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NGO Submission
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1. NfR Sri Lanka, a net work of human rights defenders and journalists of Sri Lanka together with the Free Media Movement, an organisation of journalists, writers and press freedom defenders in Sri Lanka and INFORM human rights documentation center Sri Lanka – submits this report to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on the situation of Freedom of Expression and Opinion, to be considered in the second cycle of UPR on Sri Lanka to be reviewed at the 14th session in October - November 2012. According to the framework for the second UPR cycle, emphasis should be given to the recommendations accepted by the country under review. Therefore, a main source of reference is the documents A/HRC/8/46 together with the responses of the Government of Sri Lanka to the recommendations contained in document A/HRC/8/46/Add.1.
2. In section 2 this document also deals with issues relating to Freedom of Expression & Opinion in Sri Lanka since the last UPR process of Sri Lanka in May 2008.

Section 1: Assessment of the implementation of recommendations accepted by the Government of Sri Lanka and voluntary commitments made during the UPR process in 2008

3. In general, there has been little progress on many of those recommendations made in UPR 2008. Compared to the first UPR in 2008, the human rights situation in Sri Lanka remains bleak and lack of impartial and speedy investigations into killings, abductions, assaults, threats and hate campaigns on journalists and media workers remains a grave threat to freedom of expression in Sri Lanka.
4. According to the document A/HRC/8/46, paragraph 82, A.4, Sri Lanka accepted the recommendation by Ukraine to “*Cooperate actively with international mechanisms (...) as well as special procedures of the Human Rights Council*”. Until now, Sri Lanka has refused to invite the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Opinion and 6 other mandate holders who have requested for invitations to visit Sri Lankaⁱ. In 2006 when Sri Lanka became a member of the UN Human Rights Council for the years 2006-2008 GoSL made a commitment to invite the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression which it has not fulfilled to dateⁱⁱ.
5. In November 2011 the Free Media Movement accused the GoSL of deliberately misleading the UN Committee Against Torture (UN CAT) with regard to prominent cases of arrest and conviction, abduction and torture and disappearance of journalists in 2008-2009ⁱⁱⁱ. Journalist J. S. Tissainayagam denied that he ever expressed complicity to an offence or remorse as claimed by Mr. Mohan Peiris, senior legal advisor to the Cabinet of Sri Lanka, during the sessions of the UN CAT^{iv}. Press freedom activist Poddala Jayantha denied claims of the Government to the UN CAT that he requested the Police to stop the investigations into his abduction and torture^v. Mrs. Sandya Ekneligoda, also challenged Mr. Peiris to disclose information about the whereabouts of her husband, disappeared journalist/cartoonist Prageeth Ekneligoda^{vi}.
6. Cooperation with HR mechanisms goes beyond the submission of reports and information. Meaningful cooperation with the OHCHR requires the GoSL to reveal

the implementation of the treaties, the recommendations of treaty bodies, of special procedures, and UPR recommendations at the national level.

7. According to the document A/HRC/8/46, paragraph 82/39 Sri Lanka accepted the recommendation by Ireland to *take measures to safeguard freedom of expression and protect human rights defenders, and effectively investigate allegations of attacks on journalists, media personnel and human rights defenders and prosecute those responsible.*^{vii} There has been no concrete progress in investigations of attacks on journalists and media organisations including the killings and disappearances of journalists.
8. On 15th Nov 2011, more than 3 years after GoSL accepted the above mentioned recommendation, the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) appointed by the President of Sri Lanka observed that '*The Commission was deeply disturbed by persistent reports concerning attacks on journalists and media institutions and killing of journalists and the fact that these incidents remain to be conclusively investigated and perpetrators brought to justice.*' (9.114). This clearly shows that no action has been taken to implement the above mentioned recommendation.
9. For example none of the below listed killings/abductions and assaults of media personal after the May 2008 UPR process have been investigated to a completion and those responsible held accountable.^{viii}

a. **Killed:**

- i. **Paranirupasingham Devakumar:** Sirasa, Shakthi and MTV Television Network Jaffna district correspondent P. Devakumar was hacked to death on 28 May 2008.
- ii. **Lasantha Wickrematunga:** Chief Editor of The Sunday Leader was killed on 08 January 2009.
- iii. **Puniyamoorthy Sathiyamoorthy:** long standing Tamil journalist was killed by artillery fire within the no fire zone in Vanni demarcated by the government on 12 Feb 2009.

