

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:25:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223508121

Documents (100)

1. [US Senator urges Sri Lanka to protect 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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

2. [LTTE 'actively prevent' civilians from leaving war-zone: 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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

3. [LTTE Human bomb kills 28, injures 60](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

4. [Sri Lankan rebels gun down 19 civilians: military](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

5. [TAMILS GETTING ISOLATED FROM SRI LANKAN STATE: REPORT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

6. [*More civilians fleeing LTTE bondage rescued*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

7. [*LTTE's last sea base Chalai captured*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

8. [*Dozens killed as Sri Lanka marks independence*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

9. [*Sri Lanka denies hospital shelling that killed 16*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

10. [*Tigers bomb Sri Lanka commuter bus, 21 dead: officials*](#)

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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 200911. [23 killed, 80 injured in Sri Lanka carnage](#)**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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 200912. [Sri Lanka steps up air raid on suspected LTTE targets](#)**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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 200913. [LANKAN JETS POUND SUSPECTED LTTE TARGETS, FIERCE FIGHTING ON](#)**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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 200914. [Red Cross evacuates 240 wounded civilians from LTTE-held areas](#)**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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 200915. [23 killed in Lanka bombings](#)**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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

16. [LTTE 'SUICIDE BOAT' RECOVERED AFTER FIERCE GUN-BATTLE: LANKA](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

17. [Obituary: Major General Janaka Perera: Sri Lankan soldier who played a key role in the suppression of the Tamil Tigers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

18. [The LTTE's weakened and voiceless brigade](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

19. [HR group urges LTTE to allow civilians into cleared areas](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

20. [Robert Evans' falsehoods exposed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

21. [Cracking another LTTE cell in Colombo](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

22. [19 civilians killed, 75 wounded in LTTE firing](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

23. [Sri Lanka 's refugee flow to India continues unabated](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

24. [CONGRESS, AIADMK FLAY PRO-LTTE, SECESSIONIST MOVES IN TAMIL NADU](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

25. [Sri Lanka threatens to kick out aid agencies, diplomats: report](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

26. [ALL-OUT WAR!](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

27. [Sri Lankan government minister killed in bomb explosion, military says](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

28. [Security beefed up following reports of LTTE entry in Kerala](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

29. [MINISTER ESCAPES SUSPECTED LTTE SUICIDE ASSASSINATION BID \(ROUNDUP\)](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

30. [Sri Lanka rebels hit back with suicide ship attacks](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

31. [LTTE marks 21st anniversary of its Black Tigers' Day](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

32. [ISD deals with many terror threats, not just JI: Jaya Officers have long record of keeping country secure despite Mas Selamat's escape](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

33. [Tigers killing civilians fleeing Sri Lanka war zone: 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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

34. [LTTE occupation nears end](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

35. [LTTE Flags At Protest Rally Legal: Toronto Police](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

36. [Tamil Tiger chief to issue rallying call as fiefdom crumbles](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

37. [Shelling kills nine in Sri Lanka children's ward](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

38. ['Eastern Election demolished LTTE's myth of being sole representative of Tamils'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

39. [SRI LANKA : LTTE, GOVERNMENT ENDANGERING LIVES OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF NEWLY DISPLACED AROUND WANNI](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

40. [STATEMENT OF SEN. PATRICK LEAHY 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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

41. [BLASTS MAR DAY](#)

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

42. [*Tamil refugees shelled as army closes in Sri Lanka 's civil war is nearing its endgame, says the reporter blinded in one eye by an army grenade on the island in 2001*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

43. [*Suicide blast kills 28 at Sri Lanka refugee camp: military*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

44. [*Eight dead, scores hurt in Sri Lanka train bombing: military*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

45. [*Who can protect Tamil civilians caught in the conflict? Analysis*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

46. [*Jayalithaa cracks whip on LTTE*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

47. [Fighting threatens Sri Lankan 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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

48. [Sri Lanka advances on rebel base](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

49. [LTTE claymore kills 21](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

50. ['There is no freedom' in Jaffna ; City an open prison where fear, bloodshed reign](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

51. [Trapped Sri Lankans need international intervention - and soon Mounting atrocities in civil war imperil as many as 180,000 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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

52. [*Shelling kills 16 at Sri Lanka hospital: 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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

53. [*War affected women urge all to work together to build nation*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

54. [*DISTRIBUTION OF INDIAN FOOD TO START IN SRI LANKA*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

55. [*Suicide bombing on Sri Lanka train kills seven*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

56. [*21 killed, 50 injured in blast near Colombo*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

57. [*Rights groups deplore Karuna's release*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

58. [Sri Lanka rebels attack bus carrying refugees: military](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

59. [Sri Lanka 's battle-hardened Tigers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

60. [Croydon Tamils count cost of Sri Lanka war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

61. [Sri Lanka warns Western sanctions can stoke ethnic conflict](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

62. [Sri Lanka fears more bombings as bus toll hits 26](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

63. [18 hurt in Sri Lanka rail bombing: officials](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

64. [Sri Lankan rebels shoot dead 19 civilians: military](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

65. [Sri Lanka braces for bloodier Tiger battles](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

66. [2 days of shelling on Sri Lankan hospital kills 11](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

67. [Civilians flee war zone as Sri Lanka snubs Britain](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

News

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

68. [MORE CIVILIANS KILLED IN SRI LANKA FIGHTING](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

69. [Guardian Weekly: International news: Shells kill civilians in 'final' Tamil battle](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

70. [Lankan President vows to flush LTTE out of north](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

71. [Suicide bombing kills 12 at Sri Lanka train station](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

72. [Army closes in on Sri Lanka rebels; War zone Shelling kills 11 in hospital](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

73. [Bus bombing kills 24 as Sri Lanka ceasefire ends](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

74. [How to protect 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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

75. [Suicide bombing kills 11 at Sri Lanka train station](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

76. [10 dead, 100 hurt in Sri Lanka train suicide blast](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

77. [Unresolved issues dog Tamil Nadu into 2008](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

78. [14 dead in Sri Lanka bombings, president says winning war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

79. [14 killed in Sri Lanka bombings, president says winning war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

80. ['There is no freedom' in Jaffna City an open prison where fear, bloodshed reign](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

81. [Hard to see the peace for all the guns in Sri Lanka 's civil war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

82. [Sri Lankan suicide bomber kills 3, wounds 36](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

83. [LTTE targeting impoverished Lankans - British Magazine](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

84. [Bus bombing kills 16 in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

85. [Hospital hit in clash between Tamil Tigers and Sri Lankan army](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

86. [MIA accused of supporting terrorism by speaking out for Tamil Tigers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

87. [Shelling on Sri Lankan hospital kills 9](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

88. [Trapped by the dying Tigers 150,000 people are being used as human shields by Tamil rebels who have promised to fight to the death. Nick Meo reports from Killinochi](#)

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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 200989. [Female suicide bomber kills 20 soldiers and 8 civilians 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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 200990. [Warring Sri Lanka marks 60 years of independence](#)**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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 200991. [SRI LANKA GOVT. SAYS 10,000 CIVILIANS HAVE ESCAPED FROM WAR ZONE](#)**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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 200992. [Sri Lanka sees victory over rebels near After 25-year fight, could Tamil Tigers be on verge of defeat?](#)**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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 200993. [Clinton concerned over Sri Lanka 'safe zone' deaths](#)**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: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

94. [Sri Lanka military says fighting killed 63](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

95. [Protest over Hindu temple](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

96. [Sri Lanka military: 63 dead in airstrikes, battles](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

97. [Female suicide bomber kills 28 in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

98. [The Barbed Wire Returns The Sri Lankan Army's plan for camps to intern Tamil civilians is brutal and illegal. It will help neither peace nor reconciliation in the island](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

99. [Govt. warns US and EU against sanctions](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

100. [Attempt to disrupt poll thwarted](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

US Senator urges Sri Lanka to protect civilians

Agence France Presse -- English

March 23, 2009 Monday 3:28 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 364 words

Dateline: WASHINGTON, March 23 2009

Body

A key US Senator warned Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa on Monday that his government's failure to protect civilians in government safe zones was hurting the country's global standing.

"While the **Tamil Tigers** have committed egregious acts, I am also alarmed by reports about actions taken by the government of Sri Lanka," Democrat John Kerry, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, wrote Rajapaksa.

Kerry said he had "grave concern" about reports that government forces had shelled civilians and hospitals in government-designated safe zones amid a fierce push to crush the rebel force, that humanitarian aid was not reaching civilians, and that the government had cracked down on journalists.

"This situation jeopardizes the international standing of Sri Lanka and its relations with friendly countries," the senator, his party's 2004 White House candidate, said in a letter made public by his office.

"Let me once again emphasize the urgent need for the Sri Lankan government to take all necessary steps to protect civilians, allow humanitarian access to the displaced, and credibly investigate human rights violations by all members of government security forces," Kerry wrote Rajapaksa.

Last month the government in Colombo asked men, **women** and children to move to a stretch of coastline as troops advanced on rebel positions in the north in a bid to crush all remaining pockets of resistance by the **Tamil Tigers**.

Government forces have pushed Liberation Tiger of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) rebels into a shrinking strip of land in the northeast and have said they hope to completely crush the guerrillas by April.

But tens of thousands of civilians are trapped behind the front line, according to relief agencies.

Kerry said that, as the military campaign ends, Rajapaksa would "have the opportunity to start down the path toward a durable and lasting peace through a political solution that acknowledges the legitimate aspirations of all Sri Lankans.

"As a friend of Sri Lanka, the United States will continue to closely monitor the situation -- and will stand ready to facilitate a return to the peace and prosperity so earnestly desired by all of its citizens," said Kerry.

US Senator urges Sri Lanka to protect civilians

Load-Date: March 24, 2009

End of Document

LTTE 'actively prevent' civilians from leaving war-zone: UN

Indo-Asian News Service

February 16, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 446 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 16 -- Expressing concern over the plight of thousands of civilians caught up in the fighting in Sri Lanka's north, the UN office here said Monday the Tamil Tiger rebels were "actively" preventing people from leaving the war-zone.

"The LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) continues to actively prevent people leaving, and reports indicate that a growing number of people trying to leave have been shot and sometimes killed," the office of the UN resident and humanitarian co-ordinator in Colombo said.

The UN said tens of thousands of civilians, including a large number of children remain in the Wanni pocket, and were experiencing "serious shortages of food, medicine, and clean water, and as a result increasing numbers are becoming ill".

It said the efforts to bring in more food and medicines "have not yet been successful" and stressed that it is imperative that these needs be met.

"While the designation of the new safe zone has provided some respite for the tens of thousands of civilians trapped for weeks by heavy fighting which has killed and injured many people, reports from yesterday (Sunday) indicate that there was some fighting inside the zone," the UN statement said.

"This fighting led to the deaths and injury to yet more civilians. The United Nations calls for the Sri Lankan forces and the LTTE to refrain from fighting in areas of civilian concentration," it said.

The statement said there were indications that children as young as 14 were being recruited into the ranks of the LTTE.

It said 15 of UN staff members and their families were also prevented by the LTTE from leaving the war-zone.

"Fifteen UN staff and 75 of their dependents, 40 of whom are children, and 35 of whom are women, remain in the same area, have also been prevented from leaving by the LTTE. Fifteen of these children have contracted respiratory diseases, a serious indicator for a population which is now in dire need of humanitarian assistance," it said.

Despite their own vulnerable position, the UN said, many of these staff members played an important role in helping with the distribution of 8,400 tonnes of food to the civilians of the Wanni over the past four months.

LTTE 'actively prevent' civilians from leaving war-zone: UN

"We are especially concerned that one staff member was reported forcibly recruited into the LTTE yesterday. The UN calls on the LTTE to immediately release him, to desist from further recruitment of civilians, and to permit passage for people who wish to leave, especially the women and children," the statement said. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service. 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: August 10, 2009

End of Document

LTTE Human bomb kills 28, injures 60

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

February 9, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 312 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 9 -- An **LTTE** woman suicide bomber mingling with a group of displaced civilians coming from uncleared areas blew herself up at Sugandirapuram, north of Visuamadu yesterday, killing 28 people and injuring more than 60 others.

Among the dead were eight civilians and 20 Security Forces' personnel which included three **female** soldiers. Among the injured were 24 soldiers. Initial reports said that the bomber who had come with around 1,000 displaced civilians from uncleared areas of Mullaitivu, had blown herself around 11.40 am, when a woman soldier had tried to body check her at a checkpoint prior to being taken to a transit welfare centre. According to sources, several military personnel were among the dead including **female** soldiers. A large number of civilians who had braved Tiger clutches to reach the Visuamadu area too were either injured or dead. Authorities said they had rushed medical units and ambulances to the area, and the injured had been taken to hospitals in Kilinochchi, Vavuniya and Anuradhapura. Meanwhile, the Director of Media Centre for National Security, Lakshman Hulugalle said that this was yet another desperate attempt by the **LTTE** to prevent thousands of displaced civilians from fleeing the uncleared areas. He said that despite Tiger threats more than 12,000 civilians from uncleared areas had sought refuge with Government authorities during the last seven days. Military Spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara yesterday said that the **LTTE's** strength is now reduced to 700 fighter cadres and the attack at Sugandirapuram shows the **LTTE's** desperateness over mass exodus of civilians from the uncleared area. Security Forces would take steps to enable these civilians trapped in the remaining uncleared pockets in Mullaitivu to reach safer environs, he 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: May 5, 2009

Sri Lankan rebels gun down 19 civilians: military

Agence France Presse -- English

February 10, 2009 Tuesday 12:26 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 563 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 10 2009

Body

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger guerrillas on Tuesday shot dead 19 civilians and wounded 75 others fleeing territory still under rebel control, military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Survivors of the attack who arrived at a military post told how the Tiger fighters had fired on a group of 1,000 people trying to cross the frontlines to safety, he said.

"The civilians came to an army position carrying the dead and the wounded, who had gunshot injuries," Nanayakkara said, adding 12 men, five women and two children had been killed.

According to the government, this month 25,000 non-combatants have already escaped from the rebels, who face imminent defeat in their decades-long armed struggle for an independent Tamil homeland.

The attack came a day after a Tamil Tiger suicide bomber killed 30 people at a centre for displaced civilians, in what Sri Lankan authorities said was another attempt to stop people from leaving the rebels' shrinking territory.

But thousands of Tamils are crossing the frontlines in the north of the island each day, the government has said, as it pushes on with a massive offensive to crush the Tigers after 30 years of unrest.

Sri Lanka accuses the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) -- as they are formally known -- of holding the civilians as "human shields."

Monday's suicide bombing was condemned by the United Nations and the United States, which backed Colombo's stance, saying that the attack was an "apparent effort by the LTTE to discourage Tamils from leaving the conflict area."

The Tamil Tigers have issued no response to the latest violence, and no independent verification was available as journalists, aid groups and international observers are banned from reporting from the area.

"What we are seeing is that more people are coming over to our side," Nanayakkara said. "The Tigers have also been firing mortars at the routes taken by the civilians, but still they want to escape from the fighting."

Sri Lankan rebels gun down 19 civilians: military

Nanayakkara said 10 civilians were among the 30 people killed in Monday's attack when a **female** suicide bomber hit a makeshift shelter where security forces receive displaced people.

Colombo says the number of civilians trapped by the conflict is now less than 100,000, though UN agencies recently placed it as high as 250,000.

The defence ministry said government forces on Tuesday kept up attacks against the remaining Tiger rebels, who suffered "heavy damages" and lost 27 fighters.

Amnesty International condemned Monday's suicide bombing and said it must not lead to government retaliation.

"The use of such attacks by one party to an armed conflict does not excuse unlawful attacks in response," Amnesty's Sri Lanka specialist Yolanda Foster said in a statement.

Amnesty said the government's restrictions made it impossible to know what was happening on the ground.

"In a war with no witnesses, it is the civilians who pay the price for both parties' disregard for international humanitarian law," it said.

In a dispute over censorship, the BBC announced on Monday that it would stop providing radio news to Sri Lanka's national broadcaster.

The BBC said there had been "deliberate interference" with the programmes.

The government has accused individuals from international aid agencies, diplomats and news organisations of being supportive of the **Tamil Tigers**, whose territory has shrunk to less than 100 square kilometres (38 square miles).

Load-Date: February 11, 2009

TAMILS GETTING ISOLATED FROM SRI LANKAN STATE: REPORT

Indo-Asian News Service

October 28, 2008 Tuesday 1:58 PM EST

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 625 words

Byline: Devapriyo Bhattacharjee Report from Indo-Asian News Service brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, Oct. 28 -- (IANS) Tamils are getting isolated from the Sri Lankan state because the war against the **Tamil Tigers** is becoming "an ideological crusade" against minorities, a reputed Sri Lankan rights group has said.

The University Teachers for Human Rights (UTHR) has also said that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), which is now facing the armed forces in its lair in the island's north, remains a force despite suffering military setbacks.

The 52-page report, released late Monday, is critical of both the Sri Lankan government and the **LTTE** for rights abuses but lays most of the blame on Colombo as well as the military and intelligence agencies.

"The government's 'war on terrorism' quickly took on the character of an ideological crusade against the minorities in general," it said.

"Fighting the **LTTE** became almost secondary to the prerequisites of the extremists in power to establish a totalitarian Sinhalese-Buddhist state and erase all semblance of pluralism.

"An important category that became targets of the state's killer groups were those who were not **LTTE** sympathisers but were active in defending and speaking up for legitimate Tamil interests," said the UTHR, which extensively documents rights violations in Sri Lanka's horrific ethnic conflict.

"The result was the complete isolation of the state from the Tamils," adding the government's high-handedness since late 2005 had "strengthened the admittedly negative political appeal of the **LTTE**...

"It has left the Tamils feeling bitter and angry against the government."

It added: "In this reality, despite the military setbacks, the demise of the **LTTE** should not be taken for granted."

The report has said that desertions and casualties in the military were far higher than admitted and the government used deception to send young men from the Sinhalese community to battle the **LTTE**. "This does not match the government's claim that the **LTTE** is on its last legs."

The UTHR makes a pointed reference to the mainly government-controlled Vavuniya district where mass detention centres have come up for those fleeing the **LTTE** zone.

TAMILS GETTING ISOLATED FROM SRI LANKAN STATE: REPORT

"Those in Vavuniya find themselves in a place of crime and lawlessness, where torture, murder, extortion, abduction and rape are routine and women are powerless. The blame lies mainly with security forces and Tamil paramilitary elements working with them."

The report added: "At the root of the present crisis lies the Sinhalese polity's inability to offer a political settlement acceptable to the minorities; in this regard, President (Mahinda) Rajapakse's record has been one of patent duplicity."

The report presents a dismal picture of Tamil civilians displaced from their homes in the north due to the fighting between the LTTE and the military.

"Facing abysmal conditions, they have even stopped putting up temporary shelters. They move north and as shells begin to fall they know they must move again. For the night they spread a mat under a tree.

"When they roll the mat in the morning, it is not unusual to find snakes and scorpions under the warmth of the mat."

