

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

**AI Index: ASA 37/03/94
Distr: UA/SC**

This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 10 per section.

7 January 1994

**Further information on UA 256/93 (ASA 37/14/93, 5 August 1993) -
Unacknowledged detention/Fear of "disappearance"**

**SRI LANKA: Ilayathamby Sithilingam (32)
Arumugam Arasaratnam (33)
Arulanantham Amirthanayagam (28)**

The whereabouts of the three Tamil men named above who were arrested on 4 July 1993 at Tharapuram, Mannar District, remain unknown.

The three were reportedly taken from a bus by police officers as they were returning to the Pesalai refugee camp from the Mannar Police station where they had been to sign on. According to reports, the three men were later seen under army custody at Suriyakaddaikadu, Mannar District.

In August 1993 the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into the Involuntary Removal of Persons informed Amnesty International that the cases of the three men were being investigated by the Commission. In November 1993 the organization was informed by Justice Soza of the Human Rights Task Force that the three had been released to officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). However, ICRC officials in Mannar District reportedly said that the three men had not been handed over, and relatives of the three say that the men have not returned home. Mannar District MP, Mr Emmanuel de Silva, raised their cases with President D B Wijetunga. The latter forwarded the inquiry to the army operational headquarters who replied that the army had no knowledge of the incident.

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

- acknowledging that Amnesty International has been informed that the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into the Involuntary Removal of Persons is conducting an inquiry into the arrest and subsequent "disappearance" of the three men named above and asking that the findings be made public;
- acknowledging Justice Soza's letter to Amnesty International with the information that the three men had been released into the hands of the ICRC but informing him that it has been reported that the ICRC in Mannar District say that no such handover took place;
- urging that since there are conflicting reports about the fate of the three Tamil men, the authorities should make further impartial and independent investigations to establish their fate and whereabouts;

- seeking assurances that if they are found to be in custody, they be humanely treated and that they be given immediate access to relatives and a lawyer.

APPEALS TO

1) President D B Wijetunga
Presidential Secretariat
Republic Square
Colombo 1, SRI LANKA

Telegrams: President Wijetunga, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Telexes: 22650 PRESEC CE

Faxes: + 94 1 446657

Salutation: Dear President

2) Justice J F A Soza
Chairperson
Human Rights Task Force
75 Norris Canal Road
Colombo 10, Sri Lanka

Telegrams: Justice Soza, Human Rights Task Force, Colombo 10, Sri Lanka

Faxes: + 94 1 696470

Salutation: Dear Justice Soza

3) Major General Gerry de Silva
Commander in Chief of the Army
Army Headquarters
Flower Road
Colombo 7, Sri Lanka

Telegrams: Commander in Chief, G de Silva, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka

Salutation: Dear Major-General

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO: diplomatic representatives of Sri Lanka accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 18 February 1994.