

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

Job Number: 223508016

Documents (100)

1. [ROUNDUP: Bus explosion kills at least 16 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, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

2. [Sri Lankan Muslim women get green light to join armed forces](#)

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. [Timeline of the recent upsurge in violence 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

4. [Editorial&Opinion: A tragedy born of stubbornness 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

5. [Suspected Tamil rebels detonate mines near Sri Lanka capital, 2 wounded](#)

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. [Grief-stricken Sri Lankan refugees haunted by conflict](#)

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. [Sri Lanka 's president orders probe on attacks on rebels in east](#)

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. [Post-tsunami generosity failed to unify island: Sri Lankan vote illuminates divisions. Support for main presidential candidates reflects down-the-middle split](#)

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. [VOA NEWS: AMNESTY SPOTLIGHTS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN SRI LANKA , IRAN , CONGO](#)

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. [First major British surf contest a joy 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

11. [WORLD at 1700 GMT](#)

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

12. [Xinhua world news summary at 1530 GMT, May 19](#)

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

13. [VOA NEWS: SRI LANKAN VIOLENCE INTENSIFIES AHEAD OF PEACE MEDIATOR'S ARRIVAL](#)

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

14. [Seven killed in Sri Lanka May Day mine 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

15. [Clashes With Sri Lankan Military Leave 17 Tamil Tigers Dead](#)

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

16. [Bomb explodes in a suburb of Sri Lanka 's capital, killing 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

17. [Aid agency withdraws from Sri Lanka after 15 Tamil workers killed in northeast](#)

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. [Sri Lankan rights group condemns official's alleged threat to newspaper editor](#)

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. [Sri Lanka Police Thwart Capital 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

20. [Tamil Tiger Rebel-Held Enclave Captured](#)

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. [Police thwart major attack on Sri Lankan capital, explosion kills 6 in the 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, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

22. [Sri Lankan President and ethnic Tamil rebels waits for Norway mediator SRI LANKA : Norway in No Hurry to Resume Mediation](#)

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

23. [Mine blast inside Sri Lanka wildlife park kills seven](#)

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

24. [Sri Lanka 's military captures strategic Tamil Tiger rebel-held enclave](#)

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

25. [Suspected Tamil rebels detonate mine in Colombo suburb, 2 wounded](#)

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

26. [Fragile 2-year ceasefire in Sri Lanka ends after voters reject government: Army told to stay away from conflict. Nine killed as heavy fighting erupts between Tamil Tiger rebel factions](#)

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. [French charity urges probe into Sri Lanka massacre](#)

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. [Sri Lanka says sorry for evicting Tamils](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

29. [Schedule for Thursday, July 17, 1000 GMT](#)

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. [Sri Lanka exhumes bodies of French charity workers](#)

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. [Suspected Tamil Tigers kill 7 ethnic Sinhalese villagers in Sri Lanka , 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,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

32. [More Sri Lankan refugees move to south India](#)

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

33. [Sri Lankan aid workers found murdered](#)

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

34. [SRI LANKA : FEAR OF TERRORISM COMPLICATES WORK OF RIGHTS ACTIVISTS](#)

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

35. [SECURITY COUNCIL WORKING GROUP URGES ACTION TO DEMOBILIZE 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

36. [Bomb kills 16 near Sri Lankan 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, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

37. [Priest Becky off to war torn land](#)

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. [More than 20,000 Tamil refugees enter government-controlled area 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, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

39. [Crisis looms for civilians forced to flee 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

40. [Tamils make plea to Ottawa; Speed up processing of refugee claims and immigration sponsorship requests, say a Quebec group of Sri Lankan women traumatized by civil war in their former land](#)

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. [Wars, instability worsen rights abuses in Asia: HRW](#)

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

42. [The World at 1:30 p.m.](#)

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. [Western white woman a suicide bomber](#)

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. [DESPERATE NEED: WHERE THE AID EFFORT STANDS](#)

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. [Bus carrying 40 Tamil rebels escapes landmine blast 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

46. [SENSELESS SLAUGHTER](#)

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

47. [Blast in Colombo kills 3](#)

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. [12 killed in escalated fighting in northern and 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,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

49. [St. Paul woman helps refugees in ethnically divided 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

50. [More Sri Lankan refugees move to south India](#)

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. [Two Sri Lankan aid workers freed](#)

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. [UN , SRI LANKA SHOULD COOPERATE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, HIGH COMMISSIONER 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

53. [Sri Lankan military kills 14 rebels in fighting in northern 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

54. [Dozens dead as Sri Lankan fighting escalates](#)

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

55. [Horror Suicide bombing](#)

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

56. [Sri Lanka says rebels' torture chambers found, rebels say cells only held prisoners](#)

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

57. [Sri Lanka 's military captures strategic rebel-held enclave; 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

58. [*Thousands of Tamil civilians brave flooded, mined jungle paths to flee 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

59. [*12 killed in escalated fighting 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

60. [*Mother of all roles for Sharika's film debut*](#)

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

61. [*Military says 23 Tamil rebels killed in clash 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, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

62. [*Heroines emerge from the devastation*](#)

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. [Claymore causes carnage in Sri Lanka hinterland](#)

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. [Jammu-based journalist wins EU prize](#)

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. [World Ticker](#)

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. [Protecting the persecuted](#)

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. [Suicide bomber attacks Sri Lanka 's top military commander, 8 dead, 27 injured](#)

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

68. [*In Focus*](#)

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. [*Sri Lankan navy sinks 11 rebel ships, killing about 70, official 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

70. [*News Items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua \(Part II\)*](#)

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

71. [*In Short*](#)

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. [*Bringing new hope where the tsunami washed away lives*](#)

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. [*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

74. [*Sri Lanka president blasts Tamil Tiger rebels for alleged killing of foreign minister*](#)

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. [*UNICEF says Tamil Tiger rebels recruit tsunami-affected children*](#)

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. [*Corruption, authoritarianism infect Asia's emerging democracies, U.S. watchdog warns*](#)

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. [*A life scarred by tragedies*](#)

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. [*Bombings forged ruthless leader*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Content Type
News

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

79. [*Blasts from the past Though the current wave of suicide bombings began in Lebanon in the 1970s, the act of killing yourself for your beliefs has a cultural ancestry extending back to the Middle Ages*](#)

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. [*Sri Lanka Peace Talks to Resume*](#)

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. [*Killer bombs put stamp on rebel's speech; Peace 'impossible'*](#)

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. [*WORLD 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, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

83. [*Sri Lanka troops kill six women Tiger fighters*](#)

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. [*World Digest*](#)

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. [*Two LTTE rebel women killed 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

86. [*Centre, DMK's intervention sought to prevent atrocities against Tamils in 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

87. [*Sri Lankan president says power sharing the only answer*](#)

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. [*Tsunami-affected people need more shelter, protection: UN official*](#)

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

89. [Staring death in the face](#)

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

90. [Tea with the Tigers becomes a turbulent brew](#)

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

91. [Naxals working on red corridor](#)

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

92. [Tea that goes through a war zone to reach your cup](#)

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

93. [Sgro's exit none too soon](#)

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

94. [Sri Lanka mounts massive relief operation as nearly 11,000 die](#)

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. [Sri Lankan city's descent into chaos As the cease-fire erodes, so does peace between neighbors](#)

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. [Overseas lifts test locals](#)

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. [The awful truth: Sri Lankan human-rights activist is the subject of a documentary that explores the brutality of ethnic conflicts and gives voice to the silenced](#)

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. [Tamil Tiger rebels bury slain leader as fighting in northern Sri Lanka kills 8](#)

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

99. [Sri Lankan military kills eight rebels in fighting in northern 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

100. [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

ROUNDUP: Bus explosion kills at least 16 in eastern Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

April 2, 2007 Monday 12:22 PM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 531 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts ROUNDUP: Bus explosion kills at least 16 in eastern Sri Lanka Adds govt statement, rebel reaction Colombo

An explosion on a civilian bus killed at least 16 people and wounded more than 25 others Monday in eastern Sri Lanka, a military spokesman said.

Military Spokesman Brigadier Prasad Samarasinghe said the attack occurred at Kondawattuwan, 320 kilometres east of the capital, around noon when a civilian bus was about to be checked at a roadblock manned by soldiers and policemen.

He said that the explosion had taken place inside the bus, leading to speculation that the bomb was planted inside the bus and had been triggered as the some 50 civilian passengers were getting off to be checked at a road checkpoint.

Most of the victims were believed to be from the majority

Sinhalese community. Eleven of them were women and three others were children.

Hospital sources said that the condition of at least five persons was serious and all of the injured have been transferred to the eastern Ampara district hospital.

Brigadier Samarasinghe said that Tamil rebels of the Liberation

Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were responsible for the attack.

But the rebels' spokesman, Rasiha Illanthiriyen, denied the claim and instead accused the government for carrying out what it called a "planned disinformation campaign" against the rebels.

The spokesman was quoted in the pro-rebel Tamilnet website saying the government was encouraging paramilitary elements to carry out such attacks with the "motive of tarnishing the Tiger image."

The bomb blast came hours after suspected rebels shot dead six Sinhala civilians in a separate incident in the eastern province adjoining Ampara district. The six men were shot dead in the Eravur area, 280 kilometres east of the capital of the Batticaloa district, as they were working for an non-governmental organisation.

The government condemned the two attacks, saying the rebels were deliberately targeting civilians in an attempt to mount pressure on Colombo to stop ongoing military operations, mainly in the eastern province.

However the government said it "reiterates that terror attacks

ROUNDUP: Bus explosion kills at least 16 in eastern Sri Lanka

will not deter its efforts to find a peaceful solution to the National problem or its counter terrorism masseurs to defeat terrorism.

"The LTTE's terror attacks will only strengthen the governments' resolve to defeat terrorism and restore normalcy in the North and East," the statement said.

Tamil rebels appeared to have stepped up attacks on civilian targets in the eastern province.

Fighting in north and eastern Sri Lanka has escalated during the past 15 months and over 4,000 people have been killed in related violence.

The attacks on the civilian targets also come in the wake of reports that the government intends to hold a referendum to decide whether a Cease-Fire Agreement (CFA) signed with the rebels in February 2002 with the backing of the Norwegian peace facilitators should be scrapped.

The truce agreement has been shattered due to fighting between government troops and Tamil rebels, but officially the truce agreement remains in effect because neither the rebels nor the government have given a two-week notice to withdraw from the agreement.

Apr 0207 1222 GMT

Notes

Adds govt statement, rebel reaction

Load-Date: April 3, 2007

End of Document

Sri Lankan Muslim women get green light to join armed forces - Correction Appended

Associated Press International
April 3, 2006 Monday 1:47 PM GMT

Correction Appended

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 366 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Islamic clerics on Monday gave Muslim women permission to join Sri Lanka's first exclusively Muslim infantry battalion to help provide security in the country's insurgency-wracked east, a religious leader said.

"We have no objection of Muslim women joining the security forces, but it must safeguard our culture and religion," said Muslim theologian Moulavi Mubarak Abdul, who is also president of the United Party of Ulama, an umbrella group of political parties and clerics.

"We think that there should be a Muslim unit in the armed forces," he said.

Few Muslims serve in Sri Lanka's armed forces, and Muslim women traditionally stayed out of the military.

Approval for Muslim women to join the military came after Sri Lanka's military last month began recruiting for the exclusively Muslim unit.

The unit will protect Muslims living in the troubled Ampara province where Tamil Tiger rebels, who are mostly Hindus, want to extend their domination.

Military spokesman Brig. Sudhir Samarasinghe said Muslim women will be recruited to join the forces in interviews this week.

Muslims are Sri Lanka's second-largest minority after ethnic Tamils and generally oppose the Tamil Tigers, who have accused Muslims of supporting the government. The rebels also oppose Muslims cultivating land in areas they consider Tamil territory.

During two decades of civil war, the rebels carried out systematic killings of Muslims, including a massacre in August 1990 of 130 Muslims at two mosques on the same day.

Tens of thousands of Muslims fled the northern Sri Lanka's Jaffna Peninsula after the rebels started their separatist campaign there in 1983.

Sri Lankan Muslim women get green light to join armed forces

More than 65,000 people were killed in the conflict before a Norway brokered cease-fire signed in 2002.

The truce has come under severe strain due to spiraling violence, with more than 166 people, including 87 government security personnel, killed since December.

Both sides agreed in Geneva, Switzerland last month to scale down violence and will meet again for talks on April 19-21.

Women from Sri Lanka's majority ethnic group the Buddhist Sinhalese are also allowed to join the country's military, while the rebels are known to have a large number of female fighters.

Correction

In an April 3 story about Muslim women being given permission by religious leaders to join an all-Muslim unit of the Sri Lankan military, The Associated Press erroneously cited military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe as saying that women would be recruited into the unit. Only male recruits will be accepted into the all-Muslim unit.

Correction-Date: April 5, 2006

Load-Date: April 4, 2006

End of Document

Timeline of the recent upsurge in violence in Sri Lanka

The Associated Press

June 15, 2006 Thursday 7:29 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 440 words

Byline: By The Associated Press

Body

Major developments in Sri Lanka's conflict.

1975: Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam forms. The group demands a separate state for minority Tamils in the island's north and east.

1983: Civil war begins, sparked by anti-Tamil riots in Colombo many believe were organized by Sinhalese-dominated government.

1991: **Female** Tamil Tiger suicide bomber assassinates India's former prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, at an election campaign rally in southern India, apparently in revenge for sending Indian peacekeeping troops who ended up fighting the rebels.

1993: Tamil Tiger suicide bomber kills President Ranasinghe Premadasa at a May Day parade after his government's failed peace efforts.

1999: Tamil Tiger suicide bomber tries to kill President Chandrika Kumaratunga at an election meeting. Kumaratunga survives but loses an eye.

February 2002: The Sri Lankan government signs a cease-fire agreement with **Tamil Tigers** ending 19 years of civil war, which left more than 65,000 dead.

Dec. 26, 2004: The Indian Ocean tsunami kills more than 35,000 Sri Lankans and leaves tens of thousands homeless.

Early 2005: Hopes rise that the tsunami and post-disaster reconstruction efforts could bridge the island's ethnic divide and bring war to an end.

June 2005: Relations between the government and Tiger rebels deteriorate over issue of sharing international tsunami aid.

August 2005: Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, an ethnic Tamil who opposed a separate state for the minority, is assassinated by snipers in a killing blamed on the Tigers.

December 2005: Tiger rebels launch first major attack since truce, killing at least 12 Sri Lankan navy sailors. A series of attacks follows.

Timeline of the recent upsurge in violence in Sri Lanka

Feb. 22, 2006: Government and rebel officials meet in Switzerland for peace talks and agree to de-escalate violence.

April 19, 2006: A second round of peace talks is postponed as the two sides argue over transport and security.

April 25, 2006: A suicide bombing blamed on rebels targets the government's top military commander, killing eight. Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka is hurt along with 26 others. The army responds by attacking rebel bases.

May 11, 2006: Rebel suicide boats ram and sink a navy patrol craft, killing at least 17 sailors. Five Tiger ships are destroyed in the battle, killing 50 rebels. The government responds with airstrikes on Tiger positions.

June 8, 2006: Talks in Norway aimed at restoring peace collapse after the Tigers refuse face-to-face meetings with Sri Lankan government representatives.

June 15, 2006: A land mine blast under a bus kills 62 and wounds 78. The government blames the rebels and launches airstrikes. The Tigers deny involvement.

Load-Date: June 16, 2006

End of Document

Editorial&Opinion: A tragedy born of stubbornness; SRI LANKA

The Independent (London)

June 16, 2006 Friday

First Edition

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The  INDEPENDENT

Section: FEATURES; Pg. 32

Length: 440 words

Body

Yesterday's ambush of a bus in northern Sri Lanka was a sickening attack, even by the standards of a civil war that has claimed the lives of tens of thousands over three decades. More than 60 civilians were killed in the blast, including many women and children. This was easily the deadliest attack on the island since the government and the separatist Tamil Tigers signed an uneasy truce over four years ago.

The Tigers have denied they were behind this attack. But the fact that most of the dead are from the majority Sinhalese community points to the rebels' involvement, as does the type of explosives used. The government is in no doubt, and a wave of air strikes began to pound rebel positions yesterday.

Sri Lanka is sliding perilously close to full-scale civil war. More than 500 have died since early April in military clashes and civilian ambushes. Tamil suicide bombers are back too, as demonstrated by the attempted assassination of the leader of the Sri Lankan army two months ago. The Norwegian-brokered peace process is going nowhere. The Tigers have pulled out of talks. There is no agreement even on the safety of cease-fire monitors.

The logic for this conflict remains elusive. A defacto Tamil state now exists in the north and east of the country. The Tigers long ago indicated they were prepared to accept autonomy, rather than full independence. And, of course, most Tamil and Sinhalese people have no desire for further conflict.

The blame must lie with the leadership of each side. The rebel leaders are using an upsurge in violence to distract attention from their internal struggle with a rogue general. Meanwhile those around President Mahinda Rajapakse are urging a short, sharp war to force the weakened Tamils to accept a deal.

But a return to civil war is in the interests of neither side. The island's economy is weak, ravaged by years of war, not to mention the Boxing Day tsunami in 2004. An escalation of fighting would destroy tourism and foreign investment, two of the biggest sources of income for the government. The Tigers would also soon find themselves starved of cash. New anti-terrorism global banking regulations would come into play, blocking donations from the Tamil diaspora overseas.

The aftermath of the tsunami, which did not discriminate between Sinhalese and Tamil areas of the island, created a golden opportunity to deepen the peace process through a mutual reconstruction effort. But thanks to the

Editorial&Opinion: A tragedy born of stubbornness SRI LANKA

stubbornness of leaders on both sides, the deal to share international aid has not been implemented. Sri Lanka now finds itself facing a man-made disaster of scarcely less devastating proportions.

Load-Date: June 16, 2006

End of Document

Suspected Tamil rebels detonate mines near Sri Lanka capital, 2 wounded

Associated Press International

June 6, 2006 Tuesday 5:03 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 437 words

Byline: By DILIP GANGULY, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels triggered two anti-personnel mines outside Sri Lanka's capital early Tuesday, wounding two people in the first such attacks near Colombo since the country's 2002 cease-fire.

The twin blasts wounded a bus driver and a conductor, but missed a navy convoy that was their apparent target, the military said.

The attack came as government and rebel officials prepared to meet in the Norwegian capital Thursday and Friday to review the cease-fire, which appears increasingly tenuous due to violence that has killed at least 375 people since the beginning of April.

The mine blasts took place near a navy camp on a side road of a highway connecting Colombo with the country's only international airport. It damaged a state-run bus and wounded the driver and conductor, navy spokesman D.K.P. Dassanayake said. The bus had just come out of its depot and had no passengers.

"Their main target was our buses that take navy personnel to duty, but apparently they triggered the mines prematurely," Dassanayake said.

Dassanayake blamed the attack on Tiger rebels.

Anti-personnel mines, which fire hundreds of steel balls propelled by plastic explosives and can be detonated by remote control, are a preferred weapon of the insurgents. Until now, they have been used only in the country's northeast, where the Tigers control parts of the countryside.

The only attacks in or around Colombo attributed to the rebels since the 2002 cease-fire have been suicide bombings.

In April, a **female** rebel bomber targeted the country's top military general at a military base in Colombo. Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka escaped the attack with abdominal and chest injuries, but at least 12 other people died in the blast, prompting the government to retaliate against Tamil rebel bases and pushing Sri Lanka closer to a resumption of full-scale civil war.

Suspected Tamil rebels detonate mines near Sri Lanka capital, 2 wounded

In July of 2004, a suicide bomber targeted Douglas Devananda, a government minister and a moderate Tamil leader who opposes the rebels. The bomber could not reach Devananda and detonated explosives that killed four people.

The Oslo talks are aimed at reviewing the Norway-brokered cease-fire and ensure safety of European monitors who oversee the agreement. The monitors suspended sea patrols last month after the rebels attacked a government navy convoy that had a truce monitor on board.

Sixty members from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland have monitored Sri Lanka's cease-fire.

The **Tamil Tigers**, or Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, began fighting the government in 1983 to create a separate state for ethnic minority Tamils, accusing the majority Sinhalese of discrimination.

Load-Date: June 7, 2006

End of Document

Grief-stricken Sri Lankan refugees haunted by conflict

Agence France Presse -- English

August 8, 2006 Tuesday 5:06 AM GMT

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Length: 554 words

Byline: Jason Gutierrez

Dateline: TRINCOMALEE, Sri Lanka, Aug 8 2006

Body

Grief-stricken men, women and children trudge to a refugee camp after fleeing deadly fighting through ghost towns and past decomposing bodies, haunted by what they have seen.

They are escaping from Sri Lanka's troubled northeast and many do not talk, instead simply gesturing for food and water.

Stunned at the end of a dangerous trek as government forces and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels continue exchanging mortar and artillery fire behind them, the refugees are traumatised, with family and close friends dead.

"There is no one left. Everyone is gone," wails Waralakshmi, a middle-aged woman from a majority Tamil village that was hit by mortar fire.

She says her adult son went missing when shells landed in their village at the weekend and she was separated from her husband during a mad scramble to escape.

The portly woman, her arthritic feet swollen after days of walking through unevenly paved asphalt, has reached the town of Kantale in Sri Lanka's Trincomalee district and hopes to be reunited with her family.

"I know they are somewhere safe," she said, her voice choking with emotion. "It is a nightmare. There are so many missing and dead."

She shuddered as artillery fire erupted in the distance followed minutes later by a dull thud as a shell hit its target.

Pala Nayeem, 31, escaped the town of Muttur with his family by bus and says he counts himself lucky. A shell landed on his shop, destroying it but sparing him, his wife and children.

"I am lucky. But others are not. Our town is over. There is nothing to go back to. There are still dead people there," he said.

The mainly Muslim town of Muttur has been the focus of Tiger attacks since last week as the rebels try to cut off military supply links.

Grief-stricken Sri Lankan refugees haunted by conflict

It is also the scene of gruesome atrocities -- civilians believed still lying dead on the road randomly shot by rebels or who were trapped by heavy artillery fire.

The decomposing bodies of 17 mostly Tamil aid workers from the French group ACF were also recovered there, apparently executed at close range.

International aid workers and Norwegian peace monitors have been trying in vain to reach the area to assess the situation and deliver much-needed food and aid to around 5,000 civilians that remain.

But heavy artillery fire from both sides have forced them out, while the rebels have also planted explosives on the road that leads to Muttur from the south.

A report prepared by Sri Lanka's Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, the group that found the bodies of the ACF field workers, said Muttur was in ruins.

Villages leading up to Muttur were also transformed into "mini-ghost towns" it said, while two ambulances lie abandoned by the roadside.

Survivors in Muttur also pleaded with the agencies to help them negotiate with rebel forces to allow them to retrieve bodies from a nearby road and give them proper burial.

"Unconfirmed reports of bodies of fleeing Muslim youths segregated by the LTTE and having been shot are also lying in the same vicinity," the humanitarian agencies said.

Those who were left behind "feel that they are battered both by the government and the LTTE for strategic and political reasons."

The humanitarian agencies also urged government to thoroughly probe the deaths of the ACF staff, and allow safe access for others still to be recovered and hand them over to next of kin.

Load-Date: August 9, 2006

Sri Lanka's president orders probe on attacks on rebels in east

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

March 2, 2005, Wednesday 09184909:18:49 Central European Time

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Section: Politics

Length: 544 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Sri Lanka's President Chandrika Kumaratunga has ordered an investigation into a spate of attacks on Tamil rebels which has posed a threat to the ongoing ceasefire between the two sides under a Norwegian-backed peace process, officials said Wednesday. A president's office spokesman said that a Presidential Commission headed by a former High Court judge is to be appointed to carry out the investigation on the circumstances and motives of the attacks on the rebels in the eastern Batticaloa and Ampara districts. "The president has directed that investigations should be made as to whether any group or groups of terrorists or any other forces in the eastern province are involved in these attacks," the officer quoted a statement issued by the president's office as saying. The probe has come in the wake of a spate of attacks on the rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) in the eastern province. The latest was on Monday when unidentified men fired at a group of three rebels, including a ***female*** political leader for the eastern Batticaloa and Ampara districts, seriously injuring all of them. The ***female*** political leader, identified as Kuweni, and two others who were attacked in the eastern Ampara district have been airlifted to Colombo by a military helicopter for treatment. The attack came three weeks after the political wing leader for the Batticaloa and Ampara districts, E. Kaushalyan, was killed in the same region. Tamil rebels have complained about the attack to the Norwegian peace facilitators who are trying to broker a peace process between the Sri Lankan government and the rebels and resume the stalled peace talks between the two sides.

The pro-rebel website quoted rebel leader S.P. Thamilselvan as saying the continuing "killing and shooting of our senior political leaders is a very serious and disturbing matter". Thamilselvan has conveyed their protest through the Norwegian ambassador in Colombo to the Norwegian government. Meanwhile, police said they arrested a suspect in shooting of Kuweni and the two others on Monday. The pro-rebel Tamilnet website said that the suspect, identified as Pratheepan, was a member of a paramilitary group working with the army. The allegation has been denied by military spokesman Brigadier Daya Ratnayake. Tamil rebels suspect that a breakaway group of their movement whom they claim were working alongside with the military has been involved in the spate of attacks since March last year. The breakaway group is led by V. Muralitharan, alias Karuna, who was a former regional military wing leader in the east. The renewed attacks on the rebels has been a setback to the peace process and a threat to the ceasefire between the ***LTTE*** and the government which has been in effect since February 22, 2002. Norwegian peace envoy Erik Solheim recently made a week-long visit to Sri Lanka aimed at resuming the peace talks, which have been stalled since April 2003, but he was not successful. The peace process is aimed at finding a political settlement to the two-decade-old minority ethnic conflict which has claimed over 69,000 lives, mainly in the north and eastern parts of the country, where the rebels were fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils. dpa ad jh

Load-Date: March 3, 2005

Sri Lanka 's president orders probe on attacks on rebels in east

End of Document

Post-tsunami generosity failed to unify island: Sri Lankan vote illuminates divisions. Support for main presidential candidates reflects down-the-middle split

The Gazette (Montreal)

November 17, 2005 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A19

Length: 394 words

Byline: PETER FOSTER, London Daily Telegraph

Dateline: PERALIYA, Sri Lanka

Body

On one level it is a petty village squabble. But almost a year after the Boxing Day tsunami struck, killing 40,000 people, tiny Peraliya's problems could represent those of the whole country.

It was in Peraliya, on Sri Lanka's southern coast, that the tsunami swamped a passenger train killing 1,500 and destroying every house in its path. Some called the place "Sri Lanka's ground zero."

After the tsunami, however, came aid and sympathy that, although rebuilding houses, schools and clinics, left many villagers bickering among themselves.

Visitors to the site, where three carriages stand as a reminder of the disaster, are greeted by a group of women. Each has a story to tell and all are after one thing: money.

One, Sujatha, 51, is ready with a packet of documents and photographs showing the property and family members she lost, including a son.

Soon others are joining in the chorus of misery, all with desperate stories of financial loss and bereavement.

But as tourists put their hands in their pockets - and most do - another voice warns that such generosity may be misplaced.

Alappu Darunadasa, Peraliya's self-styled village chief, accuses the women of behaving "like beggars." The women call Alappu a cheat and liar, accusing him of embezzling part of a \$11,700 Peraliya trust fund to build it.

At the national level, Sri Lanka's politics and the post-tsunami aid effort are just as short of harmony. Today, the country votes in a presidential election billed as a choice between "peace" and "war," and divisions over aid and ethnic tensions between Sinhalese and Tamils return to the surface.

Post-tsunami generosity failed to unify island: Sri Lankan vote illuminates divisions. Support for main presidential candidates reflects down-the-middle split

The ceasefire signed in 2002 to end the 20-year civil war that claimed 65,000 lives looks increasingly fragile. Tamil factions are pursuing a campaign of violence and assassinations that culminated in August's killing of the foreign minister.

For all the world's generosity - the \$3.7 billion pledged in aid was enough to rebuild the damage to Sri Lanka twice over - the money appears to have heightened, not healed, political divisions.

Attempts to share aid with areas controlled by the separatist **Tamil Tigers** caused Sinhalese hard-liners to quit the coalition government.

The two main candidates for president reflect a split right down the middle, with polls suggesting that the winner could be decided by as few as 200,000 votes from an electorate of 13 million.

Graphic

Graphic/Diagram: (See Hard Copy For Graphic).

Load-Date: November 17, 2005

VOA NEWS: AMNESTY SPOTLIGHTS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN SRI LANKA, IRAN, CONGO

US Fed News

December 12, 2006 Tuesday 11:36 PM EST

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Length: 614 words

Byline: US Fed News

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

The Voice of America issued the following story:

By Catherine Maddux

In the latest edition of its magazine, the human rights group Amnesty International focuses attention on the status of human rights in three countries: Iran, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sri Lanka. VOA's Catherine Maddux reports.

Amnesty International devotes the cover of the winter edition of its magazine to the decades-long conflict in Sri Lanka and its impact on civilians. Other articles in international rights groups' magazine tell the story of rights abuses in Iran and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Amnesty says this year alone, more than 2,000 people - mostly civilians - have been killed in fighting between Sri Lankan government forces and ethnic Tamil Tiger rebels. Another 200,000 have been displaced.

Mona Dave from Amnesty's Government Relations office says the conflict in Sri Lanka has been marked by years of human rights violations committed by the government, Tamil Tiger rebels - known as the LTTE - and other armed groups.

She says civilians often take the brunt of the abuses.

"Neither the government forces nor the LTTE have taken adequate precautions to protect civilian lives," she said.

"Political killings and abductions have been on the rise and cases of disappearance have increased. And child recruitment continues to be a large problem in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, Amnesty International is concerned about reports of food shortages and other provisions in the north and east of Sri Lanka," she added.

Dave said Amnesty is calling on the Sri Lankan government to establish a strong international monitoring operation with powers to investigate abuses as they occur.

On Iran, Zahir Janmohamed, also from Amnesty's government relation's office, says the rhetoric between the United States and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad regarding his country's nuclear program has overshadowed human rights issues within Iran.

VOA NEWS: AMNESTY SPOTLIGHTS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN SRI LANKA , IRAN , CONGO

Janmohamed says abuses against minorities, women, and reform-minded politicians have worsened since last year's elections.

He said, "In a report launched on February 20th, 2006, Amnesty International reported an intensification of repression within the first six months after President Ahmadinejad took office, including the frequent use of the death penalty and torture, persecution of ethnic and religious minorities and limitation on freedom of speech."

Amnesty says in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, recent democratic elections - the first since independence 46 years ago - may have brought hope but severe human rights abuses continue, particularly against women.

Lynn Fredriksson is Amnesty's advocacy director for Africa.

She said, "Across the country, particularly in the eastern Congo, armed groups systematically used sexual violence against women, abduct and re-recruit child soldiers and attack and intimidate reporters and human rights defenders in urban and rural areas alike."

"In fact, without continuing support for the U.N. mission in the Congo, MONUC, armed violence against civilians would re-escalate," she continued.

She adds that Amnesty is waiting for Congo's newly elected president, Joseph Kabila, to show he will respect the human rights of his citizens.

Maddux report (Real Audio) - Download 421K:
http://www.voanews.com/mediaassets/english/2006_12/Audio/rm/maddux_amnesty_international_human_rights_abuses_12dec06.rm

Listen to Maddux report (Real Audio):
<http://www.voanews.com/english/figleaf/ramfilegenerate.cfm?filepath=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Evoanews%2Ecom%2Fmediaassets%2Fenglish%2F2006%5F12%2FAudio%2Frm%2Fmaddux%5Famnesty%5Finternational%5Fhuman%5Frights%5Fabuses%5F12dec06%2Erm>

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

Load-Date: December 13, 2006

First major British surf contest a joy in Sri Lanka

Cornish Guardian

July 1, 2004

default

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Section: Sport; Water; Surfing; Pg. 60

Length: 993 words

Body

The first major British surf contest to be held in foreign waters was declared a resounding success as the Sri Lankan Airlines Champion of Champions event closed in Arugam Bay. The top 32 male surfers and four of the best females on the British circuit travelled halfway around the world for the unique contest on Sri Lanka's east coast.

Arugam Bay is gaining a reputation as one of the best surf destinations in the world, thanks to the consistent quality waves, idyllic surroundings and warm turquoise water of the Indian Ocean.

Memories of the 10-hour flight and gruelling 12-hour bus ride it took to get there were soon washed away when the surfers were met by a long, right-hand wave peeling down the point of a palm fringed sandy beach.

The contest was organised by the Newquay-based British Professional Surfing Association (BPSA), in conjunction with Sri Lankan Airlines and Travel and Tours Anywhere Limited (TTAL).

The event was conceived two years ago, when the BPSA was approached by TTAL with the concept of putting on the contest in the Indian Ocean.

Following a couple of visits to assess the set-up, the team went ahead with the plans and invited the best placed surfers from last year's BPSA tour to compete in the exotic location.

Following the success of the inaugural event, the organisers and chief sponsors are looking at a five year deal that would make A-Bay - as Arugam Bay is referred to locally - an integral part of the British circuit.

Thanks to the quality of the surf, the competitors were able to perform at the top end of their abilities and provided some awe-inspiring entertainment on the waves.

Newquay's Spencer Hargraves ended up winning the main event, after he impressed the judges with a long tube ride and some powerful surfing during the final.

Spencer commented: "It's a fantastic location for a competition. It produced the best in most surfers, especially me. My best heat was the final.

"I live part of the year in the Gold Coast in Australia where there is a wave called Snapper Point. This is very similar to that. I rate this as one as the best waves in the world for a fun, hot-dogging wave." Spencer finished just ahead of South Africa's Llewellyn Whittaker, whose lip-busting backhand snaps and floaters had made him a firm favourite with spectators throughout the competition.

First major British surf contest a joy in Sri Lanka

The current BPSA champion Sam Lamiroy finished in fourth place, with Australian Micah Lester in third.

Newquay-based South African **female** surfer Kay Holt won the **women's** final ahead of Robyn Davies and Nicola Bunt from St Agnes and Sunshine Ash from Widemouth Bay.

One of the most exciting elements of the competition was seeing the Sri Lanka's rip on their home break.

Eleven local surfers made it in to the main heats of the competition and the top four competed in the Sri Lankan final on the last day. They showed a marked improvement during the week and wowed the crowd with some awesome tube rides during their own final.

The BPSA's Dave Reed commented: "We couldn't have asked for anything more. It has been a big success. It was much better than we could have expected twelve months ago. We're looking forward to organising the event again next year." I ARUGAM Bay is a relatively new destination on the surf travel map. Until a few years ago the east of the island was off limits due to civil unrest between Government forces and the **Tamil Tigers**.

Now tourism in the area is booming thanks to an agreement that has brought the first period of peace in more than two decades.

Visitors have started pouring in to experience the unspoiled palm fringed beaches, Buddhist temples, cultivated hillsides, abundant wildlife and the warm friendliness of the locals.

Sri Lanka received over 500,000 foreign visitors last year, which a spokesman for Sri Lankan Airlines referred to as "the dividends of peace".

The **Tamil Tigers** had been fighting for better rights and an independent homeland within Sri Lanka for the minority Tamil population, who are descended from Indian workers brought over to work on tea plantations during British rule.

Many of thousands of people were killed during the dispute and the country is only just picking itself up from the situation that stifled its development for many years.

There is still a heavy military presence in many parts of the island and the surfers found themselves protected by armed guards at times during their six-day stay in Arugam Bay.

Despite appearances, the Sri Lankan authorities are keen to point out that the area is now a safe travel destination.

During the contest, the Cornish Guardian spoke to Nimal Lewke, who is the head of the country's Special Task Force.

The military police chief said: "People were very scared to come here before, apart from a few people who were willing to take a chance.

"The area had been identified as a hostile area. It is our job to assess the threat and provide security. There is now total control." The officer spoke perfect English as he had lived in Aldershot for 18 months, where he was trained in counter terrorism by the British SAS.

"Tourism is very important here. If we develop the country and the economy, half the battle will be won. But we can not do this without the support of developed countries.

"The problem is when separatist forces receive help from outside Sri Lanka. The Tigers fought with resources from outside. But since 9/11 few countries have been willing to support this cause and the situation has improved." Although Mr Lewke is not a fan of surfing, he recognises the importance of sport in the development of the country. He is a former Sri Lankan boxing champion and rugby player, and is the coach of the national rugby team.

First major British surf contest a joy in Sri Lanka

He said: "In any country, sport can do a lot for the character of a person. It brings together people from all walks of life. In Sri Lanka we try to promote sport in a big way. People can learn through sports. It makes you a perfect man."

More in next week's Cornish Guardian.

Load-Date: July 2, 2004

End of Document

WORLD at 1700 GMT

Associated Press International

April 12, 2004 Monday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 1104 words

Body

HIGHLIGHTS:

New: IRAQ: Shiite Muslim cleric withdraws militiamen from police stations, government buildings

New: SAUDI-MILITANTS: Saudi forces clash with militants in Riyadh

New: US-BUSH-MIDEAST: Bush, Mubarak would welcome Israeli withdrawal from Gaza Strip

IRAQ: Shiite Muslim cleric withdraws militiamen from police stations and government buildings; kidnappings continue

FALLUJAH, Iraq - Under pressure from the U.S. military, a Shiite Muslim cleric withdraws his militiamen from police stations and government buildings in three key southern cities after taking control from coalition forces last week. A wave of kidnappings continues, with China reporting seven of its citizens were taken hostage. Three Czech journalists also were missing. An Iraqi official says 12 foreign hostages have been released, but does not elaborate. BC-ME-GEN--IRAQ. Has moved. By Abdul-Qader Saadi and Lourdes Navarro. AP Photos MM101-102, BAG111-112, CAESC104. AP Graphics IRAQ ROUNDUP, IRAQ HOSTAGES.

- BC-ME-GEN--IRAQ-HOSTAGES FREED. BAGHDAD, Iraq: Up to 12 foreign hostages have been released in Iraq, Iraqi official says. Has moved.

US-BUSH-MIDEAST: Bush, Mubarak say they would welcome Israeli withdrawal from Gaza Strip

CRAWFORD, Texas - U.S. President George W. Bush and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said Monday they would welcome an Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip as a positive step toward a Middle East peace agreement and a future Palestinian state. BC-NA-GEN--US-BUSH-MIDEAST. Developing. By Pete Yost.