UTHR said the general mood among the people in Tamil Tiger territory "was strongly anti-LTTE four months ago. But with increased aerial bombing and shelling (by the air force), the mood is changing".

The report blames military apparatus for the Sep 21 murder of Sivakururaja Kurukkal, the priest of Sri Lanka's most revered Hindu temple dedicated to Koneswaram in Trincomalee.

It said the murdered man was intent on asserting the Hindu character of the region and had recently visited India to buy images for a temple. He also frequently took on the security forces over cases of arrests and torture.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

-861098

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

Load-Date: October 29, 2008

More civilians fleeing LTTE bondage rescued

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

February 17, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 365 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 17 -- Over 109 civilians fleeing the **LTTE** in the Vanni reached the Navy and Army on Sunday morning. Another 400 sick and wounded civilians accompanied by their relatives had been rescued and ferried by the International Committee of the Red Cross yesterday morning.

The Navy rescued 78 fleeing civilians from **LTTE** held areas on Sunday in the Northeastern seas. "The Naval patrol rescued 78 civilians seeking protection with the Security Forces. The civilians were bundled into fiber glass dinghies. Children and **women** were among the displaced people who arrived in three separate missions", Navy spokesman Commander D.P.K.Dassanayake told the Daily News. "The IDPs who were sick and weary had been provided with immediate treatment by the Naval medical team. They also were given refreshment and meal before they were directed to the IDP centre", Commander Dassanayake said. Meanwhile, 31 civilians crossing the uncleared areas reached the North of Vishuamadu with troops of the 58 division on Sunday. ICRC spokesperson Sarasi Wijeratne said a group of 400 sick and wounded civilians rescued from the **LTTE** controlled area had been ferried to Trincomalee for treatment. "The ICRC, as part of its mission rescuing sick and wounded civilians, transported 400 sick and wounded accompanied by their relatives ferried from Puthumaccalan, Mullaitivu and transferred to Trincomalee hospital today", Wijeratne added. She said more and more sick and wounded civilians are arriving at the Puthumaccalan community center, school and makeshift shelters for treatment. A special ICRC medical team has been dispatched to support the Ministry of Health at the Trincomalee hospital in order to provide medical treatment to the sick and wounded civilians transferred from the uncleared areas. "We need a regular evacuation safe passage to transfer the sick and wounded people from the uncleared areas to Trincomalee. Therefore, we are in talk with both parties to grant a regular safe passage", Wijeratne told the Daily News. However, both parties agreed to transfer this contingent of sick and wounded civilians today, she 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 1, 2009

LTTE's last sea base Chalai captured

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

February 6, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 955 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 6 -- The **LTTE** lost one of its main Sea Tiger bases in the Eastern sea belt -- Chalai -- on Wednesday night. With the fall of Chalai the **LTTE's** access to the sea has been virtually cut-off and they are now confined mainly to land areas. The strategically important base in Chalai was one of the main locations where the Sea Tigers carried out several devastating attacks on the Sri Lanka Navy, which lost several boats off this coast.

The initial battle to capture the base started on Sunday February 1. Troops of the 4th Gemunu Watch led by Major Upul Senerath of the 552 Brigade stormed the heavily fortified bund built by the Tigers using earth and sand, at around 6.30 pm. The one kilometre long, seven feet high bund linked the sea from the east and the lagoon from the west just a few kilometres north of the Chalai Sea Tiger base. The devastating attack was launched after an hour of fierce fighting using Multi Barrel Rocket Launchers, artillery guns and mortars targeting the earth bund, which is the first barrier that the troops had to face after crossing the Chundikulam lagoon some three kilometres away. Within a span of two hours, the troops were able to take full control of the bund. Just in front of the bund there was a mine field. One soldier was instantly killed when one of the mines went off as the victim stepped on it. However, the troops managed to capture the bund despite heavy resistance from the Tigers, who continuously fired at the security forces using 12.7mm guns, 81 mm mortars and 30 mm canon guns, which normally is fixed to attack boats. The gun had been mounted on a tractor, which was on the move after every attack. After holding the bund during the night, the 1st Commando Regiment led by Major K. Gnaratne moved beyond the bund with the break of dawn and was able to clear an area facilitating the 7 Vijayaba and 6 Light Infantry to move further. After some time they were able to reach the second bund, located some 400 metres from the first bund. It was not built as strongly as the first one, but the Tigers attacked the advancing forces using heavy weapons. However, by noon the troops were able to gain full control of the second bund after fierce fighting. On a jungle patch on the side of the lagoon the **LTTE** had mounted heavy guns and continued to attack the military. On the same day troops moved to another bund that was located one kilometre away from the second bund and took control of it as the Tigers fled the bund due to the barrage of artillery shells launched by the 4th Artillery regiment. The third bunker line was captured by two companies from the 7 Vijayaba Infantry Regiment who had infiltrated the area while the 6 Ceylon Light Infantry gave maximum fire support from the beach flank. By Tuesday, troops detected the **LTTE's** fourth bund some four kilometres away from the first bund. A heavy battle occurred in this area for several hours. Unable to withstand the assault from the military the **LTTE** who had suffered a large number of casualties moved further back towards the Chalai base. By Wednesday, the troops were at a crucial point in the battle as the **LTTE** entered their last defence line to protect the Chalai base. At one point a young **female** suicide cadre had jumped in front of the Commando Regiment and exploded herself. However, only one Commando soldier was injured due to the blast. With troops closing in on the Chalai base, the **LTTE** used at least eight separate teams and launched several waves of attacks on the military. But these attacks were repulsed by the troops causing heavy damages to the Tigers. Meanwhile, the **LTTE** radio communication had confirmed the deaths of five top level leaders of the sea Tiger wing during the

LTTE's last sea base Chalai captured

battle. In one area two second level leaders Sinnakannan and Annavelan were killed on the spot when they came under artillery attack from the military. Holding the self styled 'Lieutenant Colonel' rank in the Sea Tiger wing, Sinnakannan had led many attacks against the Sri Lanka Navy. He is the leader of the Black Tiger unit of the Sea Tigers. The other three second level leaders were third in-command of the Sea Tiger Wing Vinayagam alias Mike Four, Palawana and Kadar. All of them were holding the rank of 'Lieutenant Colonel' in the wing. Vinayagam alias Mike Four was the Sea Tiger Wing's third leader since September, 2008. He has over 25 years of experience in the wing and is blind in one eye. In the initial years of the LTTE, he was the bodyguard of the organisation's second in command 'Mahattaya' who was later killed by Prabhakaran. Vinayagam toured Norway in 2004 for fundraising. He functioned as the intelligence head of the Sea Tiger wing as well and hails from Marudankerni in Elephant pass. Palawana is also an experienced leader of the wing having fifteen years of service. A close confidant of Prabhakaran, he led over hundred devastating attacks on the Sri Lanka Navy including the failed attempt on the Passenger ship -Jet Liner. He was attached to the Pooneryn Sea Tiger wing. Another second level leader who was killed is Kadar. He functioned as the Nachchikuda Sea Tiger leader. He had taken part in many ground operations in the last few months and was the area leader in Punchiparanthan when the 58-Division captured it a few weeks ago. He had been in Chalai for a long period and was considered as one of main leaders who were able to carry out several crucial attacks on the Sri Lanka Navy. With the loss of five second level leaders of the Sea Tiger wing, the entire LTTE naval operations are paralyzed as almost all the attacks that the wing had carried out had been with the direct involvement of them. 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: May 5, 2009

End of Document

Dozens killed as Sri Lanka marks independence

Guardian.com

February 4, 2008

Copyright 2008 Guardian Unlimited (© Guardian Newspapers Limited) All rights reserved

theguardian

Length: 533 words

Highlight: Roadside bombings in Sri Lanka killed more than a dozen people today as the country's president marked the island's 60th anniversary of its independence, claiming terrorism was "facing a defeat it has never faced before".

Body

Roadside bombings in Sri Lanka killed more than a dozen people today as the country's president marked the island's 60th anniversary of its independence, claiming terrorism was "facing a defeat it has never faced before".

The capital, Colombo, was effectively sealed off, with roads blocked and mobile phone operators cutting off services in the morning in anticipation of an attack by the rebel **Tamil Tigers**.

The city saw parades, speeches and a security clampdown closing 40 schools for the week.

However, the guerrillas appeared to strike in Welioya, a region 150 miles north of the capital, bombing a bus. Twelve civilians died and 17 were injured.

Another roadside bombing, in the south-eastern town of Buttala, killed one soldier and injured two others, the military said.

The president, Mahinda Rajapaksa, used the anniversary to rail against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

He reiterated his vow to crush the Tigers, who want a separate state for the island's 3 million mainly Hindu Tamils in the north and east of Sri Lanka.

"Our defence forces have achieved victories that were never before seen. Terrorism is facing a defeat that it has never before faced," he said. Government officials have said they hope to rout the rebels by the end of the year.

In a militaristic display, troops and bands marched next to multi-barrel rocket launchers, armoured personnel carriers and heavy artillery pieces. Just off the coast sailed the navy's fleet of armed speed craft while overhead flew helicopters and jets.

The Tigers have not claimed responsibility for a wave of attacks on civilians - a routine practice by the group, which is listed as a terrorist organisation by the European Union, the United States and India.

Dozens killed as Sri Lanka marks independence

On Sunday, a **female** suicide bomber blew herself up inside the capital's main railway station, killing 11 people and wounding 92 others. A day earlier, a bomb on a bus killed 18 people, mostly Buddhist pilgrims, in the central town of Dambulla.

Full-scale fighting between the Sri Lankan military and the **LTTE** has become a daily event since the government scrapped the truce last month, accusing the rebels of using it to rebuild and rearm, and saying they were insincere about wanting peace.

Analysts say the government's strategy appeared to be two-pronged: to set up local governments headed by pro-government Tamil politicians, and to shred the Tigers' military strength.

At the top of the government's hit list is the Tigers' elusive guerrilla leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran.

"It is a war of attrition," said Alan Keenan of the International Crisis Group.

"We are looking at a period of intense warfare, with all the ancillary violence that brings. The government is boxed in with its rhetoric of war. It has raised expectations and cannot back down.

"There is a possibility of shattering the **Tamil Tigers** into smaller pieces and fighting a prolonged insurgency. But it is a long shot."

An estimated 70,000 people have died since the conflict began in 1983. The violence erupted when Buddhist Sinhalese mobs instigated anti-Tamil riots across the country, shattering the social compact between races that had seen Sri Lanka touted as a model developing country in the 1960s.

Load-Date: February 4, 2008

Sri Lanka denies hospital shelling that killed 16

Agence France Presse -- English

February 11, 2009 Wednesday 12:37 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 548 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 11 2009

Body

Sri Lanka's military on Wednesday denied it had shelled a makeshift hospital, killing 16 patients, as concern grew for civilians trapped in fighting between government soldiers and Tamil rebels.

"We did not fire at this location on Monday and it is quite possible that the LTTE attacked them," said military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, referring to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or Tamil Tigers.

The guerrillas, cornered in the north of the country and seemingly close to defeat, were also stopping civilians fleeing rebel-held areas, the spokesman said.

His comments came after the International Committee of the Red Cross said the hospital was shelled with the loss of 16 lives.

The organisation did not say who was responsible, but urged government forces and the rebels to spare non-combatants.

"We are shocked that patients are not afforded the protection they are entitled to," said Paul Castella, head of the ICRC delegation in Colombo.

"Once more, we call on both parties to meet their obligation under international humanitarian law to spare at all times the wounded and sick people, medical personnel and medical facilities."

News of the shelling on the makeshift hospital in Putumattalan came as civilians poured across the frontlines out of territory held by the Tigers, who have battled since 1972 for an independent Tamil homeland.

Sri Lanka's army has encircled the rebels in the jungle after a string of battlefield victories, and the government has said final victory may come within days.

The military has accused the LTTE of gunning down 19 civilians and wounding another 75 who on Tuesday tried to escape from the dwindling territory still under rebel control.

Sri Lanka denies hospital shelling that killed 16

The Tigers in a statement issued to the pro-rebel Tamilnet website denied they were behind the attack, and in turn blamed the military.

A Tiger official said that Sri Lankan army commandos had opened fire on the civilians inside a government-designated "safe zone."

The raft of claims can not be verified as journalists, rights groups and international observers are unable to report freely from the area.

The government has also accused the only two independent groups still working in the conflict area, the ICRC and the UN, of causing panic by putting out exaggerated reports of civilian casualties -- a charge denied by both.

Last week, a mob stoned the ICRC offices in Colombo while on Tuesday demonstrators denounced US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who had asked for a "no-fire period" to allow civilians to move to safety.

Colombo has also pointed the finger at aid workers, diplomats and journalists saying they are being supportive of the **Tamil Tigers**.

On Monday, a **female** Tiger suicide bomber killed 30 people at a centre for displaced civilians, in what Sri Lankan authorities and the United States said was an attempt to stop people from leaving rebel territory.

The government says nearly 33,000 non-combatants have already fled the war zone this month, with hundreds more following every day.

Government forces on Wednesday kept up attacks against the rebels and took more territory, the defence ministry said.

Foreign Secretary Palitha Kohona said the Colombo government hoped displaced locals would be able to return to their homes within about a year after the region was swept for mines.

Load-Date: February 12, 2009

Tigers bomb Sri Lanka commuter bus, 21 dead: officials

Agence France Presse -- English

June 6, 2008 Friday 10:36 AM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 542 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, June 6 2008

Body

At least 21 people were killed and 47 others wounded Friday in the latest in a string of suspected Tamil Tiger attacks against civilians in the Sri Lankan capital, officials said.

The attack saw a packed state-run bus travelling just south of Colombo peppered with red-hot shrapnel after being hit by a powerful fragmentation mine placed on the roadside.

"Twenty-one people have been killed, eight of them are women," police spokesman Ranjith Gunasekera told AFP.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). He said it was a "cowardly attack" by a "ruthless organisation."

Survivors said the bus was knocked over by the force of the explosion.

"I was standing in the middle of the bus when there was a loud noise and the whole bus toppled to the side," said 21-year-old office worker Shanika Priyadharshani while being bandaged up in hospital.

"I blacked out for a while. There was black smoke, people were dead around me. I shouted for help and someone pulled me out," she told AFP.

The defence ministry immediately sealed off the area, although no arrests have been reported. Police did, however, discover and diffuse another Claymore-type mine near the scene of the blast.

Sri Lanka's president Mahinda Rajapakse said he was shocked by the attack.

"This brutality... shows the efforts of the LTTE to provoke a backlash against the Tamil people from which it hopes to gain, although the Tamil people themselves are held in thrall by the terror of its so-called liberator," he said in a statement.

The attack was the third targeting commuters in and around Colombo in less than two weeks.

Tigers bomb Sri Lanka commuter bus, 21 dead: officials

On Wednesday, 18 people were hurt when suspected Tiger rebels set off a bomb alongside a packed commuter train.

And on May 26, another attack on a commuter train -- also blamed on the LTTE -- killed nine people and wounded 84 others.

Each of the attacks came after the LTTE complained that government commandos, who operate in small groups known as "deep penetration units", have killed civilians in roadside bombings inside Sri Lanka's rebel-held north.

Hostilities have escalated sharply since the start of the year when the government pulled out of a truce with the Tigers who are fighting to carve out a separate Tamil state within the Sinhalese-majority island.

Since then, both sides have traded allegations that each others' forces are deliberately targeting civilians.

Meanwhile, fighting in northern Sri Lanka on Thursday claimed 16 LTTE members and two soldiers, the defence ministry said Friday.

Casualty figures in the north are impossible to verify as journalists are barred from visiting front line areas or crossing into rebel-held territory.

The report came as the LTTE said two civilians were killed late Thursday by a roadside mine in the north by an army unit and that six civilians died in a similar attack on Monday night.

Last month, the rebels accused government commandos of killing 19 people in mine attacks.

Sri Lanka's military refuses to comment on its covert operations in the north.

The Sri Lankan government says that it now has the upper hand in the long-running conflict, with the defence ministry reporting that 4,081 Tamil Tigers and 339 government soldiers have been killed so far this year.

Load-Date: June 7, 2008

23 killed, 80 injured in Sri Lanka carnage

Indo-Asian News Service

June 6, 2008 Friday 1:55 PM EST

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 498 words

Byline: Report from Indo-Asian News Service brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 6 -- At least 23 people were killed and about 80 injured Friday as suspected **Tamil Tigers** bombed two buses in strife-torn Sri Lanka, triggering a furious response from President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

A deafening blast triggered by remote control early in the morning killed 21 people and injured 60 near a university in Moratuwa town, south of Colombo. And just before 4 p.m., another bomb went off inside a bus in Kandy district, killing two people and wounding over 20.

The authorities blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) for the carnage. President Rajapaksa said that the **LTTE** was hitting back after suffering reverses at the hands of his military.

"This is further proof of the **LTTE**'s frenzy (over) its major military setbacks in the north and the loss of its hold on the eastern province," he said.

The roadside bomb near the Moratuwa University, some 20 km south of Colombo, hit hard a bus on its way to Mount Lavinia, just outside the capital, causing mayhem. It was the third attack on public transport in two weeks.

The dead included 13 men and eight **women**. The explosion site was close to a Buddhist temple. The bus turned into a wreck.

Television channels showed footage of the bloodied site, wounded civilians soaked in blood being evacuated to the nearby hospitals.

The defence ministry said a claymore mine weighing five kilogrammes, a micro pistol and a "few war like items" were recovered from a privately owned land located along the Second Cross Street in Mount Lavinia.

The second explosion occurred inside a bus coming from Waththegama and going to the tea-growing hill town Kandy. When it reached a teachers' training school 12 km north of Kandy, the bomb went off.

Two people were killed and 20 suffered multiple injuries.

The injured were rushed to the Kandy district hospital.

People in the area caught a man they suspect was involved in the attack and handed him over to the police.

23 killed, 80 injured in Sri Lanka carnage

On Wednesday, 18 people were injured when a bomb targeting a passenger train exploded at Dehiwela, on the outskirts of Colombo.

On May 26, nine civilians were killed and nearly 100 wounded when a powerful bomb ripped through a crowded train coach, also in Dehiwela.

Rajapaksa Friday issued a statement condemning the latest attacks.

"The continued targeting of innocent civilians by the LTTE must earn the outrage and opprobrium of all civilised societies who can now see the reality of the LTTE's unvarying commitment to violence and terror to achieve its narrow objectives," the president said.

He said the motive behind the attack was "to provoke a backlash against the Tamil people" from members of the majority Sinhalese community.

There was no reaction from the LTTE, which claimed May 27 that six civilians, including two children, died when a claymore mine exploded a day earlier in the area they hold. The Tigers blamed the military for the attack, but the authorities denied any involvement.

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: June 6, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lanka steps up air raid on suspected LTTE targets

Indo-Asian News Service

October 1, 2008 Wednesday

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 401 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 1 -- The Sri Lankan Air Force Wednesday stepped up bombings of suspected Tamil Tiger bases in the north where the military is engaged in efforts to wrest territory from the guerrillas.