b. **Abducted/ Assaulted**

- i. **Keith Noyahr:** Deputy Editor and Defense analyst of The Nation was abducted on 22 May 2008 and dropped near his home the following morning. Noyahr had been severely beaten and was hospitalised for treatment following the attack.
- ii. **Thiruchelvam Thirukumaran:** A Freelance journalist was abducted from his home in Dehiwela on 21 June 2008 and released two day later. He had been subjected to mental and physical torture and was hospitalised for treatment.

- iii. **Namal Perera:** Deputy-head of the advocacy section of the Sri Lanka Press Institute (SLPI) and journalist was assaulted by a group of people in an attempt to abduct him on 30 June 2008. He was hospitalised for treatment following the attack.
 - iv. **Upali Tennakoon:** Chief Editor of Rivira Sinhala Weekly was assaulted using sharp weapons in an attempt to kill him on his way to work on 24 January 2009. He was hospitalised for treatment following the attack.
 - v. **N. Vithyatharan:** Editor of Tamil language dailies Uthayan and Sudaroli was abducted and assaulted on 26 February 2009. Police spokesman Gunasekara, who first said that the editor was abducted by unidentified men, hours later, admitted that he had been arrested. He was hospitalised for treatment.
 - vi. **Poddala Jayantha:** Senior journalist and General Secretary of the Sri Lanka Working Journalists Association was abducted on 1 June 2009. He was severely beaten and left by the road side several hours later. He was admitted to the intensive care unit of the Colombo General Hospital and underwent two operations to correct injuries suffered during the attack.
 - vii. **Prageeth Eknaligoda:** A Cartoonist and writer was disappeared on 24 January 2010 two days prior to the presidential election. There has been no information regarding Mr. Eknaligoda despite appeals by his wife and rights activists to conduct a credible investigation into his case.
 - viii. **Gnanasundaram Kuganathan:** News editor of Uthayan Newspaper, a Jaffna based Tamil daily was severely assaulted with iron bars on 29 July 2011. Mr. Kuganathan was seriously injured and hospitalised for treatment following the attack.
- c. **Media institutions attacked/ burned**
- i. **MBC/MTV network:** An armed group of nearly 15 people destroyed equipment and set fire to the MTV-MBC station early morning on 06 January 2009.
 - ii. **Siyatha TV:** An armed mob stormed the Siyatha TV and radio station in central Colombo, and set fire to the premises on July 30 2010.
 - iii. **Lanka e News:** The office of the web site was set on fire on 31st January 2011. The computer Hall and the library were completely destroyed.
10. According to document A/HRC/8/46, paragraph 82 / 40 Sri Lanka accepted the recommendation by Denmark *to take measures to improve safeguards for freedom of the press*;
11. More than 3 years after GoSL accepted this recommendation, in November 2011 the LLRC recommended that:

9.115 Freedom of expression and right to information, which are universally regarded as basic human rights play a pivotal role in any reconciliation process. It is therefore essential that media freedom be enhanced in keeping with democratic principles and relevant fundamental rights obligations, since any restrictions placed on media freedom would only contribute to an environment of distrust and fear within and among ethnic groups. This would only prevent a constructive exchange of information and opinion placing severe constraints on the on-going reconciliation process. The Commission strongly recommends that:

a) All steps should be taken to prevent harassment and attacks on media personnel and institutions.

b) Action must be taken to impose deterrent punishment on such offences, and also priority should be given to the investigation, prosecution and disposal of such cases to build-up public confidence in the criminal justice system.

c) Past incidents of such illegal action should be properly investigated. The Commission observes with concern that a number of journalists and media institutions have been attacked in the recent past. Such offences erode the public confidence in the system of justice. Therefore, the Commission recommends that steps should be taken to expeditiously conclude investigations so that offenders are brought to book without delay.

d) The Government should ensure the freedom of movement of media personnel in the North and East, as it would help in the exchange of information contributing to the process of reconciliation.

e) Legislation should be enacted to ensure the right to information.

