



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TAMIL JOURNALISTS

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SriLankan Governments attack on Voice of Tigers Radio Station

The International Association of Tamil Journalists (IATAJ) strongly condemns the attack on the voice of Tigers Radio station by the Sri Lankan Airforce. 3 media persons and 6 civilians were killed in this attack, and 10 seriously injured.

The Government was fully aware that civilians were gathered near the Radio Station to listen to the martyr's day speech by the LTTE leader Mr. Prabhakaran. It is therefore apparent that this attack was well planned with the obvious intention of stopping the broadcast and deterring people from listening to it.

This attack is a clear violation of International rules and universally accepted code of conduct regarding media freedom. It is a war crime, and it is doubtful whether any other government in this world acts with such utter disregard for human lives and freedom of expression. It has become a routine for the Sri Lankan government to stifle the media if it dares to question the actions of the government or exposes its misdeeds. The fact that the Voice of the Tigers radio is under the control of the LTTE does not give the Government any right to carry out an attack on it. The government of Sri Lanka, and President Mahinda Rajapakse himself must take full responsibility for this uncivilised act.

The IATAJ also condemns the claymore attack by the Sri Lankan Army on a van engaged in rural First Aid service. 11 people were killed in this attack. 7 were school girls.

It has become a habit for the Sri Lankan government to unleash such violent attacks on civilians and say that they were simply attacking Tiger targets.

The International Community should share the blame for such attacks. It has turned a blind eye to these Human Rights violations and the suppression of the media in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan government has no doubt taken this as a sign of "Go Ahead" from the International Community.

The International Association of Tamil Journalists calls upon the International community not to remain silent onlookers any more and requests it to take appropriate action against the Sri Lankan government to prevent further Human Rights violations and attacks on media.

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