

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:19:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223508026

Documents (100)

1. [*The enigmatic Tiger who holds the key to lasting peace*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

2. [*Intriguing role for Australian 'auntie' as Tigers enter new phase*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

3. [*THE WEST AND MUSLIMS*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

4. [*Volunteer medic finds no room at UBC : Local student with the common touch forced to study in Australia*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

5. [*Judaicide ON LANGUAGE*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

6. [*The women who run the world*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

7. [*News Summary*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

8. [*SRI LANKA : PROFITEERING MARS TSUNAMI CLEANUP EFFORTS*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

9. [*Murderers are not martyrs - Terror in London*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

10. [*Charles visits Sri Lanka as tour starts to improve his public profile*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 200711. [Tamil rebels square off along Sri Lankan river a potential flashpoint in renewed warfare](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 200712. [Union activist belongs to terror group, CSIS says: Mother of three: 50-year-old denies connection to Colombia 's FARC](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 200713. [INSIDE STORY: A deadly occupation Sixty-three journalists were killed across the globe in 2005, making it the deadliest year for a decade, according to Reporters Sans Frontiers, which documented the carnage](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 200714. [Martin praises military aid efforts in tsunami-devastated Sri Lankan village](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 200715. [News in Brief](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:**

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

16. [How war on terror hits charity](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

17. [Sri Lankan teen escapes Tamil rebel camp holding dozens more abductees, military says](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

18. [News Items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

19. [News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

20. [S. Korea, US rule out military operation to rescue hostages](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

21. [Sri Lanka 's Tiger rebels to resume 'freedom struggle'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

22. [Xinhua world news summary at 1530 GMT, Jan. 20](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

23. [UN REFUGEE AGENCY URGES SRI LANKA NOT TO FORCIBLY RETURN DISPLACED PERSONS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

24. [Sri Lanka 's military captures rebel territory; thousands of civilians flee](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

25. [When refugees' friends take in the welcome mat](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

26. [Bomb in bus kills 15 in eastern Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

27. [Sri Lankan Navy Clashes With Rebels](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

28. [Highlights of the AAP world wire at 15:00 Jan 16](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

29. [Harper's front bench shows hints of talent](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

30. [Relief for tsunami has limited success](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

31. [Bombers come from cults of personality](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

32. [*Assessing the rights and wrongs of women at war*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

33. [*M.I.A. is music's 'it' girl of 2005*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

34. [*Sex-slave gangs prey on orphans*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

35. [*NEWS FEATURE: Robin Hood to some, India 's most wanted bandit is shotdeadBy Anindita Ramaswamy, dpa*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

36. [*Blessed isle bleak*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

37. [*In saris and sandals, Sri Lankan villagers prepare for 'bombardment'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

38. [*TSUNAMI IMPACT: WOMEN AND CHILDREN SUFFER MOST IN CROWDED CAMPS*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

39. [*Future tense, past imperfect TIPS FOR TRIPS*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

40. [*Are we patsies, or what?*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

41. [*RIGHTS- INDIA : PATRIOT LAW REPEALED AFTER CHARGES OF MISUSE*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

News

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

42. [*Nine killed as heavy fighting erupts between two Tamil Tiger rebel factions; army moving to block sea assault*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

43. [*FBI says al-Qaida recruiting women, Analysts wary of new possibility of female attackers attackers*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

44. [*FBI wary al-Qaida may use women in attacks*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

45. [*In saris and sandals, Sri Lankan villagers prepare for 'bombardment'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

46. [*An Itinerant Refugee in a Hip-Hop World*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

47. [ACTIVITIES OF SECRETARY-GENERAL IN CUBA , SEPT. 14-16](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

48. [Sri Lanka 's military captures rebel territory; thousands of civilians flee](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

49. [Sri Lanka 's military secures territory captured from rebels; thousands of civilians flee](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

50. [News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

51. [ROUNDUP: More than 40 killed in clashes in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

52. [Sri Lanka says 16 Tiger rebels killed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

53. [Tamils expelled from Colombo Almost 400 ordered out of Sri Lanka capital, put on buses bound for war zone in country's north](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

54. [Brief](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

55. [Bus bombing ignites new wave of Sri Lankan violence](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

56. [Sri Lankan Tamil flow to India nears 3,500, may rise](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

57. [Sri Lanka : isle of lush contrasts; Refugees return from India to war-torn country full of hope, in search of peace](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

58. [*Bus bombing leads to retaliatory airstrikes in Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

59. [*Tackle social and security issues jointly*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

60. [*Bombs kill 64 on crowded bus: Officials blame Tamil rebels as attack edges country to all-out war*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

61. [*Cycle of violence brings Sri Lanka to edge of war*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

62. [*Nearly half Middle East suicide bombers had third-level education*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

63. [*War, family abuse ... at last a new life*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

64. [*THE EVE OF 2005; SOME PRACTICAL PRESCRIPTIONS FOR WORLD HOT SPOTS IN THE COMING YEAR*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

65. [*US -led forces in new push to find Osama; Troops said to be closing in on Al-Qaeda chief, who is reported to be boxed in within an area in north-west Pakistan*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

66. [*Tamils See "Dark Shadow" Over Ceasefire*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

67. [*Witness tells court of RIRA's Iraq link;*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

68. [*When truth spoils a good slavery story*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

69. [*FBI: Al-Qaida might begin using women in attacks; Tactical shift: Woman tells newspaper that Osama bin Laden asked her to set up training camps*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

70. [*FBI wary al-Qaida may begin using women in attacks*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

71. [*FBI: Al-Qaida May Use Women in Attacks*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

72. [*Deadly clashes with rebels in Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

73. [A million people left homeless in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

74. [pounds 5,000 : a high price to do your bit? GAP YEAR SPECIAL With the A-level results out, students are being offered gap-year placements as volunteers - and charged a lot for them. Do they get value for money? Charles Starmer-Smith investigates. On pages 10 and 11, we provide 100 top contacts for organising that time out](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

75. [Popular TV show may have aided Sri Lanka suicide attack](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

76. [French aid group to review Sri Lanka presence after bloodiest hit](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

77. [Sri Lankan Rebels End Water Blockade](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

78. [Sri Lanka on alert for Tiger attack anniversary](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

79. [The AFP Asia news agenda](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

80. [The Asia Foundation Launches Study on America 's Role in Sri Lanka 's Peace Process](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

81. [REP. BURTON COMMENTS ON U.S. POLICY THROUGHOUT SOUTH ASIAN REGION](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

82. [Teen fails to save tragic infant from rottweiler's jaws](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

83. [UN : Activities of Secretary-General in Cuba , 14-16 September](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

84. [STATE DEPT.: U.N. REPORT CITES BURMA , SUDAN FOR USING CHILD SOLDIERS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

85. [Sri Lanka war puts truth to test](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

86. [Thousands said fleeing Sri Lanka fighting](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

87. [Aid Workers Face Obstacles And Threats In Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

88. [U.N. REPORT CITES BURMA , SUDAN FOR USING CHILD SOLDIERS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

89. [Arab crimes against Palestinians overlooked](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

90. [Sri Lankan rebels lift water blockade](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

91. [Sri Lanka sees silver lining in tsunami tragedy](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

92. [Relief efforts make Martin proud: Prime minister sees devastation first-hand](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

93. [Global war on terror takes toll on human rights in Asia: report](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

94. [Sri Lankan Muslims say fighting has further marginalized them](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

95. [Frustrated relief workers demand protection in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

96. [Sri Lankan judge shot to death in capital](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

97. [HighLights of the AAP National Wire at 19:30, Sept 13](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

98. [Conflicts of interest](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

99. [*Democratic way must never be torpedoed by terrorism*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

100. [*Outside View: Serial political murderers*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

The enigmatic Tiger who holds the key to lasting peace

South China Morning Post

August 12, 2006 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 9

Length: 803 words

Byline: Greg Torode

Body

Veteran Sri Lankan rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran is one of the fortunate few who have had the privilege of reading their own obituaries.

Mr Prabhakaran's reclusive leadership style of the ***Tamil Tigers*** has seen Sri Lankan officials announce his demise several times - most recently after the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004.

But each time, he has emerged from his network of jungle hideouts across Sri Lanka's north and east in rude health.

This week the 51-year-old was the centre of attention again as a Norwegian envoy attempted to pick up the pieces of the shattered peace between the Tigers and government forces.

More than 900 people have died amid suicide bombings and government reprisals since April despite the formal ceasefire brokered by Norway and signed by both sides four years ago. Scenes this week matched the worst of the two-decades of civil war. Government forces launched air strikes and a ground assault on Tiger-held areas around Trincomalee.

They were trying to force open a canal blocked by rebels to dry up water supplies to about 60,000 villagers. Dozens of civilians have been killed and hundreds injured. Intervention by Norway's peace envoy, Jon Hanssen-Bauer, appeared to work. Within hours of his meeting with senior Tiger officials, the water was flowing again. He was not able to see Mr Prabhakaran yet it was the Tiger leader who was apparently still calling the shots.

"Our national leader has decided to open the sluice gate in response to a request made by [Norway]," a Tiger official told Agence France-Presse. In classic style, he did not refer to Mr Prabhakaran by name.

Restoring the wider peace is going to be a much harder effort, analysts fear. And Mr Prabhakaran sits at the heart of that drive, reflecting his position at the head of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the militant movement he founded in 1976.

Remarkably, little solid information is known about the leader.

Profiles, intelligence reports and dossiers frequently speak of his secretive, shadowy leadership style. "Enigmatic" is a constant term used by diplomats and military intelligence officers who study him. He has given few interviews and meetings with outsiders are rare.

The enigmatic Tiger who holds the key to lasting peace

More specifically, that means any political or religious ideology is hard to pin down, beyond a burning desire to forge self-rule for the country's Tamils - and a will to use violence to reach his aim.

British colonialists brought across large numbers of Tamils from India to serve as labourers and plantation workers. They make up about 3.2 million people among Sri Lanka's 20 million population. After independence from Britain in 1948, tensions with Sri Lanka's Sinhalese majority started to fester.

A sweeping decision in 1956 to make Sinhala the official language sparked complaints that the Tamils had effectively been marginalised from an extensive government bureaucracy and education system.

By the 1970s, those tensions had become violent and by 1983 had degenerated into full-blown civil war. In the vacuum of knowledge surrounding Mr Prabhakaran flies a blizzard of contradictions.

An admirer of the revolutionary style of Cuban leader Fidel Castro and his charismatic Argentinian comrade, the late Ernesto "Che" Guevara, Mr Prabhakaran is not considered a communist. A quiet child, he pored over books about military history, particularly Napoleon and Alexander the Great.

Villages under his control are marked by little political or economic ideology beyond a commitment to Tamil nationalism and the personality cult surrounding his leadership.

In photographs, he cuts a portly, genial figure, usually smiling behind a heavy moustache. But his movement is marked by the harshest discipline. His elite fighters - estimated at about 10,000 - carry cyanide capsules to kill themselves in case of capture.

The Tigers wrote the book on suicide bombing - a technique exploited by terrorists internationally.

Mr Prabhakaran is classed as a terrorist by many governments, but his role has allowed him a diplomatic profile, which has seen him meet envoys from Europe and across the region. Hong Kong's last colonial governor, Chris Patten, was among those to call on Mr Prabhakaran in his recent role as an EU commissioner.

Those who know him also speak of the contradictions. "His [relaxed] manner is such that we have to constantly remind ourselves of the violent orders he has issued and what he is capable of."

His paradox also surfaced in Batticaloa, home to the Karunas, a group that has broken away from the Tigers.

"To us in the east, he always seemed a snob," one Karuna official said. "He spoke of a casteless society of equality, yet he seemed to look down on the eastern Tamils. In the end, we had to go our own way and he can't understand that. He has lost touch with his ideals."

Graphic

Credit: AFP; Reclusive Tigers leader Velupillai Prabhakaran - seen inspecting a parade of female fighters in 2004 - has been accused of losing touch with his ideals.

Load-Date: August 14, 2006

Intriguing role for Australian 'auntie' as Tigers enter new phase

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

December 23, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 14

Length: 793 words

Byline: HAMISH McDONALD ASIA-PACIFIC EDITOR

Body

SYDNEY this week saw a gathering of notables from the Australian expatriate diaspora, mostly suits from the worlds of satellite TV, finance, science and open-fridge diplomacy.

Across the world, in a much stranger story of personal development, the reverence of a foreign people for another Australian expat was on display.

Dressed in the white sari of Hindu widowhood, the former Gippsland nurse Adele Wilby was chief mourner as 50,000 people filed past the open coffin of her husband of 28 years, Anton Balasingham, in London's Alexandra Palace Hall on Wednesday.

Balasingham, who had died a week earlier of cancer at 68, was the spokesman of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the fearsome ***Tamil Tigers*** who have been fighting for an ethnic homeland, or Eelam, in the north and east of Sri Lanka in a 23-year war that has cost some 70,000 lives.

As she recounted in her book *Will to Freedom* in 2001, Adele Balasingham became deeply immersed in the separatist struggle of the mostly Hindu Tamils against rule by the mostly Buddhist majority Sinhalese of Sri Lanka, becoming known as the "White Tamil".

By marrying Anton, she wrote, "I married the collective consciousness and history of a people: a man who embodied the Tamil psyche with all its strengths and weaknesses, greatness and failings."

Anton - with a doctorate and fluent English, plus an eclectic interest in religions, Marxism and Freudian psychology - smoothed the edges of the Tamil Tiger political position, built on a relentless guerilla struggle and a leadership cult around its chief, Velupillai Prabakaran, that many have likened to that of an ancient Hindu god-king.

"Adele was more than a mere partner who kept his house and nursed him in illness," observed a visiting Tamil member of the Sri Lankan Parliament, M. K. Eelaventhan, in Sydney this week. "She has been something more moving to us: she was his intellectual partner."

Adele lived with Anton in Jaffna and its jungle hinterland for years under siege, escaping with him by sea to Thailand then London when he became ill in recent years.

Intriguing role for Australian 'auntie' as Tigers enter new phase

Controversially, "Adele Auntie" became mentor to the female Tigers, seen posing with some with a pistol on her hip in one BBC documentary. Although she insists her role was always political and ideological, neither she nor Anton could be dissociated with the disturbing side of the Tiger campaign: the enlistment of young teenagers, the distribution of cyanide capsules, the cult of martyrdom around suicide bombers.

Whether she stays in London or returns to Jaffna, Adele could become an even more influential figure in Tamil politics, judging by the role of other widows in South Asia. As the Italian-born Sonia Gandhi - widow of Rajiv, the Indian prime minister blown up by a female Tiger - has shown, being a Westerner is not necessarily a barrier.

Whoever leads the Tigers, a new peace drive is certainly needed. About 2500 people have died in violations of a Norwegian-assisted ceasefire this year, with a rising tempo of abductions, assassinations, raids, shellings and bombings by both sides. A Sri Lankan Army operation is trying to cut Tigers territory in two by an operation south of Trincomalee.

Colombo politics, riven by intense inter-party competition and facing a nasty religious-nationalism among the Buddhist clergy, is unable to agree on a significant devolution of power into a working federalism.

The Tigers - running an intense, personalised dictatorship, killing and intimidating Tamil opponents, and still recruiting child soldiers - make their dream of a separate state utterly suspect to other countries in the region, let alone the Sinhalese on the same island.

Using its Israeli-supplied Kfir jets and Pakistani artillery, Colombo is gearing up for war, banking on attrition to break Tamil support for the Tigers. For his part, Prabhakaran has shown with a recent assassination inside a heavily guarded precinct of defence ministry buildings in Colombo, and a raid on a navy base at Galle, that he is able to take his deadly fight to the Sinhalese heartland.

Lines of support for the Tamil struggle reach around the world, via the Tamil diaspora that includes top brains in academia, law, finance and other professions. The Tigers operate a worldwide system of taxation on expats, holding relatives back in Sri Lanka as hostage.

Just how ruthless this taxation is was shown in the murder of a Tamil-Australian engineer from Perth, Subramaniam Muthulingam, in 2002 while on a visit to Colombo. He had earlier resisted pressure to channel donations from worshippers at Perth's Murugan Temple to the Tigers.

As governments, including Australia's, turn their attention back to the unresolved Sri Lankan conflict, the potential role of the Tamils' Australian "auntie" is intriguing.

Graphic

PHOTO: Married to the movement ... the late Anton Balasingham with his wife, Adele, at peace talks in 2002.
Photo: AP/Apichart Weerawong

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

THE WEST AND MUSLIMS

The Nation (AsiaNet)

January 10, 2007 Wednesday

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Length: 834 words

Byline: INAM KHAWAJA

Body

The Western countries talk of tolerance, multilateralism and dialogue. The Muslims have been practicing all this since the advent of Islam. The history of the past 1427 years is witness to the fact that Muslim countries from Spain to Indonesia and from Kazakhstan to Somalia have practiced religious freedom, tolerance and respect of the sensibilities of the minorities. There have been no Ghettos or Pogroms; on the contrary non-Muslims have occupied high offices (Ministers and Generals) in many Muslim countries.

In contrast in Europe Jews were confined to Ghettos and there were innumerable Pogroms, the last being in Germany (the Holocaust) a little over forty years ago. Then there was the notorious Spanish Inquisition. The British claim of practicing pluralism and the talk against the wearing of veil by Muslim women do not go together.

In the recent past obnoxious cartoons were published in Denmark and also republished in several other European countries. These deplorable acts were justified in the name of freedom of speech. Is insulting Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) the only way of demonstrating the freedom of speech? I would like the sane and reasonable people in the civilised Western world to please reflect and think about the fact that Muslims historically have never insulted or used insulting or derogatory language about Jesus Christ, Saint Paul, Saint Peter or any other Christian personality.

At present at US airports Muslims are singled out for detailed search, this is nothing but plain discrimination either on religious or ethnic basis. Yet today USA claims to be the champion of freedom, democracy and tolerance. The Prime Minister of Israel has recently admitted that they possess nuclear weapons; which analysts estimate to number about two hundred. Why has there been no condemnation of this by USA? Why are the Western nations not moving UN to at least pass a resolution condemning it?

Israel continues to occupy the West Bank and the Golan Heights with impunity because of US Veto in the Security Council, which makes US equally guilty of the state terrorism of Israel. It needs to be noted that Israel first attacked, killed several Hezbollah fighters and kidnapped others and when Hezbollah retaliated by killing a few and kidnapping two Israeli soldiers, Israel attacked Lebanon. The wonton destruction of Lebanese civil infrastructure continued for over a month, yet there was no condemnation by USA of this State Terrorism by Israel.

President Bush has signed the "Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006", thus banning US aid to Palestinian Authority aiming to isolate Hamas the group which swept the election with overwhelming majority in the March 2006 elections. It is strange that the Act states that it is; "designed to promote the development of democratic institutions in the areas under the administrative control of the Palestinian Authority". What it really means is that only the institution acceptable to Israel is considered democratic by USA.

THE WEST AND MUSLIMS

Iran a signatory of the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is engaged in developing Nuclear Technology for peaceful purposes. This is permissible under the provisions of NPT. The West particularly the US is opposed to Iran enriching Uranium,' because they claim that Iran intends to build nuclear weapons. This is nothing but plain discrimination based upon prejudice. In spite of this Iran is prepared to engage in a dialogue with USA.

Muslims have in fact never been opposed to dialogue. However due to the actions and the behaviour of the West one doubts if they are seriously interested in a meaningful dialogue. It appears that by dialogue they mean that they want the Muslims to change the face of Islam then I am afraid they are pursuing an unachievable goal.

Muslims claim that they stand for peace and peaceful coexistence but the attacks on US

embassies in Africa, the attacks of 9/11, the Bali bombings and the London train bombings make this claim hollow. Allah forbids killing of women, children and non-combatants. It is irrelevant that the opponents carry out these heinous crimes; this cannot be accepted as a justification for retaliation in kind. What is worse is the fact that Ulema and the politicians have not raised their voices against these atrocities.

Suicide is forbidden in Islam, yet some Muslims emulate the Tamil Tigers and carry out suicide bombings. It is deplorable that there is no condemnation of this un-Islamic practice by the Ulema and the Muslim leaders. Muslims say that Islam stands for liberation of human beings and democracy but out of fifty-eight members of OIC only in Malaysia there is democracy and not even one country practically enforces in full the injunctions of the Quran and the Sunnah. Where is the model for the world to emulate?

Both Muslims and the West need to set their houses in order before there can be any meaningful and purposeful dialogue. The West has change its behaviour and the Muslims should discourage un-Islamic acts practiced by some.

Load-Date: January 12, 2007

Volunteer medic finds no room at UBC: Local student with the common touch forced to study in Australia

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

September 8, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: WESTCOAST NEWS; Pg. B1 ; Daphne Bramham

Length: 736 words

Byline: Daphne Bramham, Vancouver Sun

Body

When did they start making kids like Mohit Singh?

Singh is 23 with a degree in bio-psychology from the University of British Columbia.

Earlier this summer he spent three months in Sri Lanka. Through the British-based Teaching and Projects Abroad, he volunteered in a hospital for two months and helped build houses for tsunami victims for the last month.

Although only a pre-med student, the hospital is so short-staffed that Singh needn't have worried that he wouldn't be able to help. Almost immediately he was taking blood samples and blood pressure. By the end of two months, he'd helped deliver babies, put in sutures and even induced labour, which is apparently a necessity in the over-crowded, under-staffed obstetrics ward.

But his most interesting work was with the staff psychiatrist. Sri Lanka has one of the highest suicide rates in the world -- 44.6 suicides per 100,000 men and 16.8 suicides per 100,000 women in Sri Lanka. By contrast the Canadian rate is 19.5 per 100,000 men and 5.1 for every 100,000 women.

Nobody, not even the World Health Organization, is exactly certain why. There are different theories -- the civil war that's been going on for more than 20 years, the repression of women, the grinding poverty.

But like everything else in Sri Lanka, there are not enough resources to deal with the problem. There's only one psychiatrist and two counsellors at the hospital. There are no support groups.

Singh asked what seemed an obvious question: Why isn't there a crisis line staffed by volunteers? Nobody had thought of it. Nobody had the money. Nobody had the time to get the government's permission to do it.

So Singh did it. It took a month for government approval -- a long time in Singh's estimation, but a miracle of speed in almost any country's bureaucracy. He put together an advertising plan for local papers and got posters for offices. He held a colouring contest in the district so that kids would know where to call if they needed help.

The crisis line has been up and running for more than a month now. It's only staffed from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., but more volunteers are being trained. And Singh is trying to raise enough money for the crisis line to be toll-free and accessible from anywhere in Sri Lanka. They need \$220 US a month.

Volunteer medic finds no room at UBC : Local student with the common touch forced to study in Australia

(Teaching and Projects Abroad is setting up a special fund for the crisis line. But for now anyone who wants to help can e-mail Ligaya Kaluarachchi at ligayakaluarachchi@projects-abroad.org or check the website <http://www.projects-abroad.co.uk/>)

For now, it's simply too dangerous for Singh to be in Sri Lanka helping with the crisis line. Because he was born in India, he was questioned several times by police suspicious that he might be part of the **Tamil Tigers**, which has been fighting a guerrilla war against the government.

Once he was taken off a bus and questioned while four police officers pointed AK-47 rifles at him.

Just last week, the United Nations threatened to suspend all aid to Sri Lanka following the July execution of 17 French aid workers by the government's security forces. Fifteen of Action Against Hunger's employees were shot in the head. Two others were shot in the back. All were wearing T-shirts bearing the agency's name.

But after a short visit with his family in Abbotsford, Singh is leaving Sept. 11 for India as a volunteer with a non-profit group called Sahaita. He will be working with its founder, California doctor Harkesh Sandhu and Surrey psychiatrist Upinderjit Harrad, providing medical services to needy and disabled children.

Singh says it was the experience of spending his first seven years in India that makes him appreciate Canada so much and want to help others in developing countries.

But it seems to me that we -- as a society -- are failing kids like Mohit Singh.

Canada needs more people like Mohit Singh who are smart, generous and worldly. We desperately need doctors.

Yet in February, Singh will be moving to Sydney, Australia, to attend medical school. He didn't get one of the coveted 224 seats at UBC, so his parents have mortgaged their Abbotsford house to cover the \$39,500-a-year tuition fees not only for Mohit, but for his sister, Pulkit, who's in her second semester of medicine there.

Both will try to transfer to UBC in the fall of 2007. Both want to study and want to practise here once they've graduated.

It will be a shame if they aren't given the opportunity to do that.

dbramham@png.canwest.com

Graphic

Colour Photo: Mohit Singh with children at the tsunami camp in Sri Lanka.

Load-Date: September 8, 2006

Judaicide; ON LANGUAGE

The Forward

June 10, 2005

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Section: Arts & Culture; Pg. 12

Length: 851 words

Byline: Philologos

Body

Allan Mallenbaum of Plainview, N.Y., writes:

"I've seen no word that can be used for the phenomenon of suicidal terrorists who target Jews exclusively. It's unfortunate, outrageous, that we need such a term, but reality dictates the needs of expression.

"Judicide, parallel to suicide, would seem a good choice, but could be misinterpreted to mean the killing of justice - which it surely is....

"Might Judaicide be a better choice? 'Judaicidal terrorist' would become a meaningful phrase and honestly descriptive...."

Although I understand the point that Mr. Mallenbaum is making, I can't say I agree. Do we really need a special word for "suicidal terrorists who target Jews exclusively," let alone a word like "Judaicide" that could just as well apply to nonsuicidal terrorists who target Jews? (The greatest "Judaicides" in history were, after all, committed by the Nazis.) Moreover, nearly all terrorists target specific groups for political or military reasons: Basques target Spanish, Chechens target Russians, Irish Republicans target Ulster Protestants. Do we need special words, like "Hispanocide" or "Russocide," for each of them? The "Tamil Tigers" of Ceylon have, in their struggle for independence, vied with Palestinian terror organizations as the main perpetrators of suicide bombing, having committed more than 200 acts of it since 1987 - nearly every one of them directed against Ceylon's Sinhalese majority. Should we call them "Sinhallocides"?

In general, the subject of suicide bombing has generated a good deal of ideological controversy. Objections to the term "suicide bomber," particularly in the Israeli-Palestinian and American-Muslim context, have come from both sides. On the one hand, there are those who protest that the term shows covert sympathy for the bomber by emphasizing his self-sacrificial death as opposed to the deaths of his victims, thus focusing on his grievances rather than on the horror of what he has done. Such thinking lay behind ex-White House press secretary Ari Fleischer's decision (starting with an April 2002 attack in Jerusalem) to refer to such acts not as "suicide bombings" but as "homicide bombings" - a coinage that, in the American media, was picked up mainly by Fox News.

Others have suggested, for similar reasons, the far stronger "genocide bombings." Hawaiian political scientist R.J. Rummel, for instance, has maintained that because genocide, as defined by the International Court of Justice, is an act committed "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part (*italics mine*), a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group," any Palestinian suicide bombing is genocidal, even if only a few Israelis die in it. Some Jewish media, such as the Internet World Jewish Review, have adopted this suggestion.

Judaicide ON LANGUAGE

On the other hand, Muslim and pro-Arab circles have objected to "suicide bomber" from the opposite extreme: Whereas suicide, they say, is viewed by most people and religious traditions as a confession of failure and an expression of impiety, suicide bombing against infidel occupiers or invaders is a form of *istish-had*, the Arabic word for becoming a *shahid* or martyr. Thus, for example, reporting on an incident in Iraq on March 7, the pro-insurgent Web site Albasrah.net told its readers that seven American troops were killed in a "martyrdom bombing" when a "Resistance fighter" drove an explosives-laden car into an American checkpoint east of Baghdad.

"Martyrdom bombing," needless to say, is not a term that any sane person can accept for blowing up women and children. And yet I do not think that "homicide bombing" or "genocide bombing" is acceptable, either. Quite apart from the fact that - the International Court of Justice notwithstanding - the second of the two is gross hyperbole (referring to a bus bombing in which three or even 23 Israelis die as "genocide" is surely an abuse of language), neither addresses the suicidal nature of the act or distinguishes it from a non-suicidal attack. If we are told that someone committed a "homicide bombing," how do we know whether he blew himself up with his victims or fled the scene before the bomb went off?

Moreover, "suicide bomber," far from being a recent coinage, is a term with an extensive history going back to the Japanese kamikaze pilots of World War II. (Kamikaze, which means, literally, "divine wind," was originally the name given to a typhoon that saved Japan from invasion by a Mongol fleet in the 13th century.) Kamikaze is by now part of the English language, and the fact that it upsets the ideologists at either extreme of the political spectrum is the best sign of its being descriptively neutral.

As for "Judaicide," although we certainly can refer to Palestinians who kill themselves while blowing up innocent Israelis as "Judaicidal suicide bombers" if we wish, it would be unrealistic to expect the media to make use of such an unwieldy and polemical expression. "Palestinian suicide bomber," which already tells us all we need to know about such a person's attitude toward Jews, is quite enough.

Questions for Philologos can be sent to philologos@forward.com.

Load-Date: June 14, 2006

The women who run the world

University Wire

February 1, 2006 Wednesday

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Section: COLUMN

Length: 793 words

Byline: By Adam Cambier, Brown Daily Herald; **SOURCE:** Brown U.

Dateline: PROVIDENCE, R.I.

Body

With the recent inauguration in Liberia of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Africa's first elected *female* leader, my thoughts turned to the other distinguished ladies, the elite few, who have held the most powerful positions in their respective countries. After much (translation: "a few minutes") contemplation, I have sorted these world leaders into several categories. Without further ado, I introduce you to the *women* who run our world:

The Widow/Wife/Daughter: This is the most common fe-male world leader we've seen. Examples include Cora-zon Aquino and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philip-pines, Isabel Peron of Argentina, Chandrika Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka, Indira Gandhi of India and Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia. These *women* are somehow related to a very popular (and often very dead) male counterpart in the government. Be he husband, father, brother or son, he is usually widely revered and adored by the nation's people. Fortunately for these *women*, this love spills over to anyone sharing a name or some genes with the man. This, however, isn't to say that these *women* aren't powerful in their own right. Indira Gandhi used her sway to amend India's Constitution and oversaw the foundation of its nuclear program; Corazon Aquino led the creation of the system of government in the Philippines and was named Time's Person of the Year for her commitment to democracy; Chandrika Kumaratunga used the presidency's executive power to declare a state of emergency in Sri Lanka when the prime minister's conciliatory actions towards the *Tamil Tigers* did not fit in with the rest of her national policy. Ultimately, despite the fact that these *women* are brought to prominence by male relatives, the vanguards of the fairer sex often end up being held in higher regard than their male counterparts.

The Frumpy One: Exemplified by *women* such as Margaret Thatcher of the United Kingdom, Angela Merkel of Germany, Golda Meir of Israel and the newly elected Michelle Bachelet of Chile, these *women* ascended to the seat of po-wer not through charisma and good looks, but with brains. Supporters refer to them as "Iron Lady," in allusion to their strong wills, as opposed to "Smokin' Hot Mama," in reference to their other "assets." These *women* often are the most competent and are able to wield the power invested in them effectively, but their efficacy in office is sometimes overshadowed by their less than fortunate looks. For instance, at a model U.N. meeting attended by some of the most internationally minded students here at Brown soon after the deadlocked German election this past fall, the discussion briefly turned to the fact that poor Merkel was, suffice it to say, not particularly attractive. Fortunately, after their time at the helms of their respective nations, these *women* are usually widely respected across the world for their intelligence and capable leadership.

The Cool Sassy Grandma: This category is a brand new one that I have created especially for the aforementioned Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. For those not familiar with her, Mrs. Johnson-Sirleaf is a Harvard-educated economist who

The women who run the world

has had high-ranking positions at the World Bank and Citibank. Liberians love her because she's got a motherly sensibility that can bring some love back to their nation that has been torn apart by strife after decades of civil war under the leadership of men. I love her because she's got a mean streak of wit underneath her kindly exterior. After defeated run-off opponent and soccer star George Weah raised baseless accusations about rigged elections, Johnson-Sirleaf said that she'd be happy to offer Weah a government appointment once he's done "getting over his disappointment." I picture George Weah as a small child who throws a hissy fit when his mom won't buy him a candy bar and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as the grandma who's cool enough to buy it for him anyway.

I, of course, make these cursory observations from my gender's comfy vantage point above the glass ceiling. As such, my position allows me to make blowhard generalizations with relative ease and peace of mind. The evidence, however, is building: women have been elected as the leaders of a typical patriarchal West African nation and one of Latin America's most conservative countries. So, to my fellow chauvinist cohorts, I tell you - the times, they are a changing. Harry Truman once warned that if we can't stand the heat, we should get out of the kitchen. Women are moving away from the kitchens of yore and are cooking up a storm in Ol' Harry's political bakery. That being said, I propose a toast - let us raise a round of Cosmos to the women who are finally taking the top spot in the pecking order and setting us men back hundreds of years.

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Load-Date: February 3, 2006

End of Document

News Summary

The New York Times

October 17, 2006 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

Length: 782 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL A3-11

Iraq Christians Threatened In Wake of Pope's Remarks

Repercussions over remarks by the pope about Islam have resulted in violence and threats against Iraqi Christians, one of the world's oldest Christian communities. Several extremist groups threatened to kill all Christians unless the pope apologized. Their position had been precarious since the war began. Now they are fleeing in large numbers. A1

Engineering Skills Gap in India

In India, once regarded as a bottomless well of low-cost, ready-to-work, English-speaking engineers, a shortage looms. India still produces plenty of engineers, nearly 400,000 a year, but many lack the skills and education to be employable. A1

Bush Assures Iraq on Troops

President Bush reassured Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq that he would not set a timetable for withdrawal of troops and would continue to support the prime minister, despite reports that American officials are dissatisfied with the Iraqi government's performance. A8

Bomber in Sri Lanka Kills 94

A suicide bomber rammed a truck packed with explosives into a military convoy, killing at least 94 people and wounding 150. It was one of the deadliest attacks since a 2002 cease-fire between the government and separatist rebels, the Tamil Tigers. A10

Venezuelan U.N. Seat in Doubt

Venezuela's campaign to gain Latin America's open seat on the United Nations Security Council next year suffered a setback when Guatemala, the United States-backed candidate, established a wide lead and maintained it after ten ballots. A3

NATIONAL A12-18

Erased Criminal Records Live On to Tell Tales

News Summary

Most states seal at least some records of juvenile offenses, and many states also allow adults arrested for or convicted of minor crimes to expunge their records. But real expungement is becoming harder to accomplish in the electronic age. A1

Search in House Lobbying Case

Federal agents executed search warrants at the homes of Representative Curt Weldon's daughter and a political associate in an investigation into whether Mr. Weldon, Republican of Pennsylvania, improperly aided their efforts to obtain lobbying and public relations contracts, law enforcement officials said. A13

Ex-Chief of F.D.A. Is Charged

The former commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration was charged with lying about stock he and his wife owned in companies the agency regulates, including two large food concerns, Pepsico and Sysco Corporation. A15

Democrats Split on Immigration

In at least a dozen fiercely contested Congressional races, Democratic candidates are publicly breaking with the message of the Democratic leadership in Congress, vowing not to legalize illegal immigrants and endorsing building a fence on the southwest border. A17

New Data on Working Moms

Mothers are spending at least as much time with their children today as they did 40 years ago, despite the surge of **women** into the work force, and the amount of child care and housework performed by fathers has sharply increased, researchers say in a new study based on analysis of thousands of personal diaries. A12

NEW YORK/REGION B1-8

Lawyer in Terror Case Sentenced to 28 Months

A federal judge sentenced Lynne F. Stewart, the radical defense lawyer, to two years and four months in prison on charges that she smuggled messages from an imprisoned terrorist client to his violent followers in Egypt. The sentence was significantly lower than the 30 years sought by the prosecution. A1

Shift in Metro-North Riders

For the first time in the history of the Metro-North Railroad, fewer than half of its riders are suburban commuters who take the train to Grand Central Terminal in the morning and head home at night, according to data compiled by the railroad. B1

SCIENCE TIMES F1-8

Heaviest Element Created

A team of scientists said that it had created the heaviest element ever seen in a laboratory, a dab of matter that lasted for less than one-thousandth of a second but would add an entry at the farthest reaches of the periodic table. F1

Health & Fitness F5

BUSINESS DAY C1-14

Wal-Mart Expands In China

Wal-Mart Stores, the largest retailer in the United States, is poised to become the biggest foreign retailer in China with the \$1 billion purchase of Trust Mart, a Taiwanese-owned chain of supermarkets, according to people briefed on the deal. A1

News Summary

Business Digest C2

OBITUARIES C15

Wang Guangmei

The widow of the Chinese president Liu Shaoqi and a powerful figure in China before she was imprisoned during the Cultural Revolution, she was 85. C15

EDITORIAL A20-21

Editorials: And the winner is me; energy shortage; France in denial; paying for better parenting.

Columns: John Tierney, Nicholas D. Kristof.

Crossword E2

TV Listings E9

Weather D8

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: October 17, 2006

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SRI LANKA: PROFITEERING MARS TSUNAMI CLEANUP EFFORTS

IPS-Inter Press Service

October 16, 2005, Sunday

Copyright 2005 IPS-Inter Press Service/Global Information Network

Length: 1087 words

Byline: By Amantha Perera

Dateline: PERELIYA, Galle, October 16 2005

Body

The twisted hulks of three railway cars, standing near where they slammed against houses in this fishing village by the Dec. 26 tsunami, symbolize the power of nature - and the profiteering in the aftermath.

Sri Lankan railway authorities left the wreck -- the remnants of a train in which 1,500 people perished -- behind as a monument to the victims of the tsunami. Soon, though, it was attracting more visitors than anticipated.

Foreign relief workers, tourists and pilgrims heading for the sacred city of Kataragama stop by to spend a few minutes at Pereliya and gape at the carriages. The more adventurous push open the bent doors and explore the mangled innards, ignoring the signs prohibiting entry.

The fresh sea breeze has removed the nauseating stench of putrefying bodies that hung about the carriages. But the metal seats, twisted like so much foil by the giant hand of the tsunami, still elicit a sense of horror.

Now, a group of enterprising villagers has set up a booth to sell tickets to awed visitors.

"We have formed a society and we are selling tickets to raise money for the village," said Peter Dharamadasa, self-styled village head, told IPS as he stood near the wreck.

The booth was set up a little more than a month when Dharamadasa's group formed a "village development fund," taking care to get the customary blessings of a Buddhist monk.

But some are saying Dharamadasa is the one to benefit.

"That man is making money using monks and others and all this is not helping anyone else. Look -- he is building a house there from all this," screamed Anthony Karunawathie, pointing at a two-story that Dharamadasa has constructed barely 50 meters from the carriages.

Dharamadasa is not specific about how he is going to spend all the money rolling in, but mumbles something about rebuilding a temple and helping out villagers during funerals. But he admitted to having collected \$ 6,000 in the first month after the booth was established.

The wreck has been a windfall not just for Dharamadasa. Just down the corner visitors can refresh themselves at the newly opened Tsunami Cafe.

SRI LANKA : PROFITEERING MARS TSUNAMI CLEANUP EFFORTS

Susila, who lives nearby, begs for money from visitors, especially dollar-bearing foreigners. "What can we do, we don't have houses, no jobs, the government is not giving out the relief funds properly. I don't see anything wrong in asking for money and help," she said.

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan government is accused of misusing billions of dollars worth of tsunami aid, which threatens to re-ignite an ethnic war raging on the island for more than two decades.

In Sri Lanka, just who is entitled to tsunami relief funds from international donors has become a national debate. The presidential elections, called in November, are virtually a referendum on the issue.

Hoping that the tsunami emergency might facilitate reconciliation between the government and rebel Tamil ethnic groups in the north and east of the island, which were seriously affected by the disaster, President Chandrika Kumaratunga entered into a deal to share international aid.

But the deal was successfully challenged in court by pro-Sinhalese groups on the grounds that sharing funds with outfits like the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was unconstitutional. Some suspect the LTTE reacted by assassinating the country's foreign minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, precipitating the elections.

In Pereliya, the big debate is on the future of the wrecks, with one group seeing it as an asset and pushing for its conversion into a permanent monument and another demanding its removal because they think it is an eyesore and even inauspicious.

"If you try to move it now, war will break out here," warned K. Somasiri, a villager who is in the camp that wants the carriages removed.

Indeed, when Somasiri raised the concern that the village was gaining a bad reputation for profiting out of a tragedy, he found himself manhandled. "At least now the fleecing has become systematized," he said, nodding in the general direction of the ticket booth.

Another advocate for the removal of the wreck, D. Kalupahana, thinks that the wreck is unlucky. "It has to be taken as far away as possible if we are to recover. These are three massive coffins in which hundreds died and it is the first thing I see when I open my front door."

Kalupahana also finds objectionable the large boards requesting visitors not to give money to children as that might encourage them to hang around the wrecks and stay away from school. "It is like those signs you see in the zoo warning people not to feed the monkeys."

To him it is matter of self-respect. "We can't say that we come from this village, because everyone thinks of people from Pereliya as beggars who make money from the dead."

On top of all that, the wreck is sitting over a storm drain, and with the onset of the monsoons there are fears that Pereliya and adjoining villages could get flooded.

The local administration in April made a formal request that the Railway Department remove the wreck. When that didn't happen, some villagers thought that confirmed suspicions of corruption. As Somasiri discovered, moving the carriages will not be easy.

Many villagers think that the government could at least be accountable for the related business enterprises. "For now it is OK that we have this ticket business, but this (private money-making) is only going to get worse," said Soma Kariyawasam.

The reluctance of authorities to take charge of the wreck is surprising given that Pereliya has received its fair share of aid and help within an overall reconstruction effort -- though even here there are allegations of profiteering.

Villagers complain bitterly that housing projects initiated by two local politicians are being badly executed and that houses are being allotted out-of-turn and as political favors to loyalists and party hangers-on.

SRI LANKA : PROFITEERING MARS TSUNAMI CLEANUP EFFORTS

There are few takers for sustainable, self-help activities in Pereliya. One local NGO, Help-O, has trouble setting up self-employment programs for women while another, Hela Saranaya, is trying hard to get the villagers interested in casting cement blocks for re-construction.

But none of these programs match the wrecks for quick money, including dollars. "The train has turned Pereliya into a village of beggars," said NGO activist A. Chandrika.

With the only tangible cash and benefits coming in from international donors and foreigners like those who stop by Pereliya, the current joke in southern Sri Lanka is that any foreigner contesting the November elections would win hands down.

Load-Date: October 17, 2005

End of Document

Murderers are not martyrs - Terror in London

Weekend Australian

July 16, 2005 Saturday All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Inquirer; Pg. 29

Length: 853 words

Byline: Abdullah Saeed

Body

Islam needs to get its true message across to those who might be tempted to follow self-described jihadists, writes Abdullah Saeed

THE recent London bombings, and the possibility of them having been perpetrated by militant Muslim suicide bombers, is another reminder of the dangers of religious fanaticism. Many of us are baffled by what appears to be an unstoppable supply of would-be suicide bombers.

These events have raised significant and difficult questions for mainstream Muslims. Why have these young people, who are born and bred in Western countries, turned against their own societies, mercilessly killing, maiming and causing unspeakable horrors? What is the ideology that drives such people towards these violent actions? And is there an Islamic view on suicide bombings?

MATP

There is a long history of suicide being used for military-political purposes, whether it was the Japanese kamikaze pilots or the **Tamil Tigers** in Sri Lanka. Among Muslims it emerged in the 1980s when Hezbollah in Lebanon used suicide bombers against its enemies. Gradually it came to be accepted in other struggles, in Palestine, Chechnya, Kashmir and Iraq.

Militants who have adopted this tactic argue that "martyrdom" (they do not use the term "suicide") is perfectly legitimate. The tactic has, frighteningly, been extended from war zones to regions that are not directly involved in any specific conflict, as was the case with 9/11, Bali, Jakarta, Madrid and now London.

In Islamic law and ethics, suicide is considered a grave sin. It is related to the idea that life is a precious gift from God; one does not own one's soul. It is simply loaned on trust from God. Therefore, it is only God who can take away this trust.

On many occasions the Koran states in no uncertain terms that human life is sacred: "Do not take life which God has made sacred except in the course of justice," the Koran says. It also says: "Do not kill yourselves", meaning do not commit suicide. The Prophet Mohammed specifically prohibited suicide in no uncertain terms. He also made the point that anyone who commits suicide will be eternally condemned to hellfire.

Based on this religious guidance, Muslims almost universally have held strongly to the view that suicide in all its forms is a grave sin and should not be accepted under any circumstances. Until recently, there has been virtually no disagreement among Muslims on the issue. The belief that someone who commits suicide would not enter

Murderers are not martyrs - Terror in London

paradise and would be eternally condemned to hell had been so dominant that until recently suicide was considered unthinkable among Muslims.

If killing oneself is viewed with horror, it is even more horrendous to kill civilians as part of the destructive act of suicide bombing. Killing another innocent human being deliberately is murder. The Koran says if one kills another human being unjustly, it is as grave a sin as killing all of humanity.

Even in the case of war, the Prophet Mohammed gave clear instructions to Muslims that noncombatants should not be targeted. He included in this category women, children and people not directly involved in fighting. Today's suicide bombers have conveniently ignored all such instructions.

In the late 20th century, militant Muslims reinterpreted classical Islamic concepts of jihad, martyrdom and the prohibition of suicide. They have relied on a selective reading of some religious texts and the views of certain marginal scholars. They went against the widely held mainstream views on suicide to endorse a violent struggle that targeted innocent civilians.

This militant reinterpretation of the Islamic concept of jihad has been challenged by a wide range of Muslim scholars across the world, particularly in relation to suicide bombings that target civilians.

Muslim scholars and leaders of all persuasions have rallied against this abhorrent trend. For instance, the grand mufti of Saudi Arabia, Sheik Abdul Aziz al-Sheik, is on record as saying that Islam forbids suicide terrorist attacks. This was reinforced by Sheik Mohammed Sayyid Tantawi, the head of Egypt's Al-Azhar University, who declared that Islamic law "rejects all attempts on human life" and that he condemns "all attacks on civilians".

In our region these calls have been no less significant. In December 2003, Indonesia's highest Islamic authority, the Ulama Council, declared terrorism and suicide bombings illegal under Islamic law. Some Muslim scholars have gone so far as to declare that a person who commits suicide is not a Muslim.

Mainstream Muslims in Western countries in particular have consistently raised their voices against suicide bombing. For these Muslims, who also suffer the consequences of the militants' violence, it is vital to reinforce the message that Islam prohibits suicide in any form. Mainstream Muslim thinkers, scholars and community leaders are the most important support in countering extremist interpretations, but they in turn need the moral and practical support of all sectors of society.

Professor Abdullah Saeed is the director of the Centre for the Study of Contemporary Islam at the University of Melbourne.

Load-Date: July 15, 2005

Charles visits Sri Lanka as tour starts to improve his public profile

The Guardian (London) - Final Edition

February 28, 2005

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Section: Guardian Home Pages, Pg. 3

Length: 768 words

Byline: Sandra Laville in Colombo

Body

Thousands of miles away from the fiasco of his wedding plans and question marks over the legality of his marriage, Prince Charles will step off a plane in Sri Lanka today to begin a two- week tour in an attempt to redeem his reputation.

Flying into Colombo - en route to Australia, New Zealand and Fiji - the prince is making a whistle-stop visit to the Tamil-dominated east of the island, where the December 26 tsunami killed about 13,000 people.

Aides said Prince Charles had requested a visit to see the progress of recovery work in Sri Lanka; the decision to avoid Galle in the south of the island and travel instead to the less visited east, came after discussions with the British high commission.

The former US presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton avoided the east of the island during their visit last week after US officials raised security concerns. But the British high commission said it was confident the prince and his party would be secure in Batticaloa, an area which is predominantly Tamil but controlled by the Sri Lankan government.

Earlier this month the political leader of the **Tamil Tigers** in the east was assassinated near Batticaloa, it is thought in an internecine conflict between the Tigers and a breakaway group.

The British high commission added: "There is a feeling that we want to show the people in the Tamil-dominated east that they haven't been forgotten."

After six hours in Sri Lanka, the prince will travel to Australia, a country he last visited 11 years ago while the row about the "Squidgygate" tape of conversations with Camilla Parker Bowles, was still raging.

Although it is a country he is said to love, there are fears that he may receive a cooler welcome than anticipated.

In a poll carried out by Galaxy and published in the Australian media yesterday the issue of "the Charles factor" became apparent. While support for republicanism after the referendum in 1999 remains at around 50%, it increases significantly in the event of Prince Charles becoming king.

Asked whether they would want Prince Charles as king and Camilla Parker Bowles as queen or consort, support for a republic rose from 53% to 57%, the poll showed.

The increase was largely down to a rise in **women** supporting a republic - from 44% to 50%.

Charles visits Sri Lanka as tour starts to improve his public profile

"While the women of Australia first appeared willing to accept the John Howard argument that if it's not broke don't fix it, Prince Charles has not endeared himself to them, perhaps by not being a model husband in the past," said David Briggs, director of Galaxy.

Further emphasising the "Charles factor", 59% of those polled said he should stand down and let Prince William take the throne on the abdication or death of his grandmother.

David Flint, from Australians for a constitutional monarchy, said the poll was flawed because it was based on the assumption that the prince and his new wife would become heads of state. But it was not intended that Mrs Parker Bowles would ever be given the title of queen, he said.

Republican supporters welcomed the poll and are likely to be present when the prince arrives in Perth for a visit to a lobster fishery later today and elsewhere during his visit.

Attempts by John Warhurst, chairman of the Australian Republican Movement, to meet the prince while he is in Australia have failed. "Our letter was passed to Clarence House but we were told we couldn't meet him because his schedule was too tight," he said.

Despite possible demonstrations from anti-monarchists, the prince will be able to enjoy a respite from the criticism about his marriage arrangements. An insight into how he views the constant criticism came yesterday in an excerpt from an interview the prince gave to the BBC reporter Gavin Hewitt two years ago.

The excerpt, printed in the Mail on Sunday, revealed that the prince believed he had been shown no compassion by the British public as a result of his relationship with Mrs Parker Bowles.

"I thought the British people were supposed to be compassionate. I don't see much of it . . . I don't see any reason why I should define my private life," he was reported as saying. "All my life, people have been telling me what to do. I'm tired of it. My private life has become an industry," he said. "People are making money out of it. I just want some peace"

On this front, he may find some sympathy and even wholehearted support from his Australian hosts, even among his republican foes.

Mr Warhurst told the Guardian: "Most people in Australia look at his marriage to Camilla and say: 'Look mate, just get on with it and good luck to you'."

Peter Preston, page 17

guardian.co.uk/monarchy

Load-Date: March 1, 2005

Tamil rebels square off along Sri Lankan river — a potential flashpoint in renewed warfare

Associated Press International

March 24, 2004 Wednesday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 796 words

Byline: DILIP GANGULY; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: VERUGAL FERRY, Sri Lanka

Body

A barefoot Tamil rebel fighter perches in a tree by the Verugal river, using a leafy branch to rest the barrel of his machine gun that points to the northern bank. From behind sand bags on the north side, other Tamils point weapons the opposite way.

The river marks the fault line in an unprecedented schism in the ranks of Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels. If the split worsens, the river would become the front line in fighting that could drag the government army into a new round of the country's two-decade-old civil war.