12. This recommendation shows that no concrete improvements has been made as requested by the above mentioned recommendation A/HRC/8/46, paragraph 82 / 40. So far no action has been taken by the GoSL to implement those recommendations including the enactment of a Right to Information Act.
13. The Committee to Protect Journalist (CPJ), an internationally recognised press freedom organisation, in its 2012 report said that "*The government of Mahinda Rajapaksa has failed to prosecute any perpetrators in the nine murders that have taken place during his time in power, first as prime minister and then president. In recent months, government officials have issued brazen public threats of violence against their critics, an alarming development given that 60 percent of Sri Lankan victims were known to have received threats before they were killed.*"^{ix}
14. The International Federation of the Journalists (IFJ), an organisation with 600,000 members in 140 countries "*strongly deplored the alarming escalation in hostile rhetoric and the barely concealed threats of reprisals that have been made against some of the country's leading journalists and human rights defenders by representatives of the Sri Lankan government and by state-owned media outlets.*"^x (26 March 2012)
15. One glaring example of the impunity enjoyed by Press freedom offenders is the case of Minister Mervyn Silva. On March 23, Sri Lanka's Minister for Public Relations, Mervyn Silva addressed a public demonstration against the adoption of a resolution on Sri Lanka at the 19th session of the UN Human Rights Council, threatening to "break the limbs" of any of the exiled journalists if they dared set foot in the country again.

16. 'Silva has been known for several bruising encounters with the media in recent years and was in July 2009, credibly reported as publicly claiming credit for the murder of newspaper editor Lasantha Wickramatunge in January and the assault on Jayantha in June, said IFJ.^{xi}
17. No inquiry was held and no disciplinary action was taken against the Minister by the GoSL and according to media reports the inquiry against him has been suspended.^{xii}
18. Improving the general human rights situation of the country has direct relevance to the full enjoyment of people's right to information.
19. According to document A/HRC/8/46, paragraph 82 / 2, 5, 12 and 13 Sri Lanka accepted the recommendations by respectively the Czech Republic, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany, Ireland, Canada, Turkey; Algeria and the Netherlands to;

Strengthen and ensure the independence of its human rights institutions such as the National Human Rights Commission in accordance with the Paris Principles, including through implementation of the 17th Amendment at the earliest, and ensure its pluralist character (82/2);

Try to respond in a timely manner to the questionnaires sent by the special procedures (82/5);

Further support human rights machinery and capacity building in its national institutions to implement the human rights instruments, such as the introduction of a human rights charter as pledged in 2006(82/12);

That the National Plan of Action provide specific benchmarks within a given timeframe (82/13);

20. The 18th Amendment to the Constitution of Sri Lanka has seriously undermined the independence of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), National Police Commission and the Election Commission (still to be appointed) among other commissions set up by the 17th amendment to the Constitution. The 18th amendment has completely nullified the 17th amendment.
21. The NHRC still remains on B status after a review by the Sub Committee on Accreditation in 2009. Since 2010, it had shown reluctance to accept complaints with regard to disappearances (E.g. case of disappeared journalist/ cartoonist Prageeth Ekneligoda) and harassment of journalists (E.g. Media trade unionist Dharmasiri Lankapeli) and to pursue such cases with a sense of urgency. The NHRC has failed to exercise its' powers to investigate the countless attacks, restrictions, threats to freedom of expression since 2008 and despite specific requests, had not pursued options such as producing and placing before parliament a report on the situation of Freedom of Expression and Opinion in Sri Lanka

