

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:34:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223508259

Documents (100)

1. [*Refugee exodus from 'unimaginable hell'*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

2. [*The end of a long war*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

3. [*Neither side has any reason to celebrate*](#) *Comment*

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

4. [*ASIA: Indon navy tries to coax Sri Lankans off boat*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

5. [*President seeks new thrust for agriculture in 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

6. [Tamil protesters clash with police in London](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

7. [SOME 350 MOTHERS TO DELIVER BABIES IN SRI LANKA IDP CAMPS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

8. [Tamil protesters demand ceasefire 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

9. [PRESS CONFERENCE ON SITUATION 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

10. [3RD LEAD: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in Sri Lanka =](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 200911. [13 convicts go on fast with demand similar to Nalini's](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 200912. [Pindi and Peshawar attacks - A linkage?](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 200913. [1ST LEAD: UN calls Sri Lanka fighting "bloodbath" for civilians](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 200914. [Death snatches saviour of lives](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 200915. [Tamil boat people fleeing 'genocide'](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

16. [*GHQ, Peshawar Terror Acts All doubts lead to RAW*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

17. [*Sri Lanka may pardon surrendering rebel 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,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

18. [*Xinhua Asia-Pacific news summary at 1600 GMT, June 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,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

19. [*UPA discusses ministerial berths, appoints Sonia chairperson \(Second Lead\)*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

20. [*Pindi and Peshawar attacks - A linkage?*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

21. [*Protests force Canadian politicians to acknowledge Tamil cause*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

22. [Protests force Canadian politicians to acknowledge Tamil cause](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

23. [The war is over, now build the peace](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

24. [Indonesia :Humanitarian disaster threatens Sri Lankan asylum seekers](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

25. [Voyage of the damned going nowhere](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

26. [Sri Lanka reaches for a lifeline in the sea War-torn nation sees potential in its bounty of fish and pristine beaches](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

27. [AFPTV Updated Advisory](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

28. [Divining peace in aftermath of war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

29. [Italian FM to brief EU states on GSP+](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

30. [Terrorist killing spree continues despite talks](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

31. [DMK to join government, likely to get seven berths \(Second Lead\)](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

32. [Civilians threatened as Tigers cornered in no-fire zone](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

33. [UN SCALING UP EFFORTS TO FACILITATE RETURN HOME OF DISPLACED SRI LANKANS](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

34. [Police scuffle with Tamil protestors in London](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

35. [Sri Lanka expels UN official over war comments](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

36. [Tamils and peace activists join forces](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

37. [AFPTV Advisory for Saturday](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

38. [Thousands trapped in Sri Lanka combat zone need food, medicines: ICRC](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

39. [AFP 1000 GMT News Advisory](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

40. [SL Army, an elite fighting force now](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

41. ["Big Brother" Regional Roles for 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

42. [Challenges faced after humanitarian operation](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

43. [ROUNDUP: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

44. [REFILE: \(ECA098\) ROUNDUP: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

45. [New home or just a base to settle scores?](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

46. [Agency attempts to cope with influx of Tamil child soldiers; Many were trained from very young age to become suicide bombers](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

47. [MEN HOPE TO 'BREAK SILENCE' ON CONFLICT 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

48. [EX-LTTE CADRES UNDERGO REHABILITATION](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

49. [Non-Profit Organization Democracy for Tamils Airs National TV Campaign to Raise Awareness in the USA
PSA Draws Attention to the Little Known Plight of the 250,000 Families Imprisoned 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

50. [ASIA: Sri Lankans plead with Rudd to save them](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

51. [SRI LANKA : GOV'T TO RESETTLE DISPLACED TAMILS AHEAD OF MONSOON](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

52. [UNICEF seeks full access to refugee camps](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

53. [International: Sri Lanka may release British medic held in internment camp: Detainee spent months helping injured patients: Reports of rapes in camps have been received by UN](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

54. [Sri Lankans threaten to set fire to boat](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

55. [Highlights of the AAP world wire at 07:00 May 17](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

56. [Ban welcomes escape of 35,000 from Sri Lankan conflict zone =](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

57. [UN seeks funds to help civilians who fled Sri Lanka war-zone](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

58. [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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

59. [Voyage of the damned going nowhere](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

60. [LTTE fire at civilians](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

61. [Sri Lankans threaten to set fire to boat](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

62. [Sri Lankans threaten to set fire to boat](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

63. [CONGRESSMAN MCMAHON VOTES IN FAVOR OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT;
INCLUDES PROVISIONS RELEVANT TO ETHNIC GROUPS IN DISTRICT](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

64. [Suspected LTTE female area leader arrested in Ampara](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

65. [RAW: A rogue agency](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

66. ['We are the voice of the voiceless'; Federal politicians echo call for ceasefire in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

67. [Dying seconds; Red Cross says Sri Lankans in 'catastrophic' situation as army closes in on rebels](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press

68. [*LTTE female cadre commits suicide, another arrested*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

69. [*The fall of the Great Empires*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

70. [*LTTE women's force leader arrested*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

71. [*Going beyond the back-handed slap from Washington*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

72. [*We'd rather die than go ashore here*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

73. [*Canada Increases Humanitarian Aid to 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

74. [*Canada Increases Humanitarian Aid to 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

75. [*'We'd rather die than go ashore here'*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

76. [*National/world briefs*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

77. [*Eye of storm for refugees*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

78. [*35,000 civilians flee Tiger area: Sri Lanka president*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

79. [*'We'd rather die than go ashore here'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

80. [*Sri Lankan government rejects Tamil ceasefire offer*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

81. [*In Brief*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

82. [*'We'd rather die than go ashore here'*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

83. [*Calls for war-crimes inquiry but Sri Lanka says no to 'obstruction'*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

84. [SRI LANKANS FLEE WAR ZONE](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

85. [Blunders doomed master strategist Tiger leader feared for killing Sri Lankan president, but slaying of Rajiv Gandhi cost him allies in 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

86. [Calls for war-crimes inquiry but Sri Lanka says no to 'obstruction'](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

87. [Sri Lanka says it may pardon surrendering Tamil 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

88. [INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

89. [Scrutiny calls on Tamil 'bloodbath'](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

90. [Sri Lanka war displaced children moved to camp](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

91. [PROTESTERS ARRESTED IN WESTMINSTER CLASHES](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

92. [AFP 1900 GMT News Advisory](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

93. [ROUNDUP: Hamas pledges to cooperate with UN Gaza war crimes team =](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

94. [*Canada Increases Humanitarian Aid to Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

95. [*Canada Increases Humanitarian Aid to Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

96. [*Aid agencies challenge Sri Lanka over war victims*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

97. [*Time to begin economic war*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

98. [*Sri Lanka war displaced children moved to camp*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

99. [*Over 600 athletes for Northern Province sports festival*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

100. [Women LTTE cadres arrested, 1 commits suicide](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

Refugee exodus from 'unimaginable hell'

Canberra Times (Australia)

April 24, 2009 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 12

Length: 392 words

Byline: Matt Wade

Body

Northern Sri Lanka has been engulfed by a refugee crisis as more than 100,000 civilians flee fighting between Tamil Tiger rebels and Sri Lankan troops.

The military says more than 100,000 refugees have crossed from the small area controlled by the rebels to Government-controlled territory over the past three days.

The exodus began when the military broke through a key rebel bunker on Monday.

Thousands had to wade through waist-deep water carrying their possessions to escape the combat zone. Some carried babies and elderly relatives. The refugees are being screened by the military to ensure Tamil Tiger cadres are not among them.

Local television showed thousands of men, women and children sitting on a road in Government-held territory, near the conflict zone, waiting to be processed by the army.

A satellite image issued by the US Government yesterday showed how, before the exodus of the past three days, about 120,000 people were packed into a "safe zone" in the coastal area held by the Tamil Tigers.

As many as 50,000 people remain in the rebel-controlled area.

Spokesman for UNICEF in Sri Lanka James Elder said, "This is a catastrophe for those who remain trapped amid fierce fighting.

"There are still tens of thousands of children who have been living through unimaginable hell, and are now caught in the final, intense stages of a war. With this latest surge in fighting, UNICEF's greatest fear is that many more will be killed."

The International Committee of the Red Cross has described the humanitarian situation in the war zone as catastrophic. It said several hundred civilians had been killed since Monday and those remaining had limited food, water and medical care.

A military spokesman, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, said refugees continued to make it to Government-controlled areas yesterday.

Refugee exodus from 'unimaginable hell'

However, aid groups are concerned conditions in the temporary camps will deteriorate quickly with the massive influx.

Mr Elder said the number of people in camps in the north of the country would more than double, from 65,000 to more than 140,000, over the next 24 hours.

The Government says the Tigers have used civilians as shields and has called the plan to allow refugees to leave the rebel-held area as the "biggest hostage rescue in history".

But the rebels have accused the Government of killing more than 1000 innocent people. with agencies

Load-Date: April 23, 2009

End of Document

The end of a long war

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City)

May 26, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 The Deseret News Publishing Co.

Length: 434 words

Byline: Dale McFeatters Scripps Howard News Service

Body

After 16 years and 70,000 dead, one of Asia's longest running civil wars has come to a bloody end. In a relentless campaign since January that alone produced 8,000 civilian dead and 265,000 refugees, the government forces of Sri Lanka pounded their nemesis, the **Tamil Tigers**, into half a square mile on the northern coast before overrunning the remnants of a once-lethal guerrilla army. Killed in the final days of fighting was the Tigers' elusive and wily leader, Vellupillai Prabhakaran, and his top commanders.

Their defeat was total, but now it is up to the Sri Lankan government to ensure, by addressing the concerns that led to the insurgency in the first place, that it is permanent. Like many insurgencies at the outset, the Tamil rebellion was grounded in legitimate grievances. When Sri Lanka ? the teardrop-shaped island at the foot of the Indian peninsula ? became independent, the largely Buddhist majority Sinhalese rampantly discriminated against the largely Buddhist minority Tamils. The Sinhalese got preferences for education and jobs and their language declared exclusive in the government and the culture. The Tamils rebelled and proved to be extremely resourceful fighters. For a while, they had a de facto government with courts, police and radio and TV stations in the north of the island. But under Prabhakaran, who envisioned a Marxist state, the movement morphed into a terrorist organization, and many nations finally recognized it as such. The Tigers forged links with other terrorist organizations, including, it is alleged, al-Qaida. Prabhakaran, in fact, is credited with pioneering the suicide belt and the use of **women** as suicide bombers. The Tigers assassinated former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and a year later the president of Sri Lanka. There was a cycle of truces and cease-fires, none of them lasting, until 2005, when Mahinda Rajapaksa, the prime minister, became president. Rajapaksa, with his two brothers, one the defense minister, the other a senior adviser, was determined to prosecute the long-running war to its finish. They greatly increased defense spending, bought weapons from nations, like China and Pakistan, that would sell them, and launched the largest offensive of the war, barring journalists and international aid organizations from the embattled enclave and ignoring international calls for negotiations. The Rajapaksas succeeded but now need major international aid, the price of which should be the Sri Lanka government making Tamils full members of Sri Lankan society while allowing them their language, culture and a decent autonomy.

Load-Date: May 26, 2009

Neither side has any reason to celebrate; Comment

The Independent (London)

May 19, 2009 Tuesday

First Edition

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The  **INDEPENDENT**

Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 400 words

Byline: Farah Mihar

Body

Today is a momentous day. I should be celebrating, like most Sri Lankans. I grew up as a Muslim in Colombo in fear of the deafening blasts of the Tamil Tiger suicide bombings. The Tigers ethnically cleansed 60,000 Muslims from their territory. Their campaign was horrific.

But when I travelled to Tiger-controlled areas, I realised that civilians there confronted another even more powerful enemy. I met children who drew only pictures of air force planes that dropped bombs over their homes. Hundreds of women had lost their husbands - killed, disappeared, abducted or imprisoned. It was ugly and sad and unknown to the rest of the country.

This is all supposedly history now. People are jubilant. Yet, I feel unable to share in this thrill. I cannot understand how my people, my family and friends, can blind themselves to the carnage behind this victory. In the past four months alone more than 6,500 people have died, because the Tigers brutally held them captive as human shields and government forces continued their indiscriminate attacks.

The fighting is supposedly now over, but this does not mean Sri Lanka's problems are. The country still faces a humanitarian crisis that has to be viewed in the context of the Sri Lankan government's disastrous human rights record.

This latest success on the part of the government was diplomatic and political, as well as military. Every UN official, human rights group, journalist or politician who questioned them was dubbed a terrorist. Posters covered the walls of Colombo with pictures of David Miliband and Hillary Clinton with the word "terrorist" imprinted on their faces. The government brilliantly used neo-colonial arguments in the corridors of the UN to shut out Western criticism.

This deafness to international pressure cannot be sustained - Sri Lanka has already appealed for international aid to rebuild the war-torn areas. The British Government must continue to work with the US to keep Sri Lanka top of the UN agenda. They should not be put off by Sri Lanka's wrath; there are hundreds of thousands of people in displaced camps who need support.

Neither side has any reason to celebrate Comment

I do not wish to undermine the defeat of the **Tamil Tigers**. Having lived through their terror, I know what this means for the country. But for there to be a lasting peace there has to be justice, accountability, freedom and equality for all.

Farah Mihar works for Minority Rights Group International

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

End of Document

ASIA: Indon navy tries to coax Sri Lankans off boat

AAP Newsfeed

October 14, 2009 Wednesday 3:15 PM AEST

Copyright 2009 Australian Associated Press Pty. Ltd.



Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 419 words

Dateline: MERAK, Indonesia Oct 14

Body

More than 250 Sri Lankan asylum seekers caught by Indonesian authorities en route to Australia have backed down from a threat to blow themselves up but still refuse to leave their boat.

The Indonesian navy apprehended the asylum seekers, who were trying to reach Christmas Island, in the Sunda Strait on Sunday.

Indonesia acted after Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made a personal plea to Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to stop the boat before it reached Australian waters.

The Sri Lankans are now moored at a port in Merak, in western Java, but are refusing to disembark.

The Indonesian navy is trying to end the standoff and coax the asylum seekers on to land without violence.

Local navy commander, Colonel Irawan, said the asylum seekers had surrendered a gas stove which they had threatened to use to blow themselves up.

"They are not suicidal anymore," he said.

"They want to live.

"They were in despair, they felt desperate but now they feel helped."

But they remained adamant they wanted to continue their journey to Australia, he said.

"They're still expecting to go there," Irawan said.

"And they don't want to be sent home, that's for sure."

The navy had put no time limit on resolving the standoff, he said.

"This is a step by step process, not to be rushed. Human rights is number one."

The asylum seekers have denied they are associated with the **Tamil Tigers** and have stuck a sign on the top of their boat which reads: "We are Sri Lankan civilians. Plz save our life."

It is not known where the asylum seekers will be taken once they do disembark.

The group - 195 men, 27 **women** and 31 children - were at sea for almost two weeks before they were caught.

Officials from Indonesia's immigration department and the International Organisation for Migration were at the scene to help resolve the standoff. An Australian embassy official was also there as an observer.

Thousands of asylum seekers from the Middle East, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka transit through Indonesia on their way to Australia.

Most engage the services of people smugglers, who charge them large amounts of money to arrange the dangerous sea voyage.

ASIA: Indon navy tries to coax Sri Lankans off boat

Indonesia is not a signatory to the United Nations Refugee Convention, meaning asylum seekers are processed by the UNHCR and forced to wait - most for many years - to be resettled in a third country. This is a major reason why many attempt sea voyages to Australia.

Indonesia's detention centres are notoriously overcrowded and harsh.

Load-Date: October 15, 2009

End of Document

President seeks new thrust for agriculture in North

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

June 11, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 481 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 11 -- President Mahinda Rajapaksa sought the need for a new thrust in the agricultural development of the North, as the people are resettled and they return to their traditional livelihoods, mainly agriculture.

He sought the assistance of Prof. M. S. Swaminathan, who is considered the Father of the Indian Green Revolution to help in the agricultural development of the North, which has been devastated by the recent war with the **LTTE** and the livelihoods of the people there shattered. During a meeting with Prof. Swaminathan at Temple Trees on Tuesday, President Rajapaksa said the Government's priority was to give hope to the people of the North who had suffered immensely under the tyranny of the **LTTE**, and sought the help of the great Indian agriculturist to help finalize a road map for rehabilitation of the displaced with enhanced restoration of their occupations in agriculture and fisheries. Prof. Swaminathan was told that over 80 percent of the population in the Northern Province covering Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya and Mannar depend on agriculture and allied occupations for their livelihood and revival and revitalization of agriculture is the need of the hour. The President requested Prof. Swaminathan to review and provide his inputs to the strategy for agricultural and fisheries development of the resettled people that the Government had already prepared. The Indian agriculturist, who was optimistic about the development of the North, told the President that every calamity also presented an opportunity. "A new chapter in the agriculture of the Northern Province can be opened up by introducing farmers to the use of soil health cards and more income per drop of water techniques. Post harvest processing and value addition are also essential, particularly for increasing earning opportunities for **women**," he said. The President was keen to have special attention paid to **women** in agriculture and said that initially the State banks would make available credit for both on-farm and off-farm livelihood opportunities. He welcomed India's assistance in strengthening agricultural research and training, which would be timely, as there is a need to move fast, as government machinery, whether in Sri Lanka or India, tends to move slowly. The possibility of choosing an appropriate centre in Vavuniya for strengthening participatory research and education for farmers, and the use of mobile soil-testing vans, farm machinery and other essential equipment to revitalize the agriculture economy, were also discussed. On fisheries sector development, Prof. Swaminathan, was of the view that it would be useful to develop one of the existing centres in the North into a "Fish for all" training centre based on the model set up at Poonpahar by the M.S. Swaminathan Foundation. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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

Load-Date: June 11, 2009

President seeks new thrust for agriculture in North

End of Document

Tamil protesters clash with police in London

Agence France Presse -- English

May 19, 2009 Tuesday 7:19 AM GMT

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Length: 393 words

Dateline: LONDON, May 19 2009

Body

Ten people were arrested and at least 16 were injured in clashes outside Britain's parliament as police dispersed 2,500 Tamils protesting against the Sri Lankan army.

Just hours after Sri Lanka declared victory in their decades-long civil war against the Tamil Tiger rebels on Monday, the protesters staged a sit-down protest outside the House of Commons in London.

But clashes broke out in the early hours of Tuesday when police tried to push the demonstrators along in order to re-open the street.

Scotland Yard confirmed the arrests, while a spokesman for the London Ambulance Service told AFP 16 people had been injured.

Three police officers were taken to hospital and two were treated at the scene, while five protestors were hospitalised and six treated on site, the ambulance spokesman said.

Scotland Yard claimed 21 officers had been treated for minor injuries. Some protestors complained of police aggression at the protest.

Sivendran Madajajah, a 22-year-old student, said: "People were being hit, kicked and stepped on by police. We had no warning that anything was going to happen until they started pushing us back off the road to Parliament Square.

"We feel really angry... how the British government is treating us when we are asking them for help.

"There are loads of people who have lost their loved ones in this conflict. They are here to grieve and it is just ridiculous that the police have behaved in this way towards us."

Monday's demonstrations came after government claims that the leader of the **Tamil Tigers**, Velupillai Prabhakaran, had been killed in the final battles, although this is denied by the rebel group.

Many demonstrators Monday wore head bandages soaked in fake blood as a symbol of solidarity with the Tamils, while several protesters were greeted with cheers as they burned a Sri Lankan flag.

Tamil protesters clash with police in London

Six Tamils, including two women, on their seventh day of a hunger strike to protest against the government's military offensive, sat huddled under blankets in a tent.

One of the women required treatment from an ambulance crew, an AFP reporter said, but her life did not appear to be in immediate danger.

Tamils have been holding a largely peaceful protest in Parliament Square for weeks, frequently blocking some of London's busiest roads and in defiance of a law banning protests near parliament without prior police permission.

bur-kah/boc

Load-Date: May 20, 2009

End of Document

SOME 350 MOTHERS TO DELIVER BABIES IN SRI LANKA IDP CAMPS

Malaysia General News

May 14, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 490 words

Dateline: VAVUNIYA May 14

Body

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) expects some 350 pregnant women to give birth in camps in Northern Sri Lanka next month where ferocious battle between government troops and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is still raging on.

The agency said that thousands of pregnant women had fled the fighting zone and it is stepping up its health and safety mechanisms to handle the influx of internally displaced persons (IDPs) -- particularly women and pregnant mothers.

"At least 3,000 pregnant women have fled the fighting in northern Sri Lanka in recent days and some 350 will give birth in the next month.

"Health facilities are overstretched but so far we are not aware of any maternal death. It could help further if we have comprehensive emergency care to treat and manage complicated pregnancies," an UNFPA official told Bernama.

MERCY Malaysia's medical team coordinator Dr Diana Zaireen said that it was a common trend that birth rate increased during disasters.

"(Here) it is a medically complicated issue, pregnant mothers and babies are exposed to undernourishment and dehydration in the camps.

"We need to increase the MISP (minimum initial service package or emergency health kits) for them," the doctor, who was part of the group that set up four mobile clinics in Vavuniya last week, told Bernama.

MERCY's clinics located inside these camps are equipped to handle antenatal, postnatal, immunisation and child development programmes.

An estimated 190,000 war victims managed to escape from LTTE fighters, who had been using them as human shield, and safely reached the camps in Menik Farm, in Vavuniya, located about 240 km northeast of Colombo.

"All these years we suffered so much because of this war and lost everything we had. For months my family had been hiding in the jungles to avoid shelling. Now I just want a peaceful life and take care of my four-month old baby and return to Jaffna where we lived before," said Tamilarasi, a young mother who arrived in the camp about 10 days ago.

SOME 350 MOTHERS TO DELIVER BABIES IN SRI LANKA IDP CAMPS

Many young mothers cuddling their infants and also pregnant women, with limited clothing and nutritional food, are currently sheltered in the camps set up by the Sri Lankan government and the United Nations.

The UNFPA official said that some of the main challenges faced are lack of human resources and high turnover of health staff, hence, there is no adequate orientation for health staff to provide care and identify the danger signs of complicated pregnancies.

"There is an urgent need to have the health posts in the IDP camps where pregnant women can be routinely checked and psychosocial support and counselling provided in privacy," the official said.

Typically, around 15 percent of women giving birth will develop complications that require blood transfusions or emergency surgical care.

Pregnancy related disabilities and death often rise in conflict situations when reproductive health services are disrupted, warned UNFPA.

Load-Date: May 26, 2009

End of Document

Tamil protesters demand ceasefire in Sri Lanka

Asian Image

April 7, 2009

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Section: UK NEWS (UK)

Length: 390 words

Body

Tamil protesters continued to occupy one of London's major bridges to demand an immediate ceasefire in Sri Lanka.

As many as 5,000 demonstrators gathered in streets around the Houses of Parliament yesterday afternoon to protest over the Sri Lankan government's offensive against Tamil Tiger rebels and alleged human rights abuses.

Today, Westminster Bridge and a number of surrounding roads remained closed to traffic as the protest continued, though numbers dwindled to around 900 during the night, police said.

One man was rescued after jumping into the River Thames at about 6pm. He was taken to hospital and his condition is not believed to be serious, police said.

Fellow protesters said the man was from Mitcham in south London.

Four RNLI lifeboats were on standby in the river amid concerns other demonstrators would attempt to throw themselves off the bridge. A Scotland Yard spokeswoman said the protest was peaceful and there had been no arrests so far.

She said: "Police are continuing to attempt to negotiate with the organisers of the demonstration to facilitate their protest and to minimise disruption to all of London's communities."

The protesters, some of whom were waving flags bearing a Tamil emblem, included women and children.

The Sri Lankan government has rejected international calls for a ceasefire, claiming it is on the verge of defeating the Tamil Tigers rebel group, which is fighting for an independent homeland.

However, the United Nations says up to 150,000 people are trapped in the war zone in the north of the country.

The protesters said the lives of thousands of civilians in Sri Lanka's northern Mullaithivu district are in danger.

Vijay Mahalingam, 28, of Harrow, said: "We are here to call on the British government and other governments of the world to wake up to the problems in our homeland Sri Lanka.

"Last week, the most powerful men in the world were here in London but there was no mention of the struggle lots of our people have to face on a daily basis.

Tamil protesters demand ceasefire in Sri Lanka

"Members of my family, some of our grandparents, are stuck in an area in the north-east of Sri Lanka which has been bombed intensively for the last two months."

He added: "There is no media except the state media so we have no real way of knowing exactly what is going on.

"There is no phone contact and every day we just hope they have not been harmed."

Load-Date: April 7, 2009

End of Document

PRESS CONFERENCE ON SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

States News Service

April 22, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 States News Service

Length: 1532 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

The following information was released by the United Nations:

Representatives of four non-governmental organizations today called on the United Nations to speak out on the situation in northern Sri Lanka and urged the Security Council to take up the matter under the concept of "responsibility to protect".

Speaking at a Headquarters press conference where they discussed the situation in and around the "no-fire zone" in northern Sri Lanka -- where Government forces are poised to overrun positions held by rebel fighters of the Liberation of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) -- were Joseph Cornelius Donnelly of Caritas Internationalis; Anna Neistat of Human Rights Watch; Robert Templer of the International Crisis Group; and Nimmi Gowrinathan of Operation USA. James Traub of the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect was available to answer questions. The press conference was sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations.

Mr. Templer warned that the end of LTTE would not mean an end to extremism. The conflict had been going on for decades and there was a resurgence of Tamil nationalism. The Tamil diaspora was also being radicalized, as was evident from the number of demonstrations, suicides and hunger strikes occurring around the world. The United Nations had been mostly absent from the political process in Sri Lanka, but had a significant presence in dealing with the question of child soldiers, internally displaced persons and other issues.

He said the Organization's response had been hindered by the indifference of most Member States, who had been caught up in the language of the "war on terrorism". Both sides were in violation of international humanitarian law, but neither was being called to account, and there had been no response from the Security Council, which was a major disappointment. The United Nations was also hindered by the fact that it had both a political and humanitarian role to play and had been trying to maintain humanitarian access. Both the Government and LTTE had a responsibility to protect the very large numbers of civilians caught up in the fighting, and a much firmer response was needed from the United Nations.

Ms. Neistat said all information and numbers from the conflict zone were hard to verify, but that there was contact with people on the ground. It was unacceptable that the Government was successfully blocking any information from the area. Journalists had been attacked, killed and denied access, but it was clear that the situation was dire. The Sri Lanka army had entered the no-fire zone and there were reports of heavy shelling. Medical facilities were not available and, although the Government had said there were 50,000 civilians in the zone, it had also stated that 40,000 had escaped at the beginning of April and later on that 60,000 had escaped. The conflicting figures were alarming as the Government could now claim that the remaining civilians were LTTE supporters.

PRESS CONFERENCE ON SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

She said that, despite denials, Government forces were indiscriminately shelling the area and there was no doubt that the rebels were forcing civilians to stay in the area and using them as human shields. Escapees were being placed in what could only be called internment camps, where screening procedures lacked transparency. Despite being present, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was not allowed to talk to the displaced, of whom more than 100,000 were now in Government-controlled camps. A message should be sent that the Government would not get away with its indiscriminate attacks and that both sides were committing war crimes in gross violation of international law. An international commission of inquiry was needed.

Mr. Donnelly said that, while fear was not the normal state of a civilized people, the fear in the no-fire zone had reached terrifying dimensions. Although Caritas Internationalis had appealed for \$2.5 million to respond to the crisis, no amount of money would make any difference without a cessation of hostilities. The situation was urgent and desperate, with people dying every day, including children, and fears of an impending bloodbath. People were also dying from starvation and, due to a lack of any medical provisions, from simple medical conditions. It was deeply alarming that the international community had not placed the crisis at the top of its agenda and urged the Security Council to take action.

Ms. Gowrinathan said that, because of displacement, families were being separated, with men placed in one camp and women in another. From the camps, it took four weeks to reach a hospital and, in order to do so, women had to leave their children behind. Sexual violence was rampant, although non-governmental organizations had been forbidden from discussing it. Another issue of concern was the rising number of paramilitary groups, which were more paid bandits than rebel groups.

She said post-conflict reconstruction funds had been funnelled through the Government and non-governmental organizations, therefore, had to work through the Ministry of Defence. Local civil society had been destroyed through Government intimidation aimed at ensuring there would be no grass-roots organizations to work with in a post-conflict environment. The Government had also removed doctors in the no-fire zone from its payroll and made them understand that they would face dire consequences if they talked about the situation.

Asked about the limitations hindering the United Nations and the invocation of the "responsibility to protect", Mr. Traub wondered what kind of crisis the concept of "responsibility to protect" had been created for if not the one in Sri Lanka. If the excuse of "fighting terrorism" was not valid, the question was why the Security Council had not invoked the principle of "responsibility to protect" whereby the issue would automatically become part of its agenda.

Within the Council, countries such as the Russian Federation, China, Viet Nam, Turkey, Japan and Libya had resisted efforts to place the situation on the Council's agenda, he said. More importantly, however, there had not been a strong push from other States in favour of taking up the situation. Only France seemed to be active in that regard. The premise of the "responsibility to protect" was to act preventively, while the United Nations was always inclined to act reactively when bodies started to pile up.

Article 99 of the United Nations Charter gave the Secretary-General the power to bring the issue to the Council's attention, although that did not mean it would be placed on the agenda, he said. The Secretary-General had engaged in intensive telephone diplomacy and should get credit for the two-day "humanitarian pause", inadequate as it had been. When placed in a situation where it must make an "agonizing choice" between speaking out and maintaining humanitarian access, the Organization tended to choose access. In the present case, the result was that it had not spoken out and had not gotten the access it needed.

Ms. Gowrinathan added that other countries had "bought into" Sri Lanka's public relations push for the language of the "war on terror". It was hard for non-governmental organizations and others to combat the Government's \$100 million public relations machine.

Asked whether the United States had done enough in pushing the issue, Ms. Neistat said it had done more than anybody else, not only within the United Nations, but also bilaterally. However, it had failed to coordinate its efforts with those of Japan, the largest donor to Sri Lanka, and the European Union. It was not too late for the Council to take action. There was no bloodbath yet, although that could come in a matter of days or even hours. The Government was moving into the no-fire zone and engagement now could save hundreds of lives.

PRESS CONFERENCE ON SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

Regarding the bailout package that Sri Lanka had requested from the International Monetary Fund, she said the fact that it had not been awarded yet was a "victory". Even though the Fund could not attach human rights requirements to its loans, Governments had to vote approval for the package. In that way, they could send a strong message to the Sri Lankan Government.

Asked why the United Nations seemed unwilling to provide numbers, participants said the Government was exerting pressure on the Organization not to release any figures by threatening to cut off humanitarian access. Also, too few journalists had pressured it to release figures. Although the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) claimed it was difficult to verify the number of casualties and injured, it had done so in other comparable situations.

Non-governmental organizations and United Nations staff on the ground were not happy with the Organization's decisions, she said, adding that it was strange that Chef de Cabinet Vijay Nambiar had not met with humanitarian staff during his visit to Sri Lanka.

As for the Government's announcement of amnesty, Mr. Templer said its offer of amnesty for lower and middle level LTTE had not been very clear and there were no international guarantees, making that scenario unlikely.

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For information media not an official record

Load-Date: April 23, 2009

End of Document

3RD LEAD: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in Sri Lanka =

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
April 20, 2009 Monday 9:23 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 521 words

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts 3RD LEAD: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in Sri Lanka =
Eds: Updates figures, government issues 24-hour deadline for rebel
leader to surrender =

Colombo (dpa) - An estimated 35,000 civilians reportedly fled the Tamil rebel-held areas in north-eastern Sri Lanka Monday, where government troops and the navy mounted a massive operation aimed at evacuating the zone, military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

As civilians were escaping by land and sea, Tamil rebels set off three suicide bombs that killed at least 17 civilians including women and children, and injured 200 others in the Puthumathalan area, 390 kilometres north-east of the capital, he said.

Ground troops continued to engage rebel targets and move into the rebel-held areas as the government set a 24-hour deadline for the rebel leadership including its top commander Velupillai Prabhakaran to surrender.

"We are giving 24 hours for the terrorist leader Prabhakaran and his members to surrender. This would be last opportunity," Defence spokesman Minister Keheliya Rambukwella told state-run television.

However there was no confirmation whether the rebel leader was in the area located along the coast of Mullaitivu.

Earlier in the day, troops broke through an earthen barrier in Puthumathalan to rescue trapped civilians. More people were leaving by boat and are being helped by the navy, officials said.

The military said that more civilians were trying to take refuge in military-controlled areas as the government tries to take back what it says is the final remaining territory held by the Liberation

Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The air force captured live images of the civilians fleeing into military-controlled areas while state-run television - the only

3RD LEAD: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in Sri Lanka =

allowed to cover the conflict zones - also broadcast footage of the exodus.

A doctor stationed in the rebel-controlled area, speaking by telephone to the German Press Agency dpa, said he could hear close-quarter fighting between the rebels and troops in the area.

Dr Thiagaraja Sathiyamoorthy said almost all patients in the hospital have run away from the facility and the medical staff were living in bunkers.

"When I came out of the bunker, I could see people running in various directions," he said. "Most are running to find places in bunkers."

Many civilians have been trapped in a 12-kilometer stretch along the coast for the past three months, although some of the villagers have been able to escape despite rebel orders to remain, military officials said.

According to army estimates, 70,000 civilians were still in the area, where drinking water is scarce. The government has been sending shipments of food by sea into the area.

An estimated 68,000 civilians have left the rebel-held areas and are currently in camps controlled by the government.

The military said it is in the last phase of a drive to crush the LTTE, which has been fighting for more than 25 years for a separate state for the Tamil ethnic minority in the northern and eastern parts of majority-Sinhalese Sri Lanka.

Apr 2009 0923 GMT

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

End of Document

13 convicts go on fast with demand similar to Nalini's

The Pioneer (India)

September 23, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 466 words

Dateline: Chennai

Body

Chennai, Sep. 23 -- A day after Nalini, serving the life term in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, went on indefinite fast at the high-security Vellore prison demanding her premature release, 13 other convicts ' including those linked with outlawed **LTTE** and AI-Umma lodged at the Puzhal prison here ' also proceeded on a day-long fast demanding release of inmates who have completed seven years of jail term.

The 13 convicts, who also extended support to Nalini, have been serving varying prison terms.

Refusing to heed reasoning by the jail authorities in the Special Prison for **Women** under the Central Prison, Vellore, Nalini on Tuesday was said to be adamant on making the Tamil Nadu Government act on her plea for release.

She began her fast on Monday, joining another of the assassination accuse Robert Payas, who began his fast on September 17. Nalini and her husband Sriharan alias Murugan were given death penalty. However, on humanitarian grounds (taking cognizance of their daughter and ensuring that at least one parent is alive) Nalini's sentence was commuted to lifer. Payas's death sentence was also commuted to life-term.

Nalini's 14-year life-term ended in 2005, having spent her life in prison since 1991 and even her daughter, Megara, was born in prison. In 2007, she applied for an early release, which the Tamil Nadu Government rejected. She then filed a petition in the Madras High Court in 2008 and the court quashed the Advisory Board which rejected her plea and directed the State to reconsider her request for early release by a validly constituted Board.

However, the State Government did not constitute a new Board. Last week, Nalini petitioned the Madras High Court urging it to direct the state government constitute the new Advisory Board. Even as this petition is pending, Nalini began her fast and on Monday the court asked the State Government to respond to Nalini's plea in two weeks and posted the case for hearing on October 6.

The State Government is said to have been now hastened to reconstitute the Advisory Board as per the orders of the court last year.

It may be recalled that Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated at a rally in Sriperumbudur on the night of May 21, 1991 by an **LTTE** suicide bomber, Dhanu. Nalini had facilitated her access to go near Gandhi and detonate the powerful bomb. Nalini was also seen sitting with the assassination plotter and one-eyed-jack Sivarasan and the back-up assassin Subha. Nalini was already pregnant with Murugan's child and while on the run from police, the two got married in Tirupati.

13 convicts go on fast with demand similar to Nalini's

Payas had facilitated the place for Sivarasan to stay and plot the assassination. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Pioneer. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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

Load-Date: November 16, 2009

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Pindi and Peshawar attacks - A linkage?

The Statesman

October 12, 2009 Monday

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Section: Vol. 8; No. 544

Length: 1317 words

Byline: Fozia Niazi

Body

Analysts see similarities between Kabul and Peshawar blasts, and link them with the Saturday attack on the GHQ main gate by TTP terrorists on October 10. Over a dozen army personnel got martyred and eight terrorists were killed while one, Dr Usman was arrested in critical condition.

Around 50 people were killed and over 100 injured in a car bomb blast in Peshawar on October 9. On October 8 a suicide bomber struck outside the Indian embassy in Kabul, killing 17 people. The Afghan Taliban claimed the responsibility, but many in New Delhi dubbed the Peshawar blast as a tit-for-tat as if the Kabul blast was conducted by ISI. Already the UN has halted work on various projects in Pakistan after the October 5 blast in the WFP offices in Islamabad, which left two women and a foreigner killed and eight others injured.

Indian experts linked it with Islamabad but owing to the modus operandi and tactics used in both the blasts, it seems that both the blasts are a handiwork of RAW. Same methods and similar nature of explosives VBIED (Vehicle borne improvised explosive device) have been used in the cars, which is the specialty of Indian intelligence agency. The inquiry of Samjhota Express proved that RAW agent Lt Col Prohit was an expert of preparing such devices and vehicles.

Such attacks always coincide with Pakistan's successes either in the operations against terrorists or on the end of our sports teams. Indian agencies gear up acts of sabotage whenever there is possibility of Islamabad getting world assistance or appraisal at least. New Delhi tries to cash in on important occasions to attract the world attention for fulfilling its malicious designs.

At the time of 2008 G-8 Summit, the Indian embassy in Kabul was hit by a blast on July 7. This time the Kabul blast coincides with American aid bill, though highly controversial and humiliating for Pakistan.

The people and the armed forces of Pakistan have put their weight together in opposing this bill as it is intrusive of our security mechanism. RAW in connivance with RAAM and Mossad has planned series of blasts in Afghanistan and Pakistan with a view to use pressure tactics and build opinion for forcing Washington to refrain from providing economic and military aid to Islamabad.

When we analyse these two possibilities the first one seems quite out of place because the terrorists in the tribal areas of Pakistan are no more in a position to launch such a well-planned and organised activity. During the last few months, the security agencies of Pakistan have very successfully crushed and crumpled all their strength and force with an iron hand.

Pindi and Peshawar attacks - A linkage?

The first rank leadership of these so called terrorists has gone to the other world, the remaining ones have surrendered before the security forces and some others have decided to be loyal to the state of Pakistan admitting that they had been misguided by their leaders. In short no one among them has a capability of confronting the armed forces of Pakistan. Now the second possibility is of the involvement of RAW in the GHQ attacks.

India has always reacted as a stubborn child whenever it feels any American inclination towards Pakistan. The recent Kerry-Lugar Bill could be one of the heart pinching realities for India. Although this bill is being criticised by some of the Pakistani factions of society for its objectionable clauses regarding the Pakistan army and the intelligence agencies, yet this bill is going to prove itself a strong favour and support for Pakistan in near future.

By getting an aid of 1.5 billion dollars every year Pakistan would be able to solve many of its economic problems. If the objectionable clauses are removed, this bill would strengthen the Pak-American relations. This all-well situation is certainly not very pleasing for India. Now India wants to create hurdles so that this bill may not reach to final.

The attack on the GHQ is nothing but an attempt to promote harassment and fear throughout the world that America is not taking a wise step by planning to help people of Pakistan through the Kerry-Lugar Bill. There could be another objective behind these attacks; to tell the world that Pakistan Army has not succeeded in crushing the terrorists. India wants to nullify the claims of Pakistan that it is doing its best against the menace of terrorism. The main objective behind all this activity is to distort Pak-US relations which are getting better day by day.