Vinayakamoorthy Sivanesadurai, a 40-year-old field commander, eyed the north from the south bank that marks the edge of eastern Sri Lanka territory controlled by a renegade Tamil leader.

"We will not be the first to fire," he said. "But if they fire, it will have terrible consequences."

His younger brother is the eastern commander who earlier this month broke from **Tamil Tigers** based in the north, arguing that the northern leadership treated eastern Tamils as second-class.

The nearby Verugal Ferry crossing provides the only link between territories claimed by the two groups.

Rebels carrying rifles, grenades and radio transmitters melt in and out of the jungle here, and Tamil Tiger propaganda blares from a loudspeaker on the north side.

Otherwise, the atmosphere can be deceptively calm.

On the southern bank, a Tamil woman sells "alu bonda" potato cutlets from a makeshift hut. A fish monger offers his catch to passengers who cross the river by hand-pulled ferry. The river, only 150 meters (500 feet) wide in the dry season, has crocodiles - so nobody dares to swim.

But this picture-postcard ferry crossing carries deeper dangers: It could become the flash-point in reviving the civil war that left 65,000 people dead before a 2002 cease-fire between Tamil rebels and the Sinhalese-dominated government.

Tamil rebels square off along Sri Lankan river _ a potential flashpoint in renewed warfare

This tropical island of 19 million people was looking good after the Norwegian-brokered accord. Peace talks were launched.

But they were halted last April when the rebels made additional demands.

Then in November, the president began an intense power struggle with the prime minister - her political rival - on how to handle the peace process. That feud has culminated in snap elections to be held next week.

On March 3, the eastern commander, Vinayagamorthy Muralitharan, broke away from the Tigers with more than 6,000 of the group's 15,000 troops.

His elder brother, better known as Reggie, frequently visits Verugal Ferry to supervise its defenses. He is a renowned marksman credited with 100 sniping deaths of government troops during the peak of the civil war in the 1990s.

He calmly sips Coca-Cola on the river's southern bank.

"If they attack us, we are ready and they will regret their action," he said. "We have enough weapons and cadres to beat back the other side."

There have been preparations for war on both sides.

On the southern bank, rebels cut trees and logs for bunkers, transporting them in tractors to road-side points where others collect them on their shoulders and vanish into the jungle.

There are similar scenes on the northern side controlled by Tamil Tiger leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran. Rebels have set up camps every few kilometers (miles), said a European aid worker who was allowed by northern rebels to travel through that area.

The Verugal Ferry lies halfway between the northeastern town of Trincomalee, famed for its port, and the main eastern city of Batticaloa. Before 1983, when Sri Lanka's civil war started, at least 100 vehicles crossed per day. Now, only two state-run buses pass daily. Aid workers occasionally pass through.

The Sri Lankan army has a large presence nearby, and could easily be sucked into any conflict here. There is no proper demarcation between government and rebel-controlled areas. Hundreds of small hamlets dot the region.

Along the 70-kilometer (40-mile) road between Batticaloa and the ferry crossing, as many as five army camps are manned by Sri Lankan soldiers who stand behind sandbag fortification.

"We have no intention of getting involved in their problem," Lionel Balagalle, the chief commander of Sri Lanka's 100,000 armed forces, said in Colombo. "But we may be forced to defend ourselves if they start using heavy weapons which may affect us."

Military intelligence officers say neither of the rebel sides could sustain a conventional war for long. Fighting could start with a sniping death at Verugal Ferry, then open warfare. But both sides would soon opt for a guerrilla war, which would make the Sri Lankan army vulnerable.

"For two years we had no fighting. That was very good," said Jal Moly, a 19-year-old female fighter on the southern bank who clutched a M-16 Colt rifle.

"But now I am called again to duty and I am ready," she said patting her weapon. "But I am told to wait."

Load-Date: March 25, 2004

Union activist belongs to terror group, CSIS says: Mother of three: 50-year-old denies connection to Colombia's FARC

National Post (f/k/a The Financial Post) (Canada)

July 7, 2005 Thursday

National Edition

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Section: CANADA; Pg. A5

Length: 751 words

Byline: Stewart Bell, National Post

Dateline: TORONTO

Body

TORONTO - A Toronto trade union activist and 50-year-old mother of three has been identified by Canada's intelligence service as a secret member of the Colombian terrorist group FARC.

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) alleges in a newly released report that Amparo Torres is a member of the outlawed Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, better known as FARC.

FARC is a Marxist guerrilla group formed in 1964 that is responsible for a brutal campaign of bombings, assassinations, kidnappings and hijackings in Colombia.

"The service has reasonable grounds to believe that the FARC is a terrorist entity, that Torres is a member of the FARC and that Torres has undertaken activities in support of the FARC," CSIS wrote.

The intelligence service provided information about Ms. Torres to an immigration adjudicator at a closed-door hearing in Toronto in May. The adjudicator sealed the information on the grounds that making it public could harm Canada's national security.

But a summary was recently filed in Federal Court. It says intelligence agents first interviewed Ms. Torres at her home in July, 1999.

The interview took place a month after the National Post reported that Ms. Torres had received enthusiastic applause when she spoke at a National Action Committee on the Status of Women conference.

"The guerrilla movement is fighting to protect Colombian people's rights," the Post quoted her as saying. "They have very strong popular and political support and they have become the only voice of the Colombian people."

A CSIS investigation has since determined that Ms. Torres is the former wife of Luis Alberto Urbano, also known as Marco Leon Calarca, the alleged chief international spokesman for FARC, who was arrested in Bolivia in 1998.

Her brother, Jorge Torres, is also a FARC leader.

Union activist belongs to terror group, CSIS says: Mother of three: 50-year-old denies connection to Colombia's FARC

CSIS says Ms. Torres was a member of both the Colombian Communist Party (FARC was established as the party's armed wing) and the Union Patriótica, a political party that was linked to FARC.

"Based on Torres's membership in the PCC and UP, her activities on behalf of FARC and her association with members of the FARC, the service has reasonable grounds to believe that Torres is a member of FARC and is inadmissible to Canada."

Unlike such terror groups as the Tamil Tigers, FARC does not have a large support network in Canada, but it is known to use the country for fundraising and propaganda purposes. FARC was added to Canada's list of banned terrorist organizations in April, 2003.

The CSIS report blames FARC for a litany of terrorist attacks, including the 1999 execution of three U.S. missionaries, the 2002 hijacking of a passenger plane, the kidnapping of 13 state legislators in Cali in 2002 and last year's murder of 34 peasants.

Under Canadian immigration law, members of terrorist organizations are not allowed to enter Canada. Ms. Torres will be deported back to Colombia if an immigration judge upholds the government's case against her.

Ms. Torres denied the allegations in an affidavit filed in Federal Court and said there are "numerous inaccuracies and omissions" in the CSIS report. She claims that CSIS is trying to recruit her.

"I believe that CSIS not only wants me to become a CSIS informant, but also believes that I can help locate my ex-common law spouse. In one of their interviews, a CSIS officer specifically asked me if he is living in Cuba," she wrote.

She said FARC has no representatives in Canada.

"I completely deny CSIS's accusation that I am involved with the FARC. I have only committed myself to promoting non-violent political change in Colombia," she wrote.

Ms. Torres was a trade union leader at Santiago de Cali University. In October, 1992, she was kidnapped. She believes the kidnappers were members of a right-wing paramilitary group.

Upon her release, she fled Colombia in February, 1993, with her then-spouse Mr. Urbano and their three children. She went to Mexico until the Canadian government offered her asylum.

She arrived in Canada in 1996 and applied for Canadian citizenship in June, 2000. She married a Canadian, a retired University of Toronto professor, two years ago.

Since coming to Canada, Ms. Torres says she has been doing volunteer work with two unions that belong to the Canadian Labour Congress "to promote solidarity with the trade union movement in Colombia."

Hearings that will decide whether she will be deported are scheduled for November. Ms. Torres is appealing the findings of the CSIS report, but federal lawyers call her case "specious."

Load-Date: July 7, 2005

INSIDE STORY: A deadly occupation; Sixty-three journalists were killed across the globe in 2005, making it the deadliest year for a decade, according to Reporters Sans Frontiers, which documented the carnage

The Independent (London)

January 16, 2006 Monday

First Edition

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The  **INDEPENDENT**

Section: NEWS; Pg. 10

Length: 2017 words

Body

AFGHANISTAN (2)

18.05.2005 - I Shaima Rezayee, Tolo TV Rezayee, 24, was killed after being shot in the head in Kabul. She had presented a music programme that was criticised by conservatives for being 'immoral and anti-Islamic'.

22.10.2005 - "Maiwand", Da Solah Pagham Radio journalist who died in a bomb attack on a military convoy. Maiwand, 22, was standing near the vehicle when it was attacked.

AZERBAIJAN (2)

02.03.2005 - Elmar Husseynov, 'Monitor' Editor of Azerbaijan's opposition weekly, the Monitor. He was shot seven times, including twice in the heart, as he returned to his apartment in Baku.

19.06.2005 - Alim Kazimli, 'Yeni Musavat' ' Kazimli, 54, was paralysed following a beating at a police station in Baku. He fell into a coma and died from a brain haemorrhage six months later. He had worked for the main opposition daily.

BANGLADESH (2)

11.02.2005 - Sheikh Belaluddin Ahmed, Sangram' A bomb planted on the 48-year-old correspondent's moped critically wounded him when it exploded in front of the Khulna Press Club.

12.08.2005 - Gautam Das, 'Dainik Shamokal' Das, 28, was found dead in his office with broken arms and legs. He had also received blows to his neck. Das regularly wrote about illegal activities in Bangladesh.

BELARUS (1)

18.10.2005 - Vassili Grodnikov, 'Narodnaya 'Volya' Grodnikov was found dead in his apartment, having been killed by head injuries. He wrote for the opposition daily, and was focusing on crime rings at the time.

INSIDE STORY: A deadly occupation Sixty-three journalists were killed across the globe in 2005, making it the deadliest year for a decade, according to Reporter....

BRAZIL (1)

01.07.2005 - JosZ Candido Amorim Pinto, Radio Comunitaria Alternativa Two men gunned down the investigative reporter as he parked his car outside work. He had received death threats for six months before the attack, and was injured in a shooting two months before his death.

COLOMBIA (1)

11.01.2005 - Julio Palacios Sanchez, Radio Lemas The 55-year-old news presenter was shot in the chest three times on his way to work. He drove home before being rushed to hospital, where he died. He had survived two murder attempts, in 1996 and 1998.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (2)

01.08.2005 - Pascal Kabungulu, HZritiers de la Justice Human-rights campaigner who was shot dead at his home. Kabungulu regularly wrote about human-rights violations in eastern Democratic Congo.

03.11.2005 - Franck 'Ngyke' Kangundu, 'La Reference Plus' Kangundu, 52, and his wife were shot outside their home by four gunmen. The political editor tried to negotiate with the men, but they said that they were "sent to kill".

ECUADOR (1)

19.04.2005 - Julio Augusto Garcia, freelance photographer Garcia died of a heart attack, caused by tear-gas. Police had used the gas to stop demonstrators outside parliament who were protesting against President Gutierrez.

HAITI (2)

04.04.2005 - Robenson Laraque, Tele Contact The 25-year-old radio journalist died two weeks after being shot during a showdown between UN peacekeepers and former soldiers who were occupying a police station.

14.07.2005 - Jacques Roche, 'Le Matin' Roche's handcuffed body was found in a chair on a Port-au-Prince street. The arts and culture editor appeared to have been tortured before being shot several times.

KAZAKHSTAN (1)

07.06.2005 - Batyrkhan Darimbet, 'Azat' Darimbet, the editor of the opposition weekly 'Azat', was fatally injured in a road accident. Other journalists have died in similar circumstances in recent years.

KOSOVO (1)

25.06.2005 - Bardehul Ajeti, 'Bota Sot' Ajeti died after gunmen shot him in the head. The attack was politically motivated, said the local press. Ajeti often wrote about organised crime gangs in 'Bota Sot', the Albanian-language daily.

LEBANON (2)

02.06.2005 - Samir Kassir, 'An-Nahar', TV5 Columnist Kassir, 45, was killed in Beirut when his car exploded. He was well known for his anti-Syrian views and criticism of the "Lebanese police state". He had been harassed and threatened for years.

12.12.2005 - Gebran Tueni, An-Nahar' Tueni, the CEO of the Arabic-language daily 'An-Nahar' and a member of the Lebanese parliament, died in a car-bomb explosion in Beirut.

LIBYA (1)

INSIDE STORY: A deadly occupation Sixty-three journalists were killed across the globe in 2005, making it the deadliest year for a decade, according to Reporter....

01.06.2005 - Daif Al Ghazal, Libya Al-Youm Al Ghazal, who wrote for the London-based online newspaper Libya Al-Youm, was kidnapped by two gunmen who forced his car to stop. When his body was found, fingers had been severed and his body had multiple bruises and stab wounds. He had been "finished off" by a gunshot to the head.

MEXICO (2)

08.04.2005 -RAUL GIBB GUERRERO, 'LA OPINION' The 53-year-old editor of the daily La Opinion was shot seven times, including three times in the head, as he returned home in his car.

16.04.2005 - Dolores, Guadalupe Garcia Escamilla, Radio Estereo 91 XHNOE Escamilla was shot nine times by a gunman outside her radio station. She died 11 days later due to liver failure caused by one of the shots.

NEPAL (2)

31.03.2005 - Khagendra Shrestha, 'Dharan Today' The managing editor of Dharan Today was shot twice in the head while in his office. Shrestha, 45, died 16 days later.

4.10.2005 - Maheshwor Pahari, 'Rastriya Swabhimani' Pahari, 30, who had worked for the weekly Rastriya Swabhimani, died of TB a week after being belatedly transferred from prison to hospital.

PAKISTAN (2)

07.02.2005 - Amir Nawab Khan, APTN and 'The Frontier Post' and Allah Noor Wazir, Khyber TV, 'The Nation' and DPA Both journalists were killed when their cars came under fire as they returned from Sararogha, where a Taliban warlord, Baitullah Mehsud, had given himself up.

PHILIPPINES (7)

02.02.2005 -Edgar Amoro, Radio DXKP Amoro was a key witness in the murder trial of fellow-journalist Edgar Damalerio, when he was shot by two accomplices of the main suspect in the case. He was shot at point-blank range and died of his injuries.

24.03.2005 - Marlene Garcia Esperat, 'Midland Review' - Esperat, 45, was killed in front of her 10-year-old daughter by two gunmen. The columnist had police protection, but allowed her bodyguards to go home for Easter. She waged a crusade against corruption and was known for her scathing commentaries.

04.05.2005 - Klein Cantoneros, DXAA A radio presenter who financed his own show. He was critically wounded when gunmen shot him in the street. Cantoneros was an outspoken critic of the local authorities.

10.05.2005 - Philip Agustin, 'Starline Times Recorder' Editor and publisher who was killed by a single shot inside his daughter's home. Agustin, 54, had published negative articles about the local mayor, who denied being involved in the murder.

03.07.2005 - Rolando 'Dodong' Morales, DXMD Eight gunmen on motorcycles shot Morales, 43, as he left work, and continued to fire at him as he lay dying. Morales had recently criticised drug traffickers in the region.

20.11.2005 - Roberto Ramos, 'Katapat' A newspaper reporter who died when two men on a motorcycle shot him twice in the head. They killed him because he had written about their trafficking of pirated DVDs, they allegedly confessed.

01.12.2005 - George Benaogan, DYDD Bantay Radio Radio presenter who was shot by a gunman. He had received death threats in text messages, said colleagues. The attack was made after he accused local figures, including customs officials, of being corrupt, said the police.

RUSSIA (2)

INSIDE STORY: A deadly occupation Sixty-three journalists were killed across the globe in 2005, making it the deadliest year for a decade, according to Reporter....

21.05.2005 - Pavel Makeev, Puls d'Azov TV Young cameraman whose body was found dead at a roadside. He had just finished filming a report about illegal dragster racing.

28.06.2005 - Magomedzagid Varisov, 'Novoe delo' A political editor, Varisov was shot dead as he got out of a car outside his home. He was critical of the Dagestan opposition in his articles.

SIERRA LEONE (1)

28.07.2005 - Harry Yansaneh, 'For Di People' Yansaneh, acting editor of the independent daily For Di People, was beaten up by the henchmen of a deputy in the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party. The attack led to his death from kidney failure two months later.

SOMALIA (2)

09.02.2005 - Kate Peyton, BBC Peyton, 39, an experienced television producer, was shot in the back by masked men while outside the Hotel Sahafi International, despite having bodyguards around her. She was part of a group of foreign reporters with a delegation of Somali parliamentarians who were supposed to pave the way for the transitional government's arrival.

05.06.2005 - Duniya Muhiyadin Nur, Horn Afrik Nur, 26, a radio journalist was shot while covering a protest by bus and truck drivers. People were ordered to turn back at the barricades by the drivers and the military. She drove on and was killed.

SRI LANKA (2)

29.04.2005 - Dharmaratnam Sivaram, Tamil Net and 'Daily Mirror' Editor and columnist found dead after being kidnapped. Sivaram was in danger because of his hard-hitting coverage of the political situation.

12.08.2005 - Relangi Sevaraja, Sri Lankan Rupavahini Corporation Sevaraja, 45, and her husband were shot dead by gunmen. In her radio show, she was critical of the LTTE (Tamil Tigers).

IRAQ (24)

28.11.2005 - Akeel Abdul Rwdha, Al-Iraqiya

Rwdha, of the state-run al-Iraqiya television network, was killed by gunmen in Baghdad.

07.11.2005 - Ahmed Hussein Al Maliki, 'Tall Afar'

Maliki's body was discovered two months after insurgents had kidnapped him.

19.10.2005 - Mohamed Haroun, general secretary of the Union of Iraqi Journalists

Haroun was shot at the wheel of his car in Baghdad.

21.09.2005 - Firas Al-Maadhidi, Al-Safir'

Head of Iraqi daily Al-Safir's bureau in Mosul. He was shot dead outside his home.

20.09.2005 - Hind Ismail, 'Al-Safir'

A female reporter, Ismail was gunned down by men in police uniforms in Mosul city centre.

19.09.2005 - Fakher Haydar Al-Tamimi, 'New York Times'

An Iraqi journalist who worked for foreign news media. He was kidnapped at his home and shot in the head hours later in Basra.

INSIDE STORY: A deadly occupation Sixty-three journalists were killed across the globe in 2005, making it the deadliest year for a decade, according to Reporter....

27.08.2005 - Rafed Al Rubaii, Al-Iraqiya

TV reporter who was covering a pro-Saddam demonstration. Was shot several times by gunmen.

02.08.2005 - Steven Vincent, freelance journalist

American freelance journalist who was abducted and shot dead in Basra. He wrote a book about the Iraqi war, In the Red Zone.

03.07.2005 - Maha Ibrahim, Baghdad TV

Ibrahim was editor-in-chief of Baghdad TV. He was killed by US military gunfire, it is believed.

01.07.2005 - Khaled Sabih al Attar, Al-Iraqiya

A television producer who was murdered in Mosul. He produced a satirical programme called I Don't Give a Damn, which made fun of government employees.

28.06.2005 - Wael Al Bakri, Al-Charkiyah

A television producer who was shot at the wheel of his car by the US army when he drove too close to a US military convoy.

22.06.2005 - Jassim Al Qais, 'Al-Siyada'

The journalist Al-Qais and his son were shot dead near Baghdad.

22.06.2005 - Yasser Al Salihi, Knight Ridder

Salihi, a reporter for the US Knight Ridder newspaper group, was shot while driving his car.

15.05.2005 - Najem Abed Khodair and Ahmad Adam, 'Al-Madaa' and 'Tariq al-Shaab'

Iraqi journalists who had their throats slit at the side of a road.

23.04.2005 - Saleh Ibrahim, Associated Press

An Iraqi cameraman who came under gunfire as he arrived at the scene of an explosion. The gunmen were aiming at US military.

15.04.2005 - Shamal Abdallah Assad, Kirkuk TV, Kurdsat

The body of the Kurdish television journalist was dumped on the street after gunmen shot him.

14.04.2005 - Fadel Hazem Fadel and Al Ibrahim Aissa, Al-Hurriya TV

A bomb killed the reporter Fadel and cameraman Aissa as they drove to report a car-bomb in Baghdad.

01.04.2005 - Ahmed Jabbar Hashim, 'Al-Sabah'

The decapitated body of Hashim, a reporter for the US-backed paper Al Sabah, was found a week after he was kidnapped. Eight men had ambushed the journalist.

14.03.2005 - Houssam Hilal Sarsam, Kurdistan-TV

Kidnapped cameraman Sarsam was shot when he tried to escape his abductors. He tried to flee during a traffic jam, but was shot four times as he ran away.

INSIDE STORY: A deadly occupation Sixty-three journalists were killed across the globe in 2005, making it the deadliest year for a decade, according to Reporter....

10.03.2005 - Laik Ibrahim, Kurdistan-TV

Kurdistan-TV's bureau chief in Kirkuk, Laik Ibrahim, was shot dead as he drove to work.

25.02.2005 - Raeda Mohammed Wageh Wazzan, Al-Iraqiya

Iraqi television journalist who was found dead five days after she and her son were kidnapped by masked gunmen in Mosul.

09.02.2005 - Abdel Huss Khazaal, Al-Hurra TV

A correspondent for the US-financed station, Al-Hurra, Khazaal was gunned down along with his three-year-old son.

Load-Date: January 16, 2006

End of Document

Martin praises military aid efforts in tsunami-devastated Sri Lankan village

The Canadian Press (CP)

January 17, 2005 Monday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 744 words

Byline: BY BRUCE CHEADLE

Body

KALMUNAI, Sri Lanka (CP) _ Just two minutes spent visiting Sri Lanka's tsunami-shattered east coast would convince any Canadian of the value of sending in Canada's military, an awe-struck Prime Minister Paul Martin said Monday after wandering a devastated community here for close to an hour.

Martin travelled by helicopter 300 kilometres east of Colombo to inspect the Disaster Assistance Response Team, or DART, at its camp in Ampara district _ a region about half the size of Prince Edward Island that is estimated to have had more than 10,000 die as a result of the Dec. 26 tsunami.

The prime minister later conceded that nothing had prepared him for the experience.

"The fact is that (Canadian tax) money is going directly to where it's needed," Martin told reporters in the jungle heat outside a DART medical clinic in a girls' school that has become a refugee camp.

CP

"I don't think you can spend more than about two minutes here without realizing just how desperately that help is needed."

Hundreds of local Sri Lankans _ Muslim, Sinhalese and Tamils _ crowded Kalmunai's rubble-strewn streets to wave at the visiting Canadian leader.

Martin's first stop was a mass grave just a stone's throw from the beach.

Houses and businesses that looked like they had been bombed surrounded the dusty patch of ground.

"In that grave site alone there's over 1,000 people that died," Padre Jim Hardwick of the DART team said in an interview.

It was the first place local **women** led him when he arrived in Kalmunai, and Hardwick called it the "heart" of what the local community wanted Martin to see.

"I've been told upwards from 5,000 to 10,000 (died in Ampara) and the last count somebody had was definitely 10,736," said the Petawawa, Ont.-based chaplain. "That number won't leave my head."

Martin had already toured affected beaches in Thailand on the weekend as he opened a nine-day Asian tour. Those scoured communities were pictures of industry, cleanliness and recovery compared with Kalmunai.

Martin praises military aid efforts in tsunami-devastated Sri Lankan village

As Martin and his wife Sheila stepped gingerly through cratered streets to reach to beach, they literally stepped over burnt indentations in the sand that indicated where badly decomposed corpses had been torched as they lay.

Children scampered barefoot through the tangled angle iron and slabs of concrete jutting at odd angles from the ground. The prime minister stopped again and again to greet the delighted kids.

Martin appeared overwhelmed, repeatedly commenting on the children to no one in particular.

"You'd have to be stone not to be emotionally affected by all this," he told reporters after catching his breath.

"When you see these young kids, what they've been through ... it is impossible not to be deeply, deeply affected."

Capt. Steve Pirie, a doctor leading the DART clinic in the overrun Mahmud Ladies College _ now home to about 450 refugee families representing about 1,900 people_ told the prime minister they treat 50 to 100 patients a day.

"We turn away people every day," said Pirie when Martin asked if that was the patient load. "There's no shortage of medicine (care) to be done here."

The prime minister also took several long drinks from a bottle of water purified by the DART team _ water drawn from a nearby slough.

"It's good stuff ... maybe pour in a little scotch," he joked to the long-suffering soldiers, whose camp is alcohol free.

Meerasahib Jamaldeen was among the hundreds milling about Martin's retinue.

A father of 10 at age 42, he lost two daughters, his home and a brother-in-law to the waves. His wife and eight remaining children now live in a classroom at the college.

"The people are happy that he has come to see the children," Jamaldeen said of Martin, before adding sadly, "My home is gone."

When Martin returned to Colombo on Monday afternoon, he met with political representatives allied to the insurgent **Tamil Tigers**, who control parts of northeastern Sri Lanka not far from Ampara district.

The prime minister has promised to ensure that foreign aid to Sri Lanka is distributed equitably throughout the country, and his political meetings in Colombo were to that end.

But Martin appeared to have little patience for political infighting after visiting Kalmunai.

"There comes a time when human beings are facing trauma," the prime minister told a news conference in Colombo.

"You should set the politics aside and take a look at what other people are facing. There should be one focus and that should be what we can do to help them."

Load-Date: January 18, 2005

News in Brief

The Philadelphia Inquirer

APRIL 10, 2004 Saturday CITY-D EDITION

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A04

Length: 787 words

Body

In the Nation

Astronauts' tour of duty

at space station may double * NASA is considering a Russian request that astronauts spend a year on the international space station instead of six months. That would allow Russia to set aside two seats on its Soyuz capsule next spring for paying customers - space tourists or European astronauts - who would spend a week or so on the station, station program manager Bill Gerstenmaier said yesterday. The longest any American has spent in space is 6 1/2 months. Russian Valery Polyakov once spent a record 14 1/2 months in space.

Pentagon inspector general pans Boeing deal

* The Pentagon should not move forward on a \$23.5 billion plan to acquire 100 air refueling tankers from Boeing Co. until the deal is changed significantly, Pentagon Inspector General Joseph Schmitz said yesterday. In a highly critical report, he said procedural and financial problems with the deal could cause the government to spend up to \$4.5 billion more than needed. Boeing, in a statement, defended the deal.

Ethics panel investigates Rep. Conyers' use of staff

* The House ethics committee is looking into allegations that Rep. John Conyers Jr., 74, improperly used congressional staff to work on election campaigns, including his wife's bid for a state Senate seat in Michigan. Conyers' attorney, Stanley Brand, confirmed that the Detroit congressman had answered questions from the ethics panel. Conyers has served in the House since 1964. The ethics panel conducts informal inquiries before deciding whether to launch a full investigation.

U.S. rejects independent testing for mad cow

* The U.S. Department of Agriculture will not allow American beef companies to independently test their cattle for mad cow disease, an agency official said yesterday. Also, Mexico further eased its restrictions on U.S. beef imports, allowing more varieties of meat and tallow shipments, the agency said.

U.S. offers alternate plan for closed nuclear reactor

News in Brief

* The Energy Department has proposed a \$96.8 million plan to remove radioactive material from a shuttered reactor at the Brookhaven National Laboratory in eastern Long Island, N.Y., scrapping an entombment proposal. The plan, which requires review from regulatory agencies, was hailed by environmentalists who had criticized Energy's December proposal to entomb the reactor in concrete for up to 87,000 years.

In the World

More than 1,000 arrested for protesting in Nepal

* Police in Kathmandu, Nepal, detained more than 1,000 protesters for defying a ban on public rallies yesterday, as about 25,000 people flooded the streets of Nepal's capital to demand that the king restore democracy. Police rounded up the demonstrators for violating a ban imposed Thursday that aimed to head off protests against the king, who dismissed an elected government two years ago and replaced it with one loyal to the monarchy.

Algerian president wins reelection in landslide

* Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika was reelected in a landslide, the Interior Ministry said yesterday, but his challenger cried foul after winning only eight percent of the vote. Bouteflika, 67, who campaigned on a record of restoring calm to a nation wracked by more than a decade of Islamic-inspired bloodshed, won a second term Thursday with 83 percent of the vote, said Interior Minister Nourredine Zerhouni. Former Prime Minister Ali Benflis won only 8 percent of the vote and said he would appeal.

2 factions of **Tamil Tigers** fight in Sri Lanka

* Mainstream Tamil Tiger guerrillas advanced on a heavily armed breakaway faction yesterday in a vicious gun-and-mortar battle that killed at least nine people, wounded 20, and imperiled Sri Lanka's fragile two-year-old cease-fire. It was the worst fighting since the 2002 truce halted the 19-year civil war. It came a week after voters rejected the government that had negotiated the cease-fire.

20,000 protesters urge Armenian president to quit

* About 20,000 demonstrators massed in the Armenian capital of Yerevan yesterday to demand that President Robert Kocharyan resign. It was the largest public gathering since mass protests denouncing alleged irregularities in his reelection last year. Protesters said they wanted changes to a law on referendums in order to hold a confidence vote on Kocharyan's administration.

Pope hears confessions

in Holy Week tradition

* Pope John Paul II heard confessions from 11 Catholics on Good Friday in St. Peter's Basilica, keeping up a tradition in a Holy Week marked by security concerns in tourist-filled Rome. The frail pontiff, 83, was wheeled into the basilica by aides and into a mahogany confessional booth. He spent about an hour there, hearing the confessions of five men and six **women** of various nationalities.

Graphic

PHOTO;

PATRICK HERTZOG, Associated Press

A torchlight Good Friday procession moves past the Colosseum in Rome. Braving the chill of a rainy night, Pope John Paul II led prayers at the traditional Way of the Cross procession as thousands of faithful turned out despite concerns over security. The procession symbolically traces the path to Jesus' crucifixion.

Load-Date: August 24, 2005

End of Document

How war on terror hits charity

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

July 29, 2003, Tuesday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 11

Length: 955 words

Byline: By William P. Fuller and Barnett F. Baron

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

In the aftermath of the Iraq war, American foundations and humanitarian organizations are beginning to play their traditional role of providing relief and assistance to distressed populations, just as they are doing in Afghanistan and many other poor countries.

Americans think of international development and relief mainly as publicly funded programs, but in reality most are funded from private sources. In 2000, for example, official development assistance and other government aid amounted to \$ 22.6 billion, while private aid flows totaled \$ 33.6 billion, according to the US Agency for International Development.

Although poverty isn't the only factor that breeds terrorists, its destruction of hope surely contributes. A vital element in the long-term fight against terrorism is strengthening the American and foreign nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) whose work curbs extremism through programs that alleviate poverty and violent conflict, increases economic opportunity, provides education and healthcare, enhances the roles and status of women, and encourages tolerance and secular governance.

In Bangladesh, for example, NGOs reach more than 85 percent of the country's villages with services helping to meet family and community needs. This may help explain why Bangladesh, despite its poverty and predominantly Muslim population, hasn't faced the extremism prevalent in some of its South Asian neighbors.

NGOs are truly frontline allies in the war against terrorism. Their programs focus on prevention, and their success is essential for their country's security and ours. New regulations affecting international philanthropy, however, could lead to a reduction in support for this vital work.

Since the Sept. 11 attacks, the US has taken forceful and legitimate steps to halt the flow of funds to terrorist organizations through Executive Order 13224 and related elements of the USA Patriot Act. Although the policy objectives of these measures are widely supported, considerable public debate continues about their possible impact on the political rights and civil liberties enjoyed by US citizens, immigrants, and visitors from certain countries, and their potentially chilling impact on American private philanthropy and development assistance.

To clarify implementation of the new anti-terrorist measures, the Treasury Department last November issued "Anti-Terrorist Financing Guidelines: Voluntary Best Practices for US-Based Charities."

How war on terror hits charity

The voluntary guidelines contain too many vague and undefined terms that leave grantmakers vulnerable to legal action. In addition to mandatory checks of the names of all prospective grantees against published lists of terrorist organizations, the guidelines prohibit foundations from funding organizations that may "deal with" named terrorist organizations, organizations that may be "otherwise associated with" terrorists, or anyone who "is or has been implicated in any questionable activity."

These terms are open to interpretation. For example, organizations trying to provide assistance to the millions of Sri Lankans in areas controlled by the Tamil Tigers, a named terrorist organization, have little choice but to "deal with" this group, at least to provide safe passage for personnel and materials.

Likewise, in many countries, local human rights NGOs and election monitors are regularly - and falsely - accused by their political opponents of supporting radical organizations or violent opposition groups, and therefore may be "implicated in questionable activity."

The guidelines expect private funders to function as bank regulators. In addition to determining the identity of all the financial institutions in which prospective grantees have accounts, grantmakers must obtain references to determine if the financial institution is "a shell bank operating under an offshore license," in a jurisdiction "that has been ... non-cooperative in the international fight against money laundering, or that lacks adequate anti-money laundering controls and regulatory oversight." Making such determinations is far beyond the competence of most involved in international philanthropy.

Perhaps most important, the new requirements risk undermining cooperative relationships between US organizations and their overseas partners. The guidelines assume that comprehensive information is available about nonprofit organizations worldwide, as it is in the US. Unfortunately, that's not the case. Excessive and unrealistic due diligence requirements will ultimately destroy relationships of trust and the ability of US foundations to operate freely and effectively. Under cover of the war on terror, some governments are likely to see the guidelines as a convenient rationale for increased scrutiny and control over foreign and domestic nonprofit organizations.

Clearly, prudence is required in selecting grantees, but well-managed international philanthropic organizations, particularly grant-makers with offices abroad, know their grantees and exercise careful oversight and financial controls. They're steadfastly committed to ensuring that their funds never fall into the hands of those who wish us harm. We welcome the current IRS review of international grantmaking practices, in the expectation that taking into account the views of experienced international grantmakers will result in revised guidelines that recognize the important contributions of private philanthropy to our national interests, while meeting our country's legitimate security needs.

* William P. Fuller and Barnett F. Baron are the president and executive vice president, respectively, of the Asia Foundation, a private, nongovernmental, grantmaking organization.

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Load-Date: July 28, 2003

Sri Lankan teen escapes Tamil rebel camp holding dozens more abductees, military says

Associated Press International

December 29, 2006 Friday 12:18 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 454 words

Byline: By DILIP GANGULY, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A 15-year-old Tamil girl who claims she was abducted by separatist rebels and forced to undergo guerrilla training has escaped a rebel camp in eastern Sri Lanka, the military and police said Friday.

The girl, who has not been named, told police that two **women** from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels snatched her from her home in eastern Batticaloa district on Dec. 18, and took her to Thoppigala, a jungle training camp in the east, military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe said.

Six other girls were also abducted on the same day and forcibly taken for weapons training, Samarasinghe said, quoting the girl.

She escaped early Tuesday, found her way through the jungle and surrendered to police on Thursday, Samarasinghe said.

"She told the police that there are about 30 to 35 girls at the **LTTE** camp who are undergoing forced training," he said.

A police officer at Aralaganwilla, where she sought shelter, said the girl had bruises in her legs and hands when she arrived.

"She looked very tired and had injuries specially on her legs," police officer Mahinda Waydyathilaka told The Associated Press when reached by the telephone. "We gave her rice and curry and send her to Polonnaruwa," the area's main town where she will complete legal formalities before she can be handed over to her parents or guardians.

Waydyathilaka said the girl does not want to go home.

"She told us that she is very afraid that the Tigers will come for her again," he said. "She is a very frail looking girl, but had enough courage to trek through the jungle."

There was no independent confirmation of the incident and the U.N.'s children agency, UNICEF, had no information on the issue, according to spokesman Francis Mead.

Sri Lankan teen escapes Tamil rebel camp holding dozens more abductees, military says

Phone calls to the rebels' northern headquarters at Kilinochchi rang unanswered Friday.

Tamil rebels are known to have recruited underage fighters sometimes by force since their separatist rebellion began in 1983. Rebel leaders say forced recruitment no longer takes place and that the movement has strict rules against underage fighters.

Sri Lanka's government has accused the Tamil rebels of abducting at least 455 boys and girls from government-controlled areas this year to be trained as combatants. UNICEF has said insurgents recruited 539 underage combatants this year through Nov. 30.

Separately on Friday, Tamil rebels fired mortars at several military posts in eastern Sri Lanka, wounding three soldiers, Samarasinghe said.

Sri Lanka's nearly two-decade-long civil war ended in 2002 when Norway brokered a cease-fire, but the truce has recently come under serious threat due to near-daily violence.

More than 3,500 combatants and civilians have been killed in fighting this year, according to the Defense Ministry.

Load-Date: December 30, 2006

End of Document

News Items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Xinhua General News Service

April 29, 2007 Sunday 1:30 PM EST

Copyright 2007 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS

Length: 520 words

Dateline: HONG KONG

Body

Following are news items from the Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua in Hong Kong Saturday:

Major news items in leading Australian newspapers

Major news items in leading Japanese newspapers

Major news items in leading Philippine newspapers

5 hijackers killed in shootout in Philippines

Foreign exchange rates in Nepal

Major news items in leading Nepali newspapers

Major news items in Thailand's leading newspapers

S.Korean seeks to introduce F-22 class fighters

Major news items in leading Indian newspapers

S.Korea's steel, shipbuilding giants to buy each other's shares for closer ties

(Sports) S. Korean midfielder Park Ji-sung to have knee operation in U.S.

Foreign exchange rates in Indonesia

(Sports) Nepali Sherpa porter falls to death as climbs Mt. Qomolangma

Insurgents attack mosque in southern Thailand

62 Nepali parties apply for registration for CA polls

Foreign exchange rates in Hong Kong -- April 28

S.Korea to provide 2.5 mln USD for data center in Nepal

Roundup: Myanmar, DPRK improve bilateral relations

News Items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Major news items in leading Pakistani newspapers

(Sports) Soccer: J-League 1st division fixtures

Flight shortage jeopardizes Bangladesh manpower export to Malaysia

Indonesia to import 1.5 mln tons of LPG

(Sports) Indonesian **female** driver to compete in AFR opener

URGENT: 14 militants killed in Afghanistan

Indonesia anti-graft fight gets boost from extradition treaty: President

1st Ld Writethru: 14 Taliban militants killed in E. Afghanistan

NATO soldier found dead in Afghanistan

Urgent: French **female** hostage released in Afghanistan

Conflicts kill 5 in S. Afghanistan

Special security measures in Sri Lankan capital

8 injured as gang opens fire at wedding party in central Nepal

Afghan president calls on armed oppositions to give up resistance

(Sports) India to bid for 2020 Olympic Games

3 dead, 28 injured in bus crash in central Thailand

1st Ld-Writethru: French **female** hostage released in Afghanistan

Blast rocks Pakistani airport canteen

Three new deputy ministers endorsed by Thai King

Indian state gov't blames **LTTE** for fishermen killings

20 injured in bus crashes in Hong Kong

Suspected al-Qaida member arrested from southwestern Pakistan

7 killed in military helicopter crash in Philippines

Weather information for Asia Pacific cities -- April 28

Cambodia lowers fees for foreign DK tribunal lawyers

(Sports) J-League 1st division results

(Sports) J-League first-division standings

Update: 8 killed in military helicopter crash in Philippines

URGENT: Bomb explodes in northwest Pakistan, several wounded

URGENT: Suspected suicide bombing rocks public meeting in northwest Pakistan

News Items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

10 Taliban militants killed in S. Afghanistan

1st Ld Writethru: Powerful bomb explodes at public meeting attended by federal minister in NW Pakistan

2nd Ld Writethru: Pakistani interior minister unhurt in bombing: official

16 arrested in search operation in Sri Lanka

3rd Ld Writethru: At least 20 killed, scores injured by bombing in Pakistan

Load-Date: April 29, 2007

End of Document

News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Xinhua General News Service

December 11, 2005 Sunday 12:00 PM EST

Copyright 2005 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS

Length: 556 words

Dateline: HONG KONG

Body

Following are news items from the Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua in Hong Kong Saturday:

Major news items in leading Australian newspapers

Major news items in leading Philippine newspapers

Foreign exchange rates in Nepal

Major news items in leading Indian newspapers

Foreign exchange rates in Indonesia

Sri Lankan elected to UN Migrant Workers Committee

Gold price higher in Hong Kong -- Dec. 10

Foreign exchange rates in Hong Kong -- Dec. 10

Guerrillas' training camp destroyed in eastern Nepal: Army

Major news items in Thailand's leading newspapers

Norway urges **LTTE** to refrain from violence in Sri Lanka

Nepal gets aid from international non-gov't organization

Roundup: Nepal endeavors to protect human rights

by Wang Haijing

Thailand's southern province declared emergency area as flood ravage havoc

Program organized against domestic violence in Nepal

Bangladesh's export earnings increase

Indonesian gov't plans to fingerprint all citizens

News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Japan to help develop EAS into framework for regional contribution

Taliban occupy district building, killing 7 police in S. Afghanistan

Bali tourism in gloomy prospect ahead of holiday season

Vietnam's cashew nut export expected to increase this year

Roundup: Bangladeshi opposition to reject dialogue on militancy by Pan Xiaozhu

Australia doubles funding to combat illicit drugs in Southeast Asia

Filipino seafarers who have survived ship collision off Denmark to arrive home

Australia invests fund for closer economic ties with ASEAN

Malaysian PM: Integrated Asian region not to create trade barriers

WTO ministers urged to make MC6 a success

Closed-circuit TVs installed to monitor MC6 traffic

Japanese schoolgirl stabbed to death by teacher

Australia clears way to EAS membership by signing non- aggression pact

Bangladeshi militants puzzle security men by changing tactics

Afghan rights commission seeks access to US military detention centers

Indonesia plans mass bird flu vaccinations

China, Vietnam hold 12th government-level border negotiations

ASEAN, Russia sign agreement on economic and development cooperation

Malaysia-Japan free trade pact not to affect local auto industry: Minister

Australia, Indonesia team up to combat illegal fishing

163 Nepali army men punished for rights violation

Weather information for Asia-Pacific cities -- Dec. 10

Arroyo leaves for Kuala Lumpur to attend ASEAN summit

More Hong Kong people support passage of proposed 07/08 electoral package: polls

Malaysian PM urges for enhanced regional business linkage

Thai PM leaves for 11th ASEAN Summit

China supports ASEAN's leading role in East Asia cooperation: Chinese FM

Afghan parliamentarians begin orientation program

EU recommends improvements in Afghanistan's future elections

Afghan women commit self-immolation over one year: Afghan rights commission

News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Malacca Strait's littoral states to sign accord on cooperated patrols

Illicit brew kills 10 in southern Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka official calls for independent election commission

Nepal to protect human rights

Join hands in building new perspective for Chinese nation: Lien

Pakistan to build kidney treatment center in Afghanistan

Pakistan gives education top priority

Load-Date: December 11, 2005

End of Document

S. Korea, US rule out military operation to rescue hostages

Hindustan Times

August 2, 2007 Thursday 2:03 PM EST

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Length: 449 words

Byline: Report from the Asian News International brought to you by the Hindustan Times

Dateline: Manila

Body

Manila, Aug. 2 -- South Korea and the United States have ruled out the possibility of a military operation to secure the release of 21 South Korean hostages in the Taliban captivity in Afghanistan's Ghazni Province.

According to a South Korean Foreign Ministry official, South Korean Foreign Minister Song Min-soon and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte discussed the issue on the sidelines of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in Manila on Thursday.

"The two sides ruled out the possibility of military operations and placed a top priority on safely resolving the issue by mobilising all means," Song was quoted as saying after the meeting.

Meanwhile, the ARF began on Thursday by expressing concern over Korean hostage crisis and called for the release of 21 South Koreans held by the Taliban.

Foreign ministers of nearly 30 countries extended their sympathy to South Korea and the families of the hostages, and expressed "deepest regret at what has happened," Philippine Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said.

"We all wish that the remaining 21 hostages be returned to their families as soon as possible," Romulo said in a statement.

Pointing out that global terrorism poses a serious threat to all nations, the participating countries called for greater counter-terrorism cooperation between ASEAN and its ten dialogue partners.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama specifically mentioned Al-Qaeda and **LTTE** as a major threat to mankind.

Australia has also offered help to secure the release of South Korean hostages.

"We have quite a number of troops in Afghanistan, in the southern part of Afghanistan. I don't know that there is anything that we can do but if there is, we would be happy to assist the South Koreans," The News quoted Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer speaking at the summit.

Meanwhile, an operation to rescue 21 South Korean hostages has begun in Afghanistan on Wednesday to free kidnapped Korean Christian volunteers who have been in captivity for nearly a fortnight.

S. Korea, US rule out military operation to rescue hostages

The Taliban has killed two of the 23 hostages, and threatened to shoot more if their demand of a prisoner release is not met. South Korean officials have reportedly been holding talks with the Taliban to try to secure the hostages' release.

The 23 Korean Christian aid workers - 18 of them women - were seized on July 19 as they were travelling on a bus down the Kabul-Kandahar Highway.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai has already refused to swap prisoners for hostages, after he was criticised for releasing five Taliban members from jail in March in exchange for an Italian reporter.

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Load-Date: August 2, 2007

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Sri Lanka's Tiger rebels to resume 'freedom struggle'

Agence France Presse -- English

February 22, 2007 Thursday 5:38 PM GMT

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Length: 474 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 22 2007

Body

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels Thursday announced a resumption of their "freedom struggle" after declaring that a truce arranged by peace broker Norway had collapsed.

The Tigers said the truce, which came into effect five years ago on Friday, was now virtually non-existent and warned that Colombo's military drive against them would only add to the "bloodstained pages of the island's history."

"It has also compelled the Tamil people to resume their freedom struggle to realize their right to self-determination and to achieve statehood," the Tigers said in a statement.

It blamed the government of President Mahinda Rajapakse for trying to find a military solution to the drawn-out Tamil autonomy campaign, which has claimed over 60,000 lives in the past 35 years.

"Even though today it exists only on paper, it (the ceasefire agreement of 2002) remains a unique document in the search for an end to the national conflict in the island of Sri Lanka," the Tigers said.

The statement came as Sri Lanka's navy said it sank two suspected Tiger boats off the island's north-western coast, killing at least nine people.

There was no reaction from the rebels, but a pro-rebel website said eight fishermen had gone missing in the same area where the navy said it sank the boats.

Security forces also launched ground attacks against Tiger rebels Thursday as the guerrillas said thousands of civilians in the north fled their homes in fear of an upsurge of fighting.

Military officials confirmed they were retaliating against rebel harassment, but said there was no major offensive in the region.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) said thousands of men, **women** and children from half a dozen villages along the de facto border between the two sides were on the move, seeking refuge deeper inside rebel territory.

Sri Lanka 's Tiger rebels to resume 'freedom struggle'

On Wednesday, 25 Tamil civilians carrying white flags entered a government-held area in the northern district of Vavuniya and were provided with shelter and food by the troops, a military official said.

An exodus of civilians from the island's troubled regions is usually a first sign of stepped-up fighting between troops and Tamil Tiger guerrillas, who are campaigning for independence.

The escalation of fighting in the past year has claimed nearly 4,000 lives and tattered a ceasefire arranged by peacebroker Norway on February 23, 2002.

At least five people were killed earlier on Thursday in clashes linked to the conflict, police said.

Norway's top peacebroker, Erik Solheim, Thursday offered to continue to try to revive peace talks, even as thousands of Sinhalese nationalists took to the streets here calling for the truce to be scrapped.

"Norway is willing to go the extra mile to assist their peace endeavours at their request," Solheim said. "As soon as the parties renew their peace efforts, we will be ready to do all we can to help."

Load-Date: February 23, 2007

End of Document

Xinhua world news summary at 1530 GMT, Jan. 20

Xinhua General News Service

January 20, 2005 Thursday 10:30 AM EST

Copyright 2005 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 507 words

Body

KIEV -- Opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko, who won the rerun of Ukraine's presidential election, will be inaugurated as president on Sunday, parliament speaker Volodymyr Litvin said Thursday.

"The electoral campaign is finished and at noon on January 23 we will hold the inauguration ceremony," Litvin told reporters. (Ukraine-Yushchenko-inauguration)

- - - -

LONDON -- The United States should learn from mistakes from the past and adopt a more responsible and multilateral approach toward world affairs, the Iranian Ambassador to Britain Mohammed Hossein Adeli told the BBC on Thursday.

"Waging war against Muslims, disrespecting and ignoring its allies, including the Europeans, only created tension, instability, a less secure world, and created an ocean of mistrust between the United States and the rest of the world," Adeli said in an interview with the BBC radio. "I don't think this would do any good to the American image and the American cause." (UK-Iran-US)

- - - -

MOSCOW -- In coping with the terrorist threat, Russia reserves the right to make preemptive strikes against terrorists, but rules out using nuclear weapons, Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov said Thursday at a press conference in St. Petersburg, according to Russian news media.

"We reserve this right to make preemptive strikes against terrorists, who have declared a war on us. In this situation, it would be naive and culpable not to think about how to prevent a terrorist threat in case it is aimed against Russia from the outside," Ivanov said after talks with his French counterpart Michele Alliot-Marie. (Russia-Terrorism-Strike)

- - - -

CAIRO -- Arab League (AL) chief Amr Moussa on Wednesday urged the United States to adopt a "new policy" toward conflicts in the Middle East, especially the Palestinian-Israeli issue, Egypt's official MENA news agency reported.

Xinhua world news summary at 1530 GMT, Jan. 20

Condoleezza Rice, designated US secretary of state, used "new language" when talking about the US Mideast policy at Tuesday's confirmation hearing in the Senate, Moussa was quoted as telling visiting Armenian Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanyan.

"We hope the new language used by Rice can be turned into new actions," Moussa said, adding the United States should act as a "true mediator" on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. (Egypt-AL-US- Mideast)

- - - -

COLOMBO -- Sri Lanka should pay more attention to the issues on shelter and protection of the vulnerable tsunami-affected people as the relief efforts move on to stabilization and rehabilitation, said an official from the United Nation on Thursday.

Both the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) are expected to care more about the issues on shelter and protection of the vulnerable group, especially women and children, said Kamei Morjane, assistant high commissioner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), after a brief visit to the worst tsunami-hit south and north of Sri Lanka. (SL-Tsunami)

Load-Date: January 21, 2005

End of Document

UN REFUGEE AGENCY URGES SRI LANKA NOT TO FORCIBLY RETURN DISPLACED PERSONS

States News Service

March 16, 2007 Friday

Copyright 2007 States News Service

Length: 512 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: New York

Body

The following information was released by the United Nations:

After reports that the Sri Lankan authorities have forcibly returned many internally displaced people (IDPs) who fled fighting, the United Nations refugee agency today said that it had received the Government's assurances that the agency will be "fully engaged" in any future returns to ensure that they are both voluntary and safe.

Yesterday, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) received disturbing reports of increased police presence around displacement sites in the eastern Batticaloa district, where more than 150,000 IDPs reside, spokesperson Ron Redmond told a press briefing in Geneva.

The highest number of IDPs in the country are sheltered in the district, where many continue to flee the fighting between the Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***), which has been going on for over 20 years despite a ceasefire signed in 2002.

"According to one of the reports, ***women*** and children at one site were forced to board buses despite pleas that they couldn't leave while their husbands were still at work and children at school," Mr. Redmond said.

