

Press Freedom · Sri Lanka — MP Evidence Pack

The press-freedom record on Sri Lanka, the Tamil diaspora press it produced, and the credentialed bodies that protect journalists. Pairs with the Press Freedom Desk.

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Audience

- UK MPs
- Lords
- FCDO
- Foreign Affairs Committee
- Media Freedom Coalition supporters
- Home Office (CPIN)

Best used for

- World Press Freedom Day (3 May) statements
- International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists (2 November)
- Letters on FCDO engagement with the Media Freedom Coalition (UK + Canada co-chair)
- PQs on UNESCO SDG 16.10.1 monitoring of Sri Lanka
- PQs on Online Safety Act 2024 and the Anti-Terrorism Bill (Sri Lanka)
- UK Global Human Rights Sanctions consideration in journalist-attack cases

Tier-A evidence anchors

- OHCHR A/HRC/60/21 — surveillance apparatus 'largely intact'
- HRW World Report 2026 — Sri Lanka
- CPJ Sri Lanka killed-journalists database
- UNESCO Observatory of Killed Journalists
- RSF World Press Freedom Index — Sri Lanka
- OHCHR OISL 2015 (A/HRC/30/CRP.2)
- Article 19 — Sri Lanka analyses
- Freedom House Transnational Repression annual report
- UN Human Rights Committee — Lasantha Wickrematunge case
- UN WGEID — Prageeth Eknaligoda opinion
- ICJ — Sri Lanka impunity reports
- JDS Germany — Journalists for Democracy in Sri Lanka

Policy asks

- UK Government (FCDO): Publicly back UNESCO SDG 16.10.1 monitoring of Sri Lanka, and raise the Online Safety Act 2024 and Anti-Terrorism Bill at the next UN Human Rights Council session.
- UK Government (FCDO): Use the Media Freedom Coalition (UK + Canada co-chair) to keep Sri Lankan press freedom on the standing agenda.

- UK Government (FCDO): Publish UK Global Human Rights Sanctions consideration of state actors where credentialed UN or CPJ casework has documented attacks on journalists.
- UK MPs: Mark World Press Freedom Day (3 May) and 2 November with a Hansard-recorded statement citing CPJ / RSF / OHCHR.
- Home Office: Reflect the press-freedom record in CPIN updates relevant to journalist asylum claims from Sri Lanka.

Draft parliamentary questions

- [FCDO] What recent assessment has the Government made of press freedom in Sri Lanka, with reference to the Reporters Without Borders World Press Freedom Index?
- [FCDO] What representations has the Government made to Sri Lanka on the human rights implications of the Online Safety Act 2024 and the Anti-Terrorism Bill?
- [FCDO] What discussions has the Government had within the Media Freedom Coalition on Sri Lanka?
- [FCDO] What assessment has the Government made of the impunity rate for crimes against journalists in Sri Lanka, with reference to the UNESCO Observatory of Killed Journalists?
- [FCDO] What consideration has the Government given to designations under the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regulations 2020 in respect of attacks on journalists in Sri Lanka?
- [Home Office] What guidance does the Government give to UK-based diaspora journalists who report transnational repression?

Civic remembrance

3 May (World Press Freedom Day) and 2 November (International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists) are the days the diaspora can mark. Every statement should cite a credentialed body — CPJ, RSF, UNESCO, OHCHR — never a TLTE figure.

Pack rules

- Never name a living at-risk journalist. Use outlet and credentialed-body language only.
- Never name a perpetrator. Cite CPJ, OHCHR, UN HRC, UN WGEID, ICJ verbatim.
- Never aggregate killed-journalist totals. Cite CPJ / UNESCO Observatory verbatim with date and URL.
- Pair every Tamil-journalist reference with the broader Sri Lankan press-freedom record — Sinhala-language and English-language journalists have also been killed, intimidated and exiled (Tier-A documented).
- Transnational repression framing always cites Freedom House TNR — never our own assertion.

Transparency

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