



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TAMIL JOURNALISTS

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Condemns the assassination of Lasantha

The International Association of Tamil Journalists vehemently condemns the assassination of Lasantha Wickrematunga, the chief editor of 'Sunday Leader' news paper. Lasantha was shot at close range, in Ratmalana, on his way to work. The incident happened in broad daylight on a busy road with scores of people including Policemen watching. The attack comes few days after President Rajapakse took over the media ministry. Two days ago, a privately-owned MTV television station was attacked and set on fire and it follows several incidents of harassment and threats of journalists in Sri Lanka that have occurred over recent months.

Although no group has claimed responsibility for the crime, it is believed to be carried by gunmen loyal to the Sri Lankan government. In the past, the Sri Lankan president himself warned Wickrematunga for being critical of his Government.

Since the President Rajapakse sworn in 2005, there a several media personnel of Tamil origin have been killed and some journalists are continuously detained without legal action.

International Association of Tamil Journalists supports its affiliates in Sri Lanka in condemning the murder of Wickrematunga and in calling upon international community and fellow journalist associations to put the pressure on Sri Lankan government to stop the violence and to institute proper investigation.

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