The UNHCR office in Colombo, the capital, conveyed its concerns over the alleged returns to the Government, which responded positively this morning, Mr. Redmond said.

These reports come on the heels of earlier Government assurances that UNHCR would be able to participate in returns, all of which would be voluntary, he noted.

"However, reports indicate that this has not been the case and we also are disturbed by statements attributed to local authorities that all assistance may be stopped if internally displaced people remain in Batticaloa and that the Government would not be able to guarantee their safety," he added.

Many returnees interviewed by UNHCR, which advocates only voluntary return movements, has voiced serious concern over the security situation in their places of origin, and the agency believes returnees are currently not armed with the necessary information to make decisions on whether to make the journey home.

UN REFUGEE AGENCY URGES SRI LANKA NOT TO FORCIBLY RETURN DISPLACED PERSONS

To this end, Mr. Redmond said that UNHCR will shortly launch a campaign to inform people of the rights of IDPs as set forth in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, including the right to be protected against forcible return to any place where their life, safety, liberty or health would be at risk. [Search UN News](#)

[Past 2 weeks](#) [Past 30 days](#) [Past 45 days](#)

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[Sri Lanka: UN Emergency Relief Coordinator calls on both sides to grant aid access - 14 March](#)

[UN, aid agencies appeal for civilian protection in Sri Lanka as over 100,000 flee - 12 March](#)

[Haiti: UN peacekeepers extend crackdown on criminal gangs - 9 March](#)

[UN-backed effort to halt illegal trade in ozone depleting chemicals reports successes - 1 March](#)

[Condemning rebel attack in Sri Lanka, Ban Ki-moon calls for end to violence - 27 February](#)

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[SECRETARY-GENERAL CONDEMNS SHELLING OF SRI LANKA AIRFIELD BY REBEL GROUP, URGES END TO DESTRUCTIVE SPIRAL OF VIOLENCE - 27 February](#)

Load-Date: March 30, 2007

End of Document

Sri Lanka's military captures rebel territory; thousands of civilians flee

Associated Press International

January 20, 2007 Saturday 2:00 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 489 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lankan soldiers routed ethnic Tamil rebels from a key town in the volatile east after weeks of heavy fighting, the military said, as the violence sent thousands of Tamil civilians fleeing their homes.

Military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe said on Friday the army "gained complete control over Vaharai," an impoverished coastal town in eastern Batticaloa district the scene of heavy fighting between government troops and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam over the last few weeks.

The Tigers, in a statement e-mailed to The Associated Press, said they "decided to pull back" from the area, but did not elaborate.

The rebels had used Vaharai as a key transit point for smuggling arms and drugs and as a base for the naval wing of their insurgency, the Defense Ministry said.

Samarasinghe said the army would continue to flush rebels from the east, where both sides hold pockets of territory.

"Forces liberate Vaharai civilians," the state-run Daily News said in a lead story Saturday. "The government is confident that the security forces will be able to establish civil administration in Vaharai within the next two, three weeks to resettle the civilian population," the Daily News said.

"**LTTE** losses Vaharai," the independent Island newspaper said in a banner headline.

A pro-rebel Web site reported Friday that the army stepped up shelling of Vaharai on Thursday night, forcing 15,000 civilians to flee the area.

"Many **women** and children were fleeing on foot and bicycles," said TamilNet.

The U.N. refugee agency said about 9,500 people had started moving from Vaharai to government-held areas on Friday, and called on both sides to allow them transfer to safety.

Thuraijah Varatharajah, Vaharai hospital's only doctor, said around 9,000 people had been staying in the hospital over the last two months but that a shell fell on the building Thursday night, wounding four civilians, and that now they all wanted to leave.

Sri Lanka 's military captures rebel territory; thousands of civilians flee

The UNHCR estimates some 465,000 people have been displaced by conflict in Sri Lanka, including 204,300 since April 2006.

Meanwhile, deputy military spokesman, Maj. Upali Rajapakse, said a pre-emptive strike was launched against the Tigers as they were preparing to attack army troops in a separate area in Batticaloa. He said nine rebels were killed and 12 wounded.

The military is trying to push the rebels out of the eastern area and regain control of a cluster of rebel-held coastal villages.

At least 45 army troops and 331 rebels were killed due to fighting in Vaharai and surrounding areas since Oct. 29, last year, Samarasinghe said.

The Tigers have been fighting for more than 20 years for a separate homeland for the country's 3.1 million ethnic minority Tamils, who have suffered decades of discrimination by the majority Sinhalese.

Although both sides claim to be adhering to a Norwegian-brokered 2002 cease-fire, violence has escalated since late 2005 with more than 3,600 people killed last year alone.

Load-Date: January 20, 2007

When refugees' friends take in the welcome mat

The Daily Telegraph (Australia)

February 28, 2007 Wednesday

State Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Opinion / Op Ed; Pg. 31

Length: 859 words

Byline: Anita Quigley

Body

MATP

REMEMBER the Bakhtiari brothers? Because their mates sure don't.

They were the two boys who escaped from the Woomera detention centre in 2002 and turned up at the British consulate in Melbourne, asking for asylum in England.

Ultimately their bids failed and the family was deported to Pakistan despite their pleas they were Afghan.

This week a ring-around of their former "supporters" revealed none knows exactly where the brothers now are, although a couple of them speculated Afghanistan.

Many were deeply reluctant to speak about them.

In an interview with 7.30 Report in October 2005, nine months after being deported, elder brother Alamdar accused supporters of using the brothers for political gain.

"If they wanted to help us, why are they not talking to us today -- nine months, 10 months have passed, there was no email, they haven't even called us yet, they are sort of pretending that they don't have our number," he said.

Montazar agreed, saying "40 per cent" of those who claimed they wanted to help did so because they "just wanted to become famous".

The minor political parties love nothing more than to champion the cause of such people but only when there is political mileage to be made.

Later, when they are out of sight, they are truly out of mind.

The group of boatpeople (mainly Sri Lankan) intercepted by the navy off Christmas Island last week would be wise to remember this.

The Australian Greens and the Democrats have spent the week banging on in Parliament that any repatriation of them would be "illegal" and "outrageous".

When refugees' friends take in the welcome mat

They may well be right. Their fears for the men's safety if returned to Sri Lanka, where violence between the Tamil Tigers and government forces is escalating daily, is a valid concern.

And Sydney's small Sudanese refugee community (there are about 4500) is starting to feel like the Bakhtiaris -- even though they're still here.

Increasingly they feel abandoned and frightened following a string of unprovoked racist bashings that have left three of their young men dead and a fourth in hospital with a permanent brain injury.

But where are the Democrats and Greens for them?

Two of the deaths and the maiming of Deng Kuech have all occurred in the past three months.

However, there are no political voices (the Government's included) or refugee advocates coming to their aid. And the attacks are not isolated.

In 2005, some young Sudanese girls were set upon by a group of older white Australian women at Blacktown station, during which they were pulled along by their hair.

According to Reverend Bernard Suwa, pastor of Blacktown Anglican Church's Sudanese congregation, many are frequently abused in the street and have been pelted with beer bottles from passing cars.

One, father-of-four Kuol Agang, was hit with an egg from a car driven by teenagers in Harrow Rd, Auburn, on January 31 last year.

He retaliated by throwing an empty plastic drink bottle at the vehicle. One of the occupants climbed from the car and punched him. He died four days later in hospital.

His killer received four years at a juvenile detention centre for a crime described by the judge as a "senseless act of violence".

But there were no cries from the minor parties in Parliament protesting against the killer's light sentence.

No, because they don't want to be seen as being hard on juvenile crime. So the perpetrator becomes the victim. And the refugee's family no longer serves any political use.

Support for Mr Agang's family has predominantly been left to Matthew Moore, who read of their plight.

He is not a refugee advocate, just a married man saddened by the family's circumstances.

He helped Mr Agang's widow -- who speaks no English and is raising her late husband's three younger brothers along with her four children, all under 10 -- claim her husband's body from the morgue.

Along with the Edmund Rice Centre, he also organised the funeral and sat with the family during the trial.

He and his mother still visit the family once a week, taking them food.

About \$6000 has been raised from within the struggling Sudanese refugee community and a further \$25,000 came from a fundraising night at Parramatta Council.

But with the family's breadwinner dead, the money won't last until the children are old enough to get jobs.

Mr Suwa is right to say the Sudanese community feels neglected. "The support of these families in such instances should not be left to individuals and churches," he said.

"The Federal Government settles us here, these other parties add their voices of support, but now we feel abandoned. We feel like we are in another war zone ... if we have to keep our children inside for fear of being attacked."

Nor should their ongoing needs be used as scaremongering -- something we have become adept at here.

[[[[[[[[[[[[[[[[[[The Daily Telegraph]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]]

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[dailytelegraph.com.au]
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Load-Date: February 27, 2007

End of Document

Bomb in bus kills 15 in eastern Sri Lanka

Associated Press International

April 2, 2007 Monday 9:56 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 491 words

Byline: By GAVIN RABINOWITZ, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A bomb ripped through a bus as it stopped at a military checkpoint in eastern Sri Lanka on Monday, killing at least 15 civilians and wounding 10 others, the military said, blaming separatist Tamil rebels.

The bus was near the town of Ampara, about 220 kilometers (130 miles) east of Colombo, when the blast happened, military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe said.

At least 15 people were killed and 10 wounded, said Samarasinghe.

"There is no doubt that this was an attack carried out by (the) LTTE, targeting civilians," he said, referring to the rebels by their official name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the bombing.

Among the dead were 10 women and two children, Samarasinghe said, adding that all the dead were civilians.

The bus stopped at a military checkpoint and the bomb exploded as passengers started to get off to allow troops to search the vehicle, he said.

Samarasinghe said it was too soon to tell if the blast was detonated by a suicide bomber.

Last week a Tamil rebel suicide bomber killed eight people when he drove an explosive-laden tractor into a military base in the east.

The rebels have generally targeted the military in recent years, including stepped up attacks on government forces at sea. Last week the Tigers launched their first-ever airstrike, bombing an air force base on the outskirts of the capital.

At the same time government forces have been assaulting Tamil positions in the east of the island, overrunning their bases and trying to wrest power in the region from the rebels who control vast swaths in the east and north, where they want to set up an independent homeland.

Ampara was the scene of bitter fighting last month between government forces and the rebels as the army captured several rebel strongholds.

Bomb in bus kills 15 in eastern Sri Lanka

The military was on high alert Monday, before the bombing, to deter retaliatory violence by majority Sinhalese after suspected Tamil rebels killed six ethnic Sinhalese laborers at an orphanage construction site.

Gunmen fatally shot the laborers on Sunday in the eastern Batticaloa district, where they were building an orphanage, Samarasinghe said. He speculated that the rebels may have launched the attack to spur a violent backlash by Sinhalese.

Sri Lanka's ethnic war started when Sinhalese mobs targeted Tamils after 13 Sinhalese soldiers were killed by the Tamils in the north in 1983 in a single major attack against the military.

The rebels have fought the government since then to create an independent homeland for the country's 3.1 million Tamil minority after decades of discrimination by the Sinhalese-dominated state.

The Norwegian-brokered cease-fire signed in 2002 that ended more than two decades of fighting remains intact in name only after violence resumed in late 2005. More than 4,000 people have died since then, though both sides still claim to abide by the agreement.

At least 65,000 people were killed before the cease-fire.

Load-Date: April 2, 2007

End of Document

Sri Lankan Navy Clashes With Rebels

Associated Press Online

November 9, 2006 Thursday 4:53 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 878 words

Byline: By DILIP GANGULY, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

At least nine vessels were destroyed in a naval clash Thursday between Tamil rebels and Sri Lanka's navy off the northern coast, officials said, as a human rights group denounced the shelling of a school by the military in which at least 23 people were killed and scores injured.

Tamil Tiger rebels said they killed at least 26 Sri Lankan sailors and caught four others alive in a fierce sea battle off the northern Jaffna peninsula.

"We have caught four sailors alive and found one dead body. Our fighters have confirmed that they killed at least another 25 sailors," ***Tamil Tigers*** military spokesman Rasiyah Ilanthirayan told The Associated Press.

He said five Sea Tiger fighters also died in the attack.

Ilanthirayan told The Associated Press that fighting broke out when navy vessels disturbed the rebels' "routine naval exercises."

A Defense Ministry official, however, said about 16 rebel boats, including explosive-laden suicide boats, attacked a navy patrol and sank one boat.

The navy, assisted by the air force, retaliated, destroying eight rebel boats, the official said on condition of anonymity due to policy. One naval craft was destroyed in the battle and another was damaged.

There was no independent account of the incident, and no details of casualties were immediately available.

Separately on Thursday, the military said Tamil rebels detonated a roadside bomb, killing two soldiers in northern Jaffna peninsula on Thursday.

Meanwhile, the government said it regretted Wednesday's artillery attack on the school.

"While we regret this whole episode, we say that national security is utmost," chief government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella told a news conference.

Scores of civilians had taken refuge in the school in Kithiraveli, a rebel-controlled eastern Sri Lankan village from fighting between the army and Tamil Tiger guerrillas in when it was hit, senior rebel official Seevaratnam Puleedevan told The Associated Press.

Sri Lankan Navy Clashes With Rebels

He said at least 60 civilians were killed and 150 wounded.

Helen Olafsdottir, a spokeswoman for the European cease-fire monitoring mission, said monitors had counted 23 bodies, mostly of women, children and older people, and were still investigating. Another 137 people were admitted to hospitals, she said.

"Our monitors have visited the impact site and they have been told that as many as 40 rounds of artillery fire had hit the area," Olafsdottir said. She said the monitors did not find any sign of a rebel military installation in the impact area.

But Rambukwella said it was likely that the rebels had forced civilians to stay in the area to become human shields a charge the insurgents denied.

London-based Amnesty International condemned the attack and called for an inquiry by international and independent human rights experts, saying there was an urgent need to "respond to the dramatic deterioration of the human rights and humanitarian situation."

In Colombo, 22 deputies from the Tamil National Alliance a political party widely believed to be a proxy of the rebels demonstrated in front of the U.N. refugee agency office, asking it to take action to protect displaced people.

The group said 41,000 Tamil civilians have been displaced in the Batticaloa region, the area of Wednesday's attack.

Rebel official Puleedevan said many villagers are now staying in makeshift tents or in the open, fearing more artillery fire.

"It is a pathetic situation," Puleedevan said. "There are more than 5,000 people there (in the village) and they are living in tremendous fear."

Military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe said the military wasn't targeting civilians, but acknowledged that it had fired artillery to silence rebels' guns.

"Tiger shelling and mortar fire on security forces' detachments in the east intensified on Tuesday and Wednesday, compelling the army to retaliate to counter further terrorist shelling," the Defense Ministry said in a statement.

Peace broker Norway, meanwhile, called on the government to explain why troops fired grenades that landed just meters (yards) from chief European cease-fire monitor Lars Soelvberg on Wednesday as he was visiting the village of Pooneryn in the country's volatile north.

Norwegian Aid Minister Erik Solheim called the incident "very worrying."

"We have asked the Sri Lankan government for an immediate explanation," he said in a statement issued in Oslo.

Soelvberg, a Norwegian, was inspecting a road suggested by the government as an alternative to a main highway that has been closed since August because of heavy fighting between government troops and separatist rebels. He escaped unhurt. The military denied knowledge of Soelvberg's presence in the area when they attacked.

The Tigers have been fighting since 1983 for a separate Tamil homeland in the country's north and east, citing discrimination by the majority Sinhalese.

The conflict killed more than 65,000 people before a Norwegian-brokered truce in 2002, but subsequent peace talks failed. Surging violence this year has killed more than 2,000 civilians, soldiers and rebel fighters and threatens a return to all-out civil war.

Associated Press reporters Krishan Francis and Bharatha Mallawarachi contributed to this report.

On the Net:

Sri Lankan Navy Clashes With Rebels

Military Web site: <http://www.nationalsecurity.lk>

Tamil rebel Web site: <http://www.ltteps.org>

Load-Date: November 10, 2006

End of Document

Highlights of the AAP world wire at 15:00 Jan 16

AAP Newsfeed

January 16, 2007 Tuesday 3:25 PM AEST

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 838 words

Dateline: HILLS Jan 15

Body

The Australian-made movie Happy Feet tonight lost what most critics thought was a certain Golden Globe for best animated feature, which instead went to a movie about talking cars. Cate Blanchett, Toni Collette and Mel Gibson also missed out. (US GLOBES AUST. Updates, US GLOBES AUST Nightlead to come.)

LOS ANGELES, California Jan 16 AP - The Golden Globes sent some big TV stars home empty-handed today while living up to a reputation for recognising less popular work, including several British television productions. (US GLOBES TV sent at 14:16, 435 words. US GLOBES TV Nightlead, to come.)

BEVERLY HILLS, Jan 15 Reuters - Stars sparkled and shivered on the red carpet at the Golden Globes Awards tonight but the chilly weather did not ruin a chance to show off dazzling gowns in gold, silver and white. (US GLOBES FASHION)

SYDNEY, Jan 16 AAP - Fiji's military is investigating a number of its officers to establish if they were involved in Australian conman Peter Foster's escape to Vanuatu. (VANUATU FOSTER FIJI sent at 12:47, 206 words. VANUATU FOSTER Nightlead, to come.)

SINGAPORE - An Australian man has been accused of trafficking cannabis in Singapore, where Melbourne man Nguyen Tuong Van was in 2005 hanged for drug smuggling. (SINGAPORE KARRAS, sent 13:11, 165 words.)

LUXOR, Egypt, Jan 15 Reuters - US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said today she would bring Israeli and Palestinian leaders together soon for what she called informal talks on how to set up a Palestinian state. (MIDEAST SUMMIT Daylead sent at 03:50, 607 words.)

RIYADH, Jan 16 Reuters - US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice holds talks with Saudi leaders today widely expected to cover Iraq and the standoff between the West and Iran over Tehran's nuclear program. (MIDEAST RICE SAUDI sent at 13:53, 447 words.)

JAKARTA - An Indonesian hospital was today overwhelmed with patients suffering bird flu symptoms as the disease spread further in Vietnam and Thailand reported its first case in poultry in six months. (FLU daylead, sent 02:37, 599 words. FLU Nightlead to come.)

TOKYO, Jan 16 Reuters - An outbreak of bird flu at a poultry farm in southwestern Japan was due to the lethal H5N1 strain of the virus, a farm ministry official said today, confirming the first such case to hit Japan in three years. (FLU JAPAN, sent 15:15, 104 words.)

LONDON, Jan 15 AFP - A British coroner's decision not to summon a jury for the Diana, Princess of Wales inquest will fuel conspiracy theories about her death, her former bodyguard lamented today. (ROYALS DIANA 2nd Daylead sent at 04:42, 473 words.)

LONDON - An Islamist cell tried to carry out suicide bombings on London's transport system just two weeks after attacks that killed 52 people and wounded 700, a prosecutor said today. (Terror UK Daylead, sent 02:36, 513 words. Nightlead to come.)

Highlights of the AAP world wire at 15:00 Jan 16

LONDON - British Home Secretary John Reid predicted today that the struggle against al-Qaeda could last for as long as the Cold War. (Terror UK Reid, sent 04:12, 186 words.)

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Jan 16 AP - Torture chambers allegedly used by Tamil Tigers to punish escaping rebels and informers, including women fighters, have been found at guerrilla camps in eastern Sri Lanka, the Defence Ministry said. (SRILANKA TORTURE, sent 14:42, 389 words.)

KABUL, Jan 16 AFP - US Defence Secretary Robert Gates will meet with Afghan President Hamid Karzai and top military officials today to discuss ways to tackle a Taliban resurgence in the war-racked country. (AFGHAN GATES Nightlead sent at 14:07, 688 words.)

QUITO, Jan 15 Reuters - Leftist Rafael Correa became Ecuador's eighth president in a decade today in a ceremony that drew presidents from a growing anti-US alliance, but the bold reforms he promptly set in motion could imperil his hopes of serving a full four-year term. (ECUADOR CORREA Nightlead sent at 13:56, 563 words.)

ROME, Jan 16 AP - A container ship and a commuter hydrofoil have collided near the entrance to the Sicilian port of Messina, killing four crew members on the hydrofoil and injuring dozens of passengers. (ITALY FERRY Nightlead sent at 13:53, 485 words.)

ATLANTA, Jan 15 AP - Americans reflected today on Martin Luther King's legacy of working for racial equality and peace, with many stressing that on the anniversary of what would have been the slain civil rights leader's 78th birthday, his dream was far from realised. (US KING sent at 04:57, 537 words.)

CHICAGO, Jan 15 AFP - A massive winter storm moved across the central United States today, killing at least 25 people and prompting President George W Bush to declare an emergency in the state of Oklahoma. (US WEATHER Nightlead sent at 14:18, 576 words.)

WELLINGTON - More men in New Zealand are having vasectomies than just about anywhere else in the world, and one Auckland University researcher wants to know why. (NZ Vasectomy, sent 10:28, 423 words.)

LONDON, Jan 15 PA - Eating both tomato and broccoli as part of a daily diet helps shrink prostate tumours, US scientists have found. (MED PROSTATE, sent 03:42, 425 words.)

Load-Date: January 16, 2007

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Harper's front bench shows hints of talent

The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

June 23, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. B8

Length: 848 words

Byline: Don Martin, CanWest News Service

Dateline: OTTAWA

Body

OTTAWA -- They weren't supposed to be this good. A cabinet loaded with rookie ministers set up the tantalizing probability of gaffes leading to numerous goners under zero tolerance prime minister.

there's been more sizzle than fi zzle on Stephen Harper's front bench as Parliament adjourns for the summer.

This could be because they're up against a hapless Liberal Opposition which trembles at thought of taking a fi rm stand on anything has largely lost the will to live until it gets new leader in December.

And, to be honest, any analysis of ministers this early stage is more about assessing personalities and their effectiveness in presenting Harper-imposed mandate. They are not generally allowed to think outside the tight little Harper hammered them into right after the swearing-in ceremony. So they mostly taunt Liberals about the 13 years they had to fi x nagging problems the Conservatives inherited.

there are promising hints that some ministers might, in the future, be capable of independent thought and creative policy.

* Finance Minister Jim Flaherty was supposed to be a hard-right ideologue, replicating his conduct under former Ontario premier Mike Harris. But he delivered an acclaimed budget of moderate tax cuts and core program spending boosts topped off by the child care subsidy and a one per cent GST cut on Canada Day. He's served notice on plans to restore clarity to bank fees, tighten stock market regulation while refusing to simply roll over with an open vault to solve a fi scal imbalance he believes may be more imaginary than real.

* Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice was handed a \$5-billion problem. He had to kill the Liberals' costly election-eve Kelowna Accord without inciting riots on the reserves.

Prentice has tried to fi ll the Kelowna coffi n with targeted money. He's aimed money at drinking water problems and violence against aboriginal women. He will tackle the problem of urban Natives, a huge but often overlooked issue, with \$600 million from any windfall surpluses. And after years of Liberal footdragging, it was Prentice who fi nally got money fl owing to the survivors of Native residential schools.

Harper's front bench shows hints of talent

* Take a bow, Stockwell Day. Yes, you're reading that correctly. The former Alliance leader, who was the Liberal poster boy of fear for extremists the Conservatives could appoint to cabinet, has proven himself very capable in the hot seat Public Safety portfolio.

He appears to have negotiated a softening of the U.S. demand for a border-crossing passport and has begun arming border guards. He banned the Tamil Tigers as a terrorist group and dealt well with the alleged terrorist bust in Toronto. And this week he delivered legislation to eliminate the federal firearms registry.

Where was this guy as Alliance leader? Oh, right. Jet-skiing.

* Treasury Board president John Baird puts on a helluva show in the Commons -- arms swinging, finger pointing, teeth bared and voice seething with partisan contempt for all non-Conservatives. It's not always his best face being put forward. But Baird had one assignment this term -- get the Federal Accountability Act through Parliament before the summer recess. That was accomplished this week, going through with nary a discouraging word as Liberals gulped and ran, unable to say if they were for or against the bill.

* Calgary MP Jason Kenney is not technically in cabinet as parliamentary secretary to the prime minister. But that job's given Kenney a spotlighted role that would leave most ministers in fetal-position whimpering. When Harper's away, the Liberals try to kill Kenney.

So far, they haven't left a scratch on his five o'clock shadow as he effortlessly delivers fluently bilingual answers to any topic in what passes for a dignified Commons style, seemingly without a glance at his talking points.

Now, we pause briefly to acknowledge a handful of ministers who could use summer school to brush up on portfolio performances.

Conspicuous by her absence, perhaps, is opposition bullseye Environment Minister Rona Ambrose. She gets a pass until fall when her oft-promised made-in-Canada plan is rolled out as Kyoto's replacement.

No such leniency for Health's Tony Clement, the only minister who has not delivered on one of Harper's five priorities, in this case guaranteed surgical wait times. Public Works' Michael Fortier has not, as promised, emerged to say anything from his hole in the unelected Senate. International Trade's David Emerson has not delivered on the reason he was brought over to the Conservatives, that being to land a softwood lumber deal with the Americans which looks increasingly unlikely. Defence's Gordon O'Connor's single-source heavy-lift aircraft deal is worrisome, given his former lobbyist credentials. And Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay has yet to shine, albeit in a portfolio that's got an impossibly steep learning curve. And as he'll find out soon, if he hasn't already, the moment there's any shine to the portfolio, Harper will step into the spotlight. That's what you get for being a potential rival in the future.

dmartincns.canwest.com

Load-Date: June 23, 2006

Relief for tsunami has limited success

The Toronto Star

December 28, 2006 Thursday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: GTA; Pg. R08

Length: 796 words

Body

This column was written by Craig Kielburger.

As I walked along the eastern shore of Sri Lanka, I came across a wonderfully picturesque scene where a fisherman was working on his boat under the hot sun, while a boy played in the white sand nearby.

But a closer look uncovered a far less peaceful reality. All the palm trees were tilted, pushed aside by the force of 40-metre waves. The man's boat, his only source of income, had been docked for two years because of severe damage.

These were living victims of the 2004 South Asian tsunami.

As I began talking to the boy, he told me about that fateful day - two years ago this week. He said Sri Lanka was actually hit by three waves, each more destructive than the last. The walls of water destroyed everything in their path and carried away homes, boats and people.

The worst part, he said, was not the water, but the feeling of being so alone afterwards.

The boy described being stranded in a tree and holding on for dear life. He pleaded for someone to rescue him, but no one came.

It's a story we've heard all over the north and east of the country, where 35,000 Sri Lankans were killed by the massive waves. In the months following the tsunami - one of the deadliest natural disasters ever recorded - \$7 billion in aid poured into the affected countries to help in reconstruction, including hundreds of millions of dollars from Canadians.

That aid has had limited success. One of the more inspirational programs to come out of it is the Sri Lanka Alternative Income Empowerment Project, located in the hard-hit eastern part of the country. The initiative, Canadian-run and partly funded by youth, gives hope to women through vocational training.

Theivendran Punchi Nona participated in an 18-month course that taught her basic literacy and entrepreneurial skills, as well as job training - groundbreaking for a predominantly conservative Muslim area.

The project, attended by Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslim residents, allows women to start their own businesses and help rebuild their communities. Punchi Nona says the workshops will help her and her family improve their quality of life.

Relief for tsunami has limited success

But this Canadian success story is an exception. Many of the victims still live in temporary housing without proper water or sanitation. Rubble litters the roads, while destroyed houses remain as constant reminders of the devastation. Reconstruction efforts in Sri Lanka have been largely abandoned, leaving families to fend for themselves.

Corruption and red tape have severely hampered progress, and even the government admits it has no idea how much has been received in donations or how much has been spent.

At the same time, most of the aid agencies that flocked to Sri Lanka after the tsunami have left.

To make matters worse, fighting in recent months between government forces and the ***Tamil Tigers*** has flared up again. More than 3,000 people have died this year alone. Despite four years of relative calm, recent peace talks have failed - and many fear that full-blown civil war is on the brink of return.

The tsunami has quickly taken a back seat. In its most recent budget, the government increased military spending by 45 per cent, while development initiatives were barely mentioned.

These successes and failures can serve as a lesson on how to improve the way we react to a crisis. While the amount of money given was admirable, its impact has not been as meaningful as it could have been. With better planning, that aid could have helped far more people and even contributed to the peace process.

Aid money can be a huge incentive for peace, says Mirak Raheem, a research associate with the Sri Lankan-based Centre for Policy Alternatives. By including conditions - for example, warring parties must work together on development projects or jointly agree on which projects receive aid - the international community could have started discussions that would foster trust and lead to peace talks.

Raheem says that in the days following the tsunami, "... a large number of domestic and international NGOs were calling for long-term aid, reconstruction aid, to be conditional on a renewal of peace negotiations."

But the money was instead simply dumped into the country, causing a perception of unequal distribution between the two groups and fuelling grievances. Too few aid agencies were willing to take the extra step of ensuring equality among all ethnic groups. The challenge is to remain committed long after the headlines fade, like the dedicated staff who run the Sri Lanka Alternative Income Empowerment Project. Two years after the tsunami, the government has changed priorities and most aid agencies have moved on, but the need for assistance remains.

Craig and Marc Kielburger are founders of Free the Children and co-authors of Me to We.

Graphic

BABU reuters A tsunami survivor from Chennai, in southern India, walks through the rubble of her house, destroyed in the 2004 tsunami. Two years on, many of the victims still live in temporary housing without proper water or sanitation.

Load-Date: December 28, 2006

Bombers come from cults of personality

The Australian

July 26, 2005 Tuesday All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2005 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: FEATURES; Opinion / Op Ed; Pg. 13

Length: 831 words

Byline: Phillip Adams

Body

Don't rush to condemn an entire faith for the actions of a few fanatics

THERE have been dozens of attacks on US abortion clinics by religious extremists -- ultra-Catholics with guns and born agains with bombs -- that most of their co-religionists would abhor. Just as the overwhelming majority of Northern Irish wanting the Brits out of Ireland totally opposed Irish Republican Army atrocities.

Do you damn the Seventh Day Adventists because of David Koresh? Or all the Joneses in the phone book because of the horrors of Jonestown? Then apply the same principle to Islam. The rush to condemn an entire faith, with its millions of adherents and a 1400-year history, because of the fanaticism of a few hundred maniacs in a single decade seems somewhat intemperate. In any case, religion is only part of the story with suicide bombers. Let the record show that the group guilty of refining the tactic were Marxist-Leninists -- the **Tamil Tigers**. And nationalism overrides Islam when the Palestinians use this murderous strategy in Israel.

MATP

Nor do you have to visit a mosque to find dangerous tracts. Just consider the literature of the Christian Identity Movement in the US. Among its tenets? The belief that the Jews are the biological descendants of the Devil, created when Satan had sex with Eve, that American whites are the lost tribe of Israel, that Jews have hijacked the US government (the CIM refers to it as ZOG, the Zionist Occupation Government.) And don't laugh -- this mob claims 50,000 members. The best-known was Timothy McVeigh.

There is probably more to learn from cult behaviour than the Koran when it comes to getting a clue about suicide bombers. The followers of Jim Jones, Koresh and, more recently, the Heaven's Gate group who killed themselves on the approach of the Hale-Bopp comet seem to share a pathology with the kids who took their bombs into the London Tube. This is certainly the view of an Irish academic Dennis Tourish, co-author of *On the Edge: Political Cults Right and Left*.

Born in Northern Ireland in 1957, Tourish lived through the worst of the Troubles. This kindled his interest in the pathology of terror, giving me an insight into extremist passion and high-level commitment.

Finding truth in Orwell's comment about the "sordid horror of left-wing politics" he detoured to university as a mature-age student, studying communication, sociology and organisational psychology. After a few years teaching in Australian universities, Tourish now has a chair in Aberdeen, where his recent writings on analogies between terrorism and cult behaviour caught my attention.

Bombers come from cults of personality

Of course cults can take root anywhere. Currently Tourish is focusing on corporate cultism, using Enron as his prime example. ("Here was a world where dissent was demolished, preventing upward criticism.") Readers might see the same process in politics, with the suppression of dissent and disagreeable intelligence as George W. Bush planned to invade Iraq coming to mind.

At heart of this phenomenon, be it in corporate life, politics or the training of terrorists, there's a cultish focus on a leader who creates a valued "in group" v the demonised "out group". Dissent is forbidden, dogma is intense, and hatred is easily manipulated. It's a theme that runs through every society and can be easily applied to Jews, Muslims, refugees, Aborigines, the target of your choice.

You may be familiar with experiments in which nine-year-olds were taught, within hours, to hate kids with blue v brown eyes, with friendships breaking down and being replaced by aggression. Or the famous Milgram experiments that proved how easy it is to manipulate the group psyche. Sadly it follows that some of us can be programmed to hate and a few of us, more than enough, to kill. Cults do it all the time, from Montana to Madrid.

Tourish talks about "confirmatory bias" -- the tendency we have to see only evidence that supports our pre-existing beliefs. Included in the examples he cites are the beliefs among far rightists in the US that their government planned the Oklahoma bombing and among far leftists insisting that Bush organised the attack on the World Trade Centre. Similarly lunatic conspiracies are jamming my inbox in the aftermath of London. Blair did it!

Tourish recalls Pauline Hanson being interviewed about her fears of Asian immigration. When told she was wildly exaggerating the statistics, and shown the data, she simply said "I don't believe those figures", demonstrating that once people become habituated to the notion that any opinion is as good as any other, and can be untethered from empirical evidence ("post-modernism in action", says Tourish), then bias is given free reign.

The cults of death. In their secret worlds members live in a vortex of belief and cold anger, swept up in a giddy mixture of fear, hatred and idealism. It can lead to 900 men, women and children drinking poisoned Kool-Aid in a jungle clearing. Perhaps it also leads to 9/11, Bali, Madrid and London.

Load-Date: July 25, 2005

Assessing the rights and wrongs of women at war

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

March 8, 2005 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Opinion; Pg. 11

Length: 802 words

Byline: Louise Williams. Louise Williams is a Herald journalist. This is an edited version of her address to an International Committee of the Red Cross briefing on Women and War in Sydney last week.

Body

Fighting wars is no longer just men's business, and Louise Williams wonders why.

WAR is not just men's business. It never has been. Every culture has its Joan of Arc. Take the Trung sisters of Vietnam who led their men into battle against the Chinese Han invaders, atop elephants draped in gilded cloth. It was 34AD and women, supposedly, enjoyed no social standing of their own.

Yet we continue to react with horror, revulsion and confusion when the perpetrators of violence in war or conflict are girls, young women or mothers. And, despite decades of academic debate, and a slew of Hollywood movies like G.I. Jane, we have not resolved the question of whether the gradual opening up of regular armed forces to females represents a victory for equality or the crossing over to a dark, male side.

"Men who refuse to fight risk being ridiculed, imprisoned or even killed for their lack of courage," notes a Dutch government study on gender and war. "[But] women who contradict female stereotypes by killing are often regarded as much more deviant or unnatural than [pacifist] men."

The Beslan school siege in Russia last year provoked international outrage not only for its appalling brutality, but also because it broke two deeply held taboos - the targets were children, and some terrorists were women.

"How could any person inflict torture on innocent children, but especially how could a woman, whose earthly purpose is to create and nurture life?" wrote Miranda Devine in the Herald, among many others.

In the Middle East, another grim first was reported three months ago: a Palestinian mother - pregnant with her third child - turned her body into a bomb and blew herself up.

And from Iraq came the horror behind the walls of Abu Ghraib prison. It was a US servicewoman, Lynndie England, whose image was circulated worldwide posing with a naked male Iraqi prisoner on a dog leash. That a professional female soldier could seemingly relish abuse with clear sexual overtones hardly gels with any social norms.

Women are usually portrayed as victims of war, and they are. They are displaced, widowed, impoverished and physically and sexually abused in their millions. But we also know women are increasingly taking up arms themselves. Too little attention, however, has been focused on why.

Assessing the rights and wrongs of women at war

Since 1990 women have served as combatants in at least 57 countries. Modern history counts World War II as the beginning of women's increased participation, mainly in reserve or support units, intelligence gathering and munitions factories. But in the Soviet armed forces women filled 8 per cent of combat roles.

In the Gulf War of 1990-91, 14 per cent of US military personnel were female. In guerilla conflicts, women made up 30 per cent of the Sandanistas in Nicaragua and 25 per cent of the Faribundo in El Salvador.

A very unusual meeting in Geneva recently brought together 32 female combatants from armed opposition groups in 18 conflict zones.

"Women and girls can support violence perpetrated by others and perpetrate violence themselves," noted the report of the proceedings.

Most interestingly, it did deal with why. If women do pick up weapons for different reasons to men, then they may be persuaded to put them down for different reasons. This is a tantalising prospect for peace negotiators and human rights groups, which clearly demands proper study. Ironically, the assumption that women may be more willing to talk peace, or to behave more humanely in war, goes full circle; back to softer, female stereotypes.

The modest conclusions of the Geneva meeting are worth noting. Most women said they fight only as a last resort. Women who had been raped, or had witnessed the killings of husbands or family members, were especially motivated.

But the girls and women also reported being lured into armed opposition groups by sometimes dubious promises of protection. For example, women and girls have long been tactically exploited to infiltrate security cordons or breach military roadblocks.

It was a young female suicide bomber of the Tamil Tigers who kissed the feet of the former Indian prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, before blowing him and herself up in 1991.

In the recent case of the Palestinian mother, surviving Israeli soldiers said they had not suspected a pregnant woman.

In Beslan, two of the female terrorists who died were wired with explosives, but the remote control was in the hands of the male ringleader.

The ambiguity is not confined to how society views armed women. An Australian military lawyer, Major Penny Cumming, told a conference in Sydney of her bewilderment when a child aimed a stick at her, threateningly, in Baghdad. "Immediately, I thought to myself that it could have been a weapon. My next thought was what on earth was his mother doing letting him out on the street behaving like that?"

Graphic

PHOTO: Photo: AP/Tahar Abed Al-Adim

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

M.I.A. is music's 'it' girl of 2005

The Toronto Star

January 27, 2005 Thursday

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Section: ENTERTAINMENT; Pg. G03

Length: 708 words

Byline: Raju Mudhar, Toronto Star

Body

M.I.A. is missing in action.

Sorry, couldn't resist. And it's forgivable. M.I.A. (a.k.a. 28-year-old Maya Arulpragasam) is a Sri Lankan-born, British-based siren who is music's uncontested "it" girl of early 2005.

Her album, *Arular*, doesn't even come out until February, but on the strength of a few singles and a much-praised mix tape with Diplo (one DJ half of Philadelphia-based Hollertronix) that have critics, media and blogs running out of descriptors for her mix of rap, dancehall and electronica, it's obvious everyone wants a minute of this girl's time.

But Toronto can afford to be patient. On February 2, M.I.A. plays her first North American show at the Drake Hotel. Then she's off for two nights at the Knitting Factory in New York. Then back to Britain to wait for her album to drop on Feb. 22, and the rest of the world to find out about her.

When I do catch her on a glitchy cellphone connection (which fits, considering the skittery, electro beats on her debut), Arulpragasam is in a cab heading across London to a pub for some food.

It's the first time all day she's had a chance to eat. The hype and the ensuing opportunities are starting to take over her life: "It's at the point where I have to stop and make conscious decisions to eat. I mean, I don't have time to speak to my mom anymore."

That said, she is surprised by all the attention.

"I am, totally. When I made the music, I was still in my bedroom, working on my four-track and didn't really think too much about it, except 'oh my god this is really fun,'" she says. "But I knew it was really odd, 'cause I couldn't really sing properly, and it's not like I'm a rapper. It's something else. It's a hybrid of stuff, but that's all that I could do. And it seemed to be a fun thing to occupy my brain with when I was at home."

"And then it started kind of taking over my life. So that's kind of weird. I mean, my album still hasn't come out. So I don't know what's going to happen. I'm about to find out."

It's that hybrid of sounds that is so appealing. It's urgent, with repetitive singalong choruses alongside deliciously squelchy beats. It's tribal and, at times, political but still fun-sounding. The comparisons to Neneh Cherry fit. So does the ***female*** Dizzee Rascal.

M.I.A. is music's 'it' girl of 2005

But M.I.A. appropriates all kinds of sounds. There's the Prince-aping chorus of "Sunshowers." And a few Missy Elliot moments, like on "Fire Fire." Or the big-beat bounce of "10\$." It's an incredible debut album, which seems to make sense when you consider Arulpragasam's incredible life story.

Born in Sri Lanka, her father was one of the founding members of one of the movements of the ***Tamil Tigers***, the rebels who have waged civil war with the majority Sinhalese. She saw the conflict first-hand. To avoid it, she moved with her Mother to England when she was 10, to live in a rough, British neighbourhood, where she encountered racism and poverty.

In this milieu, Arulpragasam acclimatized and eventually headed to art school. Her ensuing work was shortlisted for the Alternative Turner Prize. She also designed Elastica's album cover for *The Menace*, which led her to meet tonnes of musicians, and she eventually started playing a Roland 303.

Her glitchy, squelchy, urgent backbeat was born.

She wants to continue to do other types of art - the backdrop in her "Galang" video is her own - but she hasn't the time.

As well, she has family and friends in Sri Lanka, and the recent Asian tsunami disaster has affected her deeply. She wants to do something to raise money, but details haven't been formalized. It's difficult for her, so she doesn't want to talk about it.

At next Wednesday's Drake show, she will be backed by Diplo, with whom she created the "Piracy Funds Terrorism" mix tape. As for the show, she's not sure what to tell you to expect.

"I'm different in every single show. I try to give as much as I can to make it different. I don't have a planned show, so something close to the mix tape I guess," she says.

"If you're coming to see a choreographed dance thing and vocal gymnastics, then don't bother. But if you want to see something raw and something that's honest, come."

Who: M.I.A.

When: Wednesday night

Where: Drake Hotel,

1150 Queen St. W.

Tickets: \$20 adv. @ Ticketmaster, Rotate This

and Soundscapes

Graphic

M.I.A.'s appealing hybrid of sounds is urgent, with repetitive singalong choruses alongside deliciously squelchy beats.

Load-Date: January 27, 2005

Sex-slave gangs prey on orphans

DAILY MAIL (London)

January 5, 2005

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Section: ED_3RD; Pg. 8

Length: 833 words

Byline: RICHARD SHEARS; DAVID WILLIAMS

Body

REPORTS that child survivors of the tsunami are being kidnapped as sex slaves brought a new nightmare dimension to the disaster yesterday.

Aid workers fear gangs are preying on orphans and youngsters separated from their families in the hundreds of makeshift refugee camps that have sprung up in the countries hit by the giant waves.

They may be sold to paedophiles, used as household labour, bought by bereaved parents, or even allegedly drafted as soldiers.

'This is a situation that lends itself to this kind of exploitation,' said Carol Bellamy, director of the United Nations children's fund, Unicef.

'Our concern here is whether these children are frankly turned into child slaves, if you will, or abused and exploited.

'They could be put to work domestic labour, sex trade, a whole series of potential abuses.' Indonesia yesterday banned the movement of children under 16 from the devastated region of Aceh amid reports that child sex syndicates are operating in the area in force.

At least one orphan has been kidnapped and aid workers warned there may be hundreds of other cases with vulnerable children being sold as sex slaves in the wealthier neighbouring countries of Singapore and Malaysia.

There were also reports of a mobile phone text message advertising 300 Aceh orphans for sale.

Unicef said it been told of criminals offering kidnapped children from Aceh for sale or adoption.

Indonesia estimates 35,000 Acehnese children lost one or both parents in the disaster.

A spokesman for Unicef in Indonesia, John Budd, said there had been one confirmed case of a child being smuggled from Aceh to the nearby city of Medan for trafficking. He said there were also unconfirmed reports of up to 20 other children being taken to Malaysia, and possible hundreds to Jakarta, the Indonesian capital.

'I don't think you could have a more vulnerable child on Earth than a child in this situation,' Mr Budd told the BBC.

Sex-slave gangs prey on orphans

'A young child who has gone through what they have witnessed will be barely surviving in terms of psychological health.' He stressed that some of these children could have been taken by well-meaning people. But Unicef fears others are being abducted by gangs posing as aid workers or family friends.

It has set up registration schemes around Aceh to account for all children on their own.

In Thailand, police are investigating reports that a 12-year-old Swedish boy, Kristian Walker, was abducted from a hospital by a paedophile.

And aid workers told how Parithat Pethrode, aged two, was in danger of being snatched by baby traffickers. She lost her mother and grandfather who were raising her when the tsunami struck. Her future, with no home and no family, looked hopeless.

She cried for days as she was passed from stranger to stranger.

If it were not for the speedy work of Mrs Monthip Soonsueng, director of a babies' home and her team of helpers, Parithat would have been in danger of being abducted.

'We are being very, very careful to watch out for the safety of all the homeless children,' said Mrs Soonsueng, a member of the Bureau of Anti-Trafficking in Women and Children. 'We are well aware that the broken regions of southern Thailand could be a hunting ground for gangs who steal children and smuggle them out of the country to sell to couples who cannot have children of their own.'

'In this stricken area in particular, we are not far from the Malaysian border, where there have been many cases of children being smuggled out before the tsunami came. With so much chaos about us, it would not be difficult for people to steal children.' Parithat and hundreds of other children in a teeming refugee camp are now being watched over by police, security guards, and even some American soldiers who arrived there yesterday.

In Sri Lanka, a young girl left orphaned and homeless in the devastated city of Galle is reported by a women's group to have been gangraped by six men.

The Tamil Tigers rebel army is alleged to be kidnapping children separated from their families to give them combat training.

The group, which has fought a 20-year war of independence, suffered huge losses in the tsunami.

It is said to have been abducting boys aged 12 to 14 under the pretext of giving them shelter only to force them into 'combat and arms training.' The Sri Lankan authorities have warned that the traumatised victims of the tsunami are vulnerable to rape and abuse in the vast refugee camps and holding centres where there is little security.

UNICEF set out the priorities for helping the estimated 1.5million children affected by the disaster last night.

Director Carol Bellamy, who is visiting Sri Lanka, said help should focus on 'keeping children alive with an emphasis on clean water, adequate sanitation, basic nutrition and routine medical care'.

She said the relief effort also had to concentrate on reuniting those who had lost their immediate families with relatives, protecting children from exploitation and getting them back to school as soon as possible.

Load-Date: January 6, 2005

NEWS FEATURE: Robin Hood to some, India's most wanted bandit is shot dead
By Anindita Ramaswamy, dpa

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

October 19, 2004, Tuesday 11573111:57:31 Central European Time

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Section: Miscellaneous

Length: 863 words

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

A bullet through the head made death come quickly for Koose Muniswamy Veerappan, who was hunted down like an animal a little before midnight on Monday in the dense jungles where he was king. For four decades India's most wanted bandit, notorious sandalwood smuggler, ruthless kidnapper, cruel elephant poacher and moody Robin Hood to a group of desperately poor villagers, unleashed a reign of terror from the forests of the south. He ruled from an impregnable natural fortress, his domain sprawled across 6,000 square kilometres in the Male Mahadeshwara forests straddling the southern states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, sometimes spilling over into picturesque Kerala. A Special Task Force (STF), set up by the Tamil Nadu and Karnataka state governments, received information that Veerappan and his men would travel to the plains late Monday as he needed to be treated for an eye problem. Their ambulance was sighted through heavy foliage and a starless night, and the men were shot dead in Tamil Nadu's Dharmapuri district in a police operation entitled "Cocoon". "Last night's encounter was not a flash in the pan but one of a joint operation meticulously carried out by both Karnataka and Tamil Nadu STF," said STF chief K Vijaykumar. The end came after a long and desperate wait and months of hard work, he said. "When they were spotted, we asked them to surrender. But when they started firing, we returned the fire in defence," said Vijaykumar, who had taken a vow to remain bald until he killed Veerappan.

Little is known about the man who was chased by police teams for more than two decades. He was born into a poor ethnic Tamil family in a village near the forests he made his home, and was noticed by a poacher when he was 10 and had shot dead his first elephant. Agile and fearless, he built a reputation of tackling elephants head-on and police said he slaughtered 2,000 for their ivory. He smuggled 40,000 kilograms of ivory and traded illegally in sandalwood worth one billion rupees (22 million U.S. dollars). When strict environment laws governing forest wealth were enacted, he began kidnapping for ransom. Police said Veerappan committed his first murder at 17. He is believed to have killed at least 138 people, many of them government officials and policemen. At his peak, he led a motley gang of about 150, which later dwindled to 15. Ransom money bought him provisions and the loyalty of the forest tribals, who admired and feared him. They distrusted the patrolling police who raped their women. On Monday one of these tribals betrayed him. The STF, set up in 1990 to track the elusive bandit, was deterred at every step by the torturous terrain of hills, ravines, thick forests and tall elephant grass. The two state police forces had little coordination, with each wanting to claim credit for his death. Veerappan also allegedly received political patronage, dividing his support at election time between powerful regional political parties since the 1970s. A lanky man with a look of wild hunger in his eyes, always dressed in military camouflage, sometimes twirling his trademark handlebar moustache, he also allegedly had links with Tamil militants and even Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers. Over the years Veerappan's exploits became more gruesome. In November 1990 he beheaded deputy conservator of forests R. Srinivas. In April 1993 he used mines to blow up a bus carrying Tamil Nadu policemen, killing 22. His daring

NEWS FEATURE: Robin Hood to some, India 's most wanted bandit is shotdeadBy Anindita Ramaswamy, dpa

kidnapping of famous Karnataka film star Rajkumar in 2000 grabbed the headlines led to violence across the state where the actor is a cultural icon. When the state government conceded to his demand of releasing 56 jailed Tamil extremists, even then president KR Narayanan commented: "It is time that civil society and the lawful government assert their authority and primacy over the daredevil heroes of crime and banditry." Rajkumar was released 108 days later allegedly after a large ransom was paid, a fact denied by the government. Retired Karnataka police chief C Dinakar in his book "Veerappan's Prize Catch: Rajkumar," claimed 150 million rupees (3.3 million U.S. dollars) ransom was given. Politicians reacted Tuesday to Veerappan's death with a sense of relief. But many people in southern India were indifferent, saying he never troubled them and fought for the rights of the forest tribals. India has a curious relationship with some of its most feared criminals. Between 1979 and 1983, "Bandit Queen" Phoolan Devi plundered villages and murdered scores near the Chambal ravines in northern India. She surrendered in 1983, spent 11 years in prison and was granted parole in 1994 with 54 cases still pending against her. She contested parliamentary elections and won, becoming a champion of the underprivileged. Her end was as violent as her life - she was shot dead by three masked men in July 2001 outside her home in New Delhi. Phoolan Devi's story was kept alive in a controversial movie entitled "Bandit Queen". As will Veerappan's. Several films have already been made about him in Kannada and Tamil languages. His life was the inspiration for a Bollywood film, "Jungle". dpa ar pw

Load-Date: October 19, 2004

End of Document

Blessed isle bleak

Courier Mail (Queensland, Australia)

January 3, 2005 Monday

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 13

Length: 795 words

Byline: Craig Bolland

Body

ONE of the ancient names of Sri Lanka is Serendip, from which we get the word "serendipity". For thousands of years, it's been considered a lucky island. Blessed.

Four years ago, I arrived at the port town of Trincomalee on the eastern coast and it wasn't looking so fortunate.