NOVOKUZNETSK, Russia - The death toll in a weekend explosion that tore through a Siberian coal mine rises to 44, as investigators probe the cause of a sudden buildup of methane and rescue workers carry the victims to the surface in black plastic body bags. BC-EU-GEN--RUSSIA-MINE BLAST. Has moved. By Ivan Sekretarev.

SPAIN-BOMBINGS: Moroccan jailed on terrorism charges; three new suspects arrested

MADRID, Spain - A Moroccan described as having close ties to the alleged ringleader of the Madrid bombings is jailed on terrorism charges, and three new suspects have been arrested, court officials say. BC-EU-GEN--SPAIN-BOMBINGS. Has moved. By Maria Jesus Prades.

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia - Saudi security forces and wanted militants exchange gun fire in the capital, Riyadh, officials and eyewitnesses say. BC-ME-GEN--SAUDI-MILITANTS. Developing.

ISRAEL-PALESTINIANS: Sharon attends West Bank settlement celebration ahead of U.S. trip

WORLD at 1700 GMT

MAALEH ADUMIM, West Bank - Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon attends a celebration in the biggest West Bank settlement just hours before departing for Washington to seek U.S. approval for his "disengagement" plan that would see Israel withdrawing from the Gaza Strip but still retain its hold on large West Bank settlement blocs. BC-ME-GEN--ISRAEL-PALESTINIANS. Lead developing from Sharon speech at 1830 GMT. By Steve Weizman.

IRAN-NUCLEAR: U.N. nuclear inspectors in Iran to check if suspicious activities have stopped

TEHRAN, Iran - Five U.N. nuclear inspectors arrive to try to confirm whether Iran has stopped suspicious nuclear activities - including, as it has twice promised to do, suspending the building and assembling of centrifuges for uranium enrichment. BC-ME-GEN--IRAN-NUCLEAR. Has moved.

ARABS-IRAQ: Anger fueled by TV images from Iraq poses problem for leaders close to U.S.

CAIRO, Egypt - Anger fanned by up-to-the-minute satellite TV images of the violence in Iraq poses a challenge to Arab leaders who are close to the United States. BC-ME-GEN--ARABS-IRAQ. Has moved. By Donna Bryson.

SOUTH AFRICA-ELECTIONS: Smaller parties wrap up general election campaign

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa - South Africa's projected also-rans hold big, flashy rallies as campaigning wraps up for the third all-race general elections since apartheid ended a decade ago. The ruling African National Congress is confident of a sweeping victory in Wednesday's vote. BC-AF-POL--SOUTH AFRICA-ELECTIONS. Has moved. By Tom Cohen.

HAITI: International Red Cross chief says hospital security biggest challenge

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti - Along the fence of Canape Vert hospital are large coils of new barbed-wire. A guard checks for weapons. Hospital security is the biggest challenge for the International Committee for the Red Cross in Haiti, where patients have been shot or dragged away by armed gangs during and after the rebellion that ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. BC-CB-GEN--HAITI. Expected by 1800 GMT. By Peter Prengaman.

ASIA-IRAQ-KIDNAPPINGS: Beijing appeals for Chinese workers' release in Iraq; Tokyo appears less confident about Japanese captives

TOKYO - Beijing appeals for the release of seven Chinese workers seized in Iraq, while optimism fades that three Japanese hostages would be released quickly as Tokyo's top government spokesman suggests authorities are no longer confident of their safety. BC-AS-GEN--ASIA-IRAQ KIDNAPPINGS. Has moved. By Eric Talmadge.

-BC-AS-GEN--CHENEY-ASIA. TOKYO - U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney pledges his government's firm backing for Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's plans to double Japan's noncombat forces in Iraq despite the furor over the abduction of three of its citizens, U.S. officials say. Has moved. By Tom Raum.

SRI LANKA-REBEL CLASH: Military says breakaway faction of Tamil Tigers retreating

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka - A renegade group of the Tamil Tigers appears to be retreating from an offensive by the main rebel group, renewing hopes that the cease-fire in Sri Lanka's civil war would remain intact, military sources say. BC-AS-GEN--SRI LANKA-REBEL CLASH. Has moved. By Shimali Senanayake.

INDIA-BIRTHDAY STAMPEDE: Stampede for free saris at politician's birthday celebration kills 21

LUCKNOW, India - Thousands of people crowding into a small park for a politician's birthday celebration and to receive free saris cause a stampede Monday, killing 21 women and children. BC-AS-GEN--INDIA-BIRTHDAY STAMPEDE. Has moved. By Babu Lal Sharma.

NEW YORK - Investors give stocks a strong boost, reassured by earnings reports that at least temporarily offset concerns about Iraq and terrorism. BC-NA-FIN-MKT--US-STOCKS. Has moved. By Michael J. Martinez.

LOOKING AHEAD: On Wednesday, South Africa holds elections for national parliament and provincial assemblies, 10 years after apartheid's end; in Washington, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to discuss Gaza pullout plan with U.S. President George W. Bush.

YOUR QUERIES: The World Service editors in charge are Ian Phillips and Priscilla Cheung. Contact your local AP bureau or the AP International Desk in New York, by telephone: (1) 212-621-1650, fax: (1) 212-621-5449, e-mail: worldnews@ap.org.

WORLD at 1700 GMT

Load-Date: April 13, 2004

End of Document

Xinhua world news summary at 1530 GMT, May 19

Xinhua General News Service

May 19, 2007 Saturday 12:00 PM EST

Copyright 2007 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 604 words

Body

BUCHAREST -- Romania on Saturday morning began the referendum on the dismissal of suspended President Traian Basescu.

The referendum started at 8 a.m. (0600 GMT) and is to end at 8 p.m. (1800 GMT). More than 18 million citizens registered on the rolls are expected to vote on whether they still want Traian Basescu to be the head of state or not.

A total of 17,294 polling stations were set up throughout the country and 178 were opened abroad.

According to the referendum law, citizens taking part in the ballot will choose "yes" or "no" to the question written on the ballot paper: "Do you agree with the Romanian President's dismissal?" (Romania-Referendum-President)

JERUSALEM -- Israel was not planning to re-conquer the Gaza Strip but limited operations would continue in the coming days, Israeli Defense Minister Amir Peretz said Saturday.

"A large-scale land incursion into Gaza does not serve Israel's security," Peretz told the Israel Radio.

The defense minister rejected the option of striking infrastructure facilities in Gaza, such as electricity, fuel, water and communications, saying such an operation "would cause the entire Palestinian population to unite around Hamas."

However, Israel Defense Forces will continue to initiate operations in any scope that the situation would demand "to prevent any of our enemies from harming us," he added. (Israel-Palestinians-Gaza)

BAGHDAD -- Gunmen wearing military uniforms stormed a village near the Iranian border and killed 15 people on Saturday, a local official said.

"Some 50 militants in three trucks wearing Iraqi army uniform stormed the Hameed village, just south of the town of Mandily, some 110 km northeast of Baghdad, killing 15 people and wounding a woman," Jawad Kadhim al-Bazaz, deputy mayor of Mandily in Diyala province, told Xinhua by telephone.

Xinhua world news summary at 1530 GMT, May 19

Residents of the village said that the gunmen claimed they were on a legitimate mission and searched the houses for weapons and wanted insurgents, but they ordered the people to leave their houses and separated men from the women and children and then they shot at the men, Bazaz said. (Iraq-Gunmen-Killing)

- - - -

TEHRAN -- The next round of talks between Iran 's chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani and European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana over Iran's nuclear issues is likely to take place in Spain, local ILNA news agency reported on Saturday.

"The next round of talks will most likely be held in Spain," Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki was quoted as saying.

According to ILNA, Mottaki expressed hope that there will be new ideas in the forthcoming round of talks and they could provide a suitable path for each side to follow.

He said that the new talks will likely take place within the last ten days of May and the subject of the talks would be the continuance of the latest meeting between Larijani and Solana in Ankara late last month. (Iran-EU-Talks)

- - - -

COLOMBO -- Two Tamil Tiger rebels and one government soldier were killed in a clash in Sri Lanka's north, said the military on Saturday.

The Media Center for National Security said in a statement that seven members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were injured in the clash Friday evening in East Madhu, some 220 kilometers north of the capital Colombo.

Three government soldiers suffered minor injuries in the confrontation, which also resulted in the seizure of "a large quantity of weapons and military hardware" from the LTTE, said the statement. (Sri Lanka-Clash-Death)

Load-Date: May 20, 2007

VOA NEWS: SRI LANKAN VIOLENCE INTENSIFIES AHEAD OF PEACE MEDIATOR'S ARRIVAL

US Fed News

January 16, 2006 Monday 4:17 AM EST

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Length: 514 words

Byline: US Fed News

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

The Voice of America issued the following story:

By Patricia Nunan

Violence in Sri Lanka is intensifying in advance of the arrival of a European peace negotiator. The Tamil Tiger rebels on Sunday denied involvement in a grenade attack on a compound used by European cease-fire monitors, but attacks continue, and the two sides blame each other.

Analysts say the escalation of violence may be timed to the impending arrival of Erik Solheim, Norway's chief negotiator. He is due in Sri Lanka next week to take on the formidable task of salvaging a ceasefire that exists in little more than name.

Several dozen military personnel and a number of rebels have been killed in recent weeks.

Norwegian peace mediators brokered a 2002 ceasefire between the government and the Tamil Tiger rebels. But the peace process has been stalled for nearly three years. Recently, the two sides could not even agree where to meet to resume talks.

The rebels, whose full name is the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or **LTTE**, want the talks held in Norway's capital, Oslo. The government of President Mahinda Rajapakse says the talks should be held somewhere in Asia.

Iqbal Athas, an independent defense analyst in Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo, says the government appears more willing than the rebels to compromise on this point.

"There have been signs that Mahindra Rajapakse is willing to concede a venue? The question now remains whether the **LTTE** would accept such an offer," he said. "From the pronouncements they have been making in the past few days, they are very strong in their insistence that it should be in Oslo."

Athas says the increase in violence may in part be an attempt to influence Mr. Solheim, by showing in advance of the talks what they are capable of if the talks fail.

On Sunday, a blast destroyed a car belonging to Norwegian peace monitors, in a compound housing their office in the eastern city of Batticaloa. No injuries were reported, and the rebels have denied any involvement in the incident. The rebels are also suspected of hurling a grenade at a military checkpoint Monday, wounding one person.

VOA NEWS: SRI LANKAN VIOLENCE INTENSIFIES AHEAD OF PEACE MEDIATOR'S ARRIVAL

The rebels, meanwhile, have charged the government with killing three women living in a house whose owners are known for their pro-rebel sympathies - a charge the government denies.

Athas believes the recent spate of incidents is a sign that if the war does restart, the rebels are prepared for more than just traditional guerrilla operations.

"The last four years of the ceasefire has seen the rebels build up a much more stronger military machine, and this has also included the development of air capability, [and] the construction of a 1.4 kilometer runway in rebel-held Iranamaddu in the northern Vanni area," he said.

More than 65,000 people have died in more than two decades of fighting between the government, which is controlled by the ethnic Sinhalese majority, and the Tamil rebels. The rebels first demanded independence, and later, greater autonomy for areas in the north and east of the country where the ethnic Tamil minority is predominant.

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Load-Date: December 28, 2006

End of Document

Seven killed in Sri Lanka May Day mine attacks

Agence France Presse -- English

May 1, 2006 Monday 10:54 AM GMT

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Length: 576 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 1 2006

Body

Seven people were killed in blasts in Sri Lanka's northeast Monday after May Day rallies were cancelled over fear of attacks, officials said.

Five of the victims -- four civilians and a sailor -- died in the port town of Trincomalee, 260 kilometres (160 miles) northeast of Colombo, a military official there said by telephone.

Four sailors were also critically wounded and four civilians hurt in the blast when a mine, attached to a bicycle, was detonated as a navy foot patrol passed by, the military said.

"Two sailors approached the bicycle and were about to check it when the bomb went off," an official told AFP. The civilians were passing the scene at the time of the explosion, he added.

In a second attack, two civilians were killed and three wounded in the Weli Oya region, the military said.

A third mine also exploded in the island's north as an army truck passed but caused no casualties, they said.

The attacks came as the country marked international labour. But all parties called off their annual rallies -- which traditionally attract tens of thousands of people -- fearing bomb attacks by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

Plan Implementation Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said on Sunday the parties agreed to avoid large meetings after a **female** suicide bomber killed herself and 10 others inside army headquarters in Colombo last Tuesday.

"We felt that if there were large crowds gathering at public places, they could be targets for bomb attacks," said Rambukwella, the government spokesman on defence matters.

Some of the decorations and platforms set up for Monday's celebrations in Colombo were dismantled over the weekend. The then-president Ranasinghe Premadasa was assassinated by a suicide bomber at the 1993 May Day rally.

The military carried out air strikes against suspected Tiger positions in Trincomalee last week after the suicide bombing. The rebels said at least 15 civilians died in the government strikes.

Seven killed in Sri Lanka May Day mine attacks

Tamil Tiger rebels, who authorities suspect of carrying out the recent Colombo attack, are leading a drawn-out campaign for independence for minority Tamils in the island's northeast.

More than 60,000 people have died in the separatist conflict since 1972.

In a separate attack Monday, another five sailors were wounded when seaborne Tigers fired on a naval gunboat in waters off Trincomalee, military officials said.

"At least two big boats of the LTTE were involved and a Dvora gunboat (of the navy) was able to repulse the attack," an official in Trincomalee said.

A pro-rebel website earlier Monday reported the Tigers had moved an unspecified number of fighters along the island's northeastern coast to Trincomalee, in defiance of the ceasefire's ban on sea transport.

Tamilnet.com said the rebel boats came under attack from shore-based artillery, which the Sea Tigers countered.

The town of Trincomalee has been under night curfew since a massive bomb exploded at the local market on April 12, killing 17 people, mostly civilians. The government and many Sinhalese locals blamed the blast on Tiger rebels.

Two days after the attack, on the Sinhalese New Year, mobs retaliated by attacking the mainly Tamil village of Selvanayagampura adjoining Trincomalee, burning 46 houses and beating a woman to death.

Faced with the recent escalation of violence, peacebroker Norway has been trying to arrange a fresh round of talks amid mounting international pressure on both sides to return to the table.

aj/it/ejl/dro

Load-Date: May 2, 2006

Clashes With Sri Lankan Military Leave 17 Tamil Tigers Dead

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

November 13, 2007 Tuesday

National Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. A19; World Report

Length: 121 words

Byline: Reuters

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

COLOMBO -Sri Lankan troops killed 17 Tamil Tiger rebels in clashes in the north of the island, the military said. The engagements, in the northern Jaffna peninsula yesterday and northern district of Vavuniya and eastern district of Ampara on Sunday, were the latest in intensified fighting between government forces and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels. In Ampara, elite police commandos killed three members of a group of Tamil Tiger rebels who tried to lob a hand grenade at them, while the bodies of six **female** Tamil Tiger rebels were found in a search operation in Vavuniya after a government attack on a rebel bunker. About 5 ,000 people have been killed in fighting between the military and rebels since early 2006.

Graphic

Black & White Photo;; (See hardcopy for Photo Description) ;

Load-Date: November 14, 2007

Bomb explodes in a suburb of Sri Lanka's capital, killing 16

The Canadian Press(CP)

November 28, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 452 words

Byline: ERANGA JAYAWARDENA, AP

Body

NUGEGODA, Sri Lanka _ A bomb has exploded near the entrance to a popular department store in a busy suburb of the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo.

At least 16 people are reported dead and 20 injured.

The Sri Lankan military is blaming the attack on Tamil Tiger rebels.

The blast occurred just outside the four-storey No Limits store in Nugegoda as commuters crowded a nearby bus stop during the evening rush hour.

Earlier in the day, a **female** suicide bomber killed one person and wounded two others in an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate a government minister in his office in Colombo.

The separatist rebels have blamed the government for a recent escalation of fighting in the more than two-decade-old civil war that has killed an estimated 70,000 people.

Wednesday's powerful blast at the department store shattered windows and sent piles of crumbled concrete onto the bloodstained sidewalk, according to an Associated Press photographer at the scene.

Crumpled and charred parts of motorcycles and three-wheeled taxis were scattered nearby.

Police and firefighters searched the debris for victims.

Military officials said at least 16 people were killed and 20 others wounded. At a nearby hospital, residents came in search of missing relatives. One girl who suffered a broken arm in the attack sat with her mother as she received treatment.

"I was on the top floor of a shoe shop with my wife and child when I heard a big blast and there were glass pieces all over us," resident A. Jayasena told AP Television News.

"As we ran away, I saw the entrance of the No Limit shop burning, and in the midst of it, a schoolgirl on the floor trying to get up and then falling back again."

Jayasena and his daughter suffered minor injuries, while his wife was in the hospital being treated for more serious wounds, he said.

Bomb explodes in a suburb of Sri Lanka 's capital, killing 16

The bomb may have exploded when a security guard at the mall became suspicious about a parcel and tried to open it, a defence official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The earlier suicide bombing targeted the offices of Douglas Devananda, minister of social services and the leader of the Eelam People's Democratic party, an ethnic Tamil party considered a rival to the separatist **Tamil Tigers**, the military said.

Devananda, the target of repeated assassination attempts, was not injured in the attack, the military said.

The blast killed one of his staff members and injured two others, one critically, said Dr. Hector Weerasinghe, medical director of Colombo National Hospital. The bomber was also killed.

The rebel group has been fighting since 1983 to create a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils following decades of discrimination by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority.

Load-Date: November 29, 2007

End of Document

Aid agency withdraws from Sri Lanka after 15 Tamil workers killed in northeast

Associated Press International

August 8, 2006 Tuesday 12:09 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 497 words

Byline: By DILIP GANGULY, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

An international aid agency suspended its operations in Sri Lanka following the slaying of 15 Tamil aid workers in the northeast, where heavy renewed fighting threatens to shatter the country's already fragile cease-fire.

The aid workers 11 men and four women were doing post-tsunami relief for Action Against Hunger in the seaside town of Muttur.

The Paris-based agency, confirming the killing, said it was suspending its operations in Sri Lanka.

"The humanitarian values that are defended and promoted everywhere by Action Against Hunger ... have been scorned," the group's president, Denis Metzger, said in Paris. "This act undermines ... the very status of humanitarian work."

The government did not immediately comment on the slayings.

The aid workers' bodies were found late Friday, Action Against Hunger's local official Eric Fort said. The bodies had bullet wounds and most of them were laying face down, other officials at the agency said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Amnesty International urged the government to seek international assistance to ensure justice for the killings.

"While we welcome the government's statement that this investigation will be treated as a matter of high priority, we are concerned that other high-profile cases of killings and 'disappearances' remain unresolved months and even years after the crime," Natalie Hill, deputy Asia director at Amnesty International, said in a statement.

Separately, the head of anti-terrorism commando training, Upul Seneviratne, was killed by a bomb near the central city of Kandy, said Inspector General of Police Chandra Fernando, blaming the Tamil Tigers.

"By all accounts ... he was killed by the terrorists," Fernando said.

The latest violence started July 20 when the rebels in the northeast blocked water supplies to some 60,000 people in government-held villages. They said the move came in retaliation for the government reneging on a deal to boost water supplies in rebel areas.

Aid agency withdraws from Sri Lanka after 15 Tamil workers killed in northeast

The rebels said they beat back a military offensive early Monday and retained control of the sluice gates in Trincomalee district. Military spokesman, Maj. Upali Rajapakse, rebuffed that claim and said government forces were still fighting to recapture control of the water supply point Monday.

No casualty figure was immediately available.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, as the Tigers are formally known, have fought for more than two decades to carve out a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's 3.2 million minority Tamils in the north and east.

The 2002 cease-fire between the Tigers and the government put a temporary halt to the bloodshed, but the truce has nearly collapsed in recent months, and renewed fighting has killed more than 900 people half of them civilians since December, monitors say.

The water crisis dramatically escalated the violence, with six days of fighting around the northeastern port town of Trincomalee and the nearby town of Muttur.

Associated Press writer Krishan Francis contributed to this report.

Load-Date: August 8, 2006

Sri Lankan rights group condemns official's alleged threat to newspaper editor

Associated Press International

April 18, 2007 Wednesday 1:21 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 489 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A Sri Lankan media rights group condemned on Wednesday an alleged threat by the defense secretary against a newspaper editor, saying it endangered press freedoms.

"The Free Media Movement unequivocally deplores the threat made by the defense secretary and condemns what is tantamount to violence against the media," the group said in a statement.

According to the group, Defense Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse, in a telephone call on Tuesday to Champika Liyanaarachchi, editor of the independent Daily Mirror, "expressed his deep displeasure" over the newspaper's coverage of the ongoing conflict between government troops and Tamil Tiger rebels.

It said Rajapakse referred to two articles published on Tuesday and said they were critical of the government and the Karuna faction, a rebel group that broke away from the mainstream Tamil Tiger guerrillas in 2004.

"He had gone on to say that Champika should not be surprised if the Karuna faction turned violent against her. In such an eventuality, he had said that she should not expect any security from the government to protect her," the statement said.

Despite repeated denials from the government and the Karuna faction, many civilians, rights groups and aid agencies believe the two are collaborating in a common fight against the mainstream guerrillas.

Rajapakse, the brother of Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse, confirmed to The Associated Press that he phoned Liyanaarachchi to discuss some reports but denied threatening her.

"That's wrong, I never said that to her," he said of the alleged threats. "Of course I spoke to her and she is not a stranger to me and I consider her as a friend."

Liyanaarachchi told The Associated Press that she received a call from the defense secretary but declined to comment further.

Both the mainstream Tamil rebels and the Karuna faction, named after its military leader, have been accused of killing their rivals and critics. The government has also been accused of human rights abuses, including alleged involvement in the disappearances of numerous civilians.

Sri Lankan rights group condemns official's alleged threat to newspaper editor

"Given the volatile situation in the country, the FMM also fears that this threat sends a chilling message to the media community at large in Sri Lanka," the media rights group said. "This gross misconduct of a high-placed public official clearly demonstrates the challenges facing free media in Sri Lanka today."

Liyanaarachchi is the only **female** editor of a mainstream newspaper in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka's civil conflict flared in 1983. Despite a cease-fire agreement, fighting has escalated in recent months between government troops and **Tamil Tigers** in the volatile northeast.

Over 4,000 people, many of them civilians, are believed to have been killed since late 2005, taking the total death toll past 69,000.

In a recent interview with The Associated Press, Gotabhaya Rajapakse said the cease-fire had "no meaning" but had not been officially annulled to satisfy the international community.

Load-Date: April 19, 2007

End of Document

Sri Lanka Police Thwart Capital Attack

Associated Press Online

August 26, 2006 Saturday 11:55 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 465 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Police on Saturday found a large weapons cache hidden in a house on the outskirts of the Sri Lankan capital, and arrested 17 people suspected of planning a major attack.

The weapons haul came as the government carried out a third day of airstrikes on rebel positions in northern Jaffna Peninsula and six soldiers died in a mine blast blamed on separatist Tamil insurgents.

The peninsula has seen some of the fiercest fighting in years since the ***Tamil Tigers*** began a major push in mid-August to recapture the government-held region, which is dear to the ethnic minority.

Hundreds of people have been killed and tens of thousands have fled heavy shelling along the de facto border separating rebel and government-controlled territory in Jaffna.

A passenger ferry was expected Saturday to evacuate about 160 foreign passport holders who have been trapped by the fighting.

In the capital Colombo, police said they foiled a major attack on the city.

Officers from the police's elite special task force, acting on a tip, raided a house in Pamunugama, a coastal town close to the country's international airport on Saturday morning, seizing weapons and explosives, police said.

The haul included eight hand grenades, two roadside bombs, an assault rifle, ammunition and detonators, police officer S. A. Jeewahasta told The Associated Press.

The officer said 17 suspects, including two ***women***, were detained for questioning.

The suspects are all from Kokkadicholai, a village in the northeast controlled by Tamil Tiger insurgents, Jeewahasta said.

Most have been living on the outskirts of Colombo for nearly 15 years and were preparing a major attack, an investigating officer told the AP, requesting anonymity as he is not authorized to speak to the press. He declined to give further information.

Roadside bombs that fire hundreds of steel balls propelled by plastic explosives are among the rebels' preferred weapons.

Sri Lanka Police Thwart Capital Attack

On Tuesday, police discovered and defused a powerful bomb planted on a bicycle in a busy shopping district in Colombo.

The Tigers have been fighting for more than 20 years on behalf of the island nation's 3.2 million ethnic Tamils, who have suffered decades of discrimination by the majority Sinhalese.

A 2002 cease-fire brought a halt to large-scale hostilities, but the truce is endangered by the fighting in Jaffna as well as clashes in eastern Trincomalee over water supply.

The United Nations refugee agency estimates that over 200,000 people have fled their homes in the two regions, and the international community has urged the two sides to return to peace negotiations.

On Saturday, the rebels released a policeman they had held for over 11 months as a "goodwill gesture," European monitors overseeing the cease-fire said.

Associated Press writer Cassie Biggs contributed to this report.

Load-Date: August 27, 2006

Tamil Tiger Rebel-Held Enclave Captured

Associated Press Online

January 19, 2007 Friday 12:14 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 459 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

The Sri Lankan military said Friday that soldiers captured a strategic Tamil Tiger rebel enclave in the volatile east as intensified fighting forced thousands of Tamil civilians to flee from the area.

"Forces have gained complete control over Vaharai which was under the control of **Tamil Tigers**," said military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe. Vaharai is in the eastern Batticaloa district, the scene of heavy fighting between government troops and Tamil Tiger rebels over the last few weeks.

"Vaharai is one of the strategic point for both sides," said Samarasinghe, adding that insurgents were now firing artillery at soldiers from pockets in the area. "We will clear those pockets also."

There was no immediate comment from the rebels.

Separately, the military said Tamil civilians were fleeing from Vaharai.

A "large number of people" are arriving into government-controlled areas from Vaharai, Samarasinghe said. He did not give an exact number, but said there may be thousands of civilians.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said it was trying to verify the information.

"We have sent a team to that area and we are checking on that," ICRC spokesman Davide Vagnite said.

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

"Many **women** and children were fleeing on foot and bicycles," said TamilNet, adding that 200 tractors with fleeing civilians had reached Kajuwatte in Batticaloa, where there is an army camp.

Last week, the United Nations said 15,000 Tamil civilians had been trapped by fighting in Vaharai. The government has said about 20,000 civilians have moved into government-held areas to escape violence.

Also Friday, the army reported that it killed nine rebels in a separate clash in the east.

Tamil Tiger Rebel-Held Enclave Captured

Deputy Military spokesman Maj. Upali Rajapakse said the pre-emptive strike against the Tamils was conducted as they were preparing to attack army troops in the eastern district of Batticaloa. He said nine rebels were killed and 12 were wounded in the operation.

Clashes between the military and the Tamil rebels have recently been increasing in the Batticaloa region. At least four soldiers and 12 rebels died in fighting there Tuesday.

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

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 ethnic 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

End of Document

Police thwart major attack on Sri Lankan capital, explosion kills 6 in the north

The Associated Press

August 26, 2006 Saturday 11:50 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 465 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Police on Saturday found a large weapons cache hidden in a house on the outskirts of the Sri Lankan capital, and arrested 17 people suspected of planning a major attack.

The weapons haul came as the government carried out a third day of airstrikes on rebel positions in northern Jaffna Peninsula and six soldiers died in a mine blast blamed on separatist Tamil insurgents.

The peninsula has seen some of the fiercest fighting in years since the **Tamil Tigers** began a major push in mid-August to recapture the government-held region, which is dear to the ethnic minority.

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Police thwart major attack on Sri Lankan capital, explosion kills 6 in the north

Roadside bombs that fire hundreds of steel balls propelled by plastic explosives are among the rebels' preferred weapons.

On Tuesday, police discovered and defused a powerful bomb planted on a bicycle in a busy shopping district in Colombo.

The Tigers have been fighting for more than 20 years on behalf of the island nation's 3.2 million ethnic Tamils, who have suffered decades of discrimination by the majority Sinhalese.

A 2002 cease-fire brought a halt to large-scale hostilities, but the truce is endangered by the fighting in Jaffna as well as clashes in eastern Trincomalee over water supply.

The United Nations refugee agency estimates that over 200,000 people have fled their homes in the two regions, and the international community has urged the two sides to return to peace negotiations.

On Saturday, the rebels released a policeman they had held for over 11 months as a "goodwill gesture," European monitors overseeing the cease-fire said.

Associated Press writer Cassie Biggs contributed to this report.

Load-Date: August 27, 2006

Sri Lankan President and ethnic Tamil rebels waits for Norway mediator; SRI LANKA: Norway in No Hurry to Resume Mediation

IPS (Latin America)

July 5, 2007 Thursday

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Length: 920 words

Byline: Amantha Perera

Body

Norwegian embassy spokesman Erik Nurenberg told IPS on Tuesday that there were no immediate plans for a visit to the Tamil-dominated north and east of the island by special peace envoy Johann Hansen Bauer as reported. "There are no such plans, all the reports are speculation," Nurenberg said.

Diplomatic sources indicated that a visit would be possible in the coming months if ground conditions improve, but the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) said they would like to see efforts at confidence building on the part of the government first. "The government needs to first win the confidence of the north and east populations before there can be any idea of talks," Tiger military spokesman Rasiah Illanthariyan said.

Several attempts at reviving dialogue by the Norwegians and others, including Japan, have failed with Norwegian ambassador to Colombo Hans Bratskkar having to cancel two planned trips to the Tiger political headquarters of Kilinochchi because the government failed to give security guarantees.

The latest initiative by the government, to get the Norwegians back into the picture, follows months of fighting that has left hundreds of people dead and pushed the country back to the worst days of the ethnic conflict.

Heavily armed soldiers patrol the cities and checkpoints have been established at all entry points to the capital Colombo. The country's sole international airport recommenced night operations at the beginning of July after a two-month suspension due to Tiger air raids.

Violence has been on the rise since December 2005 and, according to the United Nations Human Rights Council, three million citizens have been affected, 500,000 forced out of their homes and over 4,000 killed. The toll has added to the over 65,000 people killed in more than two decades of sectarian strife since the early 1980s.

A ceasefire brokered by Norway in February 2002 lies in tatters and the two sides have not held any talks since late 2003. Talks scheduled for August last year collapsed even before the two sides walked into the conference room in Geneva.

Though, over the last fortnight, there has been a reduction in the fighting, there is no guarantee that it will not suddenly escalate. "There is no environment for talks at the moment," said Illanthariyan.

According to the Scandinavian Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM), tension prevailed in the both the north and east. "Daily artillery fire of varying degrees towards the Poonaryn area has been observed throughout the week," the SLMM's latest situation report said. In one sea battle mid-June, the government reported that its forces had killed 40 **LTTE** cadres and captured a large Sea Tiger vessel off the coast of Jaffna.

Sri Lankan President and ethnic Tamil rebels waits for Norway mediator SRI LANKA : Norway in No Hurry to Resume Mediation

Violence has been on the rise since August when government forces and **LTTE** cadres began engaging in frontal clashes. Since Aug. 11, northern Jaffna peninsula has been cut off by land due to the closure of the A9 highway.

Given this background, the invitation extended by the government to the Norwegians to visit the Tiger political headquarters seems out of tune to many observers. "It is out of character with the status quo, there does not seem to be an attitudinal change on either side," Jehan Perera, executive director of the National Peace Council (NPC), a Colombo-based independent peace group said. "The ground situation does not suggest any changes, it has all been verbal."

Others feel that the armed clashes need to halt for any success at talks. "There should definitely be a cessation of hostilities if there is to be any improvement on the ground and any hope for dialogue to move forward," SLMM spokesman Tofinnur Omrasson said. He, however, admitted that it was easier said than done. "Reality may be different, but we can still hope."

The Tigers said that they felt the government's latest overtures were influenced by international pressure. At a donor co-chair meeting, last week, attended by the U.S., European Union, Japan and Norway, in Oslo, a decision had been reached to bring pressure on the government to allow the Norwegians to visit the Tigers.

Sri Lanka also featured prominently in the recent U.N. Security Council meeting on the protection of civilians in armed conflict where delegates urged more assertive action from the Council. "Men, **women** and children continued to be the deliberate targets of warring parties and terrorist entities in Darfur, Afghanistan, northern Uganda, Lebanon, Somalia and Sri Lanka, among other areas."

A recent report by the Brussels-based think tank International Crisis Group, called the international response to Sri Lanka's abysmal human rights record as "disjointed, lacklustre and tardy";

The Tigers say it pressure of this type that is pushing the government rather than a genuine desire to end the violence. "The government says it is ready for talks due to the pressure exerted by the international community. It is not doing it on its own will. Everyone knows what the government did the last time the two parties met in Geneva," Illanthariyan said.

At the NPC, Perera said words alone were insufficient to break the impasse, and the onus lay with the government to make a change. "A cessation of all ongoing hostilities is a must. The government should try to bring forward new proposals at power sharing that would be more accommodative. At the moment it looks as if everything is rhetoric, but I hope it changes soon." © 2007 NoticiasFinancieras - IPS - All rights reserved

Load-Date: July 5, 2007

Mine blast inside Sri Lanka wildlife park kills seven

Agence France Presse -- English

May 28, 2006 Sunday 2:41 PM GMT

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Length: 202 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 28 2006

Body

Sri Lankan authorities Sunday found the mutilated bodies of seven local tourists believed to have been killed by an explosion in a wildlife sanctuary near a conflict zone, police said.

Five of the bodies could be identified -- two women and three men -- while the remains of two others were mutilated beyond recognition after the blast at the Wilpattu national park, military spokesman Prasad Samarasinghe said.

"There were three simultaneous explosions that left only the chassis of their four-wheel drive vehicle," Samarasinghe said adding that officials blamed the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for the killing.

"The motive may have been to scare off tourists from the area or they may have thought security personnel were travelling in the vehicle."

The explosion was reported Saturday, but the authorities could not reach the area until Sunday evening, Samarasinghe said.

The Wilpattu park, which is noted for leopards and elephants, is within an area under government control, south of the Mannar district which is partly under Tamil rebel control.

There has been an upsurge since December in violence between the rebels and government forces in the north and east despite a four-year ceasefire.

Load-Date: May 29, 2006

Sri Lanka's military captures strategic Tamil Tiger rebel-held enclave

The Associated Press

January 19, 2007 Friday 11:59 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 459 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

The Sri Lankan military said Friday that soldiers captured a strategic Tamil Tiger rebel enclave in the volatile east as intensified fighting forced thousands of Tamil civilians to flee from the area.

"Forces have gained complete control over Vaharai which was under the control of ***Tamil Tigers***," said military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe. Vaharai is in the eastern Batticaloa district, the scene of heavy fighting between government troops and Tamil Tiger rebels over the last few weeks.

"Vaharai is one of the strategic point for both sides," said Samarasinghe, adding that insurgents were now firing artillery at soldiers from pockets in the area. "We will clear those pockets also."

There was no immediate comment from the rebels.

Separately, the military said Tamil civilians were fleeing from Vaharai.

A "large number of people" are arriving into government-controlled areas from Vaharai, Samarasinghe said. He did not give an exact number, but said there may be thousands of civilians.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said it was trying to verify the information.

"We have sent a team to that area and we are checking on that," ICRC spokesman Davide Vagnite said.

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

"Many ***women*** and children were fleeing on foot and bicycles," said TamilNet, adding that 200 tractors with fleeing civilians had reached Kajuwatte in Batticaloa, where there is an army camp.

Last week, the United Nations said 15,000 Tamil civilians had been trapped by fighting in Vaharai. The government has said about 20,000 civilians have moved into government-held areas to escape violence.

Also Friday, the army reported that it killed nine rebels in a separate clash in the east.

Sri Lanka 's military captures strategic Tamil Tiger rebel-held enclave

Deputy Military spokesman Maj. Upali Rajapakse said the pre-emptive strike against the Tamils was conducted as they were preparing to attack army troops in the eastern district of Batticaloa. He said nine rebels were killed and 12 were wounded in the operation.

Clashes between the military and the Tamil rebels have recently been increasing in the Batticaloa region. At least four soldiers and 12 rebels died in fighting there Tuesday.

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

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 ethnic 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

End of Document

Suspected Tamil rebels detonate mine in Colombo suburb, 2 wounded

Associated Press International

June 6, 2006 Tuesday 3:02 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 446 words

Byline: By DILIP GANGULY, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels triggered an anti-personnel mine outside Sri Lanka's capital early Tuesday, wounding a bus driver and a conductor but missing a navy convoy that was their apparent target, the military said.

The attack came as government and rebel officials prepared to meet in the Norwegian capital Thursday and Friday to review the country's 2002 cease-fire, which appears increasingly tenuous due to violence that has killed at least 375 people since the beginning of April.

The mine blast took place near a navy camp on a side road of a highway connecting Colombo with the country's only international airport. It damaged a state-run bus and wounded the driver and conductor, navy spokesman D.K.P. Dassanayake said. The bus had just come out of its depot and had no passengers.

"Their main target was our buses that take navy personnel to duty, but apparently they triggered the mine prematurely," Dassanayake said.

Dassanayake blamed the attack on Tiger rebels. Anti-personnel mines, which fire hundreds of steel balls propelled by plastic explosives and can be detonated by remote control, are a preferred weapon of the insurgents.

The blast site was about 200 meters (660 feet) from a navy camp, Dassanayake said, but he declined to give details on how many sailors were staying there.

Tuesday's attack was the first near Colombo since an abortive attempt by a **female** rebel bomber to kill the country's top military general at a military base on April 25.

Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka escaped the attack with abdominal and chest injuries, but at least 12 other people died in the blast, which sparked government retaliation against the Tamil rebels, shaking a four-year-old cease-fire and pushing Sri Lanka closer to a resumption of full-scale civil war.

The Oslo talks are aimed at reviewing the Norway-brokered cease-fire and ensure safety of European monitors who oversee the agreement. The monitors suspended sea patrols last month after the rebels attacked a government navy convoy that had a truce monitor on board.

Seventeen Sri Lankan sailors were killed in the assault off the northern Jaffna peninsula, but the main ship ferrying 710 Sri Lankan sailors escaped.

Suspected Tamil rebels detonate mine in Colombo suburb, 2 wounded

The rebels later warned the monitors not to board navy vessels, saying they couldn't guarantee their security.

Sixty members from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland have monitored Sri Lanka's cease-fire since 2002.