The terrorists attacked the GHQ buildings in a very skillful manner. The attackers were very well equipped and immaculately trained. It was simply a very tactfully designed commando action. The attackers did not seem to be amongst the terrorists who had been trying to avoid the security agencies in the tribal areas of Pakistan for the last few months.

These attacks had a great resemblance with the attacks on Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore which were linked to the **Tamil Tigers** working in Sri Lanka under the guidance of the RAW. Pakistan had lent a helping hand to the Sri Lankan government in crushing the **LTTE** terrorist activities and the Indian government was not happy over this help.

The RAW agents in collaboration with the extremists working in Swat planned to teach a lesson to the government of Pakistan by attacking the Sri Lankan team. Now the same story is being repeated.

India is mistaken in its judgement that terrorist activities can frighten the people of Pakistan or the government of Pakistan. The people of Pakistan are moderate, peace-loving and forward looking. They hate and reject any kind of extremism. The war our security forces are fighting against terrorists is not just our government's war but the people of Pakistan are giving their fullest backing to it.

They are sick of this war and war mongers. They want extremism and the extremists eliminated and expelled from their soil. Our security forces, intelligence agencies, the government and the people - all are equally engaged in the unending fight against terror. We have a lot of courage and determination.

We are a nation not a crowd. We believe in unity and integrity. When we call us the American ally in the war against terror, we mean it. Every Pakistani is a soldier, eager to sacrifice his life for this land of pure passions. The world must be sure that we would never let anyone achieve his nefarious designs in this region.

Pakistan has already taken firm stand against American drone attack policy and condemned Indian involvement in Balochistan affairs. Last week Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani told the media that US drone strikes will not be allowed in the province of Balochistan, where the United States is reportedly turning to fight the militant group, Quetta Shura, which allegedly provides much of the leadership of the Pakistani Taliban.

It is quite obvious that an attack on the capital of Balochistan could further aggravate the ongoing separatist conflict in the region and which will ultimately damage to war against terror. American and their allies should also force India to do away with their ideas of launching any attack against Pakistan.

Pindi and Peshawar attacks - A linkage?

India should be asked to resolve burning issue of Kashmir for permanent peace. India should also know that Pakistan is a nuclear power and is very well aware of the movements of IAF and can respond boldly in case of any surgical strike and misadventures against her.

She must know that Pakistan security forces and intelligence agencies have gone through a real test and ready to face any kind of aggression. India should accept Pakistani offer to restart the composite dialogue and Confidence Building Measures (CBM) to resolve the issues for establish the regional peace. UNO should play its role as mediator to settle the Kashmir issue between two nuclear powers.

USA should respect the sovereignty of democratic Pakistan and remove the bugs and objectionable clauses of Kerry-Lugar Bill.

Load-Date: September 19, 2011

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1ST LEAD: UN calls Sri Lanka fighting "bloodbath" for civilians

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
May 11, 2009 Monday 8:34 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 528 words

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts 1ST LEAD: UN calls Sri Lanka fighting "bloodbath" for civilians
Eds: Adds quotes from UN spokesman, government minister =

Colombo (dpa) - The United Nations Monday described heavy shelling in north-eastern Sri Lanka as a "bloodbath" after over 400 people were killed and more than 1,200 injured in the fighting.

The government and Tamil rebels accused each other of causing civilian casualties over the weekend in a narrow land strip near the coast of the Mullaitivu district, 395 kilometres north-east of the capital.

"We can call it a bloodbath," UN spokesman in Colombo Gordon Weiss told German Press Agency dpa.

He explained that though he no had confirmation of who was responsible for the killings, both parties were responsible for the well-being of civilians caught in the conflict.

Defence spokesman Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said that the rebels were firing at the civilians and trying to tarnish the image of the government.

A government statement issued Monday saying the Tamil rebels had opened fire on fleeing civilians towards the military controlled areas.

On Sunday as many as 1,500 civilians had escaped from the zone.

The statement said intercepts of guerrilla communication showed the rebels had fired mortars into populated areas, killing or injuring as many as 250 civilians.

"It is believed that scores of civilians were killed while many others sustained injuries due to the deliberate attack launched by the terrorists to gain media mileage against government forces," the ministry said.

But medical doctor Veerachchami Shanmuagaraja told dpa by phone from the conflict zone that at least 400 people were killed and more

1ST LEAD: UN calls Sri Lanka fighting "bloodbath" for civilians

than 1,200 injured in the incidents.

He said more wounded were being brought to a makeshift hospital set up in the Mullivaikal junior school.

The doctor said women and children were among the casualties, and that he was unable to provide proper treatment for lack of medicines and other supplies.

"The fighting ceased in the morning hours on Monday and people are moving away further towards the beach," the doctor said.

The government statement said the doctor was not in a position to give an independent account because he was virtually another captive of the rebels.

A statement by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) claimed that more than 2,000 civilians were killed due to shelling by the army Sunday in an area demarcated as a "safety zone" for civilians by the government. The rebels say the zone is not free of fighting.

It was not possible to independently confirm the claims made by the government or the LTTE, as journalists are denied access to the combat zone.

An estimated 20,000 civilians are trapped in the last rebel-held area which extends to about six square kilometers according to the government, but UN agencies estimate that there are around 50,000 civilians.

The military says it is in the final phase of a major operation to crush the Tamil rebels, who have been fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the north and eastern parts of the country for the last 25 years.

May 1109 0834 GMT

Load-Date: May 12, 2009

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Death snatches saviour of lives

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

October 3, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 538 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Oct. 3 -- One would say it was destiny , that one's death is pre-determined. He was to depart this world on this particular day at this particular time. However, fate as it was that his final breath was taken away by a speeding military truck.

S.A.Upananda Gunasekera (34), an ambulance driver attached to Seru Nuwara hospital in the Trincomalee district had a heart where his heart should be, in a world where most have stones instead. Always dedicated to his enormous task as a life saver, Upananda was more driven by his heart than his mind. Those who worked with him will vouch for this.

During the Mavil Aru operations by the Security Forces to liberate the area from the clutches of the **LTTE** many wounded soldiers had to be rushed to hospitals. He braved the **LTTE** guns to drive his ambulance to places where the injured were in the battle zone, disregarding his own safety, in contrary to the others who hesitated and dodged.

" Once he said that he drove his ambulance right into Tiger territory to pick up the injured knowing very well that Tigers could shoot all of them on their return," a Doctor who had the opportunity to know him in the line of duty recollected.

Upananda was recognised for his bravery by the people of Mavil Aru. He received two civilian awards from the Somapura Temples for his noble service. He earned a name for his wordless deeds during the 2004 December tsunami as well, where his ambulance worked overtime transporting injured to hospitals from very remote areas in the Trinco coastal belt.

On this fateful day he took a critical patient from the Seru Nuwara hospital to the Trincomalee hospital. There the emergency staff who knew him very well had a heartening request, to which, being the kind-hearted person he is, Upananda dare not say 'no'.

A critically ill infant was waiting to be transferred to the Lady Ridgeway hospital in Colombo immediately but the hospital ambulance was not available at the time.

In a flash he was off to Colombo. Before his departure he had a plea to a friend, another ambulance driver from Muttur hospital. "Machang look after my hospital, if a need arises."

Upananda safely drove the baby to the LRH in Colombo. But his return journey was meant to be his last. The ambulance on its way back to Trincomalee collided head-on with a military truck carrying a group of **female** soldiers at Digampatana, Dambulla. Upananda was stuck inside the Ambulance which was badly damaged in the accident. Although he was rescued from the wreckage by the villagers he died shortly afterward.

Death snatches saviour of lives

The irony of the story was that another ambulance which happened to pass the accident scene refused to transport Upananda who was breathing his last by the road or any of the other 11 injured, six **women** soldiers and a soldier in the truck and a policeman, nurse and two attendants who were in the ambulance, to a hospital since it was not outside his beat.

Upananda leaves a wife and two young children, a son aged five and a daughter aged two and a half years. His funeral will be held today in Trincomalee. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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

Load-Date: October 3, 2009

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Tamil boat people fleeing 'genocide'

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

October 15, 2009 Thursday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; The Nation; Pg. 4

Length: 431 words

Byline: Tom Allard, HERALD CORRESPONDENT

Body

MERAK, BANTEN: Distraught Sri Lankan asylum seekers said they were fleeing "genocide" against ethnic Tamils in their country, and expressed shock that the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, had personally intervened to interrupt their journey to Australian shores.

Their barely seaworthy boat is moored next to an Indonesian Navy vessel in Merak, and more than 250 people are in a stand-off with Indonesian authorities, refusing to disembark despite the pleading of local navy personnel and a visit from officials from the International Organisation for Migration.

The boat was intercepted in the early hours of Sunday, prompting some of the asylum seekers to threaten to blow up the boat with gas canisters used for cooking, while others jumped overboard to avoid being detained.

The threat to blow up the boat has been defused, but those on board the boat remain distressed and agitated, waiting for news of their future under a makeshift sign saying "We are Sri Lankan civilians. Plz Save our Life".

"We may as well die here. We cannot go back to Sri Lanka," said Alex, the name given by a spokesman for the asylum seekers. "We are very shocked, so shocked to hear that your Prime Minister wanted to stop us, that he had something to do with this. We are not a boat full of tourists, or people looking for a job. We are people who are running from genocide."

While much has been made of Mr Rudd's phone call on Saturday reportedly urging Indonesia's President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, to intercept the vessel, Indonesian navy officers said yesterday they already had the boat in their sights.

In an interview by telephone from the boat, Alex said most were from the city of Jaffna where he said the Sinhalese-backed Government was abducting Tamils, putting them in camps, then torturing and killing them.

"There's not a person on this boat who has not seen someone they know killed or tortured," he said. "There are kids here who have seen the legs of their fathers cut off in front of them."

"They are taking people out at night, stripping them and shooting them. Five people every day, sometimes 10. Women are being tortured and raped."

Alex denied there were Tamil Tigers, considered a terrorist group by Australia, on the boat.

Tamil boat people fleeing 'genocide'

He said the 253 people on board, including 27 women and 31 children, had hidden in the jungles of Malaysia for a month while waiting for their boat to take them to Christmas Island. Each had paid US\$15,000 (\$16,400) to a people smuggler.

He said they had chosen Australia because it was the "cheapest" option, not because of the immigration policies of the Rudd Government.

Load-Date: October 14, 2009

End of Document

GHQ, Peshawar Terror Acts All doubts lead to RAW

The Financial Daily

October 12, 2009 Monday

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Section: Vol. 3; No. 70

Length: 1288 words

Byline: Fozia Niazi

Body

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GHQ, Peshawar Terror Acts All doubts lead to RAW

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The terrorists attacked the GHQ buildings in a very skillful manner. The attackers were very well equipped and immaculately trained. It was a very tactfully designed commando action. The attackers did not seem to be amongst the terrorists who had been trying to avoid the security agencies in the tribal areas of Pakistan for the last few months. These attacks had a great resemblance with the attacks on Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore which were linked to the Tamil Tigers working in Sri Lanka under the guidance of the RAW.

Pakistan had lent a helping hand to the Sri Lankan government in crushing the LTTE terrorist activities and the Indian government was not happy over this help. The RAW agents in collaboration with the extremists working in Swat planned to teach a lesson to the government of Pakistan by attacking the Sri Lankan team.

India is mistaken in its judgment that terrorist activities can frighten the people of Pakistan or the government of Pakistan.

The people of Pakistan are moderate, peace-loving and forward looking. They hate and reject any kind of extremism. The war, our security forces are fighting, against terrorists is not just our government's war but the people of Pakistan are giving their fullest backing to it. They are sick of this war and warmongers. They want extremism and the extremists eliminated and expelled from their soil.

Our security forces, intelligence agencies, the government and the people - all are equally engaged in the unending fight against terror. We have a lot of courage and determination. We believe in unity and integrity. When we call ourselves as the American ally in the war against terror, we mean it. Every Pakistani is a soldier, eager to sacrifice his/her life for this land. The world must be sure that we would never let anyone achieve his nefarious designs.

Pakistan has already taken firm stand against American drone attack policy and condemned Indian involvement in Balochistan affairs.

Last week Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani told the media that US drone strikes will not be allowed in Balochistan, where the United States is reportedly turning to fight the militant group, Quetta Shura, which allegedly provides much of the leadership of the Pakistani Taliban.

It is quite obvious that an attack on the capital of Balochistan could further aggravate the ongoing separatist conflict in the region and which will ultimately damage the war against terror.

American and their allies should also force India to shed away their ideas of launching any attack on Pakistan. India should be asked to resolve burning issue of Kashmir for the permanent peace. India should also know that Pakistan is a nuclear power and is very well aware of the movements of IAF and can respond boldly in case of any surgical strike and misadventures against her.

GHQ, Peshawar Terror Acts All doubts lead to RAW

India must know that Pakistani security forces and intelligence agencies have gone through a real test and ready to face any kind of aggression. India should accept Pakistan's offer to restart the composite dialogues and Confidence Building Measures (CBM) to resolve the issues for the establishment of durable peace in the region.

UNO should play its role as a mediator to settle the Kashmir issue between two nuclear powers. USA should respect the sovereignty of democratic Pakistan and remove the bugs and objectionable clauses of Kerry-Lugar Bill.

Load-Date: September 19, 2011

End of Document

Sri Lanka may pardon surrendering rebel fighters

Associated Press International

May 4, 2009 Monday 12:46 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 456 words

Byline: By KRISHAN FRANCIS, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka's government says it is considering an amnesty for Tamil Tiger rebels who surrender although not for leaders of the insurgency, which is facing defeat after 25 years of civil war.

Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe said Sunday that officials from the attorney general's department were studying the legal basis for a possible pardon for separatists who surrender but that a final decision had not been made.

He said any offer would not be open to rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and others convicted in Sri Lanka for various attacks or wanted in neighboring India for the 1991 assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

"The leadership will be dealt with under the laws of the country," Samarasinghe said.

Gandhi was blown up by a suspected Tamil Tiger **female** suicide bomber at an election rally in southern India in apparent revenge for sending a peacekeeping force to Sri Lanka in 1987.

Samarasinghe said the government also plans to offer vocational training for surrendering rebels to help them reintegrate into society.

Tamil Tiger leaders have vowed no surrender. Every fighter is meant to wear a cyanide capsule and swears an oath to swallow the capsule to avoid capture.

But the government says a number of rebels have already given themselves up, including the group's former media spokesman and an interpreter for its political wing.

Separately, the **Tamil Tigers'** political head, Balasingham Nadesan, wrote Saturday to British Foreign Secretary David Miliband and his French counterpart, Bernard Kouchner, saying the insurgents are ready to "engage in the process to bring about a cease-fire and enter into negotiations for an enduring resolution to the conflict."

Excerpts of Nadesan's letter were e-mailed to news organizations.

Miliband and Kouchner visited Sri Lanka last week to press for a truce, but the government refused to let up its offensive, saying it is on the verge of victory.

Sri Lanka may pardon surrendering rebel fighters

Fighting continued Sunday. The military said it captured a 500-yard (meter) -long earth fortification erected by the rebels to slow the army's advance.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said the rebels were now confined to just a 2.8-mile (4.5-kilometer) coastal stretch in the northeast. He did not give casualty details from the battle.

An estimated 50,000 noncombatants are trapped in the tiny strip along with the cornered rebels. A recent United Nations report said about 6,500 civilians were killed in the area in the past three months.

The rebels have fought since 1983 to create an independent homeland for ethnic minority Tamils, who have suffered decades of marginalization by successive governments controlled by majority ethnic Sinhalese. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the violence.

Load-Date: May 4, 2009

End of Document

Xinhua Asia-Pacific news summary at 1600 GMT, June 3

Xinhua General News Service

June 3, 2009 Wednesday 12:25 PM EST

Copyright 2009 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 559 words

Body

KABUL -- The Afghan National Police (ANP) found a big cache of narcotics in an operation on Tuesday and destroyed over a dozen of heroin producing laboratories in Taliban strong-hold Helmand province of southern Afghanistan, said a statement of the Interior Ministry issued here on Wednesday.

"Some 3,318 kg of opium, 60 kg of hashish, and 750 kg of opium seeds as well as over 4,700 kg of precursor chemical substances were found in an operation in Sarwan Qala area of Sangin district, " the statement added. (Afghanistan-Narcotics)

TOKYO -- The total number of A/H1N1 infections in Japan rose to 396 on Wednesday after a few latest cases were reported.

The Shizuoka prefectural government Wednesday announced that a man in his 20s, who was staying at a training facility in Shizuoka Prefecture, was confirmed to be infected with the influenza. (Japan-Flu)

MANILA, June 3 (Xinhua) -- The United Nations World Food Program (WFP) is worried over alleged reports of illegal sale of its rice donated to thousands of displaced impoverished population in the conflict-torn southern Philippines, the U.N. agency said Wednesday.

In a statement, WFP country director Stephen Anderson said the WFP is conducting an investigation on the matter, noting that it is taking the issue of accountability "very seriously." (Philippines-Donation)

SINGAPORE -- Singapore confirmed two more cases of Influenza A/ H1N1, bringing the number of total cases here to 11, the country's Health Ministry said on Wednesday night.

One of the newly confirmed patients is a 33-year-old Singaporean ***female*** who was in New York from May 23 to 30, the other patient is an 18-year old American ***female*** visitor. Both patients were on Singapore Airlines SQ25 from New York via Frankfurt to Singapore. The flight arrived here on June 1. (Singapore-Influenza)

Xinhua Asia-Pacific news summary at 1600 GMT, June 3

MANILA, June 3 (Xinhua) -- A Sri Lankan peace worker kidnapped by Al Qaeda-linked militants four months ago in southern Philippines has been released, police and military sources said late Wednesday.

Rear Admiral Alex Pama, chief of the military's Task Force Trillium and concurrent chief of the Naval Forces Western Mindanao, told Xinhua in a text message that Jaleel Umar, 36, was freed by his captors through negotiations. (Philippines-Kidnap)

COLOMBO -- Sri Lanka has expressed its disappointment over last week's special UN Human Rights Council session to discuss its possible human rights violations, Minister of Human Rights Mahinda Samarasinghe said Wednesday.

The Sri Lankan government had told the council that it was disappointing that the UNHRC discussed Sri Lanka just a week after it had won a major battle to eradicate terrorism from the island, Samarasinghe told reporters. (SriLanka-UN-Human Rights)

COLOMBO -- Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse said Wednesday that it is now the time to win over the hearts of the Tamil people after the defeat of Tamil Tiger rebels.

Speaking in Tamil at the beginning of a colorful ceremony paying tribute to the government troops who defeated the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eealm (**LTTE**) within less than three years, Rajapakse said "the war fought against the **LTTE** was not a war fought against the Tamil people." (SriLanka-Tamils)

Load-Date: June 4, 2009

End of Document

UPA discusses ministerial berths, appoints Sonia chairperson (Second Lead)

Hindustan Times

May 20, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 453 words

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, May. 20 -- Two days before a new government is sworn in, United Progressive Alliance (UPA) partners Wednesday discussed the knotty issue of who will get which ministerial berth and also re-elected Congress president Sonia Gandhi as chairperson of the coalition.

A UPA meeting in Congress president Sonia Gandhi's 10 Janpath residence was attended by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the galaxy of leaders of the grouping, which has bagged 263 seats in the parliamentary elections.

According to a leader who attended the meeting, DMK chief and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi talked of a multi-billion rupee package for the rehabilitation of Sri Lanka's Tamil civilians affected by the war on the **Tamil Tigers**.

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar has demanded a special industrial package for Maharashtra, the source said.

Suggestions for implementation of the recommendations of Sachar Committee report on minorities were put up by Asaduddin Owaisi, an All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen MP from Andhra Pradesh, and E. Ahamed, of the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) from Kerala.

The meeting also chose Sonia Gandhi as chairperson of the UPA. Her name was proposed by DMK leader and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi and seconded by Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief Mamata Banerjee.

Among those who attended the UPA meeting from the Congress were Pranab Mukherjee, P. Chidambaram, A.K. Antony and general secretary Rahul Gandhi.

The other members of the Congress-led grouping were there in full strength too - present besides Karunanidhi were his grandnephew Dayanidhi Maran, NCP's Praful Patel and National Conference's Farooq Abdullah. Rashtriya Lok Dal chief Ajit Singh, who switched over to the UPA after the elections, also attended.

Abdullah, president of the National Conference, congratulated Rahul Gandhi for the victory of the UPA.

"We discussed about state and national matters. I said there should be a common minimum agenda and committees should be formed so that the concerns of all parties are addressed. This will help in good governance," Trinamool's Mamata Banerjee said. With 19 seats, the party is the UPA's largest ally.

UPA discusses ministerial berths, appoints Sonia chairperson (Second Lead)

In Banerjee's view, something should be done about minorities, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. "I talked about special economic zones (SEZ), agriculture policies and the need for a relationship between industrial and agriculture," said Banerjee.

She also discussed issues of women's reservation, minority development, unemployment and "atrocities" in West Bengal.

Banerjee also talked of violence done by Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) during the polls. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

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

Load-Date: August 4, 2009

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Pindi and Peshawar attacks - A linkage?

The Statesman

October 12, 2009 Monday

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Section: Vol. 8; No. 544

Length: 1317 words

Byline: Fozia Niazi

Body

Analysts see similarities between Kabul and Peshawar blasts, and link them with the Saturday attack on the GHQ main gate by TTP terrorists on October 10. Over a dozen army personnel got martyred and eight terrorists were killed while one, Dr Usman was arrested in critical condition.

Around 50 people were killed and over 100 injured in a car bomb blast in Peshawar on October 9. On October 8 a suicide bomber struck outside the Indian embassy in Kabul, killing 17 people. The Afghan Taliban claimed the responsibility, but many in New Delhi dubbed the Peshawar blast as a tit-for-tat as if the Kabul blast was conducted by ISI. Already the UN has halted work on various projects in Pakistan after the October 5 blast in the WFP offices in Islamabad, which left two women and a foreigner killed and eight others injured.

Indian experts linked it with Islamabad but owing to the modus operandi and tactics used in both the blasts, it seems that both the blasts are a handiwork of RAW. Same methods and similar nature of explosives VBIED (Vehicle borne improvised explosive device) have been used in the cars, which is the specialty of Indian intelligence agency. The inquiry of Samjhota Express proved that RAW agent Lt Col Prohit was an expert of preparing such devices and vehicles.

Such attacks always coincide with Pakistan's successes either in the operations against terrorists or on the end of our sports teams. Indian agencies gear up acts of sabotage whenever there is possibility of Islamabad getting world assistance or appraisal at least. New Delhi tries to cash in on important occasions to attract the world attention for fulfilling its malicious designs.

At the time of 2008 G-8 Summit, the Indian embassy in Kabul was hit by a blast on July 7. This time the Kabul blast coincides with American aid bill, though highly controversial and humiliating for Pakistan.

The people and the armed forces of Pakistan have put their weight together in opposing this bill as it is intrusive of our security mechanism. RAW in connivance with RAAM and Mossad has planned series of blasts in Afghanistan and Pakistan with a view to use pressure tactics and build opinion for forcing Washington to refrain from providing economic and military aid to Islamabad.

When we analyse these two possibilities the first one seems quite out of place because the terrorists in the tribal areas of Pakistan are no more in a position to launch such a well-planned and organised activity. During the last few months, the security agencies of Pakistan have very successfully crushed and crumpled all their strength and force with an iron hand.

Pindi and Peshawar attacks - A linkage?

The first rank leadership of these so called terrorists has gone to the other world, the remaining ones have surrendered before the security forces and some others have decided to be loyal to the state of Pakistan admitting that they had been misguided by their leaders. In short no one among them has a capability of confronting the armed forces of Pakistan. Now the second possibility is of the involvement of RAW in the GHQ attacks.

India has always reacted as a stubborn child whenever it feels any American inclination towards Pakistan. The recent Kerry-Lugar Bill could be one of the heart pinching realities for India. Although this bill is being criticised by some of the Pakistani factions of society for its objectionable clauses regarding the Pakistan army and the intelligence agencies, yet this bill is going to prove itself a strong favour and support for Pakistan in near future.

By getting an aid of 1.5 billion dollars every year Pakistan would be able to solve many of its economic problems. If the objectionable clauses are removed, this bill would strengthen the Pak-American relations. This all-well situation is certainly not very pleasing for India. Now India wants to create hurdles so that this bill may not reach to final.

The attack on the GHQ is nothing but an attempt to promote harassment and fear throughout the world that America is not taking a wise step by planning to help people of Pakistan through the Kerry-Lugar Bill. There could be another objective behind these attacks; to tell the world that Pakistan Army has not succeeded in crushing the terrorists. India wants to nullify the claims of Pakistan that it is doing its best against the menace of terrorism. The main objective behind all this activity is to distort Pak-US relations which are getting better day by day.

The terrorists attacked the GHQ buildings in a very skillful manner. The attackers were very well equipped and immaculately trained. It was simply a very tactfully designed commando action. The attackers did not seem to be amongst the terrorists who had been trying to avoid the security agencies in the tribal areas of Pakistan for the last few months.

These attacks had a great resemblance with the attacks on Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore which were linked to the **Tamil Tigers** working in Sri Lanka under the guidance of the RAW. Pakistan had lent a helping hand to the Sri Lankan government in crushing the **LTTE** terrorist activities and the Indian government was not happy over this help.

The RAW agents in collaboration with the extremists working in Swat planned to teach a lesson to the government of Pakistan by attacking the Sri Lankan team. Now the same story is being repeated.

India is mistaken in its judgement that terrorist activities can frighten the people of Pakistan or the government of Pakistan. The people of Pakistan are moderate, peace-loving and forward looking. They hate and reject any kind of extremism. The war our security forces are fighting against terrorists is not just our government's war but the people of Pakistan are giving their fullest backing to it.

They are sick of this war and war mongers. They want extremism and the extremists eliminated and expelled from their soil. Our security forces, intelligence agencies, the government and the people - all are equally engaged in the unending fight against terror. We have a lot of courage and determination.

We are a nation not a crowd. We believe in unity and integrity. When we call us the American ally in the war against terror, we mean it. Every Pakistani is a soldier, eager to sacrifice his life for this land of pure passions. The world must be sure that we would never let anyone achieve his nefarious designs in this region.

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It is quite obvious that an attack on the capital of Balochistan could further aggravate the ongoing separatist conflict in the region and which will ultimately damage to war against terror. American and their allies should also force India to do away with their ideas of launching any attack against Pakistan.

Pindi and Peshawar attacks - A linkage?

India should be asked to resolve burning issue of Kashmir for permanent peace. India should also know that Pakistan is a nuclear power and is very well aware of the movements of IAF and can respond boldly in case of any surgical strike and misadventures against her.

She must know that Pakistan security forces and intelligence agencies have gone through a real test and ready to face any kind of aggression. India should accept Pakistani offer to restart the composite dialogue and Confidence Building Measures (CBM) to resolve the issues for establish the regional peace. UNO should play its role as mediator to settle the Kashmir issue between two nuclear powers.

USA should respect the sovereignty of democratic Pakistan and remove the bugs and objectionable clauses of Kerry-Lugar Bill.

Load-Date: September 19, 2011

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Protests force Canadian politicians to acknowledge Tamil cause

Asian News International (ANI)

May 12, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 444 words

Byline: ANI

Body

Toronto/Ottawa, May 12 (ANI): Protests by Canadian Tamil demonstrators in Toronto have brought the issue of the plight of Sri Lankan Tamils to the front pages here, so much so, that now Canadian politicians in Ottawa are taking notice and cautiously condemning the ongoing Sri Lankan Army operations, reports the Globe and Mail newspaper.

The Stephen Harper government has said that it is open to identifying and speaking with Canadian Tamil leaders and, in a rare move, praised NDP Leader Jack Layton for co-ordinating the "dissipation" of Sunday's demonstration.

Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff also expressed his sympathy for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils, who are caught between government forces and the **Tamil Tigers**, which Canada declared a terrorist group in 2006.

International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda expressed the government's support, but added that Tamil Tiger flags waved by some protesters may give the impression "the terrorist organization is part of the demonstrations."

In Toronto Sunday night, demonstrators included young **women** and children. Images show some protesters grabbing police bicycles and throwing them at officers. Three people were arrested and charged.

Sunday's protest, along with similar ones in London, England, and Washington, came amidst reports that shelling in Sri Lanka's war zone had killed at least 378 civilians. By Monday night, doctors in the region estimated that as many as 1,000 civilians had died.

"This is a desperate humanitarian situation and I think a lot of Canadians want to see the bombing stop. That's I think why you're seeing a growing concern," Layton said.

The political reactions stood in contrast to Ottawa's silence on similar protests that closed Toronto streets over the past few months. Many politicians continue to keep their distance from any protest involving suggestions of support for the Tigers.

On Monday, protesters outside Queen's Park and Toronto's Sri Lankan consulate hailed Tigers leader Velupillai Prabhakaran as "our national leader, our glorious leader." They carried red flags with the image of a tiger and rifles

Protests force Canadian politicians to acknowledge Tamil cause

that was the emblem of the Tigers until 1990. It's now a symbol of the secessionist Tamil Eelam initiative, but evokes the Tiger movement.

Oda insisted the Harper government will "have meetings with any Tamil community representative that [is] not part of a terrorist organization."

Tamil-Canadian leaders continued to call on the Canadian government to push for a ceasefire.

David Poopalapillai, a spokesman with the Canadian Tamil Congress, said messages from the Liberals and NDP helped diffuse Sunday's protest, and praised the Tories for agreeing to a meeting. (ANI)

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

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Protests force Canadian politicians to acknowledge Tamil cause

Hindustan Times

May 12, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 456 words

Dateline: Toronto/Ottawa

Body

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Load-Date: May 13, 2009

The war is over, now build the peace

The Gazette (Montreal)

May 20, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL / OP-ED; Pg. A18

Length: 397 words

Byline: The Gazette

Body

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa sounded the right notes in his speech to mark the harrowing, bloody end of his country's 26-year-long civil war.

Speaking first in Tamil, Rajapaksa called for Sri Lankans to live as one. "No differences of race, caste and religion should prevail here," he said. He told the 2.4 million ethnic Tamils that the government had not waged war against them, but against the insurgent **Tamil Tigers**.

But if Rajapaksa's victory against the Tigers, one of the most violent and deadly terrorist groups in the world, must be greeted with relief, it could prove to have been won at a steep cost to democracy in Sri Lanka.

Rajapaksa's government silenced opposition critics by calling them terrorists. It ignored the killing of journalists, all but ensuring that Sri Lankan media would pull back from reporting on the civil war.

Army tactics seem to have included firing on areas with large numbers of civilians, while barring international aid agencies and media from access to the targeted sites.

Now that the war, which has claimed as many as 70,000 lives, is over, the truth will come out. Sri Lankans need to know the real story. There is a huge job of rebuilding democratic institutions that needs to be undertaken quickly. A shared sense of urgency for this task can only arise from a people who fully grasp the horror of the last quarter-century.

The Tamils, especially the 200,000 or more of them in internment camps in the northern region, need to feel that peace offers them more than whatever the Tigers promised them. The government has said it will resettle at least 80 per cent of them by the end of the year.

With suspicions hanging over the Colombo government that it wasn't too worried about on whom its bombs fell, Rajapaksa should make the camps one of his first priorities.

The first order of business has already been attended to: Grotesque photos of the remains of Velupillai Prabhakaran, Tiger leader, were widely shown within Sri Lanka and around the world.

The war is over, now build the peace

As long as Prabhakaran was rumoured to be still alive, pro-Tamil groups could try to reform. But the man who plotted the assassination in 1991 of Rajiv Gandhi and who unleashed suicide bombers against men, **women** and children, is well and truly dead.

Unfortunately, his fight to create a separate Tamil state might not be over - unless Tamils are fully embraced by the new unified state.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed. ;

Load-Date: May 20, 2009

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Indonesia :Humanitarian disaster threatens Sri Lankan asylum seekers

Right Vision News

November 26, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 1067 words

Dateline: Pakistan

Body

Pakistan, Nov. 26 -- Jakarta A humanitarian disaster may befall around 255 Sri Lankan asylum seekers on a wooden boat that has been berthed at Indah Kiat sea port in Cilegon, Banten province, for more than a month."Until now, the Indonesian government has yet to make any effort to find the best solution for those Sri Lankan asylum seekers," said Kiagus Ahmad Bella Sati, a member of the Combined Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for Civilian Community Solidarity, here on Wednesday.Kiagus who is also the head of the Legal Aid Institute for Advocacy and Case Handling said the Sri Lankan refugees` plight had to do with the lack of seriousness with which the government was handling their case.On October 10, 2009, the Indonesian navy captured around 255 asylum seekers consisting of men, women and children of the Tamil tribe while their boat was entering the Sunda Strait, off the Cilegon coast.Now, the asylum seekers are still living in their wooden boat tied up at a pier of Indah Kiat port in Cilegon under tight naval surveillance.According to Kiagus, the tight security had also narrowed the refugees` access to the outside world, so that all kinds of humanitarian aid could not be distributed to them.In fact, the tight security was also curtailing the distribution of aid from theInternational Organization of Migration (IOM) which was responsible for meeting the regugees` basic needs.Kiagus said Indonesia should actually allow the refugees more free access to the humanitarian aid which was meant merely to meet their basic needs."Those asylum seekers were on their way to Australia when an Indonesian navy patrol intercepted and captured them in Indonesian waters," Kiagus said.Sharing Kiagus`s view was Ali Akbar, a researcher of the Human Right Working Group, who said that Indonesia should enable the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to meet and make an inventory of the asylum seekers."Indonesia should leave the fate of the refugees to UNHCR as the most appropriate party to find the best solution to their fate," Akbar said.According to him, eventhough Indonesia had yet to ratify the convention on the Status of Refugees of 1951, the government could not expel or ignore the fate of the asylum seekers.Considering that Indonesia had already ratified the convention against torture of 1965 through Law No 5/1998 while under the convention`s Article 3, section (1), the government was not allowed to expel, deport or extradite someone to his/her country if there are strong and reliable reasons to believe the person concerned was in danger of experiencing torture if repatriated.Those Sri Lankans had to seek for asylum in order to avoid armed conflict and violence from the majority tribe in their country, Akbar said adding that the government through relevant agencies should make a legal instrument on Indonesian policy pertaining to foreign refugees-related regulations.Earlier, it was reported that the 255 asylum-seekers once threatened to blow up their boat if the Indonesian navy forced them to disembark at the port after the large cargo boat they were piloting toward Christmas Island broke down."We have gas canisters and we have told the navy we will blow up the boat and jump into the ocean if they try to force us off the boat," said a spokesman for the asylum-seekers, who would only give his name as Alex.Alex said the Sri Lankans had each paid \$US15,000 (\$16,533) to be transported by the wooden craft from Malaysia 13 days ago, after arriving in the neighboring country by air from Jaffna."If the authorities in Sri Lanka know this is me on this boat, they will hunt down my wife and children in Jaffna and kill them," the frightened man said.

Indonesia :Humanitarian disaster threatens Sri Lankan asylum seekers

"I have been waiting for my wife and children to follow me here. We need to get to Australia as soon as possible."The Sri Lankan asylum-seekers and six Indonesian crew members were under military guard aboard their cargo boat after being intercepted while trying to reach Christmas Island.In the meantime, the Australian daily reported that Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd confirmed he had made a personal plea to Yudhoyono to intercept the Sri Lankan refugees in their boat.Alex, meanwhile, denied that those on board the boat were associated with **Tamil Tigers**. "We are civilians, not **Tamil Tigers**. Every day there are Tamils being killed and raped in the refugee camps. Men are blindfolded and shot in the back of the head.""In Sri Lanka, if you are Tamil, there is no opportunity - the government can detain you without cause, and take you to trial without evidence," he said, adding that his group`s choice of Australia as a destination was not based on intimate knowledge of federal government immigration policy, but simply "because we had to flee somewhere".However, Alex refused to give details of the agent who had taken money from members for the group in Malaysia, repeatedly saying he feared for his life.A military source, who refused to be named, said navy ships guarding the asylum-seekers had accompanied the boat after it was intercepted in the Sunda Strait near Anak Krakatau, an active volcano that attracts thousands of tourists to its spectacular displays."We`re guarding them so that no one can get on or off, and so they don`t escape. We never curtail the distribution of humanitarian aid to those refugees," the source said.Meanwhile, Indonesian police said they were investigating whether the six Indonesian crew members on board were part of a people-smuggling ring.Thousands of asylum-seekers from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Sri Lanka and Burma use Indonesia as a staging point to get to Australia where they apply for refugee status, often travelling first through Malaysia.Many make their initial applications to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Jakarta, giving them temporary right to stay in the country while their claims are processed.A large number of them then use this opportunity to organise risky voyages such as the most recent one to be intercepted, often with the help of organised people-smuggling rings.Australia has launched a joint policing program with Indonesia to combat the people trafficking waves, with at least a dozen ports across the country being targeted. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Right Vision News. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: November 26, 2009

Voyage of the damned going nowhere

The Australian

October 14, 2009 Wednesday

a - Qld Country Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 1059 words

Byline: Stephen Fitzpatrick

Body

MORE than 260 Sri Lankan asylum-seekers were in a tense standoff with Indonesian authorities last night after the large cargo boat they were piloting towards Christmas Island broke down and they resisted navy attempts to make them disembark at the port in Merak.

A spokesman for the group, who would give his name only as Alex, said the Sri Lankans had each paid \$US15,000 (\$16,533) to board the wooden craft in Malaysia 13 days ago, after travelling there by air from Jaffna.

"If the authorities in Sri Lanka know this is me on this boat, they will hunt down my wife and children in Jaffna and kill them," the frightened man said. "I have been waiting for my wife and children to follow me here. As soon as possible we need to get to Australia."

The Sri Lankan asylum-seekers and six Indonesian crew members were under military guard aboard the cargo ship in western Java after being intercepted trying to sail to Christmas Island.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono intervened directly in the case of the asylum-seekers, who were detained trying to sail to Christmas Island at the weekend.

Dr Yudhoyono has ordered his navy head of staff to treat with care the group of hungry and tired refugees, who last night were expected to be towed to shore after their cargo boat's engine died. They were then to be dealt with by immigration officials after having refused for the past three days to leave their stricken boat.

Kevin Rudd confirmed yesterday he had made a personal plea to Dr Yudhoyono at the weekend for the Indonesians to intercept the boat.

Alex denied last night that those on board the boat were associated with **Tamil Tigers**.

"We are civilians, not **Tamil Tigers**. Every day there are Tamils being killed and raped in the refugee camps. Men are blindfolded and shot in the back of the head.

"In Sri Lanka if you are Tamil there is no opportunity -- the government can detain you without cause, and take you to trial without evidence."

Alex said the group's choice of Australia as a destination was not based on intimate knowledge of federal government immigration policy, but simply "because we had to flee somewhere".

Voyage of the damned going nowhere

“Another boat full of Tamils left Malaysia for Canada, and for that people were paying \$US45,000 per person,” he said. “That was far too expensive.”

He said the group had been at sea for 13 days before being captured by an Indonesian navy vessel early on Saturday morning. “We spent a month in the jungle in Malaysia before that,” he said.

International Organisation for Migration staff were working with Immigration Department

Continued -- Page 8

From Page 1

officials last night to resolve the standoff, with the Sri Lankans adamant they wanted to continue their journey to Australia.

Alex refused to give details of the agent who had taken money from members for the group in Malaysia, repeatedly saying he feared for his life.

He was allowed to speak to The Australian for only a few moments, before senior navy officers made him rejoin the larger group.

The group contained men, women and children.

Four of the boatpeople were in hospital last night being treated for non-life-threatening issues, including one woman who reportedly was pregnant.