According to military authorities, fighter jets bombed at least six targets of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) amid reports that two civilians were killed in one of the air raids. Barely five hours after targeting a "high-profile rebel leaders hideout" in Mullaitivu district early Wednesday, the defence ministry said that the jets carried out simultaneous "twin air raids" on two key **LTTE** facilities in a Kilinochchi suburb at 10.25 a.m. "A target engaged was identified as a major foothold of the **LTTE**'s 'Charles Anthony unit' while the other was described as a hardcore **female** terrorist training facility," the defence ministry said. The Charles Antony unit is known as an elite fighting unit of the **LTTE**. Also Wednesday afternoon, fighter jets flew over the **LTTE**'s "administrative capital" of Kilinochchi "and carried out three air raids simultaneously targeting **LTTE** administration and logistic bases. "All three targets were engaged accurately," the defence ministry said in a separate report Wednesday. There was no immediate reaction from the rebels. However, the pro-rebel TamilNet website claimed that at least two civilians were killed and 13 wounded during a morning air raid about one kilometre south of Kilinochchi town. Claiming that two children and **women** were among the wounded civilians, it said that 19 houses were destroyed in the raid. The advancing government troops are currently operating only about four to five kilometers away from Kilinochchi, the **LTTE**'s political hub located 354 km north of Colombo. The UN and other aid agencies have already moved out of the rebel-held areas to nearby government-controlled region citing security reasons. Thousands of civilians have also moved from Kilinochchi deeper into the rebel-held areas in the north. The **LTTE** has been fighting against the Sri Lankan state to carve out a separate state for Tamils in the northern and eastern part of the island for the past quarter century. Thousands have died in fighting between the **LTTE** and the military since late 2005. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service. For more information on news feed please contact Surit Das 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: July 14, 2009

LANKAN JETS POUND SUSPECTED LTTE TARGETS, FIERCE FIGHTING ON

Indo-Asian News Service

October 10, 2008 Friday 6:04 AM EST

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 376 words

Byline: P. Karunakharan Report from Indo-Asian News Service brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 10 -- (IANS) Ground attack fighter jets of the Sri Lankan Air Force carried out three air raids Friday morning on suspected targets of the Tamil Tiger rebels, as fierce fighting to capture rebel strongholds continued to rage across the restive north, military sources said.

The first air raid by the supersonic fighter jets was carried out 6.30 a.m. Friday targeting "a **LTTE** communication centre located three km northeast of Paranthan", a village located some two km north of **LTTE**s administrative capital of Kilinochchi in the north, the Media Centre For National Security (MCNS) said.

"Another air strike was carried out by fighter jets targeting senior **LTTE** leaders hideout located two km north-east of Kilinochchi town around 7 a.m. At the same time, Air Force fighter jets pounded a **LTTE** black tiger camp 1.5 km west of Paranthan," it said, adding that the pilots said the targets were accurately hit.

There was no immediate reaction from the rebels in this regard.

Fierce fighting is on in the north with the military claiming that the advancing government troops were just two km away from Kilinochchi town, located about 350 km north of here.

The MCNS said at least 33 **LTTE** guerrillas and a soldier were killed and dozens were wounded on both sides during sporadic clashes Thursday in the north.

The fresh air raids come a day after a top Sri Lankan cabinet minister narrowly escaped an assassination attempt by a suspected **female** Tamil Tiger suicide bomber on the outskirts of capital Colombo.

The suicide bomber from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) blew herself up Thursday noon targeting the motorcade of Agricultural Minister Maithiripala Sirisena. The minister's vehicle narrowly escaped the blast and he escaped unharmed.

But one of his security vehicles got caught in the blast, wounding seven people including a deputy minister.

The MCNS in a report Friday said that two of the seven civilians wounded in the blast had succumbed to their injuries.

"One succumbed to his injuries at the Kalubowila Hospital and another at the Colombo National Hospital. All the injured are males," it said.

LANKAN JETS POUND SUSPECTED LTTE TARGETS, FIERCE FIGHTING ON

--Indo-Asian News Service

karu/rn/jg

(400 Words)

*

10101242

NNNN

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

-840866

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

Load-Date: October 21, 2008

End of Document

Red Cross evacuates 240 wounded civilians from LTTE-held areas

Indo-Asian News Service
February 10, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 299 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 10 -- Amid heavy clashes in Sri Lanka's northeastern Mullaitivu district, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Tuesday evacuated 240 sick and wounded civilians from rebel-held areas using a ferry, an official here said.

ICRC spokesperson Sarasi Wijeratne said that the 240 people in the war-zone boarded an ICRC-chartered ferry off Puthumathalan, a narrow coastal strip still under the control of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) in Mullaitivu district.

"The local fishermen's union has given help by providing their fishing boats to transfer these 240 sick and wounded people from the shore to the ICRC ferry. It was a difficult process," Wijeratne told IANS.

The spokesperson said the ferry was now on its way to the eastern port city of Trincomalee with the patients.

The ICRC said the sea evacuation of the sick and the wounded was done with the agreement of the parties to the conflict - the Sri Lankan government and the **LTTE**.

"There were 400 sick and wounded people and today we were able to evacuate only 240. We are planning a similar evacuation operation tomorrow," she said.

Military sources said that 30,329 civilians trapped in the **LTTE**-held areas have entered the government-held areas of Mullaitivu since January to date, despite desperate efforts by the **LTTE** to prevent them from going across.

The military said at least 19 civilians were killed while 75 were wounded Tuesday when the **LTTE** opened fire at hundreds of displaced civilians fleeing the war-zone.

On Monday, at least 20 soldiers and eight civilians were killed in a suspected **LTTE female** suicider's bomb attack. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service. 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: September 10, 2009

Red Cross evacuates 240 wounded civilians from LTTE-held areas

End of Document

23 killed in Lanka bombings

Gulf Daily News

June 11, 2008

Copyright 2008 Gulf Daily News - Hilal Publishing and Marketing Group. Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company All Rights Reserved



Length: 417 words

Body

COLOMBO: At least 23 people were killed and 67 wounded in Sri Lanka yesterday in two Tamil Tiger bomb attacks on public buses packed with civilians, officials said.

A crowded state-run bus travelling just south of Colombo was peppered with red-hot shrapnel from a powerful fragmentation mine placed on the roadside.

"Twenty-one people have been killed, eight of them are women," police spokesman Ranjith Gunasekera said. At least 47 people were injured and admitted to nearby hospitals.

Hours later, the rebels set off a bomb inside a bus in the central district of Kandy, killing two people and wounding 20.

Police said they were holding a suspect in connection with the attack.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for both "cowardly attacks." Survivors of the morning explosion said the bus was knocked sideways by the force of the explosion.

"I was standing in the middle of the bus when there was a loud noise and the whole bus toppled to the side," said 21-year-old office worker Shanika Priyadharshani while being bandaged up in hospital.

"I blacked out for a while. There was black smoke, people were dead around me. I shouted for help and someone pulled me out," she said

The defence ministry immediately sealed off the area, although no arrests have been reported. Police did, however, discover and defuse another Claymore-type mine near the scene of the blast.

President Mahinda Rajapakse accused the Tamil Tigers of trying to provoke the island's ethnic Sinhalese majority.

"This brutality... shows the efforts of the LTTE to provoke a backlash against the Tamil people from which it hopes to gain," he said.

23 killed in Lanka bombings

The **LTTE** have carried out a string of attacks in and around Colombo in recent weeks. On Wednesday, 18 people were hurt when suspected Tiger rebels set off a bomb alongside a packed commuter train, and on May 26 another attack on a commuter train killed nine people and wounded 84.

Meanwhile, government statements accusing journalists of treachery in the civil war against Tamil Tiger rebels could encourage "extreme violence" against them, Brussels-based International News Safety Institute (INSI) said.

The latest attacks on reporters condemning many of them as "enemies of the state" appeared on the Sri Lankan defence ministry website on Thursday.

Such statements, INSI director Rodney Pinder said in a statement, "risk encouraging those who have used extreme violence against journalists and other news professionals in the country."

Load-Date: July 2, 2008

End of Document

LTTE 'SUICIDE BOAT' RECOVERED AFTER FIERCE GUN-BATTLE: LANKA

Indo-Asian News Service

December 14, 2008 Sunday 1:58 PM EST

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 382 words

Byline: Sudeshna Sarkar Report from Indo-Asian News Service brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Dec. 14 -- (IANS) Sri Lankan ground troops operating in the coastal forest district of Mullaitivu fought fierce gunbattles with Tamil Tiger rebels and recovered a "suicide boat" during a subsequent search, the military said here Sunday.

The military authorities said that a fierce gunbattle broke at Kumulamunai in the rebel heartland of Mullaitivu Saturday and lasted nearly two hours, and the rebels suffered "heavy damages" during the confrontation.

"Troops sustained minor damages. Troops recovered a boat, to be used in a suicide attack, during a search operation conducted in the same area," the military said Sunday, adding that similar confrontations also took place in the adjoining areas Saturday.

The Sea Tigers, the naval unit of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), used to deploy explosive-laden suicide boats to strike moving military targets in the northern and eastern seas.

The military also said that a group of 18 civilians, including five **women** and a four-year-old boy, had fled the **LTTE**-held areas and "reached Palampai area controlled by the 59 Division of the army" in the Mullaitivu district Sunday morning "seeking military protection".

"They are to be sent to the Internally Displaced Persons' (IDP) centres after preliminary inquiries," the military said.

The Sri Lankan government is determined to capture the rebel-held districts of Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi and the troops advancing in several directions were said to be operating on the outskirts of Kilinochchi town, 350 km north of here.

The military said that heavy clashes prevailed in the area during the past few days as the **LTTE** gave heavy resistance to the soldiers inching towards the rebels' political capital, Kilinochchi.

Sri Lankan Air Force jets carried out at least nine air raids throughout Saturday, "targeting **LTTE** battlefield fortifications" at Kilinochchi and the adjoining Paranthan areas in support of the advancing ground troops.

There was no immediate reaction from the **LTTE**, which has been fighting against the Sri Lankan state to carve out a separate state for Tamils in the northern and eastern parts of the island for a quarter century.

Thousands have died in escalating fighting since late 2005.

LTTE 'SUICIDE BOAT' RECOVERED AFTER FIERCE GUN-BATTLE: LANKA

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

-920694

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

Load-Date: December 14, 2008

End of Document

Obituary: Major General Janaka Perera: Sri Lankan soldier who played a key role in the suppression of the Tamil Tigers

The Guardian - Final Edition

October 9, 2008 Thursday

Copyright 2008 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

the **guardian**

Section: GUARDIAN OBITUARIES PAGES; Pg. 32

Length: 1064 words

Byline: Tom Farrell

Body

Janaka Perera, soldier and politician, born February 1 1946; died October 6 2008

During a military, political and diplomatic career of more than 40 years, the former Sri Lankan Major General Janaka Perera was not afraid to make enemies. His death, at the age of 62, along with at least 27 others, came when a suicide bomber blew himself up at the Anuradhapura office of the country's main opposition party, the United National party (UNP). Blame was immediately attributed to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (or **Tamil Tigers**), upon whom he had visited several battlefield defeats in the 1990s. But Perera took on all opponents, right across Sri Lanka's ethnic and ideological spectrum.

Born in British colonial Ceylon, he was educated at the prestigious St Joseph's Catholic school in the capital, Colombo. In 1966, he gave up studying geology at the University of Ceylon to join the army as an officer cadet, and, after training at Sandhurst, became a second lieutenant in the Ceylon Engineers. Later, he attended the Royal College of Defence Studies in Britain, and the Defence Services Staff College in India.

When the British departed Ceylon in 1948, they left behind an island whose majority ethnic group, the Sinhalese, were mainly Buddhist and concentrated in the south, central and western sectors of the island. The predominantly Hindu Tamil community lived in the northern Jaffna peninsula and along the east coast. During the 1950 and 60s, nationalistic Sinhalese governments had pursued policies that served to push the two groups apart. By the 1970s, a far-left insurgent group called the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (National Liberation Front or JVP) was agitating for revolution among the disaffected Sinhalese youth. Meanwhile in the north, moderate Tamil politicians were sidelined by militants calling for an independent Tamil state.

Lieutenant Perera first saw action when the JVP tried to launch a "one-day revolution" in April 1971. Although they had no experience in counter-insurgency, the security forces quickly crushed the movement, but the crackdown left around 15,000 civilians dead or missing (despite the JVP's estimated membership of only 2,000).

He was promoted to captain in 1973, and when the JVP launched an even bloodier uprising in 1987, he was again in the forefront of the counter-insurgency campaign, this time as a colonel. Through strikes and assassinations of

Obituary: Major General Janaka Perera: Sri Lankan soldier who played a key role in the suppression of the Tamil Tigers

government employees, the JVP made much of southern Sri Lanka ungovernable for two years, and again the government response was ruthless. In November 1989, he led the team that captured the JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera at his home near Kandy. He is reported to have been killed a few days later, after which the insurrection collapsed - though its suppression, involving paramilitary groups, possibly cost twice as many lives as the 1971 crackdown.

However, it was his tenure as a senior officer fighting the Tamils in the north that cemented Perera's reputation. By the early 1990s, they established a mini-state in the Jaffna peninsula, complete with courts, banks and their own police force. They also began moving away from the traditional hit-and-run guerrilla tactics to those of a conventional army. Much of the most ferocious fighting was at Elephant Pass, a key government base located on the bottleneck of land connecting the Jaffna peninsula with the rest of the island.

Realising the need to upgrade and diversify military operations, in 1990 Perera was instrumental in raising the Independent Brigade, comprising special forces and commandos, and served as its commander for four and a half years. He also served as a brigade commander in the north-eastern Weli Oya region and general officer commanding the 23 and 51 Divisions of the Sri Lankan army.

After the 1994-95 ceasefire with the Tamil Tigers broke down, the army launched Operation Riviresa (Sunray) to bring the entire Jaffna peninsula under government control. As commander of the elite 53 Division, Perera played a key role in capturing Jaffna city in October 1995, after the Tigers emptied it of its civilian population (although most returned over the following year).

In April 1996, with approximately 35,000 soldiers holding the peninsula, Perera was promoted to major general. Three years later, he was appointed commander of the Commando and Special Forces Regiment, by which time the Tamil Tigers had regrouped south of the Jaffna peninsula, cutting off all land routes to the south.

In April 2000, the army suffered a devastating defeat when the Tigers overran Elephant Pass and advanced to just 45km east of Jaffna city. The government forces narrowly avoided having to evacuate the peninsula, and in the aftermath Perera was appointed overall commander in the north with the objective of reversing the setback.

Although he was appointed chief of staff that same year, he was subsequently passed over for promotion to army commander, prompting his resignation in 2001. He then served as Sri Lanka's high commissioner to Australia (2001-05) and Indonesia (2005-07). His time in Australia attracted protests by Tamils resident in the country, who accused him of complicity in the disappearance of hundreds of civilians after the capture of Jaffna. He was recalled from Indonesia before his term of office was complete.

Perera became active in opposition politics and, earlier this year, stood as the UNP candidate for the post of chief minister of the north-central province. He gained the most preferential votes but failed to win a majority in the council.

Although the recipient of more than a dozen gallantry medals, he was outspoken in his attacks on the Colombo government and critical of the provincial election as being marred by violence. Last April, his criticisms caused him to be barred from all army camps. He accused the government and military of hubris, warning that its objective of eradicating the Tamil Tigers by 2009 was unrealistic and likely to provoke further suicide attacks. The UNP favoured a more conciliatory approach.

With the army currently poised to capture the de-facto Tiger capital of Killinochchi, his warning has been validated by his own death. His wife Vajira, a former army officer in the women's corps whom he married in 1982, was also killed in the blast. They are survived by their four children, a son living in Sri Lanka and two daughters and a son studying in Australia.

Obituary: Major General Janaka Perera: Sri Lankan soldier who played a key role in the suppression of the
Tamil Tigers

End of Document

The LTTE's weakened and voiceless brigade

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

February 5, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1475 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 5 -- No one can deny the contribution made by civil society in Sri Lanka towards development and up liftment of the poverty stricken and the war affected. In a long drawn out war like Sri Lanka's theirs has been a contribution that the country has greatly been in need of. Be it the time of the Tsunami or that of the conflict ridden areas, a significant number of NGOs have done commendable work. However the clear anti-Sri Lankan agendas of a handful of members of this community have raised serious and pertinent questions about their involvements in the country.