The **Tamil Tigers**, or Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, began fighting the government in 1983 to create a separate state for ethnic minority Tamils, accusing the majority Sinhalese of discrimination.

More than 65,000 people were killed in the conflict before the cease-fire was signed.

Load-Date: June 6, 2006

End of Document

**Fragile 2-year ceasefire in Sri Lanka ends after voters reject government:
Army told to stay away from conflict. Nine killed as heavy fighting erupts
between Tamil Tiger rebel factions**

The Gazette (Montreal, Quebec)

April 10, 2004 Saturday Final Edition

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Section: News; Pg. A27

Length: 411 words

Byline: DILIP GANGULY

Dateline: PANICHACHANKANI, Sri Lanka

Body

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 ceasefire.

It was the worst fighting since the 2002 truce halted the country's 19-year civil war between minority Tamil rebels and government forces, controlled by the ethnic-Sinhalese majority.

The fighting also came a week after voters rejected the government that negotiated the ceasefire in favour of a parliament dominated by legislators who support Sri Lanka's hard-line president.

AP

Sri Lankan army troops have been told to stay out of the rebel conflict, but the fighting was taking place within a few kilometres of army camps.

Soldiers listened by radios to news of the factional guerrilla fighting along the Vergual River, 225 kilometres east of the capital, Colombo.

After hours of mortar and machine-gun fire, as many as 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 defence 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 manoeuvre was likely.

The clash was between members of the main Tamil Tiger rebel group with an estimated 9,000 fighters based in the north and a 6,000-strong eastern faction, led by a charismatic commander Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan, known as Karuna.

Open warfare between the two sides had been feared since Karuna announced their schism on March 3 in a dispute over regional rivalry and political strategy.

Fragile 2-year ceasefire in Sri Lanka ends after voters reject government: Army told to stay away from conflict.
Nine killed as heavy fighting erupts between Ta....

The fighters led by Kumar, one of Karuna's 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.

For two decades the **Tamil Tigers** fought government troops in a bloody separatist conflict that claimed an estimated 65,000 lives.

Graphic

Photo: JULIA DRAPKIN, AP; Breakaway faction of the Tamil Tiger rebels retreats yesterday from its position at the Verugal Ferry in the rebel-controlled Tamil Tiger area at Palinchankaly, in eastern Sri Lanka.

Load-Date: April 10, 2004

French charity urges probe into Sri Lanka massacre

Agence France Presse -- English

March 14, 2007 Wednesday 11:59 AM GMT

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Length: 217 words

Dateline: PARIS, March 14 2007

Body

French charity Action Against Hunger (ACF) on Wednesday urged the Sri Lankan authorities to step up their investigation into the massacre of 17 of its workers last August.

"ACF urges the Sri Lankan authorities, the CID (Criminal Investigation Department) and Australian observers to carry out ballistics tests as soon as possible," it said in a statement.

"This ballistic investigation is essential to finding a credible indication of responsibility in the massacre of our 17 colleagues," ACF said.

Although Australian forensic expertise is available to Sri Lankan police for the probe, this help has not yet been sought in carrying out the ballistics tests crucial to the case, ACF pointed out.

It stressed that the magistrate carrying out the preliminary inquest into the killings had called in December for such tests to be carried out.

Seventeen ACF workers were killed on August 4 last year in the northeastern coastal town of Muttur, during a period of intense fighting between government forces and the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (**LTTE**).

The 13 men and four **women**, aged between 23 and 54, worked mostly as engineers on water sanitation and farm projects for the charity.

Nordic truce monitors have blamed the killings on government forces, but the government has denied any role in the massacre.

Load-Date: March 15, 2007

Sri Lanka says sorry for evicting Tamils

Agence France Presse -- English

June 10, 2007 Sunday 3:11 PM GMT

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Length: 592 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, June 10 2007

Body

Sri Lanka's prime minister on Sunday apologised to ethnic minority Tamils for evicting them from the capital, promising there would be no repeat of the controversial operation.

"It was a big mistake," Ratnasiri Wickremanayake told reporters here, referring to Thursday's expulsion of hundreds of Tamils at gunpoint from low-budget Colombo hostels.

Police had justified the operation by arguing that Tamil Tiger rebels had been using the hostels to plan attacks, but the government has come in for fierce criticism from foreign governments and human rights groups.

"I express regret and apologise to the Tamil community on behalf of the government," Wickremanayake said, rejecting claims by the country's police chief Victor Perera that the Tamils had left Colombo of their own accord.

The premier discounted the defence offered by the police inspector general and said the government position was that the police and military action was "wrong" and that minority Tamils had a right to live anywhere they pleased.

"They (the police) asked people whether they want to go back to their village or not only after bussing them (256 kilometres, 160 miles north) to Vavuniya," Wickremanayake said.

"We want to tell the Tamil people that everyone has a right to live anywhere," he said, adding that the government was considering compensation for 376 men, women and children who were evicted.

Some of these people have since returned to the capital in buses provided again by the state after the Supreme Court ordered an immediate halt to the evictions, which were described as "ethnic cleansing" by rights groups.

The premier declined to name the individual in the government who had ordered the unprecedented move, but said an investigation was under way and that officials held culpable will be disciplined.

"This is not the way to deal with such a problem," he said of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) operatives. "We have legal avenues to deal with wrongdoers."

Perera was earlier Sunday quoted as saying that the Tamils had volunteered to quit the city of 650,000 people.

Sri Lanka says sorry for evicting Tamils

"He (the police chief) may have said it in the morning but I am now telling you (in the afternoon) what the government position is. It is final. We accept what happened was wrong," the prime minister said.

"That is why I am expressing regret and apologising on behalf of the government."

The premier acknowledged that people in the capital face inconvenience as a result of regular checks and road blocks, but said such measures were needed to prevent Tamil Tiger bomb attacks.

He also said the authorities had information about a further truck bomb following the discovery last week of more than 1,000 kilograms (2,200 pounds) of plastic explosives hidden in a truck.

"The explosives in that truck were enough to blow up half of Colombo," Wickremanayake said. "We are told that there is a second truck with the same quantity of explosives."

He declined to give further details

The rebel **LTTE** has been held responsible for a spate of bomb attacks in the capital and elsewhere during their drawn-out separatist campaign.

Meanwhile, the authorities were Sunday investigating the killing of nine people whose decomposed bodies were found 60 kilometres (37 miles) north of the capital on Friday.

Police said they were yet to identify the victims, who had been killed execution-style with their hands tied behind their back, blindfolded and shot in the head.

Human rights groups have accused the security forces and pro-government militia of extra-judicial killings and abductions in the past 15 months.

Load-Date: June 11, 2007

Schedule for Thursday, July 17, 1000 GMT

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

July 17, 2003, Thursday 09:48 Central European Time

Copyright 2003 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Length: 636 words

Body

----- All times GMT/ If you have any questions about the news schedule or need items repeated please call dpa:

(0600-2000 GMT) CorkTel: 00353-21-422-3504 Fax: 422-3519 (2000-0600 GMT) WashingtonTel: 001-202-662-1260Fax: 662-1270 -----

AFRICA:

Accra - Mediators in Ghana work on interim rule for Liberia (Liberia-Talks)

AMERICAS:

Washington - German Foreign Minister Fischer meets Vice President Cheney (Germany-US)

- British P.M. Blair meets President Bush (Britain-US) Joint press briefing planned for 2200

ASIA:

Seoul - Machine-gun fire exchanged between North and South Korean troops in DMZ (SouthKorea-Conflict, Roundup moved)

Manila - Philippine president threatens to sack police officials (Philippines-Corruption, moved)

Colombo - Norwegian envoy carries peace proposal to **Tamil Tigers** (SriLanka-Peace, moving)

Kabul - Canada takes command of multinational brigade from Germany (Afghanistan-Conflict, Roundup moved)

MIDEAST:

Jerusalem- Developments in the Middle East (Mideast-Conflict)

Baghdad- Situation in Iraq (Iraq-Conflict)

EUROPE:

London - German Finance Minister Eichel meets with British Chancellor of the Exchequer Brown (Britain-Germany-Finance)

Frankfurt - ECB monthly report calls for European government reforms (Europe-ECB, moving)

Schedule for Thursday, July 17, 1000 GMT

Berlin - German and Polish justice ministers Zypries and Kurczuk sign German-Polish legal aid treaty (Germany-Poland)

SPORT MOVED:

Narbonne, - FEATURE: "Cold-blooded" Armstrong must make his move France By Anton Double (545 words/Cycling-Tour)

Silverstone, - PREVIEW: More Schumacher comparisons loom at British England Grand Prix. By Andrea Wimmer (545 words/Motorsport-F1)

SPORT PLANNED:

CYCLING Paris - 11th stage of Tour de France 153,5km Narbonne - Toulouse

(Cycling-Tour)

TENNIS Stuttgart - Stuttgart-ATP Tournament (Tennis-ATP)

SWIMMING Barcelona - World Championships (Swim-Worlds)

FOOTBALL Los Angeles - Draw for Women's World Cup (Football-WomensWCup)

MOTORSPORT Silverstone, - British Grand Prix at Silverstone - Preview England (Motorsport-F1)

BACKGROUNDERS AND BYLINERS MOVED:

Washington - ANALYSIS: Lack of international support for war haunts U.S. By Mike McCarthy (810 words/Iraq-Conflict-US)

Washington - FEATURE: Iraq turning into political liability for Bush.
By Frank Zeller (740 words/US-Iraq)

Washington - FEATURE: The computer helper: Recognizing hardware damage. By Jay Dougherty (700 words/US-Computers)

Havana - FEATURE: Cuba's Catholic Church shies away from large political roll. By Klaus Blume (610 words/Cuba-Church)

Wylatowo, - FEATURE: Baffling crop circles make repeat Poland performance in Polish village (1,000 words/Poland-CropCircles)

Rokkasho, - FEATURE: Japan seeks go-ahead for nuclear fusion test Japan reactor. By Lars Nicolaysen (910 words/Japan-Nuclear)

dpa-SPECIALS: Sydney - Office porn: ignorance no excuse, Australian court rules (205 words/dpa-SPECIAL-Lifestyle)

Wellington - The cinema not a place to sit still in, doctors warn (630 words/dpa-SPECIAL-Lifestyle)

Luebeck, - Art on the beach as sand sculptors show their skill Germany (360 words/dpa-SPECIAL-Lifestyle) San Francisco - The gold-rush tailor behind the phenomenon of Levi jeans (580 words/dpa-SPECIAL-Lifestyle) Duesseldorf, - Man fined after defying in-flight ban on cell phone Germany use (100 words/dpa-SPECIAL-Lifestyle)

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Schedule for Thursday, July 17, 1000 GMT

Load-Date: July 17, 2003

End of Document

Sri Lanka exhumes bodies of French charity workers

Agence France Presse -- English

October 18, 2006 Wednesday 10:29 AM GMT

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Length: 207 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Oct 18 2006

Body

The bodies of 15 aid workers massacred in Sri Lanka were exhumed in the northeastern town of Trincomalee on Wednesday in a fresh bid to determine who killed them, police said.

The victims were among 17 mostly Tamil workers with the Paris-based Action Against Hunger (ACF) who were gunned down August 4 at their offices in the war-torn eastern town of Muttur.

The bodies of two of the dead have already been exhumed and sent to Colombo. The remaining bodies were retrieved Wednesday in the presence of a judge and forensic experts.

Australian experts are due to be present at fresh autopsies, principally as observers and advisers.

The killings came during a period of heavy fighting between the government and the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE).

The 13 men and four women, aged between 23 and 54, worked mostly as engineers on water sanitation and farm projects for the charity.

Nordic truce monitors have blamed the killings -- the worst attack on aid workers since the bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad in August 2003 -- on government forces.

The government has denied any role in the massacre, which forced ACF to drastically scale down its operations in Sri Lanka amid an upsurge in violence that continues to plague the region.

Load-Date: October 19, 2006

Suspected Tamil Tigers kill 7 ethnic Sinhalese villagers in Sri Lanka, military says

Associated Press International

April 12, 2007 Thursday 12:46 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 93 words

Byline: By KRISHAN FRANCIS, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels stormed a village in northern Sri Lanka Thursday and fatally shot seven ethnic Sinhalese residents who were preparing to celebrate a local festival, the military said.

The massacre took place in Avaranthalawa village in northern Vavuniya district, an official at the national security media center said.

Six of those killed were **women** over 50 years of age, the official said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to make media comments.

No further details were available and the rebels could not be reached for comment.

Load-Date: April 13, 2007

More Sri Lankan refugees move to south India

Xinhua General News Service

March 3, 2007 Saturday 7:00 AM EST

Copyright 2007 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Science & Technology

Length: 214 words

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

Sri Lankan Tamils affected by the conflict in the north and east moving to the neighboring south India is on the increase, Sri Lankan Naval authorities said Saturday.

Some 327 residents from Mannar and Talaimannar arrived at the southern Indian city of Rameshwaram traveling by fishing boats on Friday, officials said. Among them are 39 children and 121 women.

Naval authorities said the Indian coastal guard had informed both the Sri Lankan Navy and the Sri Lankan government on the arrival of Sri Lankan refugees in Rameshwaram.

The escalation of the armed conflict between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels and government troops in the north and east has caused a large influx of Tamil civilian refugees across the waters to the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, which is home to some 65 million Tamils.

According to the UN refugee agency UNHCR, some 128,000 Sri Lankan refugees are currently in 122 camps in south India.

The UN-assisted program to repatriate and resettle them in their place of origin has been hampered by the escalation of conflict since December 2005.

Nearly 4,000 people have been killed in the violence seriously jeopardizing the Norwegian-backed effort to bring peace to the island's north and east.

Load-Date: March 4, 2007

Sri Lankan aid workers found murdered

The Independent (London)

August 8, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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The INDEPENDENT

Section: NEWS; Pg. 26

Length: 597 words

Byline: By Justin Huggler Asia Correspondent

Body

The international aid community was deep in shock yesterday as details emerged from Sri Lanka of the killings of 15 aid workers involved in tsunami relief.

The bodies of the 11 men and four women were found lying face down in their office in the town of Muttur, the centre of fighting between government forces and the Tamil Tiger rebels.

For Sri Lanka, which is still struggling to recover from the 2004 tsunami, the deaths of the 15 aid workers are a reminder of how savage the civil war, which killed 64,000 people over two decades, can be.

Muttur has been reduced to a ghost town by the fighting. Many buildings are in ruins, and most of the population has fled. The 15 aid workers, all local Tamil civilians working for the French NGO Action Contre la Faim (ACF), were wearing their ACF T-shirts, which clearly indicated that they were humanitarian relief workers. All had bullet wounds.

"The humanitarian values that are defended and promoted everywhere by ACF... have been scorned," Denis Metzger, the group's president, said in Paris. "Beyond its horror, this act undermines the status of humanitarian work."

The Tigers and the government blamed each other for the killings. Unless witnesses are found, it is impossible to say who was really behind them.

However, the thousands of homeless tsunami survivors who still depend on international aid organisations for their daily lives will now fear that the NGOs may start pulling out for their own safety. The Norwegian chief mediator in the Sri Lankan peace process, Jon Hanssen-Bauer, who is trying to persuade both sides to restore the 2002 ceasefire, left the Tiger headquarters in Kilinochchi yesterday without securing any progress.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been fighting for more than two decades for a separate homeland for Tamils. The current fighting began when government forces launched a ground attack on Tiger-held territory just over a week ago.

Sri Lankan aid workers found murdered

The government has been at pains to insist its sole objective is to reopen a vital water supply that the Tigers have blocked. But the water issue is looking increasingly like an excuse, after European ceasefire monitors confirmed the Tigers offered to restore the supply on Sunday.

The head of the European monitors, the retired Swedish major-general Ulf Henricsson, was on his way to reopen the water supply with a Tiger commander when government artillery suddenly resumed shelling. "It seems some people want war rather than water," Maj-Gen Henricsson said.

"They have the information that the LTTE has made this offer," Tommy Lekenmyr, chief of staff for the monitors, said. "It is quite obvious they are not interested in water."

While the area the government attacked is a small Tiger-held enclave away from its main territory, it is the site of a lot of the Tigers' military resources. During several days of air strikes before the ground attack, a Tiger airstrip was hit.

The government offensive came after months of attacks on its forces, including the assassination of a general, which analysts agree were attempts by the Tigers to goad the government to war. Those attacks continued yesterday with the death of the head of a police commando unit in a suspected Tiger bomb attack.

Muttur lies just across the bay from the strategic naval port of Trincomalee, the most valuable prize in the war. But it is clear the government offensive went wrong. Fighting was meant to be centred on the Tiger-held enclaves south of Muttur, but the Tigers managed to move it into the government-held town with a surprise counter-offensive.

LEADING ARTICLE, PAGE 30

Load-Date: August 8, 2006

SRI LANKA: FEAR OF TERRORISM COMPLICATES WORK OF RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

IPS - Inter Press Service

March 22, 2006 Wednesday

Copyright 2006 IPS - Inter Press Service/Global Information Network

Length: 1326 words

Byline: Gustavo Capdevila

Dateline: GENEVA, March 22 2006

Body

Sri Lankan human rights lawyer Nimalka Fernando says "the world is steeped in racism and religious intolerance," which threaten the very existence of minority communities in countries like her own.

"In today's world, the 'other' than me and my community is an alien and an object to be dealt with and annihilated somehow," said Fernando, president of the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR), which was founded in Japan in 1988.

In addition, "The global economic and politic order creates and generates vulnerabilities and marginalization of people in an unbelievable proportion. Today human lives are threatened by poverty and the 'thirst for fuel' of (U.S. President George W.) Bush," Fernando said in an interview with IPS.

IPS: What role does racism play in the world today?

NIMALKA FERNANDO: Racism is the political ideology that moves wars and the grabbing of resources from our countries that exposes our communities to experiences of racism and exclusion.

IPS: How do non-governmental organizations like IMADR carry out their activities today?

NF: Our work has become challenging and difficult in the post-9/11 era. In the wake of (the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on New York and Washington) all dissident activities are viewed as the work of terrorists and insurgents. Democratic rights activities are smashed up under the slogan of crushing terrorists.

IPS: Is there racism in your country?

NF: Yes, racism is based on ethnic origin in Sri Lanka. The Sinhala extremist forces inside the government have embarked on a campaign to spread hate speech against the Tamil leadership fighting for self-rule and democratic rights (in northern Sri Lanka) for several decades. (The Sinhalese are the largest ethnic group in the country).

IPS: How would you describe the overall situation?

NF: Sri Lanka is a classic example of a failed nation state. A country that could not handle its post-colonial politics to secure a multiracial, multicultural and multireligious political ethos and power-sharing.

IPS: And the consequences?

SRI LANKA : FEAR OF TERRORISM COMPLICATES WORK OF RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

NF: We have been engaged in ethnic conflict resulting in a war dragging on for more than two decades. Thousands of lives have been lost (including the) disappeared. The largest losses have been faced by the Tamil community. Millions are displaced both within and outside the country. The war thrives on to annihilate a community.

IPS: Is there no solution in sight?

NF: Despite the (Feb. 22, 2002) signing of the memorandum of understanding for a ceasefire, the war looms larger every day. In the wake of the new president (Mahinda Rajapaksa) coming into power (on Nov. 19), violence erupted again in the north and east, killing hundreds of people. Most of those killed were unarmed civilians.

IPS: How are the parties to the conflict behaving?

NF: Political assassinations have not been investigated by the government. The paramilitary units operating in the east supported by the government are engaged in violence and killing. The LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) too have denied reports of violations by them.

IPS: Sri Lanka, one of the Asian countries hit by the Dec. 26, 2004, tsunami, lost between 17,500 and 41,000 lives, according to estimates. How are things looking now?

NF: The situation after the tsunami in a post-conflict Sri Lanka has further exacerbated the discrimination against the Muslim and Tamil communities. The relief and rehabilitation activities in the south (where the Buddhist majority and Christian minority are concentrated) received much attention, while the north and east received only a trickle.

The president's constituency has 500 houses constructed more than was required after the tsunami, while in the north and east hundreds are still living in temporary shelters.

IPS: Have these developments received the attention they deserve?

NF: I must say with a sense of responsibility that even the U.N. system has not documented the stories of the deprived in Sri Lanka. We always hear rosy pictures of the post-tsunami rebuilding from the U.N. and when (former U.S. president) Bill Clinton visited us to review the progress (as a U.N. special envoy).

Action Aid has produced a document discussing the human rights issues of the tsunami-affected and I would refer you to their Web site.

IPS: What is the situation of the minority communities?

NF: The Muslim community living in Sri Lanka faces a dual discrimination. On one hand the government's failure to address their issues, and on the other hand the conflicts and tensions they face with the Tamil community in the east.

Many Muslim people died last year in the east and no proper investigations have been carried out. The Muslim people who were forced by the LTTE to leave the north 10 years ago are still living as IDPs (internally displaced persons) and their future is unknown. As IDPs they face ill treatment and discrimination from all communities wherever they reside now.

IPS: And in the case of the Tamils?

NF: Tamil people living in Sri Lanka continue to face discrimination with regard to the use of their language. Even though according to the official language policy Tamil persons are entitled to use their language, the government has failed to implement the provisions.

Tamil persons arrested are compelled to sign confessions written in Sinhala or forced to sign all kinds of documents in a language they are not familiar with. There are no officers proficient in Tamil language in police stations in the government-controlled areas in the north and east. Furthermore, the post offices are not equipped to send telegrams and messages in Tamil.

SRI LANKA : FEAR OF TERRORISM COMPLICATES WORK OF RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

IPS: What repercussions does that climate have on women?

NF: Women face double or multiple discrimination. Tamil women continued to face violence throughout the war, though since the signing of the ceasefire, the situation eased.

But since last December, with the heightening of activities by the armed forces in the north and east, reports of violence and harassment against women have been reaching us. The government of Sri Lanka has still failed to report on or investigate the rape and death of a young girl, Dharshini, from Jaffna. Her mutilated body was found inside a well located near a naval base in the north.

IPS: What future do these communities face?

NF: Minorities and nationalities all over the world are struggling for their just share in the world of work, society and governance. We need to move beyond the concepts of concessions and welfarism to equal treatment based on human rights.

Mr. Bush's thirst for oil must be overturned by a thirst for justice and fair play in the global economy by the American people. Racism must be condemned at all levels and fought against at all levels.

IPS: Could you comment on the peace negotiations that began in Geneva in February and will continue in April?

NF: We welcome the talks between the LTTE and the government in Geneva because Sri Lanka cannot go back to war. People have suffered as a result of the war and the tsunami. So we take this opportunity as civil society activists to keep the dialogue open and to look into the problem area and also to finally come up with a solution to the troubled ethnic question.

We are not directly engaged in the official discussions, but as a civil society group of peace advocates, we are working diligently back home, speaking to the government, speaking to the LTTE, trying to create confidence, which is very necessary in peace-building -- confidence among the Tamil community that discussions are important.

And we are also trying to develop a political culture, especially in the minds of the Sinhalese, that we need to resolve this issue through a political settlement and negotiations, and not by war.

So on one hand our task as civil society activists back home is to keep our dialogue open with the Tamil community, and on the other hand really, really work with Sinhalese society to accept that finally there could be peace in Sri Lanka one day.

Load-Date: March 23, 2006

SECURITY COUNCIL WORKING GROUP URGES ACTION TO DEMOBILIZE CHILD SOLDIERS

States News Service

May 11, 2007 Friday

Copyright 2007 States News Service

Length: 655 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

The following information was released by the United Nations:

The United Nations Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict has demanded that the parties in Sri Lanka and Nepal demobilize all child soldiers without delay, as it also examined new reports on children caught up in fighting in Uganda and Somalia.

In messages addressed to the Sri Lankan rebels known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), as well as the so-called Karuna faction - which split from them and now supports Government troops - the Group, meeting yesterday, called for the cessation of child recruitment, respect for safe zones for children and guarantees of humanitarian access to all areas, according to the Office of the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict.

Addressing the Government of Nepal and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), which are now engaged in a peace process under UN monitoring, the Working Group called for the immediate liberation of child soldiers without waiting for further stages in that process.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy, welcomed the actions of the Working Group.

"These recommendations send a strong message to the **LTTE**, a repeat offender who has been on the Secretary General's list of violators for four years and to the Karuna faction-TMVP. They have to stop grave violations of children's rights, especially the recruitment and the use of children in the conflict in Sri Lanka," she said.

"In regard to Nepal, we hope that the children who remain in the ranks of the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) will be demobilized and reintegrated in their communities without delay," added Ms. Coomaraswamy.

During the Working Group meeting, Ms. Coomaraswamy gave a briefing on her recent visit to Lebanon, Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory.

The Group was established pursuant to by the Security Council in 2005 to promote the protection of children in armed conflict through a monitoring and reporting mechanism, and to recommend actions on the issue to the UN system.

SECURITY COUNCIL WORKING GROUP URGES ACTION TO DEMOBILIZE CHILD SOLDIERS

Mr. Ban's report on Somalia, also presented to the Group yesterday, estimates that more than one third of the victims who were killed and injured in fighting there in 2006 were children, with violence in Southern and Central Somalia is characterized by grave child rights violations.

In addition, he says, continued fighting in and around Mogadishu between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and remnants of the Union of Islamic Courts forces has resulted in more casualties and violations against children in 2007.

"The recruitment and use of child soldiers by the TFG and other armed groups is a significant concern," he says.

The report says that humanitarian access in Somalia has been severely compromised, with serious implications for children. In the absence of a functioning police and judiciary, crimes against civilians, including women and children, are committed with impunity.

In the Uganda report, Mr. Ban said he was "deeply concerned over the absence of any concrete signs regarding the release of children associated with various forces."

The conflict in the northern part of the country, which began in 1986, pits the Government and local forces against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the rebel group which has become notorious for abducting children and then using them as soldiers or porters, while allocating many girls to senior officers in a form of institutional rape.

He urged the leaders of the LRA to take immediate steps to end child recruitment and the use of child soldiers, and to immediately release all children to child protection agencies.

He also called upon Ugandan Government forces to allow independent monitoring visits to military barracks to determine the existence of any child soldiers either in their ranks or in the ranks of allied local defence forces.

Load-Date: May 13, 2007

End of Document

Bomb kills 16 near Sri Lankan capital

Suna News Agency

November 28, 2007 Wednesday 11:06 AM EST

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ARABIA 2000

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Length: 504 words

Body

Bomb kills 16 near Sri Lankan capital

NUGEGODA, Sri Lanka -Nov.28 (AP)A bomb exploded Wednesday evening near the entrance to a popular department store in a busy Colombo suburb, killing 16 people and wounding more than 20 in a rare attack on civilians near the capital, the military said.

It added that the Tamil Tiger rebel group was responsible for the bombing..

The blast occurred just outside the four-story No Limits store in Nugegoda as commuters crowded a nearby bus stop during the evening rush hour, officials said..

Authorities did not immediately give a motive for the blast or speculate who was behind it. Earlier in the day, a **female** suicide bomber sent by the rebels killed one person and wounded two others in an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate a government minister in his office in Colombo..

The rebels' top leader blamed the government for a recent escalation of fighting in the more than two-decade-old civil war that has killed an estimated 70,000 in the Indian Ocean island nation..

The powerful blast at the department store shattered windows and sent piles of crumbled concrete onto the bloodstained sidewalk, according to an Associated Press photographer at the scene..

Crumpled and charred parts of motorcycles and three-wheeled taxis were scattered nearby..

Police and firefighters searched the debris for victims..

Military officials said at least 16 people were killed and 20 others wounded. At a nearby hospital, residents came in search of missing relatives. One girl who suffered a broken arm in the attack sat with her mother as she received treatment..

Bomb kills 16 near Sri Lankan capital

"I was on the top floor of a shoe shop with my wife and child when I heard a big blast and there were glass pieces all over us," resident A. Jayasena told AP Television News. "As we ran away, I saw the entrance of the No Limit shop burning, and in the midst of it, a schoolgirl on the floor trying to get up and then falling back again. ."

Jayasena and his daughter suffered minor injuries, while his wife was in the hospital being treated for more serious wounds, he said..

The bomb may have exploded when a security guard at the mall became suspicious about a parcel and tried to open it, a defense official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media..

The suicide bombing targeted the offices of Douglas Devananda, the minister of social services and the leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party, an ethnic Tamil party considered a rival to the separatist **Tamil Tigers**, the military said..

Devananda, the target of repeated assassination attempts, was not injured in the attack, the military said. The blast killed one of his staff members and injured two others, one critically, said Dr. . Hector Weerasinghe, the medical director of Colombo National Hospital. The bomber was also killed..

The rebel group has been fighting since 1983 to create a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils following decades of discrimination by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority.AB/AB

Load-Date: November 29, 2007

End of Document

Priest Becky off to war torn land

The Uttoxeter Advertiser

June 20, 2007

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Length: 444 words

Byline: CHERYL SMITH

Body

A WOMAN priest is hoping to help rebuild a country devastated by disaster as she swaps life in a country village for a war torn country in South Asia. Becky Hollis, who grew up in Kingstone, will become the first British ***female*** priest in Sri Lanka when she travels there this summer. The 29-year-old was asked to take on the role of assistant curate in the country's capital Colombo by the city's bishop, Rt Rev Duleep de Chickera, while visiting a friend in the country last year.

The former Thomas Alleyne's pupil has been sponsored by the Church Mission Society to spend six years in the country, which is still trying to rebuild itself after the Boxing Day tsunami in 2004. She said: "I think it is where God wants me to be. It is a huge move and I am having to get rid of a lot of furniture and things but I am looking forward to it. "***Women*** only got priesthood in September so there are only four ***women*** priests on the island. I want to help show ***women*** that they too can follow their calling." The country, which is in the middle of a civil war as the government and ***Tamil Tigers*** lock in conflict, is predominantly of Buddhist faith with Christianity in the minority. Miss Hollis, whose grandfather Fred Hollis was Mayor of Uttoxeter in 1994, said: "Sri Lanka is a beautiful place but there are two sides - there are the beautiful beaches and holiday resort but there is also the fact the country is in the middle of a civil war. "There was another bombing in Colombo the other day. There is a constant overtone of violence. "I will have to be careful and you have to think of your personal safety but some people are in the wrong place at the wrong time that is the problem." The 29-year-old will be based at Christ Church, in the Mirihana district of the city and is hoping to get involved in helping to rebuild the country back to its former glory. She said: "A lot was lost when the tsunami hit and a lot more still needs to be done. I feel I want to help. "In Sri Lanka Christianity is seen as a bridge between the people of different faiths. It is helping to calm the factions which are the crux of the civil war." Miss Hollis spent three years in Oxford at a theological college before moving to Preston in 2003 to start her four-year training at St John Baptist Broughton, in Preston. She will start her two-term placement in Sri Lanka at the beginning of August. The Asian tsunami on December 26, 2004, killed more than 40,000 people in Sri Lanka with thousands of those who went missing never recovered. Many of the small, coastal villages in southern and eastern Sri Lanka were completely destroyed and more than a million people were left homeless.

Load-Date: July 9, 2009

More than 20,000 Tamil refugees enter government-controlled area in eastern Sri Lanka

Associated Press International

December 19, 2006 Tuesday 3:30 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 471 words

Byline: By KRISHAN FRANCIS, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: RIDITENNE Sri Lanka

Body

At least 20,000 Tamil civilians have crossed into government-controlled areas in eastern Sri Lanka after being driven out by heavy fighting in rebel territory, the military said Tuesday.

Many of them crossed over using jungle paths to escape and some described being held by force by Tamil separatists as the Sri Lankan government shelled rebel-controlled villages.

"Artillery shells fell into the school we were living in. If they (the army) are going to attack even refugee camps, where are we going to be safe?" said Nagakanni, a mother of two. She only gave her first name, fearing reprisals for her comments.

She is one of more than 300 ethnic Tamil men, women and children who braved heavy rain and trekked 56 kilometers (35 miles) for nearly two days without food through land-mine strewn jungles and across a river to arrive Monday in Riditenne, a government-held village in eastern Batticaloa district.

The refugees say that they took this desperate action because the rebels did not let them leave, even after more than 50 people were killed by government shelling into Vaharai and several neighboring rebel-held villages in Batticaloa.

"Until last night, a total number of 20,000 IDPs (internally displaced persons) have crossed over to our areas," military spokesman, Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe said.

He accused the rebels of firing artillery at one of the military's camps in the area late Monday. The shells missed their targets and the military suffered no casualties, he said.

The United Nations last week said some 35,000 people were trapped in the fighting and asked the separatist Tamil Tigers to allow people to move to safer areas.

The U.N. also asked the government to open the main road so civilians could leave. Fleeing refugees said Monday they trudged through the jungle because the main road was closed.

Over the last few weeks, the government claimed that the rebels were holding the civilians captive as human shields, while the rebels say the government sealed the only road out of the area.

More than 20,000 Tamil refugees enter government-controlled area in eastern Sri Lanka

The majority of the civilians lived in camps in rebel-controlled villages, having fled from the neighboring Trincomalee district during a clash in August.

"The Tigers did not let us go. They shot in the air to scare us or threatened that we will be locked up," said a man who identified himself as Kandasamy, a father of six. He did not give his full name fearing reprisals.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam have been fighting the government since 1983, demanding a self-ruled homeland for Sri Lanka's 3.1 million minority Tamils, citing decades of discrimination by the majority Sinhalese-dominated state.

A Norwegian-brokered cease-fire officially still holds but more than 3,500 fighters and civilians have been killed in renewed fighting this year.

More than 65,000 people died in the conflict before the cease-fire.

Load-Date: December 19, 2006

End of Document

Crisis looms for civilians forced to flee fighting

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

March 19, 2007 Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 12

Length: 468 words

Byline: Connie Levett Herald Correspondent in Bangkok

Body

A FIERCE offensive by the Sri Lankan Army against the **Tamil Tigers** has forced more than 150,000 civilians to leave their homes, stretching resources to the brink and threatening a humanitarian crisis.

The eastern coastal town of Batticaloa has already been overwhelmed by 60,000 internally displaced people fleeing fighting north of the town, but air and artillery strikes on Tiger territory to the south-west in the past two weeks have more than doubled that number. Food is in short supply and the Government has appealed to the outside world for immediate food assistance for at least the next four weeks. The number of refugees registered with the Government in Batticaloa was 156,384 this week, according to Tamil Week.

The World Food Program reportedly does not have supplies in country to meet the demand.

To create space in refugee camps, local authorities used heavy-handed tactics on Thursday, forcing up to 1000 longer-term refugees onto 30 buses for repatriation to the villages they fled late last year. When the Herald visited the Kiran camp in Batticaloa in late February, people were already short of food; **women** spoke of pawning their jewellery to care for their families. The local authorities threatened to cut off supplies if the people did not board the buses, local non-government organisations say.

Technically a ceasefire is in place after the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Government signed an agreement in February 2002, but that has not stopped savage fighting in recent months.

Government forces won back the key town of Vakarai in late January for the first time in 10 years in what they called a "humanitarian intervention". At that time, the army accused the Tigers of using civilians, many of whom were refugees from fighting further north, as human shields to prevent artillery strikes by the military. The army encouraged the civilians to flee south to Batticaloa, dropping thousands of leaflets over Vakarai assuring them they would be provided for and to "come over to our side".

But it cannot provide for the 90,000 refugees from the Vanunatheevu and Karahiyanaru areas, south-west of Batticaloa, who have come over from the Tiger side in the past two weeks. They fled after the army staged air strikes and artillery attacks in response to an audacious Tiger ambush of a high-level donor convoy in late February.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has warned the crisis could worsen, saying "as fighting continues, more people may be forced to flee, and we have asked the Government to step up efforts to meet the

Crisis looms for civilians forced to flee fighting

needs of the displaced". The Sri Lankan Navy yesterday sank a large ship off the east coast that it said was transporting arms for Tiger rebels. The blazing vessel and its crew disappeared under the waves after a series of explosions, it said.

Graphic

PHOTO: Tent city ... a camp near Batticaloa, now the makeshift shelter of 60,000 refugees, some of whom say local authorities forced them to leave their homes. Photo: Andrew Meares

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Tamils make plea to Ottawa; Speed up processing of refugee claims and immigration sponsorship requests, say a Quebec group of Sri Lankan women traumatized by civil war in their former land

The Gazette (Montreal)

April 11, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A6

Length: 421 words

Byline: MAX HARROLD, The Gazette

Body

Standing in front of poster-sized photos of whole families hanged and others shot while they slept, a young Montreal mother described her own relatives' tragedy in her native Sri Lanka.

"My father, mother and brother were all shot one night at dinner," said Santhiraleda Ganeshalingam, 32, who heard the news in a phone call from her sister in Sri Lanka last May.

The killings were part of continuing civil war between Sri Lanka's majority Sinhalese population and the minority Tamils, Ganeshalingam said during a recent news conference held by the association Quebec Tamil **Women** to launch a month-long awareness campaign across Canada.

Members of the group urged the Canadian government to speed up immigration sponsorship requests and refugee claims and stop deporting Sri Lankans because they face grim prospects in their native country.

They said 170,000 Tamils are near starvation in refugee camps in eastern Sri Lanka because the government has cut off humanitarian aid to the region. Another 600,000 are struggling in the northern Jaffna region because of state-enforced embargoes on medicine and basic food stocks.

Tamils comprise about 15 per cent of Sri Lanka's 20 million people.

Ganeshalingam, whose sister also was killed, said she now has four nieces and nephews in Sri Lanka without parents.

"Now I cry every time the phone rings," she said, clutching her daughters, age 3 and 4. "I worry what will happen next. I want to bring (the rest of) my family here and protect them."

Her husband, Sabarathnam Ganeshalingam, 39, said his wife has been on anti-depressant medication. "She's having a hard time. She wakes up crying in the middle of the night."

Canada's government needs to take action and help reunite Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada with their loved ones caught in the middle of the war, said Ramani Balendra, 46, a QTW member.

Tamils make plea to Ottawa; Speed up processing of refugee claims and immigration sponsorship requests, say a Quebec group of Sri Lankan women traumatized by ci....

"We are 300,000 Tamils in Canada (including) 23,000 in Quebec," said Balendra, former president of the Canadian Tamil Congress. "We pay taxes. We want the Canadian government to heed its own policy of reuniting families."

Balendra said the QTW does not support the rebel Tamil Tigers, who have been labeled as terrorists.

A spokesperson for federal Immigration Minister Diane Finley said the government is monitoring the conflict and is "sensitive to the circumstances" faced by Sri Lankans in Canada.

