Jaffna Valikamam North region to build a military base on top of the ruins. Sri Lankan military confiscated and destroyed their cameras and forced them to leave the site. Later five Tamil journalists who had been threatened in the incident gave a complaint to the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka of threats to their lives. Similar stories have been wide spread in the Tamil areas and often ignored and under reported in the mainstream media of the country.

The Sri Lankan state on the other hand uses its own media apparatus for propaganda reasons. In face of rising tensions against human rights activists, foreign governments and Muslims and other religious minorities in the country, Government media is engaged in hate and inflammatory speeches which have led to protests and occasional mob violence against foreign delegates visiting the country or against minority communities in the capital city and elsewhere. With the government's attempt to synchronize and neutralize independent media voices in favour of government perspectives, criticism against these problematic conduct of journalism by state media remains almost completely absent.

The Government's success fuels its creativity to expand its political influence. During the most recent Northern Provincial Election, Government proxies went as far as producing a fake Uthayan paper to influence the public's vote against the Tamil National Alliance)²⁶. As these papers were heavily distributed in militarized areas in the Tamil North, it is clear that the state's hands are far reaching and omnipresent.

With traditional media increasingly being supplemented and challenged by online and social media, the state has expanded and diversified its online activities as well. Censorship of Government critical websites by blocking Internet access to outlets such as TamilNet, Colombo Telegraph, Lanka-e-News and others is today commonplace. The rise of social media in the form of Facebook, Twitter, Blogs and other new online publishing formats, has shifted the focus of the state to scrutinize these new media platforms as well. The Sri Lankan Defence Secretary and brother of the President, Gotabaya Rajapakse, only recently declared in a speech at a Military university in Sri Lanka that social media is a threat to 'national security'²⁷. Social media thus increasingly falls under the security paradigm of the state as it propagates, according to Rajapakse, "certain ideologies online" and helps to mobilise and organise people.

Cases of disappeared journalists such as Ekneligoda or those of dozens of Tamil journalists, remain on the other hand unresolved to date. New video footage on the capture, alleged rape and execution of the Tamil news presenter, Isai Priya, by Sri Lankan Army soldiers and the Sri Lankan states continued refusal to investigate this provides a striking example of state-sanctioned violence and impunity²⁸. Our primary evidence of this particular incident suggests that Isai Priya was summarily executed after being captured by the Sri Lankan Army. Photographic evidence shows her killed, hand tied and sexually assaulted body. Isai Priya's colleague's case, Lohini Rathimohan, a television presenter for the former National Television of Tamil Eelam (NTT) who we supported in

²⁶ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-24285568>

²⁷ <http://www.therepublicsquare.com/politics/2013/06/14/social-media-threat-national-security-gotabaya/>

²⁸ <http://www.channel4.com/news/fate-of-tamil-actress-chilling-new-evidence-from-sri-lanka> , TAG primary evidence

her asylum quest in the UAE, further strengthens our belief that the GoSL intentionally targeted Tamil media employees linked to the separatist movement. Rathimohan escaped the war zone before the final phase of the war and went into hiding before seeking asylum in the UAE citing a continued risk to her life. Similar as to Isai Priya, Rathimohan's role as a news anchor on the widely watched television channel, NTT, made her an obvious target to the GoSL. Unlike Isai Priya however, Rathimohan escaped the war zone alive and is today able to provide testimony to the plight of Tamil media employees in the country. JDS data furthermore suggests LTTE Radio presenter and photographer, Thavapalan, who surrendered to the Sri Lankan Armed Forces at the end of the war, to have been summarily executed as well. Our primary evidence thus suggests a systematic state practice of execution of Tamil media employees sanctioned and/or condoned at the very highest levels of the Government. All of the cited cases are subject to further investigation. It remains highly questionable though whether any clarity can be won under the current Government.

The relative change post-war of the Government of Sri Lanka's various means to repress independent media is an adjustment to the changing nature of the conflict and the government's own rhetoric of 'peace and reconciliation'. With heavy international scrutiny, it seems more difficult for the state to subject media employees to extreme forms of violence such as death and abductions.