Trinco sat on the front line of a 20-year-old civil war.

The artillery fire rumbled across the hills at night. If you went walking on the beach in the morning, you could find human bones washed up with the driftwood. While I was there, the *Tamil Tigers* attacked the naval base. I heard the blast of a suicide bomber and saw his decapitated head when I wandered down to see what had happened.

Trinco was full of contrasts: palm trees and soldiers, blue oceans and curfews, pristine beaches and checkpoints, temples and barbed wire, brightly saronged *women* and machine gun nests. On one hand there was the whole tropical paradise dream kit, on the other hand, the grinding poverty of the refugee camps. It was the latter I'd come to see.

I was reporting for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the progress of aid programs in the refugee camps. In one beachside camp in Trinco lived about 2000 refugees displaced by the war.

I've seen a few war zones, and I'm not ashamed to admit that Trinco got to me. In just one schoolroom in the refugee camp there were dozens of children who'd lost parents, and sometimes whole families, to the war.

Their young eyes had seen things you and I can't begin to comprehend and they were trying to make a new life for themselves in very basic conditions.

Imagine a small garden shed, but imagine it made out of rusty roofing iron. Imagine rows of such sheds joined together so that the north wall of one makes the south wall of the next.

Imagine living in that shed for two or three years with your whole family.

You'll then have some idea of the place these people called home.

There were problems delivering the aid the refugees needed as the politics of the area were complicated and the duration and scale of the civil war was so great.

Blessed isle bleak

The camps themselves were overflowing. But there was some hope. Many of the aid programs were working.

If you've ever wondered what an aid dollar can do, let me give you an example. In Trinco, I tracked the progress of some aid loans of \$500 each. They'd be given to a family who would start a small business and repay the interest-free loan when they could. The loan would then be passed on. When I caught up with one loan, it alone had lifted seven families permanently out of poverty and it was on its way to an eighth. People were starting to feel like things were turning a corner.

A few days ago, Trincomalee became a wasteland. It was one of the places hardest hit by the tsunami.

A wall of water six metres high roared over the top of Trinco and up to a kilometre inland. What it left behind defies description. The situation in Trinco has gone from bad to immeasurably worse.

I've been unable to find out what condition the refugee camp is in and what has happened to the friends I made there. There was a naval base next door, made of concrete and steel. It is still under water.

Marco Polo wrote that Trincomalee was one of the finest natural harbours on Earth. It was famed for its beaches and its beauty. A week ago, the population of Trinco stood at about 90,000. Aid workers tell me that 60,000 of them are now without homes and at least 3000, many of them the poorest of the poor and refugees, are confirmed dead.

That number will undoubtedly rise.

TODAY, the survivors in Trincomalee will reportedly feel earth tremors, accompanied by the sea rising and receding. Aid workers are trying to drop in things like water, infant food, blankets, underwear, medicine, toothpaste and tents. Today, only a little of that aid will reach them.

Communications are down, road and rail routes destroyed, and extra hazards like uncleared land mines make the area hazardous to move around in.

The aid workers I've spoken to in Sri Lanka are dazed. Nobody's seen anything like this. No one's even imagined anything like this.

The longer-term outlook for the locals is bleak. Trinco and its neighbouring villages relied heavily on fishing and a fledgling tourist industry.

With the boats and hotels gone, the economy may take decades to rebuild.

I'm afraid there's no happy ending to this story just yet, but I can promise you that small amounts of money, like the revolving loans, make a very real long-term difference.

You can donate to an organisation based in Sri Lanka and find out more about aid programs currently under way at www.sarvodaya.org.

Please consider sponsoring a World Vision child for the longer-term support needed.

Craig Bolland is a QUT lecturer in creative writing and the author of *I Knit Water* (UQP, 2002)

Load-Date: January 2, 2005

In saris and sandals, Sri Lankan villagers prepare for 'bombardment'

Agence France Presse -- English

May 24, 2006 Wednesday 2:08 AM GMT

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Length: 492 words

Dateline: KILINOCHCHI, Sri Lanka, May 24 2006

Body

When the whistle blows at 6:00 am sharp, village women in saris and men in sandals line up in military formation. Another morning's "self-defence training" is about to begin in rebel-controlled Sri Lanka.

With tension increasing on the island, the Tamil Tiger guerrillas say they have reintroduced the program to help villagers protect themselves in the event of wider hostilities.

In Uthayanagar East village just outside Kilinochchi, the "capital" of territory held by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), roosters crow as the group snap to attention on a scrubby football field.

A rebel fighter in striped camouflage raises the Tigers' red flag before the villagers bow their heads in tribute to those who have died in action, and shout a pledge for the "homeland".

Then they break off, the women in one direction, the men in another, for a jog past a cow and several grazing goats.

The rest of this morning's hour-long training is taken up with gymnastic exercises, and sometimes accompanied by laughter.

"This is good for the body," said Sivakamaran Sutharsini, 26, one of 17 women stretching and twisting to the commands of a short-haired female rebel as the morning sun creeps over the trees.

"We like it," said Chanthirarajah Sujivan, 28, a textiles retailer and one of about 50 men who turned up. "If a war broke out, we should prepare."

Their comments were translated by a rebel who identified himself only by the nickname Naresh and who escorted AFP around the site.

"The situation is getting worse. We must train our people how to protect their lives during bombardment," Naresh said.

Training is done in four phases of 15 days each and includes segments on air raid survival, first aid, treatment of unexploded ordnance, and bunker building, he said.

In saris and sandals, Sri Lankan villagers prepare for 'bombardment'

"We have a syllabus."

Naresh showed AFP several large colour photographs of mutilated corpses and bombed buildings to make his point that civilians are at risk.

"So we emphasize you must make a bunker, a safety bunker," he said, and pointed out a "model bunker" cleanly cut into the earth beside the football field.

Violence between the Tigers and government forces has escalated since December and left a 2002 ceasefire in force only on paper. April was the bloodiest month in four years, with more than 200 deaths.

As a result, the Tigers reintroduced the civilian self-defence program which had last been employed during fighting in 1997-98, Naresh said.

Asked whether the training is mandatory, Naresh said, "we emphasize" that people attend either the morning or afternoon session.

When the day's instruction ends, everybody sits on the ground and the three uniformed supervising cadres mark the participants' yellow attendance cards. At the end of the program they will receive certificates, Naresh said.

The whistle blows. Everyone lines up in formation again and stands at attention while a guerrilla lowers the roaring tiger flag and puts it into a red case.

Another morning's training is over.

Load-Date: May 24, 2006

TSUNAMI IMPACT: WOMEN AND CHILDREN SUFFER MOST IN CROWDED CAMPS

IPS-Inter Press Service

June 7, 2005, Tuesday

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Length: 938 words

Byline: By Thalif Deen

Dateline: UNITED NATIONS, June 7 2005

Body

Women and children continue to be victims of violence and sexual abuse nearly six months after the massive tsunami devastation in the Indian Ocean region, according to an international team of researchers.

In surveys of tsunami survivors and aid workers in five countries -- India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Thailand -- researchers found that abuses are being caused by a lack of protection for individuals who lost their homes and now living in displacement camps.

"In all the countries surveyed, cramped living conditions in temporary housing have surfaced such problems as sexual violence, alcohol abuse and physical violence," the study said. "These living conditions deprive people of their dignity."

Despite the massive influx of aid, it concludes, little has changed for many survivors since the tsunami.

"Aid distribution is often lacking or discriminatory because of corruption, favouritism and poor management," researchers concluded.

In Sri Lanka, reconstruction has proceeded at different rates depending upon political influence. In the Maldives, response to survivors may depend on the whims of a particular island chief.

The researchers also discovered that decisions about relief, relocation and reconstruction aid are largely taking place without consultation with affected communities.

The study, 'After the Tsunami: Human Rights and Vulnerable Populations,' was co-sponsored by the University of California, Berkeley's Human Rights Centre; the University of Hawaii's Globalisation Research Centre; and the East-West Centre, an internationally recognised research and education organization based in Hawaii.

Kate Pattison of the London-based international relief agency Oxfam told IPS that last December's tsunami affected different people in various ways.

For example, she said, in some cases the main breadwinner was killed - often the father - and in many cases it was the caregiver - most usually the mother.

"Good relief and reconstruction programs have to respond appropriately to the differential needs of **women** and men and with people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds," she added.

TSUNAMI IMPACT: WOMEN AND CHILDREN SUFFER MOST IN CROWDED CAMPS

Oxfam is working to ensure that all these groups are able to participate in its programs, Pattison added.

The study says that abuses perpetrated on tsunami victims were in contravention of the U.N.'s Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and other international human rights agreements.

In the Maldives, security at IDP (internally displaced) camps is deficient, making women and children fearful of attacks by drug abusers.

Soon after the tsunami, the study said, Burmese migrant workers in Thailand went into hiding because they feared being arrested and deported by the authorities.

In Sri Lanka, children are at risk of recruitment or abduction by the Tamil Tigers to become child soldiers. And in both Aceh, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka, adults are living in fear of the warring groups.

The study also points out that there has been inequity in aid distribution.

"Our research teams found disparities in the distribution of aid by governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to survivors in every country they visited. These disparities, largely resulting from corruption, favouritism and poor management, have caused ruptures in communities that, in some cases, have erupted in violence."

In Sri Lanka, India and Thailand, it is not uncommon to find that fishermen in one village have received aid to rebuild their damaged boats, while fishermen in a nearby village have received no assistance.

In Indonesia, the military has threatened to withhold aid from some villagers who wish to return to their home communities.

The researchers also found a lack of community participation in the tsunami reconstruction process currently underway.

In Sri Lanka, there have been street demonstrations against local authorities. Many tsunami survivors in Aceh, where an armed conflict is ongoing, have expressed fears of reporting their concerns to the police and military authorities because of their past human rights abuses.

Thai survivors criticised what they called the government's "cash response approach," which sought to give survivors a meagre one-off payment rather than engaging them in the long-term process of rebuilding their communities.

While applauding the relief efforts by humanitarian organizations, the study said that "no amount of aid, however generous, can mask the fact that natural disasters, similar to armed conflicts, tend to make vulnerable populations even more vulnerable." In a letter to former U.S. President Bill Clinton, currently the U.N. Special Envoy for Tsunami Reconstruction, the New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) expressed concern about reconstruction efforts in three countries he visited recently: India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia.

Historically marginalised groups suffered discrimination, and government relief efforts failed to adequately consult with local communities about relocation and compensation for loss of livelihood and property, said Brad Adams, Asia director for HRW.

"Whether its higher-caste groups and developers in India, or the military and armed groups in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, the powerful have tried to take advantage of the scramble for rebuilding and recovery at the expense of the basic rights of vulnerable groups," Adams said.

While praising India for its positive overall response to the tsunami, HRW found that government recovery efforts did not adequately take into account the needs of different vulnerable segments of the affected population, particularly women, children, the disabled, Dalits (so-called untouchables) and tribal groups.

TSUNAMI IMPACT: WOMEN AND CHILDREN SUFFER MOST IN CROWDED CAMPS

Load-Date: June 9, 2005

End of Document

Future tense, past imperfect; TIPS FOR TRIPS

The Sun Herald (Sydney, Australia)

December 28, 2003 Sunday

Late Edition

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Section: TRAVEL; Pg. 6

Length: 843 words

Byline: Michael Gebicki

Body

There are still dangers out there even for hardy travellers, writes Michael Gebicki.

THE past 12 months have not been good for overseas travel. SARS and terrorism dampened many appetites for the exotic, and even a low-level perceived risk was enough to earn a travel warning from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

However, the transition from the intensive care unit to the recovery ward can be surprisingly swift. A decade ago, Cambodia was still reeling in the aftermath of Pol Pot, Croatia was fighting for its life and Cuba was beyond the wildest imaginings of most travellers which begs the question: how long before the first tourists hit the streets of Baghdad?

Here are some of the places where we hardly dared go in 2003 and where the prospects are at least a little brighter in 2004. At the moment, some of these places are strictly for the hardened escapist who doesn't mind goat for dinner and a rock for a pillow. The pay-off is a new world of wonders and the satisfaction of seeing it before the mob arrives. Travellers should of course consult the DFAT website (www.dfat.gov.au/travel/) regardless of where their travels take them.

East Timor

Still slightly traumatised as it recovers from the struggle to achieve independence, East Timor has all the basic credentials for an intriguing destination. Among its raw material, the nation has some charming beaches, Portuguese colonial towns, rugged mountains and a lush interior. Coupled with the low-level threat of militia activity, the lack of tourism facilities and general infrastructure make this a potential destination for the future rather than today.

Forecast: A slow start, but stability will bring the curious in increasing numbers.

Bali

Nowhere did it tougher than Bali in 2003. More than a year after the Bali bombing, the shops in Kuta can still go several days without a sale, taxi drivers squat listlessly beside their cabs, hotels that are 30 per cent full call themselves lucky and at the nightly dances in Ubud, you can count the audience on the fingers of one hand. The

Future tense, past imperfect TIPS FOR TRIPS

Balinese economy, which derives more than 90 per cent of its income from tourism, has been shredded. Prospects are bright, however. For shopping, culture, heat, scenery or value for money, nowhere else even comes close.

Forecast: Expect a slow but unstoppable return to prominence as Australia's No. 1 holiday destination.

Sri Lanka

This teardrop-shaped island experienced one of its most tranquil years in more than a decade after the Government and the **Tamil Tigers** abandoned mutual slaughter. However, the fallout from SARS and international terrorism scares hampered its tourism industry. Sri Lanka dazzles travellers with beaches of staggering beauty, ruined cities entwined with mythology, a Buddhist culture, elephants, leopards and highland tea plantations where **women** in flaming saris stalk through the camellia bushes.

Forecast: Bright for the mildly adventurous, although lack of direct air links clouds its appeal for Australians. Hong Kong

Blighted by the SARS scare, tourism tumbled in Hong Kong. During the height of the crisis, between March and May, airline passenger traffic into and out of Hong Kong dropped by about 70 per cent. When the World Health Organisation confirmed that Hong Kong was SARS-free on June 23, the island launched an aggressive fightback. Airlines and hotels slashed prices and, for the keen-eyed shopper, there are still plenty of great Hong Kong bargains around.

Forecast: Hong Kong will get a shot in the arm if Virgin Atlantic is cleared by regulatory authorities to operate services between Australia and Hong Kong, linking with its existing Europe services

Libya

Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's anti-Western policies have kept the country off the mass tourism map for the past two decades. However, there's a thaw in the air, which should lead to an increase in the small but ever increasing number of intrepid travellers that has been visiting the country for years now, and coming back with inspiring stories of the amazing Roman ruins of Leptis Magna, nights in Bedouin tents in the dunes of the Sahara, hassle-free souks and the genuine and courtly sense of hospitality displayed by the Libyan people.

Forecast: Wait and see, but this is one to watch.

Zimbabwe

While its Government turned a blind eye, thugs rampaged across this southern African nation, deflecting attention from the woeful economic policies of the Mugabe administration. At the cusp of 2004, the situation is still volatile and, for the moment, places such as Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe's magnificent wildlife preserves and the medieval ruins of Great Zimbabwe are on the no-go list.

Forecast: A fascinating destination, but wait and see if normalcy returns in 2004.

TOP NO-GO ZONES

- * Afghanistan
- * Burundi
- * Iraq
- * Liberia
- * Pakistan
- * Somalia

Future tense, past imperfect TIPS FOR TRIPS

The Department of Foreign Affairs is still advising travellers to defer non-essential travel to these countries:

- * Algeria
- * Central African Republic
- * Colombia
- * Ethiopia
- * Haiti
- * Indonesia (including Bali)
- * Ivory Coast
- * Kenya
- * Saudi Arabia
- * Sudan
- * Turkey
- * Yemen

Graphic

THREE ILLUS: BAD RAP: Street statement in Colombia. FOR YOUR EYES ONLY: Kabul. Picture: Reuters.
HOLDING THE FORT : American forces in Baghdad, which is on the Department of Foreign Affairs' no-go list. Picture: JASON SOUTH

Load-Date: June 20, 2007

Are we patsies, or what?

The Gazette (Montreal, Quebec)

April 17, 2004 Saturday Final Edition

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Section: Editorial / Op-ed; Norman Webster; Pg. A31; Column

Length: 823 words

Byline: NORMAN WEBSTER

Body

Why are we such patsies? It's a question many of us were muttering into our beer this week, as we watched remnants of the Khadr family return to Toronto to claim their sacred right to free medical care.

True, they are Canadian citizens. They are also one of the more dangerous families on the planet, close personal friends of Osama bin Laden and practising holy warriors in the battle against civilization. Various members are buried in rubbly ground abroad or imprisoned at Guantanamo Bay, but there is still son Karim, 14 - wounded right now, but a prime candidate for martyrdom once the Ontario medical system restores him to health.

The Gazette

Too harsh a judgment? Not, surely, for those who watched Karim's mother and sister tell the CBC's Terrence McKenna about the glories of suicide bombing and their glee at the slaughter in New York on Sept. 11.

There is a tendency to ascribe the savagery of Al-Qa'ida and its ilk to the male of the species. Then you see the two hooded Khadr women calmly discussing blowing up innocent people in the name of God. It's a reminder that men are raised, at least initially, by women, and don't get all their murderous impulses from dad.

That Khadr interview was one of the two most discouraging pieces of television I've seen in years. The other was a CBC program on a girl from Kosovo who survived a massacre of 14 members of her family by a pack of marauding Serbs known as Scorpions. Now in Canada, still recovering from 16 bullet wounds, she has identified the animal who led the execution squad - another happy newcomer to Canada.

When this gentleman was confronted, he refused to talk and a pal made a lame joke about the Scorpions being a rock band. Then they drove off, while a Canadian functionary nattered on about the obstacles to getting rid of the murderers among us.

Again, the thought: What patsies we are. Can we really do nothing about this nonsense? Do we really think there is no consequence to opening our doors to brutes and terrorists?

Someone who thinks there is has just published an arresting look at the reality of terrorism. He is Stewart Bell, senior reporter at the National Post, who was in Montreal recently speaking to the Canadian Institute of International Affairs.

In his book, Cold Terror: How Canada Nurtures and Exports Terrorism Around the World, Bell sums up: "Canada has tried to smother terrorism with kindness. ... It is perhaps a typically Canadian approach. But it is wrong, dead wrong."

Are we patsies, or what?

Some developments almost pass belief. Not one but two Canadian prime ministers have been turned into patsy accomplices by cunning terrorists. Jean Chretien made a personal pitch for the Khadr family with the prime minister of Pakistan.

Paul Martin, while finance minister, ignored security advice and attended a Toronto dinner put on by a front for the **Tamil Tigers**, probably the most dangerous terrorist organization in the world. Fighting for a Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka, the Tigers have carried out more than 160 suicide bombings - more than all other such groups in the world combined, according to Bell. These are people whose Canadian arm - jocularly known as "the Snow Tigers" - provides funds (often extorted), organization and sanctuary to the fighters on the ground.

Some of our willful ignorance almost passes belief. In the wake of the attack on the Twin Towers, Jean Chretien actually told the House of Commons: "I am not aware at this time of a cell known to the police to be operating in Canada with the intention of carrying out terrorism in Canada or elsewhere."

The facts, Bell says, are that there are about 50 active terrorist groups in the country. A former chief of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service has said there are more such groups here than anywhere else in the world, with the possible exception of the United States.

And these are not nice people. They include the Sikh terrorists who cold-bloodedly brought down an Air India flight full of Canadians in 1985, killing 329. Bell calls it "Canada's 9/11." The same fanaticism assassinated the editor of the Indo-Canadian Times in Surrey, B.C., the very courageous Tara Singh Hayer, the only such murder in Canadian history.

Then there is Hezbollah, dedicated to the destruction of Israel by any means, no matter how foul and repellently inhuman. Bell takes us with him to the scene of a suicide bombing. We see the nuts and bolts, the bone fragments and body parts, the blown-off legs and patches of red on the ceiling.

These are not nice people. Al- Qa'ida, Bell says, preaches "violence without limits." Its coded word for Americans is White Meat.

"Canada," according to a Russian security official, "is the land of trusting fools." We also have this nice medicare system to put warriors back on their feet and send them out with fresh nuts and bolts to do God's will.

We're patsies; maybe dangerous ones.

Norman Webster is a former editor of The Gazette.

Load-Date: April 17, 2004

RIGHTS-INDIA: PATRIOT LAW REPEALED AFTER CHARGES OF MISUSE

IPS-Inter Press Service

September 18, 2004, Saturday

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Length: 923 words

Byline: By Ranjit Devraj

Dateline: NEW DELHI, Sep. 18, 2004

Body

After snaring thousands of teenagers, politicians, journalists, members of minority communities but few terrorists, India this week repealed its 'patriot' law introduced in response to the Sep. 11, 2001 attacks on the United States.

A government statement said the cabinet headed by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had at a meeting Friday decided to replace the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) with a new law.

"It is important to note the intention of the government is to protect the rights of people vis-a-vis the misuse of POTA," the statement said.

The unpopularity of POTA contributed to the electoral debacle of the right-wing, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government in May by the communist-backed, Congress-led, United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Indeed, the Congress party and its allies had made misuse of POTA a major election issue and vowed to make its repeal a priority, ignoring dire warnings from BJP leaders, including former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, that this would be an invitation to increased incidents of bombings and suicide attacks.

The Congress party and its allies had opposed the introduction of POTA in Parliament on the grounds that it would be used by a pro-Hindu government to victimise members of the minority Muslim community. But Congress did not have the numbers to prevent passage of the bill on Mar. 26, 2002.

Impetus for the introduction of POTA picked up after a suicide squad stormed Parliament House on Dec. 13, 2001 but failed to blow up the monumental red sandstone building only because the car-bomb that was used did not detonate owing to faulty wiring.

The then Vajpayee government blamed neighbouring Pakistan for the incident and made preparations for an armed confrontation with Islamabad.

Friday's repeal, subject to the formality of presidential approval, came by bureaucratic fiat because the government was denied a chance to gain Parliamentary approval after BJP legislators recorded their objections by disrupting all business during the just concluded budget session.

"The government has been concerned with the manner in which the POTA has been misused in the past two years," Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil told reporters after the release of the government statement.

RIGHTS- INDIA : PATRIOT LAW REPEALED AFTER CHARGES OF MISUSE

Patil dismissed charges made by BJP leaders that the repeal compromised India's fight against terrorism saying that the government would soon strengthen the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act passed in 1967.

According to Patil the older law would, on amendment, include such POTA features as the banning of terrorist organisations and their support systems including funding. In fact, he said, all 32 militant organisations banned under POTA would continue to be declared illegal.

Importantly, the onus of proving the guilt of the accused once again shifts back to the prosecution and provisions in POTA which allow the arrest, interrogation and detention of suspects for 30 days before production in a court of law have been done away with.

Under POTA confessions made to security forces can be used as evidence as also communications secretly intercepted and recorded.

The Congress party's prediction that the BJP government would use POTA to victimise members of the Muslim community seemed to come true in western Gujarat where all 287 cases brought before the courts after the anti-Muslim pogrom in the state in 2002 were from the minority community.

Fifty-eight people were killed when a train carrying Hindu activists was allegedly set ablaze by a Muslim mob near the town of Godhra in western Gujarat. More than 1,000 people, mostly Muslims, died in riots following the attack.

Gross misuse of POTA in Gujarat has come under criticism by India's National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) -- a statutory body -- and by the London-based human rights watchdog Amnesty International.

"Over the past two years POTA has been used against mostly against juveniles, old people, members of 'dalit' (ritually low caste Hindus groups), advisias (aborigines), women, political opponents and those struggling for their socio-economic rights," Colin Gonsalves, a well-known lawyer and human rights activist told IPS.

Gonsalves organised hearings by 'Peoples Tribunals' of testimonies by victims of POTA which were widely publicised and were greatly influential in its eventual repeal.

Ram Jethmalani, who was Union Law Minister at the time POTA was passed, told the media later that he deeply regretted it afterwards. "I supported it only because it was done in obedience to United Nations Security Council resolutions," he said.

The law has also been a subject of debate for its alleged use or abuse by several provincial governments against political rivals.

One such controversy relates to a regional leader in Tamil Nadu, Vaiko, who was imprisoned for more than a year under POTA for his alleged support of the banned Sri Lankan rebel group, the Tamil Tigers.

Vaiko's party, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), was among those who had approved POTA in parliament. But he and his southern allies later pulled out of the BJP government.

Meanwhile, human rights groups were guarded in welcoming the withdrawal.

"We are happy at the repeal of POTA," said Ravi Nair, director of the South Asian Human Rights Documentation Centre - an affiliate partner of the Bangkok-based regional rights body Forum Asia.

"But we would like to see what the government intends to do by bringing amendments to some of the laws for handling terrorism," Nair told IPS.

Load-Date: September 20, 2004

RIGHTS- INDIA : PATRIOT LAW REPEALED AFTER CHARGES OF MISUSE

End of Document

Nine killed as heavy fighting erupts between two Tamil Tiger rebel factions; army moving to block sea assault

Associated Press International

April 9, 2004 Friday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 858 words

Byline: DILIP GANGULY; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: PANICHACHANKANI, Sri Lanka

Body

Mainstream Tamil Tiger guerrillas advanced on a heavily armed breakaway faction in a vicious gun and mortar battle that killed at least nine people, wounded 20 and imperiled Sri Lanka's fragile two-year-old cease-fire.

Friday's fighting, the worst since the 2002 truce halted the country's 19-year civil war, came a week after voters rejected the government that had negotiated the cease-fire. The balloting elected a Parliament that backs the hardline president.

Sri Lankan army troops were told to stay out of the rebel conflict, but the fighting was taking place within a few kilometers (miles) of army camps, where armed soldiers listened over sophisticated radios to news of the factional guerrilla fighting along the Vergul River, 220 kilometers (140 miles) east of the capital, Colombo.

After hours of mortar and machine-gun fire, about 500 fighters from the breakaway group - including women and teenage boys and girls - withdrew from the area, claiming they were repositioning not retreating.

"About 1,000 ... people came and attacked us, so this is a tactical withdrawal and we are going to set up our new defense line," S. Kumar, a senior commander of the breakaway group, told The Associated Press.

He said more fighters from the mainstream Liberation Tigers of Tamileelam were moving to fortify their freshly gained positions on the opposing side, indicating another offensive maneuver was likely.

Members of the main 9,000-strong Tamil Tiger rebel group based in the north seized territory from the breakaway 6,000-strong eastern faction, led by charismatic commander Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan, known as Karuna.

The two sides had been squared off since Karuna announced the schism on March 3 in a dispute over regional rivalry and political strategy.

The fighters led by Kumar, one of Karuna's breakaway commanders, appeared calm as they checked their weapons and ammunition. They boarded tractors taking them and their rocket launchers, grenades and heavy machine-guns to their new defensive line and announced they were closing the road for the night.

"We will fight to the last," said Kumar, carrying a light machine-gun as he hopped on the last of three tractors.

Nine killed as heavy fighting erupts between two Tamil Tiger rebel factions; army moving to block sea assault

For two decades the **Tamil Tigers** fought government troops in a bloody separatist conflict that claimed an estimated 65,000 lives.

Now the once close-knit group, infamous for its ruthless tactics, including suicide bombings, is split in two and fighting within its own ranks, leaving eight guerrillas and one civilian dead, according to unconfirmed reports.

More than 3,500 terrified villagers had fled their homes by Friday evening and more were planning to leave, they said. Among the refugees was Sumitra, 28, carrying her month-old baby boy.

"I had thought that we can live like normal people, but it looks like we are refugees again," she said. Millions of people have been displaced in Sri Lanka's years of war.

Norwegian monitors said the reported civilian death and the wounding of seven others was already a breach of the cease-fire.

Amid fears that the peace process could be doomed if government troops were drawn into the fighting, President Chandrika Kumaratunga ordered her commanders to help evacuate rebel casualties from both sides, but not to interfere in their conflict, an official in her office said.

The army positioned men along the roadways in the region and along the sea cliff to prevent any landing by the mainstream Tigers at Panichachankani, where refugees were being cared for by the international relief organizations UNICEF and OXFAM.

"When the civilian population is affected it breaches the cease-fire agreement," said Hagrup Haukland, deputy chief of a European truce monitoring team.

Friday's fight was multi-pronged. Groups of heavily armed northern rebels also landed in boats at Kathiravelli, a coastal village about 15 kilometers (nine miles) from the river, and were trying to advance on Batticaloa, the breakaway group's stronghold, military officials said.

To enter that area they would have to cross Sri Lankan government-held territory.

"We don't want to get dragged into this," Defense Secretary Ciril Herath told The AP after an emergency meeting with European cease-fire-monitors in Colombo. "We are watching the situation very closely."

Police said at least four people traveling in a minibus were wounded by a Claymore mine - a small device that is remotely detonated.

An ambulance driver who tried to retrieve wounded rebels was killed in another Claymore mine explosion, rebel sources said.

Last week, a political alliance led by Kumaratunga, who has taken a tough line toward the rebels, won the most seats in parliamentary elections, defeating the party led by former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, who initiated the most recent round of peace efforts.

Kumaratunga, blinded in one eye by a Tiger suicide bomber in 1999, had accused her rival of being too soft on the rebels.

On Monday, the Tigers warned they'd go back to war with the government if their demands for sweeping autonomy in Tamil-majority northeast Sri Lanka were not met. They say the minority Tamils face widespread discrimination from the ethnic Sinhalese majority.

Load-Date: April 10, 2004

Nine killed as heavy fighting erupts between two Tamil Tiger rebel factions; army moving to block sea assault

End of Document

FBI says al-Qaida recruiting women, Analysts wary of new possibility of female attackers

\$%Charleston Daily Mail (West Virginia) virginia)

April 1, 2003, Tuesday tuesday

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Section: News; Pg. P5D P5D

Length: 886 words

Byline: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS press

Body

WASHINGTON - FBI officials are concerned that al-Qaida, with its ranks thinned and tactics exposed by a series of arrests, may turn to women to carry out or facilitate surprise terror attacks, officials say.

For the first time in the war on terror, the FBI has issued a be-on-the-lookout bulletin for a woman, a Pakistani neurological expert, wanted for questioning in connection with al-Qaida. Analysts are also examining claims made by another woman in an Arabic newspaper that she was tasked by Osama bin Laden to open training camps for female terrorists.

Female attackers, successfully used by other terror organizations like the Palestinian Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, would represent a major tactical shift for al-Qaida after years of being aligned with the Afghan Taliban regime that oppressed women and treated them as second class citizens unworthy of participating in the Islamic jihad, officials said. said.

Several U.S. intelligence officials said they have no credible information suggesting there is an imminent attack plan to be carried out by women but that analysts are wary of the possibility, especially in light of recent developments.

"We're aware it is an option and one that was used recently against the Israelis and could easily be adapted by al-Qaida," one official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "But we have nothing to suggest it is about to happen right away."

FBI spokesman Mike Kortan said the bureau was constantly looking for trends to help prevent terrorist attacks.

There are several factors in the last month that have led the FBI to prepare for the possibility that al-Qaida might turn to women.

U.S. officials learned of an interview in mid-March in an Arabic newspaper in which a woman claimed al-Qaida was setting up training camps to train women to become "martyrs." The woman identified herself only as Umm Usama, which translates "mother of Osama."

"We are building a women's structure that will carry out operations that will make the U.S. forget its own name," the woman claimed in the interview with the Asharq al Awsat newspaper based in London. The woman said her job was "to oversee the training of the female mujahedeen affiliated with al-Qaida and the Taliban."

FBI says al-Qaida recruiting women, Analysts wary of new possibility of female attackers

She cited the success of Palestinian female suicide bombers used against Israel in recent months as an impetus for al-Qaida's planning. "The organization thought about this before, but interest increased after the female martyr attacks in Palestine and Chechnya," the woman was quoted as saying.

U.S. officials said that while they had some suspicions about the interview because it was carried out across the Internet using chat rooms and e-mail, it illustrated that women are considered a viable option for future al-Qaida attacks.

The FBI recently put out a global alert for 31-year-old Aafia Siddiqui, as well as her estranged husband, Dr. Mohammed Khan, 33. It was the first time an FBI bulletin sought a woman since the war on terrorism began, officials said.

The FBI said Siddiqui, who has a doctorate in neurological science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, may be in Pakistan, but lived in Boston while attending MIT and recently traveled to the Maryland suburbs of Washington.

FBI officials said they were not alleging she "is connected to specific terrorist activities" but that they wanted to question her about possible contacts with people under suspicion of terrorist activities.

A third reason to suspect a tactical shift, FBI officials said, is that bin Laden's network has suffered several losses in its senior ranks over the last few months and is aware documents and interrogations have yielded substantial information about its planning and tactics.

In testimony last week, FBI Director Robert Mueller divulged that more than 212 suspected terrorists have been charged with crimes since Sept. 11 - 108 who already have been convicted. Several were on U.S. soil and in a position to launch attacks, officials said.

FBI officials said al-Qaida has prided itself on crafting attacks that catch authorities off guard and may be increasing pressure to turn to women.

The use of women in terrorist attacks is rare but not new.

A handful of young Palestinian women carried out four dramatic suicide bombings in Israel last year, completely foiling the military's security profiling and shaking both the Palestinian and Israeli populations.

In 1991, the Tamil Tigers group fighting for independence in Sri Lanka used a woman, who detonated explosives strapped to her body, to assassinate Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi during a 1991 political rally.

Shibley Telhami, a University of Maryland professor and a fellow at the Brookings Institute, said if al-Qaida begins recruiting women it "clearly expands their possibilities" but would be ironic given al-Qaida's alliance with the Taliban. The Taliban would not allow women to be educated or to work outside their home during its hardline rule of Afghanistan.

Telhami said such a shift further would illustrate that many terrorist groups he has studied are affected more by secular pragmatism than religious beliefs.

"I think these groups use Islamist theology to justify whatever they think would work," Telhami said. "If they do in fact find women useful in their operations, I think they will find a rationalization." rationalization."

Load-Date: April 2, 2003

FBI wary al-Qaida may use women in attacks

Deseret News (Salt Lake City)

April 2, 2003, Wednesday

Copyright 2003 The Deseret News Publishing Co.

Section: WIRE;

Length: 893 words

Byline: By John Solomon Associated Press writer

Body

WASHINGTON -- Recent intelligence has the FBI worried that al-Qaida may be recruiting and training women to carry out terror attacks, trying to regain an element of surprise for a network thinned by arrests, officials say.

For the first time in the war on terror, the FBI has issued a be-on-the-lookout bulletin for a woman, a Pakistani neurological expert, wanted for questioning in connection with Osama bin Laden's terror network. Analysts also are examining claims another woman made in an Arab newspaper that she was asked by bin Laden to open training camps for female terrorists.

Female attackers, successfully used by other terror organizations such as the Palestinian Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, would represent a major tactical shift for al-Qaida after years of being aligned with the Afghan Taliban regime that oppressed women and considered them unworthy to participate in an Islamic holy war, officials said.

"The FBI and our partners in the intelligence community are analyzing information around the clock for trends or any indicators that would help us prevent the next terrorist attack," FBI spokesman Mike Kortan said.

Several U.S. intelligence officials said they have no credible information suggesting an imminent attack plan to be carried out by women, but analysts are wary of the possibility.

"We're aware it is an option and one that was used recently against the Israelis and could easily be adapted by al-Qaida," one official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

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"We are building a women's structure that will carry out operations that will make the U.S. forget its own name," the woman claimed in the interview with the Asharq al-Awsat newspaper, based in London. The woman said her job was "to oversee the training of the female mujahedeen affiliated with al-Qaida and the Taliban," using the Arabic word for "holy warriors."

The woman cited the success of Palestinian female suicide bombers against Israel and Chechen women against Russians as an impetus for al-Qaida's planning. "The organization thought about this before, but interest increased after the female martyr attacks in Palestine and Chechnya," the woman was quoted as saying.

FBI wary al-Qaida may use women in attacks

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Load-Date: April 2, 2003

In saris and sandals, Sri Lankan villagers prepare for 'bombardment'

Agence France Presse -- English

May 24, 2006 Wednesday 10:40 AM GMT

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Length: 492 words

Dateline: KILINOCHCHI, Sri Lanka, May 24 2006

Body

When the whistle blows at 6:00 am sharp, village women in saris and men in sandals line up in military formation. Another morning's "self-defence training" is about to begin in rebel-controlled Sri Lanka.

With tension increasing on the island, the Tamil Tiger guerrillas say they have reintroduced the program to help villagers protect themselves in the event of wider hostilities.

In Uthayanagar East village just outside Kilinochchi, the "capital" of territory held by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), roosters crow as the group snap to attention on a scrubby football field.

A rebel fighter in striped camouflage raises the Tigers' red flag before the villagers bow their heads in tribute to those who have died in action, and shout a pledge for the "homeland".

Then they break off, the women in one direction, the men in another, for a jog past a cow and several grazing goats.

The rest of this morning's hour-long training is taken up with gymnastic exercises, and sometimes accompanied by laughter.

"This is good for the body," said Sivakamaran Sutharsini, 26, one of 17 women stretching and twisting to the commands of a short-haired female rebel as the morning sun creeps over the trees.

"We like it," said Chanthirarajah Sujivan, 28, a textiles retailer and one of about 50 men who turned up. "If a war broke out, we should prepare."

Their comments were translated by a rebel who identified himself only by the nickname Naresh and who escorted AFP around the site.

"The situation is getting worse. We must train our people how to protect their lives during bombardment," Naresh said.

Training is done in four phases of 15 days each and includes segments on air raid survival, first aid, treatment of unexploded ordnance, and bunker building, he said.

In saris and sandals, Sri Lankan villagers prepare for 'bombardment'

"We have a syllabus."

Naresh showed AFP several large colour photographs of mutilated corpses and bombed buildings to make his point that civilians are at risk.

"So we emphasize you must make a bunker, a safety bunker," he said, and pointed out a "model bunker" cleanly cut into the earth beside the football field.

Violence between the Tigers and government forces has escalated since December and left a 2002 ceasefire in force only on paper. April was the bloodiest month in four years, with more than 200 deaths.

As a result, the Tigers reintroduced the civilian self-defence program which had last been employed during fighting in 1997-98, Naresh said.

Asked whether the training is mandatory, Naresh said, "we emphasize" that people attend either the morning or afternoon session.

When the day's instruction ends, everybody sits on the ground and the three uniformed supervising cadres mark the participants' yellow attendance cards. At the end of the program they will receive certificates, Naresh said.

The whistle blows. Everyone lines up in formation again and stands at attention while a guerrilla lowers the roaring tiger flag and puts it into a red case.

Another morning's training is over.

Load-Date: May 25, 2006

An Itinerant Refugee in a Hip-Hop World

The New York Times

August 19, 2007 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section AR; Column 0; Arts and Leisure Desk; Pg. 20; MUSIC

Length: 1810 words

Byline: By BEN SISARIO

Body

MAYA ARULPRAGASAM'S Brooklyn apartment was a neglected mess when she finally returned to it last month after six months abroad. But it took only a day to straighten it up and turn it into her version of a pied-a-terre, a makeshift multimedia headquarters. An audio mixing board, film canisters and shiny gold and black dancing outfits stood on one side of the apartment, and half of an uneaten papaya waited on a table in the back.

Ms. Arulpragasam -- better known as the rapper M.I.A. -- was in town for only about a week before going on tour, and when asked when she would return to the apartment, a spacious studio in Bedford-Stuyvesant, a Caribbean and African immigrant neighborhood, she shrugged. "I spent time finding that couch," she said, pointing to one of the few items of furniture, "and I haven't even sat in it."

Displacement is nothing new for M.I.A.; in fact she seems to thrive on it. A description of her life and music is inevitably like one of those old movie montages in which an airplane zigzags across a map from continent to distant continent: She left Sri Lanka at the age of 9, a refugee from an ethnic civil war that's still roiling, and discovered hip-hop in a London housing project. After art school in Britain she began making music that was simple and handmade but had a staggering, far-reaching ambition, with flirty yet brutally evocative lyrics set against whip-crack electro beats, dancehall reggae and Brazilian baile funk.

Her debut album, "Arular" (2005), sold a modest 129,000 copies but was a critical jackpot, both in the mainstream press and the blogosphere. For her follow-up, "Kala," to be released by Interscope Records on Tuesday, the original strategy was the conventional one: to pair up with brand-name producers and shoot for pop hits. But things did not go according to plan. Instead the album became, by necessity and by choice, another restless, far-flung journey.

Blocked from returning to the United States for most of the last year because of delays in renewing her working visa, she wound up traveling to India, Jamaica, Trinidad and Australia, recording along the way with portable gear. The resulting songs feel airborne and deliberately rootless. The enormous drums of "Boyz," for example, were recorded in India, but the rest of the song -- a Bollywood-tinged club banger about the rowdy, war-starting sex -- was made in Trinidad. "World Town" rewrites a Baltimore hip-hop anthem for a violent third-world ghetto; the dizzyingly abstract percussion loop of "BirdFlu" is spiked with Indian dhol drums and chicken squawks.

"I'm just trying to build some sort of bridge," she said of her work, picking at a slice of Oreo cookie cake. "I'm trying to create a third place, somewhere in between the developed world and the developing world."

An Itinerant Refugee in a Hip-Hop World

"Arular" was named after her father, who has been associated with the Tamil Tigers, the rebel group fighting for a separate state for the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka. On that album she played freely with the imagery of militancy and propaganda; the cover and interior artwork, which M.I.A. designed herself, was covered with spray-painted guns, tigers, tanks and soldiers. "Kala" is named for her mother, a seamstress who raised her three children alone, and the album is ostensibly about the survival hustle of displaced people. "We do it cheap, hide our money in a heap/Send it home and make 'em study," she whispers in "Hussel," which begins with the chants of Indian boatmen.

Disarmingly tiny and polite in person, M.I.A. speaks with articulate vigor in a British accent peppered with street slang. But not everything about her is as up-front as her lyrics, and even her record label equivocates when it comes to pinning down biographical information. When asked to confirm M.I.A.'s age, a spokeswoman at Interscope waffled between 30 and 31; her manager, Tiffany Steffens, said that M.I.A.'s passport gives her age at 32. Like many details of her past, it can't be verified very easily.

M.I.A. has called "Kala" her "feminine" album and her tribute to the everyday sacrifices of her mother, and as she spent part of an afternoon shopping for fabric and medallions to sew onto the outfit she would perform in that night, it wasn't hard to imagine a little of her mother in her. One of her new songs, "Jimmy," is based on an early-'80s Bollywood disco hit, which she said evoked comforting childhood memories of dancing at parties and weddings. "This album is also about the other stories," she said, "the good things you remember."

But politics are still front and center in "Kala." While "Arular" was partly rooted in her own experience of escaping a war zone, in "Kala" she moves beyond her own story, embracing the role of globe-trotting, chest-beating ambassador for all the world's downtrodden. In her new videos she commands armies of male dancers, and the album is full of Bono-esque declarations. "M.I.A., third world democracy/I got more records than the K.G.B.," she asserts in the Clash-sampling "Paper Planes," and on "20 Dollar," about the cheap availability of guns in Africa, she boasts, "I put people on the map that never seen a map."

Rekha Malhotra, who as DJ Rekha is the public face of bhangra music in New York, said, "There's a history within South Asian thinking of fierce women, and Maya is definitely part of it."

Travel exigencies may have prevented her from doing much recording in America, but as M.I.A. frames the story now, she also became disillusioned early on with the prospect of making a pop album, dismissing the privilege of working with big-name producers: "By the time I got to America," she said, "every amazing producer I could have possibly gone to work with, Paris Hilton had already been there. So I carried on doing my thing elsewhere. Because you know what? Me and Paris would deliver the same song, right? Because technically they always want me to sing about sex. And guess what? She has more time on her hands to sing about that than me."

(In the end Timbaland did produce one track on the album, "Come Around," a mediocre leftover from sessions for his own recent solo record.) While "Arular" had a limited sonic scope -- it's basically an upbeat party record, until you notice the narratives of violence and frantic escape -- "Kala" globalizes the M.I.A. sound even further. The trade-off is that in spite of exhilarating moments like "Boyz" and "BirdFlu," the album is less unified than its predecessor, and in some spots commits the grave sin of being undanceable.

But M.I.A.'s methods created other problems; it turns out that it's quite complicated for a major record label to release an album recorded all over the world with an ad hoc cast of local collaborators who were not initially asked to sign legal releases. "I didn't realize how anal everyone is when it comes to paperwork," she said, without a trace of sarcasm.

Mark Williams, her artist-and-repertory contact at the label, chuckled slightly -- and only slightly -- when the subject of said paperwork came up. "She has a fine battalion of clearance attorneys," he said.

And then there are her politics to consider. The issues she raises are far more complex and discomfiting than pop's usual calls for peace and recycling. And given the dearth of outspoken young female stars, she's a rarity.

An Itinerant Refugee in a Hip-Hop World

Still, her objectives have not been spelled out very clearly, leading to robust debate online and in the music press about her perceived sympathies with the Palestine Liberation Organization ("Like P.L.O. I don't surrender," she sings in "Sunshowers" from "Arular") and the **Tamil Tigers**, known for their strategic use of suicide bombing. Sensing radical chic, Slate magazine said the agitprop of the lyrics and artwork on her first album feel "more like an idle attempt at provocation than engaged expression."

M.I.A. denies any political advocacy and said that despite her use of jingoistic imagery her songs come from the point of view of the powerless noncombatant. "I wanted it to be about how confusing it is to talk about things as a civilian when you are caught up in something like that," she said of "Arular." "You can never say good and evil, and 'We'll fight the axis of evil,' because it's a confused line. Eighty percent of that argument is actually gray matter."

Even in conversation M.I.A. leapfrogs the planet. Over a couple of hours she discussed an uncle who works for Amnesty International in Sri Lanka; described shooting a gun into the Baltimore sky on New Year's Eve with Blaqstarr, one of the producers on "Kala"; wondered whether Nelson Mandela deserves her respect as a good family man; and recounted a trip to Liberia to help reintroduce former child soldiers into society. "I went there just as a human being," she said. "I wanted to see what a country looks like after a war because I come from a place that has never seen the end of it."

These have not traditionally been blockbuster topics in pop music, and along with M.I.A.'s unorthodox recording choices, the bad track record of British rappers in the American market and her intense if ambiguous political messages, they raise the question of how much impact she can have on the mainstream.

Jimmy Iovine, Interscope's chairman, did not seem overly concerned and compared her to Patti Smith and Lou Reed. "The really left-of-center artists," he said, calling from a dentist's chair on a Saturday morning, "you really wonder about them. Can the world catch up? Can the culture meet them in the middle? That's what the adventure is. It doesn't always happen, but it should and it could."

M.I.A. said she has already reached an important goal. "The fact that I'm even in the music game," she said, "the fact that I even get questioned on who I am and what I'm doing here -- it's enough." Her biggest priority, she added, is "staying by my creativity, because that is actually the only thing I have."

Late that night at Studio B, a club in the heart of hipster Brooklyn, M.I.A. took the stage in lace-up gold tights and immaculate white high-top sneakers, looking like a Fly Girl from television's "In Living Color" in 1990. That sight alone drew a lusty cheer.

The biggest response from the far-beyond-sold-out crowd, though, was for "Pull Up the People," a favorite from "Arular," in which she calls herself a soldier and "a nice, nice fighter." With a sharp beat and quirky hooks, it's the kind of song that works perfectly on a dance floor regardless of whether the dancers know or care anything about the lyrics. But this crowd knew them well. As M.I.A. held out the microphone to her fans, they chanted her signature line.

"I've got the bombs to make you blow," they hollered. "I got the beats to make it bang."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

PHOTOS: The rapper M.I.A., left, at home in Brooklyn, and far left, at the Lollapalooza music festival in Chicago. "I'm trying to create a third place, somewhere in between the developed world and the developing world," she said.

An Itinerant Refugee in a Hip-Hop World

(Photograph by STEVE C. MITCHELL/EUROPEAN PRESSPHOTO AGENCY)(Photograph by MICHAEL NAGLE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)(pg. AR20)

M.I.A. performing in 2005 at the Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival in California. (Photograph by TIM MOSENFELDER/GETTY IMAGES)(pg. AR21)

Load-Date: August 19, 2007

End of Document

ACTIVITIES OF SECRETARY-GENERAL IN CUBA, SEPT. 14-16

US Fed News

September 22, 2006 Friday 9:15 AM EST

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Length: 580 words

Byline: US Fed News

Dateline: UNITED NATIONS

Body

The United Nations Office of the Secretary General issued the text of the following statement:

Shortly after his arrival in Havana on Thursday evening, 14 September, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan was received at the Palacio Nacional by Cuba's President Fidel Castro Ruz. For nearly an hour, they discussed the issues that would come up at the fourteenth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement to begin the following day. The Secretary-General also briefed President Castro on his visit to the Middle East. They also discussed agricultural development in Africa, a cause on which the Secretary-General will focus once he steps down from office.

On Friday, 15 September, the Secretary-General addressed the Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, telling them that the Movement's larger voice "brings with it greater responsibility, both internationally and at home". That includes a responsibility to work decisively and constructively to build a multilateral system and a United Nations capable of responding to today's challenges, he said. He also noted the challenge of transforming global governance and the empowerment of women. (See Press Release SG/SM/10636.)

Immediately after the close of the opening session, the Secretary-General met with the First Vice-President of the Council of State, Ra?l Castro. The Acting President briefed him on the latest developments in Cuba, including progress made in the health sector. He also pledged that Cuba would be a constructive leader of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Secretary-General also brought up the issue of United Nations reform, especially Security Council reform. He encouraged the Non-Aligned Movement to better structure itself, so as to positively reflect its numerical strength.

During a bilateral meeting with the President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa, the Secretary-General discussed the prospects for talks between the Government and the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) and the issue of humanitarian access to the civilian population. Regarding reported violations of human rights, the President said he had agreed to an independent national commission of investigation.

With President Evo Morales Aima of Bolivia, the Secretary-General talked about developments in the new Constituent Assembly and the issue of natural resources; and a topic discussed with the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, was the upcoming high-level meeting on C?te d'Ivoire, to be held on the margins of the sixty-first General Assembly session. At a meeting with Omer Hassan A. Al-Bashir, President of Sudan, the Secretary-General and the President discussed the situation in Darfur, including the role played by the African Union Mission in the Sudan.

ACTIVITIES OF SECRETARY-GENERAL IN CUBA , SEPT. 14-16

Other bilateral meetings held that day were with Armando Em?lio Guebuza, President of Mozambique; Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania; and Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India. Issues discussed were India-Pakistan relations, terrorism and sectarian violence, developments in Jammu and Kashmir, and the situation in Nepal.

Mr. Annan also met with the United Nations country team in Cuba.

That evening, he attended a dinner for Heads of State and Government attending the Non-Aligned Movement Summit.

Before departure on Saturday morning, the Secretary-General met with students of the International School of Havana at the United Nations Development Programme compound.

He returned to New York that day.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

Load-Date: September 26, 2006

End of Document

Sri Lanka's military captures rebel territory; thousands of civilians flee

Associated Press International

January 20, 2007 Saturday 6:09 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 517 words

Byline: By KRISHAN FRANCIS, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: MANKERNI Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lankan soldiers routed ethnic Tamil rebels from a key town in the volatile east after weeks of heavy fighting, the military said, as the violence sent thousands of Tamil civilians fleeing their homes.

