

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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*This is a limited action. Please send up to 10 appeals per section.*

UA 256/93 Unacknowledged detention/Fear of "disappearance" 5 August 1993

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

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Amnesty International is concerned about the safety of three Tamil men named above who were arrested on 4 July 1993 at Tharapuram, Mannar District. The three men were reportedly taken from the bus they were travelling on by police officers, while on their way back 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. Relatives have appealed to local representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross, but no information has been revealed by the authorities as to their whereabouts.

Ilayathamby Sithilingam, Arumugam Arasaratnam and Arulanantham Amirthanayagam were arrested previously on 16 November 1990, together with 13 other people, during a cordon and search operation conducted by army personnel from the Pesalai army camp, on suspicion of having links with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Six of those arrested, including the three men named above, were transferred to New Magazine Prison, Colombo, where they were detained until their release in August 1992. After their release they were required to report to the Mannar Police Station every two months.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The armed conflict between the security forces and the LTTE continues throughout the northeast of Sri Lanka. However, the number of "disappearances" reported from northeastern Sri Lanka has reduced significantly in the past year. The security forces do not necessarily acknowledge arrests at first, but whereas previously unacknowledged arrests often proved to be long-term "disappearances", more often now the prisoner is eventually traced in custody.

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

- asking for information about the whereabouts of Ilayathamby Sithilingam, Arumugam Arasaratnam and Arulanantham Amirthanayagam, who were reportedly arrested by security forces at Tharapuram, Mannar District, on 4 July 1993;
- urging that a full, impartial investigation be held to establish their

whereabouts and fate;

- seeking assurances that if they are in custody, they be humanely treated and that they be given regular 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) Lieutenant General Cecil Waidyaratne  
Commander in Chief of the Army  
Army Headquarters  
Flower Road  
Colombo 7  
Sri Lanka

**Telegrams: Commander-in-Chief, C Waidyaratne, Colombo, Sri Lanka**

**Telexes: 22496 AYCMDC SL**

**Salutation: Dear Lieutenant General**

3) 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**

**Salutation: Dear Justice Soza**

4) Justice H A G de Silva  
Chairperson  
Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Involuntary Removal of Persons  
Room No 2-115, Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall  
Buddhaloka Mawatha  
Colombo 7  
Sri Lanka

**Telegrams: Justice de Silva, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka**

**Salutation: Dear Justice de Silva**

**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 16 September 1993.