It can not be denied that there were systematic moves to push the government towards international ridicule and pariah status to thereby weaken its fight against terror. One area of contention where serious concerns have risen is in the continued attempt by some members of the NGO community to label Sri Lanka a failed state. It is certainly no secret that there was a comprehensive attempt by certain NGOs to push Sri Lanka towards this end and thereby weaken the role of the government. The calculated attempts by these organisations to bring in foreign intervention by questioning the abilities of the State to govern can not be undermined. That attempt failed, today there is the attempt to charge the Sri Lankan state against genocide. Several articles written in this regard claim that the government's war against the 'Tamil population has involved some of the world's worst war crimes'. Tony Illtis, claims that 'civilians have been targeted: orphanages and hospitals have been regularly bombed. Starvation sieges have been imposed, including after the December 26, 2004 tsunami. Torture, rape and random killings have been committed by the military and pro-government paramilitaries', he adds. Bruce Fein, former U.S. Deputy Associate Attorney General and currently counsel for the US-based self-help-group 'Tamils Against Genocide', addressing a gathering at Max Foundation in Chennai on Friday 23 January, had said that "there can be no difference of opinion over the fact that what is happening to Tamils in Sri Lanka is a clear-cut case of genocide,". He labelled the Government of Sri Lanka's genocidal program as the "crime of crimes." where atrocities including the massacre of women and children were executed. He recalled history of the conflict. "The important point to remember is that the rights of the Tamils have been dishonored for the past sixty years. The Tamil people are being subjected to oppression, and they are made to live in fear every moment of their lives". The political agendas apart the fact remains that there is nothing to substantiate the very serious accusations made. This is not to say that there is no cause for concern. Certainly there is. The plight of the fleeing civilians and that of those caught by the LTTE demand the most vociferous of condemnations. Even the victimisation of one innocent child can not be condoned; and there are certainly hundreds of children affected. Every life restricted to the dreary life of a refugee camp must deserve the immediate attention of the State. There are at least a 100,000 civilians whose lives are threatened caught between the LTTE which uses them as a human shield and the shelling of the government troops. However there is nothing on record to suggest that the government is using the attacks to target civilians. Certainly, with the aid agencies removed from the areas the government has a serious situation in its hands. Therefore needless to say, much remains undone and these demand the attention of the State. The government must deliver on the

The LTTE's weakened and voiceless brigade

promises made to the Tamil people. However, the suggestion that certain senior officials of the government be brought before the international judiciary against war crimes is ironic. It is ironic because there was no such recommendation during the over two decade fascist rule of LTTE supremo Prabakaran. Where were these advocates when the LTTE was openly and brutally and with clear intent killing Sinhala and Muslim people in their thousands and evicting them away from areas they had arbitrarily declared the nation of the Tamil people? And what of the thousands killed of the Tamil community for disagreeing with the eelam dream? How did the levels of genocide under the LTTE failed to gain the same sympathy of this community? The US State Department Human Rights Report on Sri Lanka for 1995, published in April 1996 ,said that, "In the northern part of the island LTTE insurgents expelled some 46,000 Muslim inhabitants from their homes in 1990...virtually the entire Muslim population...expropriated Muslim homes, lands and businesses and threatened Muslim families with death if they attempt to return...In October over 120 Sinhalese civilians were massacred by LTTE forces in an attempt to inflame communal violence...many of the victims were hacked to death with swords and axes," it added. Then on 03rd August 1990, gun-carrying Tamil Tiger terrorists swooped on Muslims at prayers inside the holy Kattankudy mosque and butchered 103 Muslim including over 25 small children. According to the Muslim Peace Secretariat data in 1981 the total number of Muslims in the North was 50,831. According to statistics as at end of 2007 the population of Muslims in the North is 20,583. The process of eviction of Muslims from the Northern Province commenced early as 1985. Muslims from Mullaitivu were the first victims. In the year 1990 a pure form of ethnic cleansing of Muslims took place in an unprecedented manner. Muslims were ordered to leave within a short time period or face dire consequences. According to a survey conducted by Dr. S.H. Hasbullah Muslim families were evicted from about 70 villages in the province. Scholars have pointed out that the eviction was a calculated attempt at uprooting of an ethno-regional identity of a community from a land of historical habitation. Even today the reasons for the expulsion of Muslims from the North are not clear. In the year 1990 except in certain parts of Mannar and Vavuniya Districts an attempt was made to clear the rest of the North of Muslims. The effort was successful in the Jaffna, Mullaitivu and Mannar Districts. However, in the Districts of Vavuniya and Mannar substantial number of Muslims continued to remain in spite of threats to life and property. In Vavuniya the entire Muslim population remained intact (statistically) and in Mannar the Muslim population dropped drastically to less than 6,000 after the expulsion. (From 26.81% to 5.14%) At the time of expulsion a large concentration of Muslims lived in the Jaffna District. In the year 1981 there were 13,757 Muslims in Jaffna. The number is down to 299 in the year 2007. There was heavy concentration of Muslims in the Jaffna town. On May 14, 1985, LTTE killed a total of 146 Sinhalese men, women and children, when they hijacked a bus and drove to the Sri Maha Bodhiya, and began firing indiscriminately into a crowd that included nuns and monks. The news of a senseless attack on a civilian bus carrying more than 150 persons in Kebithigollewa in 15th June, 2006 was received by Sri Lankans with shock and grief. Details emerged that a Claymore mine attack on a bus carrying Sinhalese civilians was carried out in mid morning, leaving 64 Sinhalese civilians dead, including 12 children, and 75 injured. News wires buzzed around the world. Then two farming villages of Kent and Dollar Farm in the district of Mullaitivu were attacked by the LTTE on November 30, 1984, where 33 and another 29 Sinhalese civilians were massacred respectively. On June 2, 1987 a bus carrying Buddhist monks in Arantalawa is attacked and 35 Buddhist monks were killed. Then the LTTE cadres massacred 109 Muslim men, women and children in Palliyagodella on 15th October 1991. Subsequently the LTTE cadres massacred 42 Sinhalese men, women and children on May 25th 1995 in a fishing village called Kallarawa in Trincomalee. Later on September 18, 1999 over 50 men, women and children were again hacked to death in Gonagala, a small village in the Ampara District. The end result was the depopulation of the villages as the last remaining survivors fled. This is the sad history of real genocide in Sri Lanka. Genocide; that was planned and systematically carried out by a most ruthless terrorist organization. A terrorist organization that was sought to be placed on par with the democratically elected government of Sri Lanka by successive seekers of peace for Sri Lanka. It is time that the country realized the agendas that are the force behind certain influential elements in this country. Those that have thus far threatened the sovereignty of this country and today find themselves weakened and voiceless with the downfall of the LTTE. 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

The LTTE's weakened and voiceless brigade

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

End of Document

HR group urges LTTE to allow civilians into cleared areas

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

September 5, 2008 Friday 4:53 PM EST

Copyright 2008 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 460 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Sept. 5 -- The Intellectuals for Human Rights in a statement yesterday urged the LTTE to immediately stop forcible use of innocent civilians as a shield in its war activities since they believe that the LTTE is bent on keeping the innocent civilians in the Wanni against their will when the Government is requesting these people who have become refugees in Wanni to settle in the cleared areas.

In a press release yesterday, Intellectuals for Human Rights vehemently condemned LTTE efforts to use civilians as a shield in its war activities.

The release said: "Intellectuals for Human Rights (IHR) regrets to bring to the notice of the authorities about the thousands of people who have become refugees; and to the health, economical and security issues they are facing due to the current war situation.

Innocent civilians in Mannar, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts have become displaced in their own land.

In one hand the Government requests people who have become refugees, to settle in cleared areas and on the other hand the LTTE puts their efforts to keep these people in the same areas.

IHR believes that this act of LTTE is to use these innocent people as a human guard to be protected. IHR vehemently condemns it.

sing children, women and the elderly in a conflict has been identified as a violation of human rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Law by the UN. IHR urges the LTTE to immediately stop forceful use of innocent people as a guard to protect their selves in war activities.

We also insist the LTTE to respect the rights of the people to settle, move or to choose a safer place to live as per their wish; to stop torturing and inhuman activities against the affected innocent people who are willing to be free from the conflict areas.

IHR requests the Government to take proper estimates on the people who are displaced and now refugees due to the conflict.

The Government needs to be involved in solving issues related to food, housing, and health of these people. If the Government does not take immediate measures to address these issues; these people's lives would be more miserable due to the monsoon rains which will start in the near future.

HR group urges LTTE to allow civilians into cleared areas

We again emphasise to the Government that providing water, food and health facilities and protection to the refugees according to internationally accepted standards is a main responsibility of a Government.

A specific place which has available space to accommodate the refugees is a must and obstacles preventing people from accessing these places should be removed by the Government. The Government should ensure supply of all required facilities to these people including water, food and protection."

Report from Daily News Sri Lanka brought to you by HT Syndication.

-796352

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

Load-Date: September 5, 2008

End of Document

Robert Evans' falsehoods exposed

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

February 19, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1453 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 19 -- The British European MP Robert Evans has engaged in a constant barrage of criticism of Sri Lanka for a period of nearly ten years, when he accused the government of President Chandrika Kumaratunga of 'implementing an oppressive press-censorship policy and of not allowing essential supplies, including baby food and medicine, to be distribution in areas controlled by the Tamil Tigers.... the government has made no progress against the Tamil Tigers on the battlefield its proposals to end the fighting through constitutional reform will not work.'

Now, thought the situation is quite different, Evans sings a similar song, basically wanting to promote a solution on the lines of what the Tigers want. It is to be hoped that the British papers will publish this detailed refutation of his false arguments, and that British officials will not give in to pressure from someone who has for so long done nothing but criticize successive Sri Lankan governments. Secretary General of the Secretariat for Coordinating the Peace Process Prof. Rajiva Wijesinha in a letter to the Editor, the Independent states... I was sorry to see you give so much space, in your columns of February 14th, to Robert Evans to pronounce with regard to the situation in Sri Lanka. Far from being an expert on the subject, he is a proven partisan. The European Parliament noted this when it rejected his report on the visit to Sri Lanka of a delegation of European Parliamentarians. That report had claimed that the Sri Lankan government prevented a visit of the delegation to the East, whereas we had tried to facilitate this. Later Mr Evans declared to a pro-LTTE gathering in London that he had not gone to the East because he did not want to shake the hand of the current Chief Minister - a former child recruit who had repudiated the LTTE and taken to democratic politics. Fractured Mr Evans' fractured relationship with the truth is apparent also from the current article. He asserts, on the basis of the rejection of a special British envoy, that the government has 'become increasingly paranoid and defensive about all matters relating to the vicious civil war'. He fails to register that there is a special Japanese envoy, who was appointed after consultation, which the British failed to engage in. He claims that the conflict continued with 'very little outside involvement and the LTTE were able to establish a de facto independent state-within-a-state' - a 'state' in which all government officials were paid and food supplies secured by the central government, with free health and education provided as elsewhere in the country. The heavy taxes the LTTE were able to collect precisely because of foreign involvement went on weapons. Evans indeed knows about the foreign involvement because he asserts that 'the Sri Lankan Government unilaterally withdrew from the Norwegian-brokered ceasefire, and under the leadership of its hawkish President, Mahinda Rajapaksa, embarked on this current campaign' - again omitting that the current government succeeded in resuming talks with the LTTE which had unilaterally withdrawn from negotiations in 2003, and did so again in 2006 while launching massive attacks which had to be resisted. It was only then that the government decided that the right of self-defence accepted in the Ceasefire Agreement meant taking measures also to prevent further surprise attacks. The abrogation of the Agreement itself only happened later, when the LTTE made it clear it would not return to talks. That abrogation allowed the Government to proceed more confidently with the talks it had already begun with

Robert Evans' falsehoods exposed

democratic Tamil forces. Evans goes on to say that the 'real victims' of the Government's struggle against terrorism are civilians, he ignores the fact that his sanctimonious pronouncements come precisely because the Government has rescued much of the country from terrorist control - ie the victims are terrorists. Civilians have suffered because the LTTE forced them to retreat along with the LTTE, and people like Evans who are now pronouncing failed to make any effort to have them released then, when it would have been much easier. The same sadly goes for the UN, which claimed it was quiet earlier because it feared for its workers who had also been trapped by the LTTE. Now, however, the UN has begun to assert more loudly that the LTTE should let the people go. Why does Evans fail to add his voice to theirs, to condemn the continuing recruitment of children, to denounce the murder, through suicide bombing and grenade throwing and shooting, of civilians trying to get away? Stories Evans claims that the Tamil people are terrified of 'Sri Lankan troops and their "holding camps", with all the stories of assaults and rape, not to mention the different language and religion which divides the Hindu Tamils from the Buddhist Sinhalese troops'. He obviously does not know that nearly 40,000 have got away to the protection of Sri Lankan troops - which include Christians and Tamils and Muslims, though fewer of the last two since the LTTE started killing them as traitors, in particular those who were able to set up a fantastic intelligence network amongst Tamil speaking citizens sick of the LTTE. Service He also ignores the recent yeoman service of the Catholic church in providing leadership to Tamils, Hindu as well as Catholic, who wanted to escape. Evans' sole concession to Tiger brutality is that there are 'stories suggesting that the LTTE has, or might, shoot anyone who tries to escape from the areas that remain under their control.' But he promptly goes on to claim that none of this is verifiable - presumably even his own extreme pronouncements, which were asserted with no diffidence. He claims that 'The Sri Lankan Government restricts all journalists and independent observers from entering the conflict zone. The reports from the few remaining aid or humanitarian agencies still allowed in the area are dismissed by the Sri Lankan authorities as propaganda.' What precisely is he talking about? He goes on to declaim, 'Can Amnesty International and United Nations workers all be lying? Are all the horrific pictures of bombed-out hospitals and lines of dead men, women and children false or fabricated?' This is rhetoric of the highest degree of deceitfulness. There are no pictures of bombed-out hospitals, because there are none. The PTK hospital about which there was so much hype, Amnesty International claiming it had been cluster bombed and then refusing to withdraw that statement even when the UN repudiated it, is still standing. The lines of dead men, women and children are to do with LTTE shelling, as asserted clearly by the Bishop of Jaffna and the UN. What the Government objects to is assertions that, when there is doubt about who did it, the Government is blamed. When it is clear that the LTTE did it, even if the UN declares this, the Evans brigade claims there is no evidence. Finally, Evans does the classic British thing of wondering, if a British envoy is not accepted, 'who will protect the Tamil civilians from being massacred?' Does he not realise that, from the mealy-mouthed British head of Save the Children who gave good reasons why he had not spoken out against Tiger recruitment of children, to the Britishers who allowed heavy equipment intended for humanitarian purposes to be used to build Tiger defences, that it is the British who have the worst reputation of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds? Des Browne may himself be a gentleman, but he has to be accepted if at all after formal discussions, not simply because Gordon Brown is under pressure from Robert Evans and the other crew of British MPs desperately in need of votes in marginal seats. Robert Evans thinks that 'anyone who doesn't wholly back the murderous tactics of the Colombo Government is automatically dismissed by the Sri Lankan authorities not just as an apologist for terrorism but as a supporter of the LTTE.' Philosophy Had he ever studied philosophy he would have known that that is a collection of several propositions, none of which has basis in fact. Further analysis of his bombast is not necessary, but has it ever occurred to him that, while we might initially have thought of him as a naive fool, the alternative is not apologist for terrorism, but rather self-serving politician? The fact that terrorists can take advantage of such folly or self-serving does not mean he should be charged under Britain's Anti-Terror legislation - but Gordon Brown should perhaps gently take him aside and sit him on his knee and say he really should know better. 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 1, 2009

End of Document

Cracking another LTTE cell in Colombo

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

June 20, 2008 Friday 12:33 PM EST

Copyright 2008 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1379 words

Byline: Report from Daily Mirror brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 20 -- Police last week arrested a top level **LTTE** team, who were directly involved in the recent bomb blasts in Colombo and its suburbs. These suspects were tracked down due to an alert politician, who helped the authorities arrest a group of Sinhala terrorists on an earlier occasion.

The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna Provincial Council member for Wattala, Eraj Krishantha de Alwis never thought that he would have to rent out one of his houses to members of the world's most ruthless terrorist organization to carry out their devastating attacks on civilian and VIP targets in Colombo and its suburbs.

But, those members of the **LTTE** were able to tacitly rent out that house, located at Paranawatte Road at Kerawalapitiya close to Colombo in order to carry out their activities. However, Alwis managed to reveal the true nature of those people who rented out his home within two weeks.

Alwis some months back had informed his friends to find a tenant for his house that was available to be rented out. On April 19, a three-wheeler came along with a man looking for Alwis's house for rent.

This unidentified man introduced himself as Suresh Shanmugam and claimed that he was looking for a house for his family. Suresh had agreed to rent the house after a brief inspection of it. Alwis had further inquired of Suresh about his whereabouts and other details.

According to the details provided by Suresh, he was a businessman importing computer parts and owning a shop named 'Global' at Mutwal. He also informed his address as No: 14, Vivekananda Road, Colombo 14. He also provided his Identity Card to Alwis in order to prove his identity. Alwis was satisfied with the information received and agreed to provide the house at Rs.14,000 per month for six months. Later the agreement has been signed before a lawyer by both parties.

Initially Suresh had refused to get registered with the area Police according to the new regulations that came into being due to the prevailing security situation in the country. However, after a few days of stay, once he got to know that the newly rented house and its area was safer, he agreed and informed Alwis that he was ready for the registration with the Police.

Suresh also had told Alwis that he would bring his wife and the child in two weeks time and was also hoping to purchase furniture for the house within two weeks. At that point, Alwis had some kind of doubt about Suresh, but did not show it and just made a mental note.

Cracking another LTTE cell in Colombo

As the first week passed, there was no move by Suresh to bring his wife or furniture to the newly rented out house. Then suddenly another male had been brought by Suresh in the first week, further increasing Alwis's suspicions. This person had been later introduced as to have come from the Welikanda area,

In another few days a couple with a one and half year old child was brought to the house.

With this development, Alwis asked Suresh to register with the police and took all the relevant copies including there Identity cards.

Alwis also noted that during this short period, Suresh was having close links with some police men in the area and with several businessmen. As Suresh was an alcoholic he used to drink with two police officers in the area.

Soon afterwards Alwis handed details of the tenants to the military intelligence and later to the Police Intelligence claiming he has doubts about these people, who were all Tamils with suspicious behaviour.

A special police team from the Police Intelligence initially did not realise they were chasing some LTTE masterminds. But they were also alert to the fact that Alwis was the one who was able to track down five of the Sinhala LTTE members who were arrested by the military intelligence after months of surveillance.

The special police team was in constant observation of the three males and one female in Alwis' house. After weeks of surveillance, Police informed Alwis that they were going to arrest the group as they had concrete evidence that these persons were having some kind of contact with the LTTE.

It was on Friday, June 15 evening, a special police team raided the house and arrested the four members and also took the child into police custody. After searching the house Police found C-4 high explosives weighing around 2.7kg, further proving their direct links with terrorist acts.

They have admitted that they kept several bombs in several buses in Colombo and its suburbs including Mortauwa. On one or two occasions they had removed the bombs, when the authorities came to know about them.

After the arrest, it was revealed that these suspects had plans to explode a bomb in a train or a bus next day and had to wait until their handler in Malaysia instructs to carry out the attack. They had confessed to the police that during the past few months they were taking instructions from a Tamil, who is living in Malaysia.

In an earlier arrest in connection with the recovery of a large stock of explosives and suicide kits, an LTTE suspect revealed that he was being handled by a Tamil businessman living in the United Kingdom. This is now proving that the LTTE's latest method is not giving direct instructions to their operatives in Colombo and its suburbs but use their overseas members in order to prevent tracking the telephone conversations by the Sri Lanka authorities.

Meanwhile, the Malaysian authorities are planning to launch an investigation into the claims that Malaysians were working with the LTTE.

Deputy Home Minister Datuk Chor Chee Heung said Malaysia has yet to receive information about the latest claims. "We have no problem extending our co-operation to the (Sri Lankan) government if the allegations are true, but until today, we have not received anything from them."

Chor also told media the question of whether Malaysian police would work closely with Interpol on the matter did not arise as Malaysia had not obtained the report.

"It is best for the Sri Lankan government to contact and tell us what we can do to help," he had said.

Senior police officers on the pay list of Credit Card fraud mastermind

Latest investigations into the arrest of the mastermind behind the international credit card fraud that was used to fund the LTTE, Neshanadan Muruganandan alias Anandan, revealed that he had connections with several top Police officers in Colombo and its suburbs. Muruganandan was arrested in Wellawatta on June 13,

Cracking another LTTE cell in Colombo

The intelligence unit of the Special Task Force was able to arrest the suspect while he was in a luxury apartment in Wellawatta worth over ten million rupees. According to the inquiry, he had cloned credit cards using PIN and card numbers obtained from unsuspecting original Credit card holders in the United Kingdom, Singapore, Switzerland, Malaysia and Canada.

The suspect, now under the Terrorists Investigations Department (TID), had allegedly revealed that he had paid a large amount of money to senior police officers and also several stations' Officers In-Charge. He had even paid a night club bill amounting to one hundred thousand rupees on behalf of a senior police officer in Colombo, recently.

At the time of the arrest Anandan allegedly tried to give some 1.5 million rupees to those STF personnel claiming that he only had that amount at that time. However, the STF personnel had refused the bribe and handed him over to the TID for further investigations. Anandan had also said he would get released in a few days time from police custody using his contacts among the high profile policemen.

He had a large number of Personal Identification Numbers (PIN) of Credit Cards and bank receipts issued by both local and foreign banks, amounting to over Rs. 100 million, in his possession at the time of the arrest. He also had local bank receipts on credit, to the tune of over 15 million rupees during the last three weeks and also receipts of goods bought from an electrical items shop worth over twenty million rupees during the same period.