A military source, who refused to be named, said navy ships guarding the asylum-seekers had accompanied the boat after it was intercepted in the Sunda Strait near Anak Krakatau, an active volcano that attracts thousands of tourists to its spectacular displays.

“We're guarding them so that no one can get on or off, and so they don't escape,” the source said.

However, the refugees last night were refusing to leave the boat. The boat was moored alongside an Indonesian navy submarine chaser and bore a large hand-painted sign saying: “We are Sri Lankan civilians plz save our life.”

Australian Federal Police and Immigration Department officers had already visited the boatpeople, the source said. However they were refusing to speak to officials.

A doctor dealing with the four people in hospital said they included a baby with skin problems, a seven-months-pregnant woman, another with gastritis and a fourth who had a spinal injury sustained on the cargo boat.

Others had been given medical assessments on the boat and determined to be fine.

Dr Erwin Hilianka, from the Banten province health department, said the illegal immigrants were suffering no serious illnesses but were only sick due to weakness and not eating.

The boat was intercepted early on Sunday morning, authorities said, and arrived in Merak harbour late the same day.

Indonesian police said they were investigating whether the six Indonesian crew members were involved in a known people-smuggling ring.

Thousands of asylum-seekers from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Sri Lanka and Burma use Indonesia as a staging point to get to Australia, where they apply for refugee status, often travelling first through Malaysia.

Many make their initial applications to the UN High Commission for Refugees in Jakarta, giving them temporary right to stay in the country while their claims are processed.

Voyage of the damned going nowhere

A large number of them then use this opportunity to organise risky voyages such as the most recent one to be intercepted, often with the services of organised people-smuggling rings.

Australia has launched a joint policing program with Indonesia to combat the people trafficking wave, with at least a dozen ports across the country being targeted.

Despite tough language from Jakarta for Australia's benefit, officials admit they are unable to stem the flow of refugees through the country. Many of the asylum-seekers themselves admit the flow has increased as a result of the Rudd government's softer measures on the problem.

These measures, which many asylum-seekers believe will give them a greater chance at being accepted as refugees by Australia if they try the journey by boat, have led to the main detention and processing centre at Christmas Island being filled beyond its capacity.

However Indonesian detention centres are also stretched beyond capacity, despite financial and other assistance from foreign governments including Australia and from the International Organisation for Migration.

The IOM works with the UNHCR giving shelter, food and medical treatment to thousands of asylum-seekers living in the community in areas such as Puncak, a mountainous resort region full of low-rent hostels south of Jakarta.

Load-Date: October 13, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lanka reaches for a lifeline in the sea; War-torn nation sees potential in its bounty of fish and pristine beaches

The International Herald Tribune

July 31, 2009 Friday

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Section: Pg. 1

Length: 1027 words

Byline: Lydia Polgreen

Dateline: TRINCOMALEE, Sri Lanka

Body

ABSTRACT

Trincomalee boasts one of the world's deepest natural harbors, and its potential for fishing, shipping and tourism seems endless.

FULL TEXT

It was just after dawn and the fish market beneath this port city's clock tower was humming. Fishermen shouldering baskets laden with the night's catch tipped their Spanish mackerel, tuna and prawns onto the slick concrete floor for buyers. Sweaty men with clipboards and wads of cash leaned in close to inspect with crinkled noses, squinting eyes and prodding fingers.

"I'll take this for 500 rupees a kilo," nearly \$5 for about two pounds, one buyer said to an expectant fisherman, waving his chin in the direction of a large, glistening yellowfin tuna. "Can you get me more?"

Fishermen here certainly hope so.

The end of the brutal 26-year war against the Tamil Tiger insurgency in Sri Lanka prompted the government to ease fishing restrictions on Trincomalee's harbor, breathing new life into the region's moribund fishing industry. Boats once moldering on shore now go on all-night runs for tuna, squid and lobster. Ghostly markets are coming back to life.

Trincomalee boasts one of the world's deepest natural harbors, and its potential for fishing, shipping and tourism seems endless. It holds a bounty of fish, crab and prawns that could provide tens of millions of dollars in earnings. Whales spawn here, and dolphins leap in its azure waters.

But the **Tamil Tigers** had a small but highly effective navy, used in suicide missions and to supply weapons to fighters. Despite the fact that the **Tamil Tigers** were chased from this region in 2006, the bay has been largely off limits to development because of security concerns.

In the last month, the government has allowed fishermen to fish in 12-hour shifts here and has allowed fishing to resume in other sensitive coastal areas as well.

Sri Lanka reaches for a lifeline in the sea War-torn nation sees potential in its bounty of fish and pristine beaches

Fishing is at the heart of the economic and cultural life of this region, indeed to much of coastal Sri Lanka, and its return is being celebrated across the north and east.

"When people here cannot fish, they feel as if they are not living," said T.T.R. de Silva, the top central government official here.

The rapid rebound of the fishing industry mirrors a broader rebirth under way, one that gives people in Sri Lanka a tantalizing morsel of how prosperous postwar life could be.

With its lush tea plantations, endless miles of pristine beaches, rolling farmland and deep-water harbors, Sri Lanka's economy is waiting to be unleashed, government officials and business leaders say. Nowhere is that truer than in the war-scarred east and north of the country.

In 1981, the Eastern Province made up 11 percent of the country's gross domestic product. In 2006, it contributed only 4 percent, according to Pathila Kohona, Sri Lanka's foreign secretary, who has been busy trying to drum up investment in the formerly war-torn parts of the country.

"The potential here is just enormous," he said. "There is nowhere to go but up."

Sri Lanka's economy has grown at a relatively good clip despite nearly three decades of war between a hardened guerrilla insurgency and government troops, averaging about 6 percent in the past four years.

But winning the war, which required an army of about 200,000 men and huge expenditures on arms, has left government coffers almost empty. After weeks of wrangling, the International Monetary Fund has agreed to help Sri Lanka with a \$1.5 billion line of credit, despite quiet objections from some Western countries concerned about the government's human rights record.

In the last weeks of the war, thousands of Tamil civilians died in a narrow strip of land where they were stuck, along with Tamil Tiger fighters. The government says it did not intentionally target civilians, but human rights organizations have called for an independent investigation. The government has vehemently opposed it.

Here in Trincomalee, hopes for a large peace dividend are high.

"The war is over," said D.H. Podimahathaya, a 43-year-old fisherman who has seen his income plummet because of restrictions on fishing in Trincomalee harbor. "Everyone suffered a lot. Now we need money." Mr. Podimahathaya's family has been fishing for generations, and the restrictions hit them hard.

"Our whole family depends on fishing," he said. "At some times, we didn't have anything to eat. But now the situation is improving."

Muthumala Gunadasa, a wizened 57-year-old fisherman, said the war had forced three of his brothers to migrate to the south, despite the fact that the fish here are much more lucrative.

"But now those who left are returning home," he said. "Everyone wants to fish here."

But the picture in Trincomalee is not exactly postcard perfect, said R. Rajarammohan, chairman of the city's Chamber of Commerce. The seas may be more open, but harsh security measures remain on land, like the roadblocks leading from the city to the capital, Colombo, where much of Trincomalee's fish is headed.

"When goods and people cannot move freely, it is premature to talk about an economic turnaround," Mr. Rajarammohan said. "If the war is over, are all of these measures really necessary?"

Indeed, the journey from Trincomalee to Colombo, just 250 kilometers, or 160 miles, can take more than eight hours. Soldiers stop motorists more than a dozen times, and at one major checkpoint passengers are made to get out of their vehicles and have their cargo searched.

Sri Lanka reaches for a lifeline in the sea War-torn nation sees potential in its bounty of fish and pristine beaches

Government officials say that these precautions are necessary because Tamil Tiger fighters may remain hidden in the north and east. The Tigers have used women and children as suicide bombers in the past, so almost anyone could be a suspect, Mr. de Silva said.

"We cannot be too careful," he said. "The war only just ended."

Fishermen here are glad to be back out on the water, but are looking forward to the day when they can fish anytime they like. At the moment they can only go out for 12 hours at a time, and they can only use small outboard motors, which limits the size of their catch.

"There is so much demand, but we can't meet it," said a white-haired 62-year-old fisherman named Siripala. "One day we hope to be free to fish without fear."

Load-Date: July 30, 2009

End of Document

AFPTV Updated Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

April 30, 2009 Thursday 8:06 PM GMT

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Length: 1162 words

Dateline: PARIS, April 30 2009

Body

We will file the following videos:

Anger rises in Mexico as swine flu spread

MEXICO CITY

Even as the spread of the lethal swine flu appears to be slowing in Mexico, the discontent of residents is rising, with people questioning the government strategy to fight the disease, re-named by the World Health Organization as influenza A (H1N1).

NEWS/HEALTH

Images and soundbites transmitted by 0100 GMT Friday

RAW - VID80350

WEB - MMV80351

Chrysler to file for bankruptcy protection

WASHINGTON

Chrysler will file for bankruptcy protection after major creditors balked at a deal to reduce a big part of the ailing automaker's debt, a White House official said Thursday. The official said the expected court filing would not deter the administration from supporting Chrysler as it seeks to emerge from restructuring in the court process under Chapter 11 of the bankruptcy code. News coverage of President Barack Obama's statement on the auto industry to the press.

NEWS/ECONOMY

Voiced report transmitted by 2000 GMT - Revised filing time

VUS1132

AFPTV Updated Advisory

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A wall around Rio slums?

RIO DE JANEIRO

Authorities in Rio de Janeiro have a new strategy to contain the spread of one of the city's most infamous favelas. They plan to encircle it with an "environmental wall" -- they say to protect the neighbouring rainforest from encroachment.

SPECIAL REPORT

Voiced report transmitted by 2200 GMT

NSV - VID80250

BROADCAST-READY - VID80251

WEB - MMV80252

We have already filed the following:

US hospitals lay down swine flu strategy

WASHINGTON

Hospitals in Washington have laid out detailed plans to combat swine flu.

NEWS/HEALTH

Images and soundbites

RAW - VID80350

WEB - MMV80351

EU health chief predicts flu 'pandemic'

LUXEMBOURG

EU Health Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou said at an emergency meeting on the swine flu Thursday that an international pandemic was "likely" but that it did not mean it would cause widespread deaths. She stressed that there had been no deaths of non-Mexicans thus far and that people who had contracted the disease were responding to treatment. EU health ministers agreed to pool information and resources to combat the spread of the flu, but shot down a more radical French proposal to halt flights to Mexico.

NEWS/HEALTH

1. Images of ministers arrivals and round table discussions

RAW - VID80300

WEB - MMV80301

2. Images and soundbites of press conference

RAW - VID80310

AFPTV Updated Advisory

WEB - MMV80311

Five killed in attack on Dutch royal couple

APELDOORN, Netherlands

A car slammed into Dutch festival-goers Thursday, killing five in an attack on the royal couple at an annual festival celebrating the queen. Officials arrested the seriously injured driver of a car which rammed into the foot of a monument after mowing down people gathered for the Queen's Day royal procession in the city of Apeldoorn.

NEWS

Images

RAW - VID80345

WEB - MMV80346

Sri Lanka dismisses critics, vows to crush rebels

UNDISCLOSED LOCATION, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's president on Thursday ruled out halting the military's offensive against the **Tamil Tigers**, and warned the rebels that they must give up or be killed. Tens of thousands of civilians are trapped by the fighting and many victims remain without adequate medical aid. Raw images and soundbites released by the Coordination Office for Humanitarian and Human Rights for Tamils, dated 28 April 2009.

NEWS

Images

RAW - VID80308

WEB - MMV80309

French hospital helps Sri Lankan civilian victims

VAVUNIYA, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's president on Thursday ruled out halting the military's offensive against the **Tamil Tigers**, and warned the rebels that they must give up or be killed. A hospital provided by France is now up and running, providing much needed help to civilian victims of the conflict. The hospital is based in Cheddikulam, near the town of Vavuniya, about 80 kilometres (50 miles) south west of the conflict zone where tens of thousands of refugees remain trapped.

NEWS

Images and soundbites

RAW - VID80263

WEB - MMV80264

French capture three 'Somali pirates' - New offer

OFF THE COAST OF SOMALIA

The French navy on Thursday captured three suspected Somali pirates in waters off the coast of the Horn of Africa nation. The three posed no resistance when they were seized by the forces aboard the Nivose, a French frigate

AFPTV Updated Advisory

serving in the European Union's anti-piracy naval mission Atalanta off the Somali coast. The Nivose had just returned from the Kenyan port of Mombasa where it handed over 11 suspected Somalis pirates captured when it intercepted the mother ship off the Kenyan coast.

Images

RAW - VID80396

WEB - MMV80399

Prince Charles given German environmental award

BERLIN

Prince Charles, the British heir to the throne, received an award for his environmental campaigning during a two-day trip to Berlin. Charles, accompanied by his wife, Camilla Duchess of Cornwall, received the German Sustainability Award.

ENVIRONMENT

Images and soundbites

RAW - VID80305

WEB - MMV80306

Freed Lebanese prisoner speaks out - New offer

BEIRUT

Hezbollah scored a major political win ahead of crucial elections with the release of four generals detained for nearly four years in connection with the murder of ex-premier Rafiq Hariri, experts say. One of the freed men, former security services director Jamil Sayyed, has been speaking to AFPTV on his first day of release. Raw images and soundbites.

NEWS

RAW - VID80373

WEB - MMV80382

Congo's male rape victims speak out

KAKU, Democratic Republic of Congo

In Democratic Republic of Congo's troubled and lawless east, sexual violence against women is commonplace and often used as a weapon of war. But now, increasingly, male rape victims are coming forward.

SPECIAL REPORT

Voiced report

NSV - VID80285

BROADCAST-READY - VID80286

WEB - MMV80287

Bollywood meets Bronte

LONDON

Bollywood is taking on the mainstream with a musical adaptation of Wuthering Heights. The colour, dance and music of classic Indian cinema comes face to face with Emily Bronte's classic tale of unrequited love on the London stage.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

Voiced report

NSV - VID80293

BROADCAST-READY - VID80294

WEB - MMV80295

Ahead of the five-year anniversary of EU enlargement to 25 states on Friday, we have filed the following:

2004 ceremonies of EU enlargement

PARIS

The European Union welcomed 10 mostly Eastern European nations into its fold on May 1, 2004, ushering in a new era for the bloc and erasing boundaries drawn by the Cold War. File footage of the enlargement ceremonies presided by former European Commission President Romano Prodi.

NEWS

Images

RAW - VID80372

Language barriers in the Baltics

RIGA

Of the three Baltic states, Latvia has the biggest Russian-speaking population. Moscow argues the minority group faces institutionalised discrimination, including on job applications in which they must submit to Latvian language tests.

SPECIAL REPORT

Voiced report

NSV - VID80290

BROADCAST-READY - VID80291

WEB - MMV80292

Load-Date: May 1, 2009

Divining peace in aftermath of war

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

July 7, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 1280 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 7 -- "All too often it is innocent men, women and children who pay the price of war. We cannot ask them to pay the price of peace." -- Report of the United Nations Secretary-General on peace building in the immediate aftermath of conflict.

This morning, as I was writing this column, I noticed a strange pattern of tea-leaves amongst the dregs of satiation. The pattern suggested that the Chief Executive's term in office was out of his hands and largely defined by filial ambition. The languid leaves also suggested that the boundless aspirations of the gods of war physically closest to him posed the greatest danger to his legacy and life to boot. Alarmed at such a bleak future and the danger it posed to our Executive Ubermensch, I poured myself another cuppa. The damned pattern remained essentially the same, though just near the stem, a few leaves foretold an increasingly violent clampdown on dissent erasing any real threat to the government's prospects over the long-term. Depressed, I switched to coffee, but have preserved the tea-leaves for production in court as evidence that the company responsible for its production is an agent of the LTTE. Evidently, what the LTTE could not win through violence, they are now clearly attempting to subliminally suggest through Golden Flowery Orange Pekoe. Perhaps existing travel advisories to Sri Lanka must be revised to caution that shamans, soothsayers, psychics and astrologers stand the risk of arrest, interrogation and production in court if they see a future even a shade less luminous than government. We've been here before. The UNF's disastrous design of a peace process, defined by a political leadership unable and unwilling to communicate meaningfully with voters in the South resulted in unmet expectations of economic prosperity that eventually contributed to the rise of violent Sinhala nationalism in opposition to the CFA and subsequently the government's demise. Memories of voters are short lived. To constantly relive 12th May 2009 suggests the essential insecurity of a regime that cannot, and will not, move past its crowning moment. To do so is to enter the unfamiliar and uncomfortable domain of peacebuilding. The very term peacebuilding suggests that peace exists in a state of siege or not at all. But the hardest part of peacebuilding is explaining what it means, and must entail, to polity and society that for three decades have had their lives and imagination conditioned by war, emergency rule and normalisation violence. Such societies unthinkingly peg peace to violent foundations, either in their support for terrorism or in their support for war against terrorism. Existing literature on conflict resolution deals very badly with an example like Sri Lanka, for it does not capture or offer any meaningful answers to the vexed problem of a government adopting, without care or concern, the very tactics of the terrorists they are fighting against in order to defeat them. In a column that irked, among others, the Government's Peace Secretariat during the war, I called the Chief Executive and his inner cabal of war architects "murderous brutes". I see no reason to revise or retract this statement today, because it is precisely why we won the war against the LTTE so quickly and decisively. It is entirely possible, and obviously very desirable, that such people change for the better. But the challenge of peacebuilding and conflict resolution practice and theory as they stand today is to deal with a regime that does not after war's end. The recently released UN Report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict is

Divining peace in aftermath of war

interesting reading in this regard. Being a typical UN document, it is turgid, full of platitudes and needlessly long (though the "Please Recycle" notice on the front page suggests the UN is now more acutely conscious of how much of paper it wastes). It offers no new thinking or real innovation, and contains plenty of recommendations and proposes more studies. Yet its value lies in its reiteration to UN member states that peacebuilding after war is a tremendously challenging task especially for victors. It cautions that the post-war context brings significant challenges to political leadership and civil society, and that "threats to peace are often greatest during this early phase". The report notes the value of coordination and collaboration between domestic, regional and international actors, "since no single actor has the capacity to meet the needs in any of the priority areas of peacebuilding". A point that captures the UNF's failure to embed the value of the CFA in the minds of the voter in the South warrants a fuller excerpt, for it is a set of challenges facing the incumbents in power today to a much greater degree (since the Prime Minister of the UNF was never seen as a god), The end of conflict... tends to create high expectations for the delivery of concrete political, social and economic dividends. Building confidence in a peace process requires that at least some of these expectations are met. Equally important is effective communication and an inclusive dialogue between national authorities and the population, not least to create realistic expectations of what can be achieved in the short run. The full participation of women in policy making is stressed, as well as the inclusion of civil society and those who have been socially, economically and politically marginalised. The report courageously notes that post-war, "some of the national actors with whom the international community must engage may be implicated in past human rights abuses or significant atrocities". Disappointingly and unsurprisingly, the report does not go on to explain how the mechanisms of such engagement with regimes charged with war crimes can be fashioned. In line with the government's post-war priorities, the report notes that "jump starting economic recovery can be one of the greatest bolsters of security and provides the engine for future recovery." On the other hand, it stresses the importance of the safe and sustainable return and reintegration of IDPs, strengthening the rule of law, reforming the security sector, promoting inclusive dialogue and reconciliation. Juxtapose this basic common sense with the propaganda and actions of the Rajapakse regime during and especially after the end of war. No astrologer is needed to predict what is evident upon sober reflection of facts suggesting the hubris, insensitivity, arrogance and violent exclusion that defines governance and government. In his Nobel Peace Prize address in 1998, John Hume noted that, "All of us are asked to respect the views and rights of others as equal of our own and, together, to forge a covenant of shared ideals based on commitment to the rights of all allied to a new generosity of purpose." Where is this generosity of purpose today? Instead of it we have sprawling IDP camps, sarcophagi of hopelessness and destitution, where success is measured not by standards of human dignity and decency but by comparisons to what we think their lives must have been under the LTTE. The sheer absurdity and considerable violence of such comparisons are lost to many, perhaps on account of the greater farce of attempts to secure peace by abducting journalists and arresting recalcitrant astrologers. In one sense though, the government's avowed design for peacebuilding in Sri Lanka is heavenly, for it is certainly like nothing on earth. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: July 7, 2009

Italian FM to brief EU states on GSP+

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

November 10, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 584 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Nov. 10 -- An inter-religious delegation headed by Colombo Archbishop Most Rev. Dr. Malcolm Ranjith, and composed of Chief Incumbent of the Bellanwila Raja Maha Viharaya Venerable Bellanwila Wimalaratana Nayaka Thera, Ven. Kamburugamuwe Vajira Thera, Hindu Vidyanithi Brahmasri Kuhananda Sarma, Muslim Affairs Coordinator Venerator Alhaj Moulavi Viyas Mohamed JP, and Rev. Fr. Damian Fernando together with Ambassador of Sri Lanka in Italy Hemantha Warnakulasuriya, met Foreign Affairs Minister of Italy Franco Frattini, and the other members of his delegation, (Deputy Director General of the Asia Desk) Enzo Angeloni, Economides (Chief of Cabinet of the Minister) Alain Giorgio Maria and Chief of Press Office to the Minister Maurizio Massari).

Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini thanked the inter-religious delegation for having enlightened him and the Foreign Affairs Ministry on the current situation in Sri Lanka. The Foreign Minister assured that the Italian Government will under no circumstances deprive of the benefits of the GSP+ concession on the women and children.

He said, the Italian Government could see the position of Sri Lankan Government much clearly, and I would request the Sri Lankan Ambassador to submit a report with the full statistics with regard to the resettlement process and the negative impact the suspension of the GSP+ scheme will have on the women, especially the factory workers. Once this information is available, I will discuss it with the Italian President and Prime Minister, to enlighten the other EU member states, who are not aware of the situation in the country, especially in light of the information given by this important inter-religious delegation and by the Ambassador'.

Archbishop Malcolm Ranjith said the inter-religious delegation is an independent delegation, and not a political one. It does not represent the position of the Sri Lankan Government.

It represents the position of the four major religions. Archbishop Malcolm Ranjith further said the suspension of the GSP+ concessions will only worsen the human rights situation, and negatively affect women and children.

As the inter-religious delegation represents all ethnic groups, it made an appeal to ensure that the GSP+ concessions are granted without any suspension, as it would aggravate the human rights situation in Sri Lanka.

After the war was over, when peace finally settled, we found that more than 250,000 people were displaced due to the LTTE. The Government had the onerous task of providing food, water and shelter to those IDPs. Out of these 250,000 people, over 100,000 have been resettled.

The IDPs are an example of people ravaged by war. If the GSP+ concessions are suspended, this would have a negative impact on the poor and underprivileged of the country, especially women and children.

Italian FM to brief EU states on GSP+

Over one million people depend on the GSP+ scheme, working in the factories. Of these, 95% are women.

The Ambassador said the human rights concerns expressed by the EU are due to the terrorist actions of the LTTE; long before it started terrorism, the Sinhalese youth also took up arms in 1983.

Foreign Minister Frattini explained that there will be the Council meeting in December, where every single country will be able to vote, and most of these countries will not know the real situation in Sri Lanka. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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

Load-Date: November 10, 2009

End of Document

Terrorist killing spree continues despite talks

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

June 13, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 554 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 13 -- The month of June in the year 1986 perhaps marked the peace overtures from the naive politicians of the times who in several fronts were trying to speak to the the Tamil United Liberation Front, the Tamil terrorist groups EPRPLF, TELO or **LTTE** who had refuge in India with the protective umbrella over their heads held by New Delhi and the South Indian film idol turned politician M.G.Ramachandran.

While the J. R. Jayewardene government was discussing their own proposals for peace with the local political parties it also was in touch with New Delhi and a set of proposals made by the government of India came to be given to the TULF who at the time were the political arm of the terrorists the stage manager of the bloody drama that the terrorists were unfolding before a shocked nation. Among those that had the temerity to go to South India to meet the terrorist groups was the local silver screen idol also turned politician the late Vijaya Kumaratunga his wife Chandrika Kumaratunga and Ossie Abeygunsekera who were the leaders of the Sri Lanka Mahajana Pakshaya a splinter political group with left leanings. The SLMP trio not only met the terrorist groups but also MGR and it was reported their meeting with them went well. But of course none of these political figures knew that all the separatist groups including the TULF and the terrorist outfits were experts at doublespeak and subterfuge. The news report published on the meeting said Vijaya Kumaratunga had proposed a ceasefire to the terrorist groups and went as far as to say if needed his political party, SLMP, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Communist Party would act as monitors of the proposed ceasefire! While the amateur politicians Vijaya and Chandrika were talking peace with the separatists in India the comrades in arms of the same terrorists set off a bomb at the Sunday Fair in Kantale killing 2 civilians and injuring 19 others among them two critically. On the same day June 22 separatist terrorists raided a Muslim village in the east and threatened the homeguards and seized 18 shot guns and 65 cartridges. The peace overtures of mediocre politicians were shattered again a few days later June 25 when the terrorists killed 16 civilians including 7 **women** on Ella-Kantale road, burned down a house in the same area killing a woman in it. While the political parties were discussing devolution proposals for peace in Colombo with President Jayewardene and the news reports said the government had agreed to Provincial Councils within a unitary state the terrorist groups mainly the **LTTE** were killing civilians in the villages. The Kantale Sunday fair where Sinhalese and Muslim civilians were present always was only one of the many terrorist attacks killing unarmed people. There was hope that the terrorist groups could agree to a political settlement and New Delhi and MGR were trying to convince them about the need for a cessation of hostilities though the secretive and blood thirsty killer groups were to scorn such proposals as evidenced by the continuing killings of civilians they never stopped till they were militarily defeated recently, proving that they had never agreed to any political solution other than continuing their killing spree. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Terrorist killing spree continues despite talks

Load-Date: June 13, 2009

End of Document

DMK to join government, likely to get seven berths (Second Lead)

Hindustan Times

May 24, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 560 words

Dateline: New Delhi/Chennai

Body

New Delhi/Chennai, May. 24 -- The DMK Sunday decided to put behind its wrangling with the Congress and join the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government after settling for seven ministerial berths, including three of cabinet rank, sources said.

"The problem is resolved. We are joining (the UPA government)," Arcot Veeraswami, a senior DMK leader told IANS in Chennai. "They are working out the finer details. It is only the DMK supremo M. Karunanidhi (Tamil Nadu chief minister) who can take a final decision on the names of ministers," he added. Congress sources in Delhi told IANS that the party and the DMK had come to a consensus on the ministerial berths and an official announcement would be made Monday. Ghulam Nabi Azad, the Congress leader in charge of Tamil Nadu, had telephonic parleys with the DMK patriarch, they said. Azad was in Orissa Sunday and returns to New Delhi Monday. According to the agreement reportedly worked out, the DMK will get three cabinet and four minister of state (MoS) berths. The names doing rounds for ministers of cabinet rank with their portfolios are: A. Raja (chemicals and fertilisers), Karunanidhi's son M.K. Azhagiri (textiles) and Dayanidhi Maran (communications and IT). Kanimozhi, the chief minister's daughter, is likely to be minister of state (independent charge) for women and child welfare. The others in contention for the MoS posts are S. Gandhiselvan, A.K.S. Vijayan and Jagathrakshakan. Earlier in the day, Karunanidhi met senior party leaders at his residence to decide on joining the UPA government. The DMK had demanded nine ministerial berths - two more than what it had in the previous government, but finally decided to settle for seven, party sources told IANS. The party's move to join the government comes three days after its announcement Thursday night that it would support the UPA government from outside after its several rounds of talks on sharing of ministerial berths failed. Manmohan Singh was sworn in as prime minister as well as 19 others as ministers on Friday. The portfolios of six ministers were announced Saturday. A new round of ministers is expected to be sworn in this week, most probably Tuesday. The DMK's Arcot Veeraswami said the Congress wants to keep the infrastructure portfolios like shipping, surface transport and power. However, the DMK is keen to complete the Sethu Samudram project and it feels that if a party leader is not given the shipping portfolio then the project to create a shipping canal in the Palk Strait will remain in limbo. The Congress-led UPA commands 322 seats in the new Lok Sabha. The DMK, a major pre-poll ally, has 18 seats and has been bargaining hard for ministerial berths to party leaders, including members of the Karunanidhi family. Meanwhile, National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan met Karunanidhi and briefed him on the situation in Sri Lanka and his talks with Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Narayanan visited Sri Lanka May 20 after the killing of LTTE chief Velupillai Prabhakaran. He informed Karunanidhi about the Sri Lankan government's plan to resettle the civilians displaced during the war against the LTTE. Narayanan had assured Sri Lanka of India's cooperation in rebuilding the strife-torn area and the rehabilitation of the civilians. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

DMK to join government, likely to get seven berths (Second Lead)

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Load-Date: May 25, 2009

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Civilians threatened as Tigers cornered in; no-fire zone

The Daily Telegraph (London)

April 6, 2009 Monday

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The Daily Telegraph

Section: NEWS; International; Pg. 17

Length: 521 words

Byline: Nick Meo in Colombo

Body

SRI LANKA reported the deaths of 420 Tamil Tiger fighters yesterday after three days of heavy fighting forced the group to seek refuge in a "no-fire zone" packed with up to 190,000 civilians.

A spokesman for the military said operations against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) had begun within the seven-square mile zone, fuelling concerns over the safety of civilians trapped between the warring parties.

The rebels have set up artillery and dug bunkers among encampments of refugees in the enclave on the island's north-east coast. Thousands of civilians have already been killed or maimed by shells falling in the area. The Tigers stopped refugees from leaving, shooting at those trying to escape and effectively holding thousands as human shields.

The military said the group was now facing total annihilation.

Security forces said they found the bodies of 250 fighters when they overran the town of Puthukkudiruppu, a former Tiger stronghold.

"The only uncleared area left is the no-fire zone," said Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, a military spokesman. "We have recovered over 420 bodies over the last three days."

Troops confirmed that they had killed Gaddhafi, the head security officer for Velupillai Prabhakaran, the ***LTTE***'s founder and leader, plus Vidusha, the head of its ***female*** fighters, and Theepan, a commander. There were also reports that troops got close to the elusive Prabhakaran after finding a bullet-proof car he was believed to have used. The state-owned Sunday Observer newspaper said troops found his birth certificate and photo albums.

Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations Secretary General, urged rebel leaders yesterday to allow civilians to move freely out of the conflict area and reminded the Sri Lankan government of its responsibility to protect civilians.

The army rejected calls for a ceasefire but did not explain how it could fight the surviving Tigers without causing massive civilian casualties.

Civilians threatened as Tigers cornered in no-fire zone

Since February the Sri Lankan army has besieged the Tigers in a shrinking area of jungle and coconut plantation. Conditions have steadily worsened for those trapped in the area. Supplies of food and medicine have run low, medical facilities are primitive, and most families have only plastic sheeting as shelter.

Annemarie Loof, of Médecins Sans Frontières, the aid group, said its surgeons had been carrying out 200 operations a week, mainly for bullet and shrapnel wounds.

"A few weeks ago people were scared to leave because of their fear of the Sri Lanka army, but now they are terrified of staying," she said.

"For the last few weeks there has been daily shelling and people have spent much of their time huddled in ditches and home-made bunkers."

Families live in fear of their children being forcibly recruited.

"One woman I know was stopped five times when she tried to escape with her husband and two daughters," said Ms Loof. "She was terrified that they would be forcibly recruited and sent to fight. On the sixth attempt they managed to get away."

The 50,000 refugees who have fled south since January have been kept behind barbed wire in government-run camps, guarded by armed men.

Load-Date: April 6, 2009

UN SCALING UP EFFORTS TO FACILITATE RETURN HOME OF DISPLACED SRI LANKANS

States News Service

June 2, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 States News Service

Length: 549 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: NEW YORK

Body

The following information was released by the United Nations:

The United Nations refugee agency and its partners are working to ensure that the hundreds of thousands of people who were uprooted by clashes between Sri Lankan Government forces and Tamil rebels are able to return to their homes.

Last month, the Government declared that its military operation against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) was over, ending more than two decades of fighting.

Some 300,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) are living in 40 emergency shelter sites. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and its partners have erected nearly 9,000 emergency shelters and over 14,000 tents so far, distributed non-food items and carried out protection monitoring activities.

"We continue to work closely with the Government to better respond to the emergency - from central Government level to the local Government officials who are involved with direct assistance activities on the ground," UNHCR spokesperson Ron Redmond told reporters in Geneva today.

Key priorities are to decongest and improve conditions in the camps, stabilize the population and prepare for their return home, he added.

"UNHCR's ultimate objective is to support efforts to restore normalcy in the lives of this population by ensuring that they can return home as soon as conditions are in place," such as security issues, de-mining and reconstructing damaged homes, the spokesperson said.

The agency is also in talks with the Government to ensure that IDPs living in camps can move around freely, Mr. Redmond said. "The Government has taken positive steps on this front by releasing categories of persons with special needs, including the elderly and pregnant **women**, to specialized institutions as well as reunifying families separated during flight."

Further, the agency is encouraging authorities to wrap up screening as soon as possible and separate ex-combatants to allow civilians to move more freely in and out of camps, he noted.

UN SCALING UP EFFORTS TO FACILITATE RETURN HOME OF DISPLACED SRI LANKANS

Yesterday, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon reiterated his strong concerns over "unacceptably high" civilian casualties in the conflict between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE, while rejecting in the strongest terms any figure attributed to the UN.

Briefing the General Assembly on his recent visit to Sri Lanka and other travels, Mr. Ban said media reports alleging that some 20,000 civilians may have been killed during the last phase of the conflict "do not emanate from the UN and most are not consistent with the information at our disposal."

He "categorically" rejected any suggestions that the UN has deliberately under-estimated any figures. "Let me also say, whatever the total, the casualties in the conflict were unacceptably high - as I have also said repeatedly," he added.

Mr. Ban told the Assembly that during his 22-23 May visit to the South Asian island nation, he pressed the Government to heed international calls for an inquiry into alleged abuses and underscored the need for full accountability and transparency.

"Any inquiry conducted by the international community would require, first, the full cooperation of the host government, or, second, the support of the UN Member States, expressed through the Human Rights Council, the General Assembly or the Security Council," he said.

Load-Date: June 2, 2009

End of Document

Police scuffle with Tamil protestors in London

Agence France Presse -- English

April 7, 2009 Tuesday 12:15 PM GMT

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Length: 539 words

Byline: Katherine Haddon

Dateline: LONDON, April 7 2009

Body

British police arrested four protestors Tuesday after repeated scuffles at an illegal demonstration by Tamils in central London, Scotland Yard said.

Officers were deployed to try to disperse the protest, over alleged rights abuses in Sri Lanka, after up to 3,000 demonstrators blocked Westminster Bridge and streets near the House of Commons overnight.

The demo comes as Tamil Tiger rebels face a final assault by government forces in Sri Lanka, who have killed at least 525 rebels in four days of fierce fighting in the northeast of the island.

By Tuesday afternoon -- 24 hours after the unannounced demo began -- police had rounded up some 500 protestors on Parliament Square, where sporadic scuffles broke out amid noisy chanting and drumming.

"It's because of the bombing and killing in Sri Lanka. They have started to use chemical bombs in Sri Lanka," said Nathan Kumar, chairman of the British Tamil Forum, adding that more than 10 people had been injured.

Protestor Baskaran Arumugasamy said the scuffles broke out after police tried to seize their flags -- which he insisted were not those of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), but Tamil flags.

"They took the flag. That's why we're angry. It's our national flag. They can't touch it," he told AFP.

During one surge with police, protestors threw objects including cans and a stick. At least three people were taken away on stretchers, according to an AFP reporter on the scene.

Four lifeboats were scrambled after some of the protestors reportedly threatened to throw themselves into the nearby River Thames. One person did enter the water and was taken to hospital, the spokesman said.

The protest started Monday, and at one stage overnight had expanded to about 3,000 men, women and children. By Tuesday morning it had shrunk to 200-300, before growing to 500 in the afternoon.

"We've got a contingency plans if the numbers start to grow again," a Scotland Yard spokesman told AFP.

Police scuffle with Tamil protestors in London

Police chief Jerry Savill said his officers were showing restraint. "We've been remarkably tolerant really," he told the BBC, explaining that police had to be careful because women and children were also among the demonstrators.

"These people are demonstrating in breach of the law. We've had to show some restraint," he said, adding that police planned to try to disperse them again in the coming hours.

Meanwhile Foreign Secretary David Miliband said he was "deeply" worried by reports of civilians being trapped by fighting in Sri Lanka.

"The need for a humanitarian ceasefire is now even more urgent... it is vital that civilians are able to move away from danger to safety," he said in a statement.

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse on Sunday said the military was close to wiping out the LTTE after decades of bitter fighting for an independent homeland.

Rajapakse has rejected international calls for a truce, which the government has argued would only let the rebels regroup.

The United Nations and other foreign aid organisations say as many as 150,000 civilians may still be trapped in the war zone, although the Sri Lankan government insists the figure is less than half that.

At the height of their power in the mid-1990s, the Tigers controlled more than a third of Sri Lanka.

kah-mt/jj

Load-Date: April 8, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lanka expels UN official over war comments

Agence France Presse -- English

September 6, 2009 Sunday 10:32 AM GMT

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Length: 459 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sept 6 2009

Body

The Sri Lankan government said on Sunday it had ordered a senior United Nations official to leave the country over comments he made about the recently ended war against Tamil Tiger separatist rebels.

James Elder, spokesman for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), appeared regularly on foreign television news channels and in print media discussing the bloody ethnic conflict and its effects on young people.

"His visa has been cancelled from September 7 and he was ordered to leave immediately. But the UN appealed for more time and we extended until September 21," P.B. Abeykoon, Controller of Immigration and Emigration, told AFP.

Abeykoon said the government took the decision some months ago based on "adverse remarks made to the media", but he declined to give further details.

Elder, an Australian passport holder, has been working for UNICEF in Sri Lanka since July last year and had a residency visa valid until 2010.

The Sri Lanka government maintained tight control of media coverage of the fighting, banning virtually all access to the conflict zone in the northeast and issuing few visas to international reporters.

Before the government's defeat of the Tiger rebel forces in May, Elder spoke of the "unimaginable hell" suffered by children caught up in the last stages of the war.

In April he said hundreds of children had been killed in the previous months of battle and that those who survived were "living in dire circumstances, caught in the crossfire".

Elder had also called for the government to lift its restrictions on aid groups that have been trying to help hundreds of thousands of war refugees still detained in makeshift state-run camps.

The Sri Lanka government has shown little patience with critics of its military offensive to crush the Tigers, dismissing concerns expressed by the United Nations, the United States and dozens of rights groups.

Sri Lanka expels UN official over war comments

UNICEF said on Sunday it was seeking more details on Elder's visa status.

"James Elder has been UNICEF's voice advocating on behalf of those who do not have a voice -- children and the most vulnerable," Sarah Crowe, UNICEF's regional chief of communications, told AFP from New Delhi.

"We strongly feel that he should continue to act as an impartial advocate on behalf of Sri Lanka's most vulnerable women and children."

Elder declined to comment when contacted by AFP.

The Reporters Without Borders press freedom group earlier this year said that the government had achieved an "almost total blackout of independent and objective reporting" of the war.

Sri Lankan troops took control in May of the last patch of territory held by the Tamil Tigers, and killed the rebels' leader and founder Vellupillai Prabhakaran.

The separatist conflict had claimed tens of thousands of lives since 1972.

Load-Date: September 7, 2009

End of Document

Tamils and peace activists join forces

Waikato Times (Hamilton, New Zealand)

June 29, 2009 Monday

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Section: NEWS; NATIONAL; Pg. 2

Length: 460 words

Byline: BRENNAN Nicola

Body

Lobbying the Black Caps to boycott their August tour of Sri Lanka would help raise awareness of human rights abuses in Sri Lanka, a peace and justice forum heard at the weekend.