With few exceptions, they cannot be removed from Canada without the right to ask for an assessment of the risk they face in their homeland.

mharrold@thegazette.canwest.com

Graphic

Photo: TYREL FEATHERSTONE, THE GAZETTE; Local Tamil women at a press conference held by the Quebec Tamil Women's Association in Park Extension on Saturday. The group has launched a month-long cross-Canada awareness campaign about the civil strife in Sri Lanka. ; MAP: THE GAZETTE; TAMIL-INHABITED AREAS ;

Load-Date: April 11, 2007

Wars, instability worsen rights abuses in Asia: HRW

Agence France Presse -- English

January 12, 2007 Friday 6:17 AM GMT

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Length: 526 words

Dateline: BANGKOK, Jan 12 2007

Body

Key countries across Asia suffered serious setbacks in human rights last year, with the most worrying abuses due to wars and political instability, a US-based watchdog said in its annual report.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) warned abuses were taking place amid conflicts and political unrest in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand, while giants China and India also suffered violations.

HRW said in its report Thursday that Afghanistan was on the "precipice of again becoming a haven" for human rights abusers, criminals and militant extremists.

Last year the Taliban-led insurgency "escalated into open warfare", while rebels carried out more than 80 suicide bombings.

There were also hundreds of attacks on students, teachers and schools during 2006, a sharp rise on previous years.

Much of last year's violence was driven by opium poppy production which exceeded 2005's crop by 60 percent and generated nearly half of the country's income and 92 percent of the world's supply of heroin, the group said.

Abuses were exacerbated by poor governance and corruption of the government of President Hamid Karzai, it added.

In Sri Lanka, an upsurge in fighting between government troops and the **Tamil Tigers** has "resulted in a dramatic increase in serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law."

Military-ruled Myanmar came in for criticism over its continued detention of democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi, as well as for gross abuses in its battle against ethnic minorities.

"In the conflict areas, human rights violations such as forced labor for Burmese army units, rape of **women** and girls, and summary executions continue," the report said.

A military coup in neighbouring Thailand avoided any violence, but HRW said the erosion of liberties that began under ousted premier Thaksin Shinawatra had worsened since the takeover.

Wars, instability worsen rights abuses in Asia: HRW

The group also accused both the government and Islamic separatists in southern Thailand of killings and other abuses in a conflict that has killed 1,800 over three years.

Amid political instability in Bangladesh, HRW said the country's "already poor human rights record worsened, as security forces continued to commit numerous abuses, including extrajudicial killings, excessive use of force, and custodial torture."

India, widely hailed as the world's largest democracy with a vibrant press and civil society, also came in for stiff criticism over officials and security services that abuse their power, especially in areas of conflict such as Kashmir.

In China, the group said that human rights had "deteriorated significantly" last year as the government reacted to rising social discontent with even tighter controls.

China focused particularly on silencing a loosely organised network of lawyers, journalists and activists seeking justice for victims of official abuses, it said.

One cause for cheer was in Nepal, where Maoist rebels declared an end to a decade-long insurgency and signed a peace deal with the government.

"The human rights situation improved markedly" due to the peace deal, HRW said, while accusing both sides of failing to hold their forces accountable for past violations.

burs-gs/th

Load-Date: January 13, 2007

The World at 1:30 p.m.

The Canadian Press(CP)

October 6, 2007 Saturday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 1199 words

Byline: AP

Body

HEADLINES:

Musharraf sweeps Pakistan election; court could still disqualify him

AP Poll: Giuliani's lead offers no guarantees in GOP field

AP Poll: Clinton expanding lead nationally, but Iowa tighter

Myanmar's junta could suffer for treatment of monks who protested

Real estate boom turns to foreclosure boom in Phoenix suburb

Budget, policy blunders send R.I. teenage offenders to adult prison

NEW & DEVELOPING:

_ AUTO TALKS _ Talks ongoing; will be led.

_ ARMORED CAR SHOOTING _ News conference at 3 p.m.

_ TAMMY FAYE MESSNER _ Memorial service scheduled for 6 p.m.

MULTIMEDIA:

Notable Photos:

PAKISTAN POLITICS: KAR106, Holding a poster of Pakistan's military ruler President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, supporters celebrate his majority votes in the presidential election in Karachi, Pakistan.

BRITAIN MYANMAR: LON803, Burmese monks clasp their hands as they leave No. 10 Downing Street after meeting the prime minister before a march in London against the violent crackdown on pro-democracy protests in Myanmar.

AFGHANISTAN: KAB108, A firehose sprays water on damaged vehicles after a suicide car bomber attacked an American military convoy in Kabul, Afghanistan.

The World at 1:30 p.m.

SEARCH FOR "APTOPIX" TO FIND TOP AP STAFF AND FREELANCE PHOTOS.

Interactives:

_ IRAQ: _international/iraq_troop_increase folder.

_ CAMPAIGN 2008: wdc/2008primaries folder; wdc/early2008 folder; wdc/08issues folder; wdc/2008money folder.

_ BRITNEY SPEARS CUSTODY: _documents folder, slugged britney_custody_order.pdf.

_ NFL SEASON OVERVIEW: sports/nfl07/regular_season folder.

ALSO GETTING ATTENTION:

_ ARMORED CAR SHOOTING _ Convicted bank robber charged in killings of 2 armored car guards at ATM machine, Philadelphia police say.

_ BUSH _ President Bush signaled a willingness to spend more than what he had recommended for a popular children's health program, but provided no specifics.

_ INDIA-JUDGING JUDGES _ New Delhi's High Court justices, annoyed with lower court judges who issue problematic rulings, have decided to send one of them back to law school.

_ SKINNY DIP SANDWICH _ Maine eatery's 'Naked Lunch' promotion may be banned.

TOP STORIES:

PAKISTAN-POLITICS

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan _ Pakistan's U.S.-backed military leader runs up a huge majority in a presidential election largely snubbed by his opponents. The Supreme Court must still decide whether Gen. Pervez Musharraf is eligible for another five-year term, although analysts question whether it would dare deny him victory. By Matthew Pennington.

AP Photos ISL116, 119, KAR106, PES103, RWP105. AP Video.

_ PAKISTAN-ELECTION BLUES _ One loser in the election was clear before the voting began: public faith in Pakistani politics.

_ PAKISTAN-ELECTION TIMELINE.

REPUBLICANS-AP POLL

WASHINGTON _ Don't be fooled by Rudy Giuliani's longtime ranking atop national Republican polls. A lot can shake up the GOP presidential field _ and his opponents are counting on it. An AP News Analysis by Liz Sidoti.

AP Photos WX103-105. AP Graphic DEM REP AP POLL.

DEMOCRATS-AP POLL

NEW YORK _ Hillary Rodham Clinton has strengthened her position as the front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination. But her strong showing nationally belies a much closer race in Iowa, where she is in a tight contest with Barack Obama and John Edwards. An AP News Analysis by Beth Fouhy.

AP Photos staffing. AP Graphic DEM REP AP POLL.

MYANMAR-WHAT NEXT?

The World at 1:30 p.m.

BANGKOK, Thailand _ Myanmar's democracy protests have been crushed, but the brutality the entrenched junta inflicted on Buddhist monks may be the one thing that could splinter the fiercely loyal military. The monks are deeply revered in Myanmar, and imprisoning them upsets the faithful, no matter what their occupation. An AP News Analysis by Denis D. Gray.

AP Photos DLL101, 103, 106, XDLL101-103.

_ MYANMAR _ Thousands across Europe and Asia protest against the military junta, while activists in Myanmar hold covert prayer vigils. AP Photos SL104, MLA101, LON803, XGO112

_ MYANMAR-CHRONOLGY.

LEAVING HOMES

QUEEN CREEK, Ariz. _ Cement mixers still operate during the day, but sundown reveals this seemingly ordinary subdivision's troubling secret: Behind many dark windows and unanswered doors, nobody is home. The real-estate boom led to extraordinary times at Queen Creek, but the empty homes raise doubts about what's next. By National Writer Adam Geller.

Shorter version moving as LEAVING HOMES-ABRIDGED. AP Photos NY305-311. AP Graphic ARIZONA FORECLOSURES.

BUSINESS:

SCOTUS-ENRON

WASHINGTON _ The hopes of Enron investors are riding on a Supreme Court case that may be the last chance at compensation for their losses when the scandal-ridden energy company collapsed. Much of corporate America is arguing that shareholders in companies that commit securities fraud should not be allowed to sue banks and other alleged participants. By Pete Yost.

AP Photos WX101-102.

Also:

_ AUTO TALKS _ Negotiators with the United Auto Workers and Chrysler LLC are talking about a new contract, weeks after the autoworkers reached a tentative agreement with General Motors.

NATIONAL:

IMPRISONED TEENS

PROVIDENCE, R.I. _ Lawmakers believed a bill that would incarcerate 17-year-olds in the adult prison system would save them money. It didn't _ and now they are trying to figure out how to fix a law advocates say is harming teens. By Ray Henry.

_ IMPRISONED TEENS-SUMMARY BOX.

PHILLY CASINO FIGHT

PHILADELPHIA _ Surging gun violence never got Kathy O'Neill to think about moving her family out of the city. Neither did an ever-struggling school system. Now that two casinos are moving in, however, it's a different story. By Patrick Walters.

AP Photos of Oct. 5: PX201-206.

INTERNATIONAL:

The World at 1:30 p.m.

AFGHAN-SIX YEARS LATER

BAGRAM, Afghanistan _ Six years to the day after the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan, America is planning for a long stay. The main U.S. base _ which the Pentagon once viewed as "temporary" _ is expanding. New barracks will accommodate a record number of U.S. troops fighting a resurgent Taliban militia in the battle's bloodiest year yet. By Jason Straziuso.

AP Photos planned.

IRAQ-**WOMEN** IN PERIL

SULAIMANIYAH, Iraq _ She is 18, unmarried, and eight months pregnant. Soon she will give up her baby, go home and hope never to fall victim to an "honor killing" _ whereby murder is supposed to erase the family's shame. The Kurdish enclave of Iraq stands out for its condemnation of the custom and threat of severe penalties. By Christopher Torchia.

AP Photos NY345-347.

_ IRAQ _ Two of Iraq's most powerful Shiite leaders agree to end their bitter rivalry that has spawned months of armed clashes in across the oil-rich south. AP Graphic THE WEEK IN IRAQ.

SRI LANKA-PARALYZED BY FEAR

VALAICHCHENAI, Sri Lanka _ Sri Lanka's government says it scored a huge victory this summer when it broke Tamil separatists control of the island's east. But in extensive interviews with The Associated Press, people living here say the **Tamil Tigers**' ruthless rule has been replaced by a violent free-for-all of rival militant groups. By Ravi Nessman.

AP Photos NY440-449. AP Graphic SRI LANKA CLASH. Audio slideshow in the _international/**tamil tigers** folder.

_ SRI LANKA-SUMMARY BOX.

SPORTS:

_ RUN--JONES-THANOU _ Lawyer says Greek silver medalist deserves Jones' gold, in wake of steroid-related guilty plea.

Load-Date: October 7, 2007

Western white woman a suicide bomber

The Times (London)

December 1, 2005, Thursday

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 41

Length: 500 words

Byline: Anthony Browne, Brussels Correspondent

Body

MIREILLE, who was born in Belgium to a white, middle-class Christian family, blew herself to pieces last month in a suicide attack against American troops near Baghdad.

In one of the most extraordinary tales of Islamic radicalisation, she is thought to be the first white Western woman to carry out a suicide bombing.

Belgian investigators, who arrested 14 people associated with her, are keeping the 38-year-old woman's true identity secret, but details have started to emerge. She was from the southern Belgian town of Charleroi, married to a Moroccan and converted to an extreme form of Islam.

"This is how she came into contact with the organisation which allowed her to become a fighter for jihad," said Glenn Audenaert, the federal police director.

Her Belgian documents show that she travelled with her husband to Iraq. On November 9 she blew herself up in a car bomb attack on a US military convoy, killing -according to conflicting reports -either only herself, or six people.

Her Belgian passport was near by. Her husband was killed by American troops in a separate incident.

Security sources said that they knew of no other western European women suicide bombers. Al-Qaeda recently appealed for white converts to become suicide bombers, because it was easier for them to travel and evade detection before carrying out their attacks.

Mireille's story leaked out yesterday in the French media, prompting the series of raids across four Belgian cities, including Brussels, and separate raids in Paris.

M Audernaert said that the authorities wanted "to dismantle this network, which we knew was on our territory and which aimed to send volunteers for the jihad to the battlefield".

The backgrounds of those arrested show that the problem of Islamic terrorism is no longer confined to immigrant communities -seven of those arrested were Muslim converts of native Belgian origin, two were Belgians of north African origin, two were Tunisians and three were Moroccans. One of the chief suspects held yesterday was a male Belgian convert to Islam, police said. "We know these groups are always planning attacks. All we can say is there were no attacks planned in Europe."

Western white woman a suicide bomber

The group had been under surveillance for four months, but Mireille slipped out of the country. "It was through this organisation that the lady went to Iraq with her husband, but we only knew about her once she was already there," said M Audernaert. Belgium, with its big Muslim community, has become notorious as an operational base for Islamic terrorists.

RADICALS' CALL:

- * Jermaine Lindsay: one of four July 7 Tube bombers. Briton of Jamaican origin, converted to Islam
- * Richard Reid: tried to blow up a commercial flight with a shoe bomb. English mother and Jamaican father, converted to Islam while serving at young offenders' institution
- * **Women** suicide bombers: first used by **Tamil Tigers** in Sri Lanka, notably in 1991 murder of Rajiv Gandhi
- * Black Widows: Chechen **female** suicide bombers, widows of fighters killed by the Russian Army

Load-Date: December 1, 2005

End of Document

DESPERATE NEED: WHERE THE AID EFFORT STANDS

The Dominion Post (Wellington, New Zealand)

January 4, 2005, Tuesday

Copyright 2005 Fairfax New Zealand

Section: NEWS; INTERNATIONAL;

Length: 527 words

Body

Indonesian commandos shift aid from a US helicopter in Sumatra. A week into the disaster, an international campaign to help Indonesia has at last moved into gear, with Hercules aircraft delivering food, medicine and tents. But the distribution system from the airport in Banda Aceh -- slapped together by still-reeling local officials and international aid groups -- has proved patchy. In village after village, people have yet to receive all the help they need. Aid workers say a lack of trucks has not helped, but also point the finger at the Indonesian military, which has taken charge of the airport warehouse. Death toll: 94,081

SRI LANKA

Women and children struggle for food in the southern city of Matara. While the government in the country's south was struggling to cope as politicians argued over who was in charge of the relief effort, observers were praising the rebel **Tamil Tigers** for their efforts in the country's north. Within minutes of the disaster, rebel soldiers had evacuated survivors and were pulling bodies from the water, villagers and observers said. Squads had also set up roadblocks to control panic and prevent looting. Teams with digital cameras and laptops had then moved into disaster zones to photograph the faces of the dead for later identification, before burial or cremation. Death toll: 28,729

INDIA

A bucket salesman cycles through a devastated part of Cuddalore, south of Madras. Buckets and water are in great demand. In the village of Nambiar Nagar, on the edge of the Bay of Bengal, pipelines are choked with debris, so a tanker must bring in water each day. The **women** carry it away in plastic pots. Children are again playing hide-and-seek, though there are fewer participants than before. "I used to play with my younger brother. The wave has sucked him in," said one boy. Death toll: 14,872

DESPERATE NEED: WHERE THE AID EFFORT STANDS

THAILAND

Ice is placed on the bodies of victims on Phuket. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said that Thailand no longer needed financial assistance, so the focus was on finding and identifying bodies, along with maintaining the flow of aid to the needy and finding housing for people who lost their homes, particularly those from fishing villages that were all but wiped off the map. Teams searching for bodies zeroed in on the hardest-hit areas. The main search effort continued to be in Phang Nga province, where thousands of foreign tourists and Thai villagers were swept away from the area around Khao Lak beach. Death toll: 4993

OTHERS

Somalis stand next to destroyed homes in the country's north. About 200 Somalis are reported to have died. In the Maldives, where 80 people died, 14 islands have been evacuated after the tsunami, and the damage will run into the hundreds of millions of dollars. The islands have asked the United States military to help with engineering equipment and water purification. The death toll in Tanzania is 10 and in Kenya, one. The toll in Malaysia stood at 68, and 90 were reported killed in Myanmar and two in Bangladesh.

Load-Date: January 6, 2005

End of Document

Bus carrying 40 Tamil rebels escapes landmine blast in Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

June 26, 2005, Sunday 15391015:39:10 Central European Time

Copyright 2005 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: Politics

Length: 209 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

A bus carrying 40 Tamil rebels in north central Sri Lanka on Sunday narrowly escaped a land mine explosion believed to have been set off by rivals, a military spokesman said.

The bus was transporting rebels to a destination in the eastern province when it was caught in the blast at Welikanda, 220 kilometres north east of the capital injuring one **female** cadre.

"The bus had narrowly missed the mine which had been planted about one foot below the surface. The damage could have been more serious if the bus was caught in the full explosion", he said.

The bus' windows were damaged but the vehicle proceeded to its destination.

Tamil rebel cadres were being provided escort by the army for its movement from the northern Vavuniya town to the eastern Batticaloa district at the time of the blast, but no injuries were caused to the soldiers.

Police in the area said there was no indication as to who was responsible for the attack, but the main suspects are a breakaway group of rebels who have been carrying out a series of attacks on other rebels in the past few months.

The group known as the Karuna faction led by one of the breakaway military wing leaders has also been under attack by the rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**). dpa ad mga

Load-Date: June 27, 2005

SENSELESS SLAUGHTER

The Australian

December 5, 2005 Monday All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2005 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: FEATURES; Leader; Pg. 11

Length: 496 words

Body

Muriel Degauque died an awful, unnecessary death

THERE is something terrible and troubling about the death of Muriel Degauque. She died in Baghdad last month after entering into a suicide pact with her husband to separately kill themselves, and as many other people as they could in the process. While the details are unclear, it seems, mercifully, the only lives they took were their own. So, Degauque's name will now be remembered, if at all, as just another foot soldier in the cause of terror, prepared to murder and die for no explicable reason. Even though her husband was a Muslim, he was born in Belgium to Moroccan immigrant parents and seems to have had no contact with the conflict in Iraq. And Degauque was Belgium-born and bred. There is no doubting her life was worth any more or any less, than that of any other perpetrator or victim of terror attack. But this does not dictate that we ignore why this otherwise anonymous, and apparently inoffensive, woman embraced a fatal cause with which she had no direct connection, and determined to kill people who had done her no wrong.

MATP

Certainly, Degauque was far from the world's first female suicide bomber. The nationalist Tamil Tigers have sent women to their deaths as part of the movement's campaign for an independent state in Sri Lanka. The Kurdish PKK organisation has used teenage girls for terror attacks in Turkey. In the 2002 Moscow theatre siege, some of the assailants were Chechen women, with orders to blow themselves up and murder hundreds of hostages in the act, if security forces attacked. And Palestinian terrorists have used young women as suicide bombers. All these actions are utterly unforgivable and completely pointless. Murdering innocent civilians is beyond contempt and no government intent on maintaining its authority will ever bend in the face of terror. But while the acts are awful, at least the causes that motivate them -- almost always demands for some sort of ethnic autonomy -- are explicable.

But what was Degauque doing? It certainly appears she had embraced Islam with all the zeal of a convert. So do many others without becoming murderers. Perhaps Degauque's husband convinced her that Islam was at war with the rest of the world and she should die a martyr's death. Perhaps she set her own course to her awful end. It is likely we will never know. But what is plain is the tragedy that befell this young woman who so lost touch with reality, and any sense of humanity, that she chose to kill in a cause that assumes all who think differently are the enemy. Last month, al-Qa'ida sent a married couple to murder other Muslims in Jordan. The husband's bomb went off, the wife's did not. But Degauque died. She died in the service of a brutal, stupid cause that dresses its nihilism and bloodlust in a false cloak of piety. Her death served no purpose at all. There seems to be no doubting Degauque's commitment, but serving such a senseless, murderous cause merits no respect.

Load-Date: December 4, 2005

SENSELESS SLAUGHTER

End of Document

Blast in Colombo kills 3

Hindustan Times

August 8, 2006 Tuesday 12:59 PM EST

Copyright 2006 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 203 words

Byline: Hindustan Times

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

NEW DELHI, India, Aug 8 -- Three people, including a three-year-old **female** child, were killed, and eight others including a former Tamil member of parliament were seriously injured, in a van bomb blast in front of a popular girls' school in the centre of Colombo on Tuesday.

Among the injured was Sivadasan, a former Tamil MP belonging to the pro-government Eelam Peoples' Democratic Party headed by cabinet minister Douglas Devananda. A Sri Lankan Army spokesman said that the blast occurred right in front of St. Paul's school on the busy Dickman's Road at about 2.30 pm. The army squarely blamed the **LTTE** for the blast and said that the Tamil terror group had targeted Sivadasan but failed to get him.

A plastic magnetic device with powerful explosives had been planted in a van, the army said. There was a loud explosion and billowing smoke, which could be seen for miles around. The van itself was ablaze for quite sometime. Burning along with it was a car right behind it. The mother of the dead child was among the seriously injured. They were crossing the road when the blast occurred. The injured were rushed to the Colombo National Hospital.

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Load-Date: August 13, 2006

12 killed in escalated fighting in northern and eastern Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

April 30, 2007 Monday 11:15 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 233 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts 12 killed in escalated fighting in northern and eastern Sri Lanka Colombo
At least 12 persons, including a Hindu priest, were killed in northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka as fighting escalated between government troops and Tamil rebels, military officials said Monday.

Six persons including the Hindu priest were killed when the Sri Lankan Navy stormed a Hindu temple on an island off the northern Jaffna peninsula on Sunday.
The military claimed five of them were rebels belonging to the

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who had taken cover inside the temple and attacked the navy, which arrived at the location to carry out a search operation.

But the pro-rebel Tamilnet website said that six persons were killed when the navy carried out a search operation following an attack on a group of sailors on the previous day where a naval officer was killed on Kayts island, 420 kilometres north of the capital.

There was no independent confirmation about the incident.

Six more suspected rebels, including three female cadres, were killed in a confrontation with the army in Welioya, 320 kilometres north-east of the capital, on Monday morning.

The military said they had recovered three weapons left behind by the rebels.

Fighting in the north and eastern parts of Sri Lanka has left over 4,000 dead and more than 200,000 displaced during the past 15 months.

Apr 3007 1115 GMT

Load-Date: May 1, 2007

St. Paul woman helps refugees in ethnically divided Sri Lanka

The Associated Press

January 18, 2005, Tuesday, BC cycle

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Section: State and Regional

Length: 1189 words

Byline: By BRIAN BONNER, St. Paul Pioneer Press

Dateline: KARATIVU, Sri Lanka

Body

Shivanthi Sathanandan loaded a cargo van with supplies paid for with Minnesotans' donations, then drove nine hours through the mountains to deliver them to the island's hard-hit east coast.

The 24-year-old St. Paul woman found what she expected: thousands of needy tsunami survivors eager for the medicines, biscuits, powdered milk, soap and sandals she brought. At stops in four camps throughout the day, people crowded around, welcoming the supplies, sometimes sneaking back into line to get seconds.

But Sathanandan also ran into a rising squall of anger and despair among ethnic minority Tamils on a beach where 1,800 villagers are buried below light sands and lovely palms.

The tsunami victims were buried there because, as one resident put it, even bloated corpses of babies proved hard to lift after the angry sea receded. The presence of the mass graves feeds unrest among Tamils who complain that the Sinhalese-dominated government is bypassing them with tsunami-recovery aid.

"This is the place with the most loss of life," said a local public health inspector. "There is no help that's come to us from the government." The government vigorously denies this, but the health inspector's sentiment was prevalent on the beach where Sathanandan stopped.

After spending hours handing out goods from a table at the back of her van, she walked past the ruins of homes and personal belongings, at one point coming across an emerald-colored sari partially buried in the sand. "This was a fancy one, too," she said, a sari that might be worn for a wedding.

She bent to touch it, then moved on and pointed out other household objects scattered about.

A Highland Park resident who plays the piano, designs jewelry and teaches children to ride horseback, Sathanandan is a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota. Her response to the tsunami was to dive in head first with a direct and personal approach.

A leader of the Tamil Association of Minnesota, Sathanandan spearheaded a campaign that raised \$35,000 in donations after the Dec. 26 earthquake. Many of the state's several thousand Tamils belong to the cultural group.

She flew to Sri Lanka with her parents - Myles, a retired accountant, and Rose, a nurse - both of whom grew up in Sri Lanka but who have lived in Minnesota for two decades.

St. Paul woman helps refugees in ethnically divided Sri Lanka

Sathanandan used half the money in Sri Lanka, mainly in the eastern Ampara district. The rest will be spent in the Tamil Nadu state of India.

Despite her youth, Sathanandan is getting schooled in disaster-recovery programs. She doesn't like a lot of what she sees.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, she wanted money she raised to go directly to children who lost their parents but later learned her donations had been channeled elsewhere.

"People in Minnesota have been so generous," she said. "We wanted to make sure what they've given so generously actually goes to the people who need it."

The Ampara district suffered the most on this island in a disaster that may have claimed 40,000 Sri Lankan lives and left another 800,000 homeless.

The Sathanandans are traveling at personal expense. They know that what they brought with them didn't make a dent in the needs. But the recipients were grateful - touching, thanking and blessing the family along its stops.

The family's journey from St. Paul also provided insight into the volatile situation between the government and Tamils on the east coast.

As Tamils who grew up in Sri Lanka, Sathanandan's parents are familiar with their ethnic group's complaints of second-class treatment. The tensions played a role in Rose Sathanandan's decision to leave Sri Lanka in the late 1960s. The family settled in London, then moved to Minnesota in the early 1980s.

Tamils make up less than a fifth of Sri Lanka's population of 20 million people. While they and majority Sinhalese live in harmony on much of the island, grievances remain.

A civil war between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, popularly known as the **Tamil Tigers**, claimed 64,000 lives over nearly 20 years before a cease-fire in 2002.

Shivanthi Sathanandan understands the Tamil struggle for freedom but disavows the violence.

In border areas, such as the Ampara district, government control is tenuous.

Metal barricades, special-unit Army soldiers and checkpoints dot the narrow roads. Razor wire surrounds sensitive places. Hospitals plan for suicide bombings, a tactic of the **Tamil Tigers** during the civil war.

In one camp visited by the Sathanandans, a sign identifies the sponsoring organization as the Tamil Relief Organization, which is associated with the Tigers and active in relief work. **Women** walk the camp wearing the green, black-belted uniforms identified with the separatist group.

While the government remains officially in charge, even government representatives - some of whom are Tamils - express frustration with the pace of recovery.

A regional police commander, also a Tamil, said he lacks information about the government's plans to move people out of the district's 69 refugee centers, where thousands live in schools, temples and businesses.

On the beach of the buried victims, a group of Tamil men gathered around Rose Sathanandan to say they feel the government is assigning Tamils an inferior status in the recovery efforts.

One man said Tamils may be forced to take desperate steps if the government can't build new homes and help them return to their jobs as fishermen.

He said he lost all of his family and possessions in the tsunami. He has only the clothes he is wearing, he said, given to him at the refugee center where he sleeps.

St. Paul woman helps refugees in ethnically divided Sri Lanka

"If we don't get this help, we have to turn into thieves and join some terrorist group," he said. "We need to do that to eat."

The government has denied the charges of neglect, recently announcing plans to pay \$3.75 a week to each refugee and begin programs for food rationing and tent- and shelter-building.

And even in discontented Karativu, international aid organizations are present.

Most camp officials say people's basic nutritional and medical needs are being met for now, although diets are lacking in fruits and vegetables.

So who got the care packages, specially delivered from this St. Paul woman?

The items went to families that sleep on mats covering concrete floors, use outhouses and have a hard time finding places to shower. Despite the flies, foul smells and unhygienic conditions, an outward calm prevails.

The children remained lively and rambunctious, racing around courtyards, laughing and playing games.

But pain and sorrow also run deep. A mother, Visantha Sinnatambi, 36, remains haunted by the last words of her 10-year-old son, who is probably among the many buried on the beach. Her top concern is to give him a decent funeral.

"Mom, I want to go with you," she recalls her son pleading as she and her husband left for an errand Dec. 26. She insisted he stay home. The boy perished, along with two older sisters, while two other children survived.

"It's an unbearable sadness," she said. "I survive because everyone else here has suffered loss, so we are together."

Information from: St. Paul Pioneer Press, <http://www.twincities.com>

Graphic

Eds: An AP Member Exchange Feature; RETRANSMITTING to ADD photo; AP Photos MNPAU101-102

Load-Date: January 19, 2005

More Sri Lankan refugees move to south India

Indo-Asian News Service

March 3, 2007 Saturday 2:34 PM EST

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Length: 223 words

Byline: Indo-Asian News Service

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, March 3 -- Sri Lankan Tamils affected by the conflict in the north and east moving to the neighbouring south India is on the increase, Sri Lankan Naval authorities said Saturday.

Some 327 residents from Mannar and Talaimannar arrived at the southern Indian city of Rameshwaram travelling by fishing boats Friday, officials said. Among them were 39 children and 121 women.

Naval authorities said the Indian coastal guard had informed both the Sri Lankan Navy and the Sri Lankan government on the arrival of Sri Lankan refugees in Rameshwaram.

The escalation of the armed conflict between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels and government troops in the north and east has caused a large influx of Tamil civilian refugees across the waters to the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, which is home to some 65 million Tamils.

According to the UN refugee agency UNHCR, some 128,000 Sri Lankan refugees are currently in 122 camps in south India. The UN-assisted program to repatriate and resettle them in their place of origin has been hampered by the escalation of conflict since Dec 2005.

Nearly 4,000 people have been killed in the violence seriously jeopardising the Norwegian-backed effort to bring peace to the island's north and east.

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Load-Date: March 3, 2007

Two Sri Lankan aid workers freed

Agence France Presse -- English

February 2, 2006 Thursday 7:23 AM GMT

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Length: 218 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 2 2006

Body

Two Sri Lankan women out of 10 aid workers kidnapped in the island's restive east have been freed, their charity group seen as close to Tamil Tiger rebels said Thursday.

The Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO) said the two women were released Monday, a day after being captured.

But they only reported to the charity Wednesday after being told by their abductors "not to make a report to the police or anyone else and thus feared for their lives and the lives of their family," the TRO said in a statement.

"The TRO requests that the government of Sri Lanka and civil society exert pressure to ensure the safety of these women."

Eight aid workers are still held by "unidentified paramilitary personnel," the TRO said, calling for their immediate release.

Colombo and the Tamil Tiger rebels agreed last week to meet for the first time in three years to try to save their fragile ceasefire.

The charity's allegations came as a breakaway faction of the Tiger guerrillas declared its own truce.

The faction which operates in the east decided to stop attacks against the mainstream rebels, the Asian Tribune website said, quoting renegade leader V. Muralitharan, known as Colonel Karuna.

The LTTE said the offer was "totally irrelevant" and insisted the group should have no part in the Norwegian-backed peace process.

Load-Date: February 4, 2006

UN, SRI LANKA SHOULD COOPERATE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, HIGH COMMISSIONER SAYS

States News Service

October 15, 2007 Monday

Copyright 2007 States News Service

Length: 702 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

The following information was released by the United Nations:

Citing ongoing reports of abuses in Sri Lanka, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, who has just wrapped up a visit to the country, called for UN-Government cooperation to address the problem.

There is a large number of reported killings, abductions and disappearances which remain unresolved. This is particularly worrying in a country that has had a long, traumatic experience of unresolved disappearances and no shortage of recommendations from past Commissions of Inquiry on how to safeguard against such violations, Louise Arbour said in Colombo.

Sri Lanka, which has ratified most international human rights treaties, has potential for national protection, she said, but in the context of the armed conflict and of the emergency measures taken against terrorism, the weakness of the rule of law and prevalence of impunity is alarming.

The High Commissioner said government representatives insisted that national mechanisms are adequate for the protection of human rights, but people from across a broad political spectrum and from various communities have expressed to me a lack of confidence and trust in the ability of existing relevant institutions to adequately safeguard against the most serious human rights abuses.

Members of the Commission of Inquiry established last year to investigate killings of civilians reported that some State officials had failed to appear in response to their requests, and said their work was constrained by the absence of an effective witness assistance and protection system, according to the High Commissioner.

Ms. Arbour called for public hearings of the Commission and stressed that it should not be a substitute for effective action by law enforcement agencies.

She praised the country's Human Rights Commission for the important role it has played in the past but said controversy over the appointment of commissioners has created a crisis of confidence both locally and internationally.

One of the major human rights shortcomings in Sri Lanka, she said, is rooted in the absence of reliable and authoritative information on the credible allegations of human rights abuses.

UN , SRI LANKA SHOULD COOPERATE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, HIGH COMMISSIONER SAYS

The assertion that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is manipulating information for propaganda gain, she said, only accentuates the need for independent information gathering and public reporting on human rights issues.

The High Commissioner said her office (OHCHR) is willing to support the Government of Sri Lanka toward this end. In light of the gravity of the reported ongoing abuses, and in particular of threats to life and security of the person, I believe that we should urgently resolve our ongoing discussions about the future of a productive relationship between OHCHR and the Government of Sri Lanka.

Ms. Arbour, who visited Jaffna with help from the military authorities, voiced regret that she had not been able to visit the Eastern Province because of time constraints.

I also regret that I did not have the opportunity to visit Killinochchi, where I would have liked to convey directly to the LTTE my deep concern about their violations of human rights and humanitarian law, including the recruitment of children, forced recruitment and abduction of adults, and political killings, she said.

I am very concerned by the many reports I have also received of serious violations by the TMVP and other armed groups, she added, referring to a breakaway rebel faction.

Broader human rights issues affecting all communities on the island have largely been eclipsed by the immediate focus on issues related to the conflict, Ms. Arbour said, citing discrimination and exclusion, gender inequalities, the low participation of women in public and political life, the rights of migrant workers and press freedom.

These challenges will remain before and after any peace settlement, and they are deserving of greater and more focused attention.

She also called for Sri Lanka to ratify the new International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and to seriously consider joining the 105 countries which have ratified the Rome Treaty creating the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Load-Date: October 15, 2007

Sri Lankan military kills 14 rebels in fighting in northern region

Associated Press International

November 30, 2007 Friday 2:40 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 548 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Government forces killed 14 Tamil Tiger rebels in a series of attacks against the separatist group across northern Sri Lanka, the military announced Friday.

The fighting, part of an escalation in violence between the two sides in recent months, came amid a security clampdown on the capital, Colombo, following a pair of rebel bombings that killed 20 people.

The military released security camera footage Friday showing one of the attacks, a suicide bombing at the Colombo offices of a Cabinet minister that killed one person as well as the bomber.

In the footage, the ***female*** bomber is seen patiently sitting in a chair on the other side of an official's desk in what appears to be a waiting room as people mill about around her. The bustle of the office quickly turns into a chaotic dash for safety when the woman detonates the bomb, which police say was hidden in her bra.

The bombings demonstrate how the rebels were suffering under a government offensive against their stronghold in northern Sri Lanka, security officials said.

"They were desperate and unable to face the security forces in the north," military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

On Thursday, troops killed four guerrilla fighters in a battle near the rebels' stronghold in northern Sri Lanka, the military said Friday. Four others were killed in two separate battles in the region.

Soldiers killed six other rebels, also on Thursday, in three separate clashes in the Vavuniya district, just south of rebel-controlled territory, the military said in a statement.

The ***Tamil Tigers*** have been fighting since 1983 to create a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's minority ethnic Tamils following decades of discrimination by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority.

The group, branded a terror organization by the U.S. and European Union, is responsible for more than 240 suicide bombings as well as scores of other deadly attacks.

Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan, who has not answered repeated calls from The Associated Press since the latest bombings Wednesday, could not be reached for comment on the new fighting.

Sri Lankan military kills 14 rebels in fighting in northern region

The death toll from the worst of the bombings at a department store in a Colombo suburb rose to 19 Thursday as two of the injured died from their wounds, security forces said. The earlier bombing at the Colombo offices of Social Services Minister Douglas Devananda killed one person, but left the minister unharmed.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the rebel attacks and called on both sides to return to peace talks. The U.S., in its condemnation of attacks on civilians, said "only a political solution, not a military one, offers a way out of the current cycle of escalating violence."

The European Union called on both sides to avoid civilian casualties.

Fearing the attacks Wednesday were only the first in a wave of bombings, the government canceled school for the rest of the week. It also cut train service from the northern town of Vavuniya to the capital in the belief that rebels were using the route to infiltrate Colombo.

The military, which already maintained a maze of checkpoints throughout the capital, sent more forces into the streets, and intelligence agencies were directed to redouble their efforts to prevent more attacks, government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella said.

Load-Date: December 1, 2007

End of Document

Dozens dead as Sri Lankan fighting escalates

Guardian.com

December 3, 2007

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theguardian

Length: 529 words

Highlight: Bitter fighting between Sri Lankan government soldiers and Tamil Tiger rebels intensifies

Body

Bitter fighting between Sri Lankan government soldiers and Tamil Tiger rebels claimed dozens of lives today.

The army said it had killed 37 rebels and lost six of its own soldiers in battles in the north of the country, which the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam claims as its homeland.

The worst violence was in the Mannar district just south of rebel-held territory.

The military spokesman, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, said guerrilla fighters attacked soldiers in an offensive aimed at recapturing land the military seized over the weekend. The military repelled the attack in a battle that left 35 rebels and six soldiers dead, he said.

Troops killed two rebel fighters in separate fighting in the Vavuniya district and discovered more than 400 anti-personnel mines in caches in the area, he said.

Over the weekend, attacks across the north resulted in the deaths of 56 rebels and six soldiers, according to reports from the military.

A rebel spokesman, Rasiah Ilanthirayan, said large battles had taken place in the north, but said the military's death tolls were inaccurate. He did not provide figures of his own, saying they were not yet available.

Meanwhile, Sri Lankan forces defused a bomb hidden in the garden of a heavily guarded Colombo residential building where many politicians live, the military said.

Nanayakkara said the 1.2kg (2.7lb) explosive - discovered by a resident - was presumed to be an assassination attempt on the air force chief, Air Marshall Roshan Goonetilleke, whose house is located nearby.

"There are so many senior officers living there - including parliamentarians, military officers - it is not possible to say who the target is. But we suspect they targeted the air force commander," he said.