22. A number of questionnaires sent by the Special Rapportuer on Human Rights defenders has not been responded to at all.
23. No human rights charter has been prepared.
24. The Human Rights Action Plan remains as a mere document even in March 2012. According to Dr. Rajiva Wijesinghe ruling party member of parliament, and Secretary to the Ministry of Human Rights during the 2008 UPR process, no guide lines had been sent to ministries on the implementation of the HRAP. " *The sad thing was that no one in authority seemed to care. I kept suggesting that the Action Plan we had drafted should be taken forward, but though in time the Attorney General assured me that he was putting to Cabinet what he described as 'your Action Plan', the lack of specific responsibility meant that it took another year to be finalized. Then it took six months for a system to be set up to ensure action but the necessary instructions have still not gone out formally to all Ministries.*"^{xiii}

Section 2: Some key concerns about Freedom of Expression & Opinion in Sri Lanka since the last UPR process of Sri Lanka in May 2008

Censorship:

25. In November 2011 GoSL internet service provider Sri Lanka Telecom, which covered more than 80% internet connections in the country, blocked at least six websites without prior warning. Secretary to the Media Ministry admitted that the websites had been blocked as they violated laws but did not specify which news item of what date violated which law, and no charges have been filed for violating of any such laws to date.^{xiv}
26. The Free Media Movement (FMM) filed a Fundamental Rights petition in the Supreme Court over the blocking of websites. The case has been postponed over 3 times and leave to proceed has not been granted by the Supreme Court to date.
27. In the meantime, dozens of news websites have been blocked by Government order. The Department of Government Information under the Ministry of Mass Media and Information, has ordered all news websites that report on Sri Lanka to register with the ministry without any legal provisions to support its decision.
28. On 12 March 2012, Sri Lanka's Defense Ministry ordered news outlets to get prior approval before sending mobile phone alerts about the military or police. In a letter hand-delivered to news outlets including Reuters, the Media Center for National Security (MCNS) Director-General Lakshman Hulugalle said the new order was effective immediately.^{xv}
29. The reintroduction and enforcement of draconian legislation in 2009 led to the reactivation^{xvi} of the Press Council Act which empowers the Press Council to

recommenjd jail sentences of upto two years to jouranalists and media workers wihtout a formal court procedure. The Press Council requires the nomination of a representative of media organizations, but media organizations in Sri Lanka have opposed the Press Council and have not nominated a representative to the Council. The President of Sri Lanka has since appointed his own representative from a party which is closely allied with the ruling UPFA Government, to the Press Council.^{xvii}

30. During the height of the war and even after the end of the war, the government prevented international and local media from accessing the war affected areas and speaking with civilians in these areas.
31. The Government also prevented foreign media from covering public hearings of the LLRC held in the North^{xviii}.

Arrests, detention and torture of journalists and publishers:

32. A journalist was convicted in September 2009^{xix} under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). Several others were charged under the PTA and Emeregy laws that were in place in 2008-2009. At least one journalist was tortured while in custody, Two journalists arrested and detained in March 2008 were finally released in October 2009, as there was no evidence, but they were released only after one of the journalists agreed to withdraw the fundemental rights case he had filed against torture while in custody^{xx}.
33. *Iridia Lanka* newspaper editor Chandana Sirimalwatte was arrested, detained and subsequently released in 2009^{xxi}. Jayampathy Bulathsinhala and his family members incuding his wife, were arrested and detained in September 2010 for printing a poster that opposed the 18th Amendment to the Constitution by the governmnet that was widley seen as undemocratic^{xxii}.
34. In 2011, News Editor of popular government critique *Lanka e-News* (www.lankaenews.com) was arrested and detained.

