



# MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS COLLECTIVE

2021-08-24

Mr. Chandana Wickramaratne,  
Inspector General of Police,  
Police Headquarters,  
Colombo.

Dear Inspector General of Police,

## Regarding the arrest and interrogation of journalists!

The editorial board of the Lanka e-News website has informed us of the arrest and detention of Keerthi Ratnayake, a journalist of their website, on a 90-day detention order for providing certain information to the Indian Embassy. We, as a Media Organisations Collective would request that the arrested journalist be investigated under the prescribed legal provisions and that his life be protected against all harm. This is based on the expressed concerns of the e-News editorial board that the life of the journalist could be in danger while the Police are investigating sources and information regarding the website, going beyond the reason for his arrest.

We would also like to take this opportunity to enlighten you that journalists have professional accountability and a tradition of not disclosing or divulging sources that provide them with information other than the sources relevant to an incident in a judicial process. Therefore, we request that accurate information pertaining to the Keerthi Ratnayake incident be publicized and that all actions be in compliance with the due legal provisions.

Meanwhile, Thushara Wanniarachchi, a social media activist, states that a large group of police officers had searched her house recently early in the morning. We also note that a group of unidentified people claiming to be from the CID had tried to enter the residence of R. Sivarajah, the editor of the Thamilan newspaper. Meanwhile, a journalist from Batticaloa was interrogated. We are concerned about the background of these recent events and reiterate that it is always advisable to provide definite information to the public.

We call on you to guarantee that investigations against journalists will be within the due legal provisions at all times since actions that lead to intimidation and threaten journalists could hamper their freedom and restrict their professional work.

We also call on you to ensure that specific reasons for the arrest of journalists be made public at all times.

Yours Sincerely

**FMETU** - Federation of Media Employers Trade Union - Dharmasiri Lankapeli, Secretary: fmetu123@gmail.com: 077 364 1111

**FMM** - Free Media Movement - Seetha Ranjane Convener, fmmsrilanka@gmail.com 777312460

**SLMMF** - Sri Lanka Muslim Media Forum - N.M. Ameen, President: nnameen08@gmail.com 077 261 2288

**SLWJA** - Sri Lanka Working Journalists' Association - Duminda Sampath, President: dsampath15@gmail.com; 077 318 1731

**SLYJA** - Sri Lanka Young Journalists' Association - Indunil Usgoda Arachchi, Secretary: youthjournalists.association@gmail.com 0770658285

**TMA** - Tamil Media Alliance - Kanapathipillai Sarvananda, Secretary: aingren@gmail.com 076 666 7454

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for the Media Organisation's Collective

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Seetha Ranjanees,  
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Free Media Movement

Duminda Sampath ,  
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N.M. Ameen,  
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Secretary  
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Indunil Usgoda Arachchi,  
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