Military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe said on Friday the army "gained complete control over Vaharai," an impoverished coastal town in eastern Batticaloa district the scene of heavy fighting between government troops and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam over the last few weeks.

The Tigers, in a statement e-mailed to The Associated Press, said they "decided to pull back" from the area, but did not elaborate.

The rebels had used Vaharai as a key transit point for smuggling arms and drugs and as a base for the naval wing of their insurgency, the Defense Ministry said.

Samarasinghe said the army would continue to flush rebels from the east, where both sides hold pockets of territory.

"Forces liberate Vaharai civilians," the state-run Daily News said in a lead story Saturday. "The government is confident that the security forces will be able to establish civil administration in Vaharai within the next two, three weeks to resettle the civilian population," the Daily News said.

"**LTTE** losses Vaharai," the independent Island newspaper said in a banner headline.

A pro-rebel Web site reported Friday that the army stepped up shelling of Vaharai on Thursday night, forcing 15,000 civilians to flee the area.

"Many **women** and children were fleeing on foot and bicycles," said TamilNet.

The U.N. refugee agency said about 9,500 people had started moving from Vaharai to government-held areas on Friday, and called on both sides to allow them transfer to safety.

Samarasinghe said fleeing civilians reached government-held areas from several directions.

Sri Lanka 's military captures rebel territory; thousands of civilians flee

Thuraijah Varatharajah, Vaharai hospital's only doctor, said around 9,000 people had been staying in the hospital over the last two months but that a shell fell on the building Thursday night, wounding four civilians, and that now they all wanted to leave.

Thousands of refugees arrived in the government-held town Mankerni on Friday and spent the night under tents at a school. They boarded buses on Saturday to go for refugee camps elsewhere in the area.

"Between 5000 and 6000 civilians arrived in Mankerni on Friday," said Seeniwasam Giritharan, the area's top government official, adding that eight refugee camps had been set up for them.

"We believe that the entire population has left Vaharai," he said.

The UNHCR estimates some 465,000 people have been displaced by conflict in Sri Lanka, including 204,300 since April 2006.

At least 45 army troops and 331 rebels were killed due to fighting in Vaharai and surrounding areas since Oct. 29, last year, Samarasinghe said.

The Tigers have been fighting for more than 20 years for a separate homeland for the country's 3.1 million ethnic minority Tamils, who have suffered decades of discrimination by the majority Sinhalese.

Although both sides claim to be adhering to a Norwegian-brokered 2002 cease-fire, violence has escalated since late 2005 with more than 3,600 people killed last year alone.

Load-Date: January 21, 2007

Sri Lanka's military secures territory captured from rebels; thousands of civilians flee

Associated Press International

January 20, 2007 Saturday 8:30 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 565 words

Byline: By KRISHAN FRANCIS, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: MANKERNI Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lankan troops began securing a key eastern town and its surrounding areas captured from Tamil Tiger rebels, the military said Saturday, as thousands of Tamil civilians fled the ongoing violence.

Soldiers advanced further into insurgent-held areas in the east, said military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe.

The army on Friday routed rebels from Vaharai, an impoverished coastal town in eastern Batticaloa district the scene of heavy fighting between government troops and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam over the last few weeks.

Samarasinghe said the army would continue to flush out rebels in the east, where both sides hold pockets of territory.

"We have gone beyond Vaharai," said Samarasinghe adding that the military is continuing to capture rebel-held areas from where insurgents are firing artillery at army troops.

Troops were searching for and clearing the area of booby traps and mines, repairing roads and preparing helipads. They were also constructing bunkers and setting up command, radar and communication centers and tents for soldiers.

The rebels had used Vaharai as a key transit point for smuggling arms and drugs and as a base for the naval wing of their insurgency, the Defense Ministry said.

The Tigers, in a statement e-mailed to The Associated Press, said on Friday they "decided to pull back" from the area, but did not elaborate.

"Forces liberate Vaharai civilians," the state-run Daily News said in a lead story Saturday. "The government is confident that the security forces will be able to establish civil administration in Vaharai within the next two, three weeks to resettle the civilian population," the Daily News said.

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The Tigers have been fighting for more than 20 years for a separate homeland for the country's 3.1 million ethnic minority Tamils, who have suffered decades of discrimination by the majority Sinhalese.

Although both sides claim to be adhering to a Norwegian-brokered 2002 cease-fire, violence has escalated since late 2005 with more than 3,600 people killed last year alone.

Associated Press writer Bharatha Mallawarachi in Colombo contributed to the report.

Load-Date: January 21, 2007

News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Xinhua General News Service

March 29, 2007 Thursday 1:00 PM EST

Copyright 2007 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS

Length: 604 words

Dateline: HONG KONG

Body

Following are news items from the Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua in Hong Kong on Wednesday:

Foreign exchange rates in Hong Kong -- March 28

Trading on Hong Kong Stock Exchange -- March 28

Australian dollar closes lower

Jakarta stock index ends lower

Indonesia to continue to dominate Asian coal market: report

One killed by armed group in S. Nepal

Foreign exchange rates in Vietnam

Australian stock market finishes lower

Thai bourse down 9.53 points

Cambodian Prince Ranariddh sues Funcinpec Secretary General

Malaysia tin market ends flat

Singapore shares end lower

Malaysia stock market closes lower

Foreign exchange rates in Malaysia

Foreign exchange rates in Singapore

Roundup: Hong Kong shares decline 0.8 pct

Indonesia assumes oil price at 57 USD per barrel in 2008

India's Canara Bank expands operations in HK

News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Colombo stocks close down

Major foreign exchange rates in Sri Lanka

Xinhua summary of Asia-Pacific stocks news at 1100 GMT, March 28

Urgent: Manila hostage-taker releases hostages

Indonesia demands fairness in access to bird flu vaccine

1st Ld: Manila hostage-takers release hostages

Vietnam stock market index closes lower

4 sentenced to jail for election fraud in Macao

2nd Ld Writethru: Philippine hostage drama comes to happy ending

Nepal's Mid-western, far-western regions are most deprived: report

Cambodia to join regional exercise against human influenza pandemic

Macao jobless rate drops

Curfew imposed in NW Pakistani town to quell violence

Gold price higher in Hong Kong -- March 28

Indonesian president calls for reaffirmation in fighting bird flu

China Enterprises Index close 0.91 pct down - March 28

No evidence of foreign fighters flooding into Afghanistan: ISAF

3rd Ld-Writethru: Manila hostage taker in police custody after 9-hour drama

Australia calls for Asia-Pacific cooperation on road toll

Weather information for Asia Pacific cities -- March 28

(Sports) Japan Airlines inks new pact to support Japan national football team

Thai authorities achieve major breakthrough in insurgency

Anti-bird flu meeting calls for sharing data, biological specimens

S. Korea sends medicine to DPRK

India sets up 8 radars in south after LTTE air attack

Afghan gov't to establish export processing zones

Brunei King to visit Cambodia

Indonesia calls for resuming talks of Palestine-Israel without precondition

S.Korean lawmaker says 30,000 Korean women sell sex in Japan

Pakistani police arrest four female teachers after "brothel house" raid

News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Indian stock market ends lower

5 health workers kidnapped by Afghan militants

S.Korea's imported car sales hit record high

Madhesh University for Peace to be set up in Nepal

(Sports) Malaysia beat Chinese Hong Kong 1-0 in Olympic qualifier

(Sports) Filipino swimmer earns ticket to Beijing Olympics

12.6 billion USD needed to achieve MDGs in Nepal

6 suspected militants captured in E. Afghanistan

Liquefied petroleum gas dealers halt supply in Nepali capital

Japan's GSDF establishes quick-response division

2 suspects in Bangkok's bomb attack arrested

Two people suspected of being killed by bird flu in Indonesia

HK starts Olympic volunteer recruitment

(sports) S.Korea defeats Uzbekistan in Olympic football qualification match

Vietnamese Deputy PM starts Macao tour

Sheikh Mujib to be recognized as father of Bangladesh after 36 years: official

Unknown persons blow up electricity towers in SW Pakistan

UNESCAP celebrates 60th anniversary

Load-Date: March 29, 2007

End of Document

ROUNDUP: More than 40 killed in clashes in Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

October 16, 2007 Tuesday 10:46 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 597 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts ROUNDUP: More than 40 killed in clashes in Sri Lanka Adds details of air strikes Colombo

Sri Lankan troops launched a series of attacks ahead of their forward defence lines in the northern part of the country, killing at least 32 Tamil rebels and losing one government soldier, a military spokesman said Tuesday.

The fighting came as the air force bombed what they called a rebel military and logistic base located in the north-eastern part of the country Tuesday afternoon.

A military statement said air force fighter jets bombed a base in Puthukuduirippu, Mullaitivu, 360 kilometres north-east of the capital, and completely destroyed it.

But Tamil rebels said five civilians, including three children, were injured and five houses damaged in the same air strike when two Kfir bombers dropped four bombs in the area.

There was no independent confirmation about the incident, which took place inside a rebel-controlled area.

In the south-east of the country a search operation was mounted Tuesday after rebels attacked a military detachment overnight within a wildlife park, killing six soldiers.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanyakkara said a search was launched after the attack in Thalgasmanakada, 380 kilometres south-east of Colombo.

A seventh soldier died Tuesday morning while trying to evacuate the bodies when his tractor set off a rebel-planted pressure mine, Nanyakkara added.

One soldier was also wounded in the fighting and three were hurt in the blast, he said, adding that a search was underway for the rebels.

Field officials with the separatist rebel Liberation Tigers of

ROUNDUP: More than 40 killed in clashes in Sri Lanka

Tamil Eelam (LTTE) told the pro-Tamil Tamilnet website that their forces overran the camp, seized government weapons and set the outpost ablaze.

The area where the detachment was located borders an eastern province where Tamil rebels have been carrying out small attacks after their main bases were overrun in military operations.

Meanwhile, military operations were launched Monday in the Wanni and Jaffna areas, 260 kilometres and 370 kilometres north of Colombo, respectively, in the wake of a string of rebel attacks on security forces manning isolated guard positions there, a military spokesman said.

The rebels had also tried to infiltrate the military's forward defence lines in the north during the past few weeks.

Government troops launched their first operation in Mullikulam in the Wanni district, killing at least 20 rebels, the spokesman said. Seven bodies, including those of five women, were recovered from the scene while 15 more were injured, he said.

Around the same area, a government soldier was killed and seven were wounded when rebels engaged troops using artillery and heavy mortar fire, the spokesman said. Government troops were unable to retaliate because the rebel positions were located around a Roman Catholic church in the area, he said.

In other confrontations, soldiers attacked a rebel hideout in Vilathikulam in the Wanni district Monday evening, killing eight rebels, and government troops killed four more rebels Monday in Muhamali, 370 kilometres north of the Colombo, military authorities said.

Fighting between the government and Tamil separatists rebels has escalated in the northern and eastern provinces during the past 23 months, claiming the lives of more than 5,300 people, including rebels, soldiers and civilians.

A Norwegian-backed ceasefire between rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the government signed in February 2002 has been ignored by both sides.

Oct 1607 1046 GMT

Notes

Adds details of air strikes

Load-Date: October 17, 2007

Sri Lanka says 16 Tiger rebels killed

UPI

December 21, 2007 Friday 11:19 AM EST

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Length: 165 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Dec. 21

Body

The Sri Lankan Defense Ministry on Friday claimed at least 16 Tamil Tiger rebels were killed in clashes with government security forces.

Those killed in the fighting in the Indian Ocean island nation's troubled north included two women, the Press Trust of India reported quoting the government.

The Tamil Tigers have been fighting for years for a separate homeland for the Tamil-speaking minority in the predominantly Buddhist country. Violence has surged in recent months in the country, resulting in the deaths of dozens of people.

Separately, a Sri Lankan government-owned publication claimed the Tamil Tigers were attempting to smuggle out their elusive leader Velupillai Prabhakaran out of the country for treatment for his injuries he reportedly suffered in an air raid last month. The Tamil Tigers have denied the reports of injury to their leader.

The report also claimed 116 of the 200 guards protecting Prabhakaran had died in recent attacks by the Sri Lankan air force, PTI reported.

Load-Date: December 22, 2007

**Tamils expelled from Colombo; Almost 400 ordered out of Sri Lanka capital,
put on buses bound for war zone in country's north**

The Toronto Star
June 8, 2007 Friday

Copyright 2007 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: WORLD AND COMMENT; Pg. AA01

Length: 502 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe, Agence France Presse, Reuters

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

Citing security concerns, gun-wielding Sri Lankan police officers forced hundreds of ethnic minority Tamils out of the capital Colombo yesterday, sending them back to the war-torn north.

Police stormed Tamil-majority areas of the capital under cover of darkness and frogmarched guests out of budget hostels into buses at gunpoint, residents said.

Some 376 Tamils deemed to be in the capital without valid reasons, including an estimated 85 women, were driven towards Vavuniya district, the front line of the war.

The forced evacuation follows a series of suspected Tamil Tiger bomb attacks in the capital as the conflict, which has killed nearly 70,000 people since 1983, deepens.

In the latest clash, the army killed five insurgents overnight in a jungle area called Thoppigala in the eastern Sri Lanka district of Batticaloa, said military spokesperson Brigadier Prasad Samarasinghe.

A Tamil woman from the besieged army-held northern Jaffna peninsula was among those ordered out of the capital. "I came to Colombo 45 days ago to apply for a visa to go to Switzerland and was waiting for it," she said. "But police came today and told me to go to Vavuniya (in the north) and wait."

Rohan Abeywardene, inspector-general of police for Colombo, said the ethnic Tamils were being sent back to their villages for their own safety. There have been a series of abductions blamed on state security services and Tamil Tiger rebels.

Police also want to stop insurgents infiltrating the capital.

"Some people who had no valid reasons to be in Colombo and are just hanging around, they have been requested to leave and told they had better get back to their own villages," said Abeywardene. "It is for their own good. You all have been complaining about people being abducted and arrested and detained. There is also a possibility that LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) cadres are among them also."

Tamils expelled from Colombo Almost 400 ordered out of Sri Lanka capital, put on buses bound for war zone in country's north

Officials said most of those evicted would cross over into Tamil Tiger-held territory and that the Tigers had agreed to let them cross defence lines. The Tigers said they had not been contacted and condemned the eviction - though have themselves been responsible for similar acts against minority Muslims in the past.

"Anybody denied a place in Sri Lanka, especially the minorities, are welcome to come to our areas," Tiger military spokesperson Rasiah Ilanthiraiyan said by telephone from the rebels' northern base of Kilinochchi.

Parliament was suspended for nearly two hours as Tamil and minority parties protested, while analysts decried the eviction as a shocking violation of human rights, with one likening it to a form of ethnic cleansing.

The local media rights group, the Free Media Movement slammed the government action and said the eviction was "tantamount to ethnic cleansing."

"This reminds us of what Hitler did to the Jews," said FMM spokesperson Sunanda Deshapriya.

The forced evacuation also comes as Japanese envoy Yasushi Akashi is on a five-day visit to try to find ways to salvage the battered peace process.

Load-Date: June 8, 2007

Brief

The Toronto Star
April 13, 2004 Tuesday
Ontario Edition

Copyright 2004 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A14

Length: 577 words

Byline: From the Star's wire services

Body

United States

Minnesota seniors' group tackles drug giant over Internet sales from Canada

A Minnesota seniors' organization announced a publicity campaign against drug giant Pfizer yesterday, saying the company seems to be succeeding in its efforts to block Americans from buying its drugs through Canadian pharmacies.

Leaders of the Minnesota Senior Federation, which runs a drug importation program for its roughly 6,000 members, said they hope to spark "10 days of outrage" before Pfizer's annual meeting in St. Louis on April 22.

The effort includes a postcard campaign to the U.S. Congress and a call for a boycott of the company's over-the-counter medications. Minnesota leaders also said seniors in New York City plan to demonstrate at Pfizer headquarters while others from Missouri, Illinois and Indiana will protest at the meeting. The campaign was launched, federation leaders said, because of New York-based Pfizer's recent cuts in supplies to Internet and mail-order pharmacies in Canada that sell to bargain-hunting Americans.

Mexico

Police force suspended over alleged links to drug lords

The entire 553-member Morelos state police force has been suspended and disarmed after two senior officers were accused of cutting deals with powerful drug traffickers. Morelos Governor Sergio Estrada said yesterday the move was part of an overhaul of law enforcement in the state, which lies south of Mexico City, to create a police force "that responds in a manner more in line with the needs of society." Arrest warrants were issued for five other Morelos state employees, who were on the run.

India

21 killed as throng stampedes for free saris

Thousands of people crowding into a park for a politician's birthday celebration and to receive free saris stampeded yesterday, killing 21 women and children, officials said.

Brief

The stampede came two weeks ahead of parliamentary elections in Lucknow, the capital of India's politically crucial Uttar Pradesh state and the constituency of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who was headed to the city after the stampede. Thousands of people, mostly women, had gathered under a huge white canopy to celebrate the birthday of Lalji Tandon, the state's opposition leader - and to receive saris being given to poor women.

Pakistan

Opposition leader gets 23-year term for sedition

A top opposition leader was convicted yesterday of trying to incite a rebellion in the army against Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and sentenced to 23 years in prison, public prosecutor Munir Ahmed Bhatti said.

Javed Hashmi, leader of the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy coalition and a member of the lower house of parliament, was convicted of sedition, mutiny and forgery by the District and Session Court in Rawalpindi, Bhatti said. Hashmi was also fined the equivalent of about \$1,000.

Sri Lanka

Rebel leader on the run

as fighters lay down arms

A breakaway Tamil rebel commander was on the run yesterday after thousands of his fighters laid down their arms in the face of a Tamil Tiger offensive, officials said.

Eastern Tamil commander Karuna has been locked in a standoff with the northern-based Tigers since early March, taking about 6,000 of the group's 15,000 fighters with him as he accused the northern leadership of discriminating against eastern Tamils. But the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's (LTTE) launched an offensive Friday to retake territory held by the rebel, after vowing last month to "get rid of Karuna from our soil."

Load-Date: April 13, 2004

Bus bombing ignites new wave of Sri Lankan violence

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

June 16, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 15

Length: 525 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: KABITHIGOLLEWA, Sri Lanka

Body

KABITHIGOLLEWA, Sri Lanka (AP) -- Suspected Tamil separatists attacked a crowded bus Thursday, triggering a pair of hidden bombs that killed at least 64 people -- the worst violence since a 2002 cease-fire began unravelling in recent months.

With peace talks largely abandoned, the attack edged this tropical island country off India's southern tip further toward all-out war in a conflict that killed 65,000 people before the truce. The government quickly launched retaliatory air strike on rebel areas.

The dead included at least 15 children, their blue school uniforms coated with blood and gore as authorities laid out corpses at a hospital in the island's north so relatives could identify them. At least 78 people were wounded in the attack.

The rebels, a well-armed movement that began fighting in 1983 to create an independent homeland for the ethnic Tamil minority, denied responsibility for the attack. They suggested it was done by shadowy forces they accused of trying to create unrest.

But Sri Lanka's government, which is dominated by the majority Sinhalese, insisted rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam movement were responsible.

"This is a barbaric act of the LTTE," said government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella.

"Their aim is to provoke a backlash."

The bus was blown up with a pair of land mines hung from a tree and detonated by remote control, said a military spokesman, Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe. Rigging bombs to trees or bicycles is a common rebel tactic, so the ground does not absorb much of the blast, officials say.

Police said most of the victims were Sinhalese, the group the rebels accuse of discriminating against Tamils.

Officials said many passengers were headed to the funeral of a policeman killed Monday in another attack blamed on rebels.

Bus bombing ignites new wave of Sri Lankan violence

Thursday afternoon, the wrecked yellow bus still lay on its side as heavily armed soldiers stood nearby. The roof of the bus was stained with blood. Shoes, a mobile phone and women's purses were scattered around.

At the hospital, relatives wept.

"They are all gone," screamed Bandula Gamini, who lost his wife, son and mother-in-law in the blast.

Gamini said he was standing three rows behind his family when "there was this blast and I recall being trapped." He was pulled from the bus by two policemen.

A doctor at the hospital, S.B. Bothota, said 49 adults and 15 children died. An additional 78 people were wounded, he said.

Dozens of people were fleeing villages near the attack site, fearing more violence. They took shelter in a school guarded by soldiers.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said the United States condemned the attack and called for resumed negotiations. "This vicious attack bears all the hallmarks of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam," and violates the ceasefire agreement, he said.

Rebel leaders said the air force conducted about five bombing runs on the outskirts of the rebel-controlled town of Kilinochchi near the island's northern tip.

"There are casualties but we don't know the exact figures. People are tense, confused and some are fleeing," a senior rebel official, Seevaratnam Puleedevan, told The Associated Press.

Graphic

Photo: CP Photo; Soldiers patrol near the bus that was hit by a landmine in Kabithigollewa, about 210 kilometers northeast of Colombo, Sri Lanka on Thursday.

Load-Date: June 16, 2006

Sri Lankan Tamil flow to India nears 3,500, may rise

Indo-Asian News Service

June 27, 2006 Tuesday 3:14 PM EST

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Length: 516 words

Byline: Indo-Asian News Service

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, June 27 -- Drenched, exhausted and carrying their meagre belongings in battered suitcases, Sri Lankan Tamils continue to arrive in India by boats, with activists warning that the flow is likely to go up.

On Monday, 114 Tamil civilians belonging to 41 families landed on Tamil Nadu's shore. It was the highest number for a single day in June. This included 45 men, 38 **women**, 17 male children and 14 **female** children.

On Tuesday, the total was just 18 (four men, six **women** and eight children) in the morning hours, possibly due to increased surveillance on the sea dividing India and Sri Lanka following the assassination in Colombo a day earlier of Sri Lankan army general Parami Kulatunga by a suspected Tamil Tiger suicide bomber.

Tamil Nadu officials said more could land during the day Tuesday.

The latest arrivals has taken the number of Tamil civilians fleeing to Tamil Nadu from Sri Lanka's northeast, to escape escalating violence, to 3,487 since Jan 12 when the tide began.

"Who knows, the figure may touch 3,500 today itself," S.C. Chandrahasan, who heads OFERR, a NGO working among Sri Lankan Tamil refugees, told IANS over the telephone from Tamil Nadu's capital Chennai.

Chandrasahasn said the refugees, who are housed in camps set up close to Tamil Nadu's coast, were landing with bitter stories of attacks on them by Sri Lankan security forces in the northwestern district of Mannar.

"The refugee flow is only going to increase," he said, explaining what he said was "a very simple reason".

"People (Tamils) over there (in Sri Lanka) are telling officials to let them fish or give them ration (food). They are also demanding security. If this can't be given, they want to be allowed to go to India.

"Since this is not happening, they will keep arriving," he said.

He mentioned this month's attack on a historic church at Pesalai in Mannar when unruly security forces fired at Tamils who had taken shelter in the building following clashes between the military and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

"After that massacre, one day no one came," Chandrasahasn said. "The next two days less than 20 people came. But again the flow picked up. Yesterday (Monday) was the highest figure for June."

Sri Lankan Tamil flow to India nears 3,500, may rise

Tamil Nadu, which is separated from Sri Lanka's north by a narrow strip of sea, has traditionally provided sanctuary to Tamils fleeing the island.

Hundreds and thousands of them poured into the state following anti-Tamil violence in Sri Lanka in 1983. There have been ups and downs in their movement. Presently thousands live in Tamil Nadu, both in refugee camps and outside.

The latest flow began Jan 12 following violence in the eastern Sri Lankan district of Trincomalee. The flow ebbed during February and March but again rose following attacks on Tamils in Trincomalee in April.

Most Sri Lankan Tamils fleeing to India now are from Trincomalee and Mannar, which have witnessed some gory killings amid escalating tensions that threaten to take the island back to full-scale war.

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Load-Date: June 28, 2006

End of Document

Sri Lanka: isle of lush contrasts; Refugees return from India to war-torn country full of hope, in search of peace

Hamilton Spectator (Ontario, Canada)

June 12, 2003 Thursday Final Edition

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Section: FORUM; Pg. A13; News

Length: 1827 words

Byline: Carolyn Vanderlip

Body

Standing in a refugee camp in southern India felt about as far removed from Ancaster as possible.

The comforts of home seemed like a surreal dream; reality was heat, sweat, and a crowd of refugee children asking for my autograph.

Three months earlier, I received the exciting news that I was to be part of a delegation of Canadian women, all members of the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund network (Anglican Church of Canada). We were to travel to India and Sri Lanka to meet with, and learn from, those who have been affected by the civil war's disruption, displacement, violence and poverty.

In the province of Tamil Nadu, India, some 65,000 Tamil refugees from the tiny island of Sri Lanka live in 116 refugee camps. They have arrived over the last two decades, after fleeing or being forced from their homes during the civil war that has taken more than 60,000 lives in their homeland. Many lost family members and friends during the harrowing journey by sea to safety.

The Hamilton Spectator

Their children have been born in India and have never seen the beautiful island home described to them by their parents and grandparents.

Their homes have been destroyed, their communities displaced, and they live in poverty in a country unable to provide the basic necessities to its own population, let alone to a surplus refugee population.

Their past is horrific, their future uncertain.

But hope remains. On our first day in India, as our little group entered the offices of the Organization For Eelam Refugees Rehabilitation (OFERR), the staff -- all refugees themselves -- proudly pointed out their temporary roof, and explained that there is no need for a more permanent one. They are going home.

A visit to a model farm run by OFERR showed this determination. After an overwhelming welcome -- and the humbling realization that the refugees we met had travelled from camps up to 300 kilometres away for our visit -- we toured the farm.

Sri Lanka : isle of lush contrasts; Refugees return from India to war-torn country full of hope, in search of peace

We watched with interest as spirulina was harvested. It's a vitamin-packed algae that was discovered during a famine in Mexico. We nodded politely as its uses were explained to us.

To our alarm, we were later presented with large glasses of the blue-green stuff, chunks of algae floating unappetizingly on the top. With all eyes expectantly upon us, we had no choice but to down the concoction. Much to our relief, it had been flavoured with lime, and tasted much better than it looked.

With the farm consisting of only 1.6 hectares of land, "reduce, reuse and recycle" has been taken to new heights. Chicken droppings are purified and used as manure for the grass, which feeds the cows, which produce bio-gas for cooking. Organic methods are preferred -- 24 spiders per square inch (which we fortunately did not encounter) make insecticide use unnecessary. Solar power is used to fuel the water pump and a slow cooker.

"This is how nature provided for humans," says the camp director. His hope is that the refugees will take these methods home with them. To help ensure that they do, much of the equipment on the farm is temporary, to be taken down when the time comes to return to Sri Lanka.

It was the refugees themselves who made the biggest impression on us. Even in the two refugee camps we visited, where people are living with next to nothing, careful preparations had been made for our visit. Little girls, wearing their best dresses and with flowers in their hair, stood nervously clutching flowers for us.

Ceremonies were held to welcome us, tea was offered, and cultural songs and dances were proudly presented. As we toured the first camp, I began to wonder if I was literally going to melt from the oppressive heat. After some concerned looks from our hosts, who were obviously wondering the same thing, umbrellas were quickly produced to shelter us.

OFERR has worked hard to improve the lot of the refugees in the camps, by ensuring that all children are able to attend school, improving nutrition for pregnant and lactating women and small children, training refugee volunteers as health workers and counsellors, and facilitating women's empowerment groups in the camps. But many problems remain.

The youth in the camps are very small due to malnutrition; a child who appeared to be about nine years old told us, when asked, that he was actually 14. A day-care centre has been set up for the pre-school children, however there were no toys or school supplies in sight. The balloons, paper and crayons we had brought were met with great excitement.

As our time in India drew to a close and we prepared to travel to Sri Lanka, we wondered what we would find awaiting the refugees in their homeland. After working so hard, for so long, to prepare themselves to return to the island, would Sri Lanka be ready to welcome them, and what conditions would they find there?

A one-hour flight from India transported us to a different world. Sri Lanka is lush, green, and beautiful, but the most exciting thing to us was the quiet. We no longer had to sleep with earplugs because of the incessant honking of car horns. Ironically, it seemed that we had found serenity in a country that has been at war for the last 20 years.

But things are not always as they appear. Although the first thing a visitor to Sri Lanka will notice is its beauty, not far behind is the realization that almost everyone and everything here has been impacted in some way by the years of violence, and that the peace on this island is very new and fragile.

The north and east areas of the island, mainly populated by the minority Tamil people, have been the most deeply affected by the conflict.

Visiting a small village in the east, we got a glimpse of the post-war reality that Sri Lankans are living with. Of a population of about 800, there are 97 widows under age 40, with 280 fatherless children.

Rev. Chandran Crispus is an Anglican priest of great compassion and courage, who has spent the last five years tirelessly working to help all of the people in the village and surrounding area, regardless of their ethnic background

Sri Lanka : isle of lush contrasts; Refugees return from India to war-torn country full of hope, in search of peace

or religion. He has organized a literacy program for the children, support groups for the widows, and even arranged for the building of a community centre and daycare using the bricks from demolished buildings.

Another village, not far away, was destroyed 12 years ago. Crispus pointed out where homes used to stand, and where the church used to be.

All that remained was jungle and overgrown ruins.

As our group walked along a path, we came upon a family who had just received government permission to return after being displaced for more than a decade. An older man approached along the path and, with Crispus translating, described his bicycle ride back to the home he hadn't seen for 12 years, his futile search for his house and his land, and his efforts to begin again.

The government claims that they've cleared the landmines, he told us, but he wasn't sure whether to believe them.

The group was hushed as he described the night the village was burned down, and all of the children were lined up in the road and shot.

For the children who lived through the violence, there are emotional wounds that need healing.

Paul Hogan, originally from Windsor, designed the Butterfly Garden, a peaceful space for play and therapy, for war-affected children in the Batticaloa area, where he has lived for the past seven years. The children he and his staff work with have been deeply and personally affected by the war. Parents, grandparents and cousins have been killed, siblings have been abducted as child soldiers, and homes and communities have been destroyed.

The Butterfly Garden has remained untouched by the violence outside of its walls. It's a place for children to tell their stories in non-threatening ways, through art, play, and theatre. A large boat provides a vehicle for imaginary voyages, a three-storey tree house can be a cozy clubhouse or a place to get a new perspective on things, and tunnels provide a way to "go underground" and escape the rigours of daily life.

But many can't get away from it all. Almost one million people were displaced during the war. Many who are unable to return to their homes live in "Welfare Centres" -- a misleading term if the centre we visited is any indication. Unlike the refugee camps in India, where there is hope for the future, the people in the Sri Lankan camp appeared to have lost all hope for anything different from their current situation, which is bleak.

The children were dressed in rags, and they spend most of their time watching television in a "recreation room." Few attend school, perhaps seeing no reason to work on their education. Families, regardless of size, live in 10-foot-square rooms where the walls don't reach all the way to the asbestos ceiling, providing no relief from the heat, and very little privacy. There are no toilet facilities, and there are daily lineups for water and dry rations.

One woman, who had been living in the camp for 12 years, summed our visit up this way: "Many people come (but), no one has any solutions".

As far as what our group had to offer, she was right. For me, the visit to the Welfare Centre remains the most difficult memory of Sri Lanka.

But on the same day, I experienced the most hopeful moment. After leaving the stench of the open sewers and the hopeless eyes of the displaced behind us, we travelled to a resettlement village.

Some 270 families had recently been moved out of the Welfare Centres, and given land and government grants to build housing. An organization called SEED (Social Environmental and Economic Development) has worked with the families, many of them headed by women or people with special needs, to create a three-year development plan for the new community.

Common fencing was the first priority identified and is almost completed. A school focuses on hearing and speech impairment, and a young boy happily demonstrated his proficiency in sign language for us. The most important

Sri Lanka : isle of lush contrasts; Refugees return from India to war-torn country full of hope, in search of peace

result is that people have been given a sense of control over their own lives again. The village is just a few kilometres from the Welfare Centre, but a world away.

And although I'm a world away from India and Sri Lanka now, in some ways I feel like I've never left. When the **Tamil Tigers** pulled out of the peace talks a week after our group returned to Canada, I thought immediately of the refugees and displaced people we had met, and those who are working so hard to try and make their lives better. Could all of their efforts be undone, and Sri Lanka plunged yet again into civil war?

At the moment, the ceasefire remains in effect while the **Tamil Tigers** consider the most recent response by the government to its demands.

Meanwhile, the people of Sri Lanka wait, once again, for the peace that has eluded them for the past two decades.

Carolyn Vanderlip is an Ancaster resident. She is the volunteer refugee sponsorship co-ordinator for the Anglican Diocese of Niagara, and the working mother of two children.

Graphic

Photo: Carolyn Vanderlip; A young Tamil refugee.; Photo: Megan Mergaert, Special to the Hamilton Spectator; Sri Lankan Tamil refugees at Virupadchi refugee camp in southern India, were keen to collect autographs from their Canadian visitors-- here, author Carolyn Vanderlip.; Photo: Carolyn Vanderlip; A woman grates coconut for a meal at the OFERR model farm near Chennai, India.

Load-Date: June 12, 2003

End of Document

Bus bombing leads to retaliatory airstrikes in Sri Lanka

Associated Press International

June 16, 2006 Friday 12:38 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 519 words

Byline: By ERANGA JAYAWARDENA, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: KABITHIGOLLEWA Sri Lanka

Body

Suspected Tamil separatists attacked a crowded bus, triggering a pair of hidden bombs that killed at least 64 people in the worst violence since a 2002 cease-fire began unraveling in recent months.

With peace talks largely abandoned, the attack Thursday edged this tropical island nation off India's southern tip further toward all-out war in a conflict that killed 65,000 people before the truce. The government quickly launched retaliatory airstrikes on rebel areas.

The dead included at least 15 children, their blue school uniforms coated with blood and gore as authorities laid out corpses at a hospital in the island's north so relatives could identify them. At least 78 people were wounded in the attack.

The rebels, a well-armed movement that began fighting in 1983 to create an independent homeland for the ethnic Tamil minority, denied responsibility for the attack. They suggested it was done by shadowy forces they accused of trying to create unrest.

But Sri Lanka's government, which is dominated by the majority Sinhalese, insisted rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam movement were responsible.

"This is a barbaric act of the **LTTE**," said government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella. "Their aim is to provoke a backlash."

The bus was blown up with a pair of land mines hung from a tree and detonated by remote control, said a military spokesman, Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe. Rigging bombs to trees or bicycles is a common rebel tactic, so the ground does not absorb much of the blast, officials say.

Police said most of the victims were Sinhalese, the group the rebels accuse of discriminating against Tamils.

Officials said many passengers were headed to the funeral of a policeman killed Monday in another attack blamed on rebels.

Thursday afternoon, the wrecked yellow bus still lay on its side as heavily armed soldiers stood nearby. The roof of the bus was stained with blood. Shoes, a mobile phone and **women's** purses were scattered around.

At the hospital, relatives wept.

Bus bombing leads to retaliatory airstrikes in Sri Lanka

"They are all gone," screamed Bandula Gamini, who lost his wife, son and mother-in-law in the blast.

Gamini said he was standing three rows behind his family when "there was this blast and I recall being trapped." He was pulled from the bus by two policemen.

A doctor at the hospital, S.B. Bothota, said 49 adults and 15 children died. An additional 78 people were wounded, he said.

Dozens of people were fleeing villages near the attack site, fearing more violence. They took shelter in a school guarded by soldiers.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said the United States condemned the attack and called for resumed negotiations. "This vicious attack bears all the hallmarks of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam," and violates the cease-fire agreement, he said.

Rebel leaders said the air force conducted about five bombing runs on the outskirts of the rebel-controlled town of Kilinochchi near the island's northern tip.

"There are casualties but we don't know the exact figures. People are tense, confused and some are fleeing," a senior rebel official, Seevaratnam Puleedevan, told The Associated Press.

Load-Date: June 16, 2006

Tackle social and security issues jointly

Hindustan Times

January 7, 2007 Sunday 2:52 PM EST

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Length: 561 words

Byline: Hindustan Times

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

NEW DELHI, India, Jan 7 -- The SDSA survey has found that it is not terrorism but crime that is the greater source of insecurity for South Asians. Political borders have not succeeded in containing either crime or terrorism, and these doubled dangers translate into an incalculable menace.

Consider that more than 10 per cent of the global trade in human beings takes place in the subcontinent. The grubby underworld link that connects the brothels of Mumbai with those of Colombo, Dhaka, Kathmandu, Lahore and Thimphu displaces hapless women from one country to another with profitable impunity. This crime is particularly lucrative because, unlike other contraband, people can be sold several times. In this process, it is not just capital and people but also bugs and viruses that are transported without scrutiny and documentation. Already close to six million people are living with HIV/ AIDS in South Asia and UNAIDS reports that women constitute over 35 per cent of new HIV infections. A thriving cross-border sex trade could contribute to a full-blown epidemic.

South Asia is also the main transit route for illegal drugs like heroin and hashish. While its countries have signed agreements for controlling both drug and human trafficking, political differences between them hinder effective cooperation. Meanwhile, drug abusers in the region now number in the millions and a significant portion of the multi-billion dollar global trade turnover is funnelled into arms smuggling and terrorist activities. For instance, Dawood Ibrahim's criminal crew, which controls most of the contraband and hawala transactions in South Asia, has financed terrorist acts such as the 1993 Mumbai bomb blasts. As its smuggling routes run through different parts of the subcontinent, the narco-terrorism nexus represented by this syndicate poses a security risk to the entire region.

Defence analyst Ajay Lele has noted that the D-company has increasingly been seeking political clout to safeguard its business interests by, for example, backing the Shahadat-Al-Hikma party in Bangladesh and the Lashkar-e-Toiba. In addition to creating havoc in Jammu and Kashmir, the latter is accused of attacking the Indian Parliament and fomenting the Shia-Sunni conflict in Pakistan. Often it is the ethnic, religious and linguistic faultlines running through the subcontinent that mutate into violence. But abysmal rankings in the Human Development Index (look to the left) suggest that South Asia has not been blessed with good governance either. Widespread illiteracy, inequality and poverty render people even more vulnerable to crime and sectarian rhetoric.

Poignant evidence of crime targeting the weak was found when traffickers rushed in to prey on the children orphaned by the 2004 tsunami. Even in normal times, 60 per cent of South Asia's human trafficking involves adolescent girls. Child recruits into the LTTE and Maoist cadres provide further instances of the exploitation of the weakest segments of society. Regional harmony requires us to tackle social and security challenges together. SAARC leaders have committed to devising development strategies and also adopted a regional convention on suppressing terrorism. But only a spirit of solidarity can fulfil the promise of this collective framework.

Tackle social and security issues jointly

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Bombs kill 64 on crowded bus: Officials blame Tamil rebels as attack edges country to all-out war

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

June 16, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A13

Length: 519 words

Byline: Eranga Jayawardena, Associated Press

Dateline: KABITHIGOLLEWA, Sri Lanka

Body

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"There are casualties but we don't know the exact figures. People are tense, confused and some are fleeing," a senior rebel official, Seevaratnam Puleedevan, told The Associated Press.

The rebels denied involvement in the bus attack, with Puleedevan suggesting it could be "the work of forces seeking to create ethnic tension."

A ceasefire four years ago ended full-scale fighting, but sporadic violence persisted.

Graphic

Photo: Eranga Jayawardena, Associated Press; Villagers, fearing further attacks by Tamil Tiger rebels, arrive at a school to spend the night in Kabithigollewa, Sri Lanka.

Load-Date: June 16, 2006

Cycle of violence brings Sri Lanka to edge of war

The Independent (London)

April 29, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

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The INDEPENDENT

Section: NEWS; Pg. 38

Length: 825 words

Byline: By Justin Huggler in Trincomalee

Body

A police Jeep moves slowly through the streets, an announcement crackling from the loudspeakers on its roof: the curfew begins in two hours. But the streets are already deserted except for the stray dogs and the soldiers toting assault rifles who stand on every corner.

Some of the buildings are burnt out, smoke-blackened shells. A couple of weeks ago, six people went missing in the middle of riots. When they found the bodies they were burnt. The word in Trincomalee is that they were burnt alive.

This is a very different Sri Lanka from the one the tourists see, but it lies a few hours drive away. Western tourists still arrive by the planeload every day, but on the other side of the island, away from the palm-fringed beaches and the nightclubs, an old nightmare is returning to Sri Lanka.

There were air strikes outside Trincomalee two days ago, and reports of as many as 40,000 people fleeing their homes to escape. The Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tiger rebels are teetering on the edge of a return to war.

Norwegian peace brokers have said the Tigers had finally agreed to attend peace talks in Geneva. The talks will be watched closely by many in Trincomalee, desperately hoping they will bring a last-minute reprieve from a return to civil war.

Up to 64,000 people are believed to have died in the two-decade war between the government and the Tigers, before a ceasefire in 2002. And as that ceasefire has all but disintegrated over the past few months, Trincomalee has become the main battleground.

"People are afraid to go out even in the daytime, never mind at night," says Aziz Bashir, a local teacher. "The schools are closed because everyone is too scared to let their children come. Even the government officials don't turn up to work. The government is not functioning."

Cycle of violence brings Sri Lanka to edge of war

"If people get sick during the night, they are too frightened to go to hospital. The shops open for a couple of hours in the morning. After noon, everything is closed."

Trincomalee is a city with a spectacular setting, on a wide inlet from the sea amid a horseshoe of palm-clad hills. But its streets have become nervous, frightened places that empty quickly as evening approaches.

On 1 April, a bomb went off in the middle of the market here. Seven people were killed, one soldier and six civilians, one of them a child. The bomb was blamed on the Tigers, although they denied responsibility. An angry mob began to take its own revenge. People were hacked to death, and shops were set on fire. At least 15 people were killed. Six others disappeared trying to flee the area of the killings. They were the ones found burnt. Most of the dead from the revenge killings were ethnic Tamils.

Trincomalee is one of the most ethnically mixed cities in Sri Lanka: one-third Tamil. But the Tigers have claimed Trincomalee as the capital of Tamil Eelam, the homeland they want to create for Sri Lanka's Tamils.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam have been fighting for autonomy for Sri Lanka's Tamils, who they say suffer discrimination by the Sinhalese majority. The ceasefire in 2002 left Trincomalee in the hands of the government, but pockets of land nearby under Tiger control.

These pockets were bombarded by the Sri Lankan military this week, after the attempted assassination of its army chief by a **female** suicide bomber in Colombo. The government blamed the Tigers for that attack' the Tigers denied it.

"I don't support this violence," says Nimal da Silva, a local football coach and one of Trincomalee's Sinhalese. "My opinion is the best way is to shake hands and make peace."

"I have suffered repression at the hands of the Tamil community. I was the only Sinhalese football coach, but they threw me out because they wanted to make it all Tamil. All my relatives have fled to Colombo, but I refuse to go. If we go, we will lose everything here."

Nayagam Sittampalam, a local scout leader and a Tamil, said: "The bombing here on the 12th was pure performance, it was totally against the Tamil community. The Sinhalese want an excuse to force us out of Trincomalee, so they are creating this problem."

Mr Bashir, the Muslim teacher, adds: "We are neutral here, but we are facing problems from both communities. The police do nothing to stop abuses committed by Sinhalese' they turn a blind eye."

In the atmosphere of distrust and accusation that pervades Trincomalee, everybody accuses everybody else of forcing a return to war. Many analysts accuse the Tigers of trying to restart the war in a bid for more territory than the tiny fiefdoms they now control, which the Tigers, naturally, deny.

As for why Trincomalee has become such a battleground, there is one other reason, besides its mixed population. The picturesque sea inlet is the finest sheltered naval harbour in South Asia, just a short journey from the coast of India, the emerging economic power of the region. Trincomalee is one big reason India, and the US, are so keen to prevent a return to war on Sri Lanka.

Graphic

Tamil Tigers at a road block between a government area and rebel villages AP' A Tamil family who fled air strikes arrive back in rebel-controlled Sampur village near Trincomalee yesterday ERANGA JAYAWARDENA/AP' Nation in turmoil

Cycle of violence brings Sri Lanka to edge of war

Load-Date: April 29, 2006

End of Document

Nearly half Middle East suicide bombers had third-level education

The Irish Times

May 12, 2005

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Section: Science Today; Pg. 15

Length: 987 words

Body

Under the Microscope: Prof William Reville One of the most disturbing aspects of war and terrorism is the suicide bomber. Suicide bombings are now regular occurrences in Iraq and in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

We commonly imagine that the typical suicide bomber is psychologically unlike the rest of us and, possibly, has a death wish.

However research shows that most suicide bombers are psychologically normal and the phenomenon is most readily explained as a community response set in a background of violence, aggression and revenge. Suicide bombing is examined from a psychological point of view by Paul Marsden and Sharon Attia in the March 2005 edition of the Psychologist.

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Suicide terrorism is not new. From the 11th century on, Assassins invited almost certain death for themselves following their brazen public murder of rivals. More recently, in the Vietnam war, Vietcong supporters blew themselves up in order to kill American soldiers.

The most recent wave of suicide terror began in Lebanon in 1981. The 1983 truck bombings killed 241 US marines and 58 French paratroopers. US troops left Lebanon four months later. These suicide attacks brought much prestige to the organisations that arranged them. Terror organisations were inspired to emulate them worldwide.

Marsden and Attia dispose of several common ideas about suicide bombers. First they declare that there is no evidence to suggest that suicide bombers suffer from personality disorders or psychiatric conditions. Second, they point out that many groups employing the tactic of suicide bombing, including those in the Middle East, are secular. Third, most of the suicide bombings since 1980 have been carried out by the Sri Lankan **Tamil Tigers**, from a predominantly Hindu culture, deflating the notion that Islamic belief is the root cause of suicide bombing.

Christine Huda Dodge in About's Guide to Islam points out that suicide is forbidden in Islam and that "harming innocent bystanders, even in times of war, was forbidden by the Prophet Muhammad".

Most suicide bombers in the Middle East are young men, but a significant minority are **female**. They come from a wide variety of backgrounds. A survey in 2001 showed that 47 per cent of suicide bombers have third-level education and about 20 per cent are married. Almost all are volunteers - 70 per cent of school children in Gaza, according to a recent survey, wish to become religious martyrs.

According to Marsden and Attia, scientific evidence suggests that the cause of behaviour "often lies more in the external context and group behaviour than it does in our own heads". Experiments have demonstrated that people

Nearly half Middle East suicide bombers had third-level education

will tend to behave violently when placed in violent environments and some researchers say that the cause of suicide bombing lies largely in "the pathological contexts and groups within which it takes place".

Suicide bombings are organised and managed by groups and are not the pure product of lone individuals. These groups are operating in a culture of violence, aggression, privation and revenge and, in this context, may conceive of suicide bombings as a rational and appropriate response to perceived gross persecution at the hands of a hated enemy.

In this context they will view suicide bombing as a flexible, adaptable, low-cost strategy of warfare that is highly cost-effective and of proven value in furthering political aims. It follows therefore that the threat of suicide bombing can only be fundamentally managed by understanding these groups and the conditions that produce them. However, some small amelioration may be achieved in another way that I will describe shortly.

Of course, understanding the reasons why terror groups employ suicide missions is not in any way to condone these actions, and in particular when civilians are the targets. Amnesty International examined Palestinian arguments for killing Israeli civilians in 2002 - basically that this is the only way to make an impression on a powerful enemy - and found them unacceptable. The report found that the deliberate killing of civilians was a crime against humanity. The report further declared that certain Israeli violations of human rights also met the definition of crimes against humanity.

The inducement of certain types of behaviour through mass media coverage is called media contagion. The power of media contagion is illustrated most effectively by the power of commercial advertising. There is no way commercial enterprises would spend all that money on advertising if it were not highly effective. Media contagion is also a well-established phenomenon in suicide. When suicide stories are prominently reported in the media, suicide levels can quickly increase by up to 10 per cent. Research also shows that media violence spreads violent behaviour.

Because of the known effect of media contagion on suicide there are generally accepted media guidelines for media coverage of suicide. Marsden and Attia propose that these guidelines, appropriately modified, should be adopted by the media when reporting suicide bombings. These guidelines would include the avoidance of

- (a) extensive/repetitive reporting of suicide bombings
- (b) concentrating on the events of suicide bombings
- (c) presenting simplistic explanations for suicide bombings
- (d) presenting these bombings as means to an end
- (e) glorifying the suicide bomber and
- (f) focusing on the bomber's positive characteristics.

Suicide bombing is a very effective tactic for striking terror into an enemy and the main targets are not the people who are killed and injured, but the people who will witness the attacks through media coverage. By reporting suicide bombings in an appropriate manner, the media can dampen the publicity effect and this should feed back to dampen the enthusiasm of the organising groups for using this terror tactic.

William Reville is associate professor of biochemistry and director of microscopy at UCC.

Load-Date: May 12, 2005

War, family abuse ... at last a new life

The Toronto Star

December 29, 2004 Wednesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. B03

Length: 836 words

Byline: Joe Fiorito, Toronto Star

Body

The last time I saw Sakthy Sabaratnam, she was on the verge of being deported to Sri Lanka. She left that country as a child. She knows no one there. Her troubles began long before the tsunami hit. If she were to be sent back now, she would be facing prison or worse.

There is good news.

Sakthy has been accepted into Canada as a refugee on humanitarian and compassionate grounds.

The story: Sakthy came here several years ago with her family. They fled shortly after the **Tamil Tigers** killed her father and threatened to kidnap her brother.

Sakthy's mother hid the family in a secret underground tunnel. Sakthy remembers seeing a snake by torchlight. Eventually, her mother got the family out of Sri Lanka and they came here.

Here turned out to be hell.

Sakthy and her family moved in with her aunt's family. There were at least 20 people crammed together in a small house. Sakthy says she was abused by an older relative - slapped, starved, beaten, made to work, and forbidden to talk to anyone outside the family.

One day, Sakthy's teacher, Christine Cairns, noticed the bruises on her arms. Because of Sakthy's age - she was in her late teens - Children's Aid was powerless to help. And so there was no choice in the matter - Christine, along with Marnie Lewis, the mother of one of Sakthy's friends, helped her escape. She managed to get out with some clothing, and some family photos.

Sakthy lived for a time with the Lewis family. She worked to finish high school. She also tried to claim refugee status. But she was told her application could not be considered separately from that of her family; the prospects did not look good.

Sakthy tried to make a separate refugee claim. No dice. And then one day, she was told to appear before officials at Immigration. It looked as if she would be told to go back to Sri Lanka. There seemed to be nothing anyone could do. Sakthy feared for her life. She was alone. She was depressed. She tried to harm herself.

War, family abuse ... at last a new life

On the day of the meeting at Immigration, Sakthy went to Markham to meet Christine and Marnie. The three of them were going to go to Immigration together. But when Sakthy arrived, the women were smiling. Marnie had had a call from a lawyer, and he'd had a call from Immigration.

Sakthy could stay.

Marnie said, "Welcome to Canada."

Sakthy said, "After they told me, we all went out for lunch. We had a celebration. I got fries and gravy, that's my favourite food." Mine, too, when I was 19.

The other day, Sakthy paid a visit to the Sri Lankan consulate. As a necessary part of the immigration process, she is required to have a Sri Lankan passport. I tagged along.