The bomb attempt appeared to be part of a new wave of attacks by the rebels in the capital. The military said this showed how badly the rebels were suffering from the fighting in the north.

Dozens dead as Sri Lankan fighting escalates

Last Wednesday, a **female** suicide bomber killed one person in a government office in a failed attempt to kill a cabinet minister. Hours later, a bomb exploded at a suburban department store, killing 19 people. Authorities blamed the separatist **Tamil Tigers** for the attacks.

In his first comment on the matter since the bombings, Ilanthirayan denied the rebels were behind the attacks.

"We have nothing to do with that," he said.

European monitors said they feared civilian casualties were approaching the levels seen before a truce between the government and the rebels was signed five years ago. The 2002 Norwegian-brokered ceasefire has largely fallen apart and fighting has intensified again over the past two years, with a further escalation in the past few weeks.

Last week, in his annual Heroes Day speech, Velupillai Prabhakaran, the reclusive leader of the Tamil Tiger rebels, said that peace efforts were a waste of time and vowed to strike back at the island's "genocidal" government.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in 24 years of conflict. The rebels demand a separate homeland for ethnic minority Tamils in Sri Lanka's north and east, following what they claim has been historic discrimination under governments dominated by the majority Sinhalese.

Load-Date: December 3, 2007

Horror; Suicide bombing

Charleston Gazette (West Virginia)

December 16, 2007, Sunday

Copyright 2007 Charleston Newspapers

Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. P2C

Length: 565 words

Byline: Gzedit

Body

LAST week brought several more horrific bombings in the Islamic world. Sunday, a suicide car bomber killed a dozen people in northern Pakistan, where a pro-Taliban cleric is battling the Pakistani army.

Monday, another suicide "martyr" struck a school bus near Kamra, Pakistan, wounding five children.

Tuesday, two suicide volunteers drove an explosives-packed car into a United Nations complex in Algeria, killing at least 34 defenseless people.

Wednesday, three car bombs were detonated in the southern Iraqi city of Amarah - first a small bomb, then two larger ones to kill rescuers who rushed to help victims of the first blast. At least 41 Shiites died and 150 were wounded. Also Wednesday, a car bomb in Lebanon killed a top military commander and his driver.

Thursday, two suicide volunteers hit a military checkpoint in southern Pakistan, killing 10.

Saturday, another self-martyr killed five near an army school gate in northwest Pakistan.

Day after day, week after week, bombings by Muslim extremists - usually suicide martyrs - burst into the news. The attacks number in hundreds. Neighborhoods are shattered. Families are devastated. Commerce and prosperity are damaged. The massacres have become the most notorious aspect of Islam. The human loss is ruinous - and the motives behind the killing seem incomprehensible.

Why do fervent believers willingly throw away their lives to murder throngs of innocent civilians, including women and children? Why has this phenomenon blossomed since the 1980s, becoming the most conspicuous type of slaughter and the biggest danger in the 21st century?

"Predatory martyrdom" is a label for suicide bombing coined by author Hugh Barlow in his book, *Dead for Good: Martyrdom and the Rise of the Suicide Bomber*. Other books on the trend include: *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* by Robert Pape; *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* by Jessica Stern; *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* by Mia Bloom; *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom* by Mohammed Hafez; *The Shahids [martyrs]: Islam and Suicide Attacks* by Shaul Shay; *Suicide Terrorism* by Ami Pedahzur; and *Making Sense of Suicide Missions* by Diego Gambetta.

Although suicide attacks were known in the past - by the Assassins cult in the Middle East almost a millennium ago, and by Japanese kamikaze pilots in World War II - the modern pattern didn't arise until 1981, when a car bomb destroyed the Iraqi embassy in Beirut - followed by a similar attack on the U.S. embassy in April 1983, then by the

Horror Suicide bombing

historic double-bombing in October 1983 that killed 241 U.S. Marines in a Beirut barracks and 58 French soldiers nearby.

Surprisingly, the tactic soon was adopted by the Hindu **Tamil Tigers** in their rebellion against the Buddhist Sinhalese majority on the island of Sri Lanka. The Tigers fielded numerous **female** suicide bombers, including one who killed Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Ghandi.

Wikipedia says the world suffered an average of only five suicide bombings per year in the 1980s, but the toll rose to 81 in 2001 - the year of the historic strike against the World Trade Center and Pentagon using hijacked airliners - and the total soared to 460 in 2005.

It's nearly impossible for Western people to understand the traumatic new phenomenon of self-martyrdom. But it's an ugly reality that propels much of the daily news.

Load-Date: December 17, 2007

End of Document

Sri Lanka says rebels' torture chambers found, rebels say cells only held prisoners

Associated Press International

January 16, 2007 Tuesday 1:36 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 579 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lankan officials said Tuesday commandoes had found torture chambers at a captured rebel base, but the separatists said the cement cells were for holding prisoners and denied any torture had taken place.

Separately, five soldiers and two policemen were killed in two separate bomb blasts blamed on rebels in the volatile north.

The government provided no details to back its assertion that the insurgents used the cells to punish informers and people who tried escape their ranks.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam said the cells were used to hold captives from a breakaway rebel faction, Karuna, and that the facility was abandoned a year ago.

Both the government and Tigers have been accused of torturing and killing dissenters and opponents, and each side routinely accuses the other of committing heinous acts, allegations that are regularly denied and often nearly impossible to verify.

The latest report came late Monday when the ministry posted a statement on its Web site saying, "Torture chambers and lockups were established to torture escapees and informers, including women cadres" at a captured camp in the eastern district of Ampara.

The Web site had a photograph taken from outside the four cells, showing a cement structure with four small doorways covered by rusty gates.

Chief military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe said Tuesday that "five escapees who have surrendered have told (government) officers that the facility was being used by the rebels to punish dissidents."

But neither he nor the Web site report provided details.

The rebels said the report was part of a government propaganda campaign to discredit them.

"The Sri Lankan state is now in the process of tarnishing the image of our liberation organization," a rebel spokesman, Rasiiah Ilanthirayan, said from the insurgents' headquarters in the northern town of Kilinochchi.

Sri Lanka says rebels' torture chambers found, rebels say cells only held prisoners

Separately, fighting broke out in eastern Sri Lanka on Tuesday, killing a government soldier and wounding 15 others, the Defense Ministry said. The rebels said seven fighters were wounded in the ground battle in eastern Batticaloa province.

The chief military spokesman said government forces were advancing to capture rebel bases in the area to prevent the insurgents from attacking military camps.

As the Sri Lankan infantry advanced, the air force bombed a rebel camp in Verugal village, causing damage to the facility, the spokesman said. Verugal is under rebel control, but the military has smaller camps south of Verugal, which is in Batticaloa district.

Tamil Tiger spokesman Ilanthirayan confirmed the ground fighting and said seven rebels were wounded.

Also on Tuesday, two policemen were killed when suspected Tamil rebels triggered a roadside bomb in the government-held northern district of Vavuniya, Samarasinghe said.

About six hours later, also in Vavuniya, five soldiers were killed in a similar bomb blast.

Tamil Tigers set off the bomb targeting a group of army troops who were on a foot patrol, said acting military spokesman, Maj. Upali Rajapakse. The blast also wounded two soldiers.

The rebels have been fighting for more than 20 years for a separate homeland for the country's 3.1 million 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.

Defense Ministry Web site:

<http://www.nationalsecurity.lk>

Load-Date: January 17, 2007

Sri Lanka's military captures strategic rebel-held enclave; civilians flee

Associated Press International

January 19, 2007 Friday 11:55 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 592 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lankan military said on Friday that soldiers captured a strategic Tamil Tiger rebel-held enclave in the volatile east as intensified fighting forced thousands of Tamil civilians to flee from the area.

The U.N. refugee agency said Friday that an estimated 9,500 people started moving from rebel-held Vaharai to government-held areas.

"Forces have gained complete control over Vaharai, which was under the control of ***Tamil Tigers***," said military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe. Vaharai is in the eastern Batticaloa district, the scene of heavy fighting between government troops and Tamil Tiger rebels over the last few weeks.

"Vaharai is one of the strategic points for both sides," Samarasinghe said, adding that insurgents were now firing artillery at the army from pockets in the area. "We will clear those pockets also."

There was no immediate comment from the rebels.

Separately, the military said Tamil civilians were fleeing Vaharai.

A "large number of people" are arriving into government-controlled areas from Vaharai, Samarasinghe said. He did not give an exact number, but said there may be thousands of civilians.

The U.N. refugee agency said those civilians are reportedly fleeing intensified fighting as government forces advance on rebel positions.

"The area has seen months of heavy fighting," said spokesman Ron Redmond. "We call on both parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians and their freedom of movement."

The International Committee of the Red Cross confirmed that thousands of civilians are arriving the government-held areas.

"We are talking of thousands of civilians and it is too early to evaluate the numbers," ICRC spokesman Davide Vagnite said.

Sri Lanka 's military captures strategic rebel-held enclave; civilians flee

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

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

"Many women and children were fleeing on foot and bicycles," said TamilNet, adding that 200 tractors with fleeing civilians have reached Kajuwatte in Batticaloa, where there is an army camp.

Last week, United Nations said 15,000 Tamil civilians have been trapped by fighting in Vaharai. The government says about 20,000 civilians have moved into government-held areas to escape violence.

Earlier, the military accused rebels of using those 35,000 people as human shields to fire artillery at government forces.

Also Friday, the army killed nine Tamil separatists in a separate clash in the east.

Deputy Military spokesman Maj. Upali Rajapakse said the pre-emptive strike against the Tamils was conducted as they were preparing to attack army troops in the eastern district of Batticaloa. He said nine rebels were killed and 12 were wounded in the operation.

Clashes between the military and the Tamil rebels have recently been increasing in the Batticaloa region. At least four soldiers and 12 rebels died in fighting there Tuesday.

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

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 ethnic 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

Thousands of Tamil civilians brave flooded, mined jungle paths to flee Sri Lanka fighting

Associated Press International

December 17, 2006 Sunday 6:50 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 571 words

Byline: By GEMUNU AMARASINGHE, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: PETHALAI Sri Lanka

Body

About 3,000 Tamil civilians braved flooded, mine-laden jungle paths to flee from separatist fighting into government-held areas in eastern Sri Lanka, officials and witnesses said.

Sri Lankan **female** soldiers helped one of the refugees give birth to a baby boy at a military checkpoint, the military said Sunday.

"We have set up camps and are trying to provide all facilities to these people who are escaping from the clutches of the terrorists," military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe said Saturday, referring to Tamil Tiger separatist rebels.

Refugees who fled the area on Friday by sea told The Associated Press that they had been forcibly by the rebels, but had sneaked out when the guerrillas were distracted during artillery and gunfire exchanges with government troops.

The government accuses the rebels of holding civilians as human shields, a claim the Tigers deny. On Friday, the United Nations urged the rebels to let tens of thousands of Tamil civilians leave.

The government said Saturday that 17 camps have been set up and some schools have been turned into refugee centers.

There was no immediate comment from the rebels. Calls to their headquarters in Kilinochchi remained unanswered.

On Sunday, Samarasinghe said Sri Lankan **women** soldiers at a military checkpoint helped a fleeing Tamil woman named Latha give birth. Like some Tamils, Latha uses a single name.

"Our soldiers noticed the woman in pain and called our **women** soldiers, who realized that she was in a very advanced stage of pregnancy," military spokesman, Samarasinghe told the AP.

Samarasinghe said that Latha had become separated from her husband, Udaya Kumaran, as they fled, but that he had since been tracked down at a refugee camp and reunited with his wife.

Thousands of Tamil civilians brave flooded, mined jungle paths to flee Sri Lanka fighting

The refugees were fleeing rebel-held Vaharai village in eastern Batticaloa district, where there has been heavy fighting between government troops and Tigers in the past few weeks.

The U.N. call to let civilians leave came after boats carrying fleeing ethnic Tamil civilians capsized Friday in the eastern sea, killing at least eight people, according to the Sri Lankan military.

The pro-rebel Web site TamilNet said as many as 18 were feared killed. The rebels claim the government has sealed the only road out of the area.

Some of the refugees did use the road Saturday but many did not, saying they feared shelling.

Waterlogged jungle paths made the escape difficult. One refugee said he had to abandon his belongings to wade through waist-deep water.

The military said 2,790 civilians fled from rebel-held areas on Saturday.

"The total number of escapees, who were dismayed with the threats and harassment of the Tiger terrorists, is now 13,910 since Nov. 1," the Media Center for National Security said.

The U.N. said on Thursday that the 35,000 people trapped in Vaharai by the fighting were suffering under indiscriminate shelling.

The ***Tamil Tigers*** have been fighting the government since 1983, demanding a self-ruled homeland for Sri Lanka's 3.1 million minority Tamils, citing decades of discrimination by the majority Sinhalese-dominated state.

A Norwegian-brokered cease-fire officially still holds but more than 3,500 fighters and civilians have been killed in renewed fighting this year.

More than 65,000 people died in the conflict before the cease-fire.

On the Web:

Pro rebel Web site: <http://www.TamilNet.com>

Associated Press Writer Dilip Ganguly in Colombo contributed to this report.

Load-Date: December 18, 2006

12 killed in escalated fighting in Sri Lanka

Indo-Asian News Service

April 30, 2007 Monday 1:46 PM EST

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Length: 224 words

Byline: Indo-Asian News Service

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 30 -- At least 12 people were killed in northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka as fighting escalated between government troops and Tamil rebels, military officials said Monday.

Six persons including a Hindu priest were killed when the Sri Lankan Navy stormed a Hindu temple on an island off the northern Jaffna peninsula Sunday.

The military claimed five of them were rebels belonging to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) who had taken cover inside the temple and attacked the navy, which arrived at the location to carry out a search operation.

But the pro-rebel Tamilnet website said that six persons were killed when the navy carried out a search operation following an attack on a group of sailors on the previous day where a naval officer was killed on Kayts island, 420 km north of the capital.

There was no independent confirmation about the incident.

Six more suspected rebels, including three ***female*** cadres, were killed in a confrontation with the army in Welioya, 320 km northeast of the capital, Monday morning.

The military said they had recovered three weapons left behind by the rebels.

Fighting in the north and eastern parts of Sri Lanka has left over 4,000 dead and more than 200,000 displaced during the past 15 months.

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For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

Load-Date: April 30, 2007

Mother of all roles for Sharika's film debut

Evening News (Edinburgh)
September 23, 2006, Saturday
1 Edition

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Section: Pg. 15

Length: 523 words

Byline: Rosalind Gibb

Body

AN Edinburgh University worker is set to make her film debut in the role of her mother, a political activist who was assassinated in the street 17 years ago.

Sharika Thiranagama appears in *No More Tears, Sister* - to be screened at the Filmhouse on Tuesday- as her mother Rajani, gunned down in the Sri Lankan city of Jaffna in 1989.

The university lecturer was cycling home when she was shot three times in broad daylight outside her front door.

Nine-year-old Sharika and her 11-year-old sister Narmadha were in the house at the time and heard the gunshots outside. They fled the war-torn country with their father three months later.

Sharika said: "I decided to play her because the political climate in Sri Lanka meant it was too dangerous for an actress to play the role. Also, I look like her so it made sense from that point of view.

"It was very emotional playing her, more so than I thought it would be. My mother was very political and very passionate and though it is about one family it also highlights the political situation, which she would have wanted.

"The film takes her death as a starting point but it is mostly about life and all the work she did. She was seen as very independent, and stood up for ordinary people."

Sharika's mother was involved with a group of university lecturers who published a book called *The Broken Palmyrah*, detailing human rights abuses in north Sri Lanka. She was just 35 when she was murdered, her death attributed to the *Tamil Tigers*.

Sharika, now 26, said her memories of the months after her mother's death are a blur. On Christmas day 1989, she arrived in the UK with her father and sister and claimed asylum.

After living in East London, Sharika moved to Edinburgh three years ago to do a PhD on displacement in Sri Lanka, which she completed this summer.

She was approached in 2004 by director Helene Klodowsky, working for the National Film Board of Canada, who wanted to make a film about women's lives affected by war. *No More Tears, Sister* is a docu-drama, filmed in secret locations in Sri Lanka over a month.

Mother of all roles for Sharika's film debut

Sharika first saw the film at a screening in Toronto. "I didn't expect it to be as beautiful as it is," she said. "You never believe someone else can tell your story, but this was very much a collaborative project, and seeing the finished film was surprising and moving."

Now with a teaching and research position at Edinburgh University, Sharika said she finally feels like she has found a place to call home. "I'm used to a nomadic lifestyle but I love Edinburgh," she said. "When I step off the train at Waverley I feel like I've come home. I am looking forward to the screening on home territory, and friends coming along."

"But I can't forget Sri Lanka because it's the last thing I have of my mother. I have to be careful when visiting but I am privileged in a way because I can leave when I want - and that is not the case for most people there."

No More Tears, Sister is at the Filmhouse on Tuesday at 8.45pm. The screening will be followed by a discussion with Sharika, Vasuki Walker, Rajani's sister, Elidh Whiteford from Oxfam and Rosemary Burnett from Amnesty International.

Load-Date: September 25, 2006

End of Document

Military says 23 Tamil rebels killed in clash in eastern Sri Lanka

Associated Press International

April 3, 2007 Tuesday 2:25 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 549 words

Byline: By KRISHAN FRANCIS, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Government soldiers killed 23 separatist Tamil rebels during a fierce clash in eastern Sri Lanka as the army attempted to regain control of the area, the military said Tuesday.

The battle erupted late Monday while the soldiers were on an operation in the village of Unnichchai in the eastern Batticaloa district, military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe said.

The military has launched several attacks in recent weeks to capture rebel bases and regain control of the east of the island, part of the area the rebels claim for an independent homeland.

The military recovered 10 bodies of rebels and was preparing to hand them over to the guerrillas through the International Committee of the Red Cross, Samarasinghe said, adding that two soldiers were wounded in the clash.

Also on Tuesday, police commandoes shot and killed two rebels who attacked a police check point in the eastern town of Kalmunai, said Lt. Col. Upali Rajapakse of the Defense Ministry. One police officer was killed in the attack.

Separately, in the northern Vavuniya district, army troops killed two insurgents Monday evening, said Rajapakse, adding that assault rifles, detonators and a radio set were found with the bodies.

Rebel officials could not be reached for comment.

Heavy violence in recent days has included the rebels' first air raid, a naval battle, a suicide bombing, government airstrikes and a bomb blast on a bus that killed 16 people and wounded 25, as the tropical island edges toward a resumption of full-scale civil war.

The victims of the bus blast near the eastern town of Ampara on Monday were mostly from the country's Sinhalese ethnic majority, Samarasinghe said, blaming the Tamil rebels for the attack.

A Tamil Tiger spokesman, Rasiyah Ilanthirayan, denied their involvement and condemned the killing of innocent civilians.

"We believe that this was carried out by forces who are opposed to us to create a bad name for us when the SAARC meeting is being held in India," he said.

Military says 23 Tamil rebels killed in clash in eastern Sri Lanka

Leaders of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation, or SAARC, are meeting in India this week. The group consists of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, the Maldives, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

The Red Cross on Tuesday condemned the killing of civilians.

"The ICRC is deeply concerned about the rising number of civilians being injured or killed as a result of deliberate attacks in Sri Lanka's escalating violence," Toon Vandenhoove, the ICRC's head in Colombo said in statement.

"In recent months, men, women and children taking no part whatever in the hostilities have been the victims of shells and bombs."

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

Tamil rebels have fought the government since 1983 to create an independent homeland for the country's 3.1 million Tamil minority after decades of discrimination.

A Norwegian-brokered cease-fire signed in 2002 temporarily ended more than two decades of fighting. More than 4,000 people have been killed since violence flared again in late 2005, though both sides still claim to abide by the agreement.

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

Load-Date: April 3, 2007

Heroines emerge from the devastation

South China Morning Post

January 3, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 13

Length: 591 words

Byline: Lo Wing-lok

Body

The Taiwan earthquake, on the second anniversary of the South Asia tsunami, is a timely reminder that the risk of another tsunami is real and could even be imminent. Has the world been doing enough in the past two years to mitigate damage and human suffering should another such disaster occur?

The answer is "no". For example, the much-needed and much-talked-about early warning system for the countries at the rim of the Indian Ocean has not been set up. This is a human failure at the highest level, which no amount of money, alone, can remedy.

If world leaders and local politicians are failing people in the tsunami-affected countries, the remarkable recovery of many of the devastated communities is the result of the hard work of the people themselves. Among them, women stand out as deserving the highest praise and recognition. I have been travelling to the tsunami sites in India's southern Tamil Nadu state and in Sri Lanka, as a representative of Oxfam Hong Kong. The most impressive thing I have seen is the strength and resilience of South Asian women in the face of immense adversity.

These women have long been disadvantaged compared with men in access to education, jobs, choice of spouse and property ownership, to name a few areas. Many more women died in the tsunami than men. They lacked the muscle power to flee fast enough from the advancing waters, and more women than men were caught inside when the tsunami hit their homes. Yet, in every village I visited, the women stood out as the most important force in holding families together, safeguarding health and restoring the livelihood of their communities.

In Sri Lanka, women were trained and encouraged by community development agencies, such as Oxfam, to speak out and protect their own rights in the restoration process. For example, they protested against the exclusion of women from land titles.

Well over 50 per cent of the Sri Lankan beneficiaries of Oxfam's livelihood programmes are women. They received training and funding in starting small businesses in diverse areas such as making dresses and bricks, poultry farming and selling fish and vegetables.

HIV/Aids education has become an important part of the post-tsunami health programmes provided by community development agencies. It teaches women to protect themselves by refusing to submit to the high-risk behaviour of men - which in turn will protect their offspring and the men, as well.

Heroines emerge from the devastation

Meanwhile, since April last year, fighting has resumed between the Sri Lankan army and the **Tamil Tigers**. Once again, tsunami survivors were displaced from their temporary settlements. Instead of working on the much-needed sustainable development of communities, agencies were required to switch back to providing emergency relief.

In Indonesia, despite the remarkable restoration of Aceh, 25,000 families remain homeless. Ten thousand of them owned land that was either severely damaged or became submerged.

Building new housing has fared no better along the coastline of southern India. Only 20 per cent of the housing being built as tsunami relief was scheduled to be finished by the end of last year, according to Oxfam.

The billions of dollars set aside for tsunami relief, by themselves, clearly will not provide comprehensive relief for the affected areas. Instead, the eventual solution has to come from the affected people and the governments concerned.

Dr Lo Wing-lok is a committee member of Oxfam Hong Kong and vice-chairman of the League of Social Democrats

Load-Date: January 3, 2007

End of Document

Claymore causes carnage in Sri Lanka hinterland

Agence France Presse -- English

June 15, 2006 Thursday 2:28 PM GMT

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Length: 513 words

Dateline: KEBITIGOLLEWA, Sri Lanka, June 15 2006

Body

The crowded bus was ferrying mothers and children to a free medical clinic in central Sri Lanka, but many ended up in a make-shift morgue after a landmine blast by suspected Tamil rebels.

The yellow and green bus, meant to carry only 60 passengers, was already loaded with more than 160 passengers and slowly crossing an area known for wild elephants when the bomb ripped it apart.

"According to the bus crew, they had issued 164 tickets, but it is possible there were more people travelling," a police official at the scene told AFP.

A heap of slippers and shoes lay among the blood-soaked floorboards of the bus. The driver's side of the bus was peppered with shrapnel holes made by hundreds of pellets packed into the Claymore mines.

A 67-year-old woman said all she heard was a huge explosion and remembers the bus toppling.

"That's all I can remember," she said amid sobs. "There were dead bodies all around me."

M. Jayawardene, an elderly farmer, said his daughter was among those killed in the blast.

"She had got into the bus a few minutes before it was hit. I came here when I heard the explosion. I clambered into the bus. There were people fallen everywhere and I saw my daughter's body and pulled it out."

A schoolboy was too upset to speak. He was still in shock. Other survivors said his mother and two sisters were among those killed.

A rural hospital waiting room was turned into morgue to cope with the 58 bodies of men, women and children killed in Thursday's blast which also wounded 80. Six of them later succumbed to their injuries.

Police believe there were two mines set up to target the bus as it made its way through a thinly-populated area just four kilometres (two-and-a-half miles) from its final destination, the village of Kebitigollewa.

Usually motorists are wary about driving in these parts of the country fearing attacks from wild elephants.

Claymore causes carnage in Sri Lanka hinterland

The government said Thursday's bombing was the work of Tamil Tigers. The guerrillas denied the allegation, but hundreds of ethnic Sinhalese in neighbouring areas here moved to the main government school fearing more attacks from the rebels.

"A 12-year-old girl was taken to hospital just now," media minister Anura Yapa told AFP as the military transported a group of journalists to the scene of the carnage.

There was an unusual number of children and women packed into the bus because they were travelling to the rural hospital here for the weekly free clinics conducted by government doctors.

Another group of about 50 people was also travelling in the bus to attend the funeral of a home guard shot dead by Tamil Tiger rebels on Wednesday. Only a few of the mourners survived.

Police poured some 500 constables to the area to step up security after President Mahinda Rajapakse visited here to meet with the survivors and the mourners.

"I am not going to allow this to happen again," he said as he walked out of the hospital morgue where he was shown the remains of the victims.

It was the worst attack against civilians in Sri Lanka since the July 1996 bombing of a commuter train here in which 70 people were killed.

Load-Date: June 16, 2006

Jammu-based journalist wins EU prize

Indo-Asian News Service

March 11, 2006 Saturday 2:02 PM EST

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Length: 571 words

Byline: Indo-Asian News Service

Dateline: Brussels

Body

Brussels, March 11 -- Luv Puri, the Jammu-based journalist for The Hindu, has been awarded the European Union's Natali Prize for articles on human rights and democracy.

Puri, 26, won the third prize for his article published in The Hindu, "In an alien land". The story was a poignant account of two Pakistani boys who had crossed the India-Pakistan border and had landed in the Kot Bhalwal Jail with a group of terrorists.

"I wanted to highlight that, well, there has been animosity which exists between the two counties and this issue of repatriation should be handled strictly from a humanitarian perspective," Puri told INEP after the glittering award ceremony at the Salvoy Bibliotheque Friday.

"I was able to get in the jail through my sources, interview them and bring out the reality. This is not the place for the children to be locked up with the terrorists."

Speaking about his award, he said: "This inspires you to continue your work keeping in mind respect for human rights and democracy. India is known for its democracy."

In response to a question on the Indian media focusing more on infotainment, Puri said: "You have to dish out the serious stuff. Serious journalism has an effect on policy making."

Puri said his despatches, which had inspired a series of reports in the electronic media, were not welcome at first, but have made a difference. "It was an humble effort. There are many reporters carrying on this effort on both sides of the border and efforts on both sides have definitely made a difference."

Sri Lankan journalist Wijedasa Namini won the "grand prix" of the Natali Prize for her report, "Blatant relentless child recruitment", on the recruitment of children as soldiers by the Tamil Tigers.

Namini, who was chosen from 15 nominees for the top prize by a jury, said: "The standards of journalism in our subcontinent were any way quite high, so this just emphasises that we have been maintaining high standards through out."

Yusuf Huma from Pakistan won the second prize for her article on physical abuse of Pakistani women, "In the wake of violence", published in the Herald Magazine.

Jammu-based journalist wins EU prize

The Natali Prize was established by the European Commission in 1992 to promote quality journalism and to commemorate the dedication of former vice-president of the European Commission, Lorenzo Natali.

It comprises five regional prizes: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Arab World, Lebanon and Israel.

This year, the prize attracted a record interest, with 996 nominees from 138 countries. The 15 prize winners were selected by an independent jury drawn from representatives of organisations such as Reporters sans Frontières, Amnesty International, World Association of Newspapers and major newspapers and press agencies.

Each winner received a trophy and a financial award - 5,000 Euros for the first prize, 2,500 Euros for the second prize and 1,500 Euros for the third prize. Another prize of 5,000 Euros was awarded for the best article.

EU commissioner for development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, presented the awards to the winners and expressed his strong support for journalists' rights in suppressive regimes.

"We share your indignation and stand shoulder to shoulder with you in your battle. This kind of intellectual accuracy is necessary for democracy."

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Load-Date: March 12, 2006

World Ticker

The Toronto Star
March 26, 2006 Sunday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A15

Length: 580 words

Body

United States

Six shot dead at Seattle house party

A man shot and killed six people he was partying with in a Seattle home yesterday before taking his own life with a sawed-off shotgun, police said.

The seven killed were all teens or in their 20s, and male and female. Two more people were wounded, one critically, in the shooting at 7 a.m. in a residential neighbourhood. "The scene was chaotic," said Seattle police Sgt. Deanna Nollette.

Fifteen other people who were partying at the house witnessed the shooting, she said. Police converged on the scene after reports of gunshots and found the suspect chasing one victim, who staggered from the home. When confronted, the suspect turned the gun on himself, police said.

Nigeria

Asylum ending for deposed Liberian

Nigeria announced yesterday it will end the asylum of deposed Liberian dictator Charles Taylor and hand him over to the Liberian government for trial.

Taylor, a warlord-turned-president who ruled over a country shattered by civil war, was indicted by the U.N.-backed Special Court in neighbouring Sierra Leone in 2003 for war crimes in Sierra Leone during a 10-year insurgency there. But the court was unable to arrest Taylor, who was granted safe haven in Nigeria in a deal to end 14 years of civil war in Liberia. Newly elected Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf recently said that ending Taylor's asylum was an important part of bringing stability to Liberia.

Iraq

Leaders urged to rein in their militias

The U.S. ambassador yesterday urged Iraq's divided leaders to rein in militias as political blocs struggled again to break a deadlock on forming a unity government that they hope can avert civil war. Zalmay Khalilzad, who is pressing hard for a government more than three months after elections, issued a tough warning on the militias, many of which have ties to powerful Shiite leaders and are entrenched in Iraqi security forces and police. Meanwhile, U.S. Senators John McCain and Russell Feingold, visiting Baghdad yesterday, told Iraqi leaders

World Ticker

American patience was growing thin and they needed to urgently overcome their stalemate and form a national unity government.

Sri Lanka

Six rebels die in fishing boat blast

Suspected **Tamil Tigers** blew up their fishing boat yesterday to avoid capture by a navy patrol off the western coast of Sri Lanka, leaving six rebels dead and eight sailors missing, the Sri Lankan military said.

The incident was the most serious since government and rebel negotiators met last month to try and salvage a four-year-old ceasefire.

Top rebel leader Seevaratnam Puleedevan said the Tigers had "no involvement at all" with the blast, and suggested the fishing boat could have belonged to a smuggling gang.

Eleven sailors aboard the damaged navy boat were rescued after the blast, but eight were still missing yesterday.

Vatican City

Pope pleads for Afghan's freedom

Pope Benedict has written to Afghan President Hamid Karzai asking that charges be dropped against Abdur Rahman, 40, who is facing a possible death sentence for converting from Islam to Christianity, the Vatican said yesterday.

The appeal was sent in the pope's name by Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Angelo Sodano, who told Karzai the pope's appeal was inspired by "profound human compassion."

Sodano told Karzai in the letter that dropping the charges would help "in a most significant way ... to foster mutual understanding and respect among the world's different religions and cultures."

FROM the STAR's WIRE SERVICES

Load-Date: March 26, 2006

Protecting the persecuted

Ottawa Citizen

April 14, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A14

Length: 525 words

Byline: The Ottawa Citizen

Body

The Conservatives recently scored a quiet but significant victory for human rights. Let's hope it sets the tone for the duration of their government.

Lu Decheng may not be a household name in Canada, but he's a reason for every Canadian to be proud.

In 1989 Mr. Lu stood in Tiananmen Square and threw eggshells full of paint at a portrait of Mao Tse-tung. For that, he was jailed for nine years. He escaped from China in 2004 but landed in a detention centre in Thailand. Canadians should be proud because Canada granted him asylum and persuaded reluctant Thai authorities to let him leave.

Several days ago Mr. Lu arrived safely in Vancouver, en route to his final destination of Calgary. The government did the right thing on our behalf, and found a home for a bona fide political refugee.

Canada prides itself on advocating for human rights around the world. In practice, though, clear victories such as the story of Lu Decheng are infrequent. Political allegiances and economic interests too often get in the way of moral action. Standing up for human rights requires patience, diplomacy and compromise. It is seldom glorious and often inconvenient. And it is absolutely the right thing to do.

The federal Liberals can boast a few real human-rights experts, including Irwin Cotler and Michael Ignatieff. But it's easier to rail from the sidelines than to make decisions, as Mr. Cotler knows.

The Conservatives' first steps show they are not content to delegate human-rights advocacy to the Opposition. Their decisive action on the **Tamil Tigers** suggests they pay attention to human-rights reports. The new government is finding its voice in the world, and finding it quickly.

The real test for Canada will be its allies. It's easy to denounce Zimbabwe or North Korea. It's much more difficult to criticize the new governments in Afghanistan and Iraq. In Afghanistan, where Canadian troops are fighting to create a stable society, wishful thinking can turn the good guys into saints. But saints are rare: The recent case of the Christian convert in Afghanistan shows just how much work remains to be done before that country can be trusted to respect human rights.

One of Canada's foreign-policy priorities should be the aid and protection of **women** in Afghanistan. This is not only a humanitarian duty: The participation of **women** is vital to the democratizing process. **Women**'s rights are under

Protecting the persecuted

attack in other countries, too, especially in the Middle East and Africa. Journalists and political dissidents are in danger all over the world. Prisoners are tortured and children are recruited to kill. There is much work to do.

Above all, Canada must do no harm. When the Maher Arar report comes out at the end of the summer, the government should address the question of how to balance national security and international co-operation with the rights of citizens.

This government's throne speech defined Canadian values as "freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights." Respect for every individual is at the heart of conservatism. These Conservatives can show their truest colours by speaking strongly in defence of human rights everywhere in the world.

Load-Date: April 14, 2006

End of Document

Suicide bomber attacks Sri Lanka's top military commander, 8 dead, 27 injured

Associated Press International

April 25, 2006 Tuesday 12:30 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 523 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A **female** Tamil Tiger suicide bomber pretending to be pregnant to conceal explosives set off a bomb Tuesday in front of a car that was taking Sri Lanka's top military general inside the army headquarters, the military said.

The blast killed eight people and injured 27 others, military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe said.

"A powerful blast activated by a woman Tamil Tiger suicide bomber claimed the lives of several army and civil personnel," the army said in a statement.

The commander of the army, Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka, suffered serious abdominal injuries, a hospital official said.

He was operated on by 10 surgeons and his condition was stable, said Dr. Hector Weerasinghe of Colombo's National Hospital.

The bomber died on the spot, but it was not clear whether she was included in the figure of eight dead given by Samarasinghe.

Fonseka, a battle-hardened soldier with 35 years in the infantry, was appointed to the top post after President Mahinda Rajapakse took office in November.

The victims included civilians who visit the army headquarters complex in Colombo to meet relatives, Samarasinghe said.

The attack was certain to put further pressure on the country's four-year-old cease-fire, which has been threatened by rising violence that has killed at least 89 people this month, including at least 43 soldiers or police.

The woman was able to enter the area by presenting fake identification and saying she had an appointment for a pregnancy examination at the army hospital located inside the complex, said other officials, speaking on condition of anonymity due to military regulations.

"I saw a fireball as I came out of my saloon," said S.A. Weerasinghe, who works in the military saloon, which is also inside the sprawling complex.

Suicide bomber attacks Sri Lanka 's top military commander, 8 dead, 27 injured

Top Sri Lankan military officials work in the headquarters, which is protected by fences and troops guarding all entry points.

There was no claim of responsibility. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rarely take credit for such attacks.

The rebels are known for their deadly suicide bombers, called Black Tigers.

The first suicide attack by the guerrillas was in July 1987, when a rebel known as Captain Miller drove a truckload of explosives into a military camp, killing 40 soldiers.

Since then, 240 other rebels have blown themselves up in attacks that have killed Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa, former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and dozens of others.

In earlier violence late Monday, suspected rebels in a hijacked bus opened fire on soldiers when their vehicle was blocked at a checkpoint in northern Sri Lanka, drawing return fire that killed the driver, the military said.

The passengers on the bus believed to be three or four Tamil Tiger rebels escaped following the brief gunbattle in Jaffna, said Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe.

Last week, the rebels backed out of peace talks scheduled to start Monday in Geneva, citing attacks on ethnic Tamil civilians and other disputes with the government.

The **Tamil Tigers** are demanding a separate Tamil homeland and accuse the Sinhalese-dominated government of discrimination. A Norwegian-brokered cease-fire halted the war in 2002.

Load-Date: April 26, 2006

End of Document

In Focus

The Gazette (Montreal)

April 11, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A2

Length: 511 words

Byline: The Gazette

Body

Hamis works to end rise in Gaza violence

The new Hamas-led Palestinian government is quietly working to end a surge in violence, urging rival militant groups in the Gaza Strip to refrain from launching rockets at Israel without official permission. Yesterday, an 8-year-old Palestinian girl was killed when an Israeli artillery shell hit her house in northern Gaza.

Thirteen others were wounded, ranging from one to 17 years. Details, Page A18

Iraq unity talks stalled

Shiite politicians failed yesterday to persuade Sunni and Kurdish leaders to soften their opposition to Ibrahim al-Jaafari as the next prime minister, leaving the Shiites with little choice but to replace him if they want to break the deadlock on a new Iraqi government. Details, Page A20

Freed reporter returns

Freelance journalist Frederick Lavoie arrived in Montreal yesterday looking relaxed and unfazed by his 15 days in a Belarus prison. Lavoie said he hopes his time in jail has raised awareness about the restrictions on freedom of expression in that country. Details, Page A7

Farrell ran The Gazette

Mark Farrell, the left-leaning, public-spirited publisher of The Gazette for four years in the early 1970s and of the Windsor Star before then, died of pneumonia at his home in Morrisville, Vt., on Thursday.