Dozens of Waikato Tamil community members joined well-known human rights campaigners in Whitiara on Saturday night to campaign to end what they call Sri Lanka's years of genocide against its Tamil minority.

Heartfelt pleas came from Tamils brave enough to attend the four-hour Peace and Justice in Sri Lanka forum.

"We only want to be able to live in our own land and be able to express ourselves freely," one woman said.

"We want dignity and respect for our people - to be able to live as human beings. That is all we are asking for."

The forum organiser, Waikato University Associate Professor Sinniah Ilanko, said up to 300,000 Tamil civilians were in detention camps run by the Sri Lankan military.

The 26-year civil war between the **Tamil Tigers** and the Sri Lankan military officially ended last month.

But the Tamil community said the war would not truly be over until their people received equal treatment by the government in their homeland.

There had been numerous reports of people going missing from the camps and **women** being raped.

Mr Ilanko said many Tamil people with family in the camps were too scared to attend the forum or speak out for fear their families would be targeted.

The four-hour forum ended with a proposed action plan put forward by human rights campaigner John Minto:

- * Set short and long-term goals.
- * Run a public education plan to inform New Zealanders of the Tamil struggle.
- * Campaign publicly for the New Zealand Government to put sanctions on the Sri Lankan Government, including asking the Black Caps to boycott their planned tour as they had planned to do with Zimbabwe.
- * Lobby members of Parliament.

Tamils and peace activists join forces

Amnesty International Aotearoa New Zealand deputy director Rebecca Emery said while the recent conflict in Sri Lanka had been particularly violent, the Sri Lankan Government's failure to deliver justice for serious human rights violations over the past 20 years had trapped the country in a vicious cycle of abuse and impunity.

"The grave human rights violations that have, and are still being, committed in Sri Lanka are deeply concerning," she said.

"As the Sri Lankan people contend with the most recent abuses committed by both sides, the reality is that they have been haunted by injustice and impunity for years."

CAPTION:

Remembering: Peace activist John Minto, above, lights a ceremonial candle at the Peace and Justice in Sri Lanka forum, in Hamilton, on Saturday night. Right: Human rights activists Marie Leadbeater and Keith Locke observe a minute's silence for people killed in the Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka.

Picture: PETER DRURY.

Load-Date: July 1, 2009

AFPTV Advisory for Saturday

Agence France Presse -- English

May 23, 2009 Saturday 9:25 AM GMT

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Length: 451 words

Dateline: PARIS, May 23 2009

Body

We will file the following videos:

UN chief visits Sri Lanka conflict zone

OUTSIDE COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

UN chief Ban Ki-moon Saturday saw at first hand the plight of civilians displaced by Sri Lanka's conflict with the **Tamil Tigers** amid concerns for 300,000 Tamils left homeless by the fighting. Just days after Colombo declared victory over the rebels, the United Nations secretary general toured the sprawling Menik Farm camp, home to thousands of civilians who fled the war zone.

NEWS

Images transmitted by 0930 GMT

RAW - VID82616

WEB - MMV82617

A lifetime behind bars for Aung San Suu Kyi

YANGON/BANGKOK

The UN Security Council has renewed calls for the release of political prisoners in Myanmar and talks with democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi, but failed to urge a halt to her trial. The opposition leader is no stranger to arrest or efforts by the military regime to sideline her, having spent more than 13 of the past 19 years in detention. A portrait of the Nobel peace prize winner.

NEWS / SPECIAL REPORT

Voiced report transmitted by 1200 GMT

NSV - VID82618

BROADCAST-READY - VID82619

WEB - MMV82620

As part of our continuing coverage of the Cannes film festival, we will offer the following videos:

Facing the spotlight in Cannes

CANNES, France

"Visage" (Face) by Tsai Ming-Liang is among the last movies to enter the competition at Cannes. A film about a Taiwanese film maker based on the myth of Salome at the Louvre, where aesthetics is queen. With French actress Fanny Ardant and model Laetitia Casta.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

1. Trailer of film - already transmitted

RAW - VID82475

WEB - MMV82476

2. Images from red carpet transmitted by 2100 GMT

RAW - VID82621

WEB - MMV82622

Cannes Excerpts: 'Map of the Sound of Tokyo'

CANNES, France

Third and final **female** director running for the coveted Palme d'Or this year, Isabel Coixet, presents her new film 'Map of the Sound of Tokyo' on Saturday in Cannes. The Spanish director follows Ryu, a solitary girl working nights at a Tokyo fishmarket and sporadically taking on jobs as a hit-woman. A love story which searches the shadows of the human soul.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

Trailer of film - already transmitted

RAW - VID82478

WEB - MMV82479

Who will win? Bets are on for this year's Palme d'Or

CANNES, France

On the eve of awards night and with all 20 films in competition already screened, it's time for the Cannes cinema critics to speak up about who they think will take the Palme d'Or home. Will the jury reward an old-time veteran or a rising star? From what continent? For people in the industry, it's time to place those bets.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

Voiced report transmitted by 1700 GMT

NSV - VID82623

AFPTV Advisory for Saturday

BROADCAST-READY - VID82624

WEB - MMV82625

Contact:

Richard Sargent: +33 (0)1 40 41 81 17

afptv

Load-Date: May 24, 2009

End of Document

Thousands trapped in Sri Lanka combat zone need food, medicines: ICRC

Hindustan Times

April 30, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 461 words

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, April. 30 -- Thousands of civilians, including women, children and the elderly, many of them wounded and sick, remain trapped and at risk in the no-fire zone in Sri Lanka, an international humanitarian organisation said Thursday appealing for more food and medicines to be allowed in the area.

"Given the catastrophic situation of thousands of displaced, sick and wounded people still in the conflict area, the parties must do more to protect them and must allow more food and medicine into the area," said Monica Zanarelli, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) deputy head of operations for South Asia, in a statement.

According to the ICRC, it has evacuated close to 12,400 people - the sick and wounded and their accompanying relatives - from the conflict area by boat since Feb 10.

On Wednesday, the ICRC carried out its 28th evacuation with over 520 people aboard the Green Ocean, an ICRC-chartered ferry.

The previous day, the ferry also brought over 30 tonnes of food donated to the Sri Lankan government by the World Food Programme into the conflict area. Further deliveries are expected in coming days.

"It is the responsibility of the authorities to ensure that all displaced people are safe and have access to food, medical care, clean water and sanitation. It is essential that families are rapidly reunited and allowed to return voluntarily to their homes as soon as conditions permit," said Zanarelli.

The ICRC said many displaced people were worried about their future and wanted to know how long they would have to stay away from home. Besides family members have also been separated from one another and are anxious of the whereabouts of their relatives.

Though the Sri Lankan authorities have made some attempts to restore links between separated family members by making available postal and telephone services, requests of many families dispersed among different camps to be reunited, and information on the whereabouts of relatives remain to be addressed, said the ICRC.

"The ICRC has asked the authorities to clarify the time frame for lifting restrictions on movement imposed on the displaced population and to indicate when the resettlement process will begin," said Zanarelli.

The ICRC, together with its partners in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, have in recent days installed water tanks and built latrines, and they are currently erecting over 1,800 tents for over 7,200 people.

Thousands trapped in Sri Lanka combat zone need food, medicines: ICRC

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa has ruled out halting the fight-to-finish military campaign against the **Tamil Tigers** and has also disallowed aid agencies access to civilians trapped in the no-war zone in the northeastern Mullaitivu district. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

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

Load-Date: August 4, 2009

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AFP 1000 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

May 1, 2009 Friday 10:23 AM GMT

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Length: 478 words

Dateline: PARIS, May 1 2009

Body

Duty Editor: Laurent Thomet

Tel: + 33 1 4041 4636

-- TOP STORIES --

+ Mexico shuts down to fight flu

+ May Day marked by protests, clashes

+ Driver in Dutch royals attack dies

Health-flu-world,lead-WRAP

MEXICO CITY

Mexico starts a five day shut down to try to halt the spread of swine flu as the virus spreads further around the world.

700 words 1145 GMT by Marc Burleigh. Graphic. Picture. Video

Mayday-demo-world,lead-WRAP

BERLIN

Police in Germany and Turkey fight pitched battles with May Day demonstrators as the traditional labour rallies around the world are dominated by the international economic crisis.

650 words 1130 GMT. Pictures

Netherlands-royals-crime,lead

THE HAGUE

A man who tried to ram his car into the Dutch royal family, killing five onlookers at a parade, dies in hospital as details emerge at how he had lost his job and was about to lose his home.

600 words 1200 GMT by Mariette le Roux

REGIONAL FILING PLANS

-- EUROPE --

Mayday-demo-Russia-CIS,lead

MOSCOW

Die-hard Communists celebrate May Day with red flags and portraits of Lenin in cities from Moscow to Bishkek, as police in Saint Petersburg arrest 120 far-right activists suspected of preparing "provocations."

500 words 1100 GMT by Amelie Herenstein. Pictures

Azerbaijan-crime-shooting,lead-WRAP

BAKU

Hundreds of students gather to mourn the victims of a mass shooting that left 13 dead at a university in Azerbaijan as police announce the detention of a suspect in connection with the tragedy.

500 words 1130 GMT by Emil Guliyev

Entertainment-Britain-poetry,lead

LONDON

Britain names its first **female** -- and openly gay -- poet laureate, to follow in the footsteps of renowned bards such as William Wordsworth and Alfred Lord Tennyson.

450 words 1200 GMT. Picture

Britain-politics

LONDON

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown is left reeling from one of his worst weeks since taking office, amid warnings of a "void" in policy in a deeply unpopular government facing elections within barely a year.

550 words 1200 GMT

-- ASIA --

Pakistan-unrest,WRAP-lead

PESHAWAR, Pakistan

AFP 1000 GMT News Advisory

Taliban militants kidnap 10 security personnel as Pakistan's offensive against the Islamist fighters runs into fierce resistance in the country's troubled northwest.

700 words 1100 GMT by Lehaq Ali. Picture

Srilanka-unrest,lead-WRAP

COLOMBO

Sri Lankan troops press on with their blistering offensive against the ***Tamil Tigers*** ahead of a final push aimed at taking the last stretch of beach and jungle from the ethnic rebels after decades of fighting.

500 words 1130 GMT by Amal Jayasinghe

-- AMERICAS --

US-auto-company-Chrysler-Fiat,lead

WASHINGTON

Chrysler files for bankruptcy, idling most of its plants, but President Barack Obama insists that a quick restructuring in partnership with Italy's Fiat would give the US carmaker "a new lease on life."

750 words around 1100 GMT by Rob Lever

afp

Load-Date: May 2, 2009

End of Document

SL Army, an elite fighting force now

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

October 11, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 2171 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Oct. 11 -- "From the 4th of next month", he said in his gruff voice, " we shall be responsible for our own defence". His teeth showed white beneath the iron grey walrus moustache. The sides of his eyes crinkled but he was not smiling.

"Actually as a matter of fact, we may have help against foreign aggressions, but we will have to handle any enemy within the country". His eyes became penetrating. "Have you ever thought what could happen to us".

"Communism ad Marxist terrorism as a prelude to a general uprising to seize power by force, such as occurred in Singapore and Malaya", I readily replied.

"Exactly", the Prime Minister replied and "how has the British government tackled the problem". "By sending General Sir Gerald Templar and Gurkhas out there", I responded. "We have neither a Templar nor Gurkhas", the Prime Minister observed. Every trace of a smile had vanished from his craggy face. " We must create our own". He raised a stubby forefinger. He had large, capable hands, I noticed.

"I want one thousand men under arms six months from the 4th February. He leaned back in his chair. This is how the idea of having our own army was mooted.

This is an excerpt from the article written by Colin de Silva who was the first Assistant Secretary to the Ministry of Defence in Ceylon that has been mentioned in the book released to mark Sri Lanka Army's 60th Anniversary.

Just after an year of gaining independence, the idea of Prime Minister D.S. Senanayake to have an indigenous army ripened into giving birth to Ceylon Army on October 10, 1949. People would have perhaps laughed at the Prime Minister when he pronounced his desire to have an Army to defend the country. But, the wise leader had smelled the volcanic issue brewing silently!

Addressing the first batch of recruits of the 1st Battalion of the Ceylon Light Infantry (CLI) at Diyatalawa the Prime Minister said : " You have joined the Army to serve your country in peace and war; therefore you must train yourselves to a high standard of efficiency and with personnel zest, be prepared to meet all contingencies, may even to lay down your life for the love and honour of our country.

I am confident that in the Army the government in power will own a body of strong disciplined men, who will not hesitate to come to Lanka's aid in her hour of the need".

The young soldiers who joined the Army since 1949 kept his wish and came forward to protect the Mother Lanka in each time her sovereignty is threatened. Bravely holding their heads straight, the soldiers of the Sri Lanka Army

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after defeating a ruthless group of terrorists, the LTTE, which was said to be invincible, is celebrating their hard earned victory marking the Army's 60th Anniversary yesterday.

While the Sri Lanka Army celebrated its 60th anniversary, the soldiers who underwent training in the 1st Battalion of the CLI in 1950 and became the Army Chief in 1977 has also celebrated his 79th birthday yesterday.

"As the leader of the country D.S. Senanayake foresaw the internal problems that would prop up", the eighth Army Commander of the Sri Lanka Army Lt. Gen. Denis Perera said.

Recalling the early days of the Sri Lanka Army , the first Sandhurst trained Army Commander who led the infantry during the Northern insurgency said that if not for the Army's surveillance the situation would have resulted in an imbalance in the country's population.

While the main task of the newly formed Army was to crack down on illicit immigration, the soldiers were assigned for ceremonial duties, prevention of illicit timber transport, cyclone relief duties and training of youth for the national development service.

" The illicit immigration was going on at a terrific rate and the Army set up the Task Force Illicit Immigration to tackle the problem. We knew if that was not controlled there would be more Indians than Sri Lankans. They came here for employment in estate sector. The kakais used to smuggle people", he said.

Lt. Gen. Perera said that he realised the real gravity of illicit immigration when he was serving as the High Commissioner in Australia where he saw how the Fijians were outnumbered by the Indians who came to work in sugar cane cultivations.

"Fiji is 9000 miles away from India but there are only nine miles from Sri Lanka to India. At that time there were one million Indian Tamils and seven million Sinhalese in Sri Lanka. Imagine if they were allowed to come into our soil"... he asked. While the Sri Lanka Navy guarded the waters, the SLA kept a close eye on those illicit immigrants trying to enter Sri Lanka. The former Army chief, who is dead against the Army being called a ceremonial Army, recalling incident after incident to prove Army's interactions to maintain law and order in the country, said that the taking part in ceremonies was only a part of military training.

It was in the 1953 Hartal that the young Lieutenant Perera was asked to deploy 50 soldiers clad in 'kakhi' uniforms at Pettah to control the anti-government protestors. Without resorting to military action, the military officer started marching along the Main Street giving orders loudly. "Panjabiyo Avilla... Panjabiyo Avilla...(Punjabi soldiers have come ...)," the protestors started running.

That was the first time the people of Sri Lanka saw the SLA soldiers were in full action and they thought the soldiers were from Punjab as they recalled how the British deployed Punjabi soldiers to quell the riots between Buddhists and Muslims in Mawanella in 1915.

The SLA originally had two major units - Artillery Regiment and Ceylon Light Infantry and later it was expanded into the Armoured Corps, the Sinha Regiment and the Gemunu Watch. Other units were established subsequently.

Captain Perera was given another task in 1958 when he was ordered to prevent a 'red procession' coming into Colombo. Dr. Colvin R. De Silva and Dr. N.M. Perera were leading a group of protestors with red banners marching along the High Level Road from Nugegoda. "Duddlige bade masala vade" (There is vade in Dudley's stomach), they carried the slogan.

Captain Perera, who had the orders to 'shoot the leader', saw the leading politicians from his binoculars and instructed a Sergeant to tell the leader not to step beyond the Kirulapone Bridge. Capt Perera heard that Dr. Colvin asking in a strong tone " Where is your officer". The officer explained to the politician about the government order but the leader asked what happened if he would defy the order.

"I have to shoot you, sir", the officer said and the leader ordered the procession to turn away.

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Years later the two met at a cocktail in Colombo. The Captain as the Commander of the Army and the politician as a Minister. The Commander reminded the incident humbly. " Ah.. you are the fellow who wanted to shoot me", Minister said.

"If you did not obey me, you would not have been the Minister and I would not have been the Army Commander", the Commander said.

The 1958 riots engaged the Army to support the Police to maintain law and order. Captain Perera with his troops was stationed in Ampara after the riots and in 1959 the Ceylon School of Military Engineering was established at Kondawattuwa.

The security in the North and East was at stake and the Police alone could not handle the situation. With the killing of the Jaffna Mayor Alfred Dorayappa, the 'volcanic' conflict started to explode.

After the major shocking assassination, the youth started robbing the banks. According to a book written by Maj.Gen. Sarath Munasinghe there were only 65 weapons including shot guns in Jaffna in 1970s but the politics made the 'rat into a Tiger'.

"Gradually we found this Movement by the Tamil youth was developing. The government enacted the Prevention of Terrorism Act in 1979 and Brig. Tissa Weeratunge was appointed the Competent Authority to contain all terrorist activities in the peninsula. He was my batchmate but unfortunately he adopted the wrong policy when he chased out these youth to India.

he said he had cleared Jaffna and said nothing further would take place. Meanwhile, the youth gained sympathy of Mrs. Gandhi and started their training camps. They were preparing to attack us", he said.

Lt. Gen. Perera said that the way the 1983 riots were handled fuelled the situation into a three decade long battle. "What the Army could do was just to send the 13 bodies to their villages instead of having a ceremonial funeral at Kanatte. It was a big mistake. People got restless and forces including politicians with ulterior motives took the incident for granted. I think that was one of a root causes of the 30-year long suffering inflicted by the LTTE. The other biggest mistake was sending the Indian Peace Keeping Force back during President Premadasa's regime", he pointed out.

With the gradual increase of military tasks the Army got expanded. The male dominated Army recruited its first batch of female officers in 1979 amidst opposition within the Army. "I found that a large number of men who could be employed in a combat role were tied down to work which could easily be handled by women. There was opposition against the idea but when President Jayewardene gave the final nod, every one started praising the move", Lt. Gen. Perera giggled.

The Commandos were the next addition to the SLA. Hijacking of aircraft was rampant at that time and President Jayewardene was worried about the security as the Katunayake Airport was to be upgraded into an international airport. "When he asked for my solution my only answer was that a group of soldiers be trained as commandos. He agreed and we established the Commando Training School at Ganemulla as it is in close proximity to the Katunayake Airport and Colombo. With 200 soldiers and Maj. Sunil Peiris as the Commander of the Unit we started the first batch". recalled Lt. Gen. Perera. He also recalled his days at Diyatalawe Training School where the Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa and Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Sarath Fonseka had their initial military training.

It was in 1978. The Army Commander Lt. Gen. Perera visited the Kandawala Walauwa, the residence of the Prime Minister Sir John Kotelawala, who was the President of the Ex-Servicemen Association to invite him for a function. The charming environs of the Walauwa robbed the heart of the Army Chief, who was looking for a peaceful environment to start the National Defence Academy - a proposal approved by the President himself.

"Sir John made a 'mistake' by taking me around the place while he was feeding the birds and squirrels in the garden. I slowly put the idea to him. His initial plan was to give the land to a children's home but later he dropped

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the idea due to possible communist leanings. Then he said you can come after my death. However, later he signed the documents but we never touched the land until his death. But one day he called me and discussed the plan. But that evening he got a heart attack and was admitted to the hospital. The doctor told us his survival was unsure. That day President Jayewardene and myself visited him to induct him as General, the honorary title that was proposed to bestow on him on the opening day of the Academy", he recalled.

President Jayewardene said: "Sir John, I am making you a General". He took the papers and gave it to the Army Chief and mumbled something. " I think what he mumbled was to keep it in the Academy Museum", Lt. Gen. Perera said adding that the SLA had started constructing the Academy in the 50 acre land. Commenting on the defeat of the LTTE, Lt. Gen Perera said that the entire credit should go to the government for its correct leadership and uninterrupted political support in addition to appointing capable military officers like Lt. Gen Sarath Fonseka to lead the Army.

"The other factor is that the Defence Secretary is the younger brother of the President, who always has direct access in any matter. I know Gotabhaya since he was an 18-year-old boy", he said. The former Army Chief who contributed vastly to the development of the SLA said that the LTTE became a formidable force, and therefore, there was a need for another formidable force to bring the former down to its knees. " That is why the government had to make the SLA such a large force and hats off to the dedication and commitment of the soldiers they swept the menace", he said adding that he strongly believes that the LTTE shouldn't have been allowed to mature for 30-long years.

He cautioned to be watchful and take concrete and meaningful steps to see that the LTTE does not raise its head again. " Until then we have to have a strong armed force. The British Army had over two million soldiers but later it was reduced to 100,000. Because they could not maintain such a large army as it was a costly affair. The SLA needs to have 300,000 until the defence of the country is consolidated", he said. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Big Brother" Regional Roles for India?

Colombo Times

May 9, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 1346 words

Body

Colombo, May 9 -- Two new challenges on the foreign policy front await the newly elected government of India to be installed soon - in heaven-turned-hell Sri Lanka and the Himalayan state of Nepal.

How India meets the challenges will depend on how its people vote in the five-phase, month-long general elections to end on May 13. It will depend on the share of power that the political camp of militarism will manage to acquire in the government to be formed by the first week of June.

Clear signals have already been sent out from this camp, with its friends in the foreign policy bureaucracy and beyond, about possible post-election moves. In neither of the cases can such New Delhi moves ease or improve situations involving the armed forces of neighboring nations in the wake of inordinately long and often savagely fought civil wars.

Sri Lanka, where traditionally the tourist is "welcome to Paradise," is currently witness to an inferno of refuge camps on a coastal strip in the country's north. While tens of thousands of internally displaced Tamils face an agonizing fate and an indefinite future of homelessness, we are being repeatedly assured that the war is almost at an end. Voices raised in India, however, hardly warrant hopes that peace is returning to "Paradise" at last.

Sri Lanka figures as an election issue in India, though only in the southern state of Tamilnadu. Pan-Tamil solidarity, however, played only a small part in the poll campaigns until the other day, as only minor political parties made a pitch for Eelam, as the Tamil rebels of Sri Lanka call the separate homeland they seek. The issue has acquired a less dismissible dimension after the surprising support for the separatist demand from a major state-level party.

The larger surprise is for the support coming from the party's leader, known until then for staunch opposition to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***), the formidable rebel force reportedly facing a rout in the latest phase of the 25-year-old war that has seen many twists and turns.

J. Jayalalitha, one of the strong ***women*** of Indian politics, and her All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagan (AIADMK), a regional party despite its ambitious prefix, had thus far stood for a solution to the Tamil problem within a united Sri Lanka, while terming and treating the ***LTTE*** as a "terrorist" outfit and little more.

Addressing an election meeting on April 29, however, the same Jayalalitha said, "If a central (federal) government of my choice is formed, I will take steps to send our troops to Sri Lanka to form separate Eelam." The statement cannot be dismissed as totally inconsequential because she and her party cannot be. Coalition rule has come to stay in New Delhi, giving regional parties and leaders a greater say in national policy formulation than some decades ago.

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Expectedly, the statement drew flak, especially from the Congress Party heading the current ruling coalition in New Delhi. Party spokespersons saw ignorance of international law behind the "irresponsible" statement. She reacted by recalling that two former prime ministers of India, who had sent India's army personnel into neighboring countries. Indira Gandhi sent the Indian army into erstwhile East Pakistan in a war that ended in the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. Rajiv Gandhi, Indira's son, also sent an Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) to Sri Lanka in 1987.

While the creation of Bangladesh was widely welcomed as "national liberation," India's far right was ready even to deify Indira for dismembering Pakistan. As for the apparently more relevant example of the IPKF, it was formed and sent on its mission under an Indo-Sri Lankan accord with the stated aim of ending the civil war. While trying to enforce the terms of the accord, the force became embroiled in three-year-long hostilities with the LTTE. That broke forever the bonds between New Delhi and the Tigers led by Velupillai Prabhakaran, whom eminent members of India's foreign policy establishment once used to call "our boys."

Is Jayalalitha indulging in mere electoral claptrap? Or is she also speaking for a section of India's security establishment extending beyond mandarins in the external affairs ministry?

The second possibility would appear to be quite strong, considering the observations of one of such semi-official security experts on India's post-LTTE and post-Prabhakaran options, B. Raman, former head of the counterterrorism division of the famous and regionally feared Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), India's external espionage agency. He has argued for resumed Indian intervention in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict. He makes no bones that he is pleading for a "Big Brother" role for India in regional affairs.

Writes he, "Let us not forget that ever since our independence in 1947, the Bengalis of the then East Pakistan, the Balochs and Sindhis of Pakistan and the Tamils of Sri Lanka have been India's natural allies. It was this reality which persuaded Indira Gandhi to assist the Bengalis of the then East Pakistan to achieve their independence. Even though successive governments in New Delhi refrained from supporting the causes of the Sindhis and the Balochs, Indian public opinion sympathized and continues to sympathise with their cause."

Raman continues, "It was sympathy for the Sri Lankan Tamil cause at New Delhi when Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister and in Tamil Nadu, which induced India to take up their cause in the 1980s."

He adds, "There is no reason why India should not pride itself and seek to be the paramount power of the region. To emerge and remain as the paramount power, we need natural allies in the region around us. We should not let the legitimate aspirations of our natural allies - whether they be the Sindhis and Balochs of Pakistan or the Sri Lankan Tamils - be crushed...."

Exploitation of ethnic conflicts around India's empowerment is a line that a leader like Jayalalitha can be expected to pursue - if she comes to share power in New Delhi, especially with her known friends in the far right.

The political front of the far right, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is more forthright about its eagerness for intervention in Nepal in order to serve India's interests as a regional superpower.

Recent events in Nepal - culminating in the resignation of Maoist Prime Minister Pushpa Kumar Dahal (better known by his nom de guerre of Prachanda) and threatening resumption of the Maoist-military confrontation - may be no matter of rejoicing to others. To the BJP, however, this would appear to present the perfect opportunity for the reversal of history made in the Himalayan nation over the past three years.

The extended far-right "family" ("parivar"), of which the party is a part, was disconsolate at the dethronement of hated monarch Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev. The BJP, which always had a special place in its heart for the world's only "Hindu kingdom," could not stomach the idea of Nepal as a "secular republic" either. And the party has entirely disapproved of the Maoists being given any place in a democracy.

It is no surprise that the security establishment of democratic India, along with the far right, is siding with sacked Nepal army chief Gen. Rookmangud Katawal in his confrontation with Prachanda. Just as it is natural for the vast majority of the people of Nepal, who struggled for democracy for over decade, to oppose the moves of a discredited army leadership as shown by the reported series of street protests in Kathmandu.

Katawal, too closely allied with Gyanendra to inspire popular confidence, has defied civilian authority on several counts. He violated a commitment made to parliamentary parties and the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) by ordering recruitment of new soldiers. He also went out of his way to pull the army out of the national games held last month in Kathmandu as the Maoist-affiliated People's Liberation Army (PLA), awaiting integration into the army under UN supervision, participated in them.

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Big Brother" Regional Roles for India ?

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Challenges faced after humanitarian operation

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Body

Colombo, Aug. 9 -- It is a great pleasure and privilege for me to deliver the 12th Deshamanya Professor Nandadasa Kodagoda Memorial Oration. I sincerely thank the members of the late Professor Kodagoda's family, the trustees of the Nandadasa Kodagoda Memorial Trust and the Board of Management for this signal honour which they have bestowed upon me by their kind invitation.

As Sri Lanka strides towards a new era with the defeat of terrorism, we must draw inspiration from the lives of great sons of the soil and, to my mind, Professor Kodagoda is one such exemplar. He was a man of many parts scholar, academician, healer, intellectual, literary genius, social activist and, above all, a kind, caring human being.

All of his pursuits were characterized by a common thread: dedication to the task at hand and a tireless search for excellence. He exemplified the marrying of Western knowledge with national consciousness and creativity.

As we embark on a nationally driven search for a home-grown solution to the outstanding problems of the day, we must adopt such an approach.

Professor Kodagoda was never unduly wary of adopting and adapting technical solutions and other experiences in the wider world to resolve essentially local issues. However, his efforts to address national situations were based on a unique perspective of an individual whose personal philosophy was firmly rooted in local social, cultural and moral traditions.

It is a similar intellectual openness informed by national consciousness - putting the nation's interest before everything else - that must guide our every effort. His Excellency President Mahinda Rajapaksa identified this challenge before our nation as one of the most significant of those that we face. We can and must meet this challenge and overcome it. Future generations of Sri Lankans expect no less of us.

After decades of being shrouded by the pall of terrorism, the Sri Lankan polity's fears have today been dispelled. With the recent successful conclusion of the humanitarian operation, hope for a brighter tomorrow has been kindled in hearts of all Sri Lankans. If this expectation is to be sustained and brought to fruition in time to come, there are a myriad challenges that we are called upon to face in the short and longer term.

The delivery of humanitarian assistance, the process of clearing of mines and other hazards, the protection of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and catering to their physical needs, the rehabilitation of combatants of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) and their reintegration into civilian life, the strengthening of the relationship among communities, the resuscitation of the democracy and the reestablishment of good governance, the search for a suitable political solution, development and the restoration of infrastructure, caring for disabled veterans and the families of those who lost their lives are just some of the principal challenges that we are called upon to meet.

Challenges faced after humanitarian operation

One of the main short term challenges we face is the provision of humanitarian supplies and services in a systematic manner.

Today there are approximately 280,000 IDPs in 4 Districts who are being housed in temporary accommodation in welfare camps. Their wants include food, clothing, medicines and the provision of water and sanitation which compels the Government to undertake a daily expenditure of several million Rupees.

It is not our policy to rely on international cooperation alone in caring for these persons. It is of critical importance that the assistance given and facilities provided these persons by the Government is carried out in an orderly and organized manner.

While catering to the general needs of the IDPs, the needs of displaced children, women, the disabled and the elderly demands special attention. Of these children some have lost both parents and others have lost one of their parents. Ensuring the full flowering of their childhood, educating them and enabling their eventual integration into society is a task of some magnitude.

Similarly a significant group of persons among the IDPs are those aged 60 and above. Protecting these persons, attending to their medical needs and providing adequate psycho-social support is a responsibility we are called upon to bear.

Furthermore, several pregnant and lactating mothers are also within the ranks of the displaced persons. Attending to their nutritional needs and the alleviation of their mental stresses and strains also requires our special focus. Several of these persons with special needs have already been released from the welfare centres.

The Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition has made a special effort to treat and prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Several medical professionals from overseas have complemented the Government's efforts in this endeavour. The Ministry of Healthcare has provided statistical data which categorically refutes the exaggerated reports of mortality rates carried in some western media.

The Government is committed to and is constantly engaged in efforts to provide a healthier environment in the welfare centres through improved sanitation and the provision of clean water to IDPs.

The Government does not intend housing these persons in relief villages and welfare centres for an extended length of time. It is our expectation that a majority of these displaced Sri Lankans will be returned to their original homes by the end of 2009. This is an onerous task with many potential pitfalls.

The removal of mines buried under the surface is chief among the challenges. We have received reports to the effect that the LTTE was responsible for mining sizeable tracts of land in the theatre of conflict. The necessity for de-mining will cause delays not only in resettlement but also to development initiatives.

The Sri Lanka Army is at the forefront of the massive de-mining effort and has demonstrated commitment towards overcoming this challenge.

There are several other de-mining agencies also working in the affected areas. Prior to IDPs being resettled, it is also necessary to uncover and decommission armaments and ammunition which have been concealed underground by the LTTE in order to provide for better safety and security in the areas of return. This process of resettlement of IDPs is a formidable challenge that the Government is faced with.

A UN Clearance Certificate must be obtained as a precondition to resettlement. As in the Eastern Province, we hope to inform the IDPs as to conditions in areas of return and thereby ensure that return is voluntary.

The restoration of water, electricity, roads and irrigation services in the areas of return is also essential. Similarly the resumption of these persons' livelihoods needs to be assured. It is to promote speedy development of the Province that the Government has launched the "Wadakkinn Wasantham" (Northern Spring) program.

Challenges faced after humanitarian operation

In addition, the Presidential Task Force for Resettlement, Development and Security in the Northern Province is functioning in this connection under the chairmanship of Senior Presidential Advisor, the Hon. Basil Rajapaksa MP.

For 30 years, we were denied the opportunity of initiating development projects for the benefit of people of the areas unlawfully occupied by the LTTE.

The consequential imbalances in regional development are to be addressed by the Wadakkinn Wasantham Program in order to ensure that people of the North are able to enjoy facilities on par with others in the rest of the country.

Protection of IDPs and the guaranteeing of their safety and security is a principal responsibility of the Government. It is important that, due to the particular vulnerability of minors, women and especially girl children who are among the IDPs, special measures must be taken to prevent them from harassment or exploitation.

Action has been initiated to establish a network of community service centres on the basis of one for every 5,000 IDPs in order to better provide for their welfare and to ensure their protection. My Ministry has also sought to secure the contribution of Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka to this exercise and the Commission will work to ensure its success.

In order to ensure a more secure future for the people of the Northern Province and for them to enjoy a higher quality of life, attention must be paid to enhancing their economic advancement. The potential for agricultural development in the region is immense. Prior to the conflict, the contribution made by those areas to the national economy was substantial.

Those conditions should be restored. The necessary tools and implements to facilitate a return to agricultural pursuits must be made available. In restoring livelihoods, the Government will also place greater emphasis on small scale enterprises. The development of small industries, fisheries and agri-business has already received some attention.

Significant investment is required in this regard if long term productivity and sustainability is to be ensured. While it will directly be of economic benefit to the people of the North, it will also help the nation withstand exogenous shocks caused by phenomena such as the global economic crisis.

The safeguarding of the IDPs' socio-cultural diversity and ensuring that diversity is not a cause for future conflict is also something that the Government is focusing attention on.

There are many valuable historical lessons in this regard that we should be mindful of. The process of return should be carried out in a manner that does not give rise to conflict and also promotes peaceful co-existence in a pluralistic social setting.

In accordance with this principle 122 persons belonging to 12 families and a further 3320 persons belonging to 893 families have been resettled in Pantharaveli, Punuchchikulam, Marunthamadu, Sinnakulachchi and Kolamkulam within the Musali Divisional Secretary's Division in the Mannar District.

Several Muslim persons who were evicted from the north by the LTTE in 1990 still live in IDP camps in Puttalam.

My Ministry has taken an initiative to study the situation of protracted displacement with a view to focusing attention on the need to resettle these long-term IDPs.

As efforts are made to rebuild physical infrastructure damaged by the conflict, due attention must be paid to alleviate the psychological trauma suffered by those who were caught up in the conflict.

These people have endured conflict for many years. Some children have not even had the benefit of education as they had to undergo the harsh experience of being forcibly thrust onto the battlefield. These persons have had to suffer great mental stress.

Challenges faced after humanitarian operation

We need to foster attitudinal change amongst these persons. Those who were caught up in the conflict should be given adequate space to overcome their past experience and their state of mind and mental resolve must be strengthened. Counselling services must be provided that are in accordance with their traditions and customs.

His Excellency the President has given leadership to this process of national reconciliation with the involvement of all political parties and this is an initiative which will bring us closer to achieving a durable peace.

Ex-combatants including LTTE members must be rehabilitated and reintegrated into society. This endeavour must be founded on the principle that these rehabilitees will not re-engage in new conflict. Large numbers of child soldiers were deployed by the LTTE during the conflict. Similarly, many women were directly employed in armed conflict. They must be freed from the misconceptions they labour under.

They should be transformed into persons with new hope for a better future and their contribution to a social, cultural and economic renewal for the nation must be secured. Adequate investment must be made in training and guiding these persons. Though this is a daunting task, it is a critical one that must be achieved.

Rehabilitation is not only intended for the ex-combatants mentioned earlier. The country has lost a significant part of its youthful human resources through disability and other conflict-related harm.

These disabled veterans, in particular, must be rehabilitated and their psychological needs must be catered for. Their welfare and that of their families must be ensured. It is our responsibility to ensure that this pool of talent is co-opted into our national economic development programmes.

Attracting the participation of expatriate Sri Lankans in this socio-economic revival is of great importance.

In particular, the Tamil Diaspora should be engaged and they must be encouraged to invest in the future of their fellows. Public and private entrepreneurship should be mobilized to make sound investment decisions and obtain optimal returns.

Although six decades have passed since Sri Lanka gained independence, we have found it challenging to devise state structures which suit and fulfil the needs of the Sri Lankan polity. We require an institutional structure that enables representation of pluralistic political, cultural, ethnic, historical and religious interests.

We must develop a system which permits communities the space to foster and project their unique identities within a single cohesive Sri Lankan identity.

We need to build a society that nurtures the realization of human potential through exploitation of each individual's intellectual and spiritual capacity.

Professor Nandadasa Kodagoda was one such individual who embodied and added lustre to a Sri Lankan identity and whose life exemplified true national consciousness.

Our society is, at present, deeply divided along ethnic, religious, linguistic and political lines.

History teaches us that, during the independence struggle, all ethnic groups united and worked as one to gain freedom from British colonial rule.

For instance eminent leaders such as Ponnambalam Ramanathan, Ponnambalam Arunachalam and Siddi Lebbe served the Sri Lankan (then Ceylonese) people with no consideration of ethnic background. For instance Ponnambalam Arunachalam, a great Tamil leader, with the approbation and support of the Sinhalese electorate, secured public office.

However the era of peaceful and harmonious co-existence between all communities has, in the past few decades, become reduced to little more than a memory. All these past ties must necessarily be reforged anew. Without doing so, the achievement of our developmental goals becomes nearly impossible.

Challenges faced after humanitarian operation

Just as several other developed nations achieved economic development through fostering national unity, Sri Lanka must meet this challenge and overcome it. The reasonable needs and requests of the Tamil people must be resolved through the political process. Our eventual expectation is that all Sri Lankans will truly feel equal to their fellow citizens and that equality will be safeguarded.

It is extremely important that we secure and bring about a qualitative development of our foreign policy. The past few months saw frequent demonstrations by expatriate Tamils living in Western capitals as the security forces neared and secured their military objectives. The negative implications of this pressure for Sri Lanka was countered and successfully overcome in a principled manner before several international fora.

We possessed the capabilities and the strength of purpose to meet every challenge head on and win the day. We did not hesitate to forthrightly place the facts before our interlocutors. A foreign policy that fully serves the needs of the Sri Lankan nation is a sine qua non for the future.

Such a policy will prove rewarding in the long-term. We must constructively and closely engage with other nations and international organizations in a manner that fully protects our independence and sovereignty.

The next challenge that faces us, similar to the one that we successfully met in the Eastern Province after the military victory in 2007, is the reestablishment of democracy in the North. In the recent past the people of those areas were subject to a separate system of police, courts and administrative structures imposed on them by the LTTE. They had to endure and survive enormous pressures during this era.

It is vital that, in the future, we engender trust in a democratic framework and amongst the people and familiarize them with modes of popular governance. Elected political representatives should be entrusted with the responsibilities of running an administration in the Northern Province.

IDPs from those areas will also be enabled to exercise the franchise as these institutions should be representative of their interests and aspirations as well. Additionally, trust in the rule of law and structures to ensure good governance must be encouraged.

Administrative structures must be strengthened in order that the people of the North are able to attend to their needs in a manner similar to others in the rest of the country.

The operationalisation of generally acceptable and universally respected modalities in this regard has been acknowledged as a challenge that His Excellency the President's Government has taken on. Each community will, in this effort, have to eschew narrow parochial thinking and make some sacrifices for the common good.

Thereby, the military victory gained during the humanitarian operation will be made more productive and meaningful and will be of eventual benefit to us all. In this manner a stable peace in Sri Lanka can be assured.