When the STF personnel raided the luxury apartment, only the Computer was there. However the machines that were used to create the forged credit cards had not been there. According to the suspect, some 40% of income from printing forged Credit Cards was sent to the **LTTE** every month.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror.

-702002

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

Load-Date: August 11, 2008

19 civilians killed, 75 wounded in LTTE firing

Indo-Asian News Service

February 10, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 246 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 10 -- At least 19 civilians were killed and 75 wounded when Tamil Tiger guerrillas fired at hundreds of civilians fleeing Sri Lanka's war zone, the defence ministry said Tuesday.

The ministry accused the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) of carrying out this "cowardly attack at the civilians seeking refuge with the soldiers in Udayarkattukualam Tuesday morning".

It said the dead included two children, five **women** and 12 men. Another 28 children, 30 **women** and 17 men were injured.

It said that 1,046 Tamil civilians had reached a military-held area northeast of Udayarkattukulam in Mullaitivu district "amidst raging **LTTE** small arms fire".

The troops immediately flew out the critically wounded civilians to Anuruadhapura and Vavuniya towns.

It was the second attack of its kind in as many days. Thirty soldiers and eight civilians were killed Monday when a **female** suicide bomber exploded herself in the midst of Tamils trying to leave the war zone.

The bomber blew herself up when the soldiers were frisking the civilians entering government-held areas in Mullaitivu district.

The attack has drawn worldwide condemnation. The UN demanded that the civilians "must be distinguished from combatants and protected from the fighting".

There has been no word from the **LTTE** on the two killings. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service. 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: September 10, 2009

Sri Lanka's refugee flow to India continues unabated

Indo-Asian News Service

August 2, 2008 Saturday 11:30 AM EST

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 466 words

Byline: Report from Indo-Asian News Service brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Aug. 2 -- Sri Lanka may be winning the war against the **Tamil Tigers** but the steady influx into India of Tamils fleeing the conflict shows no signs of abating.

But in recent months, Tamils who are making it to Tamil Nadu after a rough and dangerous sea ride from Sri Lanka's north - the latest battle zone - are landing on the coast as virtual paupers.

"Earlier the refugees brought at least some of their belongings with them," said S.C. Chandrahasan, a Sri Lankan Tamil activist who for decades has worked among the refugees from his office in Chennai. "Now they are coming without even a few rupees or clothes."

"All they seem to have is the set of clothes they are in. The situation is very, very pathetic," Chandrahasan told IANS in a telephonic interview.

Most of the latest arrivals, he explained, were from the northern districts of Mannar, Vavuniya and Kilinochchi, the last of which remains under the control of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

Some are also from Jaffna and a handful from the **LTTE** bastion Mullaitivu, the largely forested region where the Tiger leadership is said to be based.

In January this year, a total of 145 refugees sailed to Tamil Nadu. The number went up slightly to 159 in February and remained steady at 233 both in March and April.

Amid escalating fighting, the figure shot up to 556 in May, dropping to 228 in June and again climbing to 242 in July.

A total of 22,000 men, **women** and children have come to Tamil Nadu since January 2006, when the influx began in right earnest in the wake of the resumption of fighting between the **LTTE** and Sri Lankan security forces.

According to Chandrahasan, several factors were driving Tamil civilians in Sri Lanka's north to quit their homes for good.

One reason is the displacement caused by fighting. Fear of arbitrary killings by the security forces and forcible abduction of their children by the **LTTE** are the other factors, he said.

Sri Lanka 's refugee flow to India continues unabated

"As long as fighting continues, those who don't think they are safe (in the war zone) will keep fleeing. Those who can make it to Colombo will go there. Others may head to India. Some families succeed, some fail," Chandrahasan said.

To make it to India, a fleeing family - whatever may be its economic plight - has to pay the boatmen a princely amount. While some boatmen land them safely on the Tamil Nadu coast, others dump them on sandbanks from where they get picked up by the Indian Navy or Coast Guard.

Once they are in India, the refugees register their details with the Tamil Nadu government, undergo routine security checks (to find out if any of them are linked to the **LTTE**) and then get assigned to any of the 117 refugee camps in Tamil Nadu - unless they say they are able to live on their own.

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 2, 2008

End of Document

CONGRESS, AIADMK FLAY PRO-LTTE, SECESSIONIST MOVES IN TAMIL NADU

Indo-Asian News Service

October 22, 2008 Wednesday 6:01 PM EST

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 549 words

Byline: Venkatachari Jagannathan and Fakir Balaji Report from Indo-Asian News Service brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Chennai

Body

Chennai, Oct. 22 -- (IANS) The Congress, the main ally of Tamil Nadu's ruling DMK, and the state's main opposition AIADMK Wednesday slammed "secessionist moves" by regional parties and the Tamil film industry under the guise of supporting the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka.

Congress Legislature Party leader D. Sudarsanam and AIADMK chief J. Jayalalitha decried attempts of organisations and individuals openly supporting the banned Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) and demanded their arrest and prosecution.

"The Congress calls for stern action against pro-**LTTE** elements - regardless of their being politicians or media personalities as they have openly begun secessionist moves," Sudarsanam told reporters after an urgent meeting of Congress legislators.

"The National Security Act should be invoked against movie directors Seeman and Ameer for canvassing support for terrorists, espousing separatist causes in India and threatening to start an armed rebellion from a public platform in Rameshwaram Oct 19.

"Failure to do so will result in agitations to prosecute persons like Seeman and Ameer who blatantly insulted Congress martyrs (late prime ministers) Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi," Sudarsanam added.

Jayalalitha blamed Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi and Congress president Sonia Gandhi for allowing "secessionist movements" to take root in Tamil Nadu and allowing a free run for terrorist organisations with links to the **LTTE** for espousing separatist causes.

"The **LTTE** is a terrorist organisation linked to several fissiparous outfits in India and abroad. While local outfits like the banned People's War Group, United Liberation Front of Assam and at least three terrorist movements in Tamil Nadu are known to be open collaborators with the Tigers, Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence also has an unholy alliance with this outfit," Jayalalitha said.

"While during Karunanidhi's rule, such movements always manage to take roots, it is surprising that former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi's widow Sonia Gandhi has tacitly allowed the **LTTE** to operate freely in India. Rajiv Gandhi's killers like Nalini (Murugan) have adopted holier-than-thou attitudes and claim to be fighting for their birthright of freedom after assassinating the former prime minister in cold blood," Jayalalitha added.

CONGRESS, AIADMK FLAY PRO-LTTE, SECESSIONIST MOVES IN TAMIL NADU

The AIADMK leader, however, did not react to statements by its main ally MDMK leader Vaiko which termed as "Tamil traitors" all those who opposed **LTTE** leader V. Prabhakaran's "fight for the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka".

A few days ago, Vaiko had demanded that apart from immediately stopping military aid, India also cut off diplomatic relations with Sri Lanka.

Meanwhile, Karunanidhi issued a statement criticising the Sri Lankan regime for "killing Tamil civilians" and exhorting his supporters to make the human chain protest slated for Friday a success.

"Men, **women**, children are felled cruelly by bullets of those inimical to the origins of Tamil race. Only those with treason against the Tamil nationality in their minds are opposing the spirited defence of the Tamil race's origins rightful homeland - Eelam," Karunanidhi said in an open letter addressed to his party workers, writing in Murasoli - the DMK party organ.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

-854470

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

Load-Date: October 22, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lanka threatens to kick out aid agencies, diplomats: report

Agence France Presse -- English

February 1, 2009 Sunday 6:42 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 352 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 1 2009

Body

Sri Lanka's top defence official has threatened to expel aid agencies, diplomats and foreign journalists seen as supportive of Tamil rebels cornered by troops in the island's north, a report said Sunday.

Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapakse told the Sunday Island that there would be "dire consequences" for any foreign non-governmental organisation, diplomat or correspondent attempting to give "terrorists a second breath of life."

"They will be chased away (if they try) to give a second wind to the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) terrorists at a time the security forces, at heavy cost, are dealing them the final blow," Rajapakse was quoted as saying.

Rajapakse is leading the government's crackdown against the Tigers who lost their mini state last month in the face of a military offensive that has pushed the rebels back to a narrow strip of land.

"Rajapakse did not mince his words when he said that some ambassadors, specially the German and Swiss ambassadors, and some news agencies were behaving irresponsibly," the newspaper said.

German ambassador Jurgen Weerth was recently summoned by the foreign ministry over remarks he made at the funeral of a newspaper editor and outspoken government critic who was killed by unidentified gunmen.

Rajapakse accused CNN, Al-Jazeera and the BBC of trying to sensationalise civilian hardships by broadcasting video clips from LTTE websites, the paper said.

The government maintains that it has a policy of "zero civilian casualties" and accuses the Tamil Tigers of using tens of thousands of men, women and children as a human shield.

The government does not allow independent media free access to the island's conflict zone.

The UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross have been joined by overseas governments as well as local and foreign rights groups in demanding safe passage for the civilians trapped by the fighting.

Sri Lanka threatens to kick out aid agencies, diplomats: report

The UN has asked the Tigers to allow civilians to leave the small strip of jungle area where they have been boxed in by the military offensive. The ICRC has said "hundreds" of civilians were killed in heavy fighting last month.

Load-Date: February 2, 2009

End of Document

ALL-OUT WAR!

Gulf Daily News

May 1, 2008

Copyright 2008 Gulf Daily News - Hilal Publishing and Marketing Group. Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company All Rights Reserved



Length: 443 words

Body

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka was yesterday on the brink of an all-out war after air force jets destroyed a hideout occupied by senior Tamil Tiger rebel leaders while artillery fire and ground clashes killed 30 insurgents. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), seen as being on the defensive after a string of recent setbacks, also affirmed their readiness for the all-out war.

For the moment, President Mahinda Rajapakse appears convinced that victory is just around the corner and is determined to push his troops into the northern jungles to kill **LTTE** supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran.

The military said its war planes had "completely destroyed" a hideout where **LTTE** leaders were meeting at Jayapoor in Kilinochchi.

The pro-rebel TamilNet website, however, said the bombs hit a civilian area, wounding seven people and damaging nine houses.

It said the planes "bombed a civilian area with a mechanic workshop," and that the **Tamil Tigers** responded with anti-aircraft fire.

Military spokesman Brig Udaya Nanayakkara said soldiers captured a 3km stretch of road connecting Uyilankulam and Adampan villages in northern Mannar district after a battle that killed nine rebels. Though small, the stretch is seen as strategic in the military's push to take rebel-held territories.

Commandoes also advanced into rebel territory in Mannar and destroyed a bunker, killing four **female** rebels. Nanayakkara said seven more rebels died in clashes elsewhere.

The EU condemned the attack on civilians and reiterated "strong concerns" on the government's decision to abrogate the ceasefire.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon strongly condemned the attacks and urged the parties to try to negotiate an end to the conflict.

ALL-OUT WAR!

With the ceasefire officially ending at midnight on Wednesday, observers and analysts held out no hope of peace talks anytime soon and say the fall-out could be grim.

"Both sides have rolled up their sleeves for a bloody fight," said a Western diplomat.

"There will be no end to war this year until they both end up with bloodied noses. Only then will they make moves to restart peace talks."

Sri Lankan army brass argue major battlefield progress can be made in the next six months. The Tiger leader has in turn said peace talks with the ethnic Sinhalese majority are a waste of time and says he has laid a trap for any Sri Lankan army unit that steps into his mini-state.

But analysts have warned that as the government digs in for war, it will also have to dig deep into its pockets to bankroll a big push north.

There are signs the war is beginning to bite, with the economy expanding by a slower-than-expected 6.7 per cent last year and inflation running at nearly 18pc.

Load-Date: June 30, 2008

Sri Lankan government minister killed in bomb explosion, military says

Associated Press International

January 8, 2008 Tuesday 8:07 AM GMT

Copyright 2008 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 209 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A Sri Lankan government minister was killed Tuesday in a roadside bombing near the capital blamed on Tamil Tiger rebels, the military said.

D.M. Dassanayake, the nation building minister, who is not a member of the Cabinet, died in a hospital after his car was caught in an explosion in the Ja-Ela area, about 20 kilometers (12 miles) north of Colombo, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

"We have still not arrested anybody but the suspicion is on the LTTE," Nanayakkara said, referring to the rebels by the initials of their formal name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

If proven, this will be the first successful attack by the Tamil Tigers on a top political or military target after a string of failures in recent years.

In 2006, a female suicide bomber failed to kill Army Commander Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka, who was critically wounded, but resumed work after treatment.

Later that year, Defense Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa escaped a bomb attack without injuries.

In November, a female suicide bomber tried but failed to kill a government minister, killing an aide instead.

The last successful assassination took place in 2006, when the rebels killed Maj. Gen. Parami Kulatunga, the third highest-ranking military officer, in a bomb attack.

Load-Date: January 9, 2008

Security beefed up following reports of LTTE entry in Kerala

UNI (United News of India)

March 30, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 UNI All Rights Reserved

Length: 283 words

Dateline: Kochi

Body

Kochi, Mar. 30 -- Security in the city has been stepped up in the wake of intelligence reports that a boat with about 15 **LTTE** cadres had reached Cherthala coast in the neighbouring Alappuzha district and were planning to proceed to this city.

Police today said intelligence wing got information at 1500 hrs that a boat with 15 **LTTE** activists had reached the Cherthala coast. Police were conducting extensive vehicle checking under City Police Commissioner Manoj Abraham and vehicles entering the city were under scanner. Sources in Cherthala quoted locals as saying that two **women** and three men came to a couple of houses asking for clothes and were speaking in Tamil. Two Coast Guard ships and as many helicopters were conducting surveillance operation off Thaikkal beach, where the suspected cadres supposedly came by boat. Security in the city has been stepped up in the wake of intelligence reports that a boat with about 15 **LTTE** cadres had reached Cherthala coast in the neighbouring Alappuzha district and were planning to proceed to this city. Police today said intelligence wing got information at 1500 hrs that a boat with 15 **LTTE** activists had reached the Cherthala coast. Police were conducting extensive vehicle checking under City Police Commissioner Manoj Abraham and vehicles entering the city were under scanner. Sources in Cherthala quoted locals as saying that two **women** and three men came to a couple of houses asking for clothes and were speaking in Tamil. Two Coast Guard ships and as many helicopters were conducting surveillance operation off Thaikkal beach, where the suspected cadres supposedly came by boat. Published by HT Syndication with permission from United News of India.

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

Load-Date: March 31, 2009

MINISTER ESCAPES SUSPECTED LTTE SUICIDE ASSASSINATION BID **(ROUNDUP)**

Indo-Asian News Service

October 9, 2008 Thursday 5:59 AM EST

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 407 words

Byline: Muhammad Najeeb Report from Indo-Asian News Service brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 09 -- (IANS) A Sri Lankan cabinet minister Thursday escaped an assassination attempt by a suspected **female** Tamil Tiger suicide bomber who was the only one to die in the attack on the outskirts of Colombo.

Seven people, including a deputy minister, were wounded in the deafening blast at Pirivena Junction in Boralasgamuwa, about 10 km east of Colombo, around 1.15 p.m.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said the suicide bomber from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) blew herself up targeting the motorcade of Agricultural Minister Maithiripala Sirisena.

The **LTTE** frequently uses members of its Black Tigers unit to target installations and personalities in Sri Lanka. The Black Tigers specialise in suicide attacks.

"Luckily the minister's vehicle escaped the blast and he escaped unharmed. But one of his security vehicles got caught in the blast, wounding seven people including a deputy minister," Brig. Nanayakkara told IANS.

Initial reports said that one of the minister's security personnel was killed. "It is now confirmed that no one except the **LTTE** suicide cadre was killed."

Hospital sources said that Deputy Minister Siripala Gamlath sustained only minor injuries.

A senior minister, Sirisena is also the general secretary of the ruling Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) led by President Mahinda Rajapaksa. This is the second suicide attack in Sri Lanka within a week.

On Monday, a suicide bomber blew up at a function of the main opposition United National Party (UNP) in the northcentral district of Anuradhapura, killing 28 people including a retired major general.

Over 90 people were wounded in that blast and were undergoing treatment at the military hospital in Anuradhapura, about 200 km north of here.

Thursday's explosion came as the United Nations, the US, Russia and the EU condemned Monday's suicide attack.

The latest attack took place barely an hour before the arrival of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on a two-day official trip to Colombo.

MINISTER ESCAPES SUSPECTED LTTE SUICIDE ASSASSINATION BID (ROUNDUP)

President Abbas is scheduled to hold talks with his Sri Lankan counterpart Rajapaksa and senior government ministers.

In April, a former Sri Lankan minister, Jeyaraj Fernandopulle (55), was killed with 13 civilians in Gampaha district when a suspected **LTTE** suicide bomber exploded himself up at a public function.

--Indo-Asian News Service

karu/mr

(411 Words)

*

09101637

NNNN

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

-840725

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

Load-Date: October 21, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lanka rebels hit back with suicide ship attacks

Agence France Presse -- English

October 22, 2008 Wednesday 1:40 PM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 603 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Oct 22 2008

Body

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels struck back against a major government offensive with suicide attacks on merchant ships off the island's northern coast on Wednesday, defence officials said.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) rammed explosives-laden boats against the MV Ruhuna and MV Nimalawa which were supplying the besieged Jaffna peninsula in a pre-dawn attack, officials said.

The ethnic guerrillas also fought a sea battle with naval units defending the port of Kankesanthurai on the peninsula and the convoy of merchant vessels. At least six members of the elite Black Sea Tiger suicide squad may have perished in the attack, officials said.

"One of the merchant vessels -- MV Nimalawa -- was crippled and the other was damaged," said a defence official who declined to be named. He said a salvage operation was under way.

He said crew were rescued by the navy and there were no reports of casualties among the merchant sailors, who were escorted by heavily armed navy troops.

The guerrillas used three suicide boats, the official said. One of them capsized and the navy managed to capture it without its occupants, who were believed to have been killed in the naval firing.

Sri Lanka's ***Tamil Tigers*** have a sea-going unit known as "Sea Tigers," a rarity among rebel outfits in the world. The Tigers have used explosives-laden boats to sink naval and civilian craft in the past as part of their drawn out and deadly campaign for an independent state for ethnic minority Tamils.

There was no immediate comment from the Tigers, but the pro-rebel website Tamilnet.com said two Black Sea Tigers, one a woman, died in the attack.

One was Lieutenant Colonel Ilakkiya, the deputy head of the "Black Sea Tiger" ***women's*** unit, and the other was identified as Lieutenant Colonel Kuperan.

Tamilnet quoted an unidentified Tiger official as saying that the ships were carrying military supplies as well as other cargo, but Sri Lankan officials rejected the claim and said the vessels only carried supplies for civilians.

Sri Lanka rebels hit back with suicide ship attacks

The Jaffna peninsula, which has a population of nearly half a million, is controlled by government forces but is cut off from the rest of the island by LTTE-held territory and supplied entirely by ship or plane.

The peninsula, captured from the LTTE in 1995, is of both symbolic and strategic value to the Sri Lankan government. It is the birthplace of Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, and enables government troops to attack the rebels from the north and south.