A recent judicial opinion²⁹ of the political situation of Sri Lanka by the UK Upper Tribunal of Immigration and Asylum Chamber in 2013 recognises the difficulty of reporting from the Northern and Eastern provinces of the country because of self-censorship by journalists. The determination includes journalists as one of the categories of persons at real risk of persecution. The determination observes "there is a general climate of intimidation and repression of the media and civil society organisations. It is common for journalists to receive death threats and a number of prominent journalists have been killed" (p.168, Para W). By quoting one of the TAG's expert to the case Dr. Sutha Nadarajah the determination notes;

"Adverse treatment of Tamils by the Sri Lankan authorities was not likely to be reported in the mainstream Sri Lankan media. There were four main reasons for this: self-censorship, particularly amongst the Tamil media, for fear of reprisals against journalists and publications; interference in media content by media proprietors; non state media's dependence on government advertising as its source of revenue; and nationalist sentiments in the Sinhalese media, encouraged by incentives and State coercion. The Sri Lankan authorities restricted information flow via the internet and mobile devices, arbitrarily blocking websites and monitoring telephone and electronic communications" (p.186, para29).

²⁹ UK Country Guidance case between MP, NT, GJ and SSHD (2013) is the pre-eminent legal precedent for all future Sri Lanka asylum cases in the UK. TAG participated in the CG case as an interested party.

Findings

Violence against the Media is targeted

Through analysis of extreme state-violence perpetrated against the media, it becomes clear that violence and restrictions against media personnel are neither indiscriminately applied, nor targeted against the Sri Lankan media industry per se nor against Tamils as a whole, but against those who speak out against the repression of and violence against the Tamil population.

As one leading JDS member commented to TAG, a considerable number of Sinhalese journalists were targeted solely for their opposition to the genocidal state-violence against the Tamil population that was employed during the war. Many of the dozens of Sinhalese journalists who had to flee the country in the wake of the war were outspoken critics of the state's treatment of the Tamil population. In light of the fact that the majority of Tamils journalists who were either killed or abducted by the state were both critical towards the state and in support of Tamil rights and Tamil nationalism, the key intention of the GoSL is readily identifiable, namely to silence coverage of the violations perpetrated against Tamils.

Coverage of attacks on Sinhalese media personnel exceeds that of Tamil media personnel

We have seen from the empirical evidence analysed above, that Tamil journalists and media employees are much more vulnerable to absolute state-violence than their Sinhalese counterparts. One of the surviving Tamil journalists (TamilNet) from the Vanni region, who now lives in exile was accurate in his assertion that *"If I had died in Lasantha's (Wikramatunge) place, nobody would have questioned Gotabaya (Rajapakse; Secretary of Defense and brother of President Mahinda Rajapakse) about it. They would have called me a Tiger"*.³⁰ The uproar that follows the death of Sinhalese journalists is in no way equal to the outcry (or rather the lack thereof) witnessed in the aftermath of any of the 41 Tamil journalists who have died or gone missing within the last 9 years of the UPFA government's tenure. As a Tamil journalist reflected, for members of Tamil media organisations the stakes were always higher, by virtue of being ethnic Tamil their work was more likely to be questioned and they were easily and quickly labelled as terrorists if their coverage was sympathetic to the Tamil national cause. Sinhalese journalists and media personnel who openly advocate for Tamil rights and criticize the state with regards to its treatment of Tamils are, however, also vulnerable to state violence, but this is to a lesser degree than Tamil media personnel, whose fundamental rights to freedom of expression and right to life and security are demonstrably less secure than those of others.

A War Without Witness?

Considering that the greatest death and missing toll of media personnel was in the last period (January 2, 2008 – 18 May, 2009) of the 26-year-old war (42% of all killings and abductions), the aim of the GoSL is unquestionable: to silence critical war coverage and to create the conditions for a so-called 'war without witnesses'. Without witnesses, claims of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity naturally become highly contestable and repeal-able in potential judicial procedures, thus silencing the media serves to secure impunity. The notion of a 'war without

³⁰ http://www.kindlemag.in/srorys_details.php?id=NDU1&&displayid=MQ%3D%3D.

witnesses' has been picked up and put forward by Western governments, INGOs, media organisations, academics and others, and has been widely accepted.