My Ministry has, in support of these initiatives, undertaken the preparation of a National Action Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.

Furthermore to enable smoother resettlement and normalization, we have put in place a range of Confidence Building and Stabilization Measures which are being implemented.

We have also devised a conceptual policy framework for the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants which, we expect, will be operationalised by the relevant Government focal points.

In sum, the conclusion of the humanitarian operation has placed before us a number of challenges which are as great in magnitude as they are of critical importance. All Sri Lankans have this tremendous responsibility devolved upon them.

Informed by the lessons of history and strengthened by renewed hope for a better future, we must unite and collectively decide to triumph over these challenges. If we do so, with courage and strength of purpose, the tasks before us will not prove too difficult.

Challenges faced after humanitarian operation

It is essential that the gains derived from the victory on the battlefield must be secured and transformed into a lasting peace.

We must nurture and protect Sri Lanka's multi-religious, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural diversity. It is through the nurturing of that diversity that we can, working in unison, inspire in our people the confidence necessary to forge a true Sri Lankan identity. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Surit Das at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: August 10, 2009

End of Document

ROUNDUP: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

April 20, 2009 Monday 11:48 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 635 words

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts ROUNDUP: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in Sri Lanka
Eds: President says rebels can be rehabilitated =

Colombo (dpa) - An estimated 35,000 civilians reportedly fled the Tamil rebel-held areas in north-eastern Sri Lanka Monday, where government troops and the navy mounted a massive operation aimed at evacuating the zone, military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

As civilians were escaping by land and sea, Tamil rebels set off three suicide bombs that killed at least 17 civilians including women and children, and injured 200 others in the Puthumathalan area, 390 kilometres north-east of the capital, he said.

Ground troops continued to engage rebel targets and move into the rebel-held areas as the government set a 24-hour deadline for the rebel leadership, including its top commander Velupillai Prabhakaran, to surrender.

"We are giving 24 hours for the terrorist leader Prabhakaran and his members to surrender. This would be last opportunity," defence spokesman Minister Keheliya Rambukwella told state-run television.

However, there was no confirmation whether the rebel leader was in the area located along the coast of Mullaitivu.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa visited the air force headquarters and directed government officials to ensure that civilians escaping were provided with adequate facilities.

Rajapaksa, speaking at a ceremony on Monday, said he hoped that the rebels would surrender so that they could be rehabilitated.

He said the government has proved that the rebels can be brought into the mainstream of politics. He pointed out that one of the former rebel fighters was a minister in the government and another was the chief minister in the eastern province.

Earlier in the day, troops broke through an earthen barrier in

ROUNDUP: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in Sri Lanka

Puthumathalan to rescue trapped civilians. More people were leaving by boat and are being helped by the navy, officials said.

Some 92 boats in which over 1,500 civilians were escaping off the north-eastern sea have been guided by the navy to a northern port, navy spokesman DKP Dassanayaka said.

The military said that more civilians were trying to take refuge in military-controlled areas as the government tries to take back what it says is the final remaining territory held by the Liberation

Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The air force captured live images of the civilians fleeing into military-controlled areas while state-run television - the only allowed to cover the conflict zones - also broadcast footage of the exodus.

A doctor stationed in the rebel-controlled area, speaking by telephone to the German Press Agency dpa, said he could hear close-quarter fighting between the rebels and troops in the area.

Dr Thiagaraja Sathiyamoorthy said almost all patients in the hospital have run away from the facility and the medical staff were living in bunkers.

"When I came out of the bunker, I could see people running in various directions," he said. "Most are running to find places in bunkers."

Many civilians have been trapped in a 12-kilometer stretch along the coast for the past three months, although some of the villagers have been able to escape despite rebel orders to remain, military officials said.

According to army estimates, 70,000 civilians were still in the area, where drinking water is scarce. The government has been sending shipments of food by sea into the area.

An estimated 68,000 civilians have left the rebel-held areas and are currently in camps controlled by the government.

The military said it is in the last phase of a drive to crush the

LTTE, which has been fighting for more than 25 years for a separate state for the Tamil ethnic minority in the northern and eastern parts of majority-Sinhalese Sri Lanka.

Apr 2009 1148 GMT

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

End of Document

REFILE: (ECA098) ROUNDUP: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
April 20, 2009 Monday 12:04 PM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 642 words

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts REFILE: (ECA098) ROUNDUP: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in Sri Lanka

Eds: Fixing graf 17; earlier army estimates of 70,000 civilians =

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REFILE: (ECA098) ROUNDUP: 35,000 civilians rescued from rebel area in

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LTTE, which has been fighting for more than 25 years for a separate state for the Tamil ethnic minority in the northern and eastern parts of majority-Sinhalese Sri Lanka.

Apr 2009 1204 GMT

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

New home or just a base to settle scores?

The Toronto Star
May 24, 2009 Sunday

Copyright 2009 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: OPINION; Pg. A17

Length: 599 words

Byline: Angelo Persichilli, Special to The Star

Body

Before we judge the street protests of the last few weeks by Tamil Canadians in Toronto, we have to be very careful because the issue is sensitive and complex.

There is the human tragedy of people helplessly witnessing the massacre of their relatives in their home country. We have the alleged violation of human rights by Sri Lankan troops. There is the political debate about the right of Tamils to create their own country and the right to export that fight abroad, involving other governments and other people. This last point is particularly important for us because it relates to the debate on what Canadian citizenship is all about.

I have tried to answer that last question many times, being one of those who rejoiced in the streets of Toronto when Italy won the World Cup, and voting for the election of a Canadian citizen in the Italian parliament. It is not a question about the right to demonstrate in the streets but the kind of issues to promote as Canadians.

I often wonder how far we should go in bringing our culture, heritage, pride and problems to this country. At what point, in this big non-melting-pot called Canada, do words like compassion and tolerance become catalysts for chaos and anarchy?

Where is the line between acceptance and indolence, defence of one's own rights and the abuse of those of others? I believe that in the last few weeks we've come very close to crossing that line.

To ask the Canadian government to fight for the respect of human rights everywhere is a Canadian duty. But it's not a Canadian duty, especially for those of us who believe that Quebec is part of Canada, to help other people separate from their mother country. It is a Canadian duty to fight against any genocide. But it's not a Canadian duty to help terrorism and terrorists achieve their goal. Canadians have the right to demonstrate and make their opinions known, but they have no right to disrupt the lives of other citizens by blocking highways and jeopardizing the safety of women, children and other citizens.

In the last few weeks, I went into the crowd during the Tamil demonstrations many times. They showed pictures of inconceivable violence against their people. I understand their grief and I feel their pain. They were condemning the perpetrators of those atrocities but they were cheering for the terrorist leaders of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The inhuman killings of the last few weeks were the result of a mentality of violence and terror that many of the leaders they were cheering had accepted and promoted. LTTE had waged a terror campaign to create an independent Tamil state in northeastern Sri Lanka since 1976. They killed innocent people using suicide bombers, the first group to do so. I didn't hear any condemnation of the actions of those terrorists.

New home or just a base to settle scores?

Aside from the need to defend human rights and oppose genocide, the protesters also were asking our government to intervene in a conflict that had nothing to do with Canada.

I believe it's time we took a hard look at our future as a country, a country that accepts people from around the world who are willing to share their experiences but also make an effort to be part of it and not use it as a base to settle scores elsewhere.

Canada has to be a beacon for all those around the world in search of peace and the good life. Unfortunately, because of the political opportunism and indolence of our leaders, Canada risks becoming only a parking space for frustrated foreigners with Canadian passports.

Angelo Persichilli is the political editor of Corriere Canadese. His column appears Sunday.

Load-Date: May 24, 2009

End of Document

Agency attempts to cope with influx of Tamil child soldiers; Many were trained from very young age to become suicide bombers

The Gazette (Montreal)

July 19, 2009 Sunday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL / OP-ED; Pg. A13; The Economist

Length: 625 words

Byline: The Economist

Body

Fairness cream, scented hair oil, talcum powder: These are things that **female** ex-combatants of the Tamil Tiger rebels, many forcibly recruited as children, hesitantly ask for when placed in rehabilitation.

Thousands of exhausted rebels surrendered in the weeks before the government declared its victory over the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in May. The army says more than 9,000 are now in custody. Some face prosecution; more are being absorbed into the army; others will be sent into rehabilitation as soon as space becomes available in these overburdened camps.

But to judge by the stories of the former child soldiers, turning their lives around will be a lot harder than providing some of the frills denied them during their years of warfare.

The Protection and Rehabilitation Centre in Ambepussa is run by the Bureau of the Commissioner-General of Rehabilitation. To reach it, you take a narrow lane that snakes through paddy fields and thick woods, climbs a steep incline and stops at a neat collection of single-story buildings. As the **LTTE** fought its final, doomed battle, 112 ex-fighters arrived there, fresh from combat, aged between 14 and 29.

Tall and thin, a young man with fragile features is summoned by army officers. Ganeshalingam Thayalan speaks softly, uncertainly. He has just turned 18. Today, he pores over mathematics and chemistry books to pass his advanced-level examination and enter university. There is no hint from his outward appearance that Thayalan was a trained suicide bomber.

He was just 2 when his parents died in an air force bombing and he was sent to Sencholai, a rebel "orphanage" in the Kilinochchi district. Every school holiday, he was trained in the use of weapons, psychological warfare, combat skills and other military activity. After his ordinary-level exams, he was taught to be a human bomb. The Tigers showed him how to wear and activate a suicide jacket. It was a compulsory lesson: Other friends from Sencholai also had to learn it.

The **LTTE** subsequently deployed Thayalan in Vavuniya and ordered him to continue studying until they found him a target. He was living with a friend when, acting on a tip-off, the police arrested him. Would he have exploded himself when told to? Yes, he says, because the Tigers were watching. If he had disobeyed, they would have killed him anyway.

Agency attempts to cope with influx of Tamil child soldiers; Many were trained from very young age to become suicide bombers

The rehabilitation centre provides children and adults with vocational training and education in mathematics, computer science, and languages, including Sinhalese, the tongue of the majority of Sinhala Buddhists they had once been coached to kill. There are cultural and sporting events and occasional field trips.

But the children are chaperoned on all excursions and, while parents and relatives may visit, the centre is not open to outsiders. In October 2000 a Sinhala mob attacked a similar venture in Bindunuwewa and killed 26 people.

Hiranthi Wijemanne, a consultant to the commissioner general, says that most of the inmates want to leave the country after rehabilitation. Social stigma will not permit them to return to their own villages or to mingle with the population in the Sinhala-dominated south. More than 50 reformed fighters have already gone abroad.

James Elder, a spokesman for Unicef in Sri Lanka, calls the centre a genuine attempt to help child soldiers learn how to be civilians. From 2003 to the end of 2008, Unicef recorded more than 6,000 cases of child recruitment by the rebels, but the number is thought to have soared in the final months of the war.

To cope with the influx, the bureau is expanding its centres in the northern Jaffna peninsula and Welikanda in the east. It is also building a new facility in Vavuniya, where many ex-combatants now while away the time, awaiting their turn.

Load-Date: July 20, 2009

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MEN HOPE TO 'BREAK SILENCE' ON CONFLICT IN SRI LANKA

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

September 4, 2009 Friday

SOONER EDITION

Copyright 2009 P.G. Publishing Co.

Section: LOCAL; Pg. B-1

Length: 454 words

Byline: Kaitlynn Riely, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Body

Three men left Pittsburgh last night to continue their journey on foot from Chicago to Washington, D.C., to "break the silence" on the genocide they believe is occurring in their native country of Sri Lanka.

Kannan Sveekantha, Vijay Sivanewaran and Ramanan Thirukketheeswaranathan, all friends from Chicago, left Chicago on May 26 and have since made stops in Springfield, Ill., Indianapolis, Ind., Columbus, Dayton and Cincinnati, Ohio.

They arrived in Pittsburgh on Monday and left at 10 last night, headed on foot to Mount Pleasant and then on to Washington, D.C., where they plan to hold a rally in front of the White House in about two weeks.

The belief that 1,400 people are dying every week from violence in Sri Lanka has been fuel for their several-hundred-mile journey, they said.

"At least we can say, when there was genocide happening in Sri Lanka, we weren't sitting around watching TV," Mr. Sivanewaran said.

All three men were born in Sri Lanka, but declined to give out much personal information, including their ages, out of fear of reprisal against family members who still live there.

A British television station aired video footage last week that purportedly shows government forces executing unarmed, naked, bound and blindfolded Tamils, according to a CNN report.

Last week, a U.N. special representative said he wanted an investigation into the authenticity of the video.

The ***Tamil Tigers***, formerly known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, were defeated by the Sri Lankan military this year, after a decades-long conflict that killed at least 70,000 people. The Tigers had been seeking an independent state for minority Tamils, according to CNN.

More than 350,000 people are in internment camps in Sri Lanka, Mr. Sveekantha said, and they hear daily reports of ***women*** and children being raped.

A lot of Americans don't even know where Sri Lanka is (about 20 miles off the southern coast of India), let alone about the conflict that has been occurring there, they said, so the walk is to make people aware of it and to encourage elected representatives to put pressure on Sri Lanka.

MEN HOPE TO 'BREAK SILENCE' ON CONFLICT IN SRI LANKA

They've also set up a Web site, www.breakthesilenceusa.com, to announce their trip and spread news about developments in Sri Lanka.

The men have been walking 25 miles a day, sleeping for eight to 10 hours and then walking the rest of the time. They sleep outside, but get a hotel every two or three days to stay clean. When they arrive in cities, they try to find others to support their cause.

And they believe they are giving hope to the people in their native country.

"We are able to inspire the people who have become hopeless over the last three months with what happened in Sri Lanka," Mr. Thirukketheeswaranathan said.

Notes

Kaitlynn Riely can be reached at kriely@post-gazette.com or 412-263-1478. /

Graphic

PHOTO: John Heller/Post-Gazette: From left, Vijay Sivanewaran, Ramanan Thirukketheeswaranathan and Kannan Sivekantha are walking to Washington, D.C. They stopped in Pittsburgh on the steps of the City-County Building on Grant Street.

Load-Date: September 4, 2009

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EX-LTTE CADRES UNDERGO REHABILITATION

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

April 9, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 143 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 9 -- More than 400 former **LTTE** cadres, who surrendered to the military in the recent past are being rehabilitated at several rehabilitation centres in the country, the Rehabilitation Commissioner's Office said.

A spokesman for the Commissioner General Office said that these former rebels are currently undergoing a one year training in various subjects in Tellippalai in Jaffna, Welikanda and Ambepussa rehabilitation centres. The last batch of some 76 **LTTE** cadres, including fourteen **females** who surrendered to the military a few weeks ago in the Wanni battlefield had been directed to the Tellippalai rehabilitation centre. According to the spokesman each of the cadres at the Tellippalai centre are being given Rs. 150 per day as expenses by a non- government organization. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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

Load-Date: April 10, 2009

Non-Profit Organization Democracy for Tamils Airs National TV Campaign to Raise Awareness in the USA; PSA Draws Attention to the Little Known Plight of the 250,000 Families Imprisoned in Sri Lanka

Business Wire

November 18, 2009 Wednesday 5:00 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Business Wire, Inc.

Distribution: Philanthropy Writers; News Editors

Length: 521 words

Dateline: LOS ANGELES

Body

Democracy for Tamils (www.DemocracyForTamils.com), a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting democratic rights for Sri Lankan Tamils, this month airs a national TV ad campaign aimed at drawing US attention to the ongoing suffering of the over quarter million men, **women** and children who have been wrongly imprisoned by the Sri Lankan government following the end of the long-waged civil war. The 30 second television spot airs throughout the month across major cities and highlights the humanitarian crisis brought about by the deplorable (and deteriorating) living conditions of the families in the Sri Lankan government's internment camps.¹

Following the defeat of the **Tamil Tigers** in May of this year, the government of Sri Lanka interned approximately 280,000 innocent civilian survivors, about 10 percent of the total Tamil population in Sri Lanka. In addition, the government has severely limited access to the camps to international Non Governmental Organizations (NGO), including the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) and United Nations (UN)-based organizations. The media is also barred from the camps, enabling the Sri Lankan government to control press coverage and suppress a public outcry for the inhumane treatment of the surviving Sri Lankan Tamil civilians.

The TV spot, created to engage US citizens to help with this cause, uses moving visual imagery (actual photos of those imprisoned), music and historical slogans and comparisons from other well-documented ethnic atrocities to demonstrate the dire circumstance that is currently playing out, with little to no US public awareness.

A copy of the PSA can be viewed here: <http://www.democracyfortamils.com>

About Democracy for Tamils

Democracy for Tamils was formed by a group of professionals with the goal of promoting democratic rights for Sri Lankan Tamils. The organization is federally registered as a non-profit corporation in Canada. Democracy for Tamils is operated with stringent legal and financial controls, commensurate with the practices of a public corporation.

The members of Democracy for Tamils consist of multiethnic professionals from various fields including business, legal, medical, and information technology. The common objective that brings these professionals together is the desire to promote democratic rights and freedoms including freedom of speech, assembly, press, political expression, and mobility for Sri Lankan Tamils.

Non-Profit Organization Democracy for Tamils Airl National TV Campaign to Raise Awareness in the USA PSA
Draws Attention to the Little Known Plight of the 250,0....

The democratic rights of Sri Lankan Tamils have been severely restricted and often denied for over 60 years. Democracy for Tamils promotes efforts which will help to re-establish the democratic rights for the Sri Lankan Tamils. The organization envisions conditions under which the Sri Lankan Tamils can enjoy democratic rights comparable to Western democracies.

Those interested in finding out more about this humanitarian crisis, or how they may help, can visit <http://www.democracyfortamils.com>.

¹The Sri Lankan government calls these internally displaced person (IDP) camps

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Load-Date: November 19, 2009

ASIA: Sri Lankans plead with Rudd to save them

AAP Newsfeed

October 14, 2009 Wednesday 6:06 PM AEST

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 510 words

Dateline: MERAK Indonesia Oct 14

Body

Sri Lankan asylum seekers locked in a tense standoff with the Indonesian navy have pleaded with Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to save them from an uncertain future.

The Indonesian navy apprehended the boatload of more than 250 asylum seekers, who were trying to reach Christmas Island, in the Sunda Strait on Sunday.

Indonesia acted after an intelligence tip-off from Australia, and after Mr Rudd personally spoke to Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

The Sri Lankans are now moored at a port in Merak, in western Java, but are refusing to disembark, adamant they want to continue their journey to Australia. The Indonesian navy is trying to coax the asylum seekers on to land without violence.

The group's spokesman, a man named Alex, said on Wednesday that the 195 men, 27 women and 31 children on board would stand firm.

"We will not leave this ship until we have a resolution," he told AAP.

"Please convince the Australian people to make sure the prime minister reconsiders his decision."

Alex said the Sri Lankans chose to seek asylum in Australia because it was the only Western country they could afford to reach.

Australians were aware of the "genocide, misery and brutality" occurring in Sri Lanka, he said.

"Kevin Rudd has accepted other refugees from Sri Lanka," Alex said.

"We thank you so much for accepting those refugees."

"But what is wrong with us? What is wrong with the woman and children on our boat? What is the difference between us and them?"

Staying in Indonesia was not an option, Alex said. "Indonesia cannot care for us. Indonesia cannot even take care of its own people."

"If Australia won't accept us, fine: some other country please take us."

"But we will not go back to Sri Lanka."

Local navy commander Colonel Irawan said the asylum seekers had surrendered a gas stove and diesel fuel which they had threatened to use to blow themselves up.

"They are not suicidal anymore," he said.

"They want to live."

"They were in despair, they felt desperate but now they feel helped."

The navy had put no time limit on resolving the standoff, he said.

"This is a step by step process, not to be rushed. Human rights is number one."

ASIA: Sri Lankans plead with Rudd to save them

The asylum seekers have denied they are associated with the Tamil Tigers and have stuck a sign on the top of their boat which reads: "We are Sri Lankan civilians. Plz save our life."

The group was at sea for almost two weeks before they were caught.

Thousands of asylum seekers from the Middle East, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka use Indonesia and Malaysia as staging points for their dangerous sea voyages to Australia.

Most engage the services of people smugglers, who charge them large amounts of money to arrange the voyages.

Indonesia is not a signatory to the United Nations Refugee Convention, meaning asylum seekers there are processed by the UNHCR and the International Organisation for Migration and forced to wait - most for many years - to be resettled in a third country.

Indonesia's detention centres are notoriously overcrowded and harsh.

Load-Date: October 15, 2009

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SRI LANKA: GOV'T TO RESETTLE DISPLACED TAMILS AHEAD OF MONSOON

IPS - Inter Press Service

September 12, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 1067 words

Byline: Feizal Samath

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sep 12 2009

Body

The Sri Lankan government, accused of keeping the refugees who fled fighting between the military and Tamil rebels against their will, is preparing to resettle these minority civilians ahead of next month's monsoon period, officials from non-government agencies said Friday.

"We have been told that a large number (of Tamil civilians) would be released or returned to their homes by October 15 before the monsoon season," said Jeevan Thiagarajah, executive director of the Colombo-based Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (CHA), an umbrella group of humanitarian agencies who are working in the camps.

More than 250,000 internally displaced people (IDP) have been languishing in IDP camps in the northern town of Vavuniya since fleeing fighting between government troops and rebels from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) group earlier this year.

The military smashed through strong rebel defences and killed the group's elusive leader Velupillai Prabhakaran in May, ending more than 20 years of conflict and destruction during the rebel campaign to carve out an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's 14 percent minority Tamil population in the country's north-east region.

Some 4.6 percent Tamils of Indian origin brought by the British to work on tea and rubber plantations - where they live to this day - during colonial rule do not support the separatist cause and prefer to maintain their own identity. They still live in these plantations, and currently number around 500,000.

The government has repeatedly denied allegations from human rights groups and western states of forcibly keeping refugees in the camps for more than four months since the war ended, saying mines - laid by the **LTTE** - have to be cleared and damaged housing restored before the refugees can return to their homes. The government also said there are hundreds of suspected **LTTE** cadres in the camps, and they have to be filtered out before allowing camp residents to be freed.

On Thursday, the Ministry of Resettlement and Disaster Relief Services announced that camp residents would be released to relatives who can provide shelter for these people. The Ministry, which is the main government agency involved in caring for the displaced, said in a public statement that all IDP-related details should be provided to the District Secretary, the highest government official in a region, in the northeast districts where the displaced come from, for a quick release of the affected civilians.

SRI LANKA : GOV'T TO RESETTLE DISPLACED TAMILS AHEAD OF MONSOON

The government had previously allowed those over 60 years old, numbering a few hundreds, to leave the camps and stay in the homes of their relatives.

Several NGOs and other organisations, including civic and religious groups, have been helping out at the camps where facilities are poor, particularly where sanitation, accommodation and water needs are concerned. Journalists have been barred from visiting the camps.

"I cried when I walked into a camp which houses more than 200,000 people," said an elderly social worker, who returned to Colombo from one such camp visit, on Wednesday.

While conceding that the government has a tough chore in making the refugees as comfortable as possible, the **female** worker - who declined to be named - told IPS that she was "saddened" by the hardships faced by the **women** and children. "We took clothes and milk powder, and they kept on pleading with us to ask the authorities to release them," she said.

"When we told them that their former homes have mines which have to be removed, they said they are prepared to go anywhere where they can be free," she added.

Among the problems faced by the **women** are the lack of privacy in bathing areas outside tents (in which the families live) and areas to dispose of sanitary towels.

"Because water is a problem - as it has to be brought from long distances - the **women** bathe every four days, and this is an issue during their monthly periods," she said.

On Wednesday, Sri Lankan Opposition Leader Ranil Wickremasinghe accused the government of violating the law and the country's Constitution by holding the displaced people against their will.

Speaking in Parliament, Wickremasinghe, whose United National Party, the main opposition party controlled by majority Sinhalese, has repeatedly urged the government to release the refugees as early as possible, said no law in the country allows the government to detain people in camps without a detention order.

"It is clear that these citizens are not being held in government camps under any law. This is illegal. We have a government that is acting outside the law and violating the Constitution," he told Parliament. "We do not accept the argument that the government is acting in the interest of displaced people." He added that all the displaced people must be free to leave if they have alternate accommodations.

Tamil National Alliance leader in Parliament, Rajavarothiam Sampanthan, had told the legislature that the government did not have the resources to resettle the IDPs expeditiously, as only 8.5 percent of them had been resettled after three months since the fighting ended in May.

"The government made a commitment (earlier this year) to India, the United Nations and the international community that the resettlement of IDPs would be 80 percent complete within 180 days (from May)," said Sampanthan, whose party represents the minority Tamils.

In Jaffna, the capital of the northern province of Sri Lanka, relatives of the displaced persons were waiting patiently for their return. "One of my relatives left for Vavuniya on Monday after learning that the displaced were being released to their relatives," said a journalist by telephone from this northern town.

According to government figures, close to 50,000 refugees have relatives in Jaffna. CHA's Thiagarajah said there are 2,880 pregnant mothers, 14,000 differently-abled persons and 600 orphans whom the government said would be released or relocated quickly.

The National Peace Council, which has been working on a peaceful resolution of the ethnic conflict which has killed thousands of people since the war broke out in 1983, welcomed the government decision to release the displaced civilians to relatives willing to house them.

SRI LANKA : GOV'T TO RESETTLE DISPLACED TAMILS AHEAD OF MONSOON

But as a precondition to release, said the Council, those wishing to leave the camps will go through a rigorous process of screening and identification, which it urged should be conducted speedily and transparently.

Load-Date: September 14, 2009

End of Document

UNICEF seeks full access to refugee camps

UPI

May 20, 2009 Wednesday 1:59 AM EST

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Length: 227 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, May 20

Body

The United Nations, demanding full access to Sri Lankan refugee camps, says the number of displaced persons in these shelters may reach 250,000 this week.

As the Sri Lanka government lauded its military's victory over the Tamil Tiger rebels and deaths of their leaders, Ann Veneman, executive director of the U.N. Children's s Fund, highlighted the plight of the civilians caught in the aftermath.

In a statement, she said there have been reports that access to some of the refugee camps had become restricted.

"Full and unimpeded humanitarian access must be ensured so that children and women can receive the assistance they so desperately need," she said.

The statement said the displaced persons were arriving at the camps "sick, malnourished and some with untended wounds of war."

By the end of this week, "the number of internally displaced people in camps is expected to have grown to more than a quarter of a million people since late April."

Veneman said such a massive influx of people "will put an even greater strain on the health, sanitation, and water systems in internally displaced persons camps."

The statement said water and sanitation needs are critical.

In declaring the military's victory over the LTTE rebels ending the 26-year-old civil war, Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa told his nation the country was celebrating "the defeat of terrorism."

Load-Date: May 21, 2009

**International: Sri Lanka may release British medic held in internment camp:
Detainee spent months helping injured patients: Reports of rapes in camps
have been received by UN**

The Guardian - Final Edition

June 1, 2009 Monday

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theguardian

Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 17

Length: 493 words

Byline: Gethin Chamberlain, Colombo

Body

The Sri Lankan government was last night considering the release of a British medic held in an internment camp in the north of the country after she fled the fighting there. On Saturday the Guardian revealed that Damilvany Gnanakumar, 26, was detained after spending months helping the wounded at temporary hospitals inside the so-called no-fire zone.

Yesterday a Sri Lankan government official said her case had been taken up by the human rights minister, Mahinda Samarasinghe, who had asked the government agent in charge of the camps to locate Gnanakumar and establish whether she could be released. Negotiations between the Foreign Office and the Sri Lankan government have so far failed to free her, prompting her family, from Chingford, north-east London, to launch an appeal to the authorities in Colombo.

Gnanakumar is being held in the Menik Farm camp near the town of Vavuniya, along with tens of thousands of other civilians who fled during the later stages of the conflict in which the Sri Lankan military finally defeated Tamil Tiger rebels after 26 years of war.

Conditions in the camps have been criticised by human rights groups, with the UN acknowledging that it has received reports of a number of cases of rape in the camps. Officials stressed that the Sri Lankan government was determined to clamp down on any such abuses. There have also been reports of **women's** bodies being discovered outside the barbed wire perimeter. The Sri Lankan government yesterday rebuffed international complaints over its use of barbed wire, arguing that it is a common fencing method in Sri Lanka used by its citizens to keep out intruders. It does, however, concede that those inside the camp are not free to leave.

Meanwhile, the country's foreign minister, Rohitha Bogollagama, said Sri Lanka's courts not international organisations would investigate or prosecute security personnel for any alleged human rights violations.

"Sri Lanka is a sovereign country with its own legal framework," he said, while attending a security conference in Singapore. "We have a very strong separation of powers and the judiciary is independent."

International: Sri Lanka may release British medic held in internment camp: Detainee spent months helping injured patients: Reports of rapes in camps have been

He did not mention the allegations of large-scale civilian deaths. "Sri Lanka will no doubt enter the annals of history as a classic textbook example of a nation that successfully prevailed over the scourge of terrorism, while tenaciously upholding the cherished values of democracy and human rights," he said.

There have been claims that as many as 20,000 people died in the final stages of the war, but those figures have been disputed by the UN. The UN undersecretary general, Sir John Holmes, said the true figure may never be known.

The Sri Lankan government disputes the high casualty figures, although there is plenty of evidence to suggest that thousands of civilians did die as a result of government air and artillery attacks and at the hands of the **Tamil Tigers**, who have been accused of using the civilians as human shields.

Load-Date: June 1, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lankans threaten to set fire to boat

The Australian

October 14, 2009 Wednesday

7 - NSW First Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 1193 words

Byline: Stephen Fitzpatrick

Body

MORE than 260 Sri Lankan asylum-seekers were last night threatening to blow up their boat if the Indonesian navy forced them to disembark at the port in Merak after the large cargo boat they were piloting towards Christmas Island broke down.

“We have gas canisters and we have told the navy we will blow up the boat and jump into the ocean if they try to force us off the boat,” said a spokesman for the asylum-seekers, who would only give his name as Alex.

Alex said the Sri Lankans had each paid \$US15,000 (\$16,533) to board the wooden craft in Malaysia 13 days ago, after travelling there by air from Jaffna.

“If the authorities in Sri Lanka know this is me on this boat, they will hunt down my wife and children in Jaffna and kill them,” the frightened man said. “I have been waiting for my wife and children to follow me here. As soon as possible, we need to get to Australia.”

The Sri Lankan asylum-seekers and six Indonesian crew members were under military guard aboard the cargo ship in western Java after being intercepted trying to sail to Christmas Island.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono intervened directly in the case of the asylum-seekers, who were detained trying to sail to Christmas Island at the weekend.

Dr Yudhoyono has ordered his navy chief of staff to treat with care the group of hungry and tired refugees, who last night were expected to be towed to shore after their cargo boat's engine died. They were then to be dealt with by immigration officials after having refused for the past three days to leave their stricken boat.

Kevin Rudd confirmed yesterday he had made a personal plea to Dr Yudhoyono for the Indonesians to intercept the boat.

Alex denied last night that those on board the boat were associated with **Tamil Tigers**.

“We are civilians, not **Tamil Tigers**. Every day there are Tamils being killed and raped in the refugee camps. Men are blindfolded and shot in the back of the head.

“In Sri Lanka if you are Tamil there is no opportunity -- the government can detain you without cause, and take you to trial without evidence.”

Sri Lankans threaten to set fire to boat

Alex said the group's choice of Australia as a destination was not based on intimate knowledge of federal government immigration policy, but simply "because we had to flee somewhere".

"Another boat full of Tamils left Malaysia for Canada, and for that people were paying \$US45,000 per person," he said. "That was far too expensive."

He said the group had been at sea for 13 days before being captured by an Indonesian navy vessel early on Saturday morning. "We spent a month in the jungle in Malaysia before that," he said.

Continued -- Page 8

From Page 1

International Organisation for Migration staff were working with Immigration Department officials last night to resolve the standoff, with the Sri Lankans adamant they wanted to continue their journey to Australia.

Alex refused to give details of the agent who had taken money from members for the group in Malaysia, repeatedly saying he feared for his life.

He was allowed to speak to The Australian for only a few moments, before senior navy officers made him rejoin the larger group.

The group consisted of women and children as well as men, and a number of extremely young children.

Four of the boatpeople were in hospital last night being treated for non life-threatening issues, including one woman who reportedly was pregnant.

A military source, who refused to be named, said navy ships guarding the asylum-seekers had accompanied the boat after it was intercepted in the Sunda Strait near Anak Krakatau, an active volcano that attracts thousands of tourists to its spectacular displays.

"We're guarding them so that no one can get on or off, and so they don't escape," the source said.

The boat was moored alongside an Indonesian submarine chaser and bore a large hand-painted sign saying: "We are Sri Lankan civilians plz save our life."

Australian Federal Police and Immigration Department officers had already visited the boat people, the source said. However they were refusing to speak to officials.

A doctor dealing with the four people in hospital said they included a baby with skin problems, a woman who is seven months pregnant, another with gastritis and a fourth who had a spinal injury sustained on the cargo boat.

Others had been given medical assessments on the boat and determined to be fine.

Erwin Hilianka, from the Banten province health department, said the illegal immigrants were suffering no serious illnesses but were only sick due to weakness and not eating.

The boat was intercepted early on Sunday morning, authorities said, and arrived in Merak harbour late the same day.

Indonesian police said they were investigating whether the six Indonesian crew members were involved in a known people-smuggling ring.

Thousands of asylum-seekers from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Sri Lanka and Burma use Indonesia as a staging point to get to Australia where they apply for refugee status, often travelling first through Malaysia.

Sri Lankans threaten to set fire to boat

Many make their initial applications to the UN High Commission for Refugees in Jakarta, giving them temporary right to stay in the country while their claims are processed.

A large number of them then use this opportunity to organise risky voyages such as the most recent one to be intercepted, often with the services of organised people-smuggling rings.

Australia has launched a joint policing program with Indonesia to combat the people trafficking wave, with at least a dozen ports across the country being targeted.

Despite tough language from Jakarta for Australia's benefit, officials admit they are unable to stem the flow of refugees through the country. Many of the asylum-seekers themselves admit the flow has increased as a result of the Rudd government's softer measures on the problem.

These measures, which many asylum-seekers believe will give them a greater chance at being accepted as refugees by Australia if they try the journey by boat, have led to the main detention and processing centre at Christmas Island being filled beyond its capacity.

However Indonesian detention centres are also stretched beyond capacity, despite financial and other assistance from foreign governments including Australia and from the International Organisation for Migration.

The IOM works with the UNHCR giving shelter, food and medical treatment to thousands of asylum-seekers living in the community in areas such as Puncak, a mountainous resort region full of low-rent hostels south of Jakarta.

Hundreds more are in immigration detention centres across the country, with the latest boatload almost certain to join that category unless any of them can produce documentation showing they had refugee applications already being assessed by the UN.

Asylum-seekers who are successful in such applications while living in Indonesia then have the right to be considered for resettlement in a third country that has signed the international treaty dealing with refugees.

Chief among these countries are Australia, the US and Canada. Indonesia has never signed the treaty and, despite promises by Dr Yudhoyono during a visit by Mr Rudd last year, has not enacted anti-people smuggling legislation.

Load-Date: October 13, 2009

Highlights of the AAP world wire at 07:00 May 17

AAP Newsfeed

May 17, 2009 Sunday 8:08 AM AEST

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 502 words

Body

HIGHLIGHTS WORLD (ATTN EDITORS)

Highlights of the AAP world file since 20:00

ASIA: Singh, India's cerebral PM, glides to victory again

NEW DELHI, May 16 AFP - Manmohan Singh, who is set to return as India's prime minister with an electoral mandate to revive the country's economic expansion, has always appeared a reluctant public figure. (INDIA VOTE SINGH (Analysis) sent at 00:13, 601 words.)

MID: Netanyahu won't back Palestinian state on US trip: MP

JERUSALEM, May 16 AFP - Benjamin Netanyahu will refuse on his US visit to back a Palestinian state, two Likud party colleagues say, hours before the Israeli premier left for Washington. (ISRAEL PALESTINIANS Update sent at 05:37, 345 words.)

ASIA: Sri Lanka president declares *Tamil Tigers* 'defeated'

COLOMBO, May 16 AFP - Sri Lankan president Mahinda Rajapakse has declared that the island's separatist Tamil Tiger rebels have been "defeated militarily" after decades of bitter ethnic bloodshed. (SRILANKA DEFEAT Update sent at 01:32, 375 words.)

ASIA: Car bomb kills 11 in Pakistan's Peshawar: hospital

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, May 16 AFP - A car bomb ripped through a packed street in Pakistan's city of Peshawar and killed 11 people, including women and children, near an ice cream shop and Internet cafe Saturday, officials said. (PAKISTAN BOMB Update sent at 21:11, 530 words.)

US: US astronauts equip Hubble on third spacewalk

HOUSTON, Texas, May 16 AFP - Two US astronauts are coming to the end of their third spacewalk after reviving a crippled camera on the aging Hubble Space Telescope and equipping the 19-year-old observatory with a new key instrument. (US SHUTTLE Update sent at 06:21, 324 words.)

MID: American couples on trial in Egypt for adoption

CAIRO, May 16 AP - An American woman who is being tried with her husband on charges of forgery and child trafficking after they adopted twin orphans said Saturday the trial was part of Egypt's "persecution" against Christians. (EGYPT ADOPTION sent at 06:02, 511 words.)

UK: Madeline McCann's parents to sue Portuguese ex-policeman

LONDON, May 16 AFP - The parents of missing British girl Madeleine McCann say they will sue the former Portuguese police officer who handled the investigation into their daughter's disappearance. (PORTUGAL GIRL Update sent at 05:50, 430 words.)

EUR: Freed Algerian ex-Guantanamo detainee hospitalised

UK: British PM 'appalled' by expenses scandal

Highlights of the AAP world wire at 07:00 May 17

LONDON, May 16 AP - Britain's governing Labour Party suspended a second member of Parliament for claiming reimbursement for nonexistent mortgage payments, officials said on Saturday, in a deepening scandal that has enraged the public. (UK EXPENSES sent at 04:52, 462 words.)

JPN: Japan acts over fresh swine flu cases, world figures soar

TOKYO, May 16 AFP - Officials are closing schools and cancelling public events in the Japanese city of Kobe after eight high school students tested positive for swine flu and scores more reported feeling ill. (FLU WORLD sent at 02:55, 643 words.)

Load-Date: May 17, 2009

End of Document

Ban welcomes escape of 35,000 from Sri Lankan conflict zone =

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
April 20, 2009 Monday 7:07 PM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 222 words

Dateline: New York

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts UN Ban welcomes escape of 35,000 from Sri Lankan conflict zone = New York

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon Monday welcomed the escape of at least 35,000 civilians from the Tamil rebel-held areas in north-eastern Sri Lanka.

But Ban said he was worried about the fate of civilians who remain in the conflict zone and the continuing potential for a blood bath.

"It is now imperative for UN staff to be allowed into the conflict zone to facilitate relief operations and the evacuation of civilians," Ban said.

Earlier Monday, an estimated 35,000 civilians reportedly fled the Tamil rebel-held areas, where government troops and the navy mounted a massive operation aimed at evacuating the zone, military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said in Sri Lanka.

As civilians were escaping by land and sea, Tamil rebels set off three suicide bombs that killed at least 17 civilians including women and children, and injured 200 others in the Puthumathalan area, 390 kilometres north-east of the capital, he said.

In New York, Ban condemned the Sri Lankan army's continued use of heavy weapons in the so-called 14-square-kilometre no-fire zone. He also condemned the "use of force by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil

Eelam (LTTE) in preventing the departure of civilians from the conflict zone."

Apr 2009 1907 GMT

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

UN seeks funds to help civilians who fled Sri Lanka war-zone

Hindustan Times

April 23, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 488 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April. 23 -- With over 103,000 Tamil civilians fleeing Sri Lanka's war-zone in the north, the UN Thursday made an urgent appeal for funds to meet the critical needs of the "crowds of weary and hungry people".

