

Media Advisory

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Open letter to Sri Lanka's President on the killing of 26 detainees

Wednesday's gruesome killing of at least 26 Tamil young men and boys aged between 14 and 23 who were detained for "rehabilitation" near Bandarawela, Sri Lanka, should be investigated fully, Amnesty International said today in an open letter to the President Kumaratunga.

Police and army personnel deployed at the rehabilitation camp failed to protect the inmates from villagers armed with machetes and clubs. There are further allegations that some of them may have been involved in inciting the villagers or may have assisted them in entering the camp.

The organization welcomed the President's condemnation of the attack and that two police teams were sent to investigate the scene immediately. However a full impartial investigation is needed to ensure that those found responsible are brought to justice and that compensation is paid to the victims and the relatives of those killed.

It also urged for a thorough review of provisions in the Emergency Regulations and the Prevention of Terrorism Act which allow for prolonged detention and were key contributing factors in this latest incident.

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