He was 93. Details, Page A7

Chief justice backs reform

Canada's chief justice has thrown her substantial support behind a new system of politicians publically vetting Supreme Court contenders, saying recent hearings gave Canadians a chance to learn more about the judges. Details, Page A12

Feds: No Tigers allowed

In Focus

The Conservative government has listed the **Tamil Tigers** as a banned terrorist organization, bringing Canada in line with its international allies. Details, Page A12

Business

Point Zero streamlines

At a time when Montreal fashion companies are packing it in, downsizing or moving in search of tax breaks, Point Zero is planting deeper roots than ever in the

Cite de la Mode. Details, Page B1

Labour shortage looms

With Canada on the eve of a major retirement boom and facing critical labour shortages, Ottawa should gradually raise the age of eligibility for the Canada/Quebec pension plans to 65 from the current 60, says a major think tank. Details, Page B1

sports

Full circle for Kennedy

Sheldon Kennedy, who rocked the hockey world a decade ago when he charged his former coach Graham James with sexual abuse, has emerged from the shadows of abuse and drug and alcohol addiction. Details, Page C1

McGill taps top athletes

Redmen goalie Mathieu Poitras and Mart-lets soccer defender Shari Fraser have been named McGill's men's and **women's** athletes of the year. Details, Page C5

Youth Zone

Teens shoot the works

With easy access to digital video cameras and editing software, students are getting into making movies - and they're finding audiences on the Web. Details, Page C8

Arts & Life

Before you bike to work

People looking to leave the car in the driveway and take their bikes to work need to check out the four "spokes" first: framework, foundation, fuelling up and fashion. Details, Page D4

Graphic

Photo: (Hamas works to end rise in Gaza violence)

Load-Date: April 11, 2006

Sri Lankan navy sinks 11 rebel ships, killing about 70, official says

Associated Press International

September 25, 2006 Monday 10:36 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 519 words

Byline: By RUWAN WEERAKOON, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka's navy sank 11 Tamil Tiger rebel ships loaded with troops and weapons early Monday during a five-hour sea battle off the country's east coast, killing about 70 separatists, a top navy official said.

It was one of the largest clashes in Sri Lanka's conflict since weeks of fighting in August left hundreds dead. The latest fighting began late Sunday night when the navy spotted 25 rebel ships sailing south.

Navy Cmdr. D.K.P. Dassanayake said more than 70 rebels were killed on ships believed to have been transporting arms and ammunition to reinforce the Tigers in the east. The navy attacked with battleships and gunboats, he said.

The remaining 14 rebel boats retreated after the hostilities just off the coast of the eastern town of Pulmoddai, about 225 kilometers (140 miles) from the capital Colombo, he said.

One navy vessel was damaged, injuring five sailors, but made it back to port, he said.

An officer at the Defense Ministry's press office said the third in command of the Tigers' sea wing, known by the single name Seliyan, may have been killed in the battle.

Seliyan's boat was among those badly damaged, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to speak to the media.

The official said Seliyan was thought to have been seriously injured or killed because he stopped communications in the midst of the battle.

The rebels could not be reached for comment.

It was the latest in a series of military setbacks for the **Tamil Tigers** in recent weeks after losing territory to government forces in the north and the east.

More than 100 rebels were killed in two separate sea battles earlier this month along the same stretch of coast.

The Sri Lankan navy was returning nearly 1,000 Tamil civilians to the embattled northern Jaffna Peninsula on Monday. They have been stranded since fighting broke out on Aug. 12.

Sri Lankan navy sinks 11 rebel ships, killing about 70, official says

Foreign mediators are struggling to keep alive a four-year-old Norwegian-brokered cease-fire accord, which has unraveled amid clashes that have killed at least 1,000 combatants and more than 100 civilians since July.

The Tamil rebels began fighting in 1983 for a separate homeland in the north and east for Sri Lanka's largest ethnic minority. They have suffered defeats on both fronts in the recent escalation and vowed to retake land lost to the government.

Farther down the eastern coast, thousands of Muslims were fleeing the port town of Muttur, after the distribution of leaflets warning of an imminent rebel attack.

About 1,400 of them, including women and children, sought shelter on the nearby island of Kinniyai, while many more were prevented from leaving by authorities who said they had nothing to fear.

The exodus forced many to abandon observances of the Islamic fasting month, Ramadan, which began in Sri Lanka on Sunday.

It was the second time since August that the mostly Muslim residents of Muttur, about 230 kilometers (140 miles) east of Colombo, have fled the town. They had returned home just two weeks ago after having been driven out by fighting between government forces and Tamil Tiger rebels, which killed an unknown number of civilians.

Load-Date: September 26, 2006

News Items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua (Part II)

Xinhua General News Service

March 8, 2006 Wednesday 12:30 PM EST

Copyright 2006 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS

Length: 654 words

Dateline: HONG KONG

Body

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

Major foreign exchange rates in Sri Lanka

Bangkok Rubber Price

HK foreign currency reserve assets hit 125.7b USD

Dollar trades in upper 117 yen level in Tokyo

Two guerrillas killed in clash in central Nepal

Rebel **Tamil Tigers** delegation back home after talks with government

Foreign exchange rates in Hong Kong -- March 7

Philippine military detains another officer involved in destabilization

Hong Kong stocks close down sharply -- March 7

Singapore shares end sharply lower

Foreign exchange rates in Singapore

Colombo stocks close down

S.Korea approves ordinance on reducing screen quota for local films

Gold price lower in Hong Kong -- March 7

Foreign exchange rates in Vietnam

Foreign exchange rates in New Zealand

Thai bourse down 12.45 points

6,000 Vietnamese **women**, children trafficked abroad in 2005

News Items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua (Part II)

U.S. energy secretary to visit Pakistan

Weather information for Asia-Pacific cities -- March 7

Global relocation company sets up Asian office in HK

Australian dollar finishes weaker

Trading on Hong Kong Stock Exchange -- March 7

Japan considers fingerprinting foreign visitors

Australian stock market ends lower

Vietnam stock market ends higher

Jakarta stocks close lower

Malaysian stock market edges higher

Roundup: HK filmmakers joy in Lee Ang's success in Oscar

Hang Seng China Enterprises Index lower -- March 7

BBC correspondent expelled from Pakistan's tribal region

Xinhua summary of Asia-Pacific stocks news at 1100 GMT, March 7

Philippine president asks media not to be seditious

Thai protesters rally at Singapore Embassy

India releases separation plan of nuclear facilities, 14 in civilian list

Indonesian central bank retains rate at 12.75 pct

India pledges to put civilian nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards

Indonesian businesspeople told to catch China, India in global trade

Foreign exchange rates in Malaysia

Taiwan employed female population up 7.2 percent: Survey

Cambodia, Vietnam to further strengthen bilateral relations

Indonesia to raise LNG price for industry soon

Fitch forecasts economic growth in Asia to slow down this year

HK MTR patronage hits record high of 867 million

UN says Nepali women bear brunt of war

Nepal ready for IT exhibition

Japan, U.S. to jointly test interceptor technology

Philippine international reserves hit all-time high

News Items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua (Part II)

HK, Guangdong health experts to collaborate in bird flu lab testing

Japanese film festival begins in Myanmar

Thai Cabinet approves budget for election

Thailand joins regional study on bird flu in humans

Thai police reinforce security at Singapore Embassy

U.S. commander arrives in Pakistan

Provincial governor escapes unhurt from roadside bomb in E. Afghanistan

Taiwan women of different generation differ in career preference: Survey

Information of H5N1-infected birds listed on HK website

India, Pakistan to discuss enhancing flight frequencies

Philippine economic performance in 2005 positive: IMF

Indian president to visit Myanmar, Mauritius

12 killed in blasts in central India

New desalination technologies to increase water supply in Singapore

Southern Philippine province to declare state of calamity because of flood

4 killed, 7 injured in accident in western Nepal

India targets bio-diesel for energy security

ADB studies ways to improve city management in developing countries in Asia-Pacific

10 dead, 7 injured, 40 missing in accident in central Nepal

Singapore takes measures to save energy, reduce pollution

Singapore, St. Vincent to strengthen ties

Taliban sets fire on administration building and school in central Afghanistan

Asia's first biomedical quality control testing facility opened in Singapore

Load-Date: March 8, 2006

In Short

The Irish Times

August 11, 2006 Friday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 10

Length: 551 words

Body

Other stories from around the world in brief

Bloody battles for UK troops in Afghanistan

LONDON - British soldiers in Afghanistan are engaged in fighting that is more intense and prolonged than any other conflict during the past 50 years, the British commander of all foreign troops in Afghanistan has warned.

Some soldiers will be withdrawn from the region of southern Afghanistan where they have engaged in bloody battles with the Taliban, Lieut Gen David Richards told the BBC yesterday. He said the British soldiers would be replaced by Afghans. - (Guardian service)

1.5m people flee typhoon in China

BEIJING - The most powerful typhoon to strike China for half a century tore into one of the country's manufacturing heartlands yesterday, killing at least two people, injuring 80 and forcing the evacuation of 1.5 million residents.- (Guardian service)

Tamil Tigers say army killed 50

KANTALE - Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels have said that more than 50 civilians have been killed and 200 wounded in their territory in the island's east during a major army offensive to capture a water supply.

An ammunition dump exploded at an army camp east of the government-held town of Kantale, one of the main eastern artillery sites. The army said yesterday it feared many troops had died or had been wounded. - (Reuters)

Locals try to block neo-Nazi hotel

BERLIN - Residents in the small town of Delmenhorst in Lower Saxony are frantically trying to raise EUR 3.4 million to buy a hotel before it is taken over by an extremist organisation that reportedly plans to use it as a neo-Nazi rallying point.

The ultra-right group is led by Jürgen Rieger, a Hamburg lawyer and well-known neo-Nazi who has defended prominent Holocaust deniers and leads an annual rally in Bavaria in honour of Rudolf Hess. - (Guardian service)

Two held in US on Hizbullah charges

In Short

CHICAGO - Two 20-year- old men arrested in Ohio and found with airport security information and airline passenger lists were being held on state charges of money laundering on behalf of Hizbullah, authorities said.

Ali Houssaiky and Osama Abulhassan, of Dearborn, Michigan, were apprehended during a traffic stop in Marietta, Ohio, on Tuesday. - (Reuters)

Ethiopian floods death toll rises

ADDIS ABABA - The death toll from flash floods that hit an eastern Ethiopian town rose to 254 yesterday as rescuers widened their search for 250 people still missing, police said. - (Reuters)

Lobster claws back missing cash

PLYMOUTH - Swimmer Paul Westlake thought he had seen the last of his wallet when it vanished during a late-night dip - until it turned up in the claws of a lobster.

The 30-year-old's wallet was handed in a few days later by a diver - who had caught the lobster and found the creature firmly grasping it. Mr Westlake told the Plymouth Evening Herald newspaper: "I have never eaten a lobster and I never will now." - (Reuters)

Man made 37,760 silent phone calls

TOKYO - A Japanese man was arrested this week after making 37,760 silent calls to directory inquiries because he wanted to listen to the "kind" voices of female telephone operators.

The 44-year-old has admitted to allegations of obstructing the operations of Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp by making up to 905 calls a day from his mobile phone, the daily Mainichi Shimbun reported yesterday. - (Reuters)

Load-Date: August 11, 2006

Bringing new hope where the tsunami washed away lives

Hull Daily Mail

July 16, 2005

Default Edition

© Copyright 2005 Hull Daily Mail

Section: Features; Books; Celebinterviews; Pg. 5

Length: 538 words

Body

Sri Lanka was hit by the Tsunami at 8.30am on December 26, 2004. At least 30,000 people were killed. The survivors face the hardship of rebuilding lives from nothing.

In one coastal village they will be helped by a fund set up by the Rotary Club of Hull.

ON BOXING Day morning, millions of people in Sri Lanka were going about their normal lives.

Fishermen were heading out on their boats, children were playing, women were setting about chores and people headed off to worship.

But unknown to the country's 19 million citizens, thousands of miles away in the Indian Ocean an earthquake was tearing the Earth's surface apart.

At 8.30am, life as they knew it for people in coastal communities was washed away forever.

Six tsunami waves battered the unsuspecting people on the eastern and southern coasts with 100 billion gallons of water, killing 30,000 outright and making 835,000 homeless.

It was a tragedy the world struggled to comprehend.

In the region of Batticaloa, parents became childless within seconds, men saw their wives die, children saw their parents die and communities were wiped out.

Once-idyllic Sri Lanka now faces an enormous task to rebuild itself. Seven months on, more than 10,000 people in Batticaloa are still living in refugee camps.

One Western volunteer told how a family with seven children was living in a hut just big enough for them all to sleep, with no toilet.

Their story is not uncommon. Shocking pictures taken by news agencies show another family returning to the shell of their former home.

A little girl stands among the bricks that once made up her bedroom while her mother recovers a petticoat from their shattered homestead.

Bringing new hope where the tsunami washed away lives

Fisherman Rajan Kanaharathnam once employed 40 people and had 17 fishing boats. All that is left of his livelihood is a few ripped nets. He said: "We will never recover this loss. Before this we were happy and we enjoyed our life. Now life is terrible.

"We have only the clothes we were wearing on that day and items given to us in the camp. It would take 25 years to get enough money to have the house I lost." Faces of children still missing are posted on the website of the Eastern University in Sri Lanka. Even now, parents hold out hopes against the odds.

A message on the university website reads: "Unlike the other disasters in Sri Lanka, the tsunami has left not only sorrow and despair, but questions for which there are no answers." More than £13bn of aid has been donated since the tsunami hit 13 countries on that fateful day.

But for the locals in Batticaola, help is only now starting to get through. Rows between the rebel ***Tamil Tigers*** and the Sri Lankan government meant an agreement on how aid should be spent was only made a matter of weeks ago.

That is why individual projects such as Hull Rotary Club's mean more than a faceless cheque.

In another touching Internet message from the battered area, Western survivor Paul Hogan writes: "No matter how besieged we are, we now know we are not alone. We are digging through the rubble and amid all the grief and horror we are finding our heart." j.boulton@hdmf.co.uk Links BBC tsunami reports news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/world/2004/asia_quake_disaster/default.stm Eastern University www.eusl.info

Load-Date: July 17, 2005

News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Xinhua General News Service
June 24, 2005 Friday 1:30 PM EST

Copyright 2005 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS

Length: 585 words

Dateline: HONG KONG

Body

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

Indonesian police detain truck loaded with ammunition

Foreign exchange rates in Malaysia

Dollar edges down in upper 108 yen range in Tokyo

Trading on Hong Kong stock exchange -- June 23

Injured HK aid worker to be sent to Singapore for treatment

Japanese PM marks Battle of Okinawa anniversary

Next Thai-Singapore PM retreat to be held in Chiang Mai

Malaysia Stock Exchange closes lower

Thai bourse up 6.56 points

Jakarta stocks end higher

Singapore's CPI in May sees no change on year

Singapore, Kuwait finish third round of FTA talks

Xinhua summary of Asia-Pacific stocks news at 1100 GMT, June 23

Indonesian Air Force plans to buy 12 Russian jet fighters

Inter-Korean ministerial talks adopts joint statement

5 Philippine military officers injured in helicopter crash landing

More than 100 Taliban killed in south Afghanistan in three days

Australian dollar closes weaker

News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Sri Lanka Muslims promised to be represented in Tsunami Relief Council

Australia's Nationals party has new leader

One policeman, six dacoits killed in encounter in eastern Pakistan

Australian stock market closes lower

Sri Lankan JVP calls for demonstration against aid deal with **Tamil Tigers**

Regional forum, exhibition for Chinese medicine concludes in Macao

Hong Kong shares close up 0.21 pct -- June 23

Weather information for Asia-Pacific cities -- June 23

HK's tsunami death toll increases to 30

Gold price higher in Hong Kong -- June 23

Hang Seng China Enterprises Index higher -- June 23

Four killed in Indonesian railway accident

Japanese court rejects compensation for Chinese forced laborer

Urgent: S. Korean DPRK announce joint statement on improving ties

News Analysis: Indian cabinet seeing possible reshuffle

by Jiang Yaping

Bangladesh puts strings for India-Myanmar gas pipeline

3 dead, 9 injured in western Nepal road accident

1st Ld: S.Korea, DPRK issue joint statement on improving ties

Foreign exchange rates in India

Ketamine abusers down 30.5 pct in HK

Bank of Communications makes strong debut

HK CPI up 0.8 pct in May

HK Science Museum to showcase eight giant robot animals

New Animal and Plant Health Center to function in Singapore

Female entrepreneurs in HK, Shenzhen enjoy favorable economic environment

2nd Ld: S. Korean, DPRK announce joint statement on improving ties

Thailand's 3rd largest bank to expand branches in China

No reduction of troops in Kashmir as of now: Indian minister

Mahathir appointed chairman of IDB vision 2020 commission

News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

fishing boats sink in Vietnam

Guerrillas burns private school in western Nepal

Japan-China Friendship Association urges Koizumi to stop Yasukuni Shrine visit

3rd Ld: S.Korea, DPRK announce joint statement on improving ties

Xinhua summary of Asia-Pacific stocks news Thursday, June 23

Philippine gov't warns opposition not to violate law in protests

Malaysian PM calls for promoting trade among OIC countries

Indonesia to set up agency on border development

Malaysian PM calls for more intra-OIC trade

Indonesian Army's weapon procurement focuses on domestic market

Former Philippine president calls for more severe penalty against wiretapping

Global M&A grows 14 percent over 2004

Roundup: Inter-Korean ministerial talks yield fruits

by Wang Mian

Load-Date: June 24, 2005

End of Document

Sri Lanka president blasts Tamil Tiger rebels for alleged killing of foreign minister

AP Worldstream

August 14, 2005 Sunday

Copyright 2005 Associated Press

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 561 words

Byline: KRISHAN FRANCIS; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga said Sunday there was evidence linking Tamil Tiger rebels to the assassination of her foreign minister, but she vowed not to give up on the peace process that most think is the best hope of ending 19 years of bloodshed in this South Asian island nation.

Lakshman Kadirgamar was gunned down Friday night at his home in the capital Colombo. A vocal critic of the Liberation Tigers of Tamileelam, he played a key role in their proscription as a terrorist group in several countries, including the United States.

"Initial indications of the investigations seem to reveal responsibility of the LTT in the brutal murder," Kumaratunga said in a nationwide television broadcast Sunday night.

"It is unacceptable that a group that talks endlessly about being committed to a cease-fire could so blatantly violate it," she said, referring to a 2002 Norwegian-brokered truce between government forces and the rebels.

Kadirgamar, 73, was shot in the head and chest Friday night as he emerged from the swimming pool at his private residence. He died in hospital about an hour later.

The Oxford-educated foreign minister, an ethnic Tamil himself, was a veteran campaigner against the **Tamil Tigers** and it is believed that he was instrumental in having them banned in the U.S. in 1997.

"Mr. Kadirgamar was an idealist. Long before Sept. 11 and the London bombings; long before terrorism became anathema to the western world he spoke out against terrorism in Sri Lanka and abroad," Kumaratunga said.

"He was instrumental in having the LTT recognized internationally for what they are - an armed terrorist group," she said in a rare hard-hitting remark against the rebels.

The rebels have denied killing Kadirgamar and said the government is too hasty in implicating them.

But Kumaratunga Sunday said "their denial contradicts the facts and our knowledge of their long held desire and repeated attempts to murder both my Tamil cabinet colleagues."

Sri Lanka president blasts Tamil Tiger rebels for alleged killing of foreign minister

Last year a suspected **female** Tiger suicide bomber failed in an attempt to kill Douglas Devananda, a Tamil Cabinet minister who bitterly opposes the rebels.

Despite losing an eye in a failed assassination bid against her, Kumaratunga has in recent years favored a negotiated settlement for Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict.

In her address Sunday she vowed to continue to work with the rebels to achieve peace.

"We must prevail to ensure that Lakshman Kadirgamar's sacrifice has not been in vain. I will redouble my efforts and the commitment of my government to implement the task of devolution of power based through dialogue," she said.

"We can't let terror and hatred overcome us. As long as the ethnic problem remains unresolved violence and terror will always be with us."

The government and Tamil Tiger rebels are currently observing a Norway-arranged truce. Peace talks broke down a year later, in 2003, but large scale violence has been avoided despite some infractions.

The government has accused the rebels of killing scores of political rivals even after the February 2002 cease-fire. The rebels also claim that the government harbors a group that broke away in 2004 and helps them attack the guerrillas.

The Tigers began fighting in 1983 for a separate Tamil homeland, claiming discrimination by the majority Sinhalese. The war killed nearly 65,000 people in this country of 19 million before the cease-fire.

Load-Date: August 15, 2005

UNICEF says Tamil Tiger rebels recruit tsunami-affected children

Associated Press International

January 13, 2005 Thursday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 536 words

Byline: SHIMALI SENANAYAKE; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Tamil Tiger rebels have recruited tsunami-affected children to their ranks, UNICEF officials said Thursday.

The officials said there had been three verified cases of child recruitment by the rebels, all girls. Two of the three - an 11-year-old and a 12-year-old - were released following an appeal for their freedom from UNICEF, said Geoffrey Keel, UNICEF spokesman in Colombo.

"They have been reunited with their parents," he said.

UNICEF was working to secure the release of the other child, a 15-year-old, he added.

It was unclear whether the girls were recruited to fight in rebel ranks or to work in the guerrilla camps.

All three children were from eastern Batticaloa and Ampara, among the areas worst hit by the Dec. 26 tsunami.

Children accounted for a staggering 40 percent, or 12,000, of Sri Lanka's tsunami death toll of nearly 31,000. Another 800,000 people have been left homeless.

Ted Chaiban, UNICEF chief in Sri Lanka, said preliminary data indicated that nearly 1,000 children had been orphaned by the tsunami in Sri Lanka and another 3,200 lost one parent.

The rebels are known to recruit children to bolster their ranks in their fight for a separate Tamil homeland. Peace talks stalled two years ago amid demands by the rebels for wide autonomy in the Tamil-dominated north and east.

More than 3,700 **female Tamil Tigers** - known as freedom birds - died in the separatist rebellion that began in 1983, including a woman accused of assassinating former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.

Since the rebels signed a truce with the Sri Lankan government in 2002, more than 3,500 children have been enlisted by the insurgents, according to human rights groups.

The rebels have repeatedly denied actively recruiting children, saying that any minor who joins their forces does so because of poverty or the loss of parents.

In 2003, the rebels agreed with both UNICEF and the government to free all child combatants, but the U.N. agency has accused the insurgents of continuing to seek child soldiers.

UNICEF says Tamil Tiger rebels recruit tsunami-affected children

Chaiban also said there were at least six cases of child abuse in camps and two cases of attempted trafficking. He stressed that some cases may not have been reported to authorities.

"We need to encourage people to report so that there can be a formal investigation," Chaiban said.

Police earlier this week arrested a grandfather who was accused of trying to sell his two young granddaughters to foreigners.

Chaiban said UNICEF and local authorities were developing a comprehensive plan to address the health, school, recreational and psychological needs of affected children.

"Not a single child has died from diseases such as measles or diarrhea which are usually associated with mass displacement," Chaiban said.

He attributed the success to high rates of immunization in Sri Lanka before the tsunami, effective treatment when symptoms appeared, and "excellent monitoring by health officials."

UNICEF has spent US\$17 million ([euro]12.8 million) on immediate relief efforts in Sri Lanka and expects the figure to top US\$47 million ([euro]35.5 million), he said.

"Both the government and (rebels) have been very cooperative. We haven't faced any problems in getting supplies to places where they are needed," he said.

Load-Date: January 14, 2005

Corruption, authoritarianism infect Asia's emerging democracies, U.S. watchdog warns

Associated Press International

April 7, 2004 Wednesday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 588 words

Byline: D'ARCY DORAN; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: SINGAPORE

Body

Emerging Asian democracies are failing to protect their citizen's civil and political rights and combat corruption and authoritarian tendencies, a U.S.-based watchdog group has warned.

East Timor - the world's youngest country - was alone among 10 countries examined in Asia and 30 worldwide that did well in upholding a broad range of rights and liberties, according to a study by Freedom House released in Asia on Wednesday.

In contrast, Vietnam and Uzbekistan were described as "among the most politically repressive in the world."

"These countries are at key transition points and to ignore their needs creates a risk of both individual backsliding and regional democratic deterioration," Freedom House Executive Director Jennifer Windsor said in the statement.

The survey, which was funded by the U.S. State Department, focussed on countries that are significant "to the future of democracy in their region."

Freedom House said it hoped the findings would encourage governments and the international community to make fundamental changes.

In Afghanistan, the report found that the "rule of the gun largely supersedes the rule of law" and said that additional military support was urgently needed to stabilize the country outside of Kabul, where warlords still hold enormous power.

It said the rights of some Afghan women remain at Taliban-era levels in regions such as Herat, where the provincial governor imposed restrictions on women's freedom of movement and education and forced virginity tests on young women.

The report described Pakistan as a "semi-authoritarian state" saying President Gen. Pervez Musharraf governed "with a veneer of constitutional democratic rule."

The report attacked repressive laws against women such as the Hudood Ordinance, which "equates rape with consensual sex" and regards 10-year-old females as adults.

Corruption, authoritarianism infect Asia's emerging democracies, U.S. watchdog warns

In Sri Lanka, the Tamil Tiger rebels appeared unwilling to become a democratic group despite their role in the ongoing peace process after two decades of civil war, the report said.

Although the number of human rights violations has fallen, the **Tamil Tigers** continue to commit abuses "including extrajudicial murder, torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, extortion, and the recruitment of children as soldiers," the report said.

The report accused Uzbekistan of "gross violations" of human rights and religious freedom, adding that the government has instituted few reforms since it became independent after the breakup of the Soviet Union and shows a "monolithic unwillingness to make meaningful democratic reforms." The report also accused the government of conducting mass arrests of opposition Muslims.

Indonesians have enjoyed greater freedoms since the fall of dictator Suharto in 1998, but problems remain because of the failure to completely dismantle his regime.

It said the military remains autonomous, leaders are not held accountable and corruption is rampant.

Serious human right violations continue, especially in the provinces of Aceh and Papua and other areas with communal conflicts.

Vietnam remains a one party state "that tolerates no opposition to its rule and deals harshly with dissidents," the report said, adding there is no freedom of religion, courts follow Communist Party orders and those appearing before them are presumed guilty and must prove their innocence.

In Cambodia, the report said: "Torture, arbitrary and excessive detention, and political violence are common, while discrimination, trafficking and the commercial exploitation of **women** and children continue."

Load-Date: April 8, 2004

A life scarred by tragedies

The Australian

November 6, 2003 Thursday All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2003 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: WORLDTABLE; Pg. 7

Length: 513 words

Byline: Catherine Philp

Body

SRI Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga was barely out of childhood when the looming conflict with the Tamil minority first brought tragedy into her life.

At 14 she lost her father, then prime minister Solomon Bandaranaike, at the hands of a Buddhist monk who assassinated him in the belief that he was giving too much leeway to the Tamils.

His death propelled her mother, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, into politics, becoming the world's first ***female*** prime minister when she was elected three years later. Her premiership pushed the country towards civil war when she drove through Sinhalese nationalist legislation that inflamed ethnic Tamils and set the rebellion in motion.

The Times

With a pedigree as the daughter of two prime ministers, Mrs Kumaratunga's own political future was almost inescapable. However, it took another tragedy for her to take to politics in earnest, after she saw her film star-turned-opposition-politician husband shot by a political opponent before her and her two children.

Perhaps it was unsurprising that when she ran for the presidency in 1994, she did so on a peace platform, extending the hand of friendship to the ***Tamil Tigers*** and ending the bloodshed that had dogged her life and that of her young country.

Wary of the same Sinhalese nationalist sentiments that had led to her father's death but aware also of the growing war-weariness in the country, she embarked on numerous rounds of peace talks with rebel representatives.

When the efforts broke down, however, and the rebels redoubled their military campaign, her policies took a hardline turn. Soon she found herself enemy No1, living as a virtual prisoner in her elegant Colombo home, ringed by steel barriers and bodyguards to protect her from the rebels' notorious suicide squad, the Black Tigers.

It was on her last day of campaigning for the presidential elections in 1999 that a Tiger bomber found his mark. As he blew himself up beside her, she escaped with shrapnel wounds that were to rob her of the sight in one eye. Two dozen others beside her were killed. It did nothing to soften her attitude towards the rebels.

It was an attitude that was soon to fall out of favour with a population now exhausted by war. In 2001, her party was defeated in the parliamentary elections, bringing her arch-rival, Ranil Wickremesinghe, to power as Prime Minister with a mandate to bring peace.

A life scarred by tragedies

Since then she had not flagged in her opposition to any concessions made to the Tigers in the search for a peace settlement, despite the efforts all those years ago of her father to do the same. It is a battle that now seems more personal than political, and one that risks dragging the whole country back into the war.

Her presidency is due to end in 2005, but her battle with the Tigers is one she expects to continue for the rest of her life.

"The Tigers are out to get me, in or out of politics," she said last year. "Sometimes they wait 10 to 15 years. I don't fear for my life. Assassination happens to people in my position. You forget thinking about yourself otherwise you would die of fear."

Load-Date: November 5, 2003

End of Document

Bombings forged ruthless leader

The Times (London)

November 5, 2003, Wednesday

Copyright 2003 Times Newspapers Limited

Section: Overseas news; 15

Length: 517 words

Byline: Catherine Philp

Body

PRESIDENT Chandrika Kumaratunga was barely out of childhood when the looming conflict with the oppressed Tamil minority first brought tragedy into her life.

At the age of 14 she lost her father, then Prime Minister Solomon Bandaranaike, at the hands of a Buddhist monk who assassinated him in the belief that he was giving too much leeway to the Tamils.

His death propelled her mother Sirimavo Bandaranaike into politics, becoming the world's first ***female*** prime minister when she was elected three years later. Her premiership pushed the country towards civil war when she drove through Sinhalese nationalist legislation that inflamed ethnic Tamils and set the rebellion in motion.

With a pedigree as the daughter of two prime ministers, Mrs Kumaratunga's own political future was almost inescapable. However, it took another tragedy for her to take to politics in earnest, after she saw her film star-turned opposition politician husband shot by a political opponent in front of her and their two children.

Perhaps it was unsurprising, then, that when she herself ran for the presidency in 1994, she did so on a peace platform, extending the hand of friendship to the ***Tamil Tigers*** and ending the bloodshed that had dogged her life and that of her young country.

Wary of the same Sinhalese nationalist sentiments that had led to her father's death but aware also of the growing war-weariness in the country, she embarked on numerous rounds of peace talks with rebel representatives.

When the efforts broke down, however, and the rebels redoubled their military campaign, her policies took a hardline turn. Soon she found herself enemy No 1, living as a virtual prisoner in her elegant Colombo home, ringed by steel barriers and bodyguards to protect her from the rebels' notorious suicide squad, the Black Tigers.

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Load-Date: November 5, 2003

End of Document

Blasts from the past Though the current wave of suicide bombings began in Lebanon in the 1970s, the act of killing yourself for your beliefs has a cultural ancestry extending back to the Middle Ages

Financial Times (London, England)

July 2, 2005 Saturday

Copyright 2005 The Financial Times Limited

Section: FT WEEKEND MAGAZINE - Books; Pg. 26

Length: 1934 words

Byline: By LOUISE RICHARDSON

Body

There are many reasons for the current fascination with suicide terrorism. It is disconcerting to encounter a person who is willing to sacrifice his or her life in furtherance of a cause. This does not quite fit the image we like to have of "terrorists" as one-dimensional evil-doers or deranged psychopaths. In taking their own lives, suicide terrorists are staking a claim to moral superiority that is quite incompatible with our notion of their moral depravity. It is, moreover, demoralising to find the principle of deterrence, quite simply, eviscerated.

This principle of deterrence was the edifice on which the postwar security of the west was built. It sufficed to defend us against the armed ranks of the Soviet Union yet has been rendered useless by a few hundred vagabond fighters. We are also frightened by its destructive power, seen most dramatically in the carnage of September 11 2001, but also in the daily pictures from Iraq, the West Bank and Gaza.

The authors who examine this subject employ a number of different datasets to compute how much more lethal suicide attacks are than conventional attacks. They differ on the order of magnitude, but all agree that suicide attacks are, indeed, significantly more lethal. Like hijackings in the 1970s, suicide attacks today seem to have become the terrorist weapon of choice. Their randomness and viciousness make us all feel vulnerable.

We are fascinated by suicide terrorism because we cannot understand it. How can so many young men (and, increasingly, **women** and parents) be willing to throw away their lives in an act of brutal destruction, murdering others in the process? This question has concerned observers for centuries. The most frequently cited precursors to contemporary suicide bombers (though there were, in fact, many others) were the Assassins of the Middle Ages. Their actions so fascinated others that it was widely believed for centuries afterwards that they were on hashish when carrying out their suicide missions. Only recently have we learned that they were intoxicated only by a ferocious commitment to their cause.

This is the question that three new books attempt to address. And reading Anne Marie Oliver and Paul Steinberg's *The Road to Martyrs' Square* is more likely to feed than satiate our fascination. This is a highly unusual and - its subject matter notwithstanding - thoroughly enjoyable book. Part memoir, part travelogue, part portfolio and review of street media - from graffiti to pre-mission videotapes - the book provides just what it promises: a journey into the world of the suicide bomber.

Blasts from the past Though the current wave of suicide bombings began in Lebanon in the 1970s, the act of killing yourself for your beliefs has a cultural ance....

The book consists of three, not particularly well integrated, parts. The first provides an account of the authors' time in Gaza and the West Bank, and their evolving relationships with members of Hamas during the first intifada. The second introduces a unique and quite fascinating collection of major scripts of the intifada, replete with the symbols of self-sacrifice, martyrdom, jihad and victory. Finally, they present scenes from the videotaped last words of a cell of Hamas suicide bombers, interwoven with interviews with their families.

Oliver and Steinberg are interested in drawing a portrait, not analysing a movement. They write with humour and often affection for their subjects, and keep their own personalities entirely out of the story. With a light hand they provide a cogent account of the distinctions and the tensions between the nationalists and the Islamists, and the gradual institutionalisation of Hamas over the course of the first intifada. They provide harrowing accounts of the interrogation of collaborators and the murder of an Israeli. They describe not a cult of martyrdom, but an entire social system that supports martyrdom. Without proffering analysis, they describe tight social networks, intense small-group loyalty and the motivating power of the desire for revenge.

The presentation of the final video is riveting. The authors describe the irrational exuberance - or what they call the "ecstatic obliteration" - of this group of young men, for whom life has never been better, more intense or so full of meaning, than on the night before they kill themselves and others. Far from being depressed, suicidal types, these are excited and happy young men revelling in being the centre of attention. Oliver and Steinberg write: "What the rank-and-file (of Hamas) seemed to live and die for, in the end, was neither hospitals nor politics nor ideology nor religion nor the Apocalypse, but rather an ecstatic camaraderie in the face of death on the path of Allah."

The scholarly collection *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*, edited by Diego Gambetta, a professor of sociology at Oxford, is very different in tone. Gambetta brings together a remarkable group of academics from different disciplines and countries who bring a formidable array of research and analysis to their attempt to make sense of suicide missions.

This is an important book, and the best treatment of the subject I've read. Its value is due in part to the breadth of cases its authors consider. Unusually, a chapter is devoted to the Japanese kamikaze, and another to "Dying Without Killing", which explores the history of self-immolations. A broad range of questions is asked, such as a chapter exploring "Killing without Dying", which looks at terrorist campaigns that have not included suicide missions. The book also presents a powerful range of methodological approaches, from Stephen Holmes's fascinating (and at times, fanciful) philosophical conjectures, to the Italian Luca Ricolfi's painstaking compilation of quantitative data.

These books were all written before the dramatic increase in the use of suicide bombers in Iraq. This massive escalation has rendered obsolete much of the carefully constructed quantitative data. The point that 80 per cent of all suicide missions have been undertaken either by the *Tamil Tigers* (200) or by Palestinian groups (224) needs to be revised. There appear to have been close to 100 suicide missions in Iraq this May alone.

There is little in these works that would lead us to anticipate such an extraordinary escalation - from, according to the political scientist Robert Pape, three a year in the 1980s, to 10 a year in the 1990s, to 25 a year in 2000 and 2001, to hundreds upon hundreds this year. The one trend that is confirmed is the increase in the number of Islamic terrorist groups using suicide tactics, from 43 per cent before September 11 2001 to 75 per cent soon afterwards (that figure would be considerably higher today). Moreover, one would have to argue that Sunni and Shia Muslims belong to different religions to sustain the view that 90 per cent of suicide missions are against people of a different religion.

The real significance of *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*, however, is not in the quantitatively driven conclusions, but in its treatment of the more difficult question of motivations. From different perspectives, and relying on assorted cases, several of the authors attack the myth that suicide terrorism is a religious phenomenon. The more empirically oriented point to the case of Sri Lanka, in which suicide attacks have long been part of the arsenal of the entirely secular *Tamil Tigers*. The more philosophical carefully parse the statements of Osama bin Laden and the perpetrators of September 11 and find them too wholly secular. As Holmes argues, they hit the twin towers not as icons of blasphemy but of arrogant power. Al-Qaeda is not fighting the west until it says "there is no God but Allah",

Blasts from the past Though the current wave of suicide bombings began in Lebanon in the 1970s, the act of killing yourself for your beliefs has a cultural ance....

but until it gets out of the Middle East. He makes a compelling case that it was not religion, not Islam, but the pooled insurgencies of the Arab Middle East and a specific narrative of blame that made the US the target of al- Qaeda.

Gambetta has also noticed that all suicide missions are backed up by organisations. All are conducted by the weaker party in a conflict, often (as in the Japanese case) but not always (as in the case of the Tamil Tigers) when they are backed up against a wall. Very different types of organisation deploy suicide missions, but none do so exclusively. All who do have strong ties of group camaraderie. Suicide operations are invariably undertaken against democracies. The current wave of suicide missions, however diverse geographically and organisationally, can all be traced to Lebanon in 1973-1986.

Recognising the inherent complexity of the subject, Gambetta's volume eschews the search for a single explanation for suicide missions. His authors see that the tactic, like terrorism itself, is employed by different groups, in furtherance of different objectives, in different parts of the world. They recognise that the motivation of the organisation is often quite separate from the motivation of the individual. Looking at institutional efforts to raise the barrier to defection, they point to practices such as the support planes on kamikaze missions, an elite Tamil Tiger's pre- mission "last supper" with his revered leader, or the final video of Palestinian martyrs. They readily concede, however, that most organisations have more volunteers than they wish to deploy.