The UN's Humanitarian Coordinator in Sri Lanka Neil Buhne made the appeal Thursday after returning from camps in the northern town of Vavuniya where about 80,000 exhausted civilians who fled the combat zone are being housed.

"I saw infants with dysentery, malnourished children and women, untended wounds, and people dressed in the ragged clothing they've been wearing for months," Neil Buhne said.

"We need funds for all the basics like food, medicine, water, sanitation, nutrition, shelter, and clothing. And we want to try to get kids as soon as possible back into school in order to give them some semblance of normality," he said in a statement.

The UN in February appealed for \$155 million to meet the anticipated increase in people escaping from the fighting in the island's north, but received less than one third of that amount.

Since Monday, over 103,000 people have escaped the battle zone where government and Tamil Tigers are locked in fierce fighting. The sudden exodus has stretched humanitarian and government resources.

"Many of these people were forced from their homes by fighting more than a year ago, and it is something of a miracle that they have survived such a terrible ordeal," said Buhne.

"We need to ensure that no more lives are lost by meeting their immediate needs, and beyond that to help them get back on their feet, so that they can eventually return to their homes," he said.

The UN statement said that over-crowding in the (refugee) camps "is now a grave concern, and has urged the government to make available more land and public buildings for accommodation and to quickly identify and release people from the existing sites who present no security threat".

Buhne said that while some elderly have been released, "there are many more people such as the elderly, disabled, unaccompanied children and pregnant women who could be rapidly identified and released in order to reduce the camp population".

"The UN has also urged the government to release UN national staff so that they can return to work," the statement went on to say.

UN seeks funds to help civilians who fled Sri Lanka war-zone

Sri Lanka has also made a simultaneous appeal for international assistance to provide immediate humanitarian assistance for over 103,000 civilians, saying the challenge before the government today is to provide shelter and other basic amenities for them.

Hailing the security forces for successfully carrying out "the largest hostage rescue operation by any military in the world", Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama Thursday said that an estimated 15,000-20,000 civilians are still trapped in the no-fire-zone under the control of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

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

Load-Date: August 3, 2009

End of Document

AFP Asia news agenda

Agence France Presse -- English

April 4, 2009 Saturday 2:29 AM GMT

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Length: 539 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, April 4 2009

Body

Duty Editor: Huw Griffith

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

ASIA NEWS HIGHLIGHTS ON SATURDAY

+ World awaits NKorea rocket launch

+ Tensions at Thai-Cambodian border

+ Qualifying at Malaysian F1 GP

SEOUL/TOKYO: Following North Korea's planned rocket launch, which the communist regime in Pyongyang says will be fired some time between today and Wednesday, putting the region and Washington on high alert (NKOREA-MISSILE)

PHNOM PENH/BANGKOK: Reporting on tensions at the disputed Thai-Cambodian border a day after clashes between troops there left at least two dead in the biggest flare-up for months in a bitter feud (CAMBODIA-THAILAND-CONFLICT)

SEPANG: Formula One. Reporting on qualifying at the Malaysian Grand Prix, the second race of the season, where Ferrari will be hoping to prove their fast practice times were no fluke (AUTO-PRIX-MAS)

-- OTHER STORIES --

BANGKOK: Reporting as political protesters besiege the prime minister's offices after former premier Thaksin Shinawatra rejects an offer of talks (THAILAND-POLITICS-PROTEST)

COLOMBO: Reporting after Sri Lankan troops capture a key village from the Tamil Tigers following heavy fighting that left dozens of rebels dead as Colombo keeps up its drive to crush the guerrillas (SRILANKA-UNREST)

DILI: Monitoring a meeting of international donors to discuss further aid to East Timor (TIMOR-DIPLOMACY-AID)

HONG KONG: Sotheby's spring auction (LIFESTYLE-ART-AUCTION)

AFP Asia news agenda

ISLAMABAD: Ruling Pakistan People's Party observes 30th anniversary of death of founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto with a gathering at the ancestral Garhi Khuda Bakhsh graveyard in southern Sindh province (PAKISTAN-POLITICS-BHUTTO)

JAKARTA: Following Indonesian parties as they campaign for April 9 legislative elections (INDONESIA-POLITICS-VOTE)

KABUL: President Hamid Karzai meets media at around 0900 GMT on his return from a summit on Afghanistan and amid an international uproar of his passing of a law said to restrict Shiite women's rights (AFGHANISTAN-UNREST-WOMEN)

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's new prime minister, Najib Razak, holds first press conference at 0200 GMT (MALAYSIA-POLITICS-NAJIB)

Reporting on developments after Razak's decision to free activists held under a tough security law (MALAYSIA-POLITICS-ISA)

MANILA: Government negotiators try to convince Islamic militants to free two European Red Cross aid workers after a Filipina hostage was released on the southern island of Jolo (PHILIPPINES-ATTACKS-KIDNAP-ICRC)

-- Moving a FOCUS piece on reaction in the Philippines to a Hong Kong columnist who is accused of insulting the country and its people (PHILIPPINES-HONGKONG-MEDIA-DISCRIMINATION,FOCUS)

NEW DELHI: Reporting developments in upcoming general elections due to kick off April 16 (INDIA-VOTE)

SEOUL: Watching the case of a South Korean held by the North at a joint industrial estate for allegedly criticising Pyongyang's regime (NKOREA-SKOREA-RELATIONS-KAESONG)

SYDNEY: Rugby Union. Super 14. NSW Waratahs v Western Stormers (RSA) (RUGBYU-SUPER14-NSW-STO)

-- Rugby Union. IRB Sevens, in Adelaide (RUGBYU-IRB-SEVENS-AUS)

TOKYO: Football. J-League matches (FBL-JPN)

WELLINGTON: Rugby Union. Super 14. Waikato Chiefs v Golden Lions, in Hamilton (RUGBYU-SUPER14-WAIIIO)

afp

Load-Date: April 4, 2009

Voyage of the damned going nowhere

The Australian

October 14, 2009 Wednesday

6 - NSW Country Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 1181 words

Byline: Stephen Fitzpatrick

Body

MORE than 260 Sri Lankan asylum-seekers were in a tense standoff with Indonesian authorities last night after the large cargo boat they were piloting towards Christmas Island broke down and they resisted navy attempts to make them disembark at the port in Merak.

A spokesman for the group, who would give his name only as Alex, said the Sri Lankans had each paid \$US15,000 (\$16,533) to board the wooden craft in Malaysia 13 days ago, after travelling there by air from Jaffna.

“If the authorities in Sri Lanka know this is me on this boat, they will hunt down my wife and children in Jaffna and kill them,” the frightened man said. “I have been waiting for my wife and children to follow me here. As soon as possible we need to get to Australia.”

The Sri Lankan asylum-seekers and six Indonesian crew members were under military guard aboard the cargo ship in western Java after being intercepted trying to sail to Christmas Island.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono intervened directly in the case of the asylum-seekers, who were detained trying to sail to Christmas Island at the weekend.

Dr Yudhoyono has ordered his navy head of staff to treat with care the group of hungry and tired refugees, who last night were expected to be towed to shore after their cargo boat's engine died. They were then to be dealt with by immigration officials after having refused for the past three days to leave their stricken boat.

Kevin Rudd confirmed yesterday he had made a personal plea to Dr Yudhoyono at the weekend for the Indonesians to intercept the boat.

Alex denied last night that those on board the boat were associated with **Tamil Tigers**.

“We are civilians, not **Tamil Tigers**. Every day there are Tamils being killed and raped in the refugee camps. Men are blindfolded and shot in the back of the head.

“In Sri Lanka if you are Tamil there is no opportunity -- the government can detain you without cause, and take you to trial without evidence.”

Alex said the group's choice of Australia as a destination was not based on intimate knowledge of federal government immigration policy, but simply “because we had to flee somewhere”.

Voyage of the damned going nowhere

“Another boat full of Tamils left Malaysia for Canada, and for that people were paying \$US45,000 per person,” he said. “That was far too expensive.”

He said the group had been at sea for 13 days before being captured by an Indonesian navy vessel early on Saturday morning. “We spent a month in the jungle in Malaysia before that,” he said.

International Organisation for Migration staff were working with Immigration Department

Continued -- Page 8

From Page 1

officials last night to resolve the standoff, with the Sri Lankans adamant they wanted to continue their journey to Australia.

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A military source, who refused to be named, said navy ships guarding the asylum-seekers had accompanied the boat after it was intercepted in the Sunda Strait near Anak Krakatau, an active volcano that attracts thousands of tourists to its spectacular displays.

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The refugees last night were refusing to leave the boat. The boat was moored alongside an Indonesian submarine chaser and bore a large hand-painted sign saying: “We are Sri Lankan civilians plz save our life.”

Australian Federal Police and immigration department officers had already visited the boat people, the source said. However they were refusing to speak to officials.

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Voyage of the damned going nowhere

A large number of them then use this opportunity to organise risky voyages such as the most recent one to be intercepted, often with the services of organised people-smuggling rings.

Australia has launched a joint policing program with Indonesia to combat the people trafficking wave, with at least a dozen ports across the country being targeted.

Despite tough language from Jakarta for Australia's benefit, officials admit they are unable to stem the flow of refugees through the country. Many of the asylum-seekers themselves admit the flow has increased as a result of the Rudd government's softer measures on the problem.

These measures, which many asylum-seekers believe will give them a greater chance at being accepted as refugees by Australia if they try the journey by boat, have led to the main detention and processing centre at Christmas Island being filled beyond its capacity.

However Indonesian detention centres are also stretched beyond capacity, despite financial and other assistance from foreign governments including Australia and from the International Organisation for Migration.

The IOM works with the UNHCR giving shelter, food and medical treatment to thousands of asylum-seekers living in the community in areas such as Puncak, a mountainous resort region full of low-rent hostels south of Jakarta.

Hundreds more are in immigration detention centres across the country, with the latest boatload almost certain to join that category unless any of them can produce documentation showing they had refugee applications already being assessed by the UN.

Asylum-seekers who are successful in such applications while living in Indonesia then have the right to be considered for resettlement in a third country that has signed the international treaty dealing with refugees.

Chief among these countries are Australia, the US and Canada. Indonesia has never signed the treaty and, despite promises by Dr Yudhoyono during a visit by Mr Rudd last year, has not enacted anti-people smuggling legislation.

Load-Date: October 13, 2009

LTTE fire at civilians

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 78 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 21 -- According to military officials, the **LTTE** even at the last moment tried to prevent civilians arriving in Government controlled areas and three suicide explosions took place around 8 am yesterday killing at least 17 civilians including children and **women**.

"At least 17 civilians including **women** and children have been killed in the cowardly suicide blasts," a military official added. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lankans threaten to set fire to boat

The Australian

October 14, 2009 Wednesday

8 - NSW Metro Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 1193 words

Byline: STEPHEN FITZPATRICK, MERAK, INDONESIA

Body

MORE than 260 Sri Lankan asylum-seekers were last night threatening to blow up their boat if the Indonesian navy forced them to disembark at the port in Merak after the large cargo boat they were piloting towards Christmas Island broke down.

“We have gas canisters and we have told the navy we will blow up the boat and jump into the ocean if they try to force us off the boat,” said a spokesman for the asylum-seekers, who would only give his name as Alex.

Alex said the Sri Lankans had each paid \$US15,000 (\$16,533) to board the wooden craft in Malaysia 13 days ago, after travelling there by air from Jaffna.

“If the authorities in Sri Lanka know this is me on this boat, they will hunt down my wife and children in Jaffna and kill them,” the frightened man said. “I have been waiting for my wife and children to follow me here. As soon as possible, we need to get to Australia.”

The Sri Lankan asylum-seekers and six Indonesian crew members were under military guard aboard the cargo ship in western Java after being intercepted trying to sail to Christmas Island.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono intervened directly in the case of the asylum-seekers, who were detained trying to sail to Christmas Island at the weekend.

Dr Yudhoyono has ordered his navy chief of staff to treat with care the group of hungry and tired refugees, who last night were expected to be towed to shore after their cargo boat's engine died. They were then to be dealt with by immigration officials after having refused for the past three days to leave their stricken boat.

Kevin Rudd confirmed yesterday he had made a personal plea to Dr Yudhoyono for the Indonesians to intercept the boat.

Alex denied last night that those on board the boat were associated with **Tamil Tigers**.

“We are civilians, not **Tamil Tigers**. Every day there are Tamils being killed and raped in the refugee camps. Men are blindfolded and shot in the back of the head.

“In Sri Lanka if you are Tamil there is no opportunity -- the government can detain you without cause, and take you to trial without evidence.”

Sri Lankans threaten to set fire to boat

Alex said the group's choice of Australia as a destination was not based on intimate knowledge of federal government immigration policy, but simply "because we had to flee somewhere".

"Another boat full of Tamils left Malaysia for Canada, and for that people were paying \$US45,000 per person," he said. "That was far too expensive."

He said the group had been at sea for 13 days before being captured by an Indonesian navy vessel early on Saturday morning. "We spent a month in the jungle in Malaysia before that," he said.

Continued -- Page 8

From Page 1

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The Australian

October 14, 2009 Wednesday

N - Canberra Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 1193 words

Byline: Stephen Fitzpatrick

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Load-Date: October 13, 2009

**CONGRESSMAN MCMAHON VOTES IN FAVOR OF FOREIGN RELATIONS
AUTHORIZATION ACT; INCLUDES PROVISIONS RELEVANT TO ETHNIC
GROUPS IN DISTRICT**

States News Service

June 10, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 States News Service

Length: 1342 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

The following information was released by the office of New York Rep. Michael E. McMahon:

Today, Congressman Michael E. McMahon voted in favor of H.R. 2410, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act. The bill is designed to protect the United States' national security interests by reinforcing our diplomacy and development. Specifically, H.R. 2410 authorizes \$18 billion in FY 2010 and such sums as may be necessary in FY 2011 for the funding of the State Department, Peace Corps, Broadcast Board of Governors, and other foreign affairs programs.

"This bill invests in our front line foreign service officers and public diplomacy and ensures that American diplomacy has an equal footing with our military engagement around the world," said Rep. McMahon. "It also includes provision reflecting my priority of creating Global Cultural Exchanges between Americans and a range of groups including, minority high school students in Sri Lanka and women legislators in Liberia."

Rep. McMahon drafted four provisions to H.R. 2410, focusing on relations with Sri Lanka and Liberia. New York's 13th Congressional District is home to the largest temporary protective status Liberian in the country. Additionally, over 2000 Sri Lankans reside in Rep. McMahon's district, the majority of which are of ethnic Tamil origin. Many of Rep. McMahon's constituents have led the effort to bring humanitarian aid into the IDP camps and end the 25 year conflict in Sri Lanka.

"Congress is serious about its commitments, responsibilities and presence overseas to ensure a more secure future for our own citizens and to improve the livelihood of those in the developing world," continued Rep. McMahon. "Hopefully, this legislation will prevent foreign conflicts, improve this country's image internationally and renew our relationships with countries we have long considered allies."

Below is an overview of some of the bill's key provisions as well as information on the provisions included by Rep. McMahon:

Strengthens U.S. diplomatic activities by strengthening the State Department. The bill includes several provisions to strengthen the capabilities of the State Department. For example, it is designed to close the current "diplomacy gap" that has created imbalances and vulnerabilities in U.S. national security and resulted in a 16% gap in staffing in some overseas posts. Specifically, it supports the President's request to rebuild the Foreign Service, including

CONGRESSMAN MCMAHON VOTES IN FAVOR OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT;
INCLUDES PROVISIONS RELEVANT TO ETHNIC GROUPS IN DISTRICT

authorization of 1,500 new Foreign Service officers at State and 700 at the U.S. Agency for International Development over fiscal years 2010 and 2011.

Enhances efforts to assist Mexico and other Western Hemisphere countries reduce drug-related violence. The bill strengthens the "Merida Initiative," which is an agreement reached by President Bush and Mexico in 2007 pledging U.S. assistance to the Mexican government in its fight against the drug cartels. This bill strengthens the Merida Initiative -- requiring the President to designate a "Merida Coordinator" at the State Department, with the rank of ambassador, to track all Merida Initiative-related efforts throughout the U.S. government. It also requires the President to incorporate Caribbean countries into the Initiative.

Bolsters the Peace Corps. The bill substantially increases the budget of the Peace Corps to support President Obama's goal of doubling the number of Peace Corps volunteers and authorize a plan to use short-term volunteers to respond to humanitarian and development needs.

Ensures the U.S. meets its financial commitments to the U.N. and other international organizations. The bill authorizes \$1.8 billion in FY 2010, and such funds as may be necessary in FY 2011, for assessed contributions to international organizations. International organizations to which the U.S. contributes include the U.N., the U.N.'s specialized agencies, and the Organization of American States and other inter-American organizations.

Reforms the system of export controls for military technology. The bill contains numerous reforms to better ensure that arms exports comply with U.S. foreign policy and security objectives. It also requires the President to conduct a comprehensive and systematic review of the U.S. arms export control system in the context of the national security interests and strategic foreign policy objectives of the United States.

Strengthens the arms control and nonproliferation capabilities of the State Department. The bill authorizes \$3 million for 25 new positions at the State Department for arms control and nonproliferation functions, and gives additional authority to the Secretary of State under the Arms Control and Disarmament Act (PL 87-297). It also establishes a scholarship program to recruit students for civilian careers in the fields of nonproliferation, arms control and international security.

Creates a new foundation to help U.S. students study abroad. The bill establishes the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation as a new executive branch corporation to expand dramatically the number and economic diversity of U.S. students studying abroad.

Increases resources for enforcement of intellectual property rights. The bill increases resources and training for enforcement of intellectual property rights, especially in countries identified by the U.S. government as lax in enforcing those rights - including by establishing 10 intellectual property attaches to serve at U.S. embassies around the world.

Rep. McMahon's provisions included in H.R. 2410:

Sec. 223: "Exchanges between Sri Lanka and the United States to promote dialogue among minority groups in Sri Lanka."

-

Directs the Secretary of State to create and fund a dialogue workshop in the US for Sri Lankan minority to engage in dialogue in the US.

-

Promotes inter-ethnic tolerance in Sri Lanka following the end of the 25 year war between the majority Sinhalese government and **Tamil Tigers**.

Sec. 224: "Exchanges between Liberia and the United States for **women** legislators."

CONGRESSMAN MCMAHON VOTES IN FAVOR OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT;
INCLUDES PROVISIONS RELEVANT TO ETHNIC GROUPS IN DISTRICT

-
Directs the Secretary of State to create and fund an exchange program for Liberian women legislators and their female staffers.

-
Promotes women in politics.

Sec. 1001: "Assessment of Special Court for Sierra Leone."

-
Assesses the funds and needs of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

-
This is the court which is trying Charles Taylor, who was responsible for innumerable deaths and atrocities during the Liberian Civil War.

Sec. 1122: "Sense of Congress on the humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka."

-
A provision that encourages the Sri Lankan government to pursue a political solution amongst minority groups in Sri Lanka following the recent end to the conflict between the government and the Tamil Tigers.

-
Also insists upon the government of Sri Lanka to allow humanitarian agencies to access the IDP camps to assist Tamil civilians and survivors of the recent conflict who are suffering from various physical and mental injuries.

-
Encourages the government of Sri Lanka to transition the IDP camps from military to civilian control to ease the struggle of the Tamil civilians.

Groups That Have Issued Statements of Support for H.R. 2410

Advocates for Youth

Aerospace Industries Association

American Council on Education

Amnesty International

Boeing

CARE

Council on Global Equality

Council for a Livable World

Church World Service

Citizens for Global Solutions

CONGRESSMAN MCMAHON VOTES IN FAVOR OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT;
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Friends Committee on National Legislation

Genocide Intervention Network

Global Action for Children

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities

Human Rights Campaign

Human Rights Watch

Intellectual Property Owners Association

International Center for Research on **Women**

International Campaign for Tibet

International Rescue Committee

International **Women's** Health Coalition

Lockheed Martin

Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network

National Association of Manufacturers

National Peace Corps Association

Oxfam

Pathfinder International

Population Council

Refugee Council USA

Satellite Industry Association

Save Darfur

U.N. Foundation

United Methodist Church

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

U.S. Travel Association

Women Thrive Worldwide

Women's Refugee Commission

Load-Date: July 15, 2009

CONGRESSMAN MCMAHON VOTES IN FAVOR OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT;
INCLUDES PROVISIONS RELEVANT TO ETHNIC GROUPS IN DISTRICT

End of Document

Suspected LTTE female area leader arrested in Ampara

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

October 23, 2009 Friday

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Length: 77 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Oct. 23 -- A suspected **LTTE female** area leader was arrested in Ampara following a search operation launched by the Special Task Force (STF) while in a similar operation four **LTTE** suspects, including a top ranking **LTTE** cadre, were arrested from Vavuniya, the police said today. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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

Load-Date: October 23, 2009

RAW: A rogue agency

Pakistan Observer

October 23, 2009 Friday

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Section: Vol. XV; No. 295

Length: 1493 words

Byline: Fatima Syed

Body

The Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) of India was created in 1950 with a mission to use and exploit political dissent, ethnic divisions, economic backwardness and criminal elements within targeted states to foment subversion, terrorism and sabotage. RAW is continuing its malicious activities in Pakistan for the last sixty years.

It is encouraging militancy and separatism in different provinces of Pakistan such as North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Balochistan. It runs thousands of agents and spends millions of rupees in its operations against Pakistan. The attack on GHQ on 10 October was a work of RAW according to Army's preliminary investigation. The attackers were very well equipped and immaculately trained.

These attacks had resemblance with the attacks on Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore which were linked to the **Tamil Tigers** working in Sri Lanka under the guidance of RAW. Pakistan helped the Sri Lankan government in countering the **LTTE** terrorist activities and this act was not liked by the Indian government.

In reaction, the RAW agents in collaboration with the extremists working in Swat planned an attack on the Sri Lankan Team to create misunderstandings between Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The capture of Aqeel alias Dr. Usman, who had been on the wanted list for his role in planning and masterminding the attack on the Sri Lankan Cricket team, in GHQ attack has unearthed the truth that RAW is behind both these attacks.

On 9 October 2009 at least 50 people have been killed and many injured when a vehicle laden with explosives had been detonated and destroyed near Peshawar's Khyber Bazaar. This blast was planned and executed under the direct supervision of RAW. In this bombing, VBIED (Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device) has been detonated which is the specialty of Indian Intelligence agency.

The inquiry of Sanjhotra Express proved that RAW's agent Lt. Col. Prohit was an expert of preparing such type of devices and vehicles for killing of minorities. Similarly, earlier on 5 October 2009 RAW trained terrorist blasted himself outside the UN's World Food Programme office in Islamabad.

The explosion left two Pakistani **women** and a foreigner killed and eight others injured. Since 9/11, Indian influence has increased tremendously in Afghanistan. Raw has established consulates and trade missions along the Pak-Afghan border to destabilize Baluchistan and North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Several agents of RAW captured in FATA, Waziristan and other southern eastern areas provided that Indians had managed to penetrate deeply in collaboration with Indian allies in the region.

RAW: A rogue agency

An Indian senior official named as Malkit Chand supposedly working as third secretary of education & director of Indian cultural centre is found engaged in human trafficking of Pakistani Baloch students from Afghanistan to India for their special training. Balochi students particularly the children of Baloch nomads are being offered a sum of about us\$200-300 per month when they are inducted to proceed to India. Chandra Mohan Mishra a third secretary at Indian embassy in Kabul and a person named J. Baby working as an attaché (technical) had held several meetings with Baloch militants during mid-2008. These Indian intelligence officials are also engaged in financing Pakistani youths and sending them from tribal areas to several other central Asian states.

India had invested over a billion dollars in Afghanistan so that it could build a base of operations against Pakistan. More than 10,000 Indian troops were stationed in Afghanistan under the garb of supervising the construction of Jalalabad-Chahbahar road project which was completed. Many mercantile shops run by Indians have an intelligence officer in the rear.

RAW is providing them money, training, sophisticated weapons and satellite communication system. According to sources Indian intelligence officials working in the disguise of diplomats in embassy and consulates in Afghanistan have set up a vast covert operation network to destabilize FATA, northern areas and Baluchistan engaging dozens of Afghan, Indians, the drug dealers and the Afghan warlords.

In case of Baluchistan Indian role is not new. It is as old as the revolt itself. India is repeating the history and trying to separate Baluchistan just like East Pakistan. Pakistan has stockpiles of evidence against Indian consulates in Afghanistan that are being used to fund terrorism in Pakistan through TTP as well as Brahamdagh Bugti and his Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA).

A dossier containing proof of Indian involvement in "subversive activities" in Pakistan was handed over by Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani to his Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh during their meeting at Sharm-el-Sheikh. The dossier revealed details of Indian contacts with those involved in attacks on the Sri Lankan cricket team and the Manawan police station.

Operatives of RAW who remained in touch with the perpetrators of the attacks have been identified and proof of their interaction has been attached in the dossier. A description of the Indian arms and explosives used in the attack on the Sri Lankan team has been made part of the dossier, besides which the name and particulars of the perpetrators, who illegally entered Pakistan from India and joined their accomplices who had reached Lahore from Waziristan, have been mentioned in the dossier.

It also said to list the safe houses being run by RAW in Afghanistan where terrorists are trained and launched for missions in Pakistan. The dossier also deals with the Baluchistan insurgency and Indian linkages with the insurgents, particularly Brahamdagh Bugti, Burhan and Sher Khan. Photographs of their meetings with Indian operatives are part of the evidence, which also describes Bugti's visit to India and the meetings he had with Indian secret service personnel.

The dossier mentions an India-funded training camp at Kandahar where Baloch insurgents particularly from Bugti clan were being trained and provided arms and ammunition for sabotage activities in the Pakistani province. Similarly, Talal Bugti said that 300 Baloch nationalists are getting training at RAW's training center in Afghanistan.

The Baluchistan Chief Minister said that RAW was running terrorist training camps in Iran and Afghanistan. It has now set up 30 to 40 such camps in Baluchistan, each with training facility for 30 people who are paid 10,000 monthly. Christine Fair of RAND Corporation also unearthed some facts about the Indian consulates in Afghanistan and Iran. She said, "I think it would be a mistake to completely disregard Pakistan's regional perceptions due to doubts about Indian competence in executing covert operations. That misses the point entirely. And I think it's unfair to dismiss the notion that Pakistan's apprehensions about Afghanistan stem in part from its security competition with India.

Having visited the Indian mission in Zahedan, Iran, I can assure you that they are not issuing Visas as the main activity! Moreover, India has run operations from its missions in Mazar and is like doing so from the other

RAW: A rogue agency

consulates it has reopened in Jalalabad and Qandahar along the border. Indian officials have told me privately that they are pumping money into Baluchistan".

Similarly, the leading Newspaper of Sri Lanka, Daily Mirror, in its editorial has criticized the role of Indian intelligence agency RAW. It said, among its (RAW's) most ambitious operations that are currently underway, is the move to separate Baluchistan province from Pakistan by supporting (the) Baluchistan Liberation Army".

It is also revealed that India has given forty billion rupees special fund to its intelligence agency (RAW) for creating instability in Pakistan, China, Afghanistan and Bangladesh to achieve the target of becoming a decisive power in the region. Moreover, not only RAW but several other Indian agencies have also been given important assignments to carry out subversive activities in Pakistan.

There is a need that international community should check the activities of RAW as it operates in a Mafia style, each time overstepping the limits of Intelligence operations. Interestingly, RAW is not a regular organ of the state rather it is an unnatural organ hence it is not accountable before Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha of India.

To the contrary, RAW enjoys the power to supervise all levels throughout India. RAW creates huge pressure in framing India's external policies, especially relating to its neighbouring countries.

The Indian Ministry of External Affairs does nothing more than implementing the policies worked out by RAW so in a way RAW makes the foreign policy of India. The absolute power enjoyed by RAW makes her more fearsome agency than its superior KGB, CIA, Mi-6, and the Mossad. For the peace of South Asia, it is very essential that India must put a bridle on this rouge agency otherwise its activities could be hazardous for the region.

Load-Date: November 16, 2011

End of Document

'We are the voice of the voiceless'; Federal politicians echo call for ceasefire in Sri Lanka

Ottawa Citizen

April 22, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A5

Length: 1062 words

Byline: Cassandra Drudi, with files from Laura Keil and Brendan Kennedy, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

It was damp and grey in Ottawa on Tuesday, but that did not stop thousands of Canadian Tamil protesters from flooding Parliament Hill to vent their frustration and demand immediate government action to stop the ongoing violence in the decades-old civil war in Sri Lanka.

The protesters, estimated at 30,000 by RCMP spokeswoman Cpl. Caroline Poulin, but at between 12,000 and 15,000 by other officials, want the Canadian government to push for a permanent ceasefire in the latest round of hostilities that has trapped 100,000 civilians in the war zone. After coming from as far as Montreal and Toronto, they marched peacefully in the drizzle, snarling rush-hour traffic and waving signs calling for an end to what they say is genocide in Sri Lanka. They carried Canadian flags and stark black banners, symbolic, they said, of civilians killed in the military offensive by the Sri Lankan government. They demanded the withdrawal of Canada's High Commissioner from the war-torn country and permission for independent journalists to enter.

"It really is a war without witnesses and people don't realize it," said Shiyana Kula, 20, a York University student who travelled from Toronto with family and friends.

Jothi Shanmugam, a 20-year-old University of Toronto student, said it was important for many in the Canadian Tamil community to be at the protest to speak out for those in Sri Lanka who are unable to speak for themselves.

"We feel we are the voice of the voiceless," she said, adding her uncle died two weeks ago during shelling by the Sri Lankan military.

For the first time since the demonstrations began two weeks ago, federal politicians, including Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff and NDP Leader Jack Layton showed up to echo the call for a ceasefire. The politicians, including government ministers had shunned the protesters because many of them carried banners of the **Tamil Tigers**, considered a terrorist group by Canada.

With Tiger flags not on display Tuesday, Ignatieff met with members of the community and issued a statement calling for an end to the violence. He said Canada had a special responsibility to help end the conflict and bring about reconciliation.

"We cannot sit back and watch as thousands of innocent lives are lost in the crossfire, and we condemn any attempt to use civilians as human shields," he said.

'We are the voice of the voiceless'; Federal politicians echo call for ceasefire in Sri Lanka

Shortly before 1 p.m., Layton briefly addressed the crowd. "It is time for the voices of the leaders of the world to speak up and call for a ceasefire," he said to raucous applause.

Layton also said Canada should insist that journalists be given access to Sri Lanka "so that the truth can be known."

A security official from the Privy Council Office also showed up at the demonstration to pick up a petition for Prime Minister Stephen Harper from Veera Vijenthira, a community leader from the Coalition to Stop the War in Sri Lanka.

Canada is home to an estimated 140,000 Tamils, by far the largest Tamil community outside Sri Lanka. Unofficial estimates of the Canadian Tamil population run up to 400,000.

Some, such as Jothi Shanmugam have relatives hiding out in a bunker in the country's northeast. Her aunt is occasionally able to walk five hours to a telephone she uses to call her family in Canada. She ends each call by saying her family will hear from her again if she's still alive.

"We know what's going on because we're hearing it from people who are going through it," Shanmugam said.

The civil war between the Tamil Tigers, who are fighting for a homeland for the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka, began in 1983 and has so far claimed an estimated 70,000 lives.

The war seems to be entering a decisive final phase with reports suggesting the Tamil Tiger rebels are trapped in small corner of their stronghold. On Monday, they vowed to fight to the death, ignoring a Sri Lankan army ultimatum to surrender within 24 hours. Reports say more than 60,000 people have escaped from the so-called "no-fire zone" in the past 48 hours, but the United Nations says as many as 100,000 civilians may still be trapped.

Many of protesters were angry at the Canadian government for not doing enough to end the violence despite a two-week protest.

"I'm panicking. I don't know what to do next," said Prabha Sinna, who came from Toronto. "I don't know what other ways a human being can express their thoughts and recourse for action in a democratic means."

Pushparahamany Nallarathnam, a 46-year-old mother who went on a 10-day hunger strike before being persuaded to end it, said she would resume the hunger strike if the Tamil community was not satisfied with the government's response.

"It was a painful 10 days, but I will do it again if our demands are not met," she said through a translator.

"My health is not important while Tamil people die everyday in Sri Lanka."

- - -

What You're Saying About the Tamil Protests

"My family is dying. I cannot focus on my studies. How can I have a regular day?"

Jana Sivarajah, 21, a Carleton University engineering student

"I feel with the people in terms of humanitarianism, but you've raised your issue, it's time to go home."

Elie Braks, Ottawa, owner, Bello Uomo Fine Men's Wear

"Our No. 1 priority is to stop the killings of Tamil people. We failed in Darfur. We failed in Rwanda. I think Canadians have a chance to stop this."

Sentha Nada, 37, from Toronto

"As long as they don't block and just lie in the intersections again, then it's perfectly fine."

'We are the voice of the voiceless'; Federal politicians echo call for ceasefire in Sri Lanka

Chris Semple, Ottawa

"I'm here to represent my people. They have to recognize us and we need free land, otherwise blood river is going on."

Siva Gunaseenan, 45, from Toronto

"Well they accomplished what they set out to accomplish and that is to educate people. I mean, before, people didn't really know what was happening out there."

Stephanie Walters, Ottawa, works for a staffing firm

"To go back home is to risk your life. That feeling, you just don't know how to describe it. For 61 years we have asked for our rights, and for 61 years, they have ignored us."

Supanki Kala, 22, from Toronto

"With the bus strike and everything's that's gone on, I think it's been hard on business and this sure doesn't help."

Ginette Fournier, Ottawa, A2 prêt à porter women's boutique

-- Compiled by Cassandra Drudi and Stephanie Smith

Graphic

Colour Photo: Pat McGrath, The Ottawa Citizen; Mock coffins intended to represent victims of the decades-old civil war in Sri Lanka are carried by some of the protesters on Parliament Hill on Tuesday. ;

Colour Photo: Laura Keil, The Ottawa Citizen; Some of the demonstrators kneel on the Centre Block steps on Tuesday. An RCMP spokeswoman estimated the crowd at 30,000, but other officials pegged it at 12,000-15,000. ;
Graphic/Diagram: Dennis Leung, The Ottawa Citizen; ;

Colour Photo: Jana Sivarajah ;

Colour Photo: Elie Braks ;

Colour Photo: Senthana Nada ;

Colour Photo: Chris Semple ;

Colour Photo: Siva Gunaseenan ;

Colour Photo: Stephanie Walters ;

Colour Photo: Supanki Kala ;

Colour Photo: Ginette Fournier ;

Load-Date: April 24, 2009

Dying seconds; Red Cross says Sri Lankans in 'catastrophic' situation as army closes in on rebels

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

April 22, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 10

Length: 649 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Tens of thousands of civilians trapped in Sri Lanka's northern war zone face a "catastrophic" situation, the Red Cross said Tuesday, amid fears a final assault against the Tamil Tiger rebels would lead to a dramatic rise in casualties.

The UN and others have called for a negotiated truce to allow civilians to leave the rebel-held coastal strip, and the government says more than 52,000 had escaped since Monday.

But it has refused to heed those international pleas to halt the fighting, saying it is on the verge of crushing the separatists and putting an end to the 25-year-old war.

In Ottawa, thousands of Tamil protesters packed the front lawn of Parliament on Tuesday, calling on the Canadian government to pressure Sri Lanka to end its offensive.

The United Nations estimated more than 4,500 civilians have been killed in the past three months.

The rebels said more than 1,000 civilians died Monday in a government raid, while the government said it rescued thousands after they broke through a barrier built by the insurgents that protects their last stronghold.

Human rights groups say the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam are holding many people in the enclave against their will and using them as human shields. Those groups have also accused the government of indiscriminate shelling in the region. Both sides deny the allegations.

Thousands of civilians also fled in packed small boats, and they were picked up by navy patrols and transported to camps where Tamils who have escaped the war are being held.

More than 2,000 people in about 100 boats were picked up Monday.

The Red Cross said about 50,000 civilians were still stranded, while Human Rights Watch put the number between 50,000 and 100,000.

Dying seconds; Red Cross says Sri Lankans in 'catastrophic' situation as army closes in on rebels

A worker for Doctors Without Borders said hundreds of wounded were arriving at her hospital in Vavuniya, south of the war zone, in government-arranged buses, and some had died en route. The hospital is overcrowded with 1,200 people being accommodated in a facility with only 400 beds, said mental health officer Karen Stewart, according to a statement from the aid group.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres was concerned about the "dramatic situation" for civilians still in the war zone, said commission spokesman Ron Redmond.

"There are innocent civilians - women and children - caught in the middle of the conflict ... so the high commissioner is saying there should be a pause in the hostilities and the LTTE should allow civilians to leave," Redmond said.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara denied that 1,000 civilians died, saying 17 civilians were killed Monday by rebel shelling and by three suicide bombers.

"Our troops are rescuing the trapped civilians. It's the LTTE which is preventing civilians from fleeing," Nanayakkara said.

It was impossible to get independent accounts of casualties because journalists are restricted from the war zone.

The number of fleeing civilians made it clear that the government had vastly underestimated how many people were caught in the fighting.

"Both sides need to show far greater concern for civilians, or many more civilians will die," said Brad Adams, Asia director for the New York-based group Human Rights Watch.

A final government offensive "could lead to a dramatic increase in the number of civilian casualties," the International Committee of the Red Cross said.

"The situation is nothing short of catastrophic. Ongoing fighting has killed or wounded hundreds of civilians who have only minimal access to medical care," said Red Cross operations director Pierre Kraehenbuehl. "I cannot remember ... as much concentrated pain and exposure to violence with very, very minimal possibilities to reach anywhere that could be called safe."

The UN Children's Fund South Asia director Daniel Toole said he was worried about the safety of children still in the war zone because "our greatest fear is that the worst is yet to come."

Graphic

Photo: Canadian Press; Ethnic Tamil civilians escape from Tamil Tiger controlled areas. ;

Load-Date: April 22, 2009

LTTE female cadre commits suicide, another arrested

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

September 22, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 90 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Sept. 22 -- A **female LTTE** cadre committed suicide by swallowing cyanide after she was arrested together with another **female** cadre in Vavuniya this afternoon. Police believe both cadres were members of the **LTTE** pistol gang.

Following information obtained from the surviving **female** cadre the police recovered suicide kits and explosives hidden in the ground. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: September 22, 2009

The fall of the Great Empires

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

June 30, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 1095 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 30 -- The British Empire ruled two thirds of the world. So much so, that it was said in the past that the sun never sets in the British Empire. The new boy in the 'empire classroom' is The United States of America.

