

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 37/07/99

25 March 1999

Further information on UA 29/99 (ASA 37/06/99, 23 February 1999) - Fear of Torture/Fear of "Disappearance"

SRI LANKA Sivam Ashokumar (20)
Arumugam Pakkiri (alias Jeya) (35)
Christie White
One other man, name unknown

Amnesty International has recently learned that Sivam Ashokumar, Arumugam Pakkiri and Christie White have been released by the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE).

Sivam Ashokumar was released on 4 March 1999 after 39 days in detention. He had reportedly been chained up for 26 days and badly beaten on his chest, legs and hands with a pole and electric wire. He had been taken to the Vairapuliyankulam PLOTE camp on 24 January 1999, and moved that evening to the Kovilkulam PLOTE camp, where he remained until his release.

Arumugam Pakkiri (alias Jeya) and Christie White, who were taken prisoner by PLOTE on 7 February 1999, were handed over to relatives on 18 February 1999. They had been kept for 11 days at the Kovilkulam Junction PLOTE camp. Arumugam Pakkiri had been severely tortured and was reportedly unable to walk at the time of his release. Christie White had reportedly been beaten.

Amnesty International has not been able to obtain any further information on the whereabouts of the fourth man who was taken into custody by PLOTE on 7 February 1999.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/e-mails/express/ airmail letters in English or in your own language:

- noting that Sivam Ashokumar, Arumugam Pakkiri (alias Jeya) and Christie White have been released from the custody of PLOTE;
- expressing concern that they were reportedly tortured;
- urging the government to conduct an independent investigation into allegations of torture;
- urging that those responsible be brought to justice;

APPEALS TO:

Her Excellency President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga
Presidential Residence
"Temple Trees"
Colombo 3, Sri Lanka
Telegrams: President Kumaratunga, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Faxes: + 94 1 33 37 03
E-mail: for_min@sri.lanka.net
Salutation: Your Excellency

The Hon (General) Anuruddha Ratwatte
Deputy Minister of Defence
Ministry of Defence
15/5 Baladaksha Mawatha
Colombo 3, Sri Lanka

Telegrams: Deputy Defence Minister, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Faxes: + 94 1 54 15 29 / 68 77 68
Salutation: Dear Minister

R K Chandrananda de Silva
Secretary
Ministry of Defence
No 15/5 Baladaksha Mawatha
Colombo 3, Sri Lanka

Telegrams: Secretary Defence Ministry, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Faxes: + 94 1 54 15 29
Salutation: Dear Secretary

Lt-General Sri Lal Weerasooriya
Army Commander
Army Headquarters
Flagstaff Street
Colombo 1, Sri Lanka

Telegrams: Army Commander, Colombo, Sri Lanka
Salutation: Dear Army Commander

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives Sri Lanka accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 May 1999.