

AI INDEX: ASA 37/12/96
28 JULY 1996

News Service 136/96

SRI LANKA: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONDEMNS TARGETING OF CIVILIANS IN BOMBINGS

Amnesty International is extremely disturbed by the recent bombings in Sri Lanka which have resulted on the deliberate killing of at least 70 civilians and injury to hundreds of others.

Amnesty International notes the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam 's (LTTE) denial that it was not involved and its assurance that it does not target civilians. However, Amnesty International has repeatedly condemned LTTE attacks on civilians in the past and has urged that all steps be taken to prevent such abuses.

The organization states that, whoever is responsible for the blast, such deliberate killings of civilians are reprehensible.

While recognising the government's responsibility to protect people from such attacks, in the light of the wave of human rights abuses that followed the Central Bank bombing in January, Amnesty International appeals to the Government of Sri Lanka to refrain from wholesale arbitrary arrests of Tamil people in the aftermath of the bombing.

The blast coincided with intensified fighting in the North East of the country. Amnesty International appeals, as it has done in the past, to both the LTTE and the Government of Sri Lanka to avoid deliberate and arbitrary targeting of civilians.

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A report reviewing the human rights situation in Sri Lanka will be published by Amnesty International on 14 August 1996. For further information please contact:

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