Sri Lanka or Ceylon, as it was then known was one of the most precious possessions of the British Crown. Fortunately, we did not come under the influence of the new rich, new world. However, these so called great powers ruled the world and bent the rules for their benefit. They set the standards and the so called Third World countries like India and Sri Lanka obsequiously accepted the crumbs that fell from their tables. There are no more crumbs to be collected. The tables are empty-but the arrogance remains! This country saw the spectacle of unadulterated interference on an unprecedented level, by these big powers (sic) and the little satellites like France and Germany. They could not come to terms with Sri Lanka's success in the military department and the Foreign relations arena. America that bombed the daylight out of Vietnam with Napalm and more bombs than were used in the entire Second World War were trying to tell us about the violation of human rights. They, who insisted that we enter into a political dialogue with the LTTE, pressurized Pakistan to abrogate the political arrangement with the Taliban in the Swat Valley. They who used the Hydrogen Bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki causing untold misery and destruction in Japan on a mass scale are talking of civilian casualties. They not only caused maximum destruction to human lives but were also insisting on war reparations from the fallen foe. It was we who defended Japan at the San Francisco conference! Clemency for a fallen foe. The world was kept spellbound by J.R. Jayewardene impassioned plea. I sometimes wonder if the Japanese have forgotten the contribution made by Sri Lanka! Today, there are over three million refugees in the Swat Valley. Iraq, which was invaded ostensibly due to weapons of mass destruction has over a million war refugees. There are no weapons of mass destruction but the war and the violation of the rights of the Iraqis continues with added vigour. The big (sic) powers are wading through slaughter and misery to the oil fields of Iraq. History is replete with the downfall of mighty empires. The Roman Empire and the Persian Empire were such examples. Alexander, Napoleon who waged relentless wars for world domination eventually lost not only their Empires but also their lives. Is it now the turn of the European and American Empires to decline and fall into ruin? Are coming events casting ominous shadows? Is that why they struggle to maintain their supremacy by harassing and intimidating Sri Lanka? How are these mighty Empires going to decline, one may ask. The answer is quite simple- Terrorism. Terrorism coupled with unstable economies resulting in combating terrorism the wrong way. The 9/11 struck the very heart of America. Blustering statements were made to hunt Osama Bin Laden to the ends of the Earth. The massive deployment of American, British and European forces is simply draining Western economies of their already depleted resources. None of them are even close to victory. Bin Laden is gaining more adherents. Pakistan is teetering on the edge of disintegration. America will abandon Pakistan in the way that they turned away from Pervez Musharraf. It was an American General who said "Never go to war. Try to avoid war. If everything has failed and you have to go to war. Give it everything you've got and finish it fast." The Americans, the British and the Europeans need to realize that the West is no longer the

The fall of the Great Empires

centre of the Universe. How many wars the Americans going to fight unsuccessfully? Who takes them seriously? The North Koreans are thumbing their noses at them. So is the mighty Russian Empire. Iran is against them. Iraq despises them. Afghanistan will eventually end up like Pakistan if they dance to the fickle drumbeat of the Americans. Strong economic and Military Forces are emerging. China, India and other parts of Asia have begun to realize that the key to success is self reliance and strength. A new alignment of Forces is slowly taking place. The Americans and the British cannot Combat terrorism without the support of the world. They cannot obtain the support of the world by trying to bludgeon the world into submission. The Western powers are soon going to find that they are the main targets of terrorism. They have lost the stomach for the type of war that has to be fought to eliminate terrorism. Gone are the days of the Geneva Convention and the Rules of Combat. This was when two uniformed armies faced each other on two distinct lines, fighting stopped at night and resumed the next day after both sides had a respite! Today, wars are fought in the shadows. Terror agents don't wear uniforms. It is the day of the land mine, the suicide bomber, and the child soldier. Destroying civilian targets is the first line of attack. Buddhist monks, little children, women are the victims. The nature of the war has changed. Good luck therefore to those who think that the terrorists can be subdued by either talking to them or having a half hearted attempts at fighting them. Sri Lanka has won her war against terrorism. There is no elation but only relief. The price that we had to pay for the victory was enormous. Over 60,000 Tamils and Sinhalese have perished in this war. We gave it everything we had and it is over. The Tamil people are our citizens and we know what is best for them. We do not need Hillary Clinton and David Miliband to tell us how to treat our people. The war may be over. Insidious Forces are, however, are at work. Every attempt will be made to negate the gains that we made against the LTTE. International lobbyists are working overtime. Tamil operatives who were bleeding the People dry with demands for money for an elusive Eelam, will make every attempt to keep the pot boiling to consolidate their comfortable lifestyles in the West by false propaganda. Our own paid hacks who built up the myth of an invincible LTTE, will soon join the bandwagon. May we, at this very late stage, tell the Western Powers that the only way terrorism can be combated is by presenting an united front against this scourge? Sri Lanka is more than willing to play its part on the world stage. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: June 30, 2009

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LTTE women's force leader arrested

UPI

May 29, 2009 Friday 4:26 PM EST

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Length: 168 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, May 29

Body

Subramaniam Shivathai, the leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam women's force, has been arrested in Sri Lanka, police said Friday.

Police spokesman Ranjith Gunasekara confirmed the political wing leader, who has the alias Thamilini, was arrested by a special police force in a village in Sri Lanka's Vavuniya district, China's official state-run Xinhua news agency said.

Gunasekara said Shivathai's mother and sister were also arrested in the unidentified Vavuniya village. The names of Shivathai's relatives were not reported.

The arrest of the LTTE official comes after Sri Lankan government forces successfully defeated the rebel group after a three-year military campaign, Xinhua said.

The Chinese news agency said during the nearly 30 years the rebel group attempted to campaign for a separate Tamil homeland, more than 100,000 people were killed.

The conflict in northern Sri Lanka between LTTE troops and government forces also forced nearly 270,000 civilians to leave their homes in search of safety.

Load-Date: May 30, 2009

Going beyond the back-handed slap from Washington

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

October 10, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 1003 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Oct. 10 -- Hillary Clinton, US Secretary of State slipped. Badly. So badly that US Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Patricia Butenis got tongue-tied trying to do damage-control. Melanne Verveer, US Ambassador-at-Large on Women's Issues, later said Clinton's claim of Sri Lanka using 'rape as a weapon of war' did not refer to the last phase of the struggle to liberate the country from terrorism. Interesting. I went through a clip of Clinton's speech to the UN Security Council and nowhere did she mention 'dates'. An oversight, Verveer wants us to believe. Ok, Clinton slipped, Washington said 'oops!' and we can now move on. Right? Wrong.

'Wrong,' because P.J. Crowley, US Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs speaking with reporters and the Foreign Press Centre had reiterated Verveer's clarification and speaks if 'significant levels of rape documented (he thinks, he says) through 2002 or 2003 in various reports, including State Department reports as well as Amnesty International reports'.

Looks like it's not only Hillary Clinton who has an aversion to doing homework! Crowley's reference is to the first two years of the controversial 'Ceasefire Agreement' between Ranil Wickremesinghe and Velupillai Prabhakaran. There was no 'war' at the time, i.e. the guns had fallen silent (the LTTE did, however, engage in troop movement, recruitment, forcibly conscript children, assassinate political opponents and intelligence operatives of the Army, procure weapons and so on). As such rape being used as weapon of war is an empty charge.

The message that Washington is sending the world regarding Sri Lanka is disconcerting: 'No, there was no wrong-doing in the last phase of the war, but 'there was wrong-doing somewhere down the line'. Quite apart from the United States not having a leg to stand on when charging anyone of war crimes, common decency requires officials such as Crowley and Verveer to substantiate claim.

In this case, the onus is on these people to prove that Sri Lanka's defence establishment 'willfully and intentionally, on a premeditated design used and/or permitted its forces to rape women on a pre-arranged scale to achieve military objectives' (as Gomin Dayasri points out), at any point over the past 30 years. 'Evidence' moreover has to be something more than hysterical statements issued by proxies of the LTTE who, the world knows, contributed lavishly to the election campaigns of both Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.

Frankly, I am getting tired of these ill-tempered missives from Washington, a thieves' den if ever there was one and headquarters of the world's most dangerous syndicate of brigands. I doubt that there is enough moral fibre in the White House to engage in any serious self-examination.

Rape is a serious charge and there have been instances where Security Forces in Sri Lanka have been charged with rape.

Going beyond the back-handed slap from Washington

Sure, it is a bit sick to say that 'rape was used as an instrument of war' with respect to the Sri Lankan Security Forces, but it is not possible to claim that rape has never occurred. It is also possible that rape and other unpardonable acts have been covered up or glossed over 'to maintain troop morale'. 'Professionalism' in the security forces has been marked by ups and downs, and perhaps this was one of the reasons it took so long to vanquish the LTTE.

US troops have been found guilty of all kinds of atrocities. The USA has tried to cover up but when this was not possible, has not hesitated to take action against the guilty. I am dead certain that the USA does not pursue all those who are accused of war crimes, again from fear of compromising troop morale (Obama wanted, for example, to hide photographic evidence of such crimes being committed), but that country does succeed in shelving objection by show-casing action taken.

I believe Sri Lanka can and should do better. Not for show, but for the overall betterment of society, the streamlining of process and in the interest of upping discipline among troops.

Thrishantha Nanay-akkara in an email has argued that a distinction should be made between the true patriotic soldier/policeman and one who abuses the power of his gun to victimize civilians, especially women. He believes that 'we have not been bold enough to make that distinction clear, fearing that punishing a soldier will lower the morale of others'. He is right; we have opened ourselves to criticism from the most dubious sources and, more seriously, our friends, and we frustrate our own fellow citizens, especially those in the conflict zone.

The war is over, but we still hear of excesses committed by men with guns, especially the police. In the more recent cases, concrete steps have been taken to bring to book the perpetrators. Still, it can happen again.

And again. The end of the war gives us an opportunity to re-think, as Thrishantha says. Abuse of power, in whatever form, is wrong and we suffer from a marked lack of protective institutional safeguards. 'Rape' moreover is something that happens everyday, everywhere. The Security Forces have been exemplary, comparatively speaking, but we still live in a society where women are never 100 percent safe.

Every act of transgression has to be investigated and the perpetrators brought before the law. We can't afford to be complacent just because there is no systemic torture or rape in our country. There are sick people who abuse position and power. The signs are good. There is less looking-the-other-way happening now, compared with the past. Let's hope that this leads to a more systematic approach to ridding our country of this menace. We can ask Hillary Clinton to stuff it, and I suppose we more or less have, because she was wrong. We cannot tell that to our sisters, daughters, wives, mothers and friends, all of whom are at risk, in their homes, on the street, at their workplace. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: October 10, 2009

We'd rather die than go ashore here

The Australian

October 28, 2009 Wednesday

o - SA Country Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 498 words

Byline: Simon Kearney

Body

Tanjung Pinang

THE 78 Sri Lankan asylum-seekers aboard the Oceanic Viking have threatened to kill themselves rather than walk off the ship and be interned in Indonesia.

The Australian visited the ship, anchored in the South China Sea 10km southeast of the island of Bintan, yesterday morning to find the Sri Lankans in an open area below the top deck at the stern.

They told their story by throwing messages in plastic bags tied to empty plastic water bottles into the water. Three messages were written in Indonesian and a fourth, containing this chilling threat, was written in English.

"If your country don't want find us a good solution better we will close our life in here," the unsigned letter said.

The asylum-seekers were able to throw three messages in bottles overboard before Customs officials herded them away from the side.

Another man managed to break away from the cordon and threw a fourth message in a bottle before the group was moved to an upper deck.

Shortly afterwards, the group, shepherded by Customs officers, was seen walking in single file to a covered area on the upper deck.

The Oceanic Viking has been anchored off Bintan for two days. Yesterday Indonesian immigration officials and an Australian Customs officer boarded the ship.

They were seen holding a meeting on the back deck with other Customs officials already on board. As the afternoon wore on, children were heard crying on board the vessel, then a woman appeared on the top deck at the stern with a baby in her arms and three children peered over the top of the railings.

The messages thrown overboard by the asylum-seekers detailed how there were 78 of them on board, including five

Continued -- Page 4

We'd rather die than go ashore here

From Page 1

children and five women, including an elderly lady.

In the letters, addressed to ``the Honourable Chief of Australian Government'', they promised to uphold Australian law should they be resettled.

``Until now we heard that your country is a humanitarian country and also the refugee can restart their new life with freedom in your country," one letter said.

The letters state that the Sri Lankans are seeking asylum in Australia due to the war between the Sri Lankan government and the defeated Tamil Tigers.

``That's why we escaped from Sri Lanka and then came to other countries," the English-language letter said.

``Please don't force us to (go) back to Sri Lanka or other countries because we hope and believe that your country will allow us to restart our new life in your country."

One of the letters written in Indonesian says the asylum-seekers do not want to get off the Oceanic Viking.

``We were in the ocean between the two countries, our boat was damaged. We asked for help from Australian Customs. When they rescue us, usually they take us straight to Australia, but this time they brought us to Indonesian territory. We don't want to get off (the boat)," it said.

Later in the afternoon a group of three men threw another letter overboard saying they had been arrested by Australia.

Load-Date: October 27, 2009

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Canada Increases Humanitarian Aid to Sri Lanka

Marketwire

August 7, 2009 Friday 7:15 AM GMT

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Length: 734 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, SRI LANKA; Aug 07, 2009

Body

The Government of Canada is increasing its ongoing support to civilians displaced by the recent conflict in Sri Lanka, announced the Honourable Beverley J. Oda, Minister of International Cooperation, after visiting Menik Farm in Vavuniya, Sri Lanka.

"Canada is deeply concerned about the ongoing humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka," said Minister Oda. "During my visit to the displaced persons camp in Vavuniya, I witnessed the need of those who are living there. I am pleased that Canada is increasing its support to our partners in their work to provide basic humanitarian support to meet the needs of people affected by the conflict."

Minister Oda visited camps for internally displaced persons in Vavuniya and met with partners and senior Sri Lankan Ministers and officials during her three-day official visit to Sri Lanka.

Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency, is increasing its contributions to recent United Nations and International Committee of the Red Cross humanitarian appeals. Canada is also providing funds for the humanitarian activities of the World Food Programme, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNICEF, and Canadian non-governmental organizations, including CARE, Oxfam Canada and World Vision. Canada will contribute up to \$15 million in humanitarian assistance for conflict-afflicted internally displaced persons, which is in addition to a contribution of \$3 million announced on May 4 and \$4.5 million announced on February 23, bringing Canada's total assistance to \$22.5 million.

"The Government of Canada is proud to work with our trusted partners to answer the call for humanitarian assistance and support the safe and orderly resettlement of the internally displaced persons," added Minister Oda.

For more than two decades, a civil war raged in Sri Lanka between the Sinhalese-majority government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**). The recent conflict ended on May 17, after Sri Lankan troops seized the remaining **LTTE**-held coastal area. Approximately 300,000 internally displaced persons are now located in government-controlled camps and transit sites.

For more information on CIDA programming in Sri Lanka, please visit <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/srilanka-e>

BACKGROUNDER

Canada Increases Humanitarian Aid To Sri Lanka

Canada's additional humanitarian assistance of up to \$15 million for the approximately 300,000 internally displaced persons in Sri Lanka directly responds to the needs of a population in crisis.

Canada Increases Humanitarian Aid to Sri Lanka

The support will be used to provide necessary, ongoing food and medical assistance, shelter, protection, clean water, and sanitation services.

Initially, \$7.5 million will be disbursed as follows:

- The World Food Programme will receive up to \$3 million to provide food assistance to conflict-affected persons, including pregnant and lactating women, and children under five years of age;
- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees will receive up to \$1 million to continue providing emergency shelter, relief items, and protection services for internally displaced persons, returnees and other conflict-affected populations;
- The United Nations Children's Fund will receive up to \$1.3 million to continue providing water and sanitation, nutrition, health care, education and protection services;
- Oxfam Canada, CARE, and World Vision will each receive up to \$500,000 to provide emergency shelter, water and sanitation services, and relief items;
- The International Committee of the Red Cross will receive up to \$500,000 to provide a variety of medical relief and protection services, and;
- The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will receive up to \$200,000 to help ensure efficient coordination of the humanitarian response in Sri Lanka, including timely and essential interagency coordination, humanitarian mapping, and information sharing among all humanitarian partners.

This new funding is in addition to Canada's pledges of \$3 million in May and \$4.5 million in February, to respond to the humanitarian needs of the most affected in the recent conflict.

Contacts:

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Jean-Luc Benoit

Director of Communications

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SOURCE: CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY - CIDA

Load-Date: August 8, 2009

Canada Increases Humanitarian Aid to Sri Lanka

Canadian Corporate Newswire

August 07, 2009 Friday 10:15 AM EST

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Length: 762 words

Body

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA--(Marketwire - Aug. 7, 2009) - The Government of Canada is increasing its ongoing support to civilians displaced by the recent conflict in Sri Lanka, announced the Honourable Beverley J. Oda, Minister of International Cooperation, after visiting Menik Farm in Vavuniya, Sri Lanka.

"Canada is deeply concerned about the ongoing humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka," said Minister Oda. "During my visit to the displaced persons camp in Vavuniya, I witnessed the need of those who are living there. I am pleased that Canada is increasing its support to our partners in their work to provide basic humanitarian support to meet the needs of people affected by the conflict."

Minister Oda visited camps for internally displaced persons in Vavuniya and met with partners and senior Sri Lankan Ministers and officials during her three-day official visit to Sri Lanka.

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National, Government - Security (law enforcement, homeland etc), Government

- State

Load-Date: August 19, 2009

'We'd rather die than go ashore here'

The Australian

October 28, 2009 Wednesday

N - Canberra Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 498 words

Byline: Simon Kearney

Body

Tanjung Pinang

THE 78 Sri Lankan asylum-seekers aboard the Oceanic Viking have threatened to kill themselves rather than walk off the ship and be interned in Indonesia.

The Australian visited the ship, anchored in the South China Sea 10km southeast of the island of Bintan, yesterday morning to find the Sri Lankans in an open area below the top deck at the stern.

They told their story by throwing messages in plastic bags tied to empty plastic water bottles into the water. Three messages were written in Indonesian and a fourth, containing this chilling threat, was written in English.

"If your country don't want find us a good solution better we will close our life in here," the unsigned letter said.

The asylum-seekers were able to throw three messages in bottles overboard before Customs officials herded them away from the side.

Another man managed to break away from the cordon and threw a fourth message in a bottle before the group was moved to an upper deck.

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Continued -- Page 4

'We'd rather die than go ashore here'

From Page 1

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The letters state that the Sri Lankans are seeking asylum in Australia due to the war between the Sri Lankan government and the defeated Tamil Tigers.

``That's why we escaped from Sri Lanka and then came to other countries," the English-language letter said.

``Please don't force us to (go) back to Sri Lanka or other countries because we hope and believe that your country will allow us to restart our new life in your country."

One of the letters written in Indonesian says the asylum-seekers do not want to get off the Oceanic Viking.

``We were in the ocean between the two countries, our boat was damaged. We asked for help from Australian Customs. When they rescue us, usually they take us straight to Australia, but this time they brought us to Indonesian territory. We don't want to get off (the boat)," it said.

Later in the afternoon a group of three men threw another letter overboard saying they had been arrested by Australia.

Load-Date: October 27, 2009

End of Document

National/world briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

May 25, 2009 Monday

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Section: A; Pg. 11

Length: 560 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Body

11 killed in stampede at Morocco concert RABAT, Morocco - Thousands of spectators stampeded out of a concert in the Moroccan capital, Rabat, causing a fence to collapse, the country's official MAP news agency said Sunday. Eleven people were killed and about 30 injured. The report quoted regional officials as saying those killed were two children, five women and four men.

Most of the injured were treated and released, while seven people remain hospitalized, the report said. Police: Victim in Sikh temple shooting dies VIENNA - Police say one of the Indian preachers shot in a Vienna temple by Sikhs has died. A police official said Sant Rama Nand died in a hospital shortly after being operated on for his wounds. The official said he died early today. Sikhs wielding knives and a handgun attacked two preachers on Sunday in a brawl that police said left at least 16 people wounded. Tamil Tiger rebels confirm leader's death COLOMBO, Sri Lanka - The defeated Tamil Tiger rebels confirmed Sunday that their supreme leader was killed in the group's final battle against Sri Lankan troops. The almost mythic commander, Velupillai Prabhakaran, led a terror-driven Tamil insurrection in Sri Lanka for more than a quarter century. Last week, the government declared it finally killed Prabhakaran and proclaimed victory against his Tamil Tigers. Kim Jong Il expresses condolences to family SEOUL, South Korea - North Korea's Kim Jong Il has expressed condolences to the family of ex-South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun, who leaped off a cliff to his death over the weekend, the North's state media said today. The North's Korean Central News Agency said in a brief dispatch that Kim expressed "profound condolences" for Roh's wife Kwon Yang-sook and other family members, upon hearing the news of his death. 2 killed in shooting at graduation party MESA, Ariz. - Two people were killed and six others - two of them children - were wounded in a shooting at a high school graduation party, police said Sunday. Brent Matthew Banks, 37, was arrested after a four-hour standoff with police at a house in Mesa, east of Phoenix, said Mesa Police Sgt. Ed Wessing. Man dies exploring wreckage of ship ATHENS, Greece - A member of a National Geographic team exploring the wreckage of Britannic, the Titanic's sister ship, in the Aegean Sea died of decompression sickness Sunday, the Merchant Marine Ministry said. Carl Spencer, 37, was rushed to the Athens Naval Hospital in the afternoon after diving to film the wreckage of the Britannic, four miles off the island of Kea, southeast of Athens, the ministry said. Spencer, who showed symptoms of the illness, widely known as "the bends," was placed aboard the Belgian-owned research vessel CDT Fourcault and rushed from there to a hospital where he was unconscious upon arrival. Quake hits Macedonia SKOPJE, Macedonia - A strong earthquake struck southern Macedonia near the Greek border on Sunday night, damaging dozens of homes, an official said. No casualties were immediately reported. 10 injured in crash COLUMBUS, Ohio - Two school buses have crashed into a concrete barrier at a demolition derby-style race in Ohio, injuring 10 people. The buses were racing Saturday night in figure eights around the Columbus Motor Speedway track. The race was one of several during an event called Crash-A-Rama. The Associated Press

National/world briefs

Load-Date: May 25, 2009

End of Document

Eye of storm for refugees

The Age (Melbourne, Australia)

October 15, 2009 Thursday

Second Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 549 words

Byline: TOM ALLARD, MERAK, INDONESIA and MICHELLE GRATTAN

Body

"WE ARE very shocked, so shocked to hear that your prime minister wanted to stop us," said Alex, speaking for the 260 Sri Lankans on a boat detained in Indonesia after the intervention of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd.

"We are not a boat full of tourists, or people looking for a job. We are people who are running from genocide."

With their barely seaworthy boat moored next to an Indonesian Navy vessel at the port in Merak, the asylum seekers are in a stand-off with Indonesian authorities, refusing to leave their vessel. The boat was intercepted early on Sunday morning, prompting some asylum seekers to threaten to blow the ship up with gas canisters used for cooking, while others jumped overboard to avoid being detained.

"We may as well die here. We cannot go back to Sri Lanka," said Alex.

In an interview by telephone from the moored boat, Alex said most of the asylum seekers were from the Sri Lankan city of Jaffna, where he said the majority Sinhalese-backed government was abducting Tamils, putting them in camps and then torturing and killing them.

"There's not a person on this boat who has not seen someone they know killed or tortured," said Alex. "There are kids who have seen the legs of their fathers cut off in front of them."

"They are taking people out at night, stripping them and shooting them. Five people every day, sometimes 10. Women are being tortured and raped. The situation is very bad, worse than it has ever been."

Alex denied there were members of the Tamil Tigers, considered a terrorist group by Australia, on the boat.

He described a harrowing journey where the 253 people on board, including 27 women and 31 children, hid in the jungles of Malaysia for a month while they waited for their boat to take them to Christmas Island. Each person on board paid \$US15,000 (\$A16,539) to a people smuggler, he added.

He said they chose Australia because it was the "cheapest" option, not because of its immigration policies.

Navy commander Colonel Irawan confirmed the threat to blow up the boat. "There was panic . . . they felt hopeless," he said. "We made them hopeful again. Their brains worked normally again."

Eye of storm for refugees

But Alex said the asylum seekers would not leave the boat until "representatives of the Australian Government, or the Americans or the Canadians come down and speak with us".

They would not want to speak to Western Australia's Premier Colin Barnett, who has called for the Pacific solution to be re-examined, blaming Rudd policies for the increase in asylum seekers.

But Mr Rudd "who focused outrage on what he called the "vile species" of people smugglers" insisted the Government has got the balance right between "a hardline approach when it comes to illegal immigration" and treating asylum seekers humanely.

He refused to comment on reports that Indonesia wants access to Australian intelligence if it is to do more to turn around boats.

The Government will house asylum seekers in the Darwin facility if Christmas Island can't accommodate them. Mr Rudd said there were no plans to reopen the Baxter centre in South Australia.

The Government is expanding the accommodation at Christmas Island by putting more beds into spare areas.

Christmas Island's accommodation has increased from 1200 to 1400, and portables and other measures will boost it beyond that.

Graphic

PHOTO: A Sri Lankan asylum seeker in Merak yesterday. PICTURE: AP

Load-Date: October 20, 2009

35,000 civilians flee Tiger area: Sri Lanka president

Agence France Presse -- English

April 20, 2009 Monday 6:57 AM GMT

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Length: 176 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, April 20 2009

Body

More than 35,000 civilians Monday fled the last area under the control of Sri Lanka's cornered Tamil Tigers, President Mahinda Rajapakse said, adding that the rebels' "complete defeat" was imminent.

Showing aerial video from a military spy plane over the tiny area where the Tigers are staging a last stand, Rajapakse said 35,000 non-combatants had crossed the lines into government-held territory since early Monday morning.

"The footage clearly shows that the people are defying the rebels and escaping. They are running to safety," the president said.

The government has accused the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam of using trapped civilians as a human shield, and the president suggested that their escape removed a final obstacle to an all-out military assault.

"The process of the complete defeat of the LTTE has just begun," he told AFP. "It is now all over for the Tigers."

The Sri Lankan military said that the Tigers had killed 17 civilians Monday, including women and children, in a reported suicide bombing aimed at preventing them escaping.

aj-gh/mc

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

'We'd rather die than go ashore here'

The Australian

October 28, 2009 Wednesday

7 - NSW First Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 498 words

Byline: Simon Kearney

Body

Tanjung Pinang

THE 78 Sri Lankan asylum-seekers aboard the Oceanic Viking have threatened to kill themselves rather than walk off the ship and be interned in Indonesia.

The Australian visited the ship, anchored in the South China Sea 10km southeast of the island of Bintan, yesterday morning to find the Sri Lankans in an open area below the top deck at the stern.

They told their story by throwing messages in plastic bags tied to empty plastic water bottles into the water. Three messages were written in Indonesian and a fourth, containing this chilling threat, was written in English.

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Another man managed to break away from the cordon and threw a fourth message in a bottle before the group was moved to an upper deck.

Shortly afterwards, the group, shepherded by Customs officers, was seen walking in single file to a covered area on the upper deck.

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Continued -- Page 4

'We'd rather die than go ashore here'

From Page 1

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``Until now we heard that your country is a humanitarian country and also the refugee can restart their new life with freedom in your country," one letter said.

The letters state that the Sri Lankans are seeking asylum in Australia due to the war between the Sri Lankan government and the defeated Tamil Tigers.

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``We were in the ocean between the two countries, our boat was damaged. We asked for help from Australian Customs. When they rescue us, usually they take us straight to Australia, but this time they brought us to Indonesian territory. We don't want to get off (the boat)," it said.

Later in the afternoon a group of three men threw another letter overboard saying they had been arrested by Australia.

Load-Date: October 27, 2009

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Sri Lankan government rejects Tamil ceasefire offer

The Irish Times

April 27, 2009 Monday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 10

Length: 554 words

Byline: RAHUL BEDI in New Delhi

Body

THE SRI Lankan government has rejected the ceasefire offer by Tamil Tiger rebels, further exacerbating the plight of more than 50,000 refugees trapped in the war zone in the northeast of the island starved of food, water and medicine.

Defence secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse, who heads the government's successful campaign against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, said there was no need for a ceasefire as the military was on the verge of defeating the rebels fighting for a separate homeland in northern and eastern Sri Lanka for more than 26 years.

It must be a joke, Mr Rajapakse said in response to the ceasefire offer, which the Tigers claimed would allow international aid agencies into the conflict zone to help civilians, the majority of them poor Tamils who are being used as human shields by the besieged and retreating Tigers.

What is the need for a ceasefire when they are running away? Mr Rajapakse asked, sensing victory and rejecting international appeals for cessation of hostilities on humanitarian grounds. They should first lay down arms, surrender and let the people go.

Military analysts say there is little likelihood of the military halting the fighting which they believe would give the Tigers an opportunity to regroup and for some to escape among the refugees.

The UN says more than 160,000 people have fled the area in recent weeks but more than 50,000 are still confined to the fighting area.

A UN document circulated around diplomatic missions in Sri Lanka's capital Colombo estimates that some 6,500 civilians have died and 14,000 have been injured since January.

The mass of survivors who have fled, mostly Tamil women and children, are emaciated. One aid worker said the scene resembled a horror film. Many people had untreated festering wounds and were so ill they could barely stand. They were desperate for water, then food. The refugees, who had been forced by the Tigers to retreat alongside them as the Sri Lankan military advanced, had artillery shells and mortars rained on them.

They also faced frightening and unrelenting attacks by combat aircraft that dropped lethal ordnance on Tiger strongholds, pushing them back further.

Sri Lankan government rejects Tamil ceasefire offer

Many relief workers who interacted with refugees undergoing treatment in hospitals quote them as saying that large numbers of them died like flies as they tried to escape or sidestep the military's superior and remorseless firepower. The Tigers had also fired from their midst, inviting ferocious retaliation from the military.

Meanwhile, UN under-secretary general for humanitarian affairs John Holmes on a three-day visit to Colombo has urged the Sri Lankan government to open the war zone to humanitarian groups, but to little avail.

Aid workers have been barred from the war-ravaged areas since fighting escalated last September.

The fighting is in its final phase, with the Tigers, who once ran a parallel administration in large parts of northern and eastern Sri Lanka, squeezed into an area of less than eight square kilometres.

The **Tamil Tigers**, one of the world's most fearsome terrorists, are capable of fighting set-piece battles against the Sri Lankan military. They are now surrounded on the northeastern sea board on three sides by the army and on the fourth by the navy, making any escape attempt by the rebel leadership virtually impossible.

Load-Date: April 27, 2009

End of Document

In Brief

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

May 4, 2009 Monday

Main Edition

Copyright 2009 The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

**The Atlanta
Journal-Constitution**

Section: NEWS; Pg. 3A

Length: 558 words

Byline: From News Services

Body

Pilot program looks to enlist immigrants

Starting today, immigrants who are in the United States legally but lack green cards will be able to sign up for military service at Los Angeles recruiting offices; in all, the pilot program, which launched in New York in February, seeks to enlist 1,000 recruits with special language and medical skills.

National Zoo hopes for a baby panda

Volunteers have begun around-the-clock monitoring of the National Zoo's giant **female** panda after scientists noticed hormonal and behavioral changes that might indicate pregnancy. Officials cautioned that Mei Xiang might be experiencing a false pregnancy, as she has in years past. But several behaviors are raising hopes. Mei Xiang is "denning," meaning that she is bringing bamboo to a place that's dark and quiet. Also, she is eating less and cradling objects, including food. Mei Xiang was artificially inseminated Jan. 17 after scientists determined that she was in heat.

Harman fires back over wiretapping

Rep. Jane Harman (D-Calif.) vowed Sunday to clear her name after the revelation of a wiretapped conversation in which she reportedly agreed to intervene in the federal investigation of two pro-Israeli lobbyists in exchange for help in getting a coveted congressional post.

Oldest nuke plant back in operation

Normal operations have resumed at the nation's oldest nuclear power plant a week after it was shut down because of a failed transformer. Officials at the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station in Lacey Township, N.J., had manually stopped its reactor without incident April 25. Crews repaired the transformer and modified its power supply. Plant spokesman David Benson says the outage was extended so crews could further prepare the plant for summer operations.

In Brief

Both sides blamed for rise in tensions

Pakistan's army and the Taliban blamed each other Sunday for a rise in tensions that threatened to destroy a much-criticized peace deal, just days before the Pakistani president heads to Washington for talks with President Barack Obama.

Suspect held in poisoning of five

Police in Vienna arrested a man suspected of slipping drugs into drinks at a crowded bar Sunday, causing five people to collapse. Authorities said all five victims were hospitalized in life-threatening condition. Investigators said they were still trying to determine a motive for the attack.

Venezuelan soldiers die in copter crash

President Hugo Chavez says 18 soldiers have died in a helicopter crash near Venezuela's border with Colombia. The soldiers were patrolling the 1,400-mile border separating Venezuela and Colombia when the aircraft crashed on Sunday, killing the crew and pilots. A general was among the victims.

Separatists ask for cease-fire help

The separatist **Tamil Tigers**, besieged and surrounded on a boggy beachfront, asked Britain and France on Sunday to press the government of Sri Lanka for a cease-fire.

Conservative wins presidency

Conservative supermarket magnate Ricardo Martinelli won Panama's presidential elections in a landslide Sunday, taking office as the Central American nation carries out an ambitious project to expand the Panama Canal.

Martinelli, of the opposition Alliance for Change, had 61 percent of the votes against 37 percent for ruling party candidate Balbina Herrera, Panama's Electoral Tribunal reported with 63 percent of the votes counted.

Load-Date: May 7, 2009

'We'd rather die than go ashore here'

The Australian

October 28, 2009 Wednesday

6 - NSW Country Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 498 words

Byline: Simon Kearney

Body

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Load-Date: October 27, 2009

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Calls for war-crimes inquiry but Sri Lanka says no to 'obstruction'

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

May 21, 2009 Thursday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 8

Length: 545 words

Byline: Matt Wade Herald Correspondent in Colombo

Body

SRI LANKA is under mounting pressure over alleged war crimes committed by its military forces during the bloody closing stages of the war with Tamil Tiger rebels.

The United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, who will visit Sri Lanka tomorrow, said that any serious allegations of war crimes should be properly investigated. "I hope these allegations are handled through appropriate procedures," he said.

The UN estimates that at least 6500 Tamil civilians have died between mid-January and early this month and has described the closing phase of the conflict as a "bloodbath".

The British Government also wants an investigation into what it calls the "truly shocking and appalling" numbers of civilian dead.

Amnesty International said "the mounting evidence of serious violations of international law" must be investigated.

On Tuesday the Sri Lankan President, Mahinda Rajapaksa, declared victory over the **Tamil Tigers**, who staged a 26-year armed struggle for a separate homeland for the Tamil minority.

Mr Ban said he was relieved by the conclusion of the military operation but troubled by the loss of so many civilian lives.

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Mr Ban said the legitimate aspirations of Tamils and other minorities needed to be fully addressed and he called for a "credible" devolution of power.

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It is understood they will convey India's concerns on the plight of Sri Lanka's Tamils and press demand for political reforms that devolved power to Sri Lanka's minorities, including the Tamils.

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"This massive influx of people who have endured extreme conditions of war together with horrendously inadequate food and water, puts an even greater strain on the systems of health, sanitation, and water in these already grossly overcrowded camps."

Mr Ban plans to visit refugee camps in the north of the country later this week.

Load-Date: May 20, 2009

SRI LANKANS FLEE WAR ZONE

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

May 15, 2009 Friday

SOONER EDITION

Copyright 2009 P.G. Publishing Co.

Section: WORLD; WORLD BRIEFS; Pg. A-3

Length: 553 words

Body

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka -- Thousands of civilians waded across a vast lagoon under a hail of rebel gunfire yesterday, breaking out of Sri Lanka's war zone in a mass exodus that left four civilians dead from Tamil Tiger bullets, the military said.

In the tiny coastal strip they had just fled, unrelenting shelling forced health workers to abandon the only hospital in the area, leaving hundreds of wounded patients begging for food and water, according to a health official in the war zone.

The Red Cross called the fate of the wounded "an unimaginable humanitarian catastrophe."

The government, which denies shelling the area, has cornered the **Tamil Tigers** on a spit squeezed between the sea and a lagoon and vowed to finish off the rebels after 25 years of civil war. The rebels, who demand a homeland for the ethnic Tamil minority, once controlled a shadow state across the north.

Girls afraid to go to school

MUHMUD RAQI, Afghanistan -- Only a few dozen of about 570 **female** students attended class in eastern Afghanistan yesterday after an apparent attack with poison gas sickened more than 80 girls this week.

It was the third apparent poisoning at a girls school in about two weeks. No one has claimed responsibility for the poisonings, but Education Ministry officials say they believe it is a series of poison gas attacks by militants who want to keep girls home from school.

The Taliban and other conservative extremist groups in Afghanistan who oppose **female** education have been known to target schoolgirls. Under the Taliban's 1996-2001 regime, girls were not allowed to attend school.

Outrage over sentence

NAIROBI, Kenya -- In a case that stirred fierce resentments over race and land, a Kenyan judge yesterday sentenced the son of a baron to eight months in prison for killing a black poacher on his vast family estate.

The sentence handed down to Thomas Cholmondeley -- a fraction of the possible life in prison he faced -- provoked shouts of protest from Maasai tribesmen and sighs of relief from white landowners, both of whom packed into the crowded courtroom.

SRI LANKANS FLEE WAR ZONE

Judge Muga Apondi last week convicted Mr. Cholmondeley of manslaughter in the 2006 shooting of a 37-year-old black poacher, Robert Njoya. The judge had reduced the charge from murder, saying he believed Mr. Cholmondeley's attempts to give Njoya first aid helped prove that he accidentally shot the poacher when aiming at his dogs.

The judge also said he took the three years Mr. Cholmondeley had already served into account.

Also in the world

Fidel Castro defended Havana's response to the swine flu outbreak, including suspension of direct flights with Mexico, saying yesterday that Cuba is especially vulnerable to an epidemic because the U.S. embargo prevents it from buying medicine and diagnostic equipment. Cuba, which confirmed its first case of swine flu this week, has not said if it has access to Tamiflu. But the World Health Organization says it sent 2.4 million treatments of the anti-flu treatment to 72 developing countries last week... Two U.S. journalists arrested near North Korea's border with China on accusations of illegal entry and "hostile acts" will be tried by Pyongyang in early June, state media said. The United States welcomed the announcement yesterday as a sign that the cases against Laura Ling and Euna Lee could be resolved.

Load-Date: May 15, 2009

End of Document

Blunders doomed master strategist; Tiger leader feared for killing Sri Lankan president, but slaying of Rajiv Gandhi cost him allies in India

The Toronto Star
May 19, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A06

Length: 516 words

Byline: Ravi Nessman, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

Velupillai Prabhakaran transformed a small band of poorly armed rebels into one of the world's most sophisticated and ruthless insurgencies and then made a string of miscalculations that led his **Tamil Tigers** to total defeat at the hands of the Sri Lankan military.

Sri Lanka announced yesterday it had killed Prabhakaran, 54, and his top deputies.

To his followers, Prabhakaran was the steadfast heart of the battle to establish a breakaway state for Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil minority. But his many detractors saw him as the brutal ruler of a suicide cult who repeatedly sabotaged peace deals in his pursuit of power.

Over more than a quarter century of civil war, Prabhakaran's Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam perfected the art of suicide bombings and assassinated top politicians including president Ranasinghe Premadasa and former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi.

At the height of his power, the portly rebel leader with the bushy moustache and Browning pistol ruled as a virtual dictator over a shadow state of hundreds of thousands of people across a swath of northern Sri Lanka that had its own flag, police force and court system.

His guerrilla force was armed with heavy artillery and a rudimentary air wing that once bombed Colombo's international airport. Its navy consisted of small attack craft, suicide boats laden with explosives, crude submarines and smuggling ships that plied the Indian Ocean.

The rebels reportedly earned as much as \$340 million a year from their arms and drug smuggling, a network of fake charities and donations from Tamil expatriates.

The group's activities led several countries, including Canada, to outlaw it as a terrorist organization.

Tamil Tiger fighters, some of them forcibly recruited by the group when they were children, saw Prabhakaran as their unquestioned leader. He ordered them to abstain from sex, cut personal ties and carry glass vials of cyanide on necklaces, so they could kill themselves upon capture.

Blunders doomed master strategist Tiger leader feared for killing Sri Lankan president, but slaying of Rajiv Gandhi cost him allies in India

"He is their brain. He is their heart. He is their god. He is their soul. The whole organization runs around him," said Indian journalist M.R. Narayan Swamy, who wrote a biography on the rebel leader.

Prabhakaran orchestrated surprise attacks on Sri Lankan bases that killed hundreds of Sri Lankan troops and retaliated against government offensives with devastating counterattacks.

