

ETHNICITY, DEMOCRACIES AND INTIMIDATION OF JOURNALISTS:

THE CASE OF SRI LANKA

ARCHANA ARUL¹ & SRIDHAR KRISHNASWAMI²

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, School of Media Studies,
Faculty of Science and Humanities, SRM University, Katankulathur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

²Professor & Head, School of Media Studies, Faculty of Science and Humanities,
SRM University, Katankulathur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT

The World's Press Freedom Index for 2014 is disturbing, especially for established democracies for it points to a dangerous trend in countries like the United States, Britain, India and Sri Lanka but for different reasons. If reasons of national security has been used freely by countries like the United States, Britain and India to gag the press or attempt to bully the industry to part with information, in the case of Sri Lanka the concoction of the poison is even more dangerous—a mixture of perceived national security interests and singling out journalists based on ethnicity for “special” treatment, a move that has come in for some sharp focus and debate in South Asia and elsewhere. This paper aims to analyze the case of Sri Lanka where the violence against Tamil journalists has to be seen not only in the perspective of security but also in the political comfort of the powers-that-be.

KEYWORDS: Freedom of Press, Harassment, Intimidation, Journalism, Sri Lanka, Media