Local Tamil reporters however did courageously bear witness to the atrocities until the very end of the war, and paid high personal costs for their bravery. Yet their crucial efforts remained forgotten and marginalized. Although all Western media personnel were expelled from the region prior to the beginning of the final onslaught, a number of Tamil journalists affiliated to a various media organizations remained in the region. Many of them produced quality material that was essential and invaluable in communicating the reality of those final months to the rest of the country and world. To interrupt their work, and with the aim of engineering a media blackout, the GoSL wilfully and eagerly bombed media outlets such as the Voice of Tigers radio station, the NTT broadcast station and other media institutions in the area, causing the death and injury of several Tamil media workers.

The reports of TamilNet or Eezhanatham were instrumental in carrying accounts of the crimes committed by the State in written reports, in video, through photography and in audio form to the Tamil diaspora and the world. The coverage, however, was to be largely ignored or dismissed by the BBCs, NBCs and New York Times' of the world. Governments, international organisations and NGOs were similarly quick to label the reports and material emanating from within Sri Lanka as subjective and one-sided propaganda.³¹ The, at the time, relatively paltry amount of state-critical reporting of the war from Sinhalese sources received, in comparison, much greater recognition than that from Tamils within the conflict area. Wikramatunge's death letter and its written description of Tamil suffering in the Vanni circulated for instance much more widely and by more established international bodies than the videos and photos that actually depicted the violent death of Tamils in the area. Even to date, the voices of Tamil journalist continue to be rendered secondary or expendable to those of Western or Sinhalese mediators, who are believed to be essential to mainstream and un-bias the violence experienced by the Tamil people over decades to a global and Sinhalese audience. Tamil experiences, perspectives and opinions, whether journalistic or not, seem to carry little weight on their own.

Channel 4's documentary series, 'Sri Lanka's Killing Fields', by relying upon the footage, images, and reports from Tamil journalists and other Tamil survivors in order tell the story of the final months of the war, has bestowed legitimacy upon this work, granting it credit, recognition and an audience. Without Channel 4's efforts, this body of reporting from the war would have certainly dusted in the archives and shelves of Tamil organisations and Tamils' hearts, bodies and minds, but has today been brought back to the conscience of the world. It has taken an established Western organisation to undo the denigration of Tamil voices and perspectives on the war and genocide in Sri Lanka.

The Threat from Without

Post war, as the international media has become increasingly critical of the GoSL, the state has correspondingly diverted attention to brandishing and defaming foreign reporters whose reporting is considered to bring the GOSL into disrepute. Reputed Channel 4 journalist, Jonathan Miller, is one amongst many of those who had been labelled an "LTTE agent", by government friendly websites and in GoSL published works. Major Prasanna de Silva, the defence advisor at the Sri Lankan High

³¹ http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/Sri_Lanka/The_Internal_Review_Panel_report_on_Sri_Lanka.pdf

Commission in London and an accused war criminal has, amongst others, accused the UK's media organisations of being 'bought' out by anti-GoSL sources, such as the LTTE.³²

In its determination on risk to Sri Lankan Tamil Asylum seekers, the Immigration and Asylum Tribunal in the U.K recognised the extent to which Sri Lanka feels increasingly threatened from without rather than within.³³

Concluding Remarks, Recommendations and Predictions

- ❖ Breaking down and contextualising state violence against the media in Sri Lanka has revealed an ethnic logic behind attacks. When violence is analysed temporally, spatially and ethnically, the patterns and motives of the state become apparent. Journalism in Sri Lanka is a lethal game primarily when it exposes anything deemed endangering to the state's unitary ideology. The issue of media freedoms and lack thereof ought not to be divorced from the background context, namely Sri Lanka's long history of ethnic persecution, and the nationalist ideology that runs deep amongst the island's Sinhalese Buddhist majority.
- ❖ Tamil journalists are by and large at greater risk from state violence than non-Tamils in Sri Lanka. The individual and collective courage and sacrifices that have been made and that are still being made by Tamil journalists and media organisations ought to be given far greater acknowledgement. Aside from the risks this report has focussed upon, Tamil journalists and media personnel operate today from within a highly militarised society, and under constant surveillance.³⁴ Additionally they work with less advertisement revenues and thus with less fiscal security (and equipment) than English or Sinhalese media. Indeed the work of the Tamil media must be seen in light of the hardship the entire Tamil community continues to endure.
- ❖ Since the end of the war, there has been only one case of disappearance (and probable death) related to journalism in the country. This does not mean that the attacks and violence against the media industry have stopped, but that they have instead, with the absence of armed Tamil resistance, shifted from absolute to relative acts of violence, intimidations etcetera. Today, Sri Lanka finds itself at #162 on the RSF's annual Press Freedom Index, in the company of North Korea, Syria and Eritrea with no hope for change in sight. As the State fights to realise its unitary, Sinhala Buddhist ideals, and refuses to give any ground to Tamil rights, the silencing of witnesses and critical media reporting in the island will continue.
- ❖ A wave of anti Muslim violence and hatred has been sweeping across Sri Lanka.³⁵ That the Muslim community would become another target of the State was predictable.³⁶ The nature