The Sri Lankan consulate is on St. Clair Ave., just west of Yonge. The offices are plain gray, walls and carpet. There were a dozen or so people waiting in chairs, idly reading the latest Sri Lankan newspapers.

I noticed a couple of what seemed to be shields leaning against one wall. "They are called 'sesatha'," said a young man. "They are national symbols. They are carried in parades and so on." I also noticed a silkscreen print on one wall - three women standing in a stream.

"They are taking water from the river in pots," said a woman who noticed my curiosity. "In Sri Lanka, we go to the river to get water. In the background, I think that is Dunhinda Falls." I nodded, and she smiled.

Sakthy approached the wicket when it was her turn. She explained that she needed an emergency passport. There was a hurried discussion. Sakthy said, "They need my birth certificate, or my old passport. But I don't have either of those things. The woman said she would talk to the head of the consulate on my behalf." An emergency passport costs \$290.

"I also have to have a medical, that's another \$176. I've already paid \$520 for my application for residency. I have to get fingerprinted. But now that I have been accepted, I can get a work permit. The work permit is going to cost me \$150." She is living on social assistance at the moment, and she doesn't know where she will get the money.

I took her for lunch.

Pizza, not fries.

I asked her if, as she makes her way around town, she fears that she will meet her older relative. She said, "I sort of worry. I saw him once at the temple. I was praying. He came up to me and started hitting me. He said my family was stupid, we were poor back home, and we were nothing without him. He wants to get control of us. The other people in the temple stopped him from hitting me. I felt so bad. Since then, I'm afraid to go out alone."

Does she miss her mother?

Sakthy said, "Her birthday was December 19th. I tried to call her. They wouldn't put her on the phone. I felt bad about it. But I'm not in the family any more. They think like I'm dead." But Sakthy is not dead. She has a new life here.

She wants to go to college. She would like to work with children.

A final note: A website, www.helpsl.org, has been created to provide information and links for Sri Lankan tsunami relief efforts.

Joe Fiorito usually appears Monday, Wednesday and Friday. E-mail: [jfiorito @ thestar.ca](mailto:jfiorito@thestar.ca)

War, family abuse ... at last a new life

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THE EVE OF 2005:
SOME PRACTICAL PRESCRIPTIONS FOR WORLD HOT SPOTS IN THE
COMING YEAR

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

December 29, 2004 Wednesday

SOONER EDITION

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Section: EDITORIAL,

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Body

Having examined the worst and best developments of the year in foreign affairs, it is now time to look at what should and can be achieved in 2005.

A positive approach to foreign policy involves constant planning and maneuvering to achieve good results -- peace, economic progress, political representativeness and stability -- while keeping an eye peeled and one's powder dry to head off unfavorable developments.

People -- both foreigners and Americans -- are a joy to work with, particularly when offered security and prosperity. They are also capable of very bad behavior -- poisoning, bombing, raping, pillaging -- sometimes for the very worst of reasons -- greed, ambition, revenge, old hatreds.

Trying to keep all of that in mind, let's look at 2005.

1. Iraq has to be moved toward resolution if America is not to be hopelessly crippled in its ability to do anything else at home or abroad. The country cannot continue to sustain the deaths of 60 of our servicemen and **-women** a month with no end in sight. Needed domestic programs will be cut or not started to continue to pour money into the Iraq war.

A plan exists to hand Iraq back to the Iraqis, starting with elections Jan. 30. Those must be followed by the prompt announcement and a quick beginning of U.S. troop withdrawal. Half -- 75,000 -- should be out by July; the rest, by this time next year. Even that will have made for a nearly three-year war. The American Civil War lasted four years; World War II, under four. For America in Iraq, occupation equals continued combat.

2. The year 2005 should be a year of substantial progress toward two states, peace and security in the Israeli-Palestinian face-off. Both sides should come to the table ready to deal, the Palestinians with new, post-Arafat leadership, the Israelis with a Likud-Labor coalition. President Bush has stated the achievement of a settlement as a U.S. destination; the other partners to the road map, the European Union, the United Nations and Russia, can want nothing less.

For starters, a newly elected Palestinian administration, with Egyptian help should clamp down on Gaza-based terrorism. Israel should stop talking about and start implementing removal of the 8,000 settlers from Gaza.

THE EVE OF 2005; SOME PRACTICAL PRESCRIPTIONS FOR WORLD HOT SPOTS IN THE COMING YEAR

3. China, soaring on the wings of its favorable economic relationship with the United States, should be told firmly to bring North Korea under control, in order that its nuclear program stop rattling North Asian and American nerves. The result should be that the North and South Koreans move more quickly to reconcile their differences, to keep the Chinese out. America should cut its troop presence there in half in 2005, to encourage the process.

4. The other world issue with a nuclear component is Iran. There is reasonable progress in the efforts of European states working with the International Atomic Energy Agency to devise means for Iran to develop its legitimate nuclear energy capacity, but not nuclear weapons.

What is really needed, however, is to bring an increasingly reasonable Iran into a limiting international framework. To achieve that, the United States needs to get over its 25-year estrangement from the country and commence meaningful, direct contacts.

5. The United States needs to reduce its unhealthy dependence on imported oil. As an example of the problem, on Jan. 1 the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, led by Arabs sore at us over Iraq and lack of progress in the Israeli-Palestinian issue, will reduce production, keeping the high oil price, high. The means to do that are well known.

6. The ongoing, laudable efforts of India and Pakistan to reduce the dangerous tension between them over Kashmir need to be reinforced, evenly: Pakistan has been getting more attention than India because of U.S. reliance on Pakistan in contending with the problems of al-Qaida and Afghanistan. The U.S. relationship with India should be given equal prominence.

7. Conflicts involving two islands, Sri Lanka and Cyprus, need attention and perhaps offer low-hanging fruit in terms of peacemaking in 2005. Talks on Sri Lanka between the government and the ***Tamil Tigers*** broke down, in spite of the best efforts of international mediators, when the Tigers split among themselves. This effort needs to be renewed and incentives increased to both sides to bring the conflict to an end.

The split on Cyprus could be on the way to resolution within the context of accession negotiations between Turkey and the European Union, due to begin in 2005. Greek Cyprus needs to soften its demands; Turkey, to withdraw its 35,000 troops from the island.

8. Afghanistan needs more of the same, rebuilding political institutions while investing in its economic development. The United States should withdraw at least half of its 20,000 troops there in 2005.

9. Africa and Latin America need more attention, Africa's problems from the United Nations and its own regional body, the African Union. Both should beef up their peacekeeping missions in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ivory Coast. The United States needs to work much more closely with its neighbors to the south, largely ignored from Sept. 11 on, due to the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts.

10. Finally, the key to a successful U.S. foreign policy in 2005 and beyond will be full presidential involvement. President Bush should be very interested now in how history will regard his two terms. Positive U.S. involvement with the world under his leadership in his second term will determine that assessment, not how many judges he gets confirmed or what he does with Social Security. There is a lot to do, but he has four years to do it.

Notes

Dan Simpson, a retired U.S. ambassador, is a Post-Gazette associate editor (dsimpson@post-gazette.com).

Load-Date: December 30, 2004

THE EVE OF 2005; SOME PRACTICAL PRESCRIPTIONS FOR WORLD HOT SPOTS IN THE COMING
YEAR

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**US-led forces in new push to find Osama;
Troops said to be closing in on Al-Qaeda chief, who is reported to be boxed
in within an area in north-west Pakistan**

The Straits Times (Singapore)

February 23, 2004 Monday

Copyright 2004 Singapore Press Holdings Limited

Section: Prime News

Length: 881 words

Body

By KAMRAN KHAN FOR THE STRAITS TIMES

KARACHI - In Pakistan's rugged tribal areas bordering Afghanistan, bearded men in turbans toting automatic rifles shuffle by shops and mud-brick houses daubed with defiant graffiti: Osama bin Laden Zindabad.

Translation: Long live Osama.

It is a message that has irked Washington since the Sept 11, 2001, attacks blamed on the Al-Qaeda leader and one that Islamabad has run out of patience with as it steps up the hunt with the United States for the world's most-wanted terrorist.

Life is harsh for most of the six million people scratching out a living in the rugged terrain straddling a 2,400km border where illiteracy prevails. Burka-clad women look in vain for water in dry gravel beds; barefooted children in torn clothes run aimlessly in dusty fields.

But it could get a lot tougher soon. Last week, Pakistan issued an ultimatum to tribal leaders: hand over suspicious foreigners and anyone sheltering them, or face military action.

Across the border in the former Taleban stronghold of Afghanistan, US-led forces are reportedly massing for a new push into mountainous areas that intelligence officers say is where Osama and a small band of his followers are hiding.

A British newspaper reported yesterday that US and British special forces had cornered Osama in north-west Pakistan and are monitoring him by spy satellite.

Citing 'two senior American sources' - a senior Republican and an intelligence source - the Sunday Express said Osama and 50 of his supporters had been 'boxed in' within a 16km by 16km area north of the town of Khanozai and the city of Quetta, on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

The report was denied by Pakistani Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, who told the Associated Press that he had no knowledge that Osama had been located. US officials also declined to comment.

The report of US-led forces closing in on Osama comes in the wake of statements last week by US Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Richard Meyers that US forces were engaged in 'intense' efforts to find Osama.

US -led forces in new push to find Osama; Troops said to be closing in on Al-Qaeda chief, who is reported to be boxed in within an area in north-west Pakistan

Asked whether the Al-Qaeda leader was believed to be in Pakistan, he replied: 'Don't know that. We think in that border region somewhere. We don't know where it is precisely.'

Soldiers on the ground literally face an uphill battle as they sweep through a remote region infamous for arms and drug dealing.

They will also have to contend with locals openly antagonistic to 'infidels'.

With a mosque every kilometre and some 2,000 Islamic seminaries propagating the virtues of jihad (holy war), extremist tribesmen seek the downfall of the US-backed government in Kabul and a return to Taleban rule.

Pakistani officials estimate that 10,000 armed tribesmen crossed into Afghanistan to support the Taleban following the 2001 US invasion.

Pakistani officials say that the arms and drugs markets in the tribal areas blossomed in the 1980s when US and other Western intelligence services funded jihad, using the areas as a launching pad against Soviet occupying forces in Afghanistan.

'There were special funds given to the ISI (Pakistan's military intelligence agency) by the CIA for the establishment of Islamic seminaries, which also imparted guerilla training in the tribal areas,' said General Hamid Gul, who headed the ISI in the late 1980s.

Dera Admakhel is known as the world capital for wholesale deals in hashish and is home to the world's biggest cottage industry for small arms.

'Clients, from the Irish Republican Army to the Tamil Tigers, come here for their shopping of small and medium arms,' according to Haji Behroz Gul Afridi, a shopkeeper in the market.

While ruling the sub-continent, the British devised a special system of political administration to govern the freedom-loving Pashtun tribes that resisted colonial rule fiercely.

When Pakistan was granted independence in 1947, the tribal people were given maximum autonomy and were allowed to run their affairs according to their Islamic faith, customs and traditions.

The tribal areas' political landscape may be little changed since, but US and Pakistani forces aim to transform the fight against terror in a region that has already yielded more than 500 suspected Al-Qaeda and Taleban fugitives since the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

EXTREMISM: Learnt in childhood

THE seeds of militancy are sown early in the Pakistan's tribal border areas.

Islamabad, which has never really brought the historically autonomous frontier region under its control, opened schools there but most remained without teachers, books and proper classrooms.

The majority, who are poor, are left with little choice but to send their children to madrasahs, where they are brainwashed.

'The children in the tribal areas are taught lessons in gun shooting before being sent to schools,' said tribal leader Malik Jangul Afridi, from the Khyber district.

Only 15 in every hundred men there are literate. The rate for women is one in 50. For people in the area, Osama bin Laden is a hero to be honoured.

'Since 9/11, some 24 dozen newborn sons in neighbourhoods around Dara Adam Khel have been named Osama,' said Haji Sher Zaman, who owns a weapons factory in the shanty town.

US -led forces in new push to find Osama; Troops said to be closing in on Al-Qaeda chief, who is reported to be boxed in within an area in north-west Pakistan

Many shops and houses are decorated with life-sized pictures of Osama and Mullah Omar, the deposed Taleban leader. -- Kamran Khan

Load-Date: February 22, 2004

End of Document

Tamils See "Dark Shadow" Over Ceasefire

Emerging Markets Online

March 02, 2005

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Section: ECONOMY, FINANCE, POLITICAL RISK, Daily Alert

Length: 195 words

Body

A leader of Sri Lanka's rebel **Tamil Tigers** said on Monday that alleged government attacks on the group's political officials have cast a "dark shadow" on the peace process between the two parties. S.P. Thamilchelvan, head of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's political wing, said that the Sri Lankan army is waging a covert war that is threatening a four-year ceasefire. In the past month, the group's eastern leader was killed in an ambush and the **women**'s political head in the region was wounded.

The **Tamil Tigers** are demanding an interim self-governing authority in the northeastern region as a precondition for returning to peace talks.

Meanwhile, the government's Marxist ally said on Wednesday that it would quit and topple the ruling coalition if the **Tamil Tigers** are granted self-rule or direct tsunami aid. People's Liberation Front (JVP) leader Somawansa Amarasinghe called the Tamils a fascist group, and said that they must embrace democracy.

Thamilchelvan's rhetoric is ominous, especially as the politically powerful Marxists are resolutely opposed to an autonomous Tamil state. A resumption of the civil war would be disastrous for the Sri Lankan economy.

Load-Date: March 3, 2005

Witness tells court of RIRA's Iraq link;

Irish News

June 27, 2003

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Section: Pg. 4

Length: 891 words

Byline: By Alan Erwin PA News

Body

ALLEGED Real IRA mastermind Michael McKevitt wanted Iraq to help fund his new terror offensive, a court heard yesterday.

FBI agent David Rupert also claimed the dissident Republican leader tried to forge an alliance with Sri Lankan guerrillas and was searching for suicide bombers to attack a British navy ship.

Even though the case against McKevitt (53) depends heavily on the evidence of the American businessman, Mr Rupert said he initially refused to testify because of fears he would be shot.

It was only after he watched a heart-wrenching TV documentary on the Omagh bomb attack that he changed his mind, he told Dublin's Special Criminal Court.

But defence lawyers later attacked his credibility as the star witness in the trial of McKevitt, who denies two charges of directing the Real IRA and being a member of the grouping which killed 29 people and injured hundreds more in the August 1998 Omagh attack.

They accused him of being a failed businessman who drove a Rolls Royce despite being declared bankrupt twice and failing to pay off his debts.

The former trucking company boss allegedly infiltrated the rogue republican outfit during the late 1990s and made regular transatlantic trips to Ireland until his final visit as a double agent in October 2000.

At that time he said he met with McKevitt, of Blackrock, Dundalk, Co Louth on a number of occasions, including once when the accused allegedly told him he had sent some of his top men on a field mission to drum up state sponsorship at a human rights convention in Geneva.

When this scheme did not work out, Mr Rupert said McKevitt told him he had a **female** contact with Irish connections who was linked to the **Tamil Tigers**, a guerrilla faction in Sri Lanka.

He added: "They were also looking for possible Iraqi sponsorship."

The court had heard how McKevitt was planning a new dissident Republican umbrella organisation styled as Oglagh na hEireann (the IRA) whose first strike he wanted to be even more spectacular than the Omagh bombing.

Witness tells court of RIRA's Iraq link;

Mr Rupert said that as McKevitt was mapping out his terror campaign, he went with him on a house-hunting trip along Carlingford Lough near the Irish border.

During the conversation the accused allegedly spoke about how British naval vessels, which patrolled the waters off the Co Down coast, were seen as provocative by republicans and also raised the subject of a terrorist strike on a US ship in the Yemen which killed 17 servicemen.

Mr Rupert: "He said unfortunately for the IRA, they didn't have any suicide bombers to run explosive devices into it (the British ship).

"We went on to discuss a remote control vessel."

McKevitt, allegedly a former Provisional IRA quartermaster who quit the paramilitary organisation over the direction of the Northern Ireland peace process, also apparently admitted to his involvement in the massacre of British troops at Warrenpoint, Co Down, just across the border in 1979, the court was told.

Mr Rupert said: "He pointed out across the water where he told me and spoke in the first person about a bombing that had taken place that had killed 19 British soldiers. He went into detail about how it was done."

At that time prominent Belfast dissident Joe O'Conner had been murdered and another alleged associate of McKevitt, Liam Campbell was under arrest, the court heard.

Mr Rupert said McKevitt told him this had left no one in command of the army council and it had forced him to take over the investigation into the killing of Mr O'Conner.

"He started by ordering the other person in the car with Mr O'Conner be brought down and interrogated," he said.

"If it was found out he was lying he would be shot. He took his statements and said what he was trying to do was to prevent a bloodbath within the group."

McKevitt later issued an order that those involved in the assassination would be dealt with at a time of his organisation's choosing, it was claimed.

Mr Rupert, who was paid a total of \$1.25 million US (GBP 780,000) to spy on the dissidents for the FBI and MI5, said his US handlers first asked him in the summer of 2000 if he would give evidence.

"I was not interested," he said.

"A number of times I was told different people were going to be shot for this and that and I suspected I would also be on that list for testifying."

Mr Rupert did however tell the security services he may agree in return for a big cash payment.

He also wanted assurances that the operation would lead to the terrorist organisation being completely dismantled, the court heard.

Following months of negotiations he eventually told the authorities in December 2000 it wasn't worth the risk.

But after an FBI agent urged him to sleep on his decision, Mr Rupert said: "That night on TV as I was randomly switching the channels there happened to be a special on Omagh. It featured a young lady blinded by the Omagh bomb and a young boy who apparently lost his shoulder bones.

"It was such a random choice of channels that it would be impossible that it was routed to me and through it I chose to testify."

Part of the deal saw his monthly payments from the FBI, which had already been increased from \$2,500 (GBP 1,500) to \$4,500 (GBP 2,800) rise again to more than \$12,000 (GBP 7,500).

Witness tells court of RIRA's Iraq link;

During cross-examination by Hugh Hartnett SC, for the defence, Mr Rupert confirmed he had entered a deal to write a book on the case when the trial was over.

Load-Date: July 10, 2003

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When truth spoils a good slavery story

The Daily Telegraph (Sydney, Australia)

June 3, 2003 Tuesday

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Section: FEATURES-TYPE- FEATURE-COLUMN- OP ED; Pg. 16

Length: 909 words

Byline: PIERS AKERMAN

Body

THE pitiful story of 12-year-old Thai girl Puangthong Simpalee who was sold into sex slavery into Australia certainly caught the eye when it was first published three months ago.

It had all the earmarks of a Walkley Award winner, social justice writ large and an attack on the current Coalition Government's Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock, the chattering classes' whipping boy of choice.

The story was a real tearjerker. Detective Sergeant Neal Apolony had told the NSW Coroner's Court on March 12 that it appeared that Puangthong had been sold as a child and trafficked to Australia on a fake Malaysian passport at the age of 12. By the time Immigration Department officers picked her up in a Surry Hills brothel in September, 2001, she had been enslaved as a prostitute for 15 years. She was to die three days later at Villawood Detention Centre during heroin withdrawal.

MATP

The union-backed ultra-politically correct Walkley Award was all but secured for whichever journalistic team wanted to penetrate the corrupt world of international sex trafficking.

But last week The Daily Telegraph stringer Jim Pollard visited Puangthong's parents in northern Thailand and found that the story

was not exactly as it had

been reported.

They said they had not sold Puangthong into sex slavery. She had not been a prisoner and she was not in Australia unwillingly.

Yesterday, Detective Sergeant Apolony told me that his information had come from one of two of Puangthong's boyfriends who had come forward after her death. However, he had not been able to check the information -- even though he had been given her parents' telephone number in Thailand -- because he did not speak Thai.

"She had also been using another name and had worked as a fruitpicker in Victoria," he said. "She worked on-and-off as a prostitute."

His report to the Coroner's Court was "never gospel" but it was seized upon by activists who used the unfortunate woman as their pin-up girl.

When truth spoils a good slavery story

It is a pity that The Australian, which courageously sent a reporter to Afghanistan to investigate Ali Bakhtiyari's claims to be an asylum seeker, did not make the same basic checks before launching

its campaign into human

trafficking.

It has certainly not joined the ranks of the internationally duped broadsheets The New York Times and The Washington Post which succumbed to innate urges to publish stories for political motives without applying fundamental journalistic principles -- but it did plunge in, fired up by the initial report on Puangthong's death and a controversial report which estimated the number of "sex slaves" in Australia to be as many as 1000.

This is not to say that it is improbable that some women in the Australian sex trade are the victims of international trafficking. Indeed, it would be most unlikely if some of the women in the sex trade were not been brought here under false pretences.

But whether there are 500 or 1500 sex slaves (as some zealots claim) is impossible to guess and the task is made more difficult by activists with other agendas.

Another of the stories on sex slavery has also been queried after it claimed, among other things, that an Immigration Department office that had been closed for a year was still operating. (As with the ABC's built-in bias, the recurring theme of the activists agenda is one of governmental and ministerial bungling and inaction.)

However, a spokesman for the Immigration Department says almost all so-called sex-slaves picked up from brothels reject the notion that they were enslaved, do not want to assist authorities and wish only to leave the country as soon as possible and ply their trade in other First World countries.

If they have a complaint about working in Australia,

it is that they have not made as much money as they expected. Government is however expected to begin offering witness protection visas to those who might feel they are at risk should they co-operate with authorities.

The international sex-slave lobby took a knock last month after a report in The Spectator found sex slavery in Eastern Europe was a "myth" and "nonsense."

Puangthong's parents have undermined the local campaign with their frank revelations and graphic photographs depicting their daughter at play on Sydney Harbour, at Bondi, Melbourne and the Snowy Mountains.

It would be a tragedy if more suffering is caused through sensationalist journalism.

akermanp@dailytelegraph.com.au

Random thoughts

On terrorists #1

'Unless some new evidence emerges that David Robinson had some political-religious goal in mind when he lashed out with his sharpened wooden spikes, he should be described as a mental case rather than a terrorist.'

On terrorists #2

While the focus on bias in recent days has been the ABC, the record at SBS is far worse and far more dangerous. The outfit did continue to employ an associate of the Tamil Tigers terrorist group despite being warned of his connections and the content of its Arab broadcasts could suggest that other political activists may have infiltrated the organisation. It is not unusual for the ethnic broadcaster to devote much of its news to acts of militant Islamic terrorism without mentioning the common fanatical strand of ideology that links them.'

When truth spoils a good slavery story

Dialogue

'Why should there be any reluctance to ban Hezbollah or any other group that has terrorist connections. Unless Australia acts to outlaw all of these groups we run the risk of being a safe-haven for their supporters.'

--G. Ross

Load-Date: June 2, 2003

End of Document

FBI: Al-Qaida might begin using women in attacks; Tactical shift: Woman tells newspaper that Osama bin Laden asked her to set up training camps

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

April 2, 2003 Wednesday

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Section: Pg. d7

Length: 906 words

Byline: ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

Recent intelligence has the FBI worried that al-Qaida might be recruiting and training **women** to carry out terror attacks, trying to regain an element of surprise for a network thinned by arrests, officials say.

For the first time in the war on terror, the FBI has issued a be-on-the-lookout bulletin for a woman, a Pakistani neurological expert, wanted for questioning in the terrorism investigation. Analysts also are examining claims another woman made in an Arab newspaper that she was asked by Osama bin Laden to open training camps for **female** terrorists.

Female attackers, successfully used by other terror organizations such as the Palestinian Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, would represent a major tactical shift for al-Qaida after years of being aligned with the Afghan Taliban regime that oppressed **women** and considered them unworthy to participate in an Islamic holy war, officials said.

"The FBI and our partners in the intelligence community are analyzing information around the clock for trends or any indicators that would help us prevent the next terrorist attack," FBI spokesman Mike Kortan said.

Several U.S. intelligence officials said they have no credible information suggesting an imminent attack plan to be carried out by **women**, but analysts are wary of the possibility.

"We're aware it is an option and one that was used recently against the Israelis and could easily be adapted by al-Qaida," one official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Several factors have led the FBI to prepare in the last month for the possibility that al-Qaida might recruit **women**.

U.S. officials learned of an interview in mid-March in an Arabic-language newspaper in which a woman claimed al-Qaida was setting up training camps to train **women** to become martyrs. The woman identified herself as Umm Osama, which translates "mother of Osama."

"We are building a **women's** structure that will carry out operations that will make the U.S. forget its own name," the woman claimed in the interview with the Asharq al-Awsat newspaper, based in London. The woman said her job was "to oversee the training of the **female** mujahedeen affiliated with al-Qaida and the Taliban," using the Arabic word for "holy warriors."

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U.S. officials said they had some suspicions about the interview because it was carried out across the Internet using chat rooms and e-mail, but it illustrated that women are considered a viable option for future al-Qaida attacks.

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FBI officials said they believed Siddiqui also traveled to the Maryland suburbs of Washington, the agency said.

FBI officials said they were not alleging she "is connected to specific terrorist activities," but they wanted to question her about possible contacts with people suspected of terrorist activities.

A third reason to suspect a tactical shift, FBI officials said, is that bin Laden's network has suffered several losses in its senior ranks over the last few months and its aware documents and interrogations have yielded substantial information about its planning and tactics.

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FBI officials said al-Qaida has prided itself on devising attacks that catch authorities off guard and may be increasing pressure to turn to women.

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On the Net: FBI statement to Congress on al-Qaida: <http://www.fbi.gov/congress/congress01/caruso121801.htm>

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Load-Date: April 2, 2003

FBI: Al-Qaida might begin using women in attacks; Tactical shift: Woman tells newspaper that Osama bin Laden asked her to set up training camps

End of Document

FBI wary al-Qaida may begin using women in attacks

The Associated Press

April 1, 2003, Tuesday, BC cycle

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Section: Washington Dateline

Length: 958 words

Byline: By JOHN SOLOMON, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: WASHINGTON

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End of Document

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AP Online

April 1, 2003 Tuesday

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Section: WASHINGTON DATELINE

Length: 958 words

Byline: JOHN SOLOMON; Associated Press Writer

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FBI: Al-Qaida May Use Women in Attacks

Load-Date: April 2, 2003

End of Document

Deadly clashes with rebels in Sri Lanka

UPI

October 17, 2007 Wednesday 1:02 AM EST

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Length: 85 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Oct. 17

Body

At least seven members of the Sri Lankan army were killed in an attack by the **Tamil Tigers** in Yala National Park.

Six soldiers died in the attack Monday, Lankapage reported. Another man, a member of a unit sent in to bring out the bodies, was killed by a pressure mine Tuesday morning.

The government said a total of 34 **Tamil Tigers**, including several young **women**, and nine soldiers were killed Monday in a series of gun battles, The Press Trust of India reported.

The Air Force attacked reputed rebel strongholds.

Load-Date: October 18, 2007

A million people left homeless in Sri Lanka

The Irish Times

December 28, 2004

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Section: World; Indonesian Earthquake; Pg. 8

Length: 1317 words

Byline: Rahul Bedi in Galle, Sri Lanka

Body

SRI LANKA: The stench of death pervaded Galle in southern Sri Lanka yesterday as dazed survivors of the tidal wave that struck the island's coastline, killing more than 11,500 people, vainly struggled to comprehend their tragedy and bury their dead.

Relatives sat listlessly around, heedless of the stifling heat in the tourist town's overcrowded government hospital, 75 miles south of the capital, Colombo, to take charge of the bodies of their loved ones.

Scores of corpses, including children and at least two newborn babies, lay unclaimed on the cement floor near the hospital entrance late in the afternoon.

The hospital's security officer, R.M. Piyadasa, said at least 800 bodies had so far been brought there.

An equal number, he said, were still believed to be trapped inside a train at nearby Hikadu after it was flung off its tracks. Buses and cars were similarly hurled aside and were floating along the main road hugging the coastline.

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The dead could not be recovered from the mangled railway carriages, as there was simply no heavy engineering equipment to lift such weights, officials said.

Rescue workers, their faces covered with masks to keep out the stench, said the bodies of men, women and children had been rescued from trees after the waters receded.

Many more corpses had floated into the sea, while others were still strewn amongst the debris of their homes and businesses along the coast.

A short distance away, bare-bodied men were feverishly digging shallow graves to keep pace with the unending line of make-shift hearses that were off-loading their grim cargo in crude, hurriedly assembled coffins.

"We have no time even to mourn our dead," said businessman Mahesh Ganeshshekhra, who was hurriedly burying his father-in-law, an optician.

He said his father-in-law had been getting into his car in downtown Galle around 9 a.m. on Sunday morning when the first of two "walls" of water struck. Like hundreds of others around him, he simply didn't stand a chance.

A million people left homeless in Sri Lanka

Two massive "sheets" of water, carrying huge boats from the nearby sea, descended like lightning on Galle within an hour of each other, levelling everything in their wake for several miles inland.

"It all happened so quickly that we are yet to react," John Griffin of London, holidaying with his wife and two children at the nearby Una Wataname beach resort, said. He was lucky to be alive, he added.

"My son saw boats moving very fast in the water and assumed it was a race. We did not care about it, as there are boat races here very often," Ms B.L. Deril Maria said.

"But then I saw these begin to fly and smash into pieces and realized something terrible was happening."

Nothing much remains of the once bustling bus depot in downtown Galle except rubble. "There are no words to describe what wrath descended on us," A.P. Sarachandra, chairman of the local Red Cross Society, declared.

Sri Lanka began a massive humanitarian operation after the tidal wave disaster, as the military confirmed that the overnight death toll had risen to over 11,500, including at least 48 security personnel.

This, however, does not include casualties in areas held by the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas in the island republic's north.

The LTTE, fighting for over two decades for an independent homeland, raised its own death count to 820 from 800 after collecting the bodies of victims along the north-eastern coastline, where its military bases are concentrated.

The tsunami had also rendered over a million people homeless, officials said.

Foreign tourists seeking warm weather during the Christmas holiday were also among the dead.

"Our information is that 70 foreign tourists had died in the tragedy," tourism director general Kalai Selvam said, but was unable to confirm their nationalities. Another 47 were reported missing.

Officials feared the destruction would hit Sri Lanka's economic growth, especially in the tourism sector, which has seen huge expansion in the last eight years.

"Once the full impact is ascertained the blow to the economy would be substantial," the local Financial Times declared. It could be as high as 1 per cent of Sri Lanka's GDP, it predicted.

Meanwhile, President Chandrika Kumaratunga declared a state of disaster to deal with the calamity and appealed for urgent humanitarian help from overseas.

"We have no mechanism to deal with this type of disaster," Lalith Weeratunga, aide to Prime Minister Rajapakse and the country's relief co-ordinator, said. They were getting systems in place to distribute relief, he added.

Reinforcements had been rushed to the southern and eastern regions to clear the roads and release bodies of victims piling up in hospitals.

"This is a gigantic task for us," Inspector General Chandra Fernando said, adding that clearing the roads was essential to enable relief supplies to get through.

The only single-lane alternative road to Galle was choked to a standstill yesterday as locals began fleeing the devastated town.

"We have nothing to stay for now," M.H. Tilakratne said.

The Sri Lankan authorities were also making arrangements to evacuate hundreds of tourists from coastal resorts that were badly affected by the tidal waves, senior minister Susil Premajayantha said.

A million people left homeless in Sri Lanka

He said they were not discouraging foreigners from visiting the island, but the authorities needed a few days to clear the debris and restore supplies.

"We are not saying don't come, but there are no hotel rooms in Colombo now," Premajayantha said. "Resorts in the hill area are fine, but the coastal areas are affected," he added.

Meanwhile, in neighbouring India, which was also hit by the tidal waves, a group from Denmark, restoring a former Danish fort in southern Tamil Nadu state near Cuddalore, said 300 children and fishermen were missing from nearby Nagapattinam town.

"Hundreds of thousands of children in coastal communities in six countries may be in serious jeopardy," UNICEF executive director Carol Bellamy said.

About half of around 400 people who perished in Cuddalore on Sunday were children.

Nearly 3,000 people died in India, most in Tamil Nadu.

Under Hindu tradition, children are buried instead of being cremated like adults.

For the grim task in Cuddalore, two pits were dug near a river at the edge of this palm-fringed town.

Most of the children, aged between 5 and 12, were buried as they were found - in their Sunday clothes - without the luxury of a shroud.

Local officials wanted to quickly finish the burials, and the cremation of adult victims, so they could turn their attention to helping those left alive.

Bodies of young and old lay unclaimed at the town morgue, awaiting identification by relatives.

Doctors called relatives in one by one over a public address system, while vans with wailing sirens brought in newly discovered bodies.

Many emerged from the morgue shaking their heads in silence. An occasional heart-rending cry pierced the buzz of conversation as someone discovered a loved one dead.

As a small body was lowered from a morgue van to a bed, a man cried out: "My son, my king." Venkatesh (37) wept inconsolably as he identified his son, 11-year-old Suman.

Venkatesh had been in Dubai, where he went three months ago as a construction worker, when his wife called from Cuddalore to tell him their boy was missing.

He flew home immediately and went straight to the morgue, where he was found his wife and daughter minutes before Suman's body was brought in.

"I never thought I would only see my son's body," cried Venkatesh.

Moments later, an identification tag was tied to the boy's hand and his body taken inside the morgue for paperwork before being given to the parents.

Venkatesh's tearful cries were drowned out as more parents surged forward to check other bodies. Policemen, overwhelmed by grieving parents, gently asked Venkatesh to leave.

As one of his relatives pulled him away, he kept asking: "How can I go, leaving behind my son?"

A million people left homeless in Sri Lanka

End of Document

pounds 5,000 : a high price to do your bit? GAP YEAR SPECIAL With the A-level results out, students are being offered gap-year placements as volunteers - and charged a lot for them. Do they get value for money? Charles Starmer-Smith investigates. On pages 10 and 11, we provide 100 top contacts for organising that time out

The Daily Telegraph (LONDON)

August 19, 2006 Saturday

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Section: TRAVEL; Pg. 7

Length: 2063 words

Byline: Charles Starmer-Smith Additional reporting by Robert Norden

Body

For many school-leavers and their parents, a volunteer placement with one of the established gap-year companies might seem an ideal option. It offers the excitement of working somewhere exotic, the chance to do something worthwhile and the security of having everything arranged by a Western-based, professional company.

This year, more than 40,000 young Britons, encouraged to do something "constructive" with their year off by university admissions officers and employers, will embark on volunteer placements in all corners of the globe - often at considerable expense. For the majority, it will be a positive experience; but others will return home disappointed that the roles they were assigned, and the support they received, were not what was promised when the cheque was signed.

It might seem churlish to talk about voluntary work and value for money in the same sentence, but gap-year placements have become big business. A three-month trip - whether working on a conservation project or for an aid agency, teaching English or doing zoological fieldwork - can often cost as much as pounds 5,000, plus flights. For that money, students are entitled to expect a certain level of support and service.

When questioned about the cost of some placements, gap-year organisations argue that the price enables volunteers to have experiences they would find difficult to organise themselves. Administration can be costly, as can sourcing and marketing new projects. The companies also claim to offer a network of advice and support - from instruction courses before travelling, to the help of staff on the ground - and, for parents, some peace of mind.

Nevertheless, an increasing number of volunteers are returning from charity placements dissatisfied. And whereas in the past complaints tended to be voiced in private, people are beginning to speak out.

Tom Whipple, 22, was disillusioned by his time in Sri Lanka under the auspices of one of Britain's largest gap-year companies, I-to-I. "I went to gain experience as a news reporter for a Sri Lankan paper, but most of the other I-to-I volunteers taught English or helped with tsunami relief," he said. "A lot of us felt that our money was being wasted. The deal, as I understood it, was that I had to pay for my flights and give I-to-I pounds 1,850. In return, it would arrange a worthwhile job and accommodation for three months. I discovered that my lodging cost pounds 250, so how was the other pounds 1,600 spent?"

pounds 5,000 : a high price to do your bit? GAP YEAR SPECIAL With the A-level results out, students are being offered gap-year placements as volunteers - and ch....

He found out that some of his fee went on I-to-I support staff in Sri Lanka, but as much as 60 per cent stayed in I-to-I's UK office. "Other volunteers had their own gripes," he said. "One woman went on an elephant-conservation project, which cost her pounds 1,700. She lived alongside other volunteers who had booked direct for the same length of time for just pounds 825. Their food and visas were included in the price, moreover, while she had to pay extra."

Tom did not, however, have a terrible time. "Quite the opposite, most of us loved our work. As a news reporter, I covered the general election and incidents involving the Tamil Tigers. I wrote editorials and features and had a fascinating trip. But the whole time I had a nagging feeling I was paying too much.

"My contact with I-to-I staff was limited to three or four chance meetings. If, as they claimed, they were largely there to serve as a safety net then I would have liked the company's representatives to inquire about my safety now and then. In the course of my job, I narrowly avoided arrest twice, was trailed by the Tamil Tigers' secret police and was metres away from a fatal bombing."

A spokeswoman for I-to-I said their fees are necessary in order to offer the level of service customers expect from a commercial company. "We recommend that anyone who is thinking of volunteering abroad - whether with a commercial company such as I-to-I, a non-profit organisation or a charity - examines what their fee covers and how open their travel provider is to disclosing this information.

"We go to great lengths to be as transparent as possible about what each project fee covers and what it provides for our travellers. A detailed breakdown is available both on our website and in our brochures."

She added that volunteers were regularly contacted throughout their time abroad. "All volunteer travellers are introduced to our in-country team through an induction at the beginning of their placements. After this they are encouraged to contact our co-ordination team should they encounter any problems. Our research has shown that most of our travellers do not want a hand-holding service and are happy to know that the support is there should they need it, rather than being frequently contacted while overseas."

Gap years are not without danger. There have been several high-profile deaths in recent years, including the murder of Katherine Horton, a 21-year-old British backpacker, in Thailand earlier this year. The Foreign Office recently revealed that one in four gap-year students is involved in a serious incident while travelling. In this context, it is understandable why many people opt for organised placements.

In a survey of more than 30,000 of last year's gap-year placements, the trade association The Year Out Group found that two thirds of volunteers were female.

"Girls mature earlier than boys and tend to have a more caring attitude for the young and for the developing world," said David Smith of Africa and Asia Venture, which offers unpaid teaching and conservation placements. "Girls also feel threatened by media reports of dangers abroad, and therefore feel more secure with an organisation."

But after the "disastrous" three months her 24-year-old daughter, Martha, spent at a children's refuge in Peru under the auspices of Gap Challenge, Carole Sedgwick of Brighton wanted to warn parents against sending their children abroad on a gap-year scheme.

"Martha's placement was badly organised and she was unclear what she was supposed to be doing," she said. "There was little supervision from Gap Challenge. We allowed her to go because we were led to believe she would be staying with a family, but she lived in a hostel in a seedy part of town where volunteers were continually getting mugged.

"If we had known what lay ahead, we would not have let her go. Many gap-year organisations charge a lot of money for not very much in return."

Gap Challenge said: "The feedback received from the majority of participants on the [Peru] programme was that they had a very worthwhile experience. We are sorry to hear that Martha did not feel this way."

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In Mongolia, some volunteers with another gap-year organisation, Teaching & Projects Abroad (TPA), also expressed dissatisfaction with their placements and with the support they were offered. Volunteers' requests for information often went unheeded and appointments were missed, while some felt their placements lacked structure.

On two occasions, newcomers were not met on arrival in the country. For Trish Sexton, 33, that meant being harassed by men in the middle of the night and having to take refuge in the airport toilet. She eventually found a hotel room, for which TPA later paid.

"Of course, no one truly expects everything to run like clockwork," said Trish. "This is a Third World country and we come here to experience the difference. But the point is that volunteers pay Western prices and expect a Western standard of service."

TPA acknowledged that it had slipped up in some areas and that there had been a lack of communication in the case of Miss Sexton, but said the majority of volunteers in Mongolia had had successful placements.

"The reason why they are good value is that it would be extremely difficult for the thousands of young people that we send around the world every year . . . to organise efficient and legal voluntary work in developing countries such as Mongolia," a spokesman said.

He added that roughly 70 per cent of all the money that TPA receives is spent directly in developing countries.

"We don't attempt to mollycoddle our volunteers or to control their lives but we do provide an effective framework through which they can develop themselves and contribute a great deal to the local community."

Sophie Robinson, 20, from Portsmouth (see page 10), agreed, arguing that in her three months in Africa under the auspices of Camps International she experienced more than she could ever have hoped had she tried to organise the trip on her own.

Yet for others, the whole notion of paying to be a volunteer is questionable. Several organisations, such as Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), run their programmes in a very different way. Volunteers with VSO receive a local wage for their two-year stint. The organisation spends months, sometimes as much as a year, setting up a placement in co-operation with local NGOs (non-governmental organisations). And, on arrival, VSO workers receive months of training in the culture and local language. By contrast, all TPA provides in Mongolia is a tour of Ulaanbaatar, the capital - even though its volunteers tend to be younger and need more extensive induction and training.

Judith Brodie, a director of VSO, this week accused many year-out programmes of being no more than a form of neo-colonialism, with the schemes being less about helping host communities and more about the volunteer's enjoyment. Some gap-year providers seem to pay little attention to whether young people are making a long-term difference to the communities they are working in," she said. "There seems to be a colonial attitude whereby it is assumed that just because the young people are from the UK, they will benefit from their host community."

UNA Exchange, which hosts international volunteers on projects in Wales and sends British volunteers to assignments all over the world, is run on similar lines to VSO. Kirsty Marsh, once a volunteer and now on the organisation's staff, also questions how worthwhile a lot of projects are: "Travelling abroad to take part in community projects is often seen as a predominantly middle-class venture and has been scorned as a way of relieving Western guilt and imposing Western values on other countries. A lot of businesses capitalise on volunteering.

"But we are part of an international network of around 120 voluntary organisations that arrange projects in their home countries, the focus being on inter-cultural learning. We then all send volunteers to take part in each other's projects, with thousands of volunteers being exchanged each year."

The benefit, she adds, is that these projects have been organised by a local person who knows and understands the needs of the community where the projects will take place. The cost of the project is administrative only -

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between pounds 110 and pounds 140 - and the money goes to the development of training and education of volunteers.

Organisations such as UNA Exchange are not as well known as the larger, commercial gap-year companies. They do not work for profit and they have little cash for marketing. "They are run by people who are there for the experience and not the money," said another volunteer, Lisa Stagg, 24, from Berlin. "The major thrill for me was to meet and mix with people from all walks of life not just people who can afford it."

Going it alone is also an option worth considering if you are prepared to do your research. Oliver Smith, 20, from Nottingham (see right), suggests that if you are happy to invest time organising your trip, a worthwhile placement can be arranged at far less expense and be a more rewarding experience .

Richard Oliver, the director of the Year Out Group, which provides a code of conduct for 38 gap-year organisations, admitted there were some poor operators. "They exist but they tend not to last long. When providing placements in several continents, often in remote and undeveloped areas, it is inevitable that things will go wrong from time to time.

"Prospective volunteers should get under the skin of an organisation. They should shop around and talk to former volunteers. They should list everything they wish to achieve and then match them to the right company. They should also be aware that whatever they do they will experience problems."

Grown-up gapper - read our career-break traveller's reflections on her round-the-world trip:
www.telegraph.co.uk/gapper

Load-Date: August 19, 2006

Popular TV show may have aided Sri Lanka suicide attack

Agence France Presse -- English

October 23, 2007 Tuesday 12:55 PM GMT

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Length: 638 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Oct 23 2007

Body

Sri Lanka ordered a shake up in its military command Tuesday a day after Tamil Tiger rebels launched a devastating attack on a key air base during the screening of a hugely popular TV talent contest.

President Mahinda Rajapakse appointed Major General Sanath Karunaratne overall operations commander in the north-central region of the Anuradhapura area, where Tamil Tiger rebels destroyed a fleet of aircraft on Monday.

"He will be in charge of all security forces as well as police, including intelligence units in Anuradhapura," a government official said.

Karunaratne, 53, has previously served as chief military spokesman and was credited with defending the army's Elephant Pass garrison in the far north of the island against a prolonged Tiger attack in 1991.

The government also transferred the responsibility for outer perimeter security at all airports to the army after the air force failed to secure the Anuradhapura base, officials said.

A rebel "Black Tiger" suicide squad of 21 on Monday infiltrated the Anuradhapura base north of Colombo, killing 13 servicemen and crippling the military's air surveillance capability.

Military officials said the commando-style attack began in the early hours of Monday, meaning the rebels would have had to be at the perimeter fence at least three to four hours earlier to get into position.

"That takes us to the time when Sirasa Super Star was shown on TV," a military official said, referring to a hugely popular talent show inspired by "American Idol."

"There are no TVs at sentry points, but the alertness of sentries and whether all positions were properly manned is being probed," said the official, who asked not to be named.

Three layers of razor wire protect what was considered one of the island's most secure bases. The installation serves as a key logistics hub for operations against the rebel-held north.

Popular TV show may have aided Sri Lanka suicide attack

Military officials said the Tamil Tiger suicide squad, including three women who all died, were wearing camouflage uniforms similar to government soldiers and may have even just strolled in unchallenged.

In Anuradhapura, the authorities put the naked rebel corpses on public display on Tuesday, residents said. Two farm tractors pulled around trailers loaded with the dead.

"The tractors stopped outside the hospital where there was a large gathering of people," one journalist said. "People took pictures while others were even filming."

Police and military chiefs in the area said a probe would be launched into the gruesome show.

The base is 210 kilometres (130 miles) from the capital and 60 kilometres from the front line separating government-held territory and the mini-state controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The military had previously moved its spy planes to Anuradhapura from an air base at Vavuniya, a tense town closer to the front line, for safety reasons.

Hours before the attack, the military in the area hosted a cross-country motor sporting event followed by a spirited party. The attack also came on the eve of the change of command at the base.

"Was it a happy coincidence for the Tigers or did they know all that in advance? This is something that will be covered by the investigations," a senior defence official close to the probe said.

"Defence top brass have already visited Anuradhapura, and are taking stock of the situation and looking at possible lapses. The question is how the Tigers managed to get in unnoticed."

The Tigers also sent in light aircraft to bomb the base from overhead, making the assault their first ever coordinated land and air strike. It also featured the largest number of suicide cadres for a single attack.

The latest attack came after a string of setbacks for the rebels, who in July were ejected from their last stronghold in the east of the island amid a breakdown in a Norwegian-brokered 2002 truce.

Load-Date: October 24, 2007

French aid group to review Sri Lanka presence after bloodiest hit

Agence France Presse -- English

August 7, 2006 Monday 9:00 AM GMT

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Length: 579 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Aug 7 2006

Body

A French aid agency said Monday it would review its presence in Sri Lanka after 15 of its workers were found shot dead in the worst attack since its inception 25 years ago.

Paris-based Action Against Hunger, or ACF, said 11 men and four women, all Sri Lankans, had been killed in the town of Muttur, where they helped survivors of the December 2004 tsunami and people affected by violence between troops and Tamil rebels.

"Our Muttur office had been providing safe drinking water to the people in the area and from early this year we were also providing relief to people affected by the escalating violence," ACF head of mission in Sri Lanka, Eric Fort, told AFP in Colombo.

There was no claim of responsibility for the massacre of the aid workers from the minority Tamil community, but the Tamil Tiger rebels accused the government while the military pointed fingers at the Tigers.

"We did not have people in that area at the time they were supposed to have been killed," government military spokesman Upali Rajapakse said. "Their office is not located in an area where we carried out artillery attacks."

But rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) official S. Puleedevan said the army did it. "This massacre of aid workers was carried out by security forces," Puleedevan said.

With the situation increasingly becoming dangerous for aid workers, Fort said ACF officers were expected from Paris shortly to make an assessment.

However, he said the organisation had been working in Sri Lanka's conflict-affected north and east for the past decade and had not been a target for either side.

ACF has 218 workers in Sri Lanka, mostly Sri Lankans. About 15 are expatriates currently deployed across the island's north-east.

Fort said the group's offices are painted white with ACF logos and staff wear white T-shirts carrying ACF prints.

French aid group to review Sri Lanka presence after bloodiest hit

With a current annual budget of 2.6 million euros (3.3 million dollars) the organisation provided drinking water in coastal areas hit by the tsunami as well as humanitarian assistance to thousands of internally displaced people.

"We got involved in tsunami relief operations while keeping up our other work of helping people affected by the conflict," Fort said.

The office in Muttur, a coastal fishing town of mostly minority Muslims, had a staff of 16. Half were from the area itself while the others came from Trincomalee, the main port town in the northeast.

"The 15 people who were killed are the ones who were accommodated within our own premises," Fort said. "The others are residents of Muttur, but after the clashes we have managed to make contact with only a few of them."

Benoit Miribel, the director general of ACF, said they were stunned by the killings which were unprecedented in the organisation's 25-year history.

"We are trying to send a team to find out what is going on in this area," Miribel told AFP in Paris. "But soldiers have prevented us from entering the town which remains completely sealed off."

The main fighting erupted on July 26 when planes bombed suspected Tiger positions in a bid to force the rebels to lift their blockade of an irrigation canal that also supplies water to Muttur.

At least 27 Muslim civilian also perished when their shelters were bombed during clashes last week. Thousands have fled while a large number is still trapped in the town.

Heavy fighting since July has claimed the lives of at least 425 people in a country where more than 60,000 have been killed in the Tamil separatist conflict since 1972.

Load-Date: August 8, 2006

Sri Lankan Rebels End Water Blockade

Associated Press Online

August 8, 2006 Tuesday 2:58 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 610 words

Byline: By DILIP GANGULY, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Tamil rebels released water from a disputed reservoir Tuesday in Sri Lanka, ending a 19-day blockade that sparked some of the worst fighting between government troops and guerrillas in four years. In the capital, meanwhile, a car bomb killed two people, including a 3-year-old girl, police said.

On July 20, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels blocked water supplies to 60,000 people in government-controlled villages in northeastern Trincomalee district, 135 miles northeast of Colombo. The group said the move was aimed at forcing the government to fulfill the needs of people in rebel-held villages.

"The government used this issue to harass our people attacked them forcing displacement and starvation. Therefore we decided to open the gates," rebel spokesman Daya Master said.

The rebels wanted "security of civilians who must travel between government and **LTTE** areas; to remove the ban on items imposed by the army; and to incorporate drinking water supply to their areas," a statement said.

After initial talks failed, the government began an offensive to capture the areas around the reservoir, and violence spread to adjoining villages in Trincomalee, killing scores and displacing tens of thousands of people.

There was no immediate comment from the government on the rebel action.

In Colombo, a van carrying a former Tamil lawmaker opposed to the Tamil Tiger rebels exploded in front of a girls' school, killing an occupant and a girl who was walking by, authorities said.

The apparent target of the attack, S. Sivathasan of the Eelam People's Democratic Party which bitterly opposes the Tamil Tiger guerrillas escaped with injuries, party leader Douglas Devananda said. He blamed the Tiger rebels for the bomb.

Insurgents have targeted Devananda and his supporters in the past.

The EPDP renounced violence and joined Sri Lanka's political mainstream in 1987. The Tigers, who are campaigning for a separate homeland for the country's 3.2 million Tamils, oppose the party.

In 2004, a suicide bomber targeted Devananda, who is also a government minister. The bomber detonated explosives that killed four, but Devananda escaped.