The defence ministry described the attack as "another cowardly attempt by the terrorists to deny essential supplies to the civilians living in war-affected areas."

The guerrillas have a history of attacking international and local merchant shipping and were blamed by the military for the killing of 24 Chinese crew members of two fishing boats in 2003.

The latest attack came as the government, which pulled out of a Norwegian-brokered truce in January, maintained a large-scale ground offensive against the Tigers in the northern mainland.

Government forces say they are 10 to 15 kilometres (six to 10 miles) southwest of Kilinochchi, the administrative capital of the LTTE, but breached the town's major defences over the weekend.

Monsoon rains and intense Tiger resistance had slowed the ground offensive, according to military sources.

The defence ministry also said scores of its troops were killed or injured in fighting with the LTTE over the weekend.

Tens of thousands of people have died on both sides since 1972, when the LTTE launched its campaign to carve out an independent state in the Sinhalese-majority island of 20 million people.

Load-Date: October 23, 2008

LTTE marks 21st anniversary of its Black Tigers' Day

Indo-Asian News Service

July 6, 2008 Sunday 12:39 PM EST

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 427 words

Byline: Report from Indo-Asian News Service brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 6 -- The Tamil Tiger rebels Saturday commemorated the 21st anniversary of their deadliest weapon, the Black Tigers, and said 356 suicide cadres have blown themselves up so far in their campaign against the government and the security forces in Sri Lanka.

The Black Tigers' day fell on July 5 and the LTTEs peace secretariat said in a statement to the media that the elusive rebel chief "Velupillai Prabhakaran, together with his senior commanders, and Black Tigers paid homage by lighting lamps at 7.05 p.m. to the martyred Black Tigers" at an unknown location in the rebel-held Wanni region Saturday.

It also sent photographs of the rebel chief in military fatigues paying homage to the Black Tigers who threw themselves as human bombs to hit their military as well as political targets elsewhere in the island nation.

"As many as 356 Black Tigers have laid down their lives, 254 of them in sea operations, during the last 21 years since July 5, 1987," the pro-LTTE Tamilnet website reported Sunday.

"And 76 of the 254 Black Sea Tigers who have died were female commandos. 81 male and 71 female Black Tiger commandos have died in ground operations," the web report said.

It was exactly 20 years ago that a senior LTTE cadre 'Captain' Millar drove an explosive-laden truck into a Sri Lankan military camp at Nellyyadi School in Vadamaradchchi in the northern Jaffna peninsula, killing 40 soldiers housed there. They carried out number of similar attacks since then using their suicide cadres.

In October last year, a 21-member Black Tiger commando team stormed a key Sri Lankan Air Force base in the north-central Anuradhapura district, destroying at least three aircraft, including two Russian-built MI-24 helicopters, and killing 13 airmen and a military officer.

If the LTTE can boast about its Black Tiger unit in waging its military campaign against the government forces for the past couple of decades, it is the same unit that contributed immensely in getting the outfit banned in several foreign countries.

The group was held responsible for the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, who as Indian prime minister had ordered the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to disarm the Tigers in 1987.

LTTE marks 21st anniversary of its Black Tigers' Day

This resulted in the Indian government banning the Tigers in India and continuing the ban since then. Several other countries, including the US and Britain as well as the European Union, had followed suit in later years, demanding that the Tigers denounce violence in word and deeds.

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: July 6, 2008

End of Document

ISD deals with many terror threats, not just JI: Jaya; Officers have long record of keeping country secure despite Mas Selamat's escape

The Straits Times (Singapore)

April 15, 2008 Tuesday

Copyright 2008 Singapore Press Holdings Limited All Rights Reserved

Length: 536 words

Byline: Zakir Hussain

Body

ONE year before the Internal Security Department (ISD) moved in on Jemaah Islamiah (JI) operatives plotting attacks here, its officers were busy closing in on another clandestine terror network.

That was in 2000, when 13 men were rounded up for raising funds and holding other activities in aid of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

Most of them were professionals in their 30s and 40s. Their leader was a naturalised Singaporean, who was served with a two-year restriction order limiting his activities.

The **LTTE**, or **Tamil Tigers**, is a terrorist group that wants an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's Tamil minority.

The group popularised the use of suicide bombs and had a squad of **female** bombers known as the Black Tigers, one of whom killed Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.

Suicide bombing was later adopted by groups such as Al-Qaeda and the JI in attacks like those in London, Madrid and Bali in recent years.

Yesterday, Deputy Prime Minister S. Jayakumar, who is also Co-ordinating Minister for National Security, cited the **LTTE** as one of several security threats that ISD officers have dedicated themselves to fighting.

He urged Singaporeans not to forget the ISD's long record of keeping Singapore secure, despite the escape of JI leader Mas Selamat Kastari in February which had 'blotted its copybook'.

Other threats ISD officers have devoted themselves to fighting, he said, included the communists who were active in the 1960s and 1970s, various communal and religious extremist groups, as well as international terrorist groups such as the Japanese Red Army (JRA) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

In 1974, four terrorists from the JRA and the PFLP tried to blow up oil storage tanks in Pulau Bukom.

When they failed, they hijacked the passenger ferry Laju and held its five-man crew hostage. Two escaped.

After six days of tense negotiations, the hijackers were given safe passage to Kuwait in return for the remaining hostages.

But the JRA continued operating companies here as a front for terror operations well into the 1980s.

ISD deals with many terror threats, not just JI: Jaya Officers have long record of keeping country secure despite Mas Selamat's escape

In the 1990s, Middle Eastern terror group Hizbollah also recruited five Muslims here through religious classes and asked them to photograph the American and Israeli embassies. The five refused.

But Hizbollah operatives continued to carry out surveillance of the Singapore coastline, although nothing came of their plans.

Last year, several **LTTE** couriers were arrested in Singapore. One of them was later deported back to Switzerland, according

to researcher Shanaka Jayasekara of Australia's Macquarie University.

Dr Rohan Gunaratna, head of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, said the ISD has been effective in tracking extremist groups and dismantling their fund-raising and procurement networks.

'It is well established and recognised by analysts that the Malaysian Special Branch and the ISD are the two most professional security and intelligence services in South-east Asia,' he said.

'If not for the ISD, Singapore would have suffered a significant terror attack in 2002. It was the ISD's discovery and disruption of JI and its operations that prevented many attacks in the region.'

zakirh@sph.com.sg

Load-Date: April 14, 2008

Tigers killing civilians fleeing Sri Lanka war zone: UN

Agence France Presse -- English

February 16, 2009 Monday 2:00 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 462 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 16 2009

Body

Tamil Tiger guerrillas have prevented tens of thousands of civilians from leaving Sri Lanka's war zone and those trying to escape have been "shot and sometimes killed," the United Nations said Monday.

The rebels are holding non-combatants in the small patch of jungle in the north of the island where they have been cornered by government forces, it added.

"A growing number of people trying to leave have been shot and sometimes killed," the UN office here said in a statement, adding the Tigers were also recruiting child soldiers as young as 14 years old.

It urged both the Tigers and government forces to find a humane solution so that civilians, including children, could be spared more loss of life due to disease and the fighting.

The UN said it welcomed last week's declaration of a larger "safe zone" for civilians along a narrow strip of coastline in the island's northeast, but noted there had been fighting even within that area.

"This fighting led to the deaths and injury to yet more civilians," the statement said. "The United Nations calls for the Sri Lankan forces and the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) to refrain from fighting in areas of civilian concentration."

The UN said 15 of its local staff and 75 of their dependants were also not allowed to leave the conflict area by the Tamil Tigers, who had forcibly recruited one of the UN staffers.

"We are especially concerned that one staff member was reported forcibly recruited into the LTTE yesterday (Sunday)," it said.

"The UN calls on the LTTE to immediately release him, to desist from further recruitment of civilians, and to permit passage for people who wish to leave, especially the women and children."

Tens of thousands of civilians in the rebel-held area were experiencing serious shortages of food, medicine, and clean water, the UN said.

Tigers killing civilians fleeing Sri Lanka war zone: UN

"Efforts to bring in more food and medicines have not yet been successful, and it is imperative that these needs be met."

The International Committee of the Red Cross had said a "humanitarian catastrophe" was unfolding in the region where the government says civilians are being held as a human shield by the Tigers.

The UN, the United States and Britain have asked the Tigers to allow civilians to leave the conflict zone while urging the Colombo government to declare a temporary truce. Both have rejected the calls.

On Saturday, the defence ministry accused the Tigers of a grenade attack that killed a woman and wounded 13 people who were trying to flee the shrinking area still under rebel control.

The Tigers have denied charges that they are attacking civilians and they say the civilians are staying in the area of their own accord.

Claims by either side cannot be verified as the government severely restricts independent access to the war zone.

Load-Date: February 17, 2009

LTTE occupation nears end

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

February 9, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 391 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 9 -- Only 10 per cent of the territory remains to be seized from the insurgents to unshackle the North.

And this should be achieved in a matter of days to say the least. After a spell of thirty years the seemingly endless occupation by the **LTTE** is coming to an abrupt end, said Minister of Nation Building and Infrastructure Development Rohitha Abeygunawardena. The Minister was presiding at the distribution of prizes to youngsters both male and **female** who had completed their courses in various disciplines and held at the Ministry of Youth Affairs Centre, Chilaw.

He said, after trouncing the terrorists, the other gigantic task at hand would be to transform this country to a productive and industrious nation. This uphill assignment though daunting will be accomplished with relative composure and ease. The Minister said the concrete measures the President has taken for the progress of the country is praiseworthy and I too will follow suit to emulate him and complete the construction of this four-storeyed youth complex with the resources of the Ministry of Nation Building. I'll set aside Rs. 5 million from my Ministry for this commendable venture. So, all the shortcomings and problems at this centre will be surmounted. He said that this institution was inaugurated for the benefit of the youth in Chilaw-Puttalam districts under the purview of Deputy Speaker Priyankara Jayaratne who was then the Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs. And he had commenced programs to improve the inborn talents and skills of the youth. It is our obligation then to ensure this institution is improved and safeguarded. The Minister said President Mahinda Rajapaksa used his good offices to initiate action to adopt meaningful strategies and schemes for the sake of the future of this country. In this connection, it is worth noting that countries like China, Malaysia, Japan and Singapore were in the forefront in providing ample opportunities in vocational training for youth to be gainfully employed without any hassle or hindrance. Deputy Minister of Aviation Sarath Kumara Gunaratne, Deputy Speaker Priyankara Jayaratne, Chilaw Predeshiya Sabha Chairman, Janaka Pradeep de Soysa and Puttalam district Youth Affairs Assistant Director Ms Sumithra Damayanthi also spoke. 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: May 5, 2009

LTTE Flags At Protest Rally Legal: Toronto Police

RTT News (United States)

March 19, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 NoticiasFinancieras/Grupo de Diarios America All Rights Reserved

Length: 249 words

Body

(RTTNews) - The display of flags belonging a Sri Lankan Tamil separatist outfit during a protest rally by members of Toronto's Tamil community this week was legal and did not violate the nation's anti-terror laws, Toronto police said Wednesday, despite the fact the rebel group is banned in Canada as a terrorist organization.

Thousands of Tamils waving the flags of the banned Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (**LTTE**) outfit formed a human chain at a rally around the downtown core Monday, to draw the attention of the government to the civil war in Sri Lanka and to pressure Colombo to engage Tamil rebels in ceasefire talks.

During the protest, men, **women** and children of all ages waved the red flags of the militant group that has led the fight for an independent Tamil nation in the north of the South Asian island.

The current Conservative government banned the **LTTE** in 2006 for using suicide bombers and child soldiers in its fight against the security forces and the majority Sinhalese population. Supporting a banned organization constitutes violation of Canada's anti-terror laws.

Tuesday, the city's police force said its legal department was looking into whether the flags violated Canada's anti-terrorism laws. But police spokesman Mark Pugash said the force's lawyers deemed there was "nothing illegal" about displaying the group's insignia.

For comments and feedback: contact editorial@rttnews.com

Copyright(c) 2009 RTTNews.com, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Load-Date: April 16, 2010

Tamil Tiger chief to issue rallying call as fiefdom crumbles

Agence France Presse -- English

November 25, 2008 Tuesday 1:42 AM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 601 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Nov 25 2008

Body

The reclusive leader of Sri Lanka's **Tamil Tigers** is to deliver his annual policy address this week from a besieged jungle hideout that could soon be totally overrun by government troops.

With his northern fiefdom shrinking fast in the face of a massive onslaught, Velupillai Prabhakaran is expected to use Thursday's address to rally his forces for a do-or-die battle for survival.

The last 18 months have been disastrous for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), who want to carve out an ethnic homeland in the north and east of the Sinhalese-majority island.

The rebels were ejected from the east in July 2007 and lost their political chief in a government air raid, while much of their flotilla of ships used to smuggle in black market weapons has been reported sunk.

The **LTTE**'s political capital of Kilinochchi appears to be on the brink of falling into government hands. The Tigers have lost control of the entire northwest coast, while the key northeastern coastal base of Mullaitivu is also being squeezed.

"He will vow to hit back. He might even say that they are pulling out so that the army will spread out thinly for him to attack them later," said Dharmalingam Sithadthan, a former Tamil guerrilla-turned-politician.

But a year ago Prabhakaran issued a similar threat against what he branded a "genocidal" government, only to see his northern mini-state shrink even further.

The hawkish and extremely confident Sri Lankan government pulled out of a Norwegian-brokered ceasefire in January. With his troops advancing, President Mahinda Rajapakse says he will accept nothing less from the **LTTE** than their surrender.

Analysts say Prabhakaran has been left with little room for manoeuvre.

"I think he may still have the capacity to carry out one or two big attacks, but that won't be enough to restore the military balance of power we see now," Sithadthan said.

Tamil Tiger chief to issue rallying call as fiefdom crumbles

Prabhakaran's speech is an annual event marking "Heroes' week", when the LTTE commemorates the estimated 22,000 Tamils -- many of them women and children -- who have died during the 36-year-long war.

The speech is usually pre-recorded in a jungle bunker somewhere in the northeast, and broadcast by the Voice of Tigers radio station. The station's previous headquarters was flattened by government jets a year ago.

The event also coincides with Prabhakaran's birthday -- he turns 54 on Wednesday -- although retired army brigadier general Vipul Boteju said the rotund rebel chief will have little to celebrate.

"He has to make a face-saving speech on Thursday," Boteju said.

"We will see the usual rhetoric about revenge, but his ability to deliver seems to be greatly diminished."

The annual speech is also aimed at the Tamil diaspora in countries like Canada, Australia and Switzerland, who help keep the LTTE's coffers full.

But on the home front, he also has to raise morale among an estimated 200,000 Tamil civilians displaced by the government advance. Aid agencies say the humanitarian situation in the north is desperate.

Still, Prabhakaran and his hardened guerrilla force have managed to turn the tables on security forces in the past.

Military officials say the Tigers can still deploy large numbers of suicide bombers known as "Black Tigers".

Six months after he lost his northern stronghold of Jaffna to the army in December 1995, he overran an army base in the northeast, slaughtering over 1,000 soldiers and causing a dip in public support for the war in the south.

And in November 1999, the Tigers reversed military gains of 19 months in a matter of five days. That counter-attack helped push the Colombo government into a peace process.

Load-Date: November 25, 2008

Shelling kills nine in Sri Lanka children's ward

Guardian.com

February 2, 2009

Copyright 2009 Guardian Unlimited (© Guardian Newspapers Limited) All rights reserved

theguardian

Length: 624 words

Highlight: * Artillery hits main refuge for civilians trapped in war zone* Red Cross urges both sides to cease bombardment

Body

Five artillery shells hit the children's ward of a Sri Lankan hospital, killing at least nine and injuring 20, according to aid agencies, as the army and rebels continue to bombard each other's positions in the north of the island.

The first shell hit the hospital at Puthukkudiyiruppu, known locally as PTK, late last night killing two and injuring five, the International Committee of the Red Cross said. The United Nations said the attacks had continued and its 15 staff and 81 family members had taken refuge in bunkers.

The dead include a four-year-old **female** relative of a UN staff worker. Gordon Weiss, a spokesman for the UN in Colombo, told the Guardian the hospital was one of the last functioning health institutions, with beds for 500 patients, inside rebel-held territory and could not say why anybody would target it.

"Our office is next to the hospital in PTK," he said. "The hospital is the main refuge for people in the area. It is overflowing with kids and **women**. We are very concerned as both sides are using artillery. The last communication that we had from our staff member on the ground was that they were still counting the dead."

The International Committee of the Red Cross called on both sides to stop the shelling, saying in a statement "wounded and sick people, medical personnel and medical facilities are all protected by international humanitarian law. Under no circumstance may they be directly attacked."

With the Sri Lankan military attempting to squeeze the **Tamil Tigers** into a ever smaller patch of the north-eastern shore, fighting has become bloody and intense. There are fears that the civilian death toll could rise.

Dr Thurairajah Varatharajah, the top government health official in the area, said last week more than 300 civilians had been killed in the recent fighting.

The army has denied killing civilians in its attempt to "eradicate" the rebels and end the island nation's 25-year-old civil war with the separatist group. The country's defence secretary, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, told the Guardian the army was not responsible for attacks on civilians and blamed the rebels, known formally as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

Shelling kills nine in Sri Lanka children's ward

"The LTTE is trapped ... They are firing shells everywhere ... These have fallen on civilians," he said. "We were accused of shelling homes, and the proof was that the roof was missing. But it was the LTTE who had taken the roofs off the houses. There were no blast marks on the walls."

Last month, the former US deputy attorney general Bruce Fein, who is a longtime supporter of Tamil causes, said there was enough evidence to prosecute both the defence secretary and Sri Lanka's army chief under the US genocide accountability act. Sri Lanka's defence secretary is a US citizen and the army chief holds a green card.

The Sri Lankan government has barred journalists from operating in the area, offering only "guided tours" of the 15,000 square kilometres prised from rebel control by the army. The military says the LTTE is down to its last 600 fighters.

The people who lived in the vast, forested area of Vanni, which used to be under LTTE control, have been scattered to either India or camps in central and eastern Sri Lanka, or have been left within the shrinking LTTE-controlled zone, thought to be barely 260 square kilometres.

The Red Cross estimates 250,000 civilians are in the rebel-held area, which is little more than jungle and villages, while the government says the number is smaller.

The rebels have been fighting since 1983 for a separate homeland for ethnic minority Tamils in the north and east after decades of marginalisation by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the civil war.

Load-Date: February 3, 2009

End of Document

'Eastern Election demolished LTTE's myth of being sole representative of Tamils'

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

September 18, 2008 Thursday 3:49 PM EST

Copyright 2008 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 653 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Sept. 18 -- Export Development and International Trade Minister Prof. G.L. Peiris met British Under Secretary of State for Trade Policy Gareth Thomas at his office in London. The Minister enlightened him about the present political and economic situation in the country. He pointed out that the recent electoral victories secured by the Government in the North Central and Sabaragamuwa Provinces indicate the political stability of the regime. It also reflected the public acceptance of Government policy.

