

URGENT ACTION

PRISONERS AT RISK OF TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

On July 5 and 6, violence inside Negombo Prison in western Sri Lanka left at least 28 people dead, including at least seven prison officials. Following this, Negombo Prison was declared a crime scene and hundreds of inmates were transferred to various prisons around Sri Lanka. On July 8, local media reported the death of an inmate transferred to Boossa High Security Prison, following a “sudden illness”. On the same day, another inmate transferred to Agunukolapelessa Prison also died. Sri Lankan human rights groups have raised concerns that transferred inmates have been subjected to torture and other ill-treatment. Amnesty International is concerned about the risk of custodial torture, ill-treatment, reprisals, and retaliatory violence against the transferred inmates and calls on the authorities to ensure their protection and to investigate the custodial deaths and all allegations of torture and other ill-treatment.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **UA 73.26**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Hon. Harshana Nanayakkara
Minister of Justice and National Integration
19 Sri Sangaraja Mawatha, Colombo 10, Sri Lanka
Email: minister@moj.gov.lk / secretary@moj.gov.lk
X: @MOJSriLanka

Send a copy of your letter to the address below

CC: Sri Lankan Embassy in the United States
Ambassador Mahinda Samarasinghe
3025 Whitehaven Street NW,
Washington D.C. 20008
Email: slemb.washington@mfa.gov.lk
X: @EmbassyofSL

Hon. Minister of Justice,

I am writing to you about the shocking news of the reported deaths of at least two inmates following their transfer from Negombo Prison, as well as allegations of torture and other ill-treatment of prisoners transferred following the clashes at Negombo Prison on July 5-6, which led to the tragic deaths of at least 28 people, including at least seven prison officials.

On July 8, local media reported the death of an inmate transferred to Boossa High Security Prison, following a “sudden illness”. On the same day, another inmate transferred to Agunukolapelessa Prison also died. The Committee to Protect Rights of Prisoners have alleged that transferred prisoners have also been subjected to torture and other ill-treatment. Moreover, relatives of Negombo prison inmates have been unable to get information from prison authorities regarding the whereabouts of their loved ones following their transfer.

I urge you to ensure the protection of the prisoners transferred from Negombo Prison from torture and other ill-treatment and to conduct a prompt and impartial investigation into the custodial deaths reported thus far. Additionally, I urge you to promptly inform the relatives of the inmates of the whereabouts of their loved ones following their transfer from Negombo prison and provide them and their lawyers with visitation access. Any inmates requiring medical care must also have prompt access to medical services.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT) [raised alarm](#) after its second visit to the country just weeks before the incident in June 2026, over prolonged pre-trial detention, overcrowding and inadequate conditions in detention facilities and other places where people are deprived of liberty.

On July 6, the Sri Lankan government announced that a three-person committee would investigate the violence at Negombo prison.

The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) expressed concern over the inmates' torture and ill-treatment allegations and released a [statement](#) directing the Commissioner General of Prisons to protect inmates and ensure the Commission is able to access prisons.

An HRCSL Rapid Response Unit that visited Welikada Prison on the night of July 7 was denied access.

Link to Amnesty media quote: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/07/sri-lanka-deaths-of-transferrednegombo-prisoners-following-clashes-must-be-urgently-investigated/>

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English, Sinhala, or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: October 10, 2026

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Inmates transferred from Negombo Prison