Though Prabhakaran, a shadowy figure who rarely appeared in public, was sometimes hailed as a master strategist, he also made a series of misjudgments over the years that eventually led to his downfall.

He alienated his strongest allies in India by sending a female suicide bomber to kill Gandhi in 1991, apparent retaliation for sending an Indian peacekeeping mission here that turned sour.

During negotiations that followed a 2002 ceasefire, he rejected a deal that would have given the rebels broad autonomy over the north and east but not full independence, according to a diplomat with knowledge of the offer.

It was widely seen as the best deal he could ever get.

Prabhakaran said he could not accept anything less than a separate Tamil state, dubbed Eelam.

Graphic

Velupillai Prabhakaran, rebel leader

Load-Date: May 19, 2009

End of Document

Calls for war-crimes inquiry but Sri Lanka says no to 'obstruction'

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

May 21, 2009 Thursday

Fourth Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 8

Length: 545 words

Byline: Matt Wade Herald Correspondent in Colombo

Body

SRI LANKA is under mounting pressure over alleged war crimes committed by its military forces during the bloody closing stages of the war with Tamil Tiger rebels.

The United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, who will visit Sri Lanka tomorrow, said that any serious allegations of war crimes should be properly investigated. "I hope these allegations are handled through appropriate procedures," he said.

The UN estimates that at least 6500 Tamil civilians have died between mid-January and early this month and that 80,000 to 100,000 people were killed during the 26-year war.

The British Government also wants an investigation into what it calls the "truly shocking and appalling" numbers of civilian dead.

Amnesty International said "the mounting evidence of serious violations of international law" must be investigated.

Both sides in the conflict repeatedly accused each other of rights violations. The Sri Lankan Government says the **Tamil Tigers** used civilians as human shields and that the military did everything it could to avoid harming non-combatants.

On Tuesday the President, Mahinda Rajapaksa, declared victory over the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, who staged the long-running armed struggle for a separate homeland for the Tamil minority.

Mr Ban said he was relieved by the conclusion of the military operation but troubled by the loss of so many civilian lives.

"It is most important that every effort be undertaken to begin a process of healing and national reconciliation," he said.

Mr Ban said the legitimate aspirations of Tamils and other minorities needed to be fully addressed and he called for a "credible" devolution of power.

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Mr Ban plans to visit refugee camps in the north of the country later this week.

Load-Date: May 20, 2009

Sri Lanka says it may pardon surrendering Tamil Tiger fighters

The Canadian Press(CP)

May 3, 2009 Sunday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 535 words

Byline: KRISHAN FRANCIS, AP

Body

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka _ Sri Lanka's government said Sunday it is considering an amnesty for Tamil Tiger rebels who surrender _ although not for leaders of the insurgency, which is facing defeat after 25 years of civil war.

The rebels, meanwhile, asked Britain and France to keep pushing for a ceasefire after their recent failure to secure a halt in the fighting to allow civilians to evacuate the war zone.

An estimated 50,000 noncombatants are trapped in a tiny coastal strip along with the cornered rebels in the island's northeast. A recent United Nations report said about 6,500 civilians were killed in the area during the past three months.

The government has rejected the ceasefire calls, saying it is on the verge of victory.

Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe said officials from the attorney general's department are studying the legal basis for a possible pardon for rebels who surrender but a final decision has not been made.

He said any such offer would not be open to rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and others convicted in Sri Lanka for various attacks or wanted in neighbouring India for the 1991 assassination of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi.

"The leadership will be dealt with under the laws of the country," Samarasinghe said.

Gandhi was blown up by a Tamil Tiger **female** suicide bomber at an election rally in southern India in apparent revenge for sending a peacekeeping force to Sri Lanka in 1987.

Samarasinghe said the government also plans to offer vocational training for surrendering rebels to help them reintegrate into society.

Tamil Tiger leaders have vowed no surrender. Every fighter is meant to wear a cyanide capsule and swears an oath to swallow the capsule to avoid capture.

But the government says a number of rebels have already surrendered including the group's former media spokesman and an interpreter for its political wing.

Sri Lanka says it may pardon surrendering Tamil Tiger fighters

The **Tamil Tigers**' political head, Balasingham Nadesan, wrote Saturday to British Foreign Secretary David Miliband and his French counterpart, Bernard Kouchner, saying the insurgents are ready to "engage in the process to bring about a ceasefire and enter into negotiations for an enduring resolution to the conflict."

Excerpts of Nadesan's letter were emailed to news organizations.

Miliband and Kouchner visited Sri Lanka last week to press for a truce, but the government refused to let up its offensive.

Fighting continued Sunday. The military said it captured a 500-metre-long earth fortification erected by the rebels to slow the army's advance.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said the rebels were now confined to just a 4.5-kilometre coastal stretch. He did not give casualty details from the battle.

The government says the rebels are using civilians as human shields in their final stand.

International pressure for a ceasefire is likely to grow after a pro-rebel website reported Saturday that government forces shelled a makeshift hospital in the war zone, killing 64 patients and bystanders.

A government doctor working there confirmed the death toll but declined to say who was responsible for the attack.

The government, which has promised not to use heavy weapons in the densely packed conflict zone, denied the report.

Load-Date: May 4, 2009

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

PAP News Wire

May 11, 2009 Monday

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Section: GENERAL

Length: 548 words

Body

Geneva: The World Health Organization raised its tally of confirmed human cases of swine flu to 4,694 in 30 countries, after the United States shot ahead of Mexico over the weekend.

The so-called A (H1N1) virus has killed 53 people worldwide, the agency said.

The United States has reported 2,532 laboratory-confirmed cases, including three deaths, WHO said.

Tbilisi, Georgia: The Georgian president says he is open to sharing power with his opponents to end a political crisis marked by near daily protests in the capital.

President Mikhail Saakashvili says he invited the opposition to lead a new commission to reform the constitution and electoral code.

However, lawmaker Levan Gachechiladze suggested protests would continue until Saakashvili agrees to resign.

Moscow: The Kremlin says President Barack Obama will visit Russia July 6-8. The dates were posted on the Kremlin Web site Monday.

Obama had his first face-to-face meeting with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev at the London G-20 summit in April. Talks there focused on plans for negotiations on a treaty to further reduce nuclear weapons. Russian news agencies had reported that a July meeting was agreed upon in London, but the dates had not been confirmed.

Seven Hills, Ohio: Suspected Nazi guard John Demjanjuk is expected to be deported to Germany by Tuesday, a German Justice Ministry spokesman said as the retired autoworker remained inside his suburban Cleveland home.

Demjanjuk is wanted on a Munich arrest warrant that accuses him of 29,000 counts of accessory to murder as a guard at the Sobibor death camp in Nazi-occupied Poland. According to our current information, we anticipate that

Peshawar, Pakistan: A suicide car-bomber killed 10 people at a security checkpoint in northwest Pakistan as the army battled Taliban militants in the Swat valley.

The offensive in Swat, 130 km northwest of Islamabad, is seen as a test of the government's resolve to get to grips with an intensifying Taliban insurgency and comes after the United States accused it of "abdicating" to the militants.

Kabul: Afghan President Hamid Karzai is "very serious" about a demand for foreign forces in Afghanistan to halt air raids, even though it was rebuffed by a top U.S. security official, his spokesman said.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Afghans are furious about the bombing of two villages in Western Farah province during a drawn-out battle last week, when homes full of civilians were hit.

Charikkar, Afghanistan: Nearly 50 Afghan teenagers are in hospital after a mystery gas attack on a girls' school in the northern town of Charikar, the second mass poisoning of **female** students in a month, a doctor said.

The headmaster rushed his students out of their classrooms at the Ura Jalili Girls High School after they smelt an unusual odour and started feeling nauseous and dizzy, one 17-year-old victim told Reuters from her hospital bed.

Colombo: The United Nations said a weekend attack in Sri Lanka that killed hundreds was the bloodbath it had feared, while the **Tamil Tigers** and government traded blame ahead of U.N. Security Council talks over the war.

In the latest reported assault on civilians trapped in the war zone, at least hundreds of people were reported killed on Sunday in an artillery barrage that struck the less than 5 square km (2 square miles) the separatist rebels control.

Load-Date: May 12, 2009

End of Document

Scrutiny calls on Tamil 'bloodbath'

The Age (Melbourne, Australia)

May 21, 2009 Thursday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; International News; Pg. 10

Length: 517 words

Byline: MATT WADE, SOUTH ASIA, CORRESPONDENT, COLOMBO

Body

SRI Lanka is under mounting pressure over alleged war crimes committed by its military forces during the bloody closing stages of the war with Tamil Tiger rebels.

The United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, who will visit Sri Lanka tomorrow, said any serious allegations of war crimes should be properly investigated.

The UN estimates at least 6500 Tamil civilians died between mid-January and early May, describing the closing phase of the conflict as a "bloodbath".

The British Government also wants a probe into what it calls the "truly shocking and appalling" numbers of civilian dead. Amnesty International said "the mounting evidence of serious violations of international law" must be investigated.

On Tuesday, Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa declared victory over the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, who staged a 26-year armed struggle for a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's Tamil minority.

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"It is most important that every effort be undertaken to begin a process of healing and national reconciliation".

He said the legitimate aspirations of Sri Lankan Tamils and other minorities needed to be fully addressed and he called for a "credible" devolution of power in Sri Lanka.

This echoed a demand made by India earlier this week that Sri Lanka take steps towards "the effective devolution of power" so that Tamils can "feel at home and lead lives of dignity of their own free will".

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However, in a televised address on Tuesday, Mr Rajapaksa sent a clear message that he would not allow the international community to dictate terms to Colombo.

Scrutiny calls on Tamil 'bloodbath'

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Graphic

PHOTO: The body of Tamil Tigers leader Velupillai Prabhakaran is carried past Sri Lankan soldiers near Mullaittivu this week. PICTURE: REUTERS

Load-Date: May 20, 2009

Sri Lanka war displaced children moved to camp

Xinhua General News Service

August 19, 2009 Wednesday 1:18 AM EST

Copyright 2009 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 191 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Aug. 19

Body

Children among Sri Lanka's war displaced have been moved into a camp dedicated to children, official said.

M Sumanadasa, Secretary to the Ministry of Child Development and Women's Affairs said that the new welfare camp for children has been set up in the northern town of Vavuniya.

"Out of the 400 children identified for rehabilitation, 264 of them would be accommodated in the new camp", Sumanadasa said.

He said the children would be reintegrated in to the society upon rehabilitation.

Since the government troops crushed the over three decade old challenge from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in May nearly 300,000 people displaced from the north are being accommodated in government camps.

The government has come under international pressure to keep to its promise to resettle them within the 180 day period targeted by the government.

Screening of the former rebels and the demining of the conflict ravaged areas remain government concerns in expediting the resettlement process.

Tamil Tigers faced wide spread accusations of recruiting under aged children for terrorist activity.

Load-Date: August 21, 2009

PROTESTERS ARRESTED IN WESTMINSTER CLASHES

Press Association Mediapoint

May 19, 2009 Tuesday 3:56 AM BST

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Section: HOME NEWS

Length: 533 words

Byline: Rosamond Hutt, Press Association

Body

Five pro-Tamil demonstrators were arrested today in clashes outside the Houses of Parliament that left at least five police officers and 11 protesters injured, police and ambulance sources said.

The angry scenes took place at just after midnight as police moved demonstrators off a busy road opposite Parliament where they had been staging a sit-down protest since yesterday afternoon.

The London Ambulance Service said eight people were taken to hospital - three officers and five protesters, while paramedics treated a further eight - two officers and six demonstrators - at the scene for minor injuries.

Protesters have been demonstrating in Parliament Square for a number of weeks to draw attention to the plight of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

On Sunday, the rebel ***Tamil Tigers*** conceded defeat in their bloody 25-year conflict with Sri Lanka's Government which has claimed an estimated 70,000 lives.

A Scotland Yard spokesman said five people were arrested for a variety of unspecified offences.

He estimated around a dozen officers were injured during the operation, which began at 12.15am.

Several protesters complained of rough treatment at the hands of police, claiming they were "pushed" back into a grassy area in the Square.

The protesters moved en masse at around 4pm yesterday from the grassy area in the square to occupy parts of Bridge Street and Westminster Bridge, a major thoroughfare through central London.

Traffic in the area was diverted and a large police presence gathered around the protesters with police helicopters seen circling above Parliament Square.

A large number of children were among the protesters yesterday afternoon.

PROTESTERS ARRESTED IN WESTMINSTER CLASHES

Maria Gallastegui, a bystander and local resident, said women and children were still sleeping in the street when police began ``pushing" the crowd towards the square.

``(The police) knew the women and children were there because they had hours to walk around and see them.

``They were forcefully pushing, they more or less ran at the crowd, which then surged like a wave. People were crushed against barriers and some started climbing over them in desperation to escape."

Ms Gallastegui said she had no links to Tamil groups but strongly supported their cause.

``The Tamils have just captured my heart. They are a shining example of how the peace movement should be.

``They don't really want to blockade roads but they are desperate. They have exhausted every legal means."

Sivendran Madajajah, 22, a student from Mitcham, south London, said: ``People were being hit, kicked and stepped on by police. We had no warning that anything was going to happen until they started pushing us back off the road to Parliament Square.

``We feel really angry that this how the British government is treating us when we are asking them for help.

``There are loads of people who have lost their loved ones in this conflict. They are here to grieve and it is just ridiculous that the police have behaved in this way towards us."

A Scotland Yard source said: ``Obviously if you have people in an area that don't want move and they are being moved they aren't going to be happy about it."

He added: ``They will have been given ample warning that they were going to have to move."

Load-Date: May 19, 2009

End of Document

AFP 1900 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

April 4, 2009 Saturday 7:13 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 613 words

Dateline: PARIS, April 4 2009

Body

Duty Editor: Gunther Kern

Tel: + (33-1) 40.41.46.36

-- TOP STORIES --

+ NATO pledges more troops for Afghanistan

+ NKorea keeps world waiting on satellite launch

+ Police probe New York shooting

NATO-summit,4thlead-WRAP

STRASBOURG

NATO leaders pledge thousands more troops for their Afghan mission and name the organisation's next leader, as violent anti-war demonstrations rage outside the summit.

700 words 2000 GMT by Dave Clark. Picture. Graphic. Video

We have also moved: NATO-summit-Russia-diplomacy

NATO-summit-Germany-Italy-diplomacy-gaffe,lead

NATO-summit-Afghanistan-law-women-rights,REAX

NATO-summit-Afghanistan-force

NATO-summit-Denmark-Turkey,4thlead

NKorea-missile,5thlead-WRAP

SEOUL

North Korea keeps the world guessing about its satellite after the first day of a scheduled five-day launch period passed without blast-off.

730 words moved by Park Chan-Kyong. Picture. Graphic

US-crime-shooting,3rdlead

BINGHAMTON, New York

US police probe why a jobless immigrant snapped, going on a murderous rampage in the center where he learned English, mowing down 13 people before killing himself.

700 words 2030 GMT by Luis Torres de la Llosa. Picture. Video. Graphic

FILING PLANS BY REGION

-- AMERICAS --

US-crime-shooting,SCENE-lead

BINGHAMTON, New York

Aylin Koksoy arrived in the United States from Turkey just eight months ago. Like many migrants she assiduously took English lessons at the American Civic Association.

600 words 2130 GMT by Luis Torres de la Llosa

-- EUROPE --

NATO-summit-France-Germany-protest,5thlead

STRASBOURG

Protesters clash with riot police and set property ablaze during the 60th anniversary NATO summit, leaving at least 10 people injured, the French government says.

650 words 1930 GMT by Jonathan Fowler. Picture. Graphic. Video

We have also moved: NATO-summit-Russia-diplomacy

NATO-summit-Germany-Italy-diplomacy-gaffe,lead

NATO-summit-Afghanistan-law-women-rights,REAX

NATO-summit-Afghanistan-force

NATO-summit-Denmark-Turkey,4thlead

NATO-summit-Afghanistan-Obama,FOCUS-lead

STRASBOURG

AFP 1900 GMT News Advisory

President Barack Obama passes stage two of his foreign leadership exam when NATO backs his plan for Afghanistan and offers more troops, but does not change the equation that the bulk of the military might needed to win the war will be wearing US uniforms.

600 words 2100 GMT by Stephen Collinson. Graphic. Picture. Video

Czech-US-EU-summit,newseries

PRAGUE

Barack Obama flies into Prague for a summit with EU leaders, making his first venture behind the erstwhile Iron Curtain on the third leg of his maiden European tour as US president.

650 words moved by Jan Flemr. Picture

We have also moved: Turkey-US-diplomacy,lead-ADVANCER

Finance-economy-EU-banking-accounting-ECB

PRAGUE

Just days after the landmark G20 summit on the global economy, European finance chiefs struggle to put into practice promises to overhaul the embattled financial sector.

600 words moved by Leigh Thomas. Picture

Entertainment-Britain-India-television-people,2ndlead

LONDON

Thousands pay last respects to British reality TV star Jade Goody, who responds through the magic of pre-recorded video: "See you around maybe. Bye."

500 words moved by Katherine Haddon. Picture

-- ASIA --

Pakistan-unrest-UN-US-kidnap,2ndlead

QUETTA, Pakistan

An American UN official, kidnapped in Pakistan two months ago, is released safe and sound, Pakistani police and a UN spokeswoman tell AFP.

550 words moved by Maaz Khan

SriLanka-unrest,2ndlead-WRAP

COLOMBO

Sri Lankan troops advancing on the last remaining pockets of rebel resistance kill at least 111 **Tamil Tigers** in separate ground and sea clashes on Saturday, the military says.

600 words moved by Amal Jayasinghe. Picture

afp

Load-Date: April 5, 2009

End of Document

ROUNDUP: Hamas pledges to cooperate with UN Gaza war crimes team =

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
June 1, 2009 Monday 1:49 PM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 552 words

Dateline: Gaza

Body

DPA POLITICS Mideast Conflicts Gaza ROUNDUP: Hamas pledges to cooperate with UN Gaza war crimes team =
Gaza

The Islamic Hamas movement said Monday it would cooperate with a United Nations investigation team which arrived in the Gaza Strip to probe alleged war crimes committed during Israel's 22-day offensive in the salient at the turn of the year.

The 15-member delegation, headed by South African war crimes prosecutor Richard Goldstone and charged by the UN Human Rights Council with investigating the actions of both the Israeli army and Hamas during the December 27-January 18 offensive, crossed into the enclave from Egypt late Monday morning.

"Hamas will cooperate with the UN team members and will put all the evidence and proof at their disposal to let them complete their mission," Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said.

In a statement sent to the media, he said the Islamist movement greatly appreciated "all the efforts of the international committees and the delegations which come to Gaza to unveil the war crimes

committed against our women and children."

The UN team is scheduled to hold meetings and talks with Hamas officials and will also meet with all human rights groups based in Gaza. They will also listen to testimonies of victims and witnesses.

"We are completely certain that according to the international law standards, Israel had committed war crimes in Gaza," Khalil Abu Shamallah, director of the Palestinian al-Damir human rights group, told reporters in Gaza.

Israel launched the ground and air offensive against militants, mainly from Hamas, to curb rocket attacks on southern Israeli towns.

Hamas says 1,400 Palestinians, most of them civilians, were killed in the offensive, which also caused massive destruction. Thirteen Israelis also died.

ROUNDUP: Hamas pledges to cooperate with UN Gaza war crimes team =

Israel said it would not cooperate with the probe.

"This committee has been instructed to find Israel guilty no matter what and there is no point in cooperating with such a masquerade," Israeli Foreign Ministry Spokesman Yigal Palmor told the German Press Agency dpa Friday.

Goldstone, a member of the South African Constitutional Court, and the former prosecutor of criminal courts in Yugoslavia and Rwanda, told reporters in Gaza that his team "will work and cooperate with all parties, with or without Israel."

"We came here to investigate, to listen and to watch everything related to violations that happened here and harmed the human rights and international conventions," he said.

He added that the team was asked to present its final report by early August.

In addition to Goldstone, the UN team includes Christine Chinkin, professor of international law at the London School of Economics; Hina Jilani, a human rights advocate from Pakistan; and Desmond Travers, a former officer in the Irish Armed Forces with expertise on international criminal investigations.

Israel, and other nations such as Canada, have accused the UN Human Rights Council - which mandated the fact-finding mission in a January resolution passed by 33 in favour, one against and 13 abstentions - of overtly singling it out.

The council voted last week not to investigate alleged war crimes in Sri Lanka, where at least 7,000 civilians are said to have been killed in the first four months of the year during a government

offensive against the Tamil Tigers.

Jun 0109 1349 GMT

Load-Date: June 2, 2009

End of Document

Canada Increases Humanitarian Aid to Sri Lanka

Canadian Corporate Newswire

August 07, 2009 Friday 10:15 AM EST

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Length: 762 words

Body

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA--(Marketwire - Aug. 7, 2009) - The Government of Canada is increasing its ongoing support to civilians displaced by the recent conflict in Sri Lanka, announced the Honourable Beverley J. Oda, Minister of International Cooperation, after visiting Menik Farm in Vavuniya, Sri Lanka.

"Canada is deeply concerned about the ongoing humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka," said Minister Oda. "During my visit to the displaced persons camp in Vavuniya, I witnessed the need of those who are living there. I am pleased that Canada is increasing its support to our partners in their work to provide basic humanitarian support to meet the needs of people affected by the conflict."

Minister Oda visited camps for internally displaced persons in Vavuniya and met with partners and senior Sri Lankan Ministers and officials during her three-day official visit to Sri Lanka.

Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency, is increasing its contributions to recent United Nations and International Committee of the Red Cross humanitarian appeals. Canada is also providing funds for the humanitarian activities of the World Food Programme, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNICEF, and Canadian non-governmental organizations, including CARE, Oxfam Canada and World Vision. Canada will contribute up to \$15 million in humanitarian assistance for conflict-afflicted internally displaced persons, which is in addition to a contribution of \$3 million announced on May 4 and \$4.5 million announced on February 23, bringing Canada's total assistance to \$22.5 million.

"The Government of Canada is proud to work with our trusted partners to answer the call for humanitarian assistance and support the safe and orderly resettlement of the internally displaced persons," added Minister Oda.

For more than two decades, a civil war raged in Sri Lanka between the Sinhalese-majority government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**). The recent conflict ended on May 17, after Sri Lankan troops seized the remaining **LTTE**-held coastal area. Approximately 300,000 internally displaced persons are now located in government-controlled camps and transit sites.

For more information on CIDA programming in Sri Lanka, please visit <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/srilanka-e>

BACKGROUNDER

Canada Increases Humanitarian Aid To Sri Lanka

Canada's additional humanitarian assistance of up to \$15 million for the approximately 300,000 internally displaced persons in Sri Lanka directly responds to the needs of a population in crisis.

Canada Increases Humanitarian Aid to Sri Lanka

The support will be used to provide necessary, ongoing food and medical assistance, shelter, protection, clean water, and sanitation services.

Initially, \$7.5 million will be disbursed as follows:

- The World Food Programme will receive up to \$3 million to provide food assistance to conflict-affected persons, including pregnant and lactating women, and children under five years of age;
- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees will receive up to \$1 million to continue providing emergency shelter, relief items, and protection services for internally displaced persons, returnees and other conflict-affected populations;
- The United Nations Children's Fund will receive up to \$1.3 million to continue providing water and sanitation, nutrition, health care, education and protection services;
- Oxfam Canada, CARE, and World Vision will each receive up to \$500,000 to provide emergency shelter, water and sanitation services, and relief items;
- The International Committee of the Red Cross will receive up to \$500,000 to provide a variety of medical relief and protection services, and;
- The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will receive up to \$200,000 to help ensure efficient coordination of the humanitarian response in Sri Lanka, including timely and essential interagency coordination, humanitarian mapping, and information sharing among all humanitarian partners.

This new funding is in addition to Canada's pledges of \$3 million in May and \$4.5 million in February, to respond to the humanitarian needs of the most affected in the recent conflict.

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- State

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Canadian Corporate Newswire

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- State

Load-Date: August 7, 2009

Aid agencies challenge Sri Lanka over war victims

Agence France Presse -- English

May 19, 2009 Tuesday 8:14 AM GMT

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Length: 571 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 19 2009

Body

International aid agencies and the United Nations Tuesday pushed Sri Lanka to allow desperately needed help to be rushed to displaced civilians now that the fighting against Tamil rebels is over.

The government has severely restricted access to hundreds of thousands of non-combatants who managed to escape the fighting in the northeast, despite widespread fears of a deepening humanitarian crisis.

Men, women and children waded through swamps as they fled the savage final battles between the government troops and the Tamil Tigers in a small sliver of coastal jungle.

Carrying no more than a few bundles of clothes and at risk of being shot or shelled by either side, they escaped the violence only to be herded into spartan, state-run camps where they await screening by the authorities.

The UN refugee agency (UNHCR) said the government urgently needed to allocate more land for emergency shelter, water and sanitation facilities for the 265,000 people who fled the fighting in recent months.

UNHCR complained its access to civilian camps in the district of Vavuniya had recently been "greatly curtailed" and warned another exodus of tens of thousands of people was expected in the coming days.

The agency plans to erect 10,000 more shelters to accommodate the Tamil refugees and said Sri Lanka must take immediate steps to improve conditions at 42 existing sites.

Since fighting ended on Monday, the government has come under renewed pressure to drop all restrictions imposed on aid groups and to lead a massive programme to get help to the victims of the war.

The International Committee of the Red Cross, the only neutral organisation that was working in the conflict zone, said the military's final assault had halted its access to civilians in desperate straits.

"No humanitarian aid has reached those who need it for over a week," director Pierre Kraehenbuehl said.

"Under international humanitarian law, the lives of all those who are not or are no longer fighting must be spared," he added in response to fears of a wave of killings after hostilities ceased.

Aid agencies challenge Sri Lanka over war victims

Much of the north and east of Sri Lanka has been off-limits for years to aid workers, international observers and journalists -- leaving few independent accounts of the devastation wrought by the war.

Despite its victory, the government is expected to keep many restrictions in place especially as the UN has called for an independent war crimes probe.

A spokesman for the UN's High Commissioner for Human Rights said last week an investigation into possible war crimes was vital, stressing there had to be "accountability for what has gone on in Sri Lanka."

Thousands of civilians were thought to have been hit by indiscriminate shelling, while the UN says more evidence had emerged of rebels killing Tamils who tried to escape.

Soon after the Tigers were defeated, the authorities arrested four doctors who had worked inside rebel territory treating wounded civilians and providing reports on heavy civilian casualties that contradicted government accounts.

The United States, the European Union and Amnesty International joined the chorus of calls for emergency aid groups and independent observers to be given full access to the people and places worst hit by the conflict.

The EU said it was "appalled by the loss of innocent civilian lives" particularly the high number of child casualties, and also called for an inquiry into alleged rights violations.

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Load-Date: May 20, 2009

Time to begin economic war

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

May 18, 2009 Monday

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Length: 2372 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 18 -- The business community hailed the victory of the President and the Armed Forces in liberating the country from the LTTE terrorists and pledged the fullest support to the Government and President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

President, International Chamber of Commerce Tissa Jayaweera : "The victory is great and now we have to win the economic war", President, International Chamber of Commerce Tissa Jayaweera said. We must develop the whole country including the rural areas and not only in the North and East. The ICC will support the development process by providing education and skills development facilities for the displaced families, he said. Past President, Federation of Chamber of Commerce of Industries of Sri Lanka (FCCISL) Nawaz Rajabdeen: "President Rajapaksa will go in the history as a king who saved the country and appreciated his teamwork with Secretary of Defence Gotabhaya Rajapaksa and the Service Commanders. The whole country is celebrating with pride except some western countries.

He said that Sri Lanka will be a strong country in the region with the support of the Sri Lankan diaspora returning. Chairperson Women's Chamber of Commerce and Trendy Wear (Pvt) Ltd Ramya Weerakoon: "The Chamber is looking forward to develop the country and people by improving business in areas such as agriculture, fisheries and other industries. She said that the biggest barrier is no more and the country will prosper with the continuous support of the people. Trendy Wear has already organized over one million goods to be sent to the North for the war heroes. President of Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka (FCCISL) Kosala Wickramanayake: "We are happy to see the end of this war." The business community have their greatest appreciation of President Rajapaksa and the Sri Lanka Forces. President Rajapaksa showed that he could win the war and now he will show how he could win the economic war in the country," he said. "For three decades all the investments and developments in the country were hampered by this war and now the country needs to focus more on development, exports, tourism and vocational training," he said. "Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) need to be rehabilitated without any delay and we need the assistance from the international community to help these people get their lives back to normalcy," he said. "We have already discussed with Chambers in these areas on what kind of assistance they need to bounce businesses in these areas back. We expect to launch special projects to assist entrepreneurs in these areas," he said. President of National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka (NCCSL) Lal de Alwis: No other leader could take such a bold decision on behalf of this country. There was no permanent settlement for this problem during the past 30 years. But President Rajapaksa was able to end this problem, he said. "With the end of this war we can expect a huge economic resurgence in the country and we can witness this within the next two to three years. Many foreign investors are keen on investing in Sri Lanka and this victory will draw more foreign direct investments to the country," he said. The Sri Lankan Tourism industry was badly impacted due to the war and as a Chamber, which promotes tourism, we can expect positive growth in this sector with this victory. The North and the East will contribute heavily to the GDP growth in the country," he said. "NCCSL is

Time to begin economic war

expecting to fund SME's in the North East areas through their business promotion fund and accelerate their rehabilitation process to get them back business. The Chamber is planning to have a special fund raised among the national and international business community to facilitate rehabilitation of IDPs in these areas. We have appointed a special committee for this project," he said. Chairman Joint Apparel Association Forum (JAAF) Ajith Dias: "We all are very happy and delighted by this victory. The country's next step will be in developing the North and the East. The apparel sector will be in the forefront of these developments. Accelerating rehabilitation of these IDPs is important and we need help from the international community for rehabilitating these people. As the private sector we need to expand our businesses in these areas. Some companies in the apparel sector has already set up factories in the Eastern Province. The apparel sector will have easy access to the human resources available in these areas," he said. President of the Tourist Hotel Association of Sri Lanka Srilal Miththapala: "The tourism industry is happy that the war had come to an end. The security situation had dramatically improved portraying a better picture of Sri Lanka. Foreign embassies will remove adverse travel advisories, which will be a huge boost for the tourism industry," he said. "The private sector will have a huge role to play in rehabilitating people in the North and the East. The private sector needs to look at business expansion in these areas. The tourism industry could establish hotel schools in these areas to develop skills of the youth in the North and East," he said. President of the National Chamber of Exporters (NCE) Rohan Fernando: "We are all relieved that we have finally achieved this victory. Now of course as happy as we are, we cannot just be like that. It's our nation's duty to find the IDPs places to settle in. "Also there are certain foreign countries that are bound to make issues from the status of the IDPs who have been placed in temporary areas. It is time we move out of Colombo and start our operations in these areas. We can develop the economic sector to a great extent here. We have to be hopeful as well as be cautious as well. We pass our congratulations to the forces, the Government and the Defence Secretary for a job well done", he said. Director and General Secretary of Sri Lanka Association of Software and Service Companies (SLASSCOM) Madu Ratnayake: " This victory will have a significant impact on the country's economy. Lack of peace in the country impacted many industries including the IT and BPO industry. When the security situation improves more IT and BPO investments will be attracted to the country. Everybody has a major role to play in rehabilitating the North and East. SLASSCOM expects to support training and development of people in the North and the East to enhance their skills," he said. CEO, Chamber of Construction Industry, Dakshitha Thalagodapitiya: "The domestic construction industry is recording a downturn at present, but the victory will provide reconstruction opportunities for the industry where there will be foreign investment in large scale in sectors such as infrastructure, tourism and agriculture. Chairman HNB Rienzie Wijetilike: "We are extremely happy that after 30 years we have gained peace in this country and brought the country to the state it was in the 60s". All citizens should now rally around and be together and keep the country free of terrorism and re-establish prosperity in the country. The time has come for us to offer our strength to the Government in developing the country with funds and show the foreign people what we can do. For the time being we can utilize the resources we have, and when it is necessary we can get funds from foreign countries to help us in the development of the country. If there is a planned strategy for rehabilitating the country, we will be ready to give a hand and if we join with the North, there will be a huge boost for the economy. For the foreign people who have showed sympathy towards the terrorists it is time to let them know that we gained peace in the correct manner and the whole world should realize that we have done everything to protect the civilians and rescuing them from the hands of terror. With this great victory we can now construct the country to be a better place for our future generation. Chairman of Laugfs Holdings W.K.H. Wegapitiya: "We are celebrating! This is the biggest achievement for the country so far. This is a memorable occasion and this has proved the ability of the Sri Lankans to the international community who thought we couldn't do anything. I remember, about two and a half years ago we had posed this question to some ambassadors we met what they would do to eradicate terrorism. Their response was that this war is simply an ethnic conflict and this cannot be settled nor eliminated. But we proved them wrong in many ways. We invited the LTTE for peace talks and negotiations but they wanted to have two nations and to get that they killed many innocent civilians. The military did their part and as true Sri Lankans, Sri Lanka will show a shining economy to the world. Sri Lanka is better in all terms and areas. There are multiple impacts this victory has towards the economy and one is the perception and attitude. There was a lot of people who said that we couldn't win this war and there were the political parties who took this war in terms of negotiating things politically. One thing our people are famous for is forgetting the good things that happened very quickly. Within two weeks people will ask questions like "what happened?" and they are very short sighted. People should not forget this day! International Forces will not stop here as they will find something to create some sort of trouble. We are celebrating this great victory and I really cant find words to describe how happy I am at this great achievement".

Time to begin economic war

MD/CEO of Chevron Lubricants Lanka Kishu Gomes: "At this valuable moment my greatest appreciation is conveyed to President Rajapaksa and all Forces. Now it is the time to start development activities in the North and build the confidence of the people who are living there. With the military victory of our Forces against the LTTE, we can see the Sri Lankan Government is positive about the post-war scenario. Being in the private sector we also are looking at aggressive strategies for new investments in the North. GM, Associated Motorways (AMW) PLC Virann De Soysa: "The Government Forces have defeated the LTTE completely. This is a great occasion to be celebrated for all Sri Lankans mainly Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims and our next duty is to build confidences of the people who were in the LTTE controlled areas. The Government has already begun reconstruction activities in the East, which was cleared from LTTE earlier, and they should be started in the North as soon as possible", he said. While the economy has managed to do relatively well under difficult circumstances, the country needs now to meet the challenges of post-war development with the expected opening of the North. I think that now is a good time for our country to start a new journey," he said. Chairman KIK Engineering Lalith Kahatapitiya: "I expressed my gratitude to the President for achieving this turning point from war to freedom and inevitable future economic development from poverty. It will be an eye opener for the international community to correct their misconceptions about Sri Lanka". He hoped that there will be plenty of foreign investment coming in, as they build confidence. The country will develop fast and we will continue to support the Presidents effort. This is a huge morale boost for my employees who have agreed to contribute a days salary, he said. Chairman, Imperial Tea Exports Jayantha Karunaratne: "Investors will be confident to do business with Sri Lanka now and lot of financial problems will be solved with this victory". The stock market will also go up and our long standing foreign clients have expressed their support and willingness to expand business with us already and made inquiries. We continue to support the Government at highest level, he said. Chairman, EPIC Lanka Group of Companies Nayana Dehigama: "The business community in the IT field is keen to develop the IT and communication industry in the North and East by providing skill development to people. This industry still shows a growth rate despite the existing recession although the momentum has dropped. He was confident that foreign investment will come through changing the negative attitude of international community to a positive one. Holcim Lanka Chairman Manilal Fernando: "The business community is already geared to commence development in fullest support to the Government". Director/CEO Bartleet Group Indrajith Fernando: "This is the day we have been waiting for. The private sector can do it and they will rally around to help the economy grow. This is a good lesson for all the countries to learn, and we should always think positively when doing something". Chairperson, Sri Lanka Telecom and Mobitel Leisha De Silva Chandrasena: "I wish to express our most profound gratitude to His Excellency Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka for providing a courageous leadership in winning peace". Defence Secretary, Gotabaya Rajapaksa together with the Commanders of the three forces and IGP of Police must be thanked profusely for their commitment to liberate the country and the selfless services and sacrifices of our pride, the three Armed Forces, Police and Civil Defense Force must be saluted for realizing this most important peace dream that had seemed a near impossibility for three decades. This is a historic victory for all of us Sri Lankans who have lived in a past of uncertainty but can now truly benefit from living as a family with of peace and prosperity which will be the greatest gift this for the generations to follow. Peace is a basic requisite for economic and social development and this victory of our nation we believe will lead to a new phase of national prosperity. As the National Communication Service Provider, Sri Lanka Telecom together with its wholly owned subsidiary, Mobitel, had been preparing for this moment of our nation's victory to take the lead in nation building to cover the entire country. With the arrival of Peace we are now ready to, as part of our national duty, integrate and power the entire country with the latest and best Information and Communication Technology and lead Sri Lanka to an Info-Com and Knowledge Rich Society. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Sri Lanka war displaced children moved to camp

Xinhua General News Service

August 19, 2009 Wednesday 4:55 PM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 191 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Aug. 19

Body

Children among Sri Lanka's war displaced have been moved into a camp dedicated to children, official said.

M Sumanadasa, Secretary to the Ministry of Child Development and Women's Affairs said that the new welfare camp for children has been set up in the northern town of Vavuniya.

"Out of the 400 children identified for rehabilitation, 264 of them would be accommodated in the new camp", Sumanadasa said.

He said the children would be reintegrated in to the society upon rehabilitation.

Since the government troops crushed the over three decade old challenge from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in May nearly 300,000 people displaced from the north are being accommodated in government camps.

The government has come under international pressure to keep to its promise to resettle them within the 180 day period targeted by the government.

Screening of the former rebels and the demining of the conflict ravaged areas remain government concerns in expediting the resettlement process.

Tamil Tigers faced wide spread accusations of recruiting under aged children for terrorist activity.

Load-Date: August 20, 2009

Over 600 athletes for Northern Province sports festival

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

September 19, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 253 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Sept. 19 -- The Northern Province Sports Festival-2009 commenced yesterday under the patronage of Northern Province Governor Major General G.A. Chandrasiri at the Duraipappah stadium, Jaffna.

The festival will conclude on September 20. The chief guest at the closing ceremony will be Social Services and Social Welfare Minister Douglas Devananda.

Over 600 competitors representing the Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim population in the sporting arena are taking part in the event.

Northern Province Governor Major General G.A. Chandrasiri said that Muslim sportsmen and sportswomen from Mannar, Sinhala sportsmen and **women** from Vavuniya are getting together and competing with Tamil sportsmen and **women** after a lapse of 15 years bringing about peace and harmony in the country.

This Sports Festival is being held after the liberation of the country from **LTTE** terrorists. Therefore all sports organizations and teams have got the opportunity to compete and taste victory and defeat in the same spirit.

This then is a historic opportunity for them to develop peace and harmony. It is expected that all athletes be able to reach national standard.

It is also hoped to discover an athlete who could be an Olympic star from the Northern Province. Such a person will have the blessings and assistance from the Department of Sports of the Northern Province. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: September 19, 2009

Women LTTE cadres arrested, 1 commits suicide

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

September 23, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 136 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Sept. 23 -- Two hardcore **women LTTE** cadres including a suicide cadre were arrested and their suicide jackets and a stock of explosives during a raid by the Vavuniya District Crime Investigation Unit, police said.

However one of them committed suicide by swallowing a cyanide capsule soon after she was arrested.

A police team led by Vavuniya District Crime Investigation Unit OIC Nalaka Gunasekara arrested the suspects who were hiding in the home of a **LTTE** pistol gang leader at Ukkulankulam.

Police recovered three suicide jackets, six kgs of explosives, and 10 detonators buried in the shrub jungle behind a church in Ukkulankulam. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: September 23, 2009