Speaking about the war situation in the North, Prof. Peiris said that the LTTE utilised the duration of the Ceasefire Agreement to collect armaments including light aircraft and conscript more armed cadres into its ranks.

He said the Tamil people of the East has turned the claim by the LTTE to be the only representative of the Tamils into a myth by electing a non-LTTE Tamil as their Chief Minister. He said that the main reason for the failure of the earlier peace attempt was the LTTE's inability to understand the sentiments of the people and the LTTE's lack of credibility in the public domain. He also referred to the unprecedented loss suffered by the JVP at the election.

Prof. Peiris also said that the rationale for the present war-effort of the Government was to militarily weaken the LTTE and get them to negotiate for a political solution.

"The Government had taken all steps to provide food, shelter and other humanitarian assistance to the common people of the North who have been displaced and were under-going severe hardships due to the war-efforts," he said.

Prof. Peiris informed Thomas that the Government was prepared to take action within the existing administrative and legal framework against those who were supposed have violated fundamental human rights as alleged by the LTTE and other groups. Referring to Sri Lanka as a country that had been always battling terrorism, Prof. Peiris explained to Thomas why the GSP+ facility should be extended with regard to Sri Lanka.

In reply to Prof. Peiris, Thomas promised the Minister that he and others would do the maximum to help Sri Lanka obtain an extension of the GSP+ facility.

Thereafter Prof. Peiris met with Geoffrey Van Orden, Conservative member of the European Parliament, Brussels and again discussed the extension of the GSP+ facility. He informed Van Orden that the continued employment of a large number of rural women in Sri Lanka hinges on the extension of this facility.

'Eastern Election demolished LTTE's myth of being sole representative of Tamils'

During his London visit, Prof. Peiris also attended a luncheon meeting hosted by the Commonwealth Business Council as well as another held at Asia House. Addressing the business community, Prof. Peiris invited them to utilise the investment opportunities available in Sri Lanka and specially in the Eastern Province.

In addition, Prof. Peiris met with Dr. Lorand Bartels, Lecturer on International Trade Law at the Cambridge University with whom he discussed the GSP+ facility and about the World Trade Organisation. Among the businessmen the Minister had discussions with were Sir Gulam Noon, Chairman of the Noon Group of Companies, Neal Lindsey, Director, NEXT Group, Michael Ward, Managing Director of the renowned Harrods, Collin Perkins, Chairman, Fee Group, Paul Grigg, Buyer, Tea Department at Tesco and Tony Sarin, President of the South Asian Business Association that enjoys close rapport with Gordon Brown, the British Prime Minister.

The latter discussed with the Minister, Sri Lanka's Free Trade Agreements with India and Pakistan and expressed his intention to invite Prof. Peiris for the annual dinner of the organisation to be held next month in London and which is usually attended by about 500 Indian and Pakistani businessmen. Mr. Sarin informed Prof. Peiris that this event will provide an opportunity to promote Sri Lanka as a gateway to the South Asian Market.

Report from Daily News Sri Lanka brought to you by HT Syndication.

-812638

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

Load-Date: September 18, 2008

SRI LANKA: LTTE, GOVERNMENT ENDANGERING LIVES OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF NEWLY DISPLACED AROUND WANNI

States News Service

August 15, 2008 Friday

Copyright 2008 States News Service

Length: 508 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: NEW YORK, NY

Body

The following information was released by Amnesty International USA:

Thousands of families who fled the recent fighting between Sri Lankan forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) must be allowed to move to safer areas and to receive necessary humanitarian assistance, Amnesty International said today.

These people are running out of places to go and basic necessities, said Yolanda Foster, Amnesty International's Sri Lanka researcher. The Tigers are keeping them in harms way and the government is not doing enough to ensure they receive essential assistance.

Government aerial bombardment and artillery shelling since May has forced more than 70,000 people to flee their homes, primarily in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts.

Amnesty International has established that around a third of these families are living in the open air with no shelter. Many cannot receive food, tarpaulin for temporary shelters and fuel because of a lack of access into **LTTE**-controlled areas and restrictions on goods going through Olanthai - the crossing point between government-controlled territory and that held by the **LTTE**. Some families have been forced to move several times.

In the **LTTE**-controlled Wanni area, the Tigers have hindered thousands of families from moving to safer places by imposing a strict pass system and, in some instances, forcing some family members to stay behind to ensure the return of the rest of the family. These measures seem designed in part to use civilians as a buffer against government forces -- a serious violation of international humanitarian law. The **LTTE** has also engaged in forced recruitment.

Lack of cement to build adequate toilets and washrooms has forced people to use open bathing facilities. The lack of adequate privacy for **women** and girls has led to a notable increase in reports of sexual and gender based violence.

Amnesty International has also received reports that the government is housing those who have been able to leave **LTTE** areas in temporary shelters that often operate as de facto detention centres. Witnesses from Kalimoddai camp in Mannar district told Amnesty International that more than 200 families who are held there cannot exit the camp for any reason (except to go to school) without obtaining a pass from the government's security forces.

SRI LANKA : LTTE, GOVERNMENT ENDANGERING LIVES OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF NEWLY
DISPLACED AROUND WANNI

Both sides to this long conflict have again shown that they will jeopardize the lives of thousands of ordinary people in the pursuit of military objectives, said Yolanda Foster. In the absence of independent international monitors, Sri Lankan civilians lack protection and remain at the mercy of two forces with long records of abuse.

Background

The Sri Lankan military has launched a major offensive to reclaim areas of the north and east previously controlled by the **LTTE**. Families have been multiply displaced. According to UNHCR, as of 30 June, there are some 467,000 individuals displaced by conflict in Sri Lankas north and east. This figure includes an estimated 194,900 persons who were displaced after fighting intensified in April 2006.

Load-Date: August 15, 2008

End of Document

STATEMENT OF SEN. PATRICK LEAHY ON SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

States News Service

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 States News Service

Length: 1175 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

The following information was released by Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy:

Senate Floor

February 3, 2009

Mr. LEAHY. The ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka that has waxed and waned for decades costing the lives of tens of thousands of people, has exploded into a full scale war and it is civilians who are bearing the brunt of the carnage.

The origins of the conflict arise from decades of the Sinhalese majority's systematic discrimination against the Tamil minority, and its denial of the Tamils' meaningful participation in the political process. The Sri Lankan army is almost exclusively Sinhalese. Successive Sinhalese-dominated governments have failed to effectively address these longstanding injustices.

Over the years, peaceful demonstrations by Tamils have been met with violence by Sinhalese extremists, which has in turn fostered violent extremism on the Tamil side.

In recent weeks, as the Sri Lankan army has seized control of most of the northern strongholds of the Tamil Tigers, or LTTE as they are otherwise known, the situation has gone from dire to the verge of catastrophe for the estimated 250,000 vulnerable civilians who are trapped in a so-called safe zone.

The LTTE has a history of suicide bombings and other indiscriminate attacks against civilians, using civilians as shields, and preventing civilians under their control from escaping to government areas. Several hundred local staff of the United Nations and international humanitarian organizations are reportedly trapped because the LTTE refuses to allow them to leave. The LTTE has been designated a foreign terrorist organization by the United States.

For its part, the Sri Lankan army insists it is targeting the LTTE, not civilians. But the army has also acted in ways that have blurred any meaningful distinction between itself and the LTTE. It has reportedly shelled areas populated by civilians, including hospitals, causing hundreds of casualties, summarily executed suspected LTTE sympathizers, and detained those who have fled LTTE areas, including women and children, in militarized camps where they are exposed to great hardship and danger.

The United Nations says a compound sheltering UN national staff inside the safety zone was shelled on January 24 and 25, killing at least nine civilians and wounding more than 20. On January 26, another artillery attack reportedly narrowly missed UN local staff working in the safety zone, but caused dozens of civilian deaths. The International

STATEMENT OF SEN. PATRICK LEAHY ON SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

Committee of the Red Cross has said that [h]undreds of patients need emergency treatment and evacuation to [a] hospital in the government-controlled area.

In the past two days, another hospital was reportedly shelled multiple times, resulting in more civilian deaths and injuries.

Human Rights Watch reports that since last September, when the Sri Lankan government ordered the withdrawal of most UN and nongovernmental humanitarian organizations, as well as journalists, from the conflicted area, a grave humanitarian crisis has developed with acute shortages of food, shelter, medicine, and other humanitarian supplies.

The Sri Lankan government has a duty to respect the rights and protect the safety of all Sri Lankan citizens, whatever their ethnic origin or political views. Instead, the government has embarked on a strategy to defeat the LTTE militarily and in doing so has shown disregard for the laws of war. Rather than protecting the Tamil people, the government has often contributed to their suffering. Its strategy has been to cordon off the area and blame everything, including its own violations, on the LTTE.

Since 1984, successive peace talks have failed, as both the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government have reneged on their agreements, and the government has failed to provide the vision and leadership necessary to build a multi-ethnic consensus. Both sides' extreme ethnic nationalist agendas have caused widespread human suffering. Both sides are accountable.

I have no sympathy for the LTTE, which has brought misery upon the Tamil people it professes to represent. But while the LTTE has been severely weakened, it is unlikely to disappear, and the cycle of violence may continue.

It is imperative that the government and the LTTE agree to an immediate ceasefire to avoid further loss of life, permit access to UN monitors and humanitarian organizations, and permit civilians to leave for areas of safety. The Obama administration, the British, Indian and other concerned governments, should be publicly urging the same.

Over the longer term, if lasting peace is to come to Sri Lanka, the government must effectively address, in negotiations which include all the main Tamil and Muslim parties, the core issues that have fueled the conflict including laws and policies that unfairly discriminate against Sri Lanka's minorities.

There is a related issue that needs to be mentioned, and that is the imprisonment for the past ten months of J.S. Tissainayagam, a journalist, and N. Jashiharan, a publisher, and his wife, V. Valamathy. They were arrested for articles critical of the government, and are being held in violation of their right to freedom of expression. Another of Sri Lanka's most respected journalists, Lasantha Wickrematunga, was gunned down in broad daylight a few weeks ago. According to Navi Pillay, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, [t]he killing of . . . Wickrematunga . . . was the latest blow to the free expression of dissent in Sri Lanka. The searing article he wrote prophesying his own murder is an extraordinary indictment of a system corrupted by more than two decades of bloody internal conflict. The High Commissioner noted that there have not been any prosecutions of political killings, disappearances and other violations committed in recent years. That in itself speaks volumes about the Sri Lankan government's credibility.

For many years, the United States and Sri Lanka have enjoyed good relations. A close friend of mine, James Spain, was our Ambassador there years ago. He often told me of his deep affection for the Sri Lankan people, and of the country's extraordinary natural beauty.

When the tsunami crashed ashore in December 2004, a member of my staff was on the island. The American people responded generously to help Sri Lanka rebuild.

It has therefore been difficult for me to watch the conflict intensify, the LTTE abuse civilians and fail to live up to its commitments, and the government threaten to expel foreign diplomats, aid agencies and journalists, and refuse appeals to permit independent observers and aid workers access to areas where Tamil civilians are trapped. And as reputable, courageous journalists have been arrested on transparently political charges or assassinated.

STATEMENT OF SEN. PATRICK LEAHY ON SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

The Sri Lanka government will one day want the respect and support of the United States. The same can be said of the LTTE, if and when it renounces violence and becomes a legitimate political party. How they respond to today's humanitarian appeals will weigh heavily on how the United States responds when that day comes.

#

Load-Date: February 4, 2009

End of Document

BLASTS MAR DAY

Gulf Daily News

May 1, 2008

Copyright 2008 Gulf Daily News - Hilal Publishing and Marketing Group. Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company All Rights Reserved



Length: 423 words

Body

COLOMBO: Fourteen people were killed in two roadside bombings in Sri Lanka yesterday, as the island's president marked independence day by insisting he was winning the war against **Tamil Tigers**.

A bomb in the northeast of the ethnically-divided island killed 13 bus passengers and wounded 16 others, including children, the military said, adding that among the dead were two **women** and two off-duty soldiers.

A similar blast in the south against a military vehicle killed one soldier. Three other soldiers escaped with injuries.

The attacks, both blamed on the Tigers, came hours after an annual military parade at Colombo's seaside Galle Face promenade to mark Sri Lanka's 60th anniversary of independence from Britain.

In an address to the nation, President Mahinda Rajapakse said the "challenge bestowed upon us by history is the defeat of terrorism," and said government forces had cornered the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) in the north.

"We faced this challenge squarely without avoiding it. Our security forces are today achieving victories against terrorism unprecedented in history," he said.

"Terrorism is receiving an unprecedented defeat," said Rajapakse, whose government last month pulled out of a tattered truce with the rebels, who are fighting for an independent ethnic homeland in the Sinhalese-majority island.

A string of battles in the north killed 36 rebels and one soldier, the military said yesterday. The rebels were not available for comment.

Yesterday's celebrations went ahead despite threats from the **LTTE**, and following two weekend bomb attacks that killed 34 civilians and wounded nearly 200 others.

Two more blasts just outside the capital yesterday did not cause any casualties, but an electricity transformer was destroyed in one of the attacks, police said.

BLASTS MAR DAY

A mass funeral was conducted for five students and their baseball coach killed in a suicide bomb attack at a train terminal on Sunday.

The government ordered all schools in the capital to shut for a week as students mourned their colleagues.

Ringed by tight security, Rajapakse also brushed off threats of foreign aid cuts due to the worsening ethnic conflict and human rights situation.

Sri Lanka had "established new relations with our neighbouring states, Arab states and Buddhist states," said Rajapakse while addressing the military parade, which featured multi-barrel rocket launchers, and Israeli-built Kfir and Russian MiG-27 war planes.

The island's prisons chief said around 2,280 inmates serving time for minor offences had received amnesty.

Load-Date: June 30, 2008

End of Document

Tamil refugees shelled as army closes in; Sri Lanka's civil war is nearing its endgame, says the reporter blinded in one eye by an army grenade on the island in 2001

The Sunday Times (London)

February 1, 2009

Edition 1

Copyright 2009 Times Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved



Section: NEWS; Pg. 25

Length: 834 words

Byline: MARIE COLVIN

Body

MORE than 250,000 terrified Tamil men, women and children were trapped between rebel Tamil forces and the army in no man's land in northern Sri Lanka last night as the 25-year civil war appeared to be nearing a violent conclusion.

A 48-hour ceasefire was due to end after the government promised to eliminate terrorism once and for all. Mahinda Rajapaksa, the Sri Lankan president, vowed that there would be no let-up in the army's offensive.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said a humanitarian crisis was unfolding and described horrific conditions in the conflict zone, sealed off by the government to aid agencies, diplomats and journalists. It said medical supplies, food and shelter were almost non-existent and families were living in makeshift tents and ditches in the jungle. Hundreds have been killed by heavy artillery bombardment.

Last week one of the few convoys allowed to leave the north, home to the Tamil ethnic minority, carried 50 critically injured children, some just a few months old. Thousands of Tamils have fled east in the face of an eight-month drive by the army to crush the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), known as the Tamil Tigers.

The fighting has reached a frenzy in the past few weeks, with the Buddhist government in Colombo speaking of an "endgame" in the civil war that began in 1983.

The rebels claim 800 have died in 10 days amid scenes of havoc in a "security zone" where the refugees are supposed to gather but where missiles have been falling. In a rebel video posted from the zone, Tamil nurses are shown at work in outdoor clinics, bandaging children. Bodies lie in rows under trees.

Although the government has issued statements saying that it will not injure civilians, I know how hollow they sound to those caught up in the fighting because I have encountered the Sri Lankan army.

Tamil refugees shelled as army closes in Sri Lanka 's civil war is nearing its endgame, says the reporter blinded in one eye by an army grenade on the island in....

Travelling to the north in 2001 to report on a humanitarian disaster that had engulfed 500,000 residents, I walked across a heavily fortified internal border that journalists had been forbidden to cross by the Colombo government.

Trying to return to a government-controlled area later, I walked at night past army bases lit by spotlights and ringed with barbed wire, following a Tamil route through waistdeep water and along jungle trails. When we were spotted, soldiers fired at us and lit flares. When I shouted I was a journalist, I was hit by shrapnel from a rocket-propelled grenade.

Although it is understandable that the soldiers that night were frightened that I might be a Tamil Tiger, they fired at me as I tried to stumble forward. When they saw me bloodied and barely able to stand, they beat me, stripped me and shoved me in and out of trucks despite the fact that I could barely breathe because of chest injuries from the blast and shrapnel in my head..

I was saved because I had access to help from The Sunday Times and diplomats, but the assurances from the Sri Lankan government will mean little to people in the northern Vanni area, who have endured indiscriminate bombing. The attack I survived was a mere footnote.

Yesterday the government said the **Tamil Tigers** were refusing to allow civilians to leave for safety, a claim the Tamil leadership denied. Tamil sources said a government offer that they should leave their homeland for areas under its control was unrealistic. "Not a single Tamil has slept in the last week," said a Tamil source. "They do not want to seek refuge with their killers."

Civilians removed in an evacuation have been placed in camps outside Vavuniya, the closest town to the conflict zone, which is off-limits to journalists. Injured civilians have been put in guarded hospitals. Tamils speaking from inside the conflict zone sounded desperate. "Civilians are trapped in an area 24 miles by 12. The Sri Lankan army are firing artillery and mortars from three fronts and the sea is on the other side," said a Tamil spokesman.

"The army have asked people to go to specific areas and then they fire on them."

Footage supplied by the rebels from Mullaitivu district appeared to confirm the claim. It showed people passing a naked, badly injured baby onto a lorry and doctors and nurses bandaging casualties.

"If the army overruns the forces of the **LTTE**, we will go back to guerrilla warfare.

That will be on the head of the international community," said a spokesman.

There was little sympathy from Colombo. "We are determined not to have a ceasefire and we are determined to eradicate terrorism in Sri Lanka," said Mahinda Samarasinghe, the minister for human rights and disaster management.

Thuraijah Varatharajah, a senior health official in the Vanni district, said his hospital in Puthukudiyiruppu was overflowing with patients suffering shell blast injuries.

Britain called for an end to the fighting. "Military advances by the Sri Lankan government against the **LTTE** have come at a severe humanitarian cost," said David Miliband, the foreign secretary.

Thousands of Tamils demonstrated in protest in central London yesterday.

Graphic

The attacks on Tamil refugees were the target of a protest in London yesterday, inset

Tamil refugees shelled as army closes in Sri Lanka 's civil war is nearing its endgame, says the reporter blinded in one eye by an army grenade on the island in....

TAMILNET/PAUL VICENTE

Load-Date: February 11, 2009

End of Document

Suicide blast kills 28 at Sri Lanka refugee camp: military

Agence France Presse -- English

February 9, 2009 Monday 4:35 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 584 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 9 2009

Body

A **female** Tamil Tiger suicide bomber killed 28 people on Monday at a camp for civilians who have fled Sri Lanka's ethnic war, the military said, as the rebels faced imminent defeat.

The bomber detonated her explosives as she was being searched by **women** soldiers outside the camp near Visuamadu, a northern area the military recently captured from the rebels, military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

"Twenty soldiers including three **women** soldiers were killed," he said. "Another eight civilians were killed and 40 civilians were wounded."