³² <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2012/apr/05/sri-lankan-diplomat-war-crimes-allegations>

³³ GJ Para 356 (2) "*The focus of the Sri Lankan government's concern has changed since the civil war ended in May 2009*" and Para 356 (3), "*The government's present objective is to identify Tamil activists in the diaspora who are working for Tamil separatism and to destabilise the unitary Sri Lankan state...*" accessible online at http://www.bailii.org/uk/cases/UKUT/IAC/2013/00319_ukut_iac_gj_srilanka_cg.html

³⁵ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-22356306>, <http://asiancorrespondent.com/108235/sri-lanka-monk-self-immolation-highlights-anti-muslim-campaign/> and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-21840600> for example.

³⁶ "*Muslims pay the price of the regime needing a new enemy; a dragon to slay before its core constituency, a replacement for the vanquished tiger*", <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/node/1229>

of the State is such that it will brook no 'threat' to its unitary ideals. It is likely that Sri Lankan minority media organisations and personnel will also become disproportionately targeted either because of whom they represent or because they speak out against abuses to their communities. Indeed in February 2013, British Sri Lankan Muslim Sunday Leader reporter, Faraz Shaukelay, was attacked.³⁷ Fredrica Jansz, a former chief editor of the Sunday Leader, who is a burgher of Dutch origin was threatened and fled Sri Lanka in the autumn of 2012.³⁸

- ❖ Analysis of who is being attacked and why is highly significant. Different understandings of the violence – different diagnoses - whether the indiscriminate excesses of an authoritarian state, or the discriminate acts of a genocidal state, call for different prescriptions. The findings presented in this report strengthen the argument that calls for an Independent International Investigation - to arrest the cycle of impunity. Current crimes are an extension of past crimes and result of the failure to bring anyone or thing to proper account. Justice is required to draw a line under those past crimes and impunity.

³⁷ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-21482317>

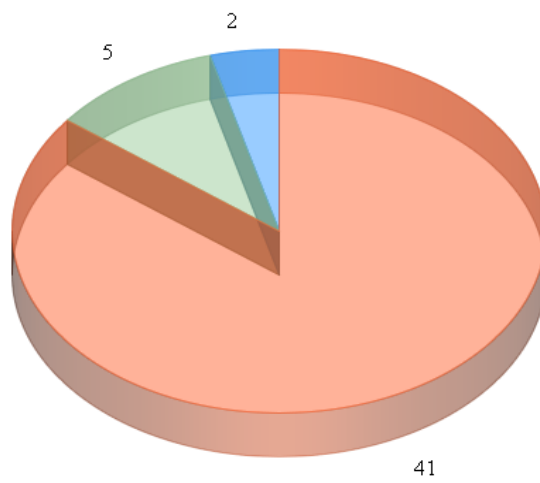
³⁸ <http://www.inyenyerinews.org/politiki/fredrica-jansz-interview-reveals-shocking-danger-facing-sri-lankan-journalists/>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-21482317>