Sri Lankan Rebels End Water Blockade

Tamil Tiger rebels have fought the government since 1983 to create a separate state for the country's 3.2 million minority Tamils accusing majority Sinhalese of discrimination.

More than 65,000 people were killed in the conflict before a 2002 cease-fire, which is now nearly collapsed. Renewed fighting has killed more than 900 people half of them civilians since December, monitors say.

Also Tuesday, relatives buried 17 international aid agency workers who were slain in the volatile northeast.

Relatives of the Action Against Hunger workers who were killed 16 from Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil minority and a Muslim wept as they buried them in their villages.

The bodies were found in the seaside town of Muttur, where the rebels and government forces fought each other last week. Their slaying triggered international condemnation, prompting the Sri Lankan government to order a through investigation.

The slain aid workers 13 men and four women were doing post-tsunami relief work in Muttur for the Paris-based agency when fighting broke out between the rebels and the government.

Former President Bill Clinton, who is also the U.N. envoy for tsunami recovery, urged Sri Lankan authorities "to do everything possible to apprehend the perpetrators of this crime and to bring them to justice."

Also Tuesday, suspected rebels killed three security personnel in two separate incidents in northeastern Trincomalee and eastern Ampara, military spokesman Maj. Upali Rajapakse said.

Associated Press writer Krishan Francis contributed to the report.

Load-Date: August 9, 2006

Sri Lanka on alert for Tiger attack anniversary

Agence France Presse -- English

July 3, 2007 Tuesday 1:27 AM GMT

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Length: 595 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, July 3 2007

Body

Sri Lankan security forces are on high alert as Tamil Tiger rebels this week mark the 20th anniversary of their first-ever suicide attack with the threat of unleashing more deadly strikes.

The island's prime minister has underlined fears that the ethnic Tamil guerrillas could be planning to celebrate with a bang, following the discovery in recent weeks of two trucks, each crammed with around a tonne of explosives.

"The explosives in the truck were enough to destroy half of Colombo," Ratnasiri Wickremanayake told reporters shortly after the first truck bomb was found before it was detonated.

In their northern de facto state, the Tigers will light coconut oil lamps and hold Hindu services for at least 260 rebels -- more than a quarter of them women -- who have blown themselves up in the name of an independent homeland.

The first of these "Black Tigers" was a rebel known as Captain Miller, who drove a truck bomb into an army camp in the Jaffna peninsula on July 5, 1987, killing 40 soldiers.

Initially inspired by Islamic militants in the Middle East, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have earned a reputation as the world's deadliest suicide bombers, claiming a long string of high-profile victims.

As a result, the group has attracted widespread international condemnation -- and been designated as a terrorist organisation by both the United States and the European Union.

Unlike their Islamic counterparts in the Al-Qaeda network, Tiger suicide operatives are driven by loyalty, and not religion. They are secular Hindus with a single-minded allegiance to their leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran.

"It is difficult to fight Black Tigers because they have no respect for life -- not even their own," said retired army general Sarath Munasinghe.

He describes the Black Tigers as a "protective armour" for the 35-year-old campaign to create a separate state for the island nation's ethnic Tamil minority.

Sri Lanka on alert for Tiger attack anniversary

The deadliest suicide attack took place on October 16 last year when a Black Tiger drove a truck bomb into a transit point where 350 sailors were waiting to board busses in north-central Sri Lanka. At least 116 of them were killed.

India banned the Tigers in 1992 after holding them responsible for the 1991 suicide bombing that killed former Indian premier Rajiv Gandhi, who as prime minister ordered Indian troops to disarm the rebels in 1987.

Twenty years on, the Tiger recruits keep coming -- and the chosen few are entertained to a last supper with the 52-year-old Prabhakaran as a high point of a short but effective military career.

Ever the masters of reinvention, the Tigers have now added an air force to their arsenal -- smuggling in light aircraft and bombing a military air base adjoining the island's only international airport in March.

"Tigers are no doubt the masters of suicide bombings," said defence analyst Namal Perera. "If they use their Black Tiger expertise with the new air wing, it could have a devastating impact on the conflict."

A retired top air force official who asked not to be named said he believed that the Tigers could soon use a flying bomb, even though up to now they have struck from the air and then flown back to their bases.

The police and armed forces are understandably nervous.

"Measures are underway to heighten our alert during the Black Tiger week," police spokesman Senior Deputy Inspector General Jayantha Wickramaratne told AFP. "We are taking all measures to eliminate the risk of terrorist attacks."

"We are also seeking public cooperation for information regarding suspicious activity in their neighbourhoods."

Load-Date: July 3, 2007

The AFP Asia news agenda

Agence France Presse -- English

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Length: 1049 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, Sept 12 2007

Body

Duty Editor: Peter Stebbings

News Desk: + 852 2829 6211

ASIA NEWS HIGHLIGHTS ON WEDNESDAY:

+ Estrada gets life in Philippines

+ Pakistan court to hear Sharif petition

MANILA: Former Philippine president Joseph Estrada is jailed for life after being found guilty of massive corruption. We are providing full coverage of events, including a profile of Estrada and a chrono of events

(PHILIPPINES-ESTRADA-POLITICS-TRIAL)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Supreme Court is expected to take up a petition against the deportation of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif to Saudi Arabia (PAKISTAN-POLITICS)

OTHER NEWS ITEMS:

BANGKOK: Monitoring as Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont gives a speech at 0200 GMT on future of Thai economy (THAILAND-POLITICS-ECONOMY)

BEIJING: EU Health Commissioner Markos Kyprianou on last day of week-long visit. Presser at 0900 GMT (EU-CHINA-HEALTH)

-- World Bank to release quarterly update for China (CHINA-WORLDBANK-ECONOMY)

-- Tennis. Men's edition of China Open (TENNIS-ATP-CHN)

-- Football. Women's World Cup (FBL-WC2007-WOMEN)

The AFP Asia news agenda

COLOMBO: Reporting on Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict after the island's navy on Tuesday claimed it had virtually wiped out the **Tamil Tigers** ability to smuggle arms into the country (SRILANKA-UNREST)

DHAKA: Monitoring as Bangladesh's emergency government lifts a ban on indoor political meetings ahead of talks with parties on electoral reforms this week (BANGLADESH-POLITICS)

-- Monitoring as Bangladesh is hit by new flooding after major rivers swell from fresh monsoon downpours (BANGLADESH-WEATHER-FLOODS)

HONG KONG: Covering speech by Financial Secretary John Tsang, who will speak at 0430 GMT on challenges facing Hong Kong economy (HONGKONG-ECONOMY)

-- Reporting on government's renewed plan for multi-billion dollar international arts hub. The project was shelved last year after developers backed out in dispute (LIFESTYLE-HONGKONG-POLITICS-ART)

ISLAMABAD: Monitoring unrest in northwest Pakistan after a suicide bomber killed 17 people on Tuesday (PAKISTAN-UNREST)

JAKARTA: Covering breakfast briefing by Indonesia's trade minister Mari Pangestu to foreign correspondents from 0100 GMT (INDONESIA-ECONOMY-TRADE)

-- Monitoring meeting between Indonesian officials and international agencies on bird flu on the island of Bali (HEALTH-FLU-INDONESIA)

-- Following ongoing reaction after Indonesia's top court awards former dictator Suharto 106 million dollars in a defamation suit against Time magazine (INDONESIA-SUHARTO-MEDIA-TIME)

-- As part of a two-day, four-story package, moving feature on impact of biofuel production on Asia-Pacific economies as farmers and companies try to cash in on trend (LIFESTYLE-ENVIRONMENT-ENERGY-ASIA-BIOFUEL-ECONOMY)

KATHMANDU: Monitoring political developments after former Maoist rebels threaten to quit the government and launch nationwide protests unless the country immediately gets rid of the monarchy (NEPAL-POLITICS-ROYALS)

-- Monitoring the condition of Nepal's Crown Prince Paras, who suffered a heart attack blamed on his playboy lifestyle (NEPAL-POLITICS-ROYALS-PRINCE)

-- Moving a story on how a new generation of adventurers are gearing up for what could be mountaineering's next great challenge: getting down all the world's 14 8,000-metre peaks on skis (MOUNTAINEERING-SKI-EXTREME-NEPAL-SWEDEN)

NEW DELHI: Reporting India's industrial output data for July (INDIA-ECONOMY-OUTPUT)

-- Monitoring outbreak of cholera and other stomach diseases in eastern India, where the death toll is nearing 200 (INDIA-HEALTH-CHOLERA)

-- Moving a story on a group providing sanctuary for abused performing bears in India (INDIA-ENVIRONMENT-ANIMALS-BEARS)

PHNOM PENH: Lawmakers are expected to approve legislation on issuing and trading non-government securities - the first step in regulating a future stock exchange (CAMBODIA-ECONOMY-STOCKS-LAW)

SEOUL: Following developments as a joint delegation of US, Chinese and Russian experts visit North Korea for talks on disabling its nuclear plants (NKOREA-NUCLEAR-WEAPONS-US-SKOREA)

-- Football. South Korea vs Syria in final-round Olympic qualifier. Kicks off 1100 GMT (FBL-ASIA-OLY-2008-KOR-SYR)

The AFP Asia news agenda

SINGAPORE: Sheldon Adelson, chief executive of Las Vegas Sands, to address a conference of CEOs at about 0415 GMT (SINGAPORE-US-GAMING-SANDS)

-- Asia Pacific Petroleum Conference features speakers from the global oil industry, starting at 0125 GMT (COMMODITIES-ENERGY-OIL)

-- Reporting on world oil prices in Asian trade after OPEC boosts production (COMMODITIES-ENERGY-OIL-ASIA-PRICE)

SYDNEY: Australian Prime Minister John Howard stares down rebels in his own ranks, with no potential rival game to launch a challenge against him at a crunch meeting of government politicians (AUSTRALIA-POLITICS-VOTE-HOWARD)

-- Field Hockey. Olympic qualifying Oceania Cup in Buderim, Queensland (FHOCKEY-OLY-2008-OCEANIA)

TAIPEI: Air force and navy to show their strength amid escalating tensions with rival China over Taiwan's plans to host a controversial referendum on joining the United Nations (TAIWAN-CHINA-MILITARY-REFERENDUM)

TOKYO: Monitoring debate in the Japanese parliament with the opposition ready to grill PM Shinzo Abe over Japan's military mission supporting US-led troops in Afghanistan (JAPAN-POLITICS)

-- Jia Qinglin, member of standing committee of Chinese Communist Party's Political Bureau and chairman of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, arrives on a week-long visit to Japan (JAPAN-CHINA-DIPLOMACY)

-- Reporting on Japan's July balance-of-payments data which shows the current account surplus grew 4.5 percent from a year earlier (JAPAN-ECONOMY-ACCOUNT)

-- Coverage of foreign exchange trading in Tokyo and Singapore with investors waiting anxiously for an expected US interest rate cut next week amid growing fears of a US recession (FOREX-ASIA)

-- Monitoring Japanese share prices which rise 0.36 percent in morning trade, tracking Wall Street higher as investors continued to bet on a US interest rate cut next week (STOCKS-JAPAN)

-- As part of a two-day, four-story package, moving a feature on the impact of biofuel production on food prices in Japan, which relies on imports for more than half its food needs (LIFESTYLE-ENVIRONMENT-ENERGY-JAPAN-BIOFUEL-FOOD)

-- Football. Olympic qualifier. Japan v Qatar (FBL-OLY-JPN-QAT)

-- Badminton. Japan Open. Second day (BADMINTON-JPN)

afp

Load-Date: September 12, 2007



The Asia Foundation Launches Study on America's Role in Sri Lanka's Peace Process

U.S. Newswire

May 13, 2007 Sunday 8:00 PM EST

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Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, May 13

Body

Sri Lanka's civil conflict, which has taken approximately 65,000 lives, has been ongoing for over 25 years. In February 2002, a ceasefire was established between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**). In 2003, the United States was designated as a Co-Chair to the Sri Lankan Peace Process -- along with the European Union, Japan, and Norway -- to provide incentives to both parties to stay committed to the peace process. Ambassador Lunstead's study provides an inside account on how the United States applied diplomatic, economic, and other resources to support Sri Lanka's increasingly precarious peace.

The United States' Role in Sri Lanka's Peace Process is a follow-up to the landmark study, Sri Lanka Strategic Conflict Assessment -- Aid, Conflict and Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka (2002-2005), which was released in January 2006. The Strategic Conflict Assessment analyzed the interaction between members of the international community and the Sri Lankan parties to the conflict, arguing that international actors should apply a balance of diplomatic, political, development, security, and economic measures to create and support an enabling environment for peace.

In this later report, Ambassador Lunstead writes that U.S. involvement in 2003 originated with the hope that Sri Lanka could provide an example that a seemingly intractable terrorism problem could be resolved by a political process, when backed by the support of the international community. Today, the U.S. sustains a natural interest in helping the democratically-elected Government of Sri Lanka defeat a terrorist threat and the U.S. and other outside actors can help the Sri Lankan parties move towards peace if those parties genuinely want to do so and are willing to make compromises. But, if the Government of Sri Lanka does not prevent human rights abuses by government forces, U.S. ability to help will be constrained.

"Over the past eighteen months, Sri Lanka's long conflict has steadily escalated, but we have seen similar cycles of relative peace followed by war before," said Nilan Fernando, The Asia Foundation's Country Representative in Sri Lanka. "Previous phases of the conflict have lasted about five years before another period of no-war. The goal of these supplementary studies to the Strategic Conflict Assessment is to analyze and draw lessons from the last

The Asia Foundation Launches Study on America 's Role in Sri Lanka 's Peace Process

ceasefire so that when the next window for peace opens, international and domestic actors can make better choices and engage more constructively."

Both The United States' Role in Sri Lanka's Peace Process and Sri Lanka Strategic Conflict Assessment -- Aid, Conflict and Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka (2002-2005) can be accessed here: http://www.asiafoundation.org/Locations/srilanka_publications.html

About The Asia Foundation

The Asia Foundation is a non-profit, non-governmental organization committed to the development of a peaceful, prosperous, just, and open Asia- Pacific region. The Foundation supports programs in Asia that help improve governance, law, and civil society; **women's** empowerment; economic reform and development; and international relations. Drawing on 50 years of experience in Asia, the Foundation collaborates with private and public partners to support leadership and institutional development, exchanges, and policy research.

With a network of 17 offices throughout Asia, an office in Washington, D.C., and its headquarters in San Francisco, the Foundation addresses these issues on both a country and regional level. In 2006, the Foundation provided more than \$53 million in program support and distributed 920,000 books and educational materials valued at \$30 million throughout Asia.

For more information, please visit <http://www.asiafoundation.org>.

SOURCE The Asia Foundation

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Load-Date: May 14, 2007

REP. BURTON COMMENTS ON U.S. POLICY THROUGHOUT SOUTH ASIAN REGION

US Fed News

June 14, 2005 Tuesday 6:28 AM EST

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Byline: US Fed News

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

At a hearing of the House International Relations subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, Rep. Dan Burton made the following statement:

Opening Statement

Honorable Dan Burton

International Relations Hearing

Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific

Hearing: "The United States and South Asia"

Location: 2172 Rayburn Building

Mr. Chairman, thank you for convening this timely and important hearing this morning to highlight the recent developments, trends, and United States policy throughout the South Asia region.

India and Pakistan

As you know, India and Pakistan have been in a constant state of military preparedness for nearly six decades. The unfriendly nature of the partition of British India in 1947 - which ultimately evolved into three wars in 1947-48, 1965, and 1971 - and the continuing dispute over Kashmir has become a major source of violence and tension around the region. Regardless of the widespread poverty throughout South Asia, both India and Pakistan have manifested their militaries into large defense establishments at the cost of social development and economic stability. These weapons include everything from overt nuclear weapons capability to ballistic missile programs. The United States must work together with Pakistan and their neighbor India to avoid a deadly, costly, and destabilizing fourth war within the region.

The United States and Pakistan have a half-century relationship of working through international security concerns, and after a brief post-Cold War era hiatus, the U.S. and Pakistan have begun to work hand in hand once again - especially since the beginning of the U.S.-led Global War on Terrorism, in which Pakistan has remanded to U.S. custody approximately 500 fugitives.

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Pakistan - after the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States - pledged and has provided support for the U.S.-led anti-terrorism coalition. In fact, Pakistan afforded the United States unparalleled levels of assistance by: allowing the U.S. military to use bases within the country; tightening the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan; and, helping to identify and detain extremists. Moreover, in a January 2002 address, President Musharraf of Pakistan vowed to end his country's use as a base for terrorism of any kind, effectively banning several militant groups.

President Musharraf is literally in a fight for his life and for the life of his country. He has made some hard choices and controversial decisions. But I firmly believe the United States must make the hard choice too and make the difficult long-term commitment to the future of Pakistan that is truly in the best interest of both Nations. Sustaining the current scale of aid to Pakistan, the United States should support Pakistan's government in its struggle against extremists with a comprehensive effort that extends from military aid to support for better education. The safety and security of our Nations depend upon the United States making a long-term economic, humanitarian, cultural, and military commitment to Pakistan.

Earlier this year, I was pleased to see India and Pakistan working together as they launched a landmark bus service across the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir. The 'peace bus' as it was noted allowed families divided by the Line of Control to be reunited for the first time in nearly 60 years. In addition, on April 18, 2005, India and Pakistan concluded a historic threeday summit in India in which Prime Minister Singh and President Musharraf held meaningful talks on all issues, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, and came to a series of agreements to boost trade and cross-border travel - declaring in a joint statement that they were "conscious of the historic opportunity created by the improved environment in relations."

Nepal

Mr. Chairman, I am deeply concerned about the state of governance, rule of law and human rights in Nepal. Nepal's King Gyanendra declared a state of emergency, dismissed the government and assumed direct power. The last time there was a state of emergency in Nepal in 2001-2002 there was widespread lawlessness and serious human rights violations. There is a crisis in Nepal and not enough being done to stem the tide of violence from the nine-year civil war between rebels of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and government security forces.

Both sides of the conflict bear responsibility for subjecting the civilian population to injustices that are well-documented, including extra-judicial killings, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention. The army's disregard of Supreme Court habeas corpus orders have undermined judicial oversight of detentions, one of the most important legal protections against "disappearances."

The Maoists also perpetrate serious abuses. International groups have documented many summary executions of civilians, often preceded by torture, often in front of villagers and family members. The Maoists have assassinated or executed suspected government informants, local political activists or non-Maoist party officials, local government officials and civil servants, and individuals who refuse their extortion demands. There are reports Maoists recruit children, making them carry ammunition and supplies to the front lines. The Maoists have also abducted students from schools for political indoctrination. Demobilization and reintegration of these child soldiers is proving to be very difficult.

King Gyanendra's seizure of the levers of power last month had profound consequences. All independent Nepali media are closed down and state owned radio announced that a number of rights - including freedom of movement and freedom of assembly - are suspended.

The conflict has had a devastating impact on the population. Nepal is among the poorest countries in Asia, with almost 40% of the 23 million people living below the poverty line. Life expectancy at birth is just 59.6 years and infant and maternal mortality rates are among the highest in the region. The literacy rate is only 44 percent. Health and education services is woefully lacking and the problem is compounded in areas under Maoist control.

The Government of Nepal has refused any international or foreign mediation of the civil war against the Maoists, and resisted strong pressure to allow a joint national and international commission to monitor human rights

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conditions in the country. Nepal continues to host over 100,000 refugees from Bhutan and has failed to make progress in finding a durable solution to the fifteen-year impasse. UNHCR is planning to withdraw assistance in 2005, leaving the fate of the refugees uncertain. This population is at high risk of statelessness.

The international community should increase pressure on the government to respect human rights. India has opposed a larger international monitoring or mediation role in Nepal because it opposes a similar international role in Kashmir. India is also battling its own insurgent Maoist groups. The United States has continued its policy of refusing to negotiate with Maoist organizations, and has cast Nepal's Maoists as enemies in the "war on terror." More recently, the U.S. passed a bill conditioning military assistance on the government's compliance with a commitment to cooperate with the NHRC to resolve "disappearances." Last week the British government suspended a planned package of military assistance.

The international community has supported the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in its appeal to both the government and Maoists to agree to independent human rights monitoring in conflict zones. The two sides have agreed to neutral monitoring as a matter of principle, but neither side has signed a human rights accord allowing for such monitoring.

There is a total disregard for the security of civilians by both the army and the rebels. Army abuses since emergency powers were taken have spurred even greater abuses by the Maoists. An end to this conflict is only possible if both the Maoists and the Royal Nepali Army stop attacks on civilians and discipline troops responsible for these abuses. This is the first step towards the longer term goal of restoring stability in Nepal.

Unfortunately, just one short week ago, Nepal's Maoist rebels admitted a "grave mistake" and claimed responsibility for a bus bombing, which killed at least 36 people and seriously injured dozens more. The bombing provoked outrage in Nepal as the Maoists rebels continue to step up their campaign with deadly attacks on troops since King Gyanendra imposed a state of emergency and assumed absolute power on February 1, 2005.

In addition to the devastating and unfortunate bus bombing, more than 40 journalists - during their protest against curbs on press freedom - have been arrested in Nepal's capital, Kathmandu. As you know Mr. Chairman, King Gyanendra introduced restrictions on reporting after assuming direct control of Nepal.

Bangladesh

As the United States continues to focus on Bangladesh's political stability, democratization, human rights, and social and economic development, the country continues to experience widespread malnutrition and poverty. The U.S. State Department's 2003 Bangladesh Country Report on Human Rights Practices described the government's record on human rights as "poor." In fact, police have "employed excessive, sometimes lethal force in dealing with opposition demonstrators" and "employed physical and psychological torture during arrest and interrogations." Even more deplorable is the fact that security forces are culpable in numerous cases of "unwarranted lethal force," and "extrajudicial killings."

I am also disheartened that the government of Bangladesh does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, according to the recent U.S. Department of State's Trafficking in Persons (TIPS) report. On the other hand, the country is making significant efforts to stem their trafficking problem. In fact, during the past year, Bangladesh demonstrated progress by: establishing inter-ministerial anti-trafficking committee to oversee its national efforts to combat trafficking; creating a national anti-trafficking police monitoring unit with presence in all 64 districts; prosecuting an increased number of trafficking and trafficking-related corruption cases; rescuing over 161 boys from servitude in the fishing industry; and, by launching a multi-faceted anti-trafficking public awareness campaign.

Moreover, as we move forward on our own U.S. trade agreements, we must also observe with watchful eyes the agreements throughout other regions of the world. In fact - just recently - Bangladesh and Iran signed a trade agreement to boost bilateral trade cooperation, with facilities to re-export products from the contracting countries to third countries - mainly in central Asia. As I have been informed, the trade agreement would facilitate trade from

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Bangladesh through Iran to the Islamic countries of central Asia and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), including Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.

Sri Lanka

The scale of devastation in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Southern Thailand and the massive loss of life throughout the rest of the region have put this Earthquake and Tsunami in the annals of history of global natural disasters. I extend my most sincere condolences to all the people of the region who have lost loved ones in this unfortunate disaster. My thoughts and prayers are with all of those families who are mourning the loss of loved ones. In Sri Lanka alone, over 31,000 persons were reportedly killed, and over 4,000 are still believed missing. As I have been informed, an estimated 496,000 Sri Lankans have been displaced from their homes.

The Sri Lankan peace process - since April 2005 - remains stalled as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) insist on self-rule. The government has expressed a desire that the **LTTE** restate that they would explore a federal solution to the conflict, and that discussion of Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) be part of a comprehensive peace discussion and not a precondition of such negotiations; however, factions within both the **LTTE** and government lead to speculation that the peace talks will remain stalled. As you know Mr. Chairman, U.S. policy has supported the efforts to reform Sri Lanka's democratic political system. The reforms should provide for full political participation of all communities, and the United States must do all in our power to play a role in multilateral peace efforts.

The U.S. State Department, in its Sri Lanka Country Report on Human Rights Practices, determined that the Colombo government "generally respected the human rights of its citizens; however, there were serious problems in some areas. Some members of the security forces committed serious human rights abuses." The report draws attention to major problems, which include torture of detainees, violence against **women**, poor prison conditions, child prostitution and child labor, and human trafficking. The government - in order to address some of these issues - investigated past abuses by security and armed forces personnel.

Once again Mr. Chairman, I thank you for holding this timely and critically important hearing today.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Teen fails to save tragic infant from rottweiler's jaws

Sunday Independent (Ireland)

December 30, 2007

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Body

The teenage aunt of a 13-month-old boy mauled to death by a rottweiler fought bravely to rescue the tot from the jaws of the 10-stone dog, but was forced to abandon her efforts and call for help.

Archie-Lee Andrew Hirst was snatched from the arms of a seven-year-old girl in the yard of his grandparents' house, in Wakefield, West Yorkshire, yesterday.

His 16-year-old aunt, who was upstairs in the house when she was alerted to the attack, battled the dog -- described by police as weighing "in the region of seven to 10 stone" -- as it savaged the child to death.

After failing to wrestle Archie-Lee from the two-and-a-half year old ***female*** rottweiler the aunt called the emergency services. Paramedics scaled a 7ft fence surrounding the yard to attend to the child, who was pronounced dead in hospital.

Detective Superintendent Steve Payne, who is leading the investigation, said: "I have to pay tribute to the auntie, who attempted to rescue the child from the rottweiler.

"She struck the rottweiler a number of times, but it wouldn't let go of the child.

"She did try her best to recover Archie from the dog, but unfortunately that was in vain."

He added that the dog, which was subsequently destroyed, had not acted aggressively before.

"It mixed with the family. Whilst it lived in the yard, it was a pet, it was in no way a guard dog, and there were no previous signs of any aggression from this dog. The attack was completely unpredictable," he said.

Blair's supporters now backing Brown

Tony Blair's strongest supporters are suing for peace with Gordon Brown as they declare their political idol is 'history' and pledge to throw their weight behind the British Prime Minister in the face of a resurgent Conservative party.

Teen fails to save tragic infant from rottweiler's jaws

In a sign of the grave threat facing the Labour party in 2008 -- dubbed its 'most challenging year' since the 1992 election defeat -- Mr Blair's supporters have made it known that anyone seeking a Labour victory must now offer unequivocal support for Mr Brown.

"Tony Blair is history," the former Blairite cabinet minister Stephen Byers writes in an in today's Observer newspaper, "He is the political past and will not be part of the future of domestic politics in our country."

"With Tony Blair gone from domestic politics, the task of leading Labour to victory falls to Gordon Brown. It is the responsibility of all of us who want to see a fourth election victory to give him our support."

The intervention by Byers is the most dramatic attempt yet to draw a line under divisions which destabilised the Labour party during the Blair era.

Stars of cricket and pop wed quietly

England cricket players were among just 60 guests gathered yesterday at a country manor, for the wedding of star batsman Kevin Pietersen and his pop singer bride Jessica Taylor, of Liberty X fame, as the couple opted for a private wedding.

Twenty Tamil Tigers die in shoot-out

Sri Lankan troops captured territory in the Tamil guerrillas' de facto state yesterday after a fierce clash killed at least 20 guerrillas, the military said.

Morrissey gives £20,000 to the 'Lads'

SINGER Morrissey has donated £20,000 (27,200) to help restore a youth club which found fame through his former band The Smiths.

The group posed outside Salford Lads Club in Manchester, England for the inside cover of the 1986 album The Queen is Dead. Devoted fans of The Smiths have since travelled from around the world to visit the distinctive red-brick site.

Palestinians refuse passage via Israel

Close to two thousand Palestinian pilgrims who arrived in Egypt yesterday protested Egyptian demands that they return to the Gaza Strip through an Israeli-controlled border crossing, security officials and pilgrims said.

Fearing arrest, senior Hamas officials among the 1,900 pilgrims have resisted Egyptian attempts to have them enter through the Israeli-controlled Aouja crossing, the Egyptian security official said.

Police marksmen shoot 'gunman' dead

POLICE marksmen in England have shot a man dead following reports that he was carrying a gun.

Armed officers had been called to Tumblefield Road in the Kent village of Stansted at 7:51am yesterday morning after reports that a man had a firearm.

Jeweller to the royals, Grima, dies

Andrew Grima, whose jewellery adorned royalty and celebrities, has died, relatives said yesterday. He was 86.

Grima died Wednesday at a hospital in the Swiss mountain resort of Gstaad after contracting pneumonia following a fall earlier this month, his family said.

Born to a Maltese father and an Italian mother in Rome in 1921, Grima came to prominence in the 1960s with a flowery and organic style that captured the mood of a new generation of postwar fashion designers.

Teen fails to save tragic infant from rottweiler's jaws

One of those who took an interest early on in Grima's work was Lord Snowdon, then married to Britain's Princess Margaret.

Letterman returns after union talks

Late-night TV host David Letterman has reached a deal with the union for striking screenwriters that will let his talk show return to the air next week while bringing his writing staff back with him.

The Writers' Guild of America called its pact with Letterman's production company, WorldWide Pants Inc, a sign of union readiness to negotiate a deal with major film and TV studios to settle Hollywood's worst labour crisis in 20 years.

Australia's Guantanamo prisoner free

David Hicks, a former kangaroo skinner from Australia, who is the only person convicted on terrorism charges at a US military tribunal at Guantanamo Bay, walked free yesterday after more than six years behind bars.

The 32-year-old -- a former Muslim convert who renounced the faith while in detention -- was released from prison in Adelaide in southern Australia.

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UN: Activities of Secretary-General in Cuba, 14-16 September

M2 Presswire

September 25, 2006

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Length: 624 words

Body

M2 PRESSWIRE-SEPTEMBER 25, 2006-UN: Activities of Secretary-General in Cuba, 14-16 September ©1994-2006 M2 COMMUNICATIONS LTD

Shortly after his arrival in Havana on Thursday evening, 14 September, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan was received at the Palacio Nacional by Cuba's President Fidel Castro Ruz. For nearly an hour, they discussed the issues that would come up at the fourteenth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement to begin the following day. The Secretary-General also briefed President Castro on his visit to the Middle East. They also discussed agricultural development in Africa, a cause on which the Secretary-General will focus once he steps down from office.

On Friday, 15 September, the Secretary-General addressed the Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, telling them that the Movement's larger voice "brings with it greater responsibility, both internationally and at home". That includes a responsibility to work decisively and constructively to build a multilateral system and a United Nations capable of responding to today's challenges, he said.

He also noted the challenge of transforming global governance and the empowerment of women. (See Press Release SG/SM/10636.)

Immediately after the close of the opening session, the Secretary-General met with the First Vice-President of the Council of State, Ral Castro. The Acting President briefed him on the latest developments in Cuba, including progress made in the health sector. He also pledged that Cuba would be a constructive leader of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Secretary-General also brought up the issue of United Nations reform, especially Security Council reform. He encouraged the Non-Aligned Movement to better structure itself, so as to positively reflect its numerical strength.

During a bilateral meeting with the President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa, the Secretary-General discussed the prospects for talks between the Government and the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) and the issue of humanitarian access to the civilian population. Regarding reported violations of human rights, the President said he had agreed to an independent national commission of investigation.

UN : Activities of Secretary-General in Cuba , 14-16 September

With President Evo Morales Aima of Bolivia, the Secretary-General talked about developments in the new Constituent Assembly and the issue of natural resources; and a topic discussed with the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, was the upcoming high-level meeting on Cte d'Ivoire, to be held on the margins of the sixty-first General Assembly session. At a meeting with Omer Hassan A. Al-Bashir, President of Sudan, the Secretary-General and the President discussed the situation in Darfur, including the role played by the African Union Mission in the Sudan.

Other bilateral meetings held that day were with Armando Emlio Guebuza, President of Mozambique; Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania; and Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India. Issues discussed were India-Pakistan relations, terrorism and sectarian violence, developments in Jammu and Kashmir, and the situation in Nepal.

Mr. Annan also met with the United Nations country team in Cuba.

That evening, he attended a dinner for Heads of State and Government attending the Non-Aligned Movement Summit.

Before departure on Saturday morning, the Secretary-General met with students of the International School of Havana at the United Nations Development Programme compound.

He returned to New York that day.

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STATE DEPT.: U.N. REPORT CITES BURMA, SUDAN FOR USING CHILD SOLDIERS

US Fed News

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Body

The U.S. Department of State's International Information Programs issued the following press release:

By Judy Aita

USINFO United Nations Correspondent

Burma and Sudan have been singled out by the United Nations for continuing to use child soldiers despite repeated international demands to stop. The two governments were featured in a report by Secretary-General Kofi Annan that cited 38 groups in 12 countries for using children in armed conflict.

The Security Council reviewed the situation during a daylong public debate November 28 and strongly condemned the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, the killing, rape, maiming and abduction of children, and the denial of humanitarian aid.

"It is important that the United Nations, the Security Council, and our governments keep the issue of children and armed conflict in our focus, particularly in light of the alarming estimate that some 300,000 children are today involved in more than 30 conflicts worldwide," said U.S. Ambassador Jackie Sanders.

Sanders, U.S. representative to the United Nation for special political affairs, said that plight of child soldiers is particularly dire in Burma, Sudan and the parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and northern Uganda in which the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) operates.

In Uganda, about 25,000 children have been abducted by the LRA, Sanders said. "Children abducted by the LRA are often forced to participate in acts of extreme violence, including beating or hacking to death fellow child captives who have tried to escape. Girls as young as 12 are given to commanders as 'wives.'"

Burma is thought to have the largest number of child soldiers in the world. Human Rights Watch has documented the widespread forced recruitment of boys as young as 11 by Burma's national army, Sanders said. The ambassador also said that Burmese forces systematically rape women and girls, particularly of the Shan, Karen, Karenni, and other ethnic minorities, as an instrument of war.

STATE DEPT.: U.N. REPORT CITES BURMA , SUDAN FOR USING CHILD SOLDIERS

Although Burma's military regime admits to the recruitment, claims to have taken action against five officials, and has set up a committee to prevent the practice, evidence continues to emerge that the recruitment of child soldiers has not ceased, Sanders said.

The Human Rights Education Institute of Burma, which is based in Thailand, said in a September 2006 report that little had changed on Burma's forced recruitment of child soldiers and the regime has done little to protect children from being recruited into the military. The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers has estimated that about 90,000 individuals - 20 percent of the Burmese army and ethnic insurgency forces - are under the age of 18.

The U.N. secretary-general said that despite the fact that the United Nations has not been allowed in Burma to verify the situation, the United Nations has received detailed and credible allegations that forced recruitment continues. UNICEF also has attempted to work with the government on developing a national plan of action to stop forced recruitment, but the government has not been forthcoming.

In Sudan, both the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) have recruited children. In Darfur, government and paramilitary forces, Jingaweit militias, the faction of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) led by Minni Minawi, and the Chadian opposition forces have been recruiting and using children. "It is estimated that thousands of children are still associated with armed forces and groups in Darfur and were actively involved in the conflict between May and July 2006," Annan reported.

In Darfur, the practice of ethnically targeted sexual violence against girls and women continues, particularly in areas of displaced populations. Some 40 percent of the victims have been under 18 years old, and many of the attacks are carried out by uniformed men, the United Nations reported.

SUDAN MUST HALT RECRUITMENT

Sanders specifically called on the Sudanese government, which is party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, to accept responsibility for the widespread recruitment and use of child soldiers and take immediate steps to halt these practices.

The nongovernmental organization Human Rights Watch wants the U.N. Security Council to take stronger measures and punish users of child soldiers by imposing sanctions.

"These groups will keep using children until they're made to pay a heavy price for it," said Jo Becker of Human Rights Watch. "The Security Council should use its power to punish the groups that ruin the lives of vulnerable children and apply sanctions against them."

Despite intensifying efforts to stop the sexual exploitation and abuse of children by U.N. peacekeeping personnel, this exploitation has continued, according to the U.N. report. From January 2004 to August 2006, investigations involving 313 U.N. peacekeeping personnel resulted in 17 civilians being dismissed, and 17 police and 141 military personnel being sent home. Another 85 allegations are still under investigation.

Other violators listed in the report include: the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka; the Maoists in Nepal; five groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; armed militia groups affiliated with the Presidential camp and Forces Armées des Forces Nouvelles (FAFN) in Cote d'Ivoire; Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter Terrorism (ARPCT) and Union of the Islamic Courts (ICU) in Somalia; and guerrilla groups in the Philippines and Colombia.

Sanders said that the United States supports the active monitoring of the governments and armed groups cited in the U.N. report; talking with governments and groups to develop plans to eliminate the use of child soldiers; and continuing efforts to halt the sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

Since 2001, the United States has contributed more than \$34 million to prevent the recruitment of child combatants and assist in their demobilization and reintegration into communities.

For further information, see Human Trafficking: http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/global_issues/human_trafficking/human_trafficking_archive.html.

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Sri Lanka war puts truth to test

The Toronto Star

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Body

Dozens of schoolgirls killed by the air force, Muslims massacred by Tamil Tiger rebels, civilians targeted by both sides.

There is no shortage of atrocity tales in Sri Lanka, but getting the truth is proving to be difficult.

With both the government and rebels facing each other in open ground warfare for the first time since a 2002 truce, few doubt that hundreds are dead and that civilians are suffering most.

In the north, hundreds of foreigners, including many Canadians, international aid workers and Sri Lankans with foreign passports, visiting friends or family, have been trapped by the fighting.

The Red Cross said yesterday it would send a ferry to help evacuate. The Canadian High Commission said it is trying to evacuate 76 Canadian nationals from the northern Jaffna Peninsula.

The UN children's fund UNICEF says rebel fighters are clearly still recruiting and abducting children to fight, but says the renegade former rebel Karuna group now does the same. Aid workers say the government openly supports Karuna as the group fights the Tigers.

"It's really just so obvious," said one international aid worker on condition of anonymity, adding troops stood by as Karuna took youths away.

"Last Tuesday and Wednesday, there was 25 taken. There's been no official condemnation."

Pro-government and pro-rebel websites show harrowing pictures: a decapitated child, a baby shot dead, lines of corpses and wailing relatives. All, they say, show the enemy's depravity. Sometimes, they use the same picture to blame each other.

On Monday, the government posted video of what it said were captured Tigers talking about abuse at the hands of the rebels - a move that rights staff said was at best legally dubious.

As tens of thousands of Muslims fled the town of Mutur, witnesses agree some were captured by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), ethnic rebels who want a Tamil homeland and who have long been feared by Sri Lankan Muslims.

Sri Lanka war puts truth to test

Some of those taken escaped amid shellfire.

Others were killed by the shells.

The government says dozens were massacred but the Red Cross has not found large numbers of bodies.

Perhaps they were taken and hidden, perhaps there was nothing to find.

Ironically, both sides agree that around 60 school-aged girls died last week in an air strike on a former orphanage in northern rebel territory.

The rebels say they were simply studying first aid, the government says they were Tiger child soldiers training.

But truce monitors and other witnesses said there did not appear to have been enough blood for 60 people to have been killed. They only saw 19 young adult bodies, male and **female**.

"We really do not know what happened and we probably never will," said one Western diplomat.

Some believe it was really a strike aimed at reclusive Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran.

Generally the pressure for a proper investigation only really comes when outside groups get involved, hence the execution-style killing of 17 Sri Lankan staff from international aid group Action Contre La Faim is the best documented so far.

Photos show the bodies lying apparently where they fell in the agency's compound in Mutur. Most had been shot several times.

Officials promised a full probe, but truce monitors say the investigation is stalled.

"I can't see any action on that," said chief monitor retired Swedish Maj.-Gen. Ulf Henricsson, adding that as a result government forces were the prime suspect in the killing.

Graphic

ANURUDDHA LOKUHAPUARACHCHI reuters A truck carries civilian Muslim evacuees earlier this month from the town of Mutur in northeast Sri Lanka. Artillery fire thunders in the background as thousands fleeing their home town arrive at the village of Thoper by bus, tractors, motorcycles and on foot.

Load-Date: August 24, 2006

Thousands said fleeing Sri Lanka fighting

Agence France Presse -- English

August 4, 2006 Friday 8:35 AM GMT

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Length: 592 words

Byline: Vishaka Jayasekara

Dateline: TRINCOMALEE, Sri Lanka, Aug 4 2006

Body

Thousands of locals were fleeing a Muslim town in Sri Lanka on Friday as troops and Tiger rebels traded artillery fire in new clashes, officials said.

Women and children were the first to rush out of the town of Muttur, just a few kilometres (miles) from the provincial capital Trincomalee, military officials said, adding that more were following.

The International Committee of the Red Cross appealed to both the government and the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) to allow a "humanitarian corridor" for aid to get in and give access to those who wanted to leave.

"Right now we are not in a position to go in but we have facilitated the evacuation of 49 people who were wounded in artillery and mortar bomb attacks yesterday," ICRC spokesman Sukumar Rockwood said.

He said there were unconfirmed reports of about 22,000 people displaced in Muttur while local politicians said about half the 60,000 population in the constituency had been affected by fighting since Wednesday.

On Thursday, 17 civilians were killed in Muttur when shells fell on schools in which they were sheltering.

Muslim legislator A. H. M. Azwer said five more civilians were killed in another shelling Friday, causing alarm among locals who had earlier been urged to stay back.

"We have tried our best to ask both sides to hold their fire," Azwer told AFP in Colombo as he met with Muslim community leaders and other politicians.

The Red Cross offices here said they were awaiting guarantees of safety from both sides before moving in to help with a major evacuation by vehicle for residents who wanted to leave.

Military officials said some in Muttur had already left on foot and were trying to reach the multiethnic town of Kantalai, about 35 kilometres (20 miles) from Trincomalee, which was also hit by artillery on Tuesday.

While they could not give precise figures, they said the number ran into thousands.

Thousands said fleeing Sri Lanka fighting

Muslims are the second-largest minority in Sri Lanka, accounting for about 7.5 percent of the 19.5 million population. Sri Lankan Tamils are about 12.5 percent, while about 70 percent are Sinhalese.

In the Trincomalee area the three communities live in almost equal numbers.

The thud of artillery in Muttur could be heard from Trincomalee, where nearly 100 people wounded in Thursday's fighting, including security personnel, were brought for treatment, an AFP correspondent said.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has expressed concern for the welfare of civilians caught up in the crossfire, while Sri Lanka's peace broker Norway has pledged 1.5 million dollars to help affected locals.

The Norwegian government, in a statement issued in Colombo, said Oslo would provide the assistance in humanitarian aid through the ICRC and other non-governmental agencies to people affected by the conflict.

"The fighting affects a large number of innocent civilians belonging to different ethnic groups and there is great need for emergency relief," the statement said. "Particularly the Muslims have been severely affected."

The fighting which began 10 days ago is the worst since Oslo arranged and put in place a truce in February 2002, and has so far claimed at least 161 lives by official count.

The government said its military action was aimed at opening the Maavilaru water canal which was blocked at a point inside rebel-held territory in Trincomalee district, depriving water to 15,000 families downstream.

The Tigers have said their action was aimed at mounting pressure on the government to provide a better drinking water systems in areas held by the guerrillas.

str-aj/bpz/mc

Load-Date: August 5, 2006

End of Document

Aid Workers Face Obstacles And Threats In Sri Lanka

The New York Times

August 18, 2006 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 9

Length: 950 words

Byline: By SHIMALI SENANAYAKE and SOMINI SENGUPTA; Shimali Senanayake reported from Colombo for this article, and Somini Sengupta from New Delhi.

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Aug. 17

Body

Twenty months after the tsunami in December 2004 brought Sri Lanka a rush of charity from abroad, international aid agencies are hemmed in by surging violence in the country's long-running civil war. They are also encountering suspicion, hostility and deadly attacks.

Aid workers say they have been increasingly stymied in their ability to reach areas hardest hit by the conflict between the government and separatists, both in government and rebel-held territory. Visas have been delayed. In the eastern Ampara district earlier this year, Sri Lankan women working for foreign aid groups were singled out and warned to quit, reportedly by a rebel front group. Some did.

In the worst violence, 17 employees of an international aid agency were massacred this month in the eastern town of Muttur. Last May, a driver for the Norwegian Refugee Council was found dead 150 yards from a military checkpoint in northern Vavuniya, his body riddled with 10 bullets. The killings remain unsolved.

A week after the driver was killed, grenades were lobbed at the local project offices of three aid groups in Muttur; one worker was wounded.

Earlier this month, a vehicle carrying members of the international Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, which was created under a cease-fire accord in 2002, was pelted with stones as it tried to advance to Muttur to look into the condition of civilians displaced by fighting.

The killing of 17 employees of Action Contre la Faim, or Action Against Hunger, and the Sri Lankan military's refusal to grant immediate access to the site to independent investigators drew pointed criticism from the monitoring mission.

"It's very unwise of the government to stop us from entering these areas," the chief of the mission, Ulf Henricsson, a retired Swedish general, said in an interview. "To stop us is to prevent an inquiry, and why do that if you have nothing to hide?"

Mr. Henricsson said the government had denied access to the area on the grounds that fighting was under way between Sri Lankan forces and the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

Aid Workers Face Obstacles And Threats In Sri Lanka

Eric Fort, the leader of the aid agency's work in Sri Lanka, said 15 of his colleagues, all Sri Lankans, had been found shot in the head in their office. Two others appeared to have been shot in the back, as though they might have been trying to escape their attackers. They were all dressed in T-shirts bearing the agency's name. The agency worked on tsunami reconstruction and provided water and sanitation services to people displaced by war.

The government has promised a "free and fair" inquiry into the killings, aided by forensic pathologists from Australia, but it has ruled out any involvement of the United Nations or the International Committee of the Red Cross in the investigations, as Mr. Fort's group had urged.

In an interview on Thursday, Mahinda Samarasinghe, the Sri Lankan minister of disaster management and human rights, said the government welcomed international relief workers but was compelled to restrict their movement for the sake of safety. "We can't have any number of aid workers running around in conflict areas," he said.

So even as military clashes have displaced tens of thousands in the north and the east, aid agencies cannot get to many areas where civilians are believed to be in greatest need.

The threats to aid workers come as Sri Lanka plunges headfirst into familiar bloodshed. The 2002 cease-fire accord had brought a halt to decades of war between the separatists, who are Tamils, and the Sinhalese-dominated Sri Lankan government. The tsunami brought hopes of peace in the face of shared tragedy.

But by late last year, after a tsunami aid-sharing deal fell apart and a new government was elected with the help of Sinhalese hard-liners, the cease-fire began to tatter. Assassinations and tit-for-tat attacks followed, bringing the death toll up to 800 in the first seven months of this year.

Late last month, what began as a fight over control of an irrigation channel in the east grew into what now looks like full-scale war, with clashes in the east, as well as a rebel advance to the strategic Jaffna peninsula in the north. At least 50,000 Sri Lankans have been displaced in the last three weeks, according to the United Nations refugee agency, although reliable estimates are difficult because of lack of access.

Even by Sri Lankan standards, the last two weeks have brought reports of particularly gruesome incidents. In one, the government accused the ***Tamil Tigers***, or the L.T.T.E. as they are known here, of having killed 100 Muslims who were fleeing the fighting. The International Committee of the Red Cross on Wednesday confirmed two dead in the area.

Earlier this week, the Sri Lankan Air Force bombed a former orphanage inside rebel territory, where teenage girls were undergoing first-aid training. At least 19 girls were killed, according to truce monitors. "It was a L.T.T.E. training camp; this was firmly established before the bombing," said Keheliya Rambukwella, the Sri Lankan Ministry of Defense spokesman. "The question of age of the cadre really doesn't arise."

The monitoring mission and the United Nations children's agency said they had found no evidence of rebel installations there.

In the resumption of combat, Tamils who do not side with the rebels have been singled out. Last Saturday, the deputy chief of the government peace secretariat, Ketheshwaran Loganathan, was killed by an unidentified gunman near his home in suburban Colombo. His killing came exactly a year after the slaying of the foreign minister at that time, Lakshman Kadirgamar. The two were among the most prominent Sri Lankan Tamils in the government.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Aid Workers Face Obstacles And Threats In Sri Lanka

Photo: Antiwar demonstrators pushed Buddhist monks from the stage of a peace rally yesterday in Colombo, Sri Lanka, where the government and Tamil rebels are fighting. The monks are against talks with the rebels. (Photo by Gemunu Amarasinghe/Associated Press)

Load-Date: August 18, 2006

End of Document

U.N. REPORT CITES BURMA, SUDAN FOR USING CHILD SOLDIERS

States News Service

November 29, 2006 Wednesday

Copyright 2006 States News Service

Length: 1030 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

. The following information was released by the U.S. Department of State:

. Burma and Sudan have been singled out by the United Nations for continuing to use child soldiers despite repeated international demands to stop. The two governments were featured in a report by Secretary-General Kofi Annan that cited 38 groups in 12 countries for using children in armed conflict.

. The Security Council reviewed the situation during a daylong public debate November 28 and strongly condemned the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, the killing, rape, maiming and abduction of children, and the denial of humanitarian aid.

. "It is important that the United Nations, the Security Council, and our governments keep the issue of children and armed conflict in our focus, particularly in light of the alarming estimate that some 300,000 children are today involved in more than 30 conflicts worldwide," said U.S. Ambassador Jackie Sanders.

. Sanders, U.S. representative to the United Nation for special political affairs, said that plight of child soldiers is particularly dire in Burma, Sudan and the parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and northern Uganda in which the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) operates.

. In Uganda, about 25,000 children have been abducted by the LRA, Sanders said. "Children abducted by the LRA are often forced to participate in acts of extreme violence, including beating or hacking to death fellow child captives who have tried to escape. Girls as young as 12 are given to commanders as 'wives.'"

. Burma is thought to have the largest number of child soldiers in the world. Human Rights Watch has documented the widespread forced recruitment of boys as young as 11 by Burma's national army, Sanders said. The ambassador also said that Burmese forces systematically rape women and girls, particularly of the Shan, Karen, Karenni, and other ethnic minorities, as an instrument of war.

. Although Burma's military regime admits to the recruitment, claims to have taken action against five officials, and has set up a committee to prevent the practice, evidence continues to emerge that the recruitment of child soldiers has not ceased, Sanders said.

. The Human Rights Education Institute of Burma, which is based in Thailand, said in a September 2006 report that little had changed on Burma's forced recruitment of child soldiers and the regime has done little to protect children from being recruited into the military. The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers has estimated that about 90,000 individuals 20 percent of the Burmese army and ethnic insurgency forces -- are under the age of 18.

U.N. REPORT CITES BURMA , SUDAN FOR USING CHILD SOLDIERS

. The U.N. secretary-general said that despite the fact that the United Nations has not been allowed in Burma to verify the situation, the United Nations has received detailed and credible allegations that forced recruitment continues. UNICEF also has attempted to work with the government on developing a national plan of action to stop forced recruitment, but the government has not been forthcoming.

. In Sudan, both the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) have recruited children. In Darfur, government and paramilitary forces, Jingaweit militias, the faction of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) led by Minni Minawi, and the Chadian opposition forces have been recruiting and using children. "It is estimated that thousands of children are still associated with armed forces and groups in Darfur and were actively involved in the conflict between May and July 2006," Annan reported.

. In Darfur, the practice of ethnically targeted sexual violence against girls and **women** continues, particularly in areas of displaced populations. Some 40 percent of the victims have been under 18 years old, and many of the attacks are carried out by uniformed men, the United Nations reported.

. SUDAN MUST HALT RECRUITMENT.