Hate campaigns, obstructions and threats to campaigns on press freedom

35. Hate speech against journalists conveyed through state media^{xxiii} as well as threats of violence and death issued by a government minister^{xxiv} - and the failure of the government to intervene - have given rise to concerns over the clamping down on dissent and engendered a fear psychosis in the media, despite the government's pronouncements about and commitments relating to media freedom and democracy.^{xxv} Almost all media institutions are directly or indirectly owned and / or managed by the state, hence there is very clear complicity of the government. In most cases the perpetrators have not been arrested and even in the few cases arrests were made there have been attempts to manipulate/subvert the judicial process.^{xxvi}
36. In January 2012, press freedom organizations in Sri Lanka organized a campaign named "Black January", to remember attacks on media institutions and journalists in general and especially those in the month of January in the preceding years and to demand justice and accountability. State media attempted to discredit the campaign, particularly targeting the Free Media Movement and included personal attacks against

its FMM convenor Sunil Jayasekera and Committee Member Udaya Kalupathirana; Police resorted to unprecedented step of seeking a court order to stop the event^{xxvii}. The court ultimately allowed the event to go ahead, but imposed restrictions and banned any marches. However, a pro-government group armed with clubs occupied the space designated for the “Black January” campaign by courts, chanted slogans discrediting press freedom activists and organizations and branding them as working for foreign money and in support of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Although the pro-government protest occupied the area designated by courts for the Black January campaign, impeded public access to public transport, blocked an entire half of a busy road and engaged in marches, the police, which had actively sought court orders against the Black January campaign, did nothing to stop or restrict the pro-government protest. Organizers of the Black January protest eventually held their event at another location in order to avoid a violent attack and confrontation that looked inevitable.^{xxviii}

37. In August 2011, Police tried to obstruct a historic protest campaign against the attack on a senior News Editor of a local Tamil newspaper in Jaffna, a city affected by war for years and which currently has a high military presence. The protest was led by Colombo based press freedom groups together with concerned journalists and activists in Jaffna.
38. In November 2011, the Legal Advisor to the Cabinet told the UN Committee Against Torture that he has reliable information that Mr. Prageeth Ekneligoda, the cartoonist / journalist who disappeared on 24th January 2010, is living overseas. Mr. Ekneligoda’s wife sought the intervention of Courts, the National Human Rights Commission and the President of Sri Lanka to find out information that Mr. Peiris claimed to have, but nearly 6 months after the statement, no information has been provided. Mr. Peiris is yet to be summoned to Courts or before the National Human Rights Commission. During the last court hearing related to Mr. Peiris being summoned to courts, the state counsel choose to discredit the wife of the disappeared journalist^{xxix}
39. In the aftermath of the arson attack on Lanka e-News (www.lankaenews.com) and the arrest of its’ News Editor in early 2011, there appears to have been an attempt to implicate Lanka-e-News journalists in the attack. There were also threats to destroy lawyers and NGOs who were supporting e-News journalists^{xxx}.

Compelling journalists into exile and self censorship

40. The severe repression of freedom of expression and constant attacks and threats led to an unprecedented exile of journalist from Sri Lanka during the period 2009-2011. Most of the exiled journalists were those who were critical of the government and leaders of prominent press freedom organizations in Sri Lanka. Amongst those in exile are two conveners of the Free Media Movement and two former Presidents of the Sri Lanka Working Journalists Association and senior editors and journalists who count more than 25 years of work as journalists. Majority of the exiled journalists are those who worked in Sinhalese and Tamil language and thus, it is extremely difficult to continue their journalism from exile. The exodus had led to a serious gap in activism for press freedom in Sri Lanka. With few exceptions, most journalists remaining in Sri Lanka exercise self censorship.