Appendix A

A) Killed/disappeared journalists by ethnicity

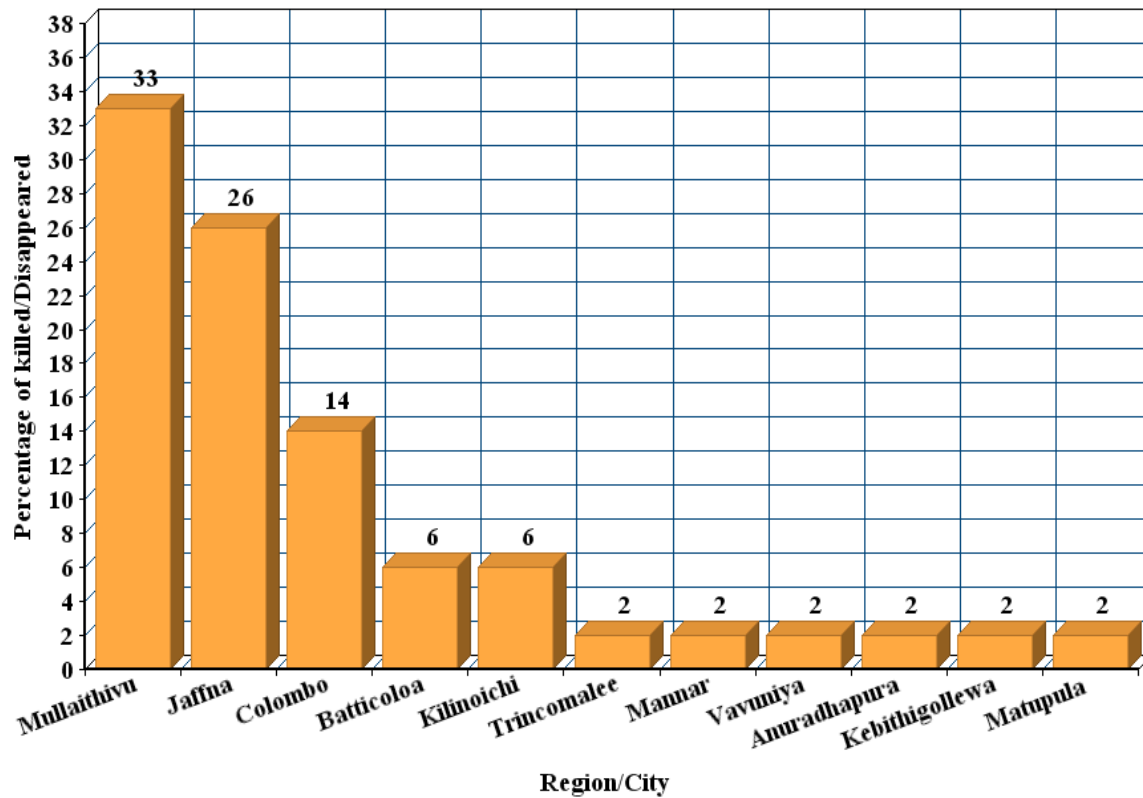
Killed/Disappeared Journalists by Ethnicity

Tamil Sinhala Muslim



B) Killed/disappeared journalists by region

Killed/Disappeared Journalists by region



Appendix B

Killed/Disappeared journalists & media workers in Sri Lanka from 2004 to 2010

Based on our primary evidence and JDS data we have categorised the killed/disappeared journalists and media workers as killed in action, missing in action, targeted Killing, killed in terror attack, killed in systemic attack and summary execution.

Killed Tamil journalists and media workers in 2009 in the Vanni region especially in the context of artillery, RPG and Sniper attacks specially categorized as killed in systemic attack as it constitutes a deliberate nature of collective killing of the civilian population of the Vanni. Those journalists who were killed in the artillery attacks in 2009 could be considered as part of this systemic pattern of killing of civilians.

Nature of killing specifically described in the cases of the killed journalists in the final stages of the war in 2009. According to JDS data five deaths of journalists in 2009 in the Vanni caused by artillery attacks, 2 in RPG attacks and one in sniper attack. Two journalists were summarily executed. Based on our primary data four journalists are categorised as missing in action.

Year	Journalist/Media Worker	Ethnicity	Institution	Nature of Killing or Disappearance
2004	Aiyathurai Nadesan	Tamil	Veerakesari	Targeted Killing
2004	Kandasamy Eyer Balanadarajah	Tamil	Thinamurasu	Targeted Killing
2004	Lanka Jayasundra	Sinhala	Vijaya News Papers	Killed in Terror Attack
2005	Dharmaratnam Sivaram/Taraki	Tamil	Tamil Net, Freelance journalist	Targeted Killing
2005	Kannamutu Arasakumar	Tamil	Eelanatham	Targeted Killing
2005	Relangi Selvarajah	Tamil	State Owned TV, Radio	Targeted Killing
2005	David Selvaratnam	Tamil	Sudar Oli	Killed in Action
2005	Yogakumar Krishnapillai	Tamil	Eelanatham	Targeted Killing