Compared to the rigorous analysis of the Gambetta volume, and the riveting storytelling of Oliver and Steinberg, Mia Bloom's superficial and disorganised treatment in *Dying to Kill* has little to contribute to our understanding of the subject. By contrast, Luca Ricolfi's careful analysis in *Making Sense* gives credence to Oliver and Steinberg's observations. For the Palestinians the key is the social milieu; becoming a martyr is the quickest route to the highest status. A desire for glory, coupled with strong group ties, is often what it takes to translate a cocktail of emotions (humiliation, rage, vengefulness), metaphysical beliefs and the desire for financial rewards into a willingness to die in order to kill. (There is often more interest in the dying than the killing, as evidenced by the sometimes remarkable lack of attention to deploying the suicide bomb to maximum effect.) The sense of group loyalty rises from the pages of *The Road to Martyrs' Square*, and finds support in Ricolfi's tracing of the clustering of martyrs' places of origin: in one extreme case, eight out of 11 members of a football team from Hebron, six of whom lived next door to one another, become Hamas suicide attackers.

In the end, one begins to wonder if suicide missions, or martyrdom operations, are indeed a unique phenomenon. Military historians long ago persuaded us that what drove young men over the trenches, and out of the foxholes, was loyalty to their small band of brothers. In all our societies we reserve the highest honours for those who have given their lives for their country. Having read these studies one is left wondering whether suicide bombers are so different. Had the members of the Hamas cell whose final videotape is depicted by Oliver and Steinberg ever learnt Latin, and had an eye for dramatic effect, one could imagine them ending their video reciting in unison Horace's ode into the camera: "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori." (It is sweet and proper to die for your country.)

Louise Richardson is executive dean at Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University.

MAKING SENSE OF SUICIDE MISSIONS

edited by Diego Gambetta

OUP Pounds 25, 392 pages

THE ROAD TO MARTYRS' SQUARE: A Journey Into the World of the Suicide Bomber

by Anne Marie Oliver and Paul Steinberg

OUP Pounds 14.99, 237 pages

DYING TO KILL: The Allure of Suicide Terror

by Mia Bloom

Blasts from the past Though the current wave of suicide bombings began in Lebanon in the 1970s, the act of killing yourself for your beliefs has a cultural ance....

Columbia University Press Dollars 24.95, 272 pages

Load-Date: July 1, 2005

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Sri Lanka Peace Talks to Resume

AP Online

March 17, 2003 Monday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 552 words

Byline: BETH DUFF-BROWN; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: HAKONE, Japan

Body

A deadly clash at sea between the Sri Lanka government and Tamil Tiger rebels could overshadow a critical round of negotiations to end one of Asia's longest-running civil wars.

The peace talks, which begin Tuesday in the foggy foothills of Mount Fuji, will focus on power sharing, economic recovery and human rights. But the Tigers are furious over the worst clash between the rebels and government forces since they reached a cease-fire a year ago.

On March 10, Sri Lanka's navy killed 11 rebel sailors and sank their boat, which was suspected of smuggling arms. The rebels warned the incident would have "far-reaching implications on the peace process."

The rebels' chief peace negotiator, Anton Balasingham, said the Tigers would respect the peace process despite speculation they would pull out of the sixth round of talks. The talks began in September, after the Norwegians brokered a cease-fire in February 2002.

The rebels have denied smuggling arms and accused the government of attacking their merchant vessel sailing in international waters.

In a separate incident on Monday, a navy patrol seized a rebel vessel suspected of transporting weapons, a senior navy officer said.

The patrol boat chased the rebel craft and arrested three guerrillas on board, the officer said on condition of anonymity. The rebels were believed to have thrown at least 10 boxes of ammunition overboard when they saw the navy boat approach, he said.

Gamini Peiris, the government's chief negotiator, said the peace talks are expected to focus on how the two sides would share tax revenue and power under a federal government. They will also discuss an international donor conference to take place in Japan in June.

Norway, Japan, the United States and the European Union will co-chair the conference intended to raise millions of dollars for the island nation off the southern tip of India. International donors pledged nearly \$90 million at a conference in Oslo, Norway, in November, and have since promised more aid.

Sri Lanka Peace Talks to Resume

"One of the most tangible and visible results of the peace process so far has been the degree of international support for our little country, which was never evident at any time in the past," Peiris said.

He said rebuilding the economy was critical. Yasushi Akashi, Japan's special envoy to Sri Lanka, will join the talks in Hakone to help map out a recovery plan.

"There will be a good deal of emphasis on human rights," said Peiris, noting that the former head of Amnesty International, Ian Martin, was working with both sides to formulate a human rights program.

The rebels began fighting for a homeland for the ethnic Tamil minority on the island in 1983 but now say they would settle for autonomy in a federal state. The war has killed nearly 65,000 people, displaced another 1.6 million and destroyed the economy.

The **Tamil Tigers** are one of the world's most notorious rebel groups, known for suicide attacks by **women** bombers and the cyanide capsules guerrillas wear around their necks to kill themselves if captured.

The Tigers accuse the majority Sinhalese, who are predominantly Buddhist, of discrimination in education and jobs against the country's 3.2 million minority Tamils, most of whom are Hindu and live in the north.

On the Net:

Tamil Web site: www.TamilNet.com.

Government site: www.peaceinsrilanka.com

Load-Date: March 18, 2003

Killer bombs put stamp on rebel's speech; Peace 'impossible'

The Gazette (Montreal)
November 29, 2007 Thursday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A18

Length: 233 words

Byline: MEL GUNASEKERA, AFP

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

At least 19 people were killed in Sri Lanka yesterday in two bomb attacks blamed on Tamil Tiger rebels, officials said, one day after the guerrillas' leader said peace with Colombo was impossible.

A powerful parcel bomb exploded outside a clothing store on the outskirts of the capital, Colombo, killing 17, wounding 43 others and leaving the street littered with body parts, police said.

The attack came just hours after a disabled **female** suicide bomber blew herself up outside the office of a Tamil government minister, killing his secretary and injuring two security guards.

Social Welfare Minister Douglas Devananda, a vocal opponent of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), escaped unharmed. He had been the target of at least four previous attempts on his life.

Officials blamed both attacks on Tamil Tiger rebels, who have been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland for 35 years, a conflict that has left tens of thousands of people dead.

The two blasts came one day after Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran vowed to strike back at what he branded the "war of genocide" led by the Colombo government and said peace efforts on the island were a waste of time.

Prabhakaran launched a furious attack on the government of President Mahinda Rajapakse, accusing the "Sinhala nation" of trying to destroy the "Tamil nation" and language, which observers said could signal a return to all-out war.

Graphic

Photo: BUDDHIKA WEERASINGHE REUTERS; Hospital staff look at the bodies of victims of a bomb explosion near a shopping centre in a Colombo suburb. ;

Killer bombs put stamp on rebel's speech; Peace 'impossible'

Load-Date: November 29, 2007

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WORLD REPORT

Windsor Star (Ontario)

October 16, 2003 Thursday Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. B2; News; Brief

Length: 1849 words

Dateline: London; Moscow; Brussels; Tokyo; Colombo, Sri Lanka; New Delhi; Yangon, Myanmar; Pinellas Park, Fla.; Anchorage; Modesto, Calif.

Body

Summit on gays may avoid split in Anglican church

London

Hopes were growing Wednesday night that a worldwide split in the Anglican church over homosexuality could be averted.

Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Rowan Williams, who called a two-day summit at Lambeth Palace, had feared that conservative primates would defeat his efforts to hold the Church together.

But it appeared Wednesday night that their united front was crumbling. One insider said that the conservatives no longer had majority support for their demand that the liberal American Episcopal Church be expelled for appointing Anglicanism's first openly homosexual bishop.

The mood of optimism was reflected by Archbishop Robin Eames, the liberal Primate of the Church of Ireland, who emerged briefly after seven hours of talks to say he believed the meeting was moving toward a consensus.

Compiled from Star News Services

Sources close to the conservative camp, which is led by primates in Africa, said they had hoped to have 20 signatories backing an ultimatum they presented to Williams Wednesday.

This called on the archbishop to discipline the U.S. Episcopal Church before the planned consecration of bishop-elect Gene Robinson, a divorcee who lives with his male lover, as bishop of New Hampshire in November.

Thou shalt not cross on a red, Orthodox Church says

Moscow

The Russian Orthodox Church in the Urals has declared jaywalking a sin in an attempt to cut the rising death toll among pedestrians.

The move came after traffic police complained that dozens of pensioners were being killed in the region every year by flouting the Russian rules of the road.

The sight of the elderly shuffling across busy roads is common in Russia. The problem is compounded by an epidemic of careless driving in a country where pedestrian crossings are all but ignored.

WORLD REPORT

Now the church has stepped in. In a service in Yekaterinburg on Sunday a priest told parishioners at the Church of Nikolai the Miracle-Worker that God would frown on them if they crossed the road on a red light.

NATO sets up 9,000-man rapid reaction force

Brussels

NATO inaugurated a world-wide strike force Wednesday in a bid to save the 54-year alliance from irrelevance as the European Union forges ahead with its own autonomous defence.

The 9,000-man Response Force will be ready within five days to carry out missions by air, land and sea, ranging from "show-of-force" deterrent action to commando strikes and beachhead missions for major military offensives.

Unlike the EU's 60,000-man rapid reaction force, it will be a war-fighting machine rather than a peacekeeping reserve.

The new NATO force, inaugurated at the Alliance's northern command at Brunssum, Holland, will be commanded by Gen. Sir Jack Deverell, a Briton.

It will have a full strength of 20,000 troops by 2006 but will not be a standing army. It is drawn from 14 states with the biggest contributions from Spain, France and Turkey.

Last of the Concorde to head to foreign museums

London

Three of the five Concorde still flying are to be given permanent retirement homes overseas under plans drawn up by British Airways.

One of the aircraft will be based at the Intrepid Air and Space Museum in New York and the other at the Seattle Museum of Flight. Another will go to Barbados. It does not have an aviation museum, but a businessman plans to build one at the island's airport.

British admirers of the aircraft will have a choice of visiting Manchester Airport or Filton aerodrome, near Bristol, where the British Concorde were assembled.

Seven given bail over Western Isles charges

London

Six men accused of raping and committing serious sex offences against young girls in the Western Isles were released on bail yesterday.

A 75-year-old woman charged with lewd, indecent and libidinous conduct involving young girls in Lewis was also released on bail. They appeared separately in private at Inverness sheriff court before Sheriff Edward Savage.

Their appearances follow a series of dawn raids on Lewis and in three English counties on Oct 3.

As the accused left the court about a dozen members of the public hurled abuse at them.

Coffee drinking linked to higher risk of miscarriage

London

Drinking four cups of coffee a day can increase the risk of a woman miscarrying her baby, researchers say.

Too much caffeine during pregnancy can also increase the risk of the baby being born small, with baby boys being more affected than baby girls.

WORLD REPORT

Two studies in the journal Paediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology found that regular coffee drinkers were twice as likely to miscarry and nearly twice as likely to have a small baby compared with women whose caffeine intake was low.

After 443 years, Kirk to have woman moderator

London

The Church of Scotland is to break with 443 years of tradition and appoint its first woman moderator as it emerged that the only two candidates selected to stand for the highest position in the Kirk are female.

Either Rev Valerie Watson, 54, the minister of several parishes, or Alison Elliot, 54, an elder at Edinburgh's Greyfriars Kirk, will be chosen to succeed Prof. Iain Torrance.

If Elliot succeeds she will also be the first lay moderator in four centuries.

Earlier this year, the Kirk was accused of institutional sexism when 140 women signed a letter expressing "profound regret" that a woman had not been elevated to the position.

Strong earthquake hits Tokyo; damage unknown

Tokyo

An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude 5 shook buildings in downtown Tokyo on Wednesday afternoon.

There was no worry of tsunami, the Meteorological Agency said. There was no word of damage or injuries.

The quake was centred just northeast of Japan's capital.

Canada urges Tamil Tigers to return to peace talks

Colombo, Sri Lanka

Canada on Wednesday urged Tamil Tigers rebels to resume stalled peace talks with the Sri Lankan government and to end their alleged recruitment of child soldiers.

"The LTT (Tamil Tigers) must actively re-engage in peace talks and once back at the table, stay the course," Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham told reporters.

The rebels signed a Norwegian-brokered ceasefire agreement with the Sri Lankan government in February 2002, but the rebels walked away from peace talks in April, refusing to negotiate until the government accepted their demands for greater autonomy in the Tamil-dominated northeast.

Graham also said Canada will provide an additional \$1.25 million Cdn for resettling displaced persons from the conflict, but said the money will be released only after the rebels return to the negotiating table.

Canada had already pledged \$5 million Cdn in May.

Court issues warrant for Indian pop star for fraud

New Delhi

A court in northern Punjab state has issued an arrest warrant for pop music star Daler Mehndi to allow police to question him about an alleged scam to help people illegally migrate to the United States or Canada, a television station reported Wednesday.

"I am innocent and will be found innocent," Mehndi told New Delhi Television News in an interview conducted as the police were searching for the singer, the station said.

WORLD REPORT

A court in Patiala, in Mehndi's home state of Punjab, has issued a non-bailable arrest warrant for him after police said they had evidence he played an active role in the scam and they were unable to find him after a raid on his farmhouse, NDTV reported.

Junta says Suu Kyi held by mutual agreement

Yangon, Myanmar

Myanmar's military government says pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi is being held at home under a "mutually agreed security arrangement," but gave no indication when she would be free.

"There is no need for concern over Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. She is convalescing because of her health condition. This is a mutually agreed security arrangement," Brig.-Gen. Than Tun, a defence ministry spokesman, told a news conference. He refused to elaborate.

Suu Kyi, 58, was detained following a bloody May 30 clash between her supporters and a pro-government mob while she was touring northern Myanmar.

She was brought home Sept. 26, after spending a week in hospital for an operation for a gynecological condition.

Feeding tube removed from comatose woman

Pinellas Park, Fla.

Doctors on Wednesday removed a feeding tube that has been keeping alive a severely brain-damaged woman at the centre of an epic, six-year legal battle between her husband and parents.

Terri Schiavo, 39, underwent the procedure at the Tampa Bay area hospice where she has been living for several years, said her father, Bob Schindler. Lawyers representing her husband, Michael Schiavo, said it will take between a week and 10 days for her to die.

The tube removal came just hours after Gov. Jeb Bush told Bob Schindler and his wife, Mary, that he was instructing his legal staff to find some means to block the court order allowing Michael Schiavo to end his wife's life.

Schiavo has been in a vegetative state since 1990, when her heart stopped due to what doctors said may have been a chemical imbalance. Her parents believe she is capable of learning how to eat and drink on her own.

Michael Schiavo says his wife would not have wanted to be kept alive artificially in this way, but his inlaws contend that she wants to live. She left no living will or written instructions.

Mom charged for hitting kid's teacher in hallway

Anchorage

The mother of an elementary student was cited for misdemeanor assault after she confronted her son's teacher in a school hallway and hit the man several times.

Police said the Fairview Elementary School teacher had broken up a fight between two sixth-graders earlier in the day, placing one, Cassaundra West's son, in a "bear hug" to pull him off the other student. Principal Lois Mance called West, 39 and asked her to come to school to discuss the incident, said Superintendent Carol Comeau.

According to police and school officials, West arrived after school hours and attacked the 40-year-old teacher outside his classroom. She punched him three times, police said.

Anonymous hero rescues man from burning wreck

Modesto, Calif.

WORLD REPORT

David Guldner's pickup shot off the California highway and sideswiped a couple of trees. The gas tank ruptured and the truck burst into flames. He was trapped inside.

Within seconds of the crash, several people stopped to see if they could help. One was Orb Hatton, a retired Modesto police officer.

As Hatton approached, he watched a man open the pickup's door and disappear into a sea of orange flame and black smoke.

Hatton reached the inferno just as the rescuer pulled out Guldner. Hatton said he helped drag Guldner away from the truck, but he still was on fire.

Hatton and the rescuer tore off their shirts and began beating flames off the man's legs and body.

As the two men fought the flames, Hatton caught a glimpse of the rescuer's skin: his entire back was a brilliant red.

A couple of minutes later, as emergency personnel worked on Guldner's burns, Hatton looked around for the rescuer.

He wanted to shake the man's hand, but he was gone.

Graphic

Open wide, say 'Purr': An unnamed ***female*** tiger cub reacts as her mouth is opened Wednesday by veterinarian Dr. Ann Duncan during a vaccination procedure in the tiger exhibit examination room at the Detroit Zoo in Royal Oak, Mich. Three Amur tiger cubs, who were born Aug. 12, were given their nine-week vaccinations. The cubs are the offspring of 13-year-old Bransk and 11-year-old Sheba. Daily Oakland Press photo: Jose Juarez

Load-Date: October 16, 2003

Sri Lanka troops kill six women Tiger fighters

Agence France Presse -- English

November 12, 2007 Monday 6:22 AM GMT

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Length: 199 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Nov 12 2007

Body

Sri Lankan troops shot dead at least six women fighters of the Tamil Tigers during a clash in the north of the island, the defence ministry said Monday.

Following an attack on a bunker line of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) along the de facto front line with guerrilla-held territory, the troops found six bodies of women fighters on Sunday, the ministry said.

It said security forces also recovered a light machine gun, three automatic assault rifles and ammunition.

The report came amid sporadic clashes in the north of the island and a warning from neighbouring India that Sri Lanka and the Tiger rebels must return to the negotiating table to end their conflict.

India's Finance Minister P. Chidambaram said Sunday that while New Delhi backed Sri Lanka's sovereignty and territorial integrity, military action would not bring an end to the rebel drive for a separate state for minority Tamils.

"Neither side can finally prevail over the other through conflict. Peace must be forged at the negotiating table," he said.

Tens of thousands of people have died since the conflict began in 1972. Fighting has escalated since December 2005, when a Norwegian-brokered truce began to unravel.

Load-Date: November 13, 2007

World Digest

The Toronto Star
June 15, 2006 Thursday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A16

Length: 291 words

Body

Sri Lanka

As many as 30 feared dead in bombing of bus full

of civilians, police say

Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels blasted a civilian bus today, officials said, with up to 30 feared dead in what looked likely to be the worst attack on civilians since a 2002 ceasefire.

"We believe 30 innocent civilians have been killed and many more wounded," said a spokesman for the government's national security media centre. "Definitely the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam)."

The blast occurred in the north-central province of Anuradapura, police said.

United States

Homeless man arrested

as 4 hurt in stabbing spree

A homeless man was arrested yesterday in the stabbing of four people, including three tourists, who were attacked in a 12-hour span in Manhattan. Investigators were questioning the 21-year-old man but did not have a motive. Two of the wounded tourists were female students from Montreal, both in their 20s. Neither suffered life-threatening injuries.

Britain

Highest court rejects Sampson's bid to sue Saudis

The Law Lords, Britain's highest court, ruled yesterday Canadian William Sampson and three Britons who say they were tortured while imprisoned in Saudi Arabia cannot sue Saudi officials over their ordeal because foreign government officials are immune from prosecution in Britain.

Gaza

Cash arrives after civil servants storm parliament

World Digest

Hours after cash-starved civil servants stormed parliament, Palestinian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Zahar returned yesterday from a trip to Muslim nations with \$20 million (U.S.) in his luggage. The money was turned over to the Palestinian Authority's treasury. A financial boycott of the new Hamas government has prevented the authority from paying staff months' worth of salaries.

From the Star's wire services

Load-Date: June 15, 2006

End of Document

Two LTTE rebel women killed in Sri Lanka

Indo-Asian News Service

November 3, 2007 Saturday 11:14 AM EST

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Length: 158 words

Byline: Indo-Asian News Service

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Nov. 3 -- Two rebels have been killed in a confrontation between government troops and Tamil Tiger rebels in northern Sri Lanka, the military said Saturday.

The Media Centre for National Security said in a statement that the two women members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) were killed in a battle triggered off by the rebels at Navathkulam in the northern district of Vanuniya around 2:30 p.m. Friday.

No damages were caused to the troops during the incident, the military added.

Claiming discrimination at the hands of the Sinhala majority, the **LTTE** has been fighting the government since the mid-1980s to establish a separate homeland for the minority Tamils in the north and east.

More than 5,000 people have been killed in the new wave of violence since the end of 2005, making the Norwegian brokered ceasefire agreement exist only on paper.

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Load-Date: November 3, 2007

Centre, DMK's intervention sought to prevent atrocities against Tamils in Lanka

Hindustan Times

June 8, 2007 Friday 3:04 PM EST

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Length: 254 words

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

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, June 8 -- The Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR) today urged the Centre and the Dravida Munnetra Khazagam (DMK) party to intervene against reported acts of ethnic cleansing and racism against the Tamil minorities in Sri Lanka.

In a statement issued here today, the ACHR said that nearly 500 ethnic Tamils, including women and children, were hounded like animals, subbed into the Ceylon Transport Board buses and then deported to war-torn North and Eastern parts on Thursday on alleged security grounds. The victims were reportedly given just half-an-hour time to pack their luggage, it added.

"Even those who escaped threats from the Sri Lankan security forces, the LTTE and the Karuna faction are not being spared. Security threat is an excuse as the ethnic Tamils coming out of Northern and Eastern parts had already taken Travel Passes from the Sri Lankan Army and provided a surety to guarantee their return to their homes," said ACHR director Suhas Chakma.

"The forcible deportation of the ethnic Tamils from Colombo to the Northern and Eastern parts is reminiscent of The Holocaust," he added.

Seeking External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee's intervention, the rights body said, "The forcible deportation of the ethnic Tamils from Colombo to their homes will not only widen the ethnic divide and intensify the conflicts but these are acts of ethnic cleansing and racism which cannot be tolerated by any civilized society".

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Load-Date: June 8, 2007

Sri Lankan president says power sharing the only answer

Xinhua General News Service

March 9, 2005 Wednesday 11:30 AM EST

Copyright 2005 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 303 words

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga on Tuesday reiterated her commitment to peace negotiations with Tamil Tiger rebels despite opposition from her government's main ally.

Addressing her Freedom Party's international *women's* day rally here Tuesday, Kumaratunga said that given the chance more than 80 percent of Sri Lanka's voting public would approve at a referendum their preference for a negotiated settlement to end the separatist armed conflict.

"There is no other alternative, devolution of power is the only one," Kumaratunga emphasized.

It was her first comment on the matter since her main ally the JVP or the People's Liberation Front had warned late last month that they would quit the government if Kumaratunga started peace negotiations based on an interim power sharing proposal put forward by the Tigers.

Kumaratunga in a critical tone of her main ally said that all forces if they had interests of the country at heart must agree to a negotiated settlement.

The Sri Lankan president said that the on going ceasefire since 2002 had brought in some form of peace and all must ensure that no room is allowed to experience any more bomb explosions in the capital or elsewhere.

Kumaratunga's government annexed power in the parliamentary election held in April last year by maintaining a critical line of the peace process initiated by her political rival, the then prime minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.

Kumaratunga and the JVP accused Wickremesinghe of betraying the national security by adopting a too soft stance as regards Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) rebels in the guise of the Norwegian backed peace process.

The Norwegian backed peace process stalled since 2003 is yet to resume despite many attempts by the Norwegian facilitators.

Load-Date: March 9, 2005

Tsunami-affected people need more shelter, protection: UN official

Xinhua General News Service

January 20, 2005 Thursday 10:00 AM EST

Copyright 2005 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS

Length: 300 words

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

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.

To assist with emergency shelter needs, the UNHCR has distributed 23,356 pieces of plastic sheeting to serve as temporary roofing. By the end of 2005, 2,000 tents will arrive in Sri Lanka to help the displaced leave schools and public buildings.

"We will continue our support, especially in the sector of shelter," Morjane said, adding there should be immediate solution to reopening school.

"We are concerned with vulnerable group including children, **women** who are linked to sexual and gender-based violence," said Morjane. "We will give advice and support about the protection issue."

The UNHCR will maintain its commitment through the emergency and transition phase of the tsunami disaster, while working with the government and its partners to ensure those displaced are both protected and assisted, said the assistant commissioner.

"We are trying to help the country build national capacity in order to handle such kinds of issues," Morjane said.

Citing the health issue of tsunami refugees, Morjane said much work is needed to improve the drinking water and sanitation system though some disease risks have been minimized.

Load-Date: January 21, 2005

Staring death in the face

The Straits Times (Singapore)

October 5, 2005 Wednesday

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Section: Review - Others

Length: 1230 words

Byline: Adam Dolnik , For The Straits Times

Body

ON SEPT 28, a suicide bomber detonated an explosives' belt in the border town of Tal Afar, 420km north-west of Baghdad, killing six people and wounding 35.

With the increasing level of violence in Iraq, such an incident would hardly attract a lot of attention, especially given the comparatively small number of casualties. However, there was an alarming new twist in this case - the suicide bomber was a woman. This tactical shift is significant, and has the potential to intensify the Iraqi insurgency.

Historical perspective

FEMALE suicide terrorism is a relatively new phenomenon - having first emerged in the 1980s during the early wave of suicide terrorism in Lebanon. Such suicide bombers gained international notoriety with the 1991 assassination of then-Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in Tamil Nadu by the Sri Lankan Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

The **LTTE**, which had become the world's leader in terms of the overall number of suicide operations, was also the first group to systematically rely on **female** martyrs. It has used them in 40 per cent of its attacks.

In 1996, the **LTTE** was joined by the Workers' Party of Kurdistan, which relied on **female** operatives in 11 out of its 15 suicide bombings in Turkey. Two more such attacks were carried out by the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front.

What is important to note here is that all of these groups were driven by secular ethno-nationalist and leftist ideologies, and were thus not religious in nature.

The first country where a **female** suicide bombing was carried out in the name of religion was Russia. In June 2000, 22-year-old Khava Barayeva rammed a truck-bomb into a Russian military facility in Alkhan-Yurt, killing two servicemen.

To date, at least 13 suicide attacks in Russia have been carried out by these 'Black Widows'.

Then, in January 2002, Wafa Idris became the first **female** suicide bomber to hit Israel. Seven other Palestinian **women** have since followed in Wafa's footsteps.

More recently, the cult of the 'Black Widows' reached Uzbekistan where, in March 2004, two **women** detonated their suicide belts in separate attacks.

Staring death in the face

Including the yet unknown suicide bomber in Iraq, some 120 women have carried out suicide attacks for at least 12 organisations in seven countries worldwide.

What motivates these women?

WHY is female suicide terrorism important? The chief reason is that it possesses several distinct motivational and operational characteristics that fascinate the media and present new tactical challenges for the security forces.

Generally speaking, a woman's motivational route to terrorism is longer than that for a man. Women usually become involved after experiencing a direct act of victimisation, as opposed to following abstract ideological or religious themes.

This is one reason why they are frequently looked down upon by the male members of the group. This is especially so in Islamic organisations, where additional dilemmas associated with the fundamentalist interpretation of the Quran play a role, such as the restrictions preventing women from operating freely outside of their homes without being accompanied by a male relative.

Further, there has been considerable stigma regarding the reliability and determination of women because of their perceived softness, due to motherly instincts.

However, women terrorists in general actually tend to be more ruthless precisely because of these instincts; once they decide that their violent actions will benefit their children and future generations, they do not hesitate to do what is necessary for the success of the operation.

Further, the involvement of female operatives in left-wing and ethno-nationalist groups shows that the desire to prove that they are just as worthy to the organisation as men are has worked to strengthen their sacrificial resolve even more.

In short, females make more committed and more reliable suicide bombers than men.

Why do groups use them?

THERE are various reasons why female suicide bombers are an attractive proposition for terrorist groups. There are tactical advantages associated with the disruption of an established profile used by security and law enforcement agencies.

There is, for example, the possibility of concealing an explosive device in a fake pregnant belly.

Such tactical advantages were also exploited in the Tal Afar suicide bombing, in which the woman involved slipped into town through checkpoints where females were not searched. Having reached the target location, the bomber then dressed in men's clothes to blend into the crowd in front of the Iraqi army recruiting centre. She then set off the explosives strapped to her body.

A possibly more important reason for the use of female suicide bombers is the message such operations convey.

The first target audience is the international community, which can be shocked by the images of desperation and commitment to sacrifice. As people worldwide try to comprehend the motivations of these women, they are also left wondering about the dedication and hatred driving their actions.

Thus an image is achieved - of a group of committed believers who will do anything to reach its goals, implying that the present environment is so humiliating that death is preferable to life.

Another especially strong message of female suicide terrorism is sent to followers and supporters, triggering a guilt trip among men that they are not doing enough to fight the enemy, and strengthening the pressure to do more.

For instance, in a video recording just before her death, Chechnya's first suicide bomber Khava Barayeva pleaded with her fellowmen to 'not take the women's role by staying at home'.

Staring death in the face

Palestinian suicide bombers have also made similar statements in their 'last will' videos. Not surprisingly, in both cases, the end result was the increased flow of outside donations for the respective campaigns.

Outlook

EXPERIENCE shows that suicide terrorism in general, and female suicide terrorism in particular, is very much a copycat phenomenon, with large campaigns usually following a single set precedent.

Given the precedent in Iraq, we are likely to witness more such attacks there. This will naturally present new challenges for the counter-insurgency effort.

First, the coalition forces will have to adapt to the new reality of women posing a direct threat by improving security arrangements. These are likely to involve unpopular measures such as more intrusive body searches of women. Such measures will become problematic as they are likely to be seen as a violation of cultural and ethical norms, possibly adding fuel to the anti-American sentiment.

Also, it would not be surprising to see the deliberate dissemination of a myth about the Tal Afar perpetrator's alleged rape or torture by the Americans in order to intensify this sentiment. This of course presents a new challenge in the counter-propaganda department.

Second, the use of a woman to 'do a man's job' will send a powerful message of guilt to radical Muslims around the world by implying that they have not done enough for the defence of the Muslim Ummah. This is likely to result, again, in the increased flow of funding and foreign militants into the country.

The end result of the recent suicide bombing in Tal Afar is thus likely to be a further intensification of the insurgency campaign.

The writer is a researcher at the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies.

Load-Date: October 4, 2005

Tea with the Tigers becomes a turbulent brew

The Age (Melbourne, Australia)

July 4, 2007 Wednesday

First Edition

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Section: BUSINESS; Pg. 7

Length: 1336 words

Byline: Eric Ellis

Body

Dilmah's patriarch wants to put tea in line with fine wine, writes Eric Ellis in Colombo.

"HOW are the Richmond Tigers doing? How's Rex?" The man asking is a Sri Lankan septuagenarian standing in a white lab coat in a tea-tasting room in downtown Colombo, a long way from the MCG.

The chaos of a South Asian metropolis swirls around us. A day later, the jerry-built air force of the **Tamil Tigers** will drop bombs on the city.

But Merrill J. Fernando, the 77-years-young patriarch of Dilmah Teas, has a large soft spot for Australia. It is where, in 1988, he launched Dilmah onto the world, Australian tea-drinkers helping grow the Fernando family business into a sprawling \$500 million tea empire spanning 93 countries.

The footy question is simply a conversational gambit for the savvy Fernando.

He knows precisely how the Tigers are doing this year - like Rex, badly - because his big mate in Australia, the broadcaster and football legend Rex Hunt, keeps him apprised of the AFL's ups and down.

Fernando often speaks to the 3AW footy panel, now that Kamahl, Dilmah's long-time public face in Australia, has been dumped. As Kamahl might put it, people can be so unkind, but Fernando knows cheap publicity is good in Dilmah's best market.

Business is very personal for the Fernandos. Though slower after a recent illness, Merrill Fernando spends part of his day personally responding to Dilmah customers around the world, with handwritten letters explaining the mysteries of the cherished leaf. He got his start in tea in 1950, when elephants would lug materiel to the upcountry estates.

Today, Fernando is regarded as an industry legend, while the modern cut and thrust is being handed to his 40-something sons, Dilhan and Malik, after whom Fernando named Dilmah.

The sons are busy remaking Dilmah as a modern brand, trying to pitch the family's single-origin teas as the Grange Hermitage of the humble cuppa, with evocations of terroir, of sommeliers and rare vintages.

Dilmah's elegant packaging is heavy with wine iconography; descriptive labels equating shiraz to a robust black tea, or champagne for a fine white leaf.

Tea with the Tigers becomes a turbulent brew

Long derided by the world's fast-growing legions of trendy latte-sippers as the favourite tippie of your eccentric great aunt, Dilmah is positioning tea as a gourmet product, clawing back some of the \$US70 billion world "hot beverage" market, where a 75 per cent share has been conceded to coffee. They want to make tea fashionable, and even exquisite.

The world might drink more than a billion cups of tea a day, but big producers have struggled to add value to the brew. Then there's the explosive growth of coffee giants such as Starbucks, opening an average five stores a day and also targeting tea drinkers. Dilmah presents Sri Lankan tea as the purest - and most expensive - in the world, while also salving high-minded consumers' health concerns and rising enviro-consciousness. "You have to regard tea in the same way as you would an immaculate vintage," says Fernando. "People need to know what they are drinking."

The pitch doesn't wash with Dilmah's main competitors, such as Anglo-Dutch giant Unilever, whose Lipton brand is world leader with 15 per cent, and Associated British Foods, second globally with Twinings at 6 per cent. "The wine analogy is fairly ridiculous in big wine-drinking countries, which also tend to be tea-drinkers," says John Cornish, Twinings' London-based international marketing director.

Running Dilmah from Sri Lanka has unique challenges that Twinings and Unilever in Europe don't face. Sri Lanka is hardly business-friendly; its creaking infrastructure and labour laws are very 1940s. Getting goods from plantation to port is tricky for a product that stresses freshness. Dilhan Fernando cites a 150-kilometre journey from Dilmah's estates that can take as many as seven hours. Colombo's port often gets locked down, and military roadblocks go up.

Sri Lanka has been crippled by a bitter civil war between its minority Tamil-Hindu community, pining for a separate state in the island's north-east, and the majority Buddhist-Sinhalese of the south. Some 70,000 people have been killed since 1983. A Norwegian-sponsored ceasefire in 2002 briefly brought peace - and a short-lived economic boom - but the fighting is back with a vengeance. On April 29, as Sri Lanka's Dilmah-sponsored national cricket team was playing Australia in the World Cup final, the **Tamil Tigers** bombed Colombo at 2am, as Sri Lankans were locked into the TV broadcast from Barbados. The capital was plunged into panic, as government anti-aircraft gunners blazed indiscriminately at commercial airliners barely 50 metres from my hotel.

Guests ducked for cover but the gunners failed to shoot down the invaders. Dilhan Fernando apologises for his country's extremism. "We've been able to manage and grow the business around the conflict," he says, "but we watch things very closely."

Politics can be tricky in Dilmah's tea country too. The Fernandos' tea gardens are equidistant to Colombo and the self-styled Tamil homeland, known as Eelam.

Most of their 37,000 workers are ethnic Tamils, mostly **female** tea-pluckers descended from the indentured labourers on estates bought by Scots from India in the 1800s.

Known as "Estate Tamils", they are regarded by Sri Lankans as an ethnic group distinct from Eelam Tamil communities.

The tea region is peaceful, but estate managers note the effigies of Tiger leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran in some Hindu temples. That's also been noticed by the Tigers' mortal enemy, the JVP (People's Liberation Front), a party of Sinhalese Marxist nationalists who regard the tea country as their stronghold. The politics is reflected in Dilmah's marketing. Though the island has been called Sri Lanka since 1972, Dilmah and Colombo's state tea board market themselves as producing "Ceylon" tea, as it used to call itself. The Fernandos are no forelock-tuggers to former colonial masters; it's just good business. "Sadly, too many people associate the term Sri Lanka with strife," rues Malik Fernando.

Dilmah is rare in the tea industry in being a vertically integrated operation; a producer, packager and marketer of its own teas. But that has often been a thorny place to be in Sri Lanka. As the biggest foreign exchange earner in one of the world's poorest countries, Sri Lanka's tea industry has endured nationalisation by greedy governments,

Tea with the Tigers becomes a turbulent brew

followed by half-hearted privatisations by reformers. Post-colonial administrations tried loosening the grip of the British tea houses, eventually succeeding in the 1970s by seizing estates. But that move backfired when the estates declined under state rule. With bureaucrats in control, Sri Lanka's tea industry almost collapsed as planters moved their skills to Kenya.

The impact was devastating. From virtually nothing in the 1970s, Kenya now vies with Sri Lanka as the world's fourth-biggest tea producer and biggest exporter, after India and China, which consume most of their domestic output.

Fernando's best years were through the late 1970s and '80s when he sold bulk tea to the then Soviet Union and Saddam's Iraq, lucrative business that helped set up Dilmah. "Moscow was a very good customer," he says. "They paid on time in pounds sterling via London and were very courteous," he says. "I had more money than I knew what to do with." In 1988, in the midst of civil war, he used his windfall to start Dilmah, with a vision to develop a high-end branded tea, adding value to the bulk tea he was trading. Then Fernando's bulk markets in the USSR and Eastern Europe were collapsing so he launched the brand in Australia, where many of his countrymen had fled from the civil strife at home.

The next challenge confronting Dilmah might be internal. Patriarch Merrill recently fell ill and is handing more control to his sons. Besides, the company seems a well-oiled operation and against the backdrop of a very difficult homeland, such a transition is nothing special.

Eric Ellis is South-East Asia correspondent of Fortune Magazine.

Graphic

PHOTO: Dilmah founder Merrill Fernando: "You have to regard tea in the same way as you would an immaculate vintage." PICTURE: ROB HOMER

Load-Date: July 19, 2007

Naxals working on red corridor

Hindustan Times

June 5, 2005 Sunday 8:52 AM EST

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Length: 285 words

Byline: Sarita Kaushik Hindustan Times

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

NEW DELHI, India, June 5 -- THE GREENS of Dandakaranya forest in central India are now a red bastion with Naxalites turning the area into their operational headquarters.

Video clippings and pictures of training camps recovered from a Naxal commander reveal that the Naxals have set up base in the Abhujmad area here as a step towards their goal of a 'Red Corridor' from Nepal to Kerala, police sources say.

Pictures of a Naxal training camp in the jungle, in possession of HT, show armed cadre dressed in olive, suspected Nepali Maoists, women cadre and banners. SP (Gadchiroli) Shirish Jain told HT that evidence, including confiscated literature, reveals that the Naxal top brass had called for strengthening their hold on Dandakaranya in 2003.

The 2004 peace talks in Andhra Pradesh gave the Naxals enough time to regroup, recruit, train and gain sponsorship, police sources say. Dandakaranya is the result of their stepped-up efforts.

A spurt in Naxal attacks in the last few months indicates trouble. Four gram panchayat buildings were burnt, records destroyed, policemen killed in the three states, villagers suspected to be police informers killed - the Naxals are striking.

