

SRI LANKA

Prageeth Eknaligoda

journalist & cartoonist disappeared



Journalist, cartoonist and political analyst Prageeth Eknaligoda disappeared from Homagama, near the capital, Colombo, shortly after leaving work at the Lanka-e-News office on 24 January 2010.

His wife, Sandya Eknaligoda, was taken into custody for several hours when she went to lodge a complaint with the Homagama Police on 25 January. She believes her husband was abducted by the government because of his criticism of President Rajapaksa.

Shortly before his disappearance, Prageeth Eknaligoda had completed a comparative analysis of the two main candidates, coming out in favour of the opposition candidate, Sarath Fonseka (who lost in the election, when President Rajapaksa was re-elected). In the days leading up to his disappearance, Mr. Eknaligoda had told a close friend that he believed he was being followed. Local residents reported seeing a white van without number plates close to his house around the time he went missing on 24 January.

Prageeth Eknaligoda had previously been abducted in August 2009 by a group who also arrived in a white van; that time, he was released the following day. White vans have been used in many abductions and enforced disappearances in Sri Lanka, particularly since 2006, when the security forces and allied paramilitary groups stepped up attacks on government critics.

There still has been no evidence of a proper, effective investigation into the disappearance of Prageeth Eknaligoda.

Please call on the Sri Lankan government to conduct a thorough investigation into the disappearance of Prageeth Eknaligoda, to make the results of the investigation public, and to hold accountable those found responsible for the disappearance; also urge an end to the climate of impunity that has allowed a long campaign of intimidation and violence against independent journalists in Sri Lanka.

**His Excellency
President Mahinda Rajapaksa
Presidential Secretariat
Colombo 1
Sri Lanka**

**Ambassador Jaliya Wickramasuriya
Embassy of the Democratic Socialist
Republic of Sri Lanka
2148 Wyoming Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008**

Salutation: *Your Excellency*

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Salutation: *Your Excellency*



Amnesty International
focuses on preventing and ending
grave abuses of the rights
to physical & mental integrity,
freedom of conscience
& expression,
and freedom from discrimination,
while promoting all human rights.

Our particular concern during Banned Books Week is to draw attention to writers, editors, librarians, publishers and readers who suffer human rights violations because of their work.

from the
**Universal Declaration
of Human Rights**

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience . . .

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of person.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information & ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 27

. . . Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. . . .

All of these letters and signatures were extremely important in keeping Tissa's case alive and finally bringing about his release. We urge all of you to continue your good work so that others who are wrongly held will be able to survive.

Ronnate Tissainayagam,
wife of former Sri Lanka prisoner of conscience J.S. ("Tissa") Tissainayagam,
freed in June 2010

**Banned Books Week 2011
IMPORTANT NOTES:**

Please do not attempt to write directly to a prisoner; in some countries there might be reprisals. Experience shows that the rarity of replies from governments does not mean our letters are being ignored. If someone does receive a reply, please send a copy to the AI address on the other side (top) of this page.