Year	Journalist/Media Worker	Ethnicity	Institution	Nature of Killing or Disappearance
2005	L.M.Faleel	Tamil Muslim	Writer	Targeted Killing
2005	K.Navaratnam	Tamil	Thinakural	Targeted Killing
2006	Subrmaniam Sugirtharajah	Tamil	Sudar Oli	Targeted Killing
2006	S.T.Gananathan	Tamil	Tamil News & Information Centre	Targeted Killing
2006	Bastian George Sagayathas	Tamil	Uthyan	Targeted Killing
2006	Rajaratnam Ranjith Kumar	Tamil	Uthyan	Targeted Killing
2006	Sampath Lakmal de Silva	Sinhala	Freelance Defence Correspondent	Targeted Killing
2006	Mariadasan Manojanraj	Tamil	Thinakural & Veerakesari	Killed in Action
2006	Sathasivam Baskaran	Tamil	Uthayan	Targeted Killing
2006	Sinathambi Sivamaharajah	Tamil	Namathu Eelanadu	Targeted Killing
2007	S.Raveendran	Tamil	Namathu Eelanadu	Targeted Killing
2007	Subramaniam Ramachandran	Tamil	Yarl Thinakural & Valampuri	Targeted Killing
2007	Chandrabose Suthakar	Tamil	Distributor of Severla Tamil news papers and edited a Magazine	Targeted Killing
2007	Selvarasa Rajeevarman	Tamil	Uthyan	Targeted Killing
2007	Sahadevan Nilakshan	Tamil	Journalism Student, Jaffna University, part time Journalist	Targeted Killing
2007	Anthony pillai Sheryn Sithiranjana	Tamil	Yarl Thinakurla	Missing in Action

Year	Journalist/Media Worker	Ethnicity	Institution	Nature of Killing or Disappearance
2007	Vadivelu Nirmalaraj	Tamil	Uthyan	Missing in Action
2007	Isaivizhi Chempiyani/Subajini	Tamil	Voice of Tigers	Targeted Killing, Condemned by UNESCO
2007	Suresh Limbiyo	Tamil	Voice of Tigers	Targeted Killing, Condemned by UNESCO
2007	T.Tharmalingam	Tamil	Voice of Tigers	Targeted Killing, Condemned by UNESCO
2007	W.Gunasinghe	Sinhala	Sinhala Daliy Divaina	Killed in Terror Attack
2008	Paranirupasingham Devakumar	Tamil	Sakthi TV	Targeted Killing
2008	Rasmi Mohamad	Tamil Muslim	Sirasa TV	Killed in Action
2008	Rasiya Jeyanthiran	Tamil	Eelanatham	Targeted Killing
2009	Lasantha Wickramatunga	Sinhala	The Sunday Leader	Targeted Killing
2009	Punniyamurthy Sathyamurthy	Tamil	Freelance Journalist	Killed in systemic attack. Killed within the No Fire Zone (military bombardment)
2009	Sasi Mathan	Tamil	Eelanatham	Killed in systemic attack. (Artillery attack)
2009	Mahalingam Maheswaran	Tamil	Eelanatham	Killed in systemic attack. (Artillery attack)
2009	Anton	Tamil	Eelanatham	Killed in systemic attack. (Artillery attack)
2009	Rajkumar Densey	Tamil	Eelanatham	Killed in systemic attack. (Artillery attack)
2009	Jeyarajah Susitharan	Tamil	Eelanatham	Killed in systemic attack. (Sniper attack)

Year	Journalist/Media Worker	Ethnicity	Institution	Nature of Killing or Disappearance
2009	Mariyappu Anthonykumar	Tamil	Eelanatham	Killed in systemic attack. (RPG attack)
2009	Thuraisingham Tharsan	Tamil	Eelanatham	Killed in systemic attack. (RPG attack)
2009	Isai Priya/Shoba	Tamil	Nitharsanam TV Presenter	Summary Execution
2009	T.Thavabalan	Tamil	Voice of Tigers Radio presenter	Summary Execution
2009	V.Susiparan	Tamil	Not Verified	Missing in Action
2009	K.Suvediran	Tamil	Freelance Photo journalist	Missing in Action
Not Verified	B.Sivakumaran	Tamil	Not Verified	Missing in Action
Not Verified	Vijayakumar	Tamil	Not Verified	Missing in Action