. Sanders specifically called on the Sudanese government, which is party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, to accept responsibility for the widespread recruitment and use of child soldiers and take immediate steps to halt these practices.

. The nongovernmental organization Human Rights Watch wants the U.N. Security Council to take stronger measures and punish users of child soldiers by imposing sanctions.

. "These groups will keep using children until they're made to pay a heavy price for it," said Jo Becker of Human Rights Watch. "The Security Council should use its power to punish the groups that ruin the lives of vulnerable children and apply sanctions against them."

. Despite intensifying efforts to stop the sexual exploitation and abuse of children by U.N. peacekeeping personnel, this exploitation has continued, according to the U.N. report. From January 2004 to August 2006, investigations involving 313 U.N. peacekeeping personnel resulted in 17 civilians being dismissed, and 17 police and 141 military personnel being sent home. Another 85 allegations are still under investigation.

. Other violators listed in the report include: the **Tamil Tigers** of Sri Lanka; the Maoists in Nepal; five groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; armed militia groups affiliated with the Presidential camp and Forces Armées des Forces Nouvelles (FAFN) in Cote d'Ivoire; Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter Terrorism (ARPCT) and Union of the Islamic Courts (ICU) in Somalia; and guerrilla groups in the Philippines and Colombia.

. Sanders said that the United States supports the active monitoring of the governments and armed groups cited in the U.N. report; talking with governments and groups to develop plans to eliminate the use of child soldiers; and continuing efforts to halt the sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

. Since 2001, the United States has contributed more than \$34 million to prevent the recruitment of child combatants and assist in their demobilization and reintegration into communities.

. For further information, see Human Trafficking.

. (USINFO is produced by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>).

Load-Date: September 27, 2007

Arab crimes against Palestinians overlooked

The Irish Times

August 15, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: OPINION; Opinion; Pg. 14

Length: 986 words

Body

Conflicts in the Middle East frequently pose awkward questions. Rory Miller and Alan Shatter ask some more...

Now that a ceasefire in Lebanon has been agreed there will, no doubt, be numerous inquests and questions asked about the month-long Lebanon war. So here's some we would like to ask.

Which country invaded its neighbour in mid-2006 in order to, as they put it, "crush" Islamists threatening regional stability?

Which country killed an estimated 500 people in a week when its artillery began bombarding its long-time guerrilla enemy in late July 2006, causing mass displacement and suffering?

If you think the answer is Israel, you guessed wrong.

On July 19th Ethiopia sent 5,000 troops into Somalia to suppress Islamists who had not even fired one rocket at it, or kidnapped or killed any of its soldiers. The artillery barrage came from the Sri Lankan army, which continues to pound civilian areas held by the ***Tamil Tigers***. Earlier this week, an estimated 50 children were killed when their orphanage was bombed by Sri Lankan warplanes.

So how come our politicians completely ignore these crises and instead choose to focus solely on Israel's campaign in Lebanon?

Why have the same politicians hardly let out a whisper of criticism of those responsible for other such tragedies in Darfur, with its estimated 300,000 dead and at least 2.5 million refugees; or Chechnya, where an estimated 150,000-160,000 have died, where a third of the population has been displaced and the country has been left in rubble by the Russian army; or the war in the Congo, with over four million dead or driven from their homes?

Why has the Lord Mayor of Dublin, for example, described the Israeli action as "probably one of the greatest scandals of the new millennium" but not seen it necessary to comment on any of these other conflicts?

Why have supposedly apolitical cultural bodies - such as the Irish Film Institute and the Festival of World Cultures in Dún Laoghaire - decided to cancel sponsorship from the Israeli embassy because of Israel's actions in Lebanon, but never seen the need to act similarly regarding countries involved in other conflicts around the world?

The truth is that Israel's use of military force, combined over the 60 years since its birth, has caused far fewer casualties and damage than war, conflict and oppression in Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bangladesh, Bosnia,

Arab crimes against Palestinians overlooked

Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Chechnya, China, Colombia, El Salvador, Eritrea and Ethiopia (and that's only the beginning of the alphabet; if we go to countries beginning with "I", there's India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq).

So why is it that people have taken to the streets of Dublin, Cork, Galway and Dundalk to protest at the Israeli campaign in Lebanon but have never felt the need to do the same to express anger over any of these more bloody conflicts?

Why is it that, over the last few decades, successive governments have made numerous statements condemning Israel's treatment of the Palestinians, while TDs and Senators have called for the economic boycott of Israel, but have felt no need to do the same in response to the mistreatment of Palestinians across the Arab world from Saudi Arabia to Lebanon, a country which was condemned in a June 2006 Amnesty International report for its "long-standing discrimination and abuses of fundamental economic and social rights of Palestinian refugees"?

Or, for that matter, why has there never been any Irish outcry when Arab countries have killed Palestinians on a grand scale?

In 1970, King Hussein of Jordan ordered the indiscriminate bombing of Palestinian refugee camps in the course of putting down the Palestinian uprising during "Black September". This left between 3,000 and 5,000 Palestinian refugees dead. Why was the fact that King Hussein killed more Palestinians in the course of a single month than Israel managed to do in decades never held against him, or even raised, on his visits to this country?

Again, more than two decades ago, Abu Iyad, the number two man in the PLO, publicly stated that the crimes of the Syrian government against the Palestinian people "surpassed those of the Israeli enemy". Much of this took place in Lebanon, where Syria was responsible for approximately 100,000 deaths and for the flight of up to half a million civilians from their homes, as well as for mass executions, as occurred, according to one 1986 Amnesty International report, when Syrian troops entered the town of Tripoli and executed hundreds of civilians, including numerous women and children.

How come in the 25 years that this was going on there was not one Dáil debate or public statement by a politician on these Syrian atrocities in Lebanon?

Where were the calls for boycotts, or the condemnations of Kuwait, when in the wake of its liberation in 1991, it embarked on the widespread slaughter of Palestinians living in the kingdom?

This revenge against innocent Palestinian workers was so severe that Yasser Arafat himself acknowledged: "What Kuwait did to the Palestinian people is worse than what has been done by Israel to Palestinians in the occupied territories."

Lastly, why, 60 years after its establishment, is Israel the only state in the world whose politicians are presented in Oireachtas debates as war criminals, whose economy faces relentless calls for sanctions and boycotts, and whose right to exist is constantly debated and challenged in the letters pages of our newspapers?

Maybe one of those who has felt the need to write such letters, or to call for a boycott, or to take to the streets against Israel, or to speak out in the Seanad, but has not seen the need to do the same in regard to any other country or conflict, could let us know why - because we just can't figure it out.

Dr Rory Miller is a senior lecturer in Mediterranean Studies at King's College, London. Alan Shatter is a former Fine Gael TD and a former head of the Oireachtas Foreign Affairs Committee.

Load-Date: August 15, 2006

Sri Lankan rebels lift water blockade

The Associated Press

August 8, 2006 Tuesday 3:06 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 610 words

Byline: By DILIP GANGULY, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Tamil rebels released water from a disputed reservoir Tuesday in Sri Lanka, ending a 19-day blockade that sparked some of the worst fighting between government troops and guerrillas in four years.

In the capital, meanwhile, a car bomb killed two people, including a 3-year-old girl, police said.

On July 20, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels blocked water supplies to 60,000 people in government-controlled villages in northeastern Trincomalee district, 135 miles northeast of Colombo. The group said the move was aimed at forcing the government to fulfill the needs of people in rebel-held villages.

"The government used this issue to harass our people attacked them forcing displacement and starvation. Therefore we decided to open the gates," rebel spokesman Daya Master said.

The rebels wanted "security of civilians who must travel between government and LTTE areas; to remove the ban on items imposed by the army; and to incorporate drinking water supply to their areas," a statement said.

After initial talks failed, the government began an offensive to capture the areas around the reservoir, and violence spread to adjoining villages in Trincomalee, killing scores and displacing tens of thousands of people.

There was no immediate comment from the government on the rebel action.

In Colombo, a van carrying a former Tamil lawmaker opposed to the Tamil Tiger rebels exploded in front of a girls' school, killing an occupant and a girl who was walking by, authorities said.

The apparent target of the attack, S. Sivathasan of the Eelam People's Democratic Party which bitterly opposes the Tamil Tiger guerrillas escaped with injuries, party leader Douglas Devananda said. He blamed the Tiger rebels for the bomb.

Insurgents have targeted Devananda and his supporters in the past.

The EPDP renounced violence and joined Sri Lanka's political mainstream in 1987. The Tigers, who are campaigning for a separate homeland for the country's 3.2 million Tamils, oppose the party.

In 2004, a suicide bomber targeted Devananda, who is also a government minister. The bomber detonated explosives that killed four, but Devananda escaped.

Sri Lankan rebels lift water blockade

Tamil Tiger rebels have fought the government since 1983 to create a separate state for the country's 3.2 million minority Tamils accusing majority Sinhalese of discrimination.

More than 65,000 people were killed in the conflict before a 2002 cease-fire, which is now nearly collapsed. Renewed fighting has killed more than 900 people half of them civilians since December, monitors say.

Also Tuesday, relatives buried 17 international aid agency workers who were slain in the volatile northeast.

Relatives of the Action Against Hunger workers who were killed 16 from Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil minority and a Muslim wept as they buried them in their villages.

The bodies were found in the seaside town of Muttur, where the rebels and government forces fought each other last week. Their slaying triggered international condemnation, prompting the Sri Lankan government to order a thorough investigation.

The slain aid workers 13 men and four women were doing post-tsunami relief work in Muttur for the Paris-based agency when fighting broke out between the rebels and the government.

Former President Bill Clinton, who is also the U.N. envoy for tsunami recovery, urged Sri Lankan authorities "to do everything possible to apprehend the perpetrators of this crime and to bring them to justice."

Also Tuesday, suspected rebels killed three security personnel in two separate incidents in northeastern Trincomalee and eastern Ampara, military spokesman Maj. Upali Rajapakse said.

Associated Press writer Krishan Francis contributed to the report.

Load-Date: August 9, 2006

Sri Lanka sees silver lining in tsunami tragedy

Agence France Presse -- English

December 31, 2004 Friday 3:40 AM GMT

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Length: 615 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Dec 31

Body

Deadly tsunamis have unexpectedly shored up Sri Lanka's peace process, where the government has been under pressure to open talks with Tiger rebels or risk war.

Nearly 25,000 people were killed in Sri Lanka after a wall of water slammed into coastal areas Sunday. The death toll is expected to soar to 29,000 in the next few days as thousands of missing are declared dead.

With rescue workers struggling to get aid to thousands stranded or left destitute by the tsunami, calls have been raised for the foes to unite in the aftermath of the disaster, despite three decades of war that have left 60,000 dead.

"The silver lining in this tragedy is that we may not go back to war anytime soon," said retired airforce chief Harry Gunatillake. "The common grief also gives an opportunity for mending fences."

Gunatillake, who had earlier predicted that the Tigers could take to the battlefield by mid-January, has now revised his forecast for war.

"The tsunami may have averted a bigger tragedy," Gunatillake said. "If not for it, we would be back at war in the New Year and that would have been a bigger catastrophe."

President Chandrika Kumaratunga, who lost an eye in a Tiger suicide assassination bid in 1999, said Thursday that the threat of war was "remoter" after the tsunamis because of losses suffered by the rebels.

She said the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) have suffered especially devastating losses to their naval units.

However, military analysts said neither side appeared in the mood to return to war, despite peace broker Norway's warning that hostilities could erupt again as it desperately tried to bring both sides back to the negotiating table after a 20-month impasse.

"The losses are such the government is also not in a position to go back to war for some time," said retired Sri Lankan army brigadier Vipul Boteju.

"Fighting is out of question for both."

Sri Lanka sees silver lining in tsunami tragedy

Kumaratunga admitted that the military lost heavy weaponry as well as a large number of vehicles when the tsunami washed away several bases along the eastern seaboard.

Government forces have also admitted having 61 soldiers killed and over 250 wounded, though the Tigers have not spoken of their losses.

Both sides, however, have made peace overtures in the wake of the aftermath of the tsunamis.

Kumaratunga told reporters here that the shared grief could clear the way for a rapprochement, but stopped short of making any direct peace moves.

However, she said she shook hands with two Tiger women cadres who were helping tsunami victims at a relief centre in the island's east Thursday.

Asked if the chance meeting could lead to a warming of relations between the two sides which have been observing a tenuous ceasefire since February 2002, the president said it was not a calculated move.

"You don't stop to calculate what the results are, but I acted naturally and spontaneously. I asked them about the relief operations, what they cooked and things like that."

However small Kumaratunga's gesture, Tiger political-wing chief S.P. Thamilselvan told AFP it could be a signal of better things to come.

"If the intentions are translated into action, definitely it could be a positive step towards building confidence," he said.

"It will definitely have a positive impact on the peace process as a whole."

Foreign aid donors and international lenders who had virtually suspended aid to Sri Lanka are now digging deep into their pockets to help the island rebuild, and unlike in the past, no peace strings are attached.

Earlier, donors who pledged 4.5 billion dollars in aid to rebuild war damaged areas had insisted on progress in talks to release money. Economists say there is a good chance now of that cash too being released.

Load-Date: December 31, 2004

Relief efforts make Martin proud: Prime minister sees devastation first-hand

The Calgary Herald (Alberta)

January 17, 2005 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A4

Length: 541 words

Byline: Robert Fife and Chris Wattie, CanWest News Service

Dateline: PHUKET, Thailand

Body

Prime Minister Paul Martin became the first western leader to visit the tsunami-ravaged region of Southeast Asia Sunday as he lauded the "common humanity" of Canadians for reaching out to help in the epic tragedy that claimed the lives of more than 162,000 -- including six Canadians.

Martin, accompanied by his wife Sheila, and an all-party delegation of MPs, arrived in the devastated tourist haven of Thailand's west coast as part of a five-nation Asia tour that includes a visit with Canadian soldiers of the DART relief unit in Sri Lanka today.

"Canadians died here. The relatives of Canadians died here. Thais died here, and I think it is important for the Canadian prime minister to come here," Martin told reporters after meeting Thai officials and Canadian relief volunteers.

Martin, who toured the beach town of Kamala Beach where the tsunami hit, expressed his admiration for the outpouring of money and assistance from Canadians, particularly volunteers who helped to identify bodies and provided humanitarian relief.

"It was huge to see how human beings are capable of turning towards each other in times of crisis. It's a wonderful thing and to recognize in your own countrymen and country women that kind of desire makes us recognize that there is a common humanity," he said.

"I felt very, very good. I felt very good about being a Canadian and a human being."

Many of the volunteers had given up their holidays to help move bodies in the morgues and relief camps set up following the carnage caused by the tsunami.

Greg Baytalan, a 46-year-old public health official from Kelowna, B.C., was vacationing in Australia when the tsunami hit. He rushed to Phuket island to help with the grim task of identifying bodies.

"I have been slugging bodies up at the morgue. That was grim, to say the least. It's beyond all horror," he said before meeting the prime minister.

Relief efforts make Martin proud: Prime minister sees devastation first-hand

Martin promised that Canada, which contributed \$425 million in tsunami aid, will also help in the environmental cleanup and help fishing communities devastated by the loss of boats and equipment.

Four of the six Canadians who died in the Dec. 26 tsunami perished in Thailand, along with hundreds of locals. Another 26 Canadians are missing, while 114 are in the region and still unaccounted for.

John Gold, a Canadian who has lived in Kamala Beach for the past eight years, said the area is rebuilding at a breakneck pace. "Two weeks ago you couldn't navigate the streets -- it was too dangerous (because of debris)," he said. "We've come a long way in two weeks."

Martin arrived in Sri Lanka Sunday night and vowed to speak forcefully today against the recruitment of child soldiers by the country's Tamil Tiger rebels but refused to join the United States, Australia and Great Britain in banning them as a terrorist organization in Canada.

Martin will meet today with three senior Tamil parliamentarians affiliated with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) -- two of whom were denied visas to enter Canada last year because of concerns they would raise money for terrorist acts in Sri Lanka.

Senior officials said Martin wants to meet the Tamil parliamentarians to condemn the use of child soldiers and ensure Canadian aid is fairly distributed to all regions of the country.

Graphic

Photo: Tom Hanson, Canadian Press; Prime Minister Paul Martin looks at photos of missing persons in tsunami-stricken Phuket, Thailand, Sunday.

Load-Date: January 17, 2005

Global war on terror takes toll on human rights in Asia: report

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

January 15, 2003, Wednesday 04:30 Central European Time

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Section: Politics

Length: 1101 words

Dateline: Washington

Body

The U.S.-led global war on terrorism has given many Asian governments cover for repression and violations of civil liberties, the group Human Rights Watch said on Tuesday.

"Perhaps more than at any time since the depths of the Cold War, human rights were marginalized in Asia in 2002," the New York-based organization said in its annual World Report.

India, Nepal, Cambodia, Malaysia and Singapore have all backed a new security agenda that "neatly dovetailed with their aspirations to increase state power and marginalize political opponents".

"When the planes crashed on September 11, they drove a large hole through the region's fragile human rights architecture," the group said in its 558-page report released in Washington.

The United States and "its increasingly docile European allies" were now treating human rights questions as an afterthought, said the 2003 World Report.

"Perhaps more broadly than anywhere else in the world, the United States muted its criticism of opportunistic repression in Asia so as not to offend governments otherwise cooperating in the war."

Just as the idea that "Asian values" clash with Western notions of human rights was fading away, 9/11 had allowed regimes "to construct another false dichotomy to marginalize human rights".

"This time the antagonists were named 'security' and 'civil liberties'," said the human rights group's annual report.

In its 558-page report, the group also said that as many as 5 million Asians were refugees in 2002, most of them Afghans, and more than 2 million people were internally displaced.

Many fled Myanmar (Burma) for Thailand, while some 1,000 indigenous Montagnards bolted Vietnam for Cambodia, fearing reprisals for political protests.

In positive developments, Sri Lanka's civil war reached a pause as the "most promising negotiations since 1995" began between Colombo and the **Tamil Tigers**, with the help of Norway.

East Timor in May 2002 became the world's newest state, emerging from the carnage of Indonesia's "scorched-earth policy" after the territory's independence vote.

Global war on terror takes toll on human rights in Asia: report

Human Rights Watch listed abuses and threats to human rights in several countries across the region. Among its findings:

AFGHANISTAN has seen a "dramatic transformation" since the end of Taliban rule, but stability now depended on warlords, some of whom have "long records of gross human rights violations" who "may someday be the subject of investigations into war crimes and crimes against humanity". It added that "the international community cynically offered them the patina of legitimacy and consciously made the protection of rights a secondary consideration".

AUSTRALIA's Prime Minister John Howard has "continued to play the populist 'immigration card'". The report said "nowhere was the lack of sympathy for refugees more apparent than in Australia", which had effectively closed its coastal borders to all unauthorized entrants, including bona fide asylum seekers. More than 2,000 people, including hundreds of children, remained in detention "under extremely harsh conditions" in remote facilities.

BANGLADESH saw attacks against Hindus escalate after October 2001 elections that brought the Bangladesh National Party to power in coalition with hardline Islamic parties. "Hindu homes were looted, vandalized and burned and Hindu temples and sacred sites were destroyed. Scores of Hindu women and girls were raped," the report said. Christians, Buddhists and dissenting Moslems were also targeted while the government did little to punish offenders.

CHINA cracked down on ethnic Uighurs in Xinjiang province, arresting thousands of Moslems in its "Strike Hard" campaign. In an apparent "quid pro quo" for Chinese support for the war on terror, the report said, the United States designated the East Turkestan Islamic Movement as a terrorist group, and the U.N. Security Council followed suit. In the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, meanwhile, no resolution on China was offered for the first time since 1991.

INDIA rushed through Congress the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which created a broad definition of "terrorism" and greatly expanded the state's intelligence gathering and investigative powers, said the report. The law was used against those expressing unpopular views on subjects such as Kashmiri independence from India. Separately, state-supported violence against Moslems in the western state of Gujarat led to more than 2,000 deaths, the report said.

INDONESIA's President Megawati Sukarnoputri, after October's Bali terrorist bombing, signed a decree that created a vague definition of "terrorism" and allowed for detention without charge of suspects for up to six months, said Human Rights Watch. The military, sullied by past human rights abuses, had moved to reactivate defunct elements of its domestic intelligence network and trained special anti-terrorism squads.

MYANMAR's junta freed dissident Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest but made "virtually no progress toward a political settlement". The human rights situation "remained grim" as the regime continued to conscript many child soldiers, and the army "stepped up its brutal push into ethnic minority regions, forcibly and violently relocating entire communities". There were "worrying signs" Thailand was considering forced repatriation.

NEPAL saw a conflict between the government and a Maoist insurgency that started in 1996 turn into a full-scale civil war. "Despite the severity of abuses by both sides - often a cycle of slaughters of police and army by the rebels and reprisals by government forces, often against civilians - the international community paid little attention," said the group.

NORTH KOREA's famine, and life under the repressive Stalinist regime, has led anywhere between 10,000 and 300,000 people to flee to China. Many were forcibly returned and, according to reports, some of them were killed, tortured or imprisoned. Those who managed to enter diplomatic compounds in Beijing without being detained were eventually resettled to South Korea via third countries.

PAKISTAN's coup leader General Pervez Musharraf, once shunned by the West, was "rewarded with instant legitimacy and aid" for his support in fighting the Taliban and al-Qaeda. He was barely criticized when he gained a five-year extension of his rule in a "rigged" April referendum, said the report. Islamabad's support for U.S. efforts

Global war on terror takes toll on human rights in Asia: report

against Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda had led to a backlash that included targeted violence against foreign nationals and religious minorities. dpa fz rk

Load-Date: January 15, 2003

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Sri Lankan Muslims say fighting has further marginalized them

Agence France Presse -- English

August 12, 2006 Saturday 9:21 AM GMT

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Length: 618 words

Byline: Jason Gutierrez

Dateline: KANTALAI, Sri Lanka, Aug 12 2006

Body

At an overcrowded mosque in Sri Lanka's northeast, thousands of Muslim refugees displaced by fighting between government troops and Tiger rebels gather to console each other.

The congregation spilled into the rough asphalt road, where they sat on mats to pray as soldiers headed to the frontline and military trucks pulling long-range artillery weapons zoomed past.

Muslims, the second biggest minority group which accounts for 7.5 percent of Sri Lanka's population of 19.5 million, have been hard hit by the fresh flare-up of violence.

Over 30,000 have been forced from their homes after artillery and mortar fire from Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the subsequent army retaliation devastated the mainly Muslim town of Muttur last week.

Many were also killed or wounded in the crossfire, while those who survived are now sheltered in squalid refugee camps in the nearby town of Kantalai.

"We have been co-existing peacefully with everyone. We have lived quietly and now we are forced out of our homes, children and women killed and future gone," said A.J. Saleem, a doctor who evacuated all his relatives from Muttur.

Saleem said one of his aunts was injured by heavy shelling last week, and an ambulance which tried to take her across the rebel lines to safety was attacked and forced to turn back.

"We tried evacuating her aboard a navy vessel, but the ship got hit by mortar, killing the navy man who only tried to help," he told a group of Muslim men who had gathered to hear his story.

"My aunt died eventually because of a loss of blood."

His pregnant niece, meanwhile, gave birth prematurely to a stillborn child in the middle of the fighting. She had to deliver at home because Muttur's hospital was also hit by artillery fire.

Sri Lankan Muslims say fighting has further marginalized them

"Another nephew, who is handicapped, was hit by a shrapnel in the back, but we were able to get him out and now he is recuperating," Saleem said.

"But we are just one family with a tragic story. Look at how many of us are here, and all telling similar tales. This unjust war is causing hatred, deep-rooted divisions that have not existed before," Saleem said.

Inside the mosque, the local imam, speaking Arabic, preached harmony and patience, urging those who had gathered to keep the peace amid their suffering.

His message blared from megaphones outside the mosque, but the men were not easily placated, demanding protection from the government, and wondering aloud why international humanitarian agencies had been slow to help, despite the presence of a few non-governmental organisations.

"There are still about 6,000 people left behind in Muttur, who can't leave because they have livestock and property to protect. We have reached them but they need more food and assistance too," said M.A. Mohammed Saleem, an adviser to the UK-based Muslim Aid agency.

The agency was among the first to respond to the refugee crisis along with the US-based United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

"There are so many refugees here. We are trying to help them out, but the infrastructure isn't enough just to accommodate them," he said, noting the limited presence of other relief agencies.

"These people want to go home, but they can't. Over and above their personal losses, many of them feel that they are marginalized," he said.

For Ahmad Raslan of the Islamic Red Crescent, the fighting has turned Sri Lanka's Muslims into innocent victims.

"Why are our people being victimized? There is no gain to those fighting. We are not involved here," he said, adding medical teams were being dispatched to violence-hit areas but were afraid of getting caught in the crossfire.

"We are doing our jobs, but we want guarantees that we will be safe, too. Who will give that to us?," he said.

Load-Date: August 13, 2006

Frustrated relief workers demand protection in Sri Lanka

Agence France Presse -- English

August 7, 2006 Monday 8:06 AM GMT

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Length: 611 words

Byline: Jason Gutierrez

Dateline: KALLAR, Sri Lanka, Aug 7 2006

Body

Tired and hungry aid workers labor ceaselessly in crowded refugee camps on the edge of Sri Lanka's conflict zone amid the thundering sound of artillery.

Their steely resolve gives hope to nearly 30,000 people displaced by heavy fighting between Tiger rebels and government forces, but news that 15 of their colleagues were killed has outraged them to a point that they are now demanding protection.

"This is plainly a crime, not only to us but to those we serve," said Guy Hovey, head of delegation for the US-based United Methodist Committee on Relief which has been working to evacuate people since the fresh conflict began.

The killings of 15 employees of French agency Action Against Hunger (ACF) is an atrocity that could complicate efforts to bring aid to some 5,000 people trapped in the town of Muttur.

More than 425 people have been killed in the latest round of fighting according to an official count.

"We're non-combatants and we can't operate if we are attacked. We would like some form of security guarantee or safe passage," from both sides, Hovey told AFP as his staff tended to scores of children and women under a makeshift tent in Kallar, 20 kilometres (12.5 miles) south of Muttur.

"We have a humanitarian duty to remain and help the people. We will remain until we are effective," he said, but stressed that if there was another security breakdown "we may pull out."

Hovey's group of 20 volunteers are trying to work on bringing food and aid to some 5,000 people believed still remaining in Muttur, which came under attack from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) trying to cut off a military supply routes.

The fighting erupted on July 26 when war planes bombed suspected Tiger positions in a bid to force the rebels to lift their blockade of an irrigation canal that was denying water to some 15,000 farming families downstream

Frustrated relief workers demand protection in Sri Lanka

Heavy shelling that followed a week later devastated the mainly Muslim town and forced thousands to flee. The area is now cut off, telephone services and power are down even as reports say bodies still lie uncollected days after it was bombarded.

Aid workers who managed to enter Muttur have reported finding the bodies of the 15 ACF staffers. It was not clear how they were killed, and the deaths were the first in the agency's 25-year history.

"Aid and relief workers should not be harmed or killed. We are a neutral force. We are bringing help to these people," said Ahmad Raslan from the Islamic Red Crescent medical agency.

"We have tried time and again going to Muttur by road, we heard there are still people there. We just couldn't get to them," he said. "There are still dead bodies there and some people left behind needing help.

"We are not afraid to help, but we also demand that there is some form of guarantee we will not be harmed. We are trying to do our humanitarian work, we can't do that if we come under attack," he stressed.

Muslim relief agencies, he said however, will remain on the ground for the long-haul. "God willing, we may be able to reach Muttur by road soon. We will keep trying," he said.

"We condemn the attack on civilians, including the volunteers," he said, referring to the ACF casualties.

Lars Stuewe, a medical officer of the German Emergency Medical Technician aid group working with Islamic organizations here, noted that apart from the deaths in Muttur some ambulances have also come under attack from civilians.

"There were NGO vehicles attacked yesterday and the other day. We know of one worker who was also beaten and this is the situation we have to live with," he said, adding that it was not clear who were behind the attacks.

"We will not go to Muttur unless we deem it safe."

Load-Date: August 8, 2006

Sri Lankan judge shot to death in capital

UPI

November 19, 2004 Friday 12:25 PM EST

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Length: 154 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Nov. 19

Body

An assassin killed a Sri Lankan high court judge and his bodyguard Friday in the capital of Colombo.

A gunman who escaped in a van, the BBC reported, killed Sarath Ambepitiya and the guard.

Authorities were searching for the shooter. No group had taken immediate responsibility for the attack. Ambepitiya, 58, had just sentenced a **female** drug trafficker to life in prison.

Two years ago he gained fame for sentencing the leader of the Tamil Tiger rebels, Velupillai Prabhakaran, to 200 years in jail in absentia over a 1996 bomb attack that killed 91.

This is the first time the civil war between the government and the **Tamil Tigers** has resulted in an attack on a member of the nation's judiciary, said officials, expressing the view that the rebels were behind the shooting.

Earlier Friday the government accused the **Tamil Tigers** of breaking a ceasefire by killing an intelligence officer and an informant in the east of the country.

Load-Date: November 20, 2004

HighLights of the AAP National Wire at 19:30, Sept 13

AAP Newsfeed

September 13, 2007 Thursday 7:38 PM AEST

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Section: DOMESTIC NEWS

Length: 1130 words

Body

HIGHLIGHTS NATIONAL UPDATED

CANBERRA - Prime Minister John Howard has denied he was forced to announce plans to retire after the election as part of a secret deal to hold on to the Liberal leadership. (Leadership Nightlead)

CANBERRA - Joe Hockey could have chosen a better analogy than Don Bradman when talking about John Howard today. (Leadership News Analysis)

BRISBANE - Queensland's first **female** premier Anna Bligh says she'll focus on issues in her own backyard, ahead of representing the state overseas. (Bligh Nightlead (with factbox and pix). See also Bligh Scene, Bligh **Women**)

BRISBANE - There's no doubt that Queensland's new treasurer, Andrew Fraser, has had a meteoric rise through the ranks - but today he got a little too far ahead of himself. (Fraser Nightlead (pix available))

BRISBANE - Peter Beattie wept today as he bowed out of Queensland politics and then later declared: "The king is dead, long live the queen." (Beattie Nightlead (pix available))

CANBERRA - The price of basic foods is set to rise because Australia's major crop-growing regions remain gripped by drought. (Drought Nightlead)

CANBERRA - A major parliamentary inquiry has recommended young children be taken away from drug-addicted parents forever and adopted out, and doctors and nurses be randomly drug tested. (Drugs, to come)

CANBERRA - At lunchtime the prime minister bounded into the Parliament House theatre and was nearly swamped by squirming primary school kids. (Parly Scene)

MELBOURNE - Calls for tougher controls on solariums stepped up following the death today of campaigning melanoma victim Clare Oliver, who blamed them for contributing to her terminal illness. (Solariums Nightlead (Pix, factbox available))

SYDNEY - Australia's leading junk food manufacturers have been lambasted for their "trickery" and aggressive marketing to children in a new report calling for an overhaul of advertising regulations. (Junk, with factbox - Embargoed until 0001 AEST on Friday)

JAKARTA - Authorities are keeping a close watch on Indonesia's fiery volcanoes as aftershocks continue to rattle the nation following yesterday's powerful earthquake. (Quake Indon Aussies Nightlead (takes in mud))

BENGKULU - Huge aftershocks rumbled across Indonesia's Sumatra island today but officials said the damage from a massive earthquake that killed 10 people was not as bad as feared. (Quake Indon 2nd Nightlead)

ADELAIDE - They embarrassed APEC security authorities and now face criminal charges which could land them in jail, but their ABC boss Mark Scott remains a big fan of The Chaser team. (Chaser Nightlead (File pix))

HighLights of the AAP National Wire at 19:30, Sept 13

MELBOURNE - Medibank Private has reported a 47.5 per cent lift in annual earnings, and Australia's largest private health insurer expects to continue to perform strongly, even if a proposed privatisation does not go ahead. (Medibank Private)

CAPE TOWN - Ricky Ponting offered no excuses. (Cricket 20 Aust Nightlead (with factbox). See also Cricket 20 Aust Analysis)

A 34-year-old Newcastle woman has been found dead in the lounge room of her home with her hands and feet tied together, police say. (Body Lead. Seeking more)

SYDNEY - A former NSW policeman has been sentenced to a minimum 16 months' jail for sexually assaulting five teenage girls. (Tink Nightlead)

MELBOURNE - Three Australian men provided Sri Lankan group the Tamil Tigers with more than \$1 million worth of military resources, a Melbourne court has been told. (Tamil Vic Nightlead (pix available))

MELBOURNE - Oil company Shell Australia admitted it left the retailing business because it wasn't good at it, an inquiry into the price of unleaded petrol was told today. (Petrol)

MELBOURNE - The Victorian government is likely to win two by-elections on Saturday because federal political "static" has distracted voters, a leading political commentator says. (Byelections Nightlead)

MELBOURNE - Previously, Danni (Danni) Turner had to rely on a polling booth official or a family member to fill out her voting form at election time. (Election Blind (Pix available))

MELBOURNE - Victoria Police's Special Operations Group (SOG) was enlisted to raid a house in Melbourne two years ago because of the violent nature of the family involved, an inquest was told today. (Chaouk)

MELBOURNE - Former Victorian Premier Steve Bracks may be invited a second time to front an upper house gaming inquiry before being slapped with a summons. (Gaming)

BRISBANE - A drug-dealing truck driver has been jailed for life for planning the murder of a fellow truckie who owed money for an amphetamines debt. (Weisz)

BRISBANE - A joyride turned to disaster today after a 14-year-old boy took his mother's car and drove himself and a younger friend into the path of a road-train near Brisbane. (Crash Lead)

BRISBANE - Restricted horse movements have begun in Queensland under a system that allows the animals to be transported in areas not affected by equine influenza (EI). (Stallions Qld)

BRISBANE - Queensland councils have until next Friday to decide if they will hold plebiscites on the amalgamations being forced onto them by the state government. (Councils)

BRISBANE - A Sri Lankan man has narrowly avoided being deported after his conviction for groping women on public buses. (Fareed)

BRISBANE - Backpackers, who spent \$3 billion in Australia last financial year, are "worth their weight in gold" and must be encouraged to keep coming, Tourism Minister Fran Bailey says. (Backpackers)

ADELAIDE - A New Zealander with a law degree has been named international red winemaker of the year at arguably the world's most prestigious wine awards. (Wine Awards (Pix available))

ADELAIDE - Prince Edward, the Duke of Kent, will spend six days in South Australia next month in the first visit to the state by a British Royal in more than five years. (Duke)

PERTH - Almost 14 years since the collapse of Bond Corporation, the company's long suffering creditors have received more than \$80 million in a second and final payment from liquidators. (Bond)

PERTH - A West Australian Supreme Court judge has told a corruption inquiry he advised police to charge a man whose murder conviction was later quashed by the High Court. (Mallard Nightlead (Pix available))

PERTH - High school students turned their canoes into makeshift shelters when forced to spend a cold night out in Western Australia's south. (Canoe Nightlead)

HOBART - Federal Environment Minister Malcolm Turnbull has indicated he aims to make a decision on Tasmania's \$2 billion pulp mill before the federal election is called, business leaders say. (Pulp Thomas)

HOBART - The only regret Harry Quick seems to have is that he had to whack a few heads to make the Labor Party take notice of him. (Quick)

Load-Date: September 14, 2007

Conflicts of interest

The Times Higher Education Supplement

October 12, 2007

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Section: Pg. 18; No. 1815

Length: 1141 words

Byline: Hazel Smith

Body

Diaspora communities worldwide look back to, and sometimes frustrate peace plans in, the countries from which they have fled. How best, asks Hazel Smith, to make these far-flung peoples a force for good?

There are many stock notions about diasporas and conflict. Some people assume, for example, that communities living safe and relatively prosperous lives in the West tend to take a harder line in peace negotiations than the people suffering the direct consequences of fighting back in their "home" land. Others talk as though the whole Palestinian diaspora is Muslim, or assume that the whole Israeli (or even Jewish) diaspora is strongly Zionist or that all American-based Cubans or Croatians are united in a single political ideology.

In reality, such generalisations are never totally true. Diasporas come in many shapes and sizes, and they are all internally divided by factors such as class, gender, generation, occupation and country of location. They can undoubtedly make a deep impact on conflicts at "home" - at every stage from the lead-up to war through the "hot" phases of fighting to post-conflict rebuilding - but it is simplistic to see them as purely "peace-makers" or "peace-wreckers". In *Diasporas in Conflict*, the recent book I edited with Paul Stares, we draw on case studies of the Armenian, Cambodian, Colombian, Croatian, Cuban, Eritrean, Jewish, Kurdish, Palestinian and Sri Lankan diasporas to try to draw out the complexities and suggest how "host" countries can encourage diasporic communities resident within their borders to promote peace.

It is seldom accurate, we discovered, to stereotype a diaspora as unmitigated peace wreckers. The Croatian diaspora, for instance, was much criticised for its contribution to funding and arming the Croat army in the Balkan wars of the 1990s. Yet it did not see itself as a contributor to conflict, but rather as a contributor to a national cause in which war was justifiable. Peace remained desirable, but not at the expense of surrender to the Serbs or the Bosnians. Once the fighting was over, however, Croatians from abroad returned to their country and invested in postwar reconstruction efforts.

Even when one generation takes a hard line, their children may think differently. Young Cuban Americans, for instance, often take less belligerent positions on US-Cuban relations than their parents, for whom the Cold War was a central feature of their upbringing and outlook. As a result, they have far less ideological baggage to prevent them exploring pragmatic possibilities of rapprochement with Fidel Castro's regime.

Another obvious, though often ignored, fault line running through every diaspora is gender. It is well known that women in war zones usually have fewer coping strategies available to them than men, mainly because they tend to be responsible for children's health and welfare. What is less well known is the gendered impact of conflict in diasporic communities. Displaced Bosnian women in the UK and in the Netherlands seem to have found it easier to

Conflicts of interest

get work, albeit low paid and menial, than their menfolk, thus enabling them to assimilate quicker into "host" countries and, sometimes, empowering them to take more part in political activities such as fundraising for humanitarian assistance. Men, conversely, can find exile, with its accompanying loss of status and professional identity, much more difficult, so that a common response is to become focused on politics within community organisations. Conservative patterns of family relations can also change if unemployed men become more involved in domestic activities and spend more time with their children than they would have in their "home" land.

Although conflicts often create diasporas, it does not automatically follow that diasporic communities want to get involved in the conflict back home. The Colombian diaspora in the US, sometimes understood as a "conflict-generated" diaspora, is so fragmented that it is difficult to identify a coherent overall identity, but if the multiple groups have anything in common it is their desire to leave the violence behind.

Whatever their desires, the ability of diasporas to contribute to specific conflicts - or to peace-making - is strongly shaped by the "political opportunity structure" in the countries where they are resident. In the early stages of the Iraq war, for instance, the Bush Administration involved Kurdish representatives in decision-making and planning for postwar reconstruction. The Kurds, therefore, developed a stake in peace and saw themselves as agents of peace-keeping. After 2004, when Kurdish leaders were pushed aside, the community became less motivated to make peace work. Similarly, the 1991 Paris international peace plans for Cambodia institutionalised a role for the diaspora in postwar reconstruction, which encouraged Cambodians to return home and run for office in the elections of 1993.

These cases reveal the impact of the conscious decisions by major states and international organisations to involve diasporas in peacemaking. But more diffuse factors can have a similar effect. When the US launched its worldwide so-called War on Terror after the attacks on the Twin Towers in 2001, diasporic communities became much more uneasy about supporting liberation groups that engaged in what could readily be understood as terrorist tactics. The Tamil community, for instance, became much more reluctant to fund and support the *Tamil Tigers*. Although their capacity to act remained much the same, the altered political context notably inhibited the inclination of Tamils to act as peace- wreckers in Sri Lanka.

These brief examples indicate how policymakers can and should do a lot more to encourage positive contributions (and dissuade negative contributions) to peace-making by diasporas. Home countries could consider the example of Eritrea, which expects Eritreans abroad to pay 2 per cent of their income to fund postwar reconstruction. Host countries can and should act to outlaw diasporic activity that supports and finances groups that adopt violent means to achieve their political ends - even, perhaps, when these are claimed to be in a good cause such as overthrowing a dictator.

In a democracy, it is the government's responsibility to decide on military activities abroad, and diasporic communities wanting to influence such decisions should do so solely through the normal processes of lobbying. Diasporas can often be, as hostile stereotypes suggest, the enemies of efforts to end conflict. But they can also be mobilised as powerful allies of conflict resolution and sustainable peace-building.

Hazel Smith is professor of international relations at Warwick University. *Diasporas in Conflict: Peace-Makers or Peace-Wreckers?* (edited with Paul Stares) is published by United Nations University Press, £ 23.99.

Load-Date: October 14, 2007

Democratic way must never be torpedoed by terrorism

Lincolnshire Echo

August 19, 2005

Default Edition

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Section: News; Politics; Europe/MEPs; Pg. 31

Length: 1083 words

Body

They came for Lakshman Kadirgamar as the weekend began. The Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, four times in office, and 73 years old, had taken a swim in the cool of the evening at his Colombo residence. The assassins may have been from the breakaway terrorists of the **Tamil Tigers**. They have slaughtered thousands. It was a **female** Tamil suicide bomber who blew Rajiv Gandhi to pieces 20 years ago. The current Sri Lankan prime minister lost an eye when the Tigers tried to kill her five years ago. Lakshman was himself from the Tamil minority, but an unswerving foe of terrorism. He had wanted peace but was ambivalent about moving forward from the truce negotiated three years ago. There were hopes that the common misfortune of the tsunami would make relations better; instead they frayed as breakaway Tigers and Sinhalese nationalists fomented fresh violence.

Each of these groups believed Lakshman to be a traitor, and wanted him dead. When he came to visit the EU in Brussels there were watchful bodyguards at every corner in the notoriously lax parliament buildings. It embarrassed him to meet old friends in this way. My mind goes back to my first term at university. The Oxford Union was visited by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, prime minister of what was then called Ceylon. A former Union bigshot, he was to unveil his portrait. Before he could do it a slender, elegant student got up to berate him for the failure to give proper rights to the Tamil minority - "a failure of statesmanship at the highest level", said Lakshman.

He could have stayed in England and made a fortune at the Bar. But he went home to the rough and tumble of Sri Lankan politics. Bandaranaike was assassinated in his turn. So was the leading Sinhalese student I knew in those days - blown up when Minister of Defence. Lakshman stayed in politics, knowing all the risks, and served Bandaranaike's widow and daughter in turn when they won power through the ballot box. For this is the point. Terrorism is everywhere, at the disposal of nationalist and religious fanatics. The democratic system, however, sinks deep roots, when its contrary merits as the least worse system are understood. When I last saw Lakshman he was going back to his old job once more, supporting the president despite her feuding with her own party. Whoever the snipers were who wanted him dead they will not see Sri Lankan democracy cremated with him.

In the even worse intransigence of the Middle East, where the assassins always sleep with their guns, there is a modest ground for hope. Ariel Sharon eventually came to see what was told to him, forcefully by Chris Patten for the EU, more laggardly by the Americans: there could be no peace process without the removal of illegal settlements.

THIS week a start has been made, with the removal of a few thousand fanatics from the Gaza strip. I must confess that I never thought Sharon would do it. He was, literally, on record telling Israeli troops to stand by settlers, whatever their orders, just a few years ago.

Democratic way must never be torpedoed by terrorism

It will be in his mind that Yitzhak Rabin, another general turned peacemaker, was shot by a Zionist fanatic when he too came close to an understanding with the Palestinian leadership. Among the hysterical settlers of Netzarim and Netzer Hazani, with their invocations of the Holocaust and Masada, their rams' horns and rebellion, the young Israeli soldiers have been sorely tried. But those Israeli soldiers represent the clear majority opinion in Israeli itself, that these costly, shameful provocations have to go.

This has all become possible because the Palestinians now have a leader, Abu Mazen, known in the West as Mahmoud Abbas, who can respond. The suicide junkies of Hamas will try to take credit for it, but they delayed it, paralysed it for years.

The Palestinian Authority, which the EU has steadfastly supported as a basis for legitimate dialogue - despite vicious criticism of Chris Patten in Washington - can now move to a proper negotiation.

Everyone knows that the West Bank settlements are the bigger problem, but Gaza had to come first. Sharon moved unilaterally, and his security wall snips off a tenth of the territory. The Palestinians have seen, for the first time, that Israel can be flexible on the ground as well as on paper.

The European role in this next stage will be critical. In Palestine, unlike Iraq, we have worked together, or with the UN. This ought to be too obvious to need stating, but after Robin Cook's funeral there is a need. The buffoon McCrirk can let loose his views on Celebrity Big Brother, but to trash the EU (as well as the "snorkelling" prime minister) at the funeral of the most consistently pro-European Labour figure (from commitment not expediency) turned buffoonery into a kind of blasphemy. Never forget; Robin's position on Iraq gave him a credibility in Europe that served us well. His successor now needs the same assured touch with the latest crisis - Iran. The Bush administration may mishandle Iran as they mishandled Iraq. True, the reform process there, with students and women prominent, has stalled. A hard-liner has been elected president. Why? Not because the Iranian revolution has "found its Stalin", the right-wing press now argues, but because from where Iranians sit the world looks very dangerous. Bush linked them into the "axis of evil". Iraq, across the border, has been peremptorily invaded and occupied. To believe that the events of 2003 left Iranian public opinion unmoved is monstrous folly.

Europe wants to talk President Ahmadinejad down from confrontation, after the unsealing of its nuclear enrichment plant.

So does the International Atomic Agency in Vienna. So do the Russians. We should not forget that dire talk about weapons of mass destruction is unpersuasive from those who have them, and constantly threaten force. Equally, we should expect to see some Iranian 'meddling' in the future of their fellow Shiites in southern Iraq. Many of their holiest shrines are held in common, and some Iraqi ayatollahs are Iranian too. Theocracy, with all its hideous inflexibility, may yet come by the ballot box in Basra. But talk we must. There is a sophisticated middle class in Iran, but it is not pro-American. President Ahmadinejad caught one public mood to get elected. Now he is in the world's orbit. As, in the end, was Ariel Sharon. We all know the difficulties of the patient talkers, but does anyone know a better way of rebuilding relations with Iran than our common European approach?

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Outside View: Serial political murderers

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Body

The 20th century was an age in which serial sex crimes were perfected. Perhaps the 21st century will be known as the age of the serial political crime.

Serial killings are no longer merely sexual, domestic or national. They are now global. We may have to study this new kind of serial killing as carefully as we have studied the crimes of Ted Bundy or the Green River killer.

In both sex and political serial killings, we have a criminal mind at work, one who murders in cold blood, and requires body-parts and a terrified public. Serial sex criminals torture and murder strangers, usually women, but not always. Serial political killers use their own people to torture and murder strangers. And, they send their own women, men, and children to do their barbaric and nihilistic dirty work.

The phenomenon of serial suicide murders in a political context began in Lebanon in the early 1980s, courtesy of the Shiite groups Amal and Hezbollah and the Islamic republic of Iran. By the mid-1980s, a few small groups (such as the Lebanese communist party and the Syrian Socialist Nationalist party) did copy-cat serial killings by proxy in Lebanon, and by the late 1980s, in Sri Lanka.

"Serial killings by proxy" mean that the overlords, masterminds, and bomb-makers remain alive to kill both their own operatives as well as civilians and enemy forces again and again.

In 1993, suicide murder became the weapon of ultimate choice in the Palestinian and Arab war against the Jews. The first such attack took place on April 16, 1993, when Hamas struck near a settlement in the Jordan Valley. The bomber killed himself and one Israeli and injured seven Israelis. In the last decade, serial political killings have no longer been confined to the Middle East but have come to afflict civilians on almost every continent.

Most of the suicide killers have been men. However, women have increasingly either been forced or seduced into playing a more visible role as political suicide killers.

For example, in 1985, 17-year old Sana'a Mehaydali, also known as "the bride of the South," used a yellow booby-trapped Mercedes-Benz (the cars are also known as "torches") to ram into the back of an Israeli Defense

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Force convoy in south Lebanon. Mehaydali was a member of the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party—and she was Christian, not Muslim. (Christian Phalangist groups imitated Shiite Iranian groups in Lebanon and used Mafia tactics such as mutilating and sending body parts to their rivals.)

One-third of the Sri Lankan **Tamil Tigers** suicide killers have been **women**. In 1991, Dhanu assassinated Ragiv Ghandi. Dhanu, a Hindu, was reportedly gang-raped and may have turned to suicide murder as a way of cleansing her dishonor. However, after Sept. 11, 2001, Prabhakaran, their leader, decided to stop using suicide terrorism as a tactic. Interestingly, Muslim **women** did not become suicide killers until the mid-1990s when the Marxist PKK (The Kurdistan Workers' Party) used **women** as suicide killers.

Women suicide killers have been associated with at least three major religions (Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam), and with Marxist, secular political parties and liberation movements as well. However, the true serial killers are not the actual operatives, whether male or **female**. They are men like al-Qaeda's Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahari and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi; the PKK's Ocalan; the Sri Lankan, Prabhakaran, and the Chechen Basayev. All six men are evil, diabolically clever, and highly charismatic. Ocalan brutally recruited his first **female** suicide killer by having her watch him shoot another woman who had refused to go on the same mission. Ocalan was caught in Kenya and is currently imprisoned in Turkey.

Just as detectives focus on each detail of the crime scene and create psychological portraits of the serial killer, we now need to focus on the political crime scene and on the psychological and cultural make-up of the serial killer. In addition to being relentlessly brainwashed with anti-infidel propaganda, what are some things that these serial killers and their proxies have in common? In addition to relentless anti-infidel brainwashing, all the political serial killers have been raised cultures in which **women** are breathtakingly devalued. However, sons nevertheless idealize and revere their mothers almost as if their mothers are exceptions to the **female** rule.

The nature of the relationship between son and mother is therefore a highly charged one. Sons deny that they hate their (idealized) mother and they deny their dependence upon their mothers who are, after all, devalued **women**. Thus, al-Zarqawi beheaded Nicholas Berg exactly 40 days (the traditional period of mourning in Islam) after his own mother had died and he then went on a rampage in which he beheaded many hostages; the Dutch-Moroccan Bouyeri assassinated Theo Von Gogh only months after Boyeri's mother died. Also, bin Laden's mother was banished and Nidal Arabiyat's mother died when both men were young. Therefore, maternal idealization is potentially even more dangerous when one's mother is truly absent. Serial sex killers and serial political killers also live in cultures in which fathers are routinely brutal and mothers cannot protect their children or themselves.

We predict two things: That serial suicide killings will continue to spread like wildfire and that more and more **women** and children will increasingly be used as proxies. We urge law enforcement, military intelligence, and foreign policy leaders to factor in cultural and family dynamics including the status of **women** as they decipher and try to contain the epidemic of jihadi rage aka serial suicide political murders.

(Phyllis Chesler Ph.D is the author of 13 books, including "The New Anti-Semitism" and newly released "The Death of Feminism. What's Next in the Struggle for **Women's** Freedom." Nancy H.Kobrin Ph.D is an affiliate professor at Haifa University, an Arabist, psycho-analyst, and author of the forthcoming book The Sheikh's New Clothes: Islamic Suicide Terrorism and What It's Really All About.")

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