That Dandakaranya is a Naxal hotbed is obvious from the kind of ammunition confiscated. Claymores have replaced landmines, metal grenades have made way for lighter, lethal plastic ones and carbines and stenguns have replaced kattas and bharmars. Training also seems to have gotten tougher. Police have intelligence that apart from Pakistan and the LTTE, Red Army outfits and international agencies in the Philippines, Turkey and Peru are aiding the Naxals.

The Hindustan Times is provided through HT Syndication, New Delhi.

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Load-Date: June 7, 2005

Naxals working on red corridor

End of Document

Tea that goes through a war zone to reach your cup

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

September 3, 2007 Monday

First Edition

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Section: BUSINESS; Pg. 21

Length: 1267 words

Byline: Eric Ellis Colombo, Sri Lanka - Eric Ellis is South-East Asia Correspondent of Fortune

Body

"HOW ARE the Richmond Tigers doing? How is Rex?"

The questions come as a surprise, for the man asking is a Sri Lankan septuagenarian standing in a white lab coat in a tea-tasting room in downtown Colombo - a long way from the MCG - with the chaos of a South Asian metropolis swirling outside.

A day later the tin-pot air force of the *Tamil Tigers* will drop bombs on the city.

But Merrill Fernando, 77, the patriarch of Dilmah Teas, has a big soft spot for Australia. It is where, in 1988, he began Dilmah into the world. Australian tea drinkers have helped grow the Fernando family business into a sprawling \$600 million tea empire now spanning 93 countries.

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The sons are busy remaking Dilmah as a modern brand, trying to pitch the family's single-origin teas as the Grange Hermitage of the humble cuppa, with evocations of terroir, of sommeliers and rare vintages. Dilmah's elegant packaging is heavy with wine iconography; descriptive labels equating a robust black tea to shiraz, or a fine white leaf to champagne. Many of the world's trendy latte-sippers may have long looked down on tea as the favourite tippie of an eccentric great-aunt, but Dilmah is positioning tea as a gourmet product, clawing back some of the \$85 billion world hot beverage market conceded to coffee's 75 per cent share by making tea fashionable.

Tea that goes through a war zone to reach your cup

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Dilhan Fernando apologises for his country's extremism.

"We've been able to manage and grow the business around the conflict, but we watch things very closely."

Politics can be tricky in Dilmah's tea country, too. The Fernandos' tea gardens are equidistant from Colombo and the self-styled Tamil homeland. Most of their 37,000 workers are Tamils, mostly female tea-pluckers descended from the communities brought from India in the 1800s by the then Scottish-owned estates as indentured labour. Known as Estate Tamils, they are regarded by Sri Lankans as distinct from Eelam's Tamil communities. The tea region is peaceful, but estate managers note the effigies of the Tiger leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran in some Hindu temples. That has also been noticed by the Tigers' mortal enemy, the JVP, a party of Sinhalese Marxist nationalists who regard the tea country as their stronghold. The politics is reflected in Dilmah's marketing. Though the island has been called Sri Lanka since 1972, Dilmah and Colombo's state tea board market themselves as producing "Ceylon" tea, as it used to call itself. The Fernandos are no forelock-tuggers to former colonial masters; it's just good business. "Sadly, too many people associate the term Sri Lanka with strife," Malik Fernando says.

Dilmah is rare in the tea industry in being a vertically-integrated operation; a producer, packager and marketer of its own teas. But that has often been a thorny place to be in Sri Lanka. As the biggest foreign-exchange earner in one of the poorest countries, Sri Lanka's tea industry has endured a nationalisation by greedy governments, followed by half-hearted privatisations by reformers. Post-colonial administrations tried loosening the grip of the British tea houses, eventually succeeding in the 1970s by simply seizing estates. But that move backfired when the estates declined under state rule. With bureaucrats in control, Sri Lanka's tea industry almost collapsed as planters moved their skills to Kenya, and with devastating effect. From virtually nowhere in the 1970s, Kenya now vies with Sri Lanka as the world's fourth biggest tea producer and biggest exporter, after India and China, which consume most of their domestic output.

Merrill Fernando's best years were through the late 1970s and '80s when he sold bulk tea to the then Soviet Union and Saddam Hussein's Iraq. "Moscow was a very good customer," Fernando says. "They paid on time in pounds sterling via London, and were very courteous. I had more money than I knew what to do with."

In 1988, in the midst of civil war, he used his windfall to start Dilmah. His vision was to develop a high-end branded tea, adding value to the bulk tea he was trading. Then, when Fernando's bulk markets in the Soviet Union and

Tea that goes through a war zone to reach your cup

eastern Europe were collapsing, he launched the brand in Australia, where many of his countrymen had fled from the civil strife at home.

But the next challenge confronting Dilmah may be internal. Merrill Fernando recently fell ill and is handing more control to his sons.

The company seems a well-oiled operation. Still, when viewed against the backdrop of operating a very difficult country like Dilmah's homeland, such a transition is nothing special.

Eric Ellis is South-East Asia Correspondent of Fortune.

Graphic

PHOTO: Merrill Fernando ... he was in Australia when he set up his company in 1988. Photo: Rob Homer

Load-Date: September 2, 2007

End of Document

Sgro's exit none too soon

The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

January 15, 2005 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: FORUM; Pg. A14

Length: 736 words

Byline: The StarPhoenix

Body

Whatever the merits of allegations by a pizzeria owner facing deportation that Canada's immigration minister had promised him asylum in exchange for help with her re-election bid, Judy Sgro's resignation Friday was a surprise only for its timing.

While Prime Minister Paul Martin accepted the resignation "with regret" ostensibly to free Sgro to defend herself against what she called "outrageous fabrications" by Harjit Singh, removing the gaffe-prone minister from cabinet was something the PM should have done months ago.

On the face of it, Singh's sworn affidavit that Sgro promised to grant his family immigrant status in exchange for free pizzas and garlic bread, along with 15 or 16 volunteer workers for her campaign office, does sound outrageous.

Yet, coming on the heels of last fall's uproar over claims that she'd fast-tracked a visa for a Romanian stripper who'd worked on her campaign, and an investigation by the federal ethics commissioner into allegations that Sgro's aides had threatened to deny residency permits to constituents of Opposition MPs who'd criticized her in the House, Singh's accusations suddenly don't seem so outlandish.

That's not to suggest for a moment that Sgro is guilty of anything beyond colossally poor political judgment. Had she any sense, she should have vacated her post the moment the "Strippergate" problem arose, to avoid prolonging the government's embarrassment over a ludicrous policy.

Sgro opened herself and the Martin government to endless public ridicule each subsequent week, with revelations that her senior assistant had made personal visits to peeler bars to consult with proprietors.

Her defence that staunching the flow of foreign strippers to work in Canada would financially ruin a strip club industry hard-pressed to find willing locals for the job, led to exposing internal government memos that warned these women would be forced into prostitution and near-slavery at establishments linked to organized crime.

Given her penchant for creating waves -- she got into trouble last summer after suggesting that the church custom of providing sanctuary for asylum seekers was being used "as the back door to enter Canada," and undermined national security -- Martin should have acted far sooner for his own good as well as Sgro's.

Sgro's exit none too soon

The point that needs to be kept in mind, however, is that while Sgro indeed is responsible for many of the problems that led to her woes, at the heart of it all lie Liberal immigration policies that too often are meant to pander to special interest groups rather than meet Canada's needs.

For instance, Sgro didn't invent the policy on granting strip-club owners a blanket exemption to import women. Pierre Pettigrew, Human Resources minister in 1998, approved the policy and a succession of ministers failed to heed cautions that it promoted the global trafficking in vulnerable women. Apparently, Liberal constituency politics trump Canada's commitment to eradicate the world's sex-trade slavery of humans.

This week, the Sri Lankan government is accusing Ottawa of playing footsies with supporters of the terrorist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam by sending Canadian visa officers into tsunami-ravaged rebel-held territory. Given the emphasis Canada has placed on aid efforts to the island, including sending its military disaster assistance team to LTTE-run areas, it's tough to discount accusations that its motivation comes from appeasement politics involving a huge and politically active Tamil expatriate population in key Ontario ridings.

Sri Lanka's deputy foreign minister, Wiswa Warnapala, says Ottawa is extending special preference to Tamils, who've already benefited disproportionately under Canada's immigration system. Given recent Liberal history, it's tough to dispute Warnapala's claim that the impetus is coming from "pressure groups associated with the LTTE operating in Canada, particularly in Toronto and Scarborough."

From a senior Immigration Canada official and four accomplices charged with running a bribery scheme, to an Immigration and Refugees board judge charged with 97 counts of fraud, breach of trust and obstruction of justice, to Sgro's resignation, it's clear that Canada's immigration system and the policies that guide it are a mess.

Martin's support for Sgro and his regret over her fate indicate that he's not about to admit any problems on those fronts or make the necessary changes anytime soon.

Load-Date: January 15, 2005

Sri Lanka mounts massive relief operation as nearly 11,000 die

Agence France Presse -- English

December 27, 2004 Monday 12:59 PM GMT

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Length: 727 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Dec 27

Body

Sri Lanka mounted a massive humanitarian operation Monday after tsunamis devastated much of the island's coastline, killing almost 11,000 people of whom 70 were foreign tourists.

The military said 10,029 people killed were civilians and 48 were security personnel throughout the island, except in areas held by the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) in the island's north.

The ***LTTE*** raised its own count Monday to 820 from 800 after collecting the bodies of victims along the northeastern coastline where they have their key military bases.

The number of people injured was 3,015, the military said.

"This is the first time Tamil people in our areas have witnessed such a large scale disaster," Tiger political leader S.P. Thamilselvan told the pro-rebel Tamilnet website Sunday. Most of the victims were children and the elderly.

Foreign tourists seeking warm weather during the Christmas holiday were also among the dead.

"Our information is that 70 foreign tourists have died in the tragedy," tourism director general Kalai Selvam told AFP, although the nationalities of the victims had not yet established. Another 47 were reported missing.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga declared a state of disaster to deal with the calamity.

A top government aide said 250,000 people were believed to have lost their homes and appealed for urgent foreign aid.

"We had no mechanism to deal with this type of disaster," Lalith Weeratunga, aide to Prime Minister Rajapakse said. "We are getting systems in place now to distribute relief."

Weeratunga, Sri Lanka's top relief co-ordinator, said officials had failed to learn from floods that ravaged the country's south in June last year.

"We had been very complacent," Weeratunga told AFP. "People had been predicting earthquakes, tidal waves and we even felt a few tremors recently, but obviously we did not take the warnings seriously."

Sri Lanka mounts massive relief operation as nearly 11,000 die

Until Sunday's destruction, the worst natural disaster had been last June's river flooding and mudslides, which left 255 dead.

"Even after that, we had not learnt a lesson... we have to rethink the entire disaster preparedness strategy."

Reinforcements were 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 told AFP. "We have never had to deal with such a tragedy. Our main task is to clear the roads so that relief supplies can get through."

"We need to ensure that relatives are able to get the bodies of their loved ones to conduct funerals. We are engaged in that process right now. The release of bodies to families has begun."

Tourists who survived the tsunamis said walls of water slammed into their hotels and they were lucky to escape. Most had lost their baggage and travel documents.

An entire train was flooded, while buses and cars floated along the main Galle Road hugging the coastline from the capital to the south of the island. Officials said restoring rail transport could take months.

The bodies of men, women and children were seen in trees after the waters receded, many more floated in the sea while others were strewn with the debris from homes and businesses along the coast.

Police clamped local curfews in most areas to prevent looting.

The tsunamis were triggered by a huge submarine earthquake off northeast Indonesia, some 1,500 kilometres (1,000 miles) from Sri Lanka. The temblor measured 9.0 on the Richter scale, the fourth largest since 1900.

Giant waves also slammed into Thailand, Myanmar, southern India, Malaysia and the Maldives.

The Sri Lankan army, navy and air force were called out to help. Officials said combat aircraft were being deployed to air-drop bottled drinking water and food to marooned residents.

At least 400 prisoners fled from two high-security jails in the southern province as inmates took advantage of the disaster, police said.

Hundreds of coastal villages and towns were battered by the high waves, police said, and almost all tourist resorts were flooded.

"The destruction is widespread along the coast and we fear for many people who were along the beach at the time," Prime Minister Rajapakse told AFP.

Leader of the opposition Ranil Wickremesinghe said the disaster had severely affected the country's economy with the tourism and hotel sectors facing the brunt, especially in the southern regions.

jds

Load-Date: December 28, 2004

Sri Lankan city's descent into chaos; As the cease-fire erodes, so does peace between neighbors

The International Herald Tribune

May 16, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 1361 words

Byline: Somini Sengupta

Dateline: TRINCOMALEE, Sri Lanka

Body

The bad blood, you could say, began with the Buddha.

Last May, in the dead of night, someone erected a giant white Buddha statue on a 1.5-meter-tall, or 5-foot-high, cement platform behind the main market here. What followed in this multi-ethnic, multifaith, perennially self-destructive city on the northeastern coast of Sri Lanka was a chain of anger and savagery.

The ethnic Tamils of Trincomalee, who are mostly Hindu and Christian, saw the clandestine raising of the Buddha statue as an act of provocation by Sinhalese Buddhists. The Tamils protested the statue. The man who led the protests, Vanniasingam Vigneswaran, was shot and killed as he went to the bank one morning. Another morning, the bodies of five Tamil youths were found on the beach. The largely Sinhalese security forces came under steady attack by people suspected of being ethnic Tamil guerrillas.

The tit for tat went on for a year and then shifted into overdrive on a Wednesday afternoon in mid-April, when an explosion at the entrance of the market killed 16 people, prompting a Sinhalese mob to torch Tamil-owned shops and to hunt down Tamil civilians.

In the reprisals that followed, Sinhalese villagers were slaughtered, Tamil homes were burned and schools and churches were turned into squalid camps of frightened, wounded villagers. At the end of April, a suicide bombing in Colombo, said to have been carried out by the Tamil rebels, prompted government airstrikes on the rebel-held countryside just south of here. More than a dozen died, and hundreds more villagers fled.

After four years of livable peace since the 2002 cease-fire between the government and the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Trincomalee has once again sunk into the muck of fear, uncertainty and distrust that marked the worst years of the ethnic Sri Lankan conflict of the past two decades.

With the cease-fire having all but unraveled, the latest violence raises the specter of the 1983 anti-Tamil campaign that plunged the country into all-out war. Bad memories compound the ill will.

Nowhere is that more apparent than in Trincomalee, 255 kilometers, or 160 miles, from Colombo. The city is a demographic microcosm of the country, with Tamils, Sinhalese and Muslims living in roughly equal numbers. It is here that the repercussions of the war are felt most intensely.

Sri Lankan city's descent into chaos As the cease-fire erodes, so does peace between neighbors

"There is right now a lot of suspicion by the communities of each other," said the Reverend George Dissanayake, a Roman Catholic priest and the secretary of the Inter-Religious Peace Foundation here. "We have gone back 20 years. It is very difficult to repair the damage."

Today, Sinhalese villagers living around Trincomalee say the police have offered them shotguns to protect themselves. In their territory, the **Tamil Tigers**, too, are raising village defense committees.

The city and the surrounding countryside are increasingly divided along ethnic lines. The market has turned into a Sinhalese enclave, and the traders, bereft of Tamil and Muslim customers, while away the day playing cards.

Nearby, a Tamil laundry, spared by the mob, waits for its Sinhalese customers to bring in their wash. Across the street, a Sinhalese grocer waits for Tamil shoppers who no longer come. Offices close by early afternoon. By nightfall, the streets are bare except for the edgy soldiers who man checkpoints at every corner.

The latest sequence of events prompted R. Rajarammohan, one of the most successful businessmen in the city, to do what he had strenuously resisted for years: cloister himself with his fellow Tamils.

Within minutes of the April 12 market blast, a gang of young men came up Central Road with kerosene cans and fishing knives, and set upon Rajarammohan's household-products wholesale company. They broke into his office, but seemed not to know who he was or his ethnicity.

It signaled to him that they were not from the area.

The mob set his shop on fire. In the course of an hour, Rajarammohan lost \$400,000 in goods, computers, four trucks and a new car, and even lost the insurance papers.

Today, Rajarammohan is setting up shop in a Tamil enclave, far from the buzz of Central Road and the main market.

"We'd love to go back; we'd love to work with them," he said of his Sinhalese neighbors on Central Road. "But they can't protect us, can they? We've learned the bitter way."

It was the fourth time since 1983 that his business had been hit in anti-Tamil riots.

One measure of the distrust between the communities is the swirl of conspiracy theories about what happened when the market got bombed. Among Sinhalese, one widespread theory is that the bomb killed mainly Sinhalese and that the riots erupted spontaneously. Among Tamils, a widespread theory is that the bomb was the handiwork of security forces or their allies and that the majority of the dead were Tamils in what they call organized reprisal attacks.

The truth is harder to categorize. According to the main hospital, the blast killed 16 people, representing the local demographic mix: eight Tamils, five Sinhalese, two Muslims and a person who could not be identified. The reprisal attacks claimed another five: four Tamils and one Sinhalese, who were burned, stabbed and shot to death.

Whether the riots were spontaneous or planned is impossible to know, although one thing seems certain: The police and the army, deployed in full force around the market, did not manage to stop them.

Rohan Abeywardana, the deputy inspector general of police in charge of Trincomalee, said his forces were overpowered. And anyway, those arrested were released the next morning.

Eleven days later, terror came to Gomarankadawela, an isolated Sinhalese village on the fringes of a forest. M.B. Kalyanaratti, 45, was bending low in a rice field when she heard gunfire and looked up. Six gunmen in uniform motioned to the **women** to stay back. Then they shot six men in the rice field, including her younger brother, M.B. Chaminda Prasanna Bhandara, 28. The gunmen fled into the bush.

Sri Lankan city's descent into chaos As the cease-fire erodes, so does peace between neighbors

There had been no warning of trouble, the villagers said, nor any acrimony with the Tamils who live nearby. The farmers here relied on Tamil labor for help at cultivation time. Bhandara's family blamed the **Tamil Tigers**.

Bhandara might have made a choice target because he was a member of a village defense force known here as the home guards. All through the war, home guards had been recruited from among Sinhalese villages to man checkpoints and help the largely Sinhalese security forces in their military operations.

Bhandara's family insists that he joined the service to survive and not to kill. His wife and son survived on his \$100 a month income

More than half the village fled after his killing.

Three days later, terror circled around to Thanganagar, a largely Tamil hamlet surrounded by Sinhalese ones. Two gunmen, their faces shielded, marched into the home of Joseph Baby, 38, as she ate lunch with her family. They pulled everyone out of the house, and they shot and killed her husband, her uncle and her brother. A bullet pierced her left thigh. "Your people are hurting our people," she recalls the gunmen saying.

Her family was no stranger to hurt. Her two sisters lost their husbands many years ago, during the height of the war. The men had gone to collect honey in the woods; they never returned. On the morning of his death, Baby's husband, a day laborer, had unloaded cement bags and brought home \$1.30

Thanganagar, along with several other Tamil villages, has since emptied out.

Not far from the school where Baby has taken refuge, in a deadly quiet Sinhalese hamlet, came reports of a new perilous turn in the conflict. Villagers said the police were offering guns to any Sinhalese who wanted one for protection. Reluctantly, it appears, a few villagers have taken up the offer.

"This is purely out of fear," confessed W.K. Dharmapala, a farmer. "We are not really sure how to use it."

Behind the market, the Buddha, encircled by concertina wire, gazes silently on once-busy Trincomalee market. The dozens of soldiers barricaded around the statue light oil lamps before him every day.

They are the only ones who can touch its feet today, along with the crows still free to roam.

Load-Date: May 17, 2006

Overseas lifters test locals

Fiji Times

April 9, 2003 Wednesday

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Section: SPORTS; Pg. 42

Length: 297 words

Body

COMMONWEALTH weightlifting gold medallist Reanna Solomon is in the country and will compete in the Fiji Games.

The Australian weightlifter won gold at the Manchester Games last August and is training at the Oceania Weightlifting Institute in Sigatoka.

Solomon took gold medals both in the clean and jerk and the overall total in her weight category.

Accompanying her is another weightlifter from Australia, Caroline Pileggi.

Fiji Weightlifting Federation interim secretary Paul Coffa said both athletes will be competing against other Fiji lifters during the Fiji Games this Friday.

Other top athletes competing from overseas are Yoko Peter from Nauru in the 69kg class.

"Yoko is expecting to be named the best weightlifter at the South Pacific Games. There is also Manuel Minginfel from Federated States of Micronesia who won three gold medals at the last SPG in Guam," Coffa said.

There will be other overseas lifter competing.

Harvey Tulensro from FSM, Ltte Detenamo from Nauru, 16 year old Nauruan Sheba Deireragea and Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Rosetta Penani.

The attraction of the day will be the appearance of the Commonwealth's strongest man, six feet four inches tall, 145kg Coran Hocking from Australia.

From the local lifters, Joe Vueti, Kesa Tawai, Della Shaw, Arele Fipe and many others will be competing. Coffa said this event would be the final trial for the Fijian lifters for the 2003 SPG.

The official team will be announced straight after the tournament.

Programme for Friday: 12noon, 48kg-53kg-58kg-63kg classes for women. 1pm, 69kg, 075kg, -75kg= classes for women, 2.30, 56kg, 62kg classes for men, 4pm, 69kg, 77kg classes for men, 5.30pm, 85kg-94kg-105kg-105kg= classes for men., 4pm, 69kg, 77kg classes for men, 5.30pm, 85kg-94kg-105kg-105kg= classes for men.

Load-Date: April 29, 2003

Overseas lifters test locals

End of Document

The awful truth: Sri Lankan human-rights activist is the subject of a documentary that explores the brutality of ethnic conflicts and gives voice to the silenced

The Gazette (Montreal)

November 21, 2005 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: ARTS & LIFE; Pg. D1

Length: 1102 words

Byline: DONNA NEBENZAHL, The Gazette

Body

The filmmaker doesn't want to be recognized. The fearsome reach of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, subject of a riveting documentary by veteran filmmaker Helene Klodawsky, is such that she has asked that her face not be shown in the photograph illustrating this story.

Her film, *No More Tears Sister: Anatomy of Hope and Betrayal*, focuses on Rajani Thiranagama, a doctor and university teacher assassinated in 1989 for her human-rights work.

Since 1948 and the end of British colonial rule in Ceylon, as Sri Lanka was then called, ethnic killing between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils has claimed the lives of thousands.

A Christian Tamil herself, who had broken her earlier ties with the Tamil separatist movement, Thiranagama - known as Rajani - was considered a threat by the **Tamil Tigers**, an armed rebel group formed in the 1970s to fight for an independent state in Sri Lanka.

In 1989, because she had founded University Teachers for Human Rights, a group that recorded atrocities committed by all sides in the conflict, Rajani was gunned down while riding her bicycle home from teaching at the medical school in Jaffna. She was 35 years old.

No one was ever charged with her killing, although suspicion rests on the Tigers.

More than a touch of serendipity led Klodawsky to tell Rajani's story. For starters, Serendip was one of the names Sri Lanka has borne in its long history.

The project began in 2003 when the National Film Board asked her to make a film on **women** and war, a subject with which Klodawsky, a filmmaker for 20 years, had grown familiar, both professionally and personally.

"I had done other films on conflict situations," said the 50-year-old filmmaker in a telephone interview from a Berlin conference she was attending.

"Growing up with a mother who was in Auschwitz and among adults who were concentration camp survivors, these themes are never far from one's psyche."

The awful truth: Sri Lankan human-rights activist is the subject of a documentary that explores the brutality of ethnic conflicts and gives voice to the silence....

She decided to focus on ethnic nationalism, to explore it from a woman's perspective. She read up and discovered that a lot of Sri Lankan feminists were writing about war.

Then Klodawsky found out about the University Teachers for Human Rights, based in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. She inquired further, and was told the founder, Rajani Thiranagama, had been assassinated 15 years before.

"I know it sounds a little flaky," she said, "but I just had an arrow of inspiration in my heart and knew this would be my film."

She contacted Rajani's older sister, Nirmala, a Tamil militant in her youth whose jailing by the Sri Lankan government had further politicized Rajani. "We've been waiting for you for 15 years," Nirmala said.

"They felt, at last, they could be secure in telling this story," largely because the National Film Board has taken great care with the security of the family, Klodawsky said. "The NFB has been fantastic, so committed to fostering a dialogue on human rights."

Because the story could anger certain people, and the family could be punished for that, "it has always been very much on our minds that the film should be promoted and seen by many, so they could be protected."

No More Tears Sister premiered in April at the 2005 Hot Docs International Film Festival in Toronto, and has been seen at the Seattle Film Festival, the Human Rights Film Festival in New York and now is travelling to 40 U.S. cities as part of the Human Rights Watch travelling film festival. It has also been shown at human-rights film festivals in South Africa and Spain, at women's events in South Korea and Thailand, and has been bought by PBS in the United States and Australian TV.

It's part of a wave of documentary filmmaking that seems to be catching on with a public that has grown to feel short-changed by the mainstream media, Klodawsky suspects.

"People want more depth, they want to hear a story from different points of view," she said. "Documentary as a form is coming into its own."

Members of Rajani's family participated in the making of No More Tears Sister at some risk to themselves, as did her ex-husband, Dayapala, who had been a radical student leader from a Sinhala Buddhist background, and is the father of their two daughters. To them, it was an act of faith, Klodawsky said, almost an obligation.

"I think when people are unjustly removed or killed or silenced, those who survive are obligated to not let that memory be lost," she said.

This sombre tale is an homage to those caught up in conflict who struggle to survive the horrors of ethnic nationalism. In Rajani's case, her courage and dedication to her country shine through.

It's fitting that Rajani's life as a young woman is re-enacted by her youngest daughter, one of several re-creations the filmmaker had to resort to because so many people were afraid to speak.

"They knew it would be too dangerous for them, and even when I proposed filming them in shadow, they were too frightened."

This was the case not just in Sri Lanka but also in Toronto: members of the Tamil diaspora who had worked with Rajani were still afraid.

"I did go to Jaffna, and in the end, people said it was impossible. It would arouse too much suspicion."

Fear of the ***Tamil Tigers***, fear of speaking out has rendered the population silent. One man told Klodawsky: "It's not our houses but our minds that are surrounded by barbed wire."

The awful truth: Sri Lankan human-rights activist is the subject of a documentary that explores the brutality of ethnic conflicts and gives voice to the silence....

Filming took place in Sri Lanka, south of the Tiger-controlled areas. "We re-created a lot with actual research and details of what really happened," Klodawsky said.

"In order to tell the truth we had to fake it."

Rajani, she believes, was unable to turn her back on the conflict, driven by her concern for the communities she saw falling apart.

"Most professionals fled the war, and she could have had a job anywhere, but she was a passionate defender of her people," Klodawsky said. "She really believed in them, and as much as she dreamed of running away - many times she confesses this in her diary - she just could not."

Rajani's story fits many of the criteria the filmmaker uses to decide on a project - a passionate story that needs to be told by people who are driven to tell the story.

"This film is reaching people all over the world," she said, "not only the Tamil diaspora. Whenever it's shown, people come and thank me for giving voice to the silent majority."

"That's what I wanted the film to be, that place where people could be open."

The world broadcast premiere of *No More Tears Sister: Anatomy of Hope and Betrayal*, by Helene Klodawsky, airs on the Documentary Channel at 10 p.m. Wednesday.

The film has also been chosen as one of 15 to be broadcast in the United States on PBS's POV next spring.

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Graphic

Colour Photo: COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA / Documentary depicts Rajani's assassination in 1989.;

Colour Photo: COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA; Rajani Thiranagama's life as a young woman is re-enacted by her youngest daughter, Sharika, in *No More Tears Sister*.;

Photo: Rajani Thiranagama: Doctor and University Teacher.;

Photo: RICHARD ARLESS JR. THE GAZETTE; Director Helene Klodawsky says that when she heard the story of Rajani Thiranagama's assassination, "I just had an arrow of inspiration in my heart and knew this would be my film."

Load-Date: November 21, 2005

Tamil Tiger rebels bury slain leader as fighting in northern Sri Lanka kills 8

Associated Press International

November 5, 2007 Monday 5:59 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 614 words

Byline: By KRISHAN FRANCIS, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Separatist Tamil rebels buried their slain political leader Monday night in a "heroes' cemetery" in the heart of their mini-state in northern Sri Lanka, three days after he was killed in a government airstrike, pro-rebel Web sites reported Monday.

With Sri Lankan air force jets flying overhead, thousands thronged the streets of the rebel stronghold of Kilinochchi during the 1 1/2 hour funeral procession for S. P. Tamilselvan, whose body was wrapped in a red **Tamil Tigers**' flag and encased in a glass-topped coffin, TamilNet reported.

Meanwhile, new fighting in the north killed seven rebels and one soldier, the military said.

The Sri Lankan government, which controls access to rebel territory, denied journalists permission to cover the funeral and the two-day procession of Tamilselvan's body through rebel-held territory that preceded it.

Photographs of the funeral service posted on TamilNet showed Tamilselvan's wife, Sasiroaja, clad in the striped uniform of a Tamil Tiger fighter, tearfully lighting an oil lamp and placing a traditional marital thread on her husband's body. At some Hindu weddings, the groom ties a yellow chain or thread around his bride's neck. The removal of the thread indicates she has become a widow.

The Tigers' powerful intelligence chief Pottu Amman and Tamilselvan's successor as political leader, P. Nadesan, addressed mourners at the funeral.

"People are questioning what will be our response to Tamilselvan's killing. A few soldiers, even a thousand soldiers or some political leaders are no compensation for this loss," Amman was quoted as saying in the pro-rebel Tamil-language Puthinam Web site.

"Our best response should be to have a stronger determination until we realize our dream of attaining the independent state of Tamil Eelam," Amman said, referring to the rebels' envisaged independent ethnic Tamil state.

Tamilselvan was killed along with five others in a government air strike on a rebel communications center near Kilinochchi on Friday morning.

Tamil Tiger rebels bury slain leader as fighting in northern Sri Lanka kills 8

Sri Lankan officials said Monday they did not know Tamilselvan, who was also the rebels' chief negotiator at peace talks in Geneva last year, was in the compound at the time of the airstrike, but added that he was a legitimate target.

"He was a terrorist, and there is no question about it," government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella said.

Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake said such attacks would continue.

"Our security forces are targeting the hiding places and safehouses of terrorist leaders to deal a mortal blow to the Tigers," he was quoting as saying by the government-owned Daily News on Monday. "They will not stop the relentless pursuit of terrorists."

The government is open to negotiations with the rebels, but will not agree to a new cease-fire, he said.

The rebels have been fighting since 1983 to create an independent homeland for ethnic minority Tamils, following decades of discrimination by the majority Sinhalese-controlled governments. More than 70,000 people have died in the conflict.

Four rebels were killed early Monday when the army launched a pre-emptive attack on rebels planning an ambush along the front lines north of their mini-state, the military said in a statement.

Troops also destroyed a rebel bunker and killed three female insurgents Sunday in the Thampane area along the southern frontier of the rebel-held territory, the military said Monday.

No troops were wounded in those attacks, but a soldier was killed and another injured in a separate rebel mortar attack, it said.

There was no independent confirmation of the fighting. Both sides routinely exaggerate their opponent's casualties, while downplaying their own.

On the Net: <http://www.tamilnet.com>

Load-Date: November 6, 2007

Sri Lankan military kills eight rebels in fighting in northern region

Associated Press International

November 30, 2007 Friday 3:16 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 564 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

In chilling security camera footage, a ***female*** suicide bomber on a mission to kill a Sri Lankan Cabinet minister is seen patiently answering questions in a bustling government office before calmly standing up and detonating the bomb hidden in her bra.

The video, released by police Friday, gave a rare look at a suicide bomber's last moments and the immediate aftermath of a devastating attack.

In the footage, the bomber, wearing a yellow sari and a white shawl, calmly walked into a small waiting room at the Colombo offices of Social Services Minister Douglas Devananda on Wednesday, the day he sets aside to hear complaints from members of the public.

The woman, identified by police as 24-year-old Sujatha Vagawanam, sat down in front of a desk and answered questions from Devananda's 72-year-old aide Steven Peiris. As the two spoke, Peiris was repeatedly interrupted by other officials sitting nearby or walking past.

After nearly a minute and a half, he began gesturing for her to sit down in a nearby cluster of white plastic chairs, apparently to await a security check. She then stood up facing Peiris, reached her right hand to her right shoulder to grab something and exploded.

Peiris and the bomber, both of whom were killed, flew backward. The others in the room scrambled to run in all directions, some falling over their chairs in their haste to escape as a cloud of smoke hung in the air.

"She thought she was getting caught, so she exploded her bomb," said Devananda, the target of the attack.

Devananda, a Tamil politician seen as a rival to the Tamil Tiger rebel group, said the guerrillas had made more than 10 attempts on his life and killed more than 70 members of his Eelam People's Democratic Party in recent years.

"This is nothing new to me," he told The Associated Press in an interview at his heavily guarded home in Colombo. "I expect that these things happen, and will happen. It will continue."

The woman had aroused concerns in his office because she had not made an appointment and did not bring a letter of introduction from his office in her hometown of Vavuniya, on the edge of rebel-held territory, he said. Earlier police reports that she had suffered from polio and had a limp were incorrect, he said.

Sri Lankan military kills eight rebels in fighting in northern region

The rebels were also blamed for a second bombing Wednesday that killed 19 people at a popular department store in a Colombo suburb during the busy evening rush hour.

The government said the attacks proved the rebels were suffering from a military onslaught against their stronghold in northern Sri Lanka, security officials said.

"They were desperate and unable to face the security forces in the north," military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

The military announced Friday that it had killed 14 rebels the day before in a wave of fighting near the rebels' stronghold in northern Sri Lanka.

Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan, who has not answered repeated calls from The Associated Press since the latest bombings Wednesday, could not be reached for comment on the new fighting.

The **Tamil Tigers** have been fighting since 1983 to create a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's minority ethnic Tamils following decades of discrimination by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority.

The group, branded a terror organization by the U.S. and European Union, is responsible for more than 240 suicide bombings as well as scores of other deadly attacks.

Load-Date: December 1, 2007

The AFP Asia news agenda

Agence France Presse -- English

September 12, 2007 Wednesday 8:58 PM GMT

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Length: 674 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, Sept 13 2007

Body

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ASIA NEWS HIGHLIGHTS ON THURSDAY:

- + Indonesia counts cost of massive quake
- + Japan ponders future after Abe's exit
- + Millions across Asia mark Ramadan

JAKARTA: Full coverage as Indonesian authorities assess damage caused by a massive 8.2-magnitude quake off the west coast of Sumatra that has killed at least two and injured dozens (INDONESIA-QUAKE)

TOKYO: Covering reactions and developments following Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's abrupt announcement of resignation on Wednesday (JAPAN-POLITICS)

JAKARTA: Reporting as Muslims across Asia start the holy month of Ramadan (RELIGION-ISLAM-RAMADAN)

OTHER NEWS ITEMS:

BEIJING: Commerce ministry briefing 02H00 GMT (CHINA-COMMERCE)

-- Tennis. Men's edition of the China Open (TENNIS-ATP-CHN)

-- Football. Women's World Cup (FBL-WC2007-WOMEN)

COLOMBO: Reporting on Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict after the island's navy this week claimed it had virtually wiped out the Tamil Tigers' ability to smuggle arms into the country (SRILANKA-UNREST)

-- Monitoring after the tsunami alert issued following the Indonesia quake (INDONESIA-QUAKE-TSUNAMI-SRILANKA)

The AFP Asia news agenda

DHAKA: Monitoring as Bangladesh's emergency government allows limited resumption of political party meetings banned in January (BANGLADESH-POLITICS)

-- Monitoring as Bangladesh is hit by new flooding after major rivers swell from fresh monsoon downpours (BANGLADESH-WEATHER-FLOODS)

ISLAMABAD: Monitoring situation in northwest Pakistan after military said it killed 40 Islamic militants (PAKISTAN-UNREST)

KABUL: Public holiday to mark the first day of the holy month of Ramadan (RELIGION-ISLAM-RAMADAN-AFGHANISTAN)

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)

MANILA: Monitoring for protests and other reactions to the anti-graft court's verdict, sentencing deposed president Joseph Estrada to life imprisonment for massive graft (PHILIPPINES-ESTRADA-POLITICS)

-- As part of a special series on biofuels, we will move a feature on proposals to introduce electric "e-jeepneys" to replace polluting jeepneys that have been the backbone of the Philippines' public transport for decades (LIFESTYLE-ENVIRONMENT-ENERGY-PHILIPPINES-BIOFUEL-TRANSPORT)

NEW DELHI: Monitoring outbreak of cholera and other diseases in eastern India, where the death toll is nearing 200 (INDIA-HEALTH-CHOLERA)

-- Moving a story overnight on India's outsourcing industry also heading for offshore as costs rise (INDIA-TECHNOLOGY-OFFSHORE)

-- Monitoring after the tsunami alert issued following the Indonesia earthquake (INDONESIA-QUAKE-TSUNAMI-INDIA)

SINGAPORE: Reporting on world oil prices in Asian trade after OPEC agrees to a production increase (COMMODITIES-ENERGY-OIL-ASIA-PRICE)

SYDNEY: Field Hockey. Olympic qualifying Oceania Cup in Buderim, Queensland (FHOCKEY-OLY-2008-OCEANIA)

TOKYO: Jia Qinglin, member of standing committee of Chinese Communist Party's Political Bureau and chairman of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, meets Japanese ruling and opposition party leaders on the second day of his week-long visit to Japan (JAPAN-CHINA-DIPLOMACY)

-- Reporting on foreign exchange trading in Tokyo and Singapore the day after the dollar hit a record low against the euro in Asian trade, pressured by fears of a US recession and prospects of a Federal Reserve interest rate cut (FOREX-ASIA)

-- Monitoring Japanese share prices following a 0.50-percent loss in the previous session amid prospects of further economic reforms following the resignation of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (STOCKS-JAPAN)

-- Badminton. Japan Open. 3rd day (BADMINTON-JPN)

WELLINGTON: New Zealand's central bank reviews interest rates amid continuing inflationary pressures (NZEALAND-ECONOMY-RATE)

-- As part of a special series on biofuels, we will move a feature on the use of coconut oil to fuel economic growth in the South Pacific (LIFESTYLE-ENVIRONMENT-ENERGY-PACIFIC-BIOFUEL-COCONUT)

Load-Date: September 13, 2007

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