

URGENT ACTION

FEARS FOR MISSING SRI LANKAN ACTIVISTS

Sri Lankan political activists Lalith Kumara Weeraraju and Kugan Muruganandan have been missing since 9 December. They were arranging a press conference for the following day to publicize a protest. Lalith Kumara Weeraraju's family received a phone call saying that he had been killed.

Lalith Kumara Weeraraju and Kugan Muruganandan were last seen leaving Kugan Muruganandan's residence in Avarangal, Jaffna, northern Sri Lanka, on 9 December. They were preparing a press conference to be held on 10 December, World Human Rights Day, which aimed to publicize a protest planned for the same day. The protest included parents and relatives of people missing since the end of armed conflict in Sri Lanka in 2009, and was to focus on denouncing human rights violations against Tamil civilians by the Sri Lankan military and calling for the release of detainees held without charge since the end of the war.

According to family members, the two men left the house on a motorbike bearing the license number NP GT 7852 at around 5:00pm on 9 December. Family members say they later received an anonymous phone call saying that Lalith Kumara Weeraraju had been killed. A missing persons complaint was lodged with the Jaffna Police, who denied they are holding the two men in custody.

Lalith Kumara Weeraraju has previously received threats warning him against involvement in politics in Jaffna, particularly during recent elections. He was also attacked and injured during a demonstration in Jaffna town on 14 November 2010, and was arrested and interrogated by the army in early 2011.

Human rights defenders say the Sri Lankan army and police attempted to block some 50 people from southern Sri Lanka attempting to join the demonstration, including members of the Civil Monitoring Committee, a voluntary human rights organization. The protest at the Jaffna bus stand went ahead on 10 December despite the obstacles.

Please write immediately in English or your own language:

- Expressing concern for the safety and wellbeing of Lalith Kumara Weeraraju and Kugan Muruganandan;
- Calling on the Sri Lankan authorities to order an immediate and impartial investigation to establish the whereabouts of Lalith Kumara Weeraraju and Kugan Muruganandan;
- Calling on the Sri Lankan authorities to ensure that human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate human rights work without fear of harassment or intimidation

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 JANUARY 2012 TO:

His Excellency the President

Mahinda Rajapaksa
 Presidential Secretariat
 Colombo 1, Sri Lanka
 Fax: +94 11 244 6657
 Email: lalith@icta.lk

Salutation: Your Excellency

Inspector General of Police

N K Illangakoon
 New Secretariat Colombo 1
 Sri Lanka
 Fax: +94 11 244 0440
 Email: igp@police.lk

Salutation: Dear Inspector General

Defence Secretary

Gotabhaya Rajapaksa
 Ministry Of Defence and urban
 development
 15/5, Baladaksha Mawatha,
 Colombo 03, Sri Lanka
 Fax: +94 11 254 1529
 Email: secdef@sltnet.lk

Salutation: Dear Defence Secretary

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Harassment, intimidation and attacks against human rights defenders and others who expose abuses in Sri Lanka are common. Many victims of human rights abuses feel an increased sense of insecurity as there is a lack of credible domestic mechanisms for filing and investigating complaints.

Name: Lalith Kumara Weeraraju and Kugan Muruganandan

Gender m/f: Both male

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