



# INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TAMIL JOURNALISTS

சர்வதேச தமிழ் செய்தியாளர் ஒன்றியம்

P.O Box 54079, London SW20 9WR

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IATAJ condemns the attack on the printing press

## Torching of Sunday leader Printing Press

The International Association of Tamil Journalists is deeply concerned at the increasing violence and attacks on journalists and offices belonging to the media.

The printing press of the Sunday Leader has been set on fire and it is obvious that this attack was due to the recent reports and comments that appeared in the Sunday Leader and its sister publication "The Morning Leader" exposing some of the misdeeds of the Government.

These papers recently published details of the Government's links and dealings with the LTTE renegade Karuna and how he was sent to London on a Diplomatic passport under a false name. These reports are obviously not palatable to the establishment and editors of these newspapers were threatened several times.

The printing press of the Sunday Leader is located near the Ratmalana Air Force Base, which is on security alert for 24 hours of the day. It is therefore not possible for 13 masked men to enter the premises, threaten the security guards, overpower them and set fire to the printing press and copies of the Morning Leader, and safely return, passing security check points. It therefore appears that this attack could not have happened without the connivance of the authorities. This is not the first time that the Sunday Leader office was attacked. An investigation on the previous attack is still continuing with the culprits still at large.

It is a sad reflection on the Freedom of the press that the masses and pro Government media has not condemned this attack.

In a another incidence the 31 year old Vadivelu Nimalaraj, a proof reader for the Udayan news paper has disappeared in Jaffna and his where about are still unknown.

The International Association of Tamil Journalists (IATAJ) strongly believes that the media has an important role in exposing the misdeeds and irregularities of all parties, irrespective of who they are , without fear.

It is the duty of the media to be the eyes of the nation.

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The IATAJ condemns the attack on the printing press of the Sunday Leader, and urges the government to take immediate steps to investigate this matter and prevent any such further attacks on the media.

IATAJ also appeals to the international community to put pressure on the Sri Lankan Government to create an environment in which the media can function without fear or restrictions.

A FREE MEDIA IS A SIGN OF A HEALTHY DEMOCRACY

இவ்வண்ணம்  
திருமதி. ஆனந்தி சூரியப்பிரகாசம்  
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