IV. Recommendations

- i. Cease the harassment, threats, attacks and murders of and ensure a safe environment for all media workers.
- ii. Ensure prompt investigations, arrests, prosecutions and convictions in relation to all attacks and threats to journalists and media institutions, including but not limited to those mentioned in this submission
- iii. The President and the Minister for Media should publicly condemn and distance themselves from hate campaigns and public threats made against press freedom activists and human rights defenders by any person, including by Government Ministers, politicians and state media and ensure that all such cases are investigated and those responsible held accountable without considering political affiliations.
- iv. Do away with requirement to register all websites and lift the blockage on websites
- v. Do away with the requirement to obtain prior permission to send out mobile phone news alerts
- vi. Abolish the Press Council
- vii. Senior Advisor to the Cabinet, Mr. Mohan Peiris, should inform the family, Police, Courts, the National Human Rights Commission and the general public about any information he has regarding the whereabouts of disappeared journalist Prageeth Ekneligoda
- viii. Enact the Right to Information Act, as requested by the media community and recommended by the LLRC
- ix. Present to Parliament a specific action plan on what recommendations of LLRC will be implemented when and by whom, and indicating also involvement of opposition parties, civil society and OHCHR.
- x. Voluntarily present a regular progress report to the Parliament on progress made on implementing the LLRC recommendations.

- xi. Ratify the Optional Protocol to CAT and the Convention against Disappearances
- xii. Extend a standing invitation to all Special Procedures, starting by at least now, honouring the commitment made in 2006 to invite the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Opinion and extending invitations to other Special Procedures whose requests for invitations remain pending, including since 2006.

ⁱ http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/countryvisitsn-z.htm#sri_lanka

ⁱⁱ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomOpinion/Pages/Visits.aspx>

ⁱⁱⁱ http://www.bbc.co.uk/sinhala/news/story/2011/11/111125_prageeth_tissa_poddala.shtml

^{iv} <http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2011/11/20/tissa-denies-mohan%E2%80%99s-claims/>

^v http://www.ceylontoday.lk/news-detail.php?news_id=517&news_category_id=16

^{vi} http://www.bbc.co.uk/sinhala/news/story/2011/11/111117_prageeth.shtml

^{vii} http://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/75844391?access_key=key-1m3regjmph5j6ubonw16

^{viii} From Free Media Movement press releases and news paper reports

^{ix} <http://www.srilankabrief.org/2012/04/cpj-impunity-index-sri-lanka.html>

^x <http://www.srilankabrief.org/2012/03/alarmed-increase-in-hostile-rhetoric.html>

^{xi} i bid

^{xii} <http://www.srilankabrief.org/2012/04/sfp-suspends-disciplinary-action.html>

^{xiii} <http://www.srilankabrief.org/2012/04/not-having-hr-ministry-is-greatest.html>

^{xiv} <http://nfrsrilanka.wordpress.com/2011/11/09/sri-lanka-the-internet-remaining-space-for-free-expression-under-attack/>

^{xv} <http://www.srilankabrief.org/2012/03/sri-lanka-to-censor-news-alerts-about.html>

^{xvi} “Press Council reactivated”, Sunday Times, June 14, 2009,

http://sundaytimes.lk/090614/News/sundaytimesnews_10.html

^{xvii} Press Council Act of 1973

^{xviii} <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-11349494>

^{xix} In September 2009, J.S. Tissainayagam, a journalist, was convicted under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for inciting “communal disharmony” by writing two articles for the North-Eastern Monthly magazine in 2006, which were critical of the government’s military campaign. Tissainayagam was detained by the Terrorism Investigation Department (TID) on March 7, 2008 without charge: “Release Tissainayagam NOW”, IFJ, September 8, 2009, <http://asiapacific.ifj.org/en/articles/free-tissainayagam/>; “J.S. Tissainayagam interview”, RSF, November 17, 2010, <http://en.rsf.org/sri-lanka-j-s-tissainayagam-interview-17-11-2010,38836.html>; “J.S. Tissainayagam, Sri Lanka, Sunday Times”, CPJ, 2009, <http://cpj.org/awards/2009/js-tissainayagam-journalist-sunday-times.php>

^{xx} Section 7 of the IFJ report on “Key Challenges for Media at War’s End” available at

<http://asiapacific.ifj.org/assets/docs/236/115/1d464ec-8892c73.pdf>

^{xxi} http://sundaytimes.lk/091018/News/nws_14.html

^{xxii} <http://forumasia.asiahumanrights.com/?events=sri-lanka-printing-workers-arrested>

^{xxiii} <http://en.rsf.org/sri-lanka-government-orchestrated-threats-23-03-2012,42179.html>,

<http://www.ifj.org/en/articles/alarmed-increase-in-hostile-rhetoric-threats-of-reprisals-against-journalists> and <http://asiapacific.ifj.org/en/articles/halt-the-slander-campaign-against-sri-lankas-journalist-union-leader>

^{xxiv} July 2009, Non-cabinet Labour Minister Mervyn Silva stated publicly at a meeting in his electorate that he “Lasantha from the Leader paper went overboard. I took care of him. Poddala (Jayantha) agitated and his leg was broken” (<http://groundviews.org/2009/07/13/mervyn-silva-publicly-admits-to-killing-lasantha-wickrematunge-and-grievously-attacking-another-journalist/>) ; In September 2010 Deputy Highways Minister Mervyn Silva (who had been promoted from a non cabinet minister to a deputy cabinet minister) told Parliament that he had evidence to prove that former Army Commander Sarath Fonseka ordered the assassination of the Sunday Leader Editor Lasantha Wickrematunga (http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=7378) ; In October 2010 The same deputy minister made a statement to a private TV channel on that he had evidence as to who killed the Sunday Leader Editor Lasantha Wickrematunga (<http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2010/10/10/mervyn-refuses-to-give-details-of-lasantha%E2%80%99s-killers/>); On 23 March 2012 Minister for Public Relations Mervyn Silva claimed he was “the one who chased Poddala Jayantha from Sri Lanka” (<http://www.adaderana.lk/news.php?nid=17473>). See also Charles Haviland, “Sri Lanka minister Mervyn Silva threatens journalists”, BBC, March 23, 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-17491832>; Easwaran Ratnam, “I will break your bones says Mervyn”, Sunday Leader, March 23, 2012,

<http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2012/03/23/i-will-break-your-bones-says-mervyn/>; “Mervyn threatens to break limbs of journos”, Daily Mirror, March 23, 2012, <http://dailymirror.lk/news/17607-mervyn-threatens-to-break-limbs-of-journos.html>; “Video: No one can touch me as long as Rajapaksas are in power”, Ada Derana, March 27, 2012, <http://www.adaderana.lk/news.php?nid=17520>

^{xxv} Recommendations on the freedom of expression accepted by the Government from the UPR 2008 included “Take measures to safeguard freedom of expression and protect human rights defenders, and effectively investigate allegations of attacks on journalists, media personnel and human rights defenders and prosecute those responsible” and “Take measures to improve safeguards for freedom of the press”.

^{xxvi} One suspect in the murder of Lasantha Wickrematunge died in hospital after being admitted for chest pains. Another suspect a former army intelligence officer Kandegedara Priyawansa claimed in open court that an official of the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) had promised him protection and a foreign job had he given evidence to the effect that a senior military officer was involved in the killing of the journalist. An application was made on the next date that Kandegedara Piyawansa’s statement be recorded and the Mt. Lavinia Magistrate proceeded to do so in Chambers. This statement was not made public nor placed on record but sent to the Inspector General of Police for a report which has been ignored to date. Whilst the TID insists in court that investigations are going on, no evidence has been forthcoming nor reported to Court. It is over three years since the murder and the Police reports to Court say that any further facts to Court would hamper a successful investigation. (<http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2012/04/08/happy-birthday/>)

^{xxvii} <http://www.humanrights.asia/news/forwarded-news/AHRC-FAT-006-2012>

^{xxviii} <http://cpj.org/blog/2012/01/black-january-a-foreign-plot-says-sri-lankan-gover.php>

^{xxix} <http://www.humanrights.asia/news/ahrc-news/AHRC-STM-092-2012>

^{xxx} <http://www.humanrights.asia/news/ahrc-news/AHRC-STM-052-2011>