Dozens of injured troops were also rushed to hospital.

Nanayakkara blamed the attack on Tamil Tiger rebels, whose decades-long armed campaign for an independent homeland has recently suffered huge territorial losses as a result of a major army offensive.

"This attack is aimed at slowing down the army's advance," Nanayakkara told reporters here. He added that the Tigers were trying to discourage civilians from crossing over to government-held areas.

The United Nations and the US government condemned the attack.

"Those killed had already been forced from their homes by fighting, and had endured terrible hardships," the UN said in a statement. "The UN reiterates that civilians must be distinguished from combatants, and protected from the fighting."

"It calls once again on the **LTTE** (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) to separate its forces from civilians under its control."

The US embassy here said in a statement that it saw the bombing as an "apparent effort by the **LTTE** to discourage Tamils from leaving the conflict area."

"The United States calls on the **LTTE** to allow all civilians freedom of movement," it said.

Suicide blast kills 28 at Sri Lanka refugee camp: military

It also urged Colombo to ensure that all internally displaced people who leave the conflict area are registered and transferred in a "transparent manner to temporary camps in accordance with international standards."

The comment was a reference to allegations from rights groups that those who enter government-controlled areas are held in prison-like conditions, a charge denied by authorities.

The **Tamil Tigers** have launched scores of suicide missions in the past. In October, a bomber killed 27 people inside an opposition party office.

Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama met with heads of UN agencies in Colombo to discuss protecting civilians amid reports that the Tigers were also using child suicide bombers against troops, the ministry said.

"It was also observed that inaccurate accounts of the situation should be avoided at all costs and the UN will continue to assist the government to ensure the welfare of civilians in the conflict zone in terms of their rescue, resettlement and rehabilitation," the ministry said.

The government had been at loggerheads with international agencies over the number of civilians trapped by the conflict as well as accounts of civilian casualties.

Colombo says the number of civilians trapped by the conflict is now less than 100,000. UN agencies have placed it at 250,000.

With government forces pressing forward, the military said the area under rebel control had shrunk to less than 100 square kilometres (38 square miles).

Sri Lanka's military says it is in the final stages of a two-year-long offensive to defeat the Tigers, who have been fighting for a separate Tamil homeland since 1972.

Amid the ongoing fighting, the BBC announced in London on Monday that it was suspending its FM programming to Sri Lanka's national broadcaster because of what it claimed was "deliberate interference."

mg-aj/sst

Load-Date: February 10, 2009

Eight dead, scores hurt in Sri Lanka train bombing: military

Agence France Presse -- English

May 26, 2008 Monday 2:31 PM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 520 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 26 2008

Body

At least eight people were killed and scores more wounded Monday in the bombing of a packed commuter train by suspected Tamil rebels in the suburbs of the Sri Lankan capital, officials said.

Hospital officials said eight bodies had been recovered, among them five women, and that more than 72 people were being treated, mostly for burns.

The island's military spokesman, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, said a pregnant woman was among the dead. He blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for the evening rush-hour attack.

State television said about 200 people were on board the train at the time of the bombing, which occurred at Dehiwela railway station in the southern suburbs of Colombo.

"There was a deafening noise and the train suddenly started to slow down. People were shouting 'bomb, bomb!' and scrambling to get out of the windows of the carriage," 42-year-old commuter Ramani Padmalatha told AFP.

"I managed to jump out from the door. I saw the roof of the carriage had blown off. People were stumbling out of that carriage with blood stains on their clothes, some with burns, some looking dazed," she said.

Over the weekend, three bombs were found on commuter buses and defused. Earlier Monday, police had told bus and train passengers to be on alert.

Colombo has been hit by a string of bombings against both civilian and security targets in recent months, with authorities pointing the finger at Tamil Tiger rebels.

There was no immediate comment from the rebels, who are fighting to carve out a separate Tamil homeland in the north and east of the ethnic Sinhalese-majority island.

Fighting has escalated in Sri Lanka since the start of the year, when the government pulled out of a Norwegian-brokered truce with the Tamil Tigers.

Eight dead, scores hurt in Sri Lanka train bombing: military

Since then, both sides have traded allegations that each others' forces are targeting civilians -- whether it be Tamil suicide attackers venturing into the south or army commandos operating inside the rebel-held north.

Last week, the LTTE accused an army "Deep Penetration Unit" of killing 20 Tamil civilians in fragmentation mine attacks in the north. Such allegations are regularly followed by bombings in the south.

Dehiwela railway station has been the target of bombings in the past. In July 1996, more than 70 people died when two bombs went off on a train at the station.

The attack came as ground battles between government forces and the LTTE continued to rage across the northern front lines.

The defence ministry said 21 guerrillas and one soldier died in the latest clashes on Sunday.

It also said air force helicopter gunships were active in the north on Monday, providing support to ground troops moving deeper into the rebel-held region of Mannar.

The casualty figures brought to 3,873 the number of rebels the government says it has killed since January.

The ministry has said 298 soldiers have died over the same period.

The numbers cannot be independently verified since Sri Lanka bars journalists and human rights groups from the embattled areas.

Sri Lanka's war with the Tamil rebels, who staged their first attacks in 1972, has left tens of thousands of people dead.

Load-Date: May 27, 2008

Who can protect Tamil civilians caught in the conflict?; Analysis

The Independent (London)

February 14, 2009 Saturday

First Edition

Copyright 2009 Independent Print Ltd All Rights Reserved

The  INDEPENDENT

Section: WORLD; Pg. 28

Length: 561 words

Byline: Robert Evans MEP

Body

THE NEWS that the Sri Lankan government has rejected Gordon Brown's appointment of the former defence secretary Des Browne as special envoy comes as little surprise to anyone who has been following the situation there. The Sri Lankan government has become increasingly paranoid and defensive about all matters relating to the vicious civil war being waged in the north of the island.

For years this conflict continued with very little outside involvement and the LTTE (*Tamil Tigers*) were able to establish a de facto independent state-within-a-state, with their capital at Kilinochchi. A year ago, the Sri Lankan government unilaterally withdrew from the Norwegian-brokered ceasefire, and under the leadership of its hawkish President, Mahinda Rajapaksa, embarked on this current campaign which seems to be reaching its climax.

Whilst the Sri Lankans claim that they are merely trying to eliminate terrorism, the real victims are, as ever, the civilians trapped by the fighting. All the evidence suggests that unless the international community acts very soon, about a quarter of a million people could be caught in a ghastly bloodbath. The Sri Lankan government has urged Tamil civilians to come over to their side for protection, but there is a strong reticence and fear of such a move.

The Tamil people have seen so much death and destruction. They are terrified of Sri Lankan troops and their "holding camps", with all the stories of assaults and rape, not to mention the different language and religion which divides the Hindu Tamils from the Buddhist Sinhalese troops.

Equally, on the other side there are stories suggesting that the LTTE has, or might, shoot anyone who tries to escape from the areas that remain under their control.

But none of this is verifiable. The Sri Lankan government restricts all journalists and independent observers from entering the conflict zone. The reports from the few remaining aid or humanitarian agencies still allowed in the area are dismissed by the Sri Lankan authorities as propaganda.

Can Amnesty International and United Nations workers all be lying? Are all the horrific pictures of bombed-out hospitals and lines of dead men, women and children false or fabricated?

Who can protect Tamil civilians caught in the conflict? Analysis

So the situation in Sri Lanka is now critical. It is difficult to know what could happen next, hence the Prime Minister's insistence on sending Des Browne as a special envoy. But if not him, then who will protect the Tamil civilians from being massacred? Could President Rajapaksa refuse the UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon if he too demanded that a UN peacekeeping mission be allowed in to supervise an evacuation of civilians?

With the Gaza war it was possible to be appalled at what the Israeli government was doing without being labelled as a supporter of Hamas, but anyone who doesn't wholly back the murderous tactics of the Colombo government is automatically dismissed by the Sri Lankan authorities not just as an apologist for terrorism but as a supporter of the LTTE.

And for how much longer should we allow British holidaymakers and cricket teams to go to an island waging a vicious civil war against its own people? Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe was ostracised by the international community. Unless things change very quickly, the same fate must await Sri Lanka.

The author is chairman of the European Parliament Delegation for Relations with South Asia

Load-Date: February 13, 2009

End of Document

Jayalalithaa cracks whip on LTTE

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

October 13, 2008 Monday 1:11 PM EST

Copyright 2008 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 651 words

Byline: Report from Daily Mirror brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 13 -- AIADMK general secretary J. Jayalalithaa on Saturday said the party had never supported Tamil militancy or terrorism in Sri Lanka. But it supported the Sri Lankan Tamils' fight for self-determination.

"There are two very clear and distinct issues. The Tamils' fight for self-determination is one. Tamil militancy or terrorism is the other. We support the first. We oppose the latter. More so, when the aftermath of this terrorism left an imprint of blood in India and even posed a threat to the security and sovereignty of the Indian nation. But DMK chief M Karunanidhi is trying to obfuscate matters by mixing the two," the Indian media quoted her as saying.

Jayalalithaa said her position on Sri Lanka, which was that of the AIADMK, was well known. "We recognise the rights of the Tamil people of Sri Lanka for equality with their Sinhala brethren, their demand for equality before law, educational institutions and in employment. We also recognise their just struggle for self-determination and an autonomous Tamil homeland within the federal set-up of Sri Lanka.

"What we are opposed to is an armed struggle."

Jayalalithaa...

The AIADMK leader said the armed struggle had lost its way, as a result of which thousands of innocent men, women and children on either side were being wantonly killed.

"We are also opposed to the policy of annihilation followed by the protagonists of this armed struggle to eliminate political opponents including Tamils."

Meanwhile the state unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party has decided to boycott the October 14 all party meeting convened by Chief Minister M Karunanidhi on the Sri Lankan Tamils issue .

In a statement BJP state president L. Ganesan said his party had taken the decision due to the continuing military assistance to the Sri Lankan armed forces by the Centre and the failure of the ruling DMK to prevent it.

The Centre "was non-functional" for the last four years on the issue and failed to protect Tamil civilians in Lanka. "Since the Congress-led UPA government is continuing with its military assistance to the Lankan armed forces, we will not be able to attend the all-party meeting," he said.

Jayalalithaa cracks whip on LTTE

Meanwhile the New Indian Express survey, undertaken by C-fore in 10 Tamil Nadu cities, has found that a significant percentage of respondents wanted the DMK government to cut off ties with the UPA for the centre's role in arming and training the Sri Lankan armed forces.

A significant percentage also supported the idea of sending Indian armed forces into Sri Lanka if **LTTE** chief V. Prabhakaran were in imminent danger of being cornered.

A substantial portion was of the opinion that the organization which has waged a bloody campaign for a separate state consisted of freedom fighters and was the sole and genuine representative of the Tamil voice in Sri Lanka. As much as 40 per cent said they would be willing to donate money and materials for Eelam.

Notably, only a minuscule fraction thought that it was akin to Pakistanis supporting the Kashmir struggle.

At the same time, 94 per cent favoured a more robust approach to prevent a fallout on Tamil Nadu soil from the Sri Lankan problem, through measures like joint patrolling, preventing Indian fishermen from fishing in Sri Lankan waters as well as denying the use of Indian shore for **LTTE** activities.

A number of those surveyed were for commuting the sentence awarded to Nalini for her role in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi for one reason or the other, though a third were against such a move. Coincidentally, only a fraction wanted Prabhakaran to stand trial, if captured, for his role in the assassination.

Political leaders in the state would also be interested in noting that mobilizing support for the Tamil cause was way below the other pressing priorities such as the deteriorating power situation and the price rise.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror.

-841270

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

Load-Date: October 13, 2008

Fighting threatens Sri Lankan civilians

Christian Science Monitor
January 22, 2009, Thursday

Copyright 2009 The Christian Science Publishing Society All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Pg. 7

Length: 865 words

Byline: Simon Montlake Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: Bangkok, Thailand

Body

Government forces in Sri Lanka say they are closing in on the last redoubt of the ***Tamil Tigers***, which appear on the verge of defeat after 26 years of war. In recent weeks, troops have captured towns and strategic roads in the disputed north and blockaded sea lanes, boxing the insurgents into a shrinking area.

But as the military advances rapidly, human rights groups and humanitarian agencies have raised the alarm over the fate of some 230,000 civilians trapped by ground fighting and aerial attacks. Many have been forced to flee by the retreating Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, making it hard to deliver aid and evacuate the injured.

In an echo of the Gaza conflict, the government has blocked access for almost all news media and relief agencies. It has also withheld casualty figures, while President Mahinda Rajapaksa has rallied public support behind an all-out push to defeat the rebels.

Since September, the International Committee of the Red Cross has been the only relief organization allowed into the Vanni region where the fighting is under way. Last week, the ICRC expressed "serious concerns" over the "physical safety and living conditions" of displaced civilians.

The last relief convoy on Jan. 16 was able to deliver food and evacuate some patients in four ambulances. But others are still stranded and require urgent treatment, says ICRC spokeswoman Sarasi Wijeratne. Increasing numbers of displaced civilians are fleeing the fighting, she says by e-mail.

Rights groups say the ***LTTE*** and government troops are to blame for the escalating humanitarian crisis. By preventing civilians from fleeing, the rebels are using them as human shields.

The ***LTTE*** is accused of recruiting child soldiers and crushing dissent in its territory. It seeks a separate state for minority Tamils in the north and east of the country. It alleges mistreatment at the hands of ethnic Sinhalese, who make up 75 percent of a population of 20 million.

In recent weeks, as more ***LTTE*** towns have fallen, several hundred civilians have escaped to government-held areas, where they are confined to Army-run camps. The government says it needs to screen them for rebels. But as Sri Lanka braces for a larger exodus from the Vanni, international donors should press for external monitoring of camp conditions, says Yolanda Foster, a researcher for Amnesty International.

Fighting threatens Sri Lankan civilians

Many of those on the run have been repeatedly forced to move and have exhausted their savings. "People are on the move because they are so desperate and fearful of attack," she says.

A presidential adviser said Sunday that government agencies were preparing space for up to 30,000 displaced people at three camps. Military officials have warned that the Tigers could try to infiltrate ethnic Tamil populations and launch surprise attacks. The US categorizes the LTTE, known for bold attacks on political opponents, as a terrorist group. In 1991, it sent a female suicide bomber to assassinate Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who had sent peacekeepers to Sri Lanka.

On Wednesday, a suspected LTTE bomb planted outside a police station in eastern Sri Lanka killed a police officer and a civilian. Government forces recaptured the ethnically mixed east in 2007, but it remains largely under tight military control, despite promises to lift emergency restrictions, say rights groups and political analysts.

This bodes poorly for postwar planning in the north, says Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, executive director of the Center for Policy Alternatives in Colombo. The emphasis on defeating the enemy has obscured serious thinking on how to bind a distrustful minority into a fractured country. "If you don't have a political solution and a way to resolve the [political] conflict, you may have three to four years of relative peace and then the whole thing starts off again," he says.

The election of Mr. Rajapaksa in 2005 and the subsequent collapse of a 2002 Norwegian-brokered cease-fire have put Sri Lanka on a war footing. His government has said that a defeat of the LTTE, which it believes is imminent, would be followed by a political settlement. But some government lawmakers have equated devolution - explored in 2002 - as a sellout to the enemy.

The military suggested Sunday that LTTE leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran may have escaped.

The Navy said Tuesday it had sunk four LTTE vessels off the northeast coast. The boats are part of a once substantial war machine, including light aircraft.

The government's hawkish approach to the conflict has correlated with a spike in attacks on critical voices within the Sinhalese community. Earlier this month, a prominent newspaper editor, Lasantha Wickrematunge, was shot dead on the street. He had angered the government by alleging graft in military procurement and criticizing the erosion of civil liberties.

In an editorial prepared beforehand and posthumously published, Mr. Wickrematunge accused the administration of Rajapaksa - whom he knew personally - of seeking his death.

"Murder has become the primary tool whereby the state seeks to control the organs of liberty. Today it is the journalists, tomorrow it will be the judges," he wrote.

(c) Copyright 2009. The Christian Science Monitor

Load-Date: January 21, 2009

Sri Lanka advances on rebel base

Christian Science Monitor

August 28, 2008, Thursday

Copyright 2008 The Christian Science Publishing Society All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Pg. 7

Length: 968 words

Byline: Jason Motlagh Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: Colombo, Sri Lanka

Body

After 25 years of fighting and 70,000 casualties, Sri Lanka's military has won a hard-fought upper hand against separatist **Tamil Tigers** - and now vows to break their northern stronghold by year's end.

Yet despite these gains, government claims that the end to one of South Asia's longest-running civil wars is near may be premature: Even if the Tigers' conventional fighting forces fall apart, the group can prolong the conflict by turning to guerrilla tactics and feeding off ethnic Tamils' discontent against the government. Meanwhile the military's intensified campaign has caused the humanitarian crisis to swell.

"As an organization that started as a small guerilla group, the [Tigers] will retain [their] capacity to go back to their origins," says Jehan Perera, director of the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka, an independent advocacy organization. "The havoc that even a small group of determined persons can do is inestimable."

Nearing the Tiger stronghold

The separatist group, called the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), has repeatedly defied heavy odds and predictions of imminent defeat since they formed in the 1970s to fight for an independent Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka's north and east. But even government critics agree that the latest military offensive has tremendous momentum.

In January, the government abandoned a Norway-brokered cease-fire and said it would defeat the Tigers by the end of the year. It has since poured \$1.5 billion into an all-out offensive that has killed about 6,000 rebels and shrunk their territory in the island's northern Wanni region by nearly 75 percent, according to the Ministry of Defense. Restrictions on journalists make independent verification impossible.

Although exaggerations are common in the propaganda war between the sides, a string of important battlefield victories have propelled the military forward. The military says some advance units are now within artillery range of Kilinochchi, where Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran is thought to be hiding in a heavily defended underground bunker complex. Fierce clashes are expected there, as hundreds of the Tigers' elite cadres are believed to have dug in for a siege.

Of the factors that have weakened the **LTTE**, none has been more instrumental than the 2004 decision of the former second-in-command, Col. Karuna Amman, to split. He has said he left the Tigers due to Mr. Prabhakaran's repeated failure to pursue a political solution at critical moments; and his preference for northern Tamils over

Sri Lanka advances on rebel base

eastern Tamils, whom he says did most of the fighting. He took 6,000 cadres with him, cutting the Tigers' fighting strength by 60 percent. Last July, the LTTE was ousted from the east.

The group's finances are also feeling the squeeze. A 2007 report by Jane's Intelligence Review said that at their peak the LTTE raised as much as \$300 million a year - 90 percent from abroad - making it the second-highest budget among separatist groups. Members of the Tamil diaspora community are often intimidated into giving a large portion of their earnings to the cause, according to Human Rights Watch.

But in recent years a worldwide dragnet on fundraising operations and weapons procurement has cramped the Tigers, which are listed as a terrorist organization by the United States. The group has been called the "most dangerous and deadly extremists in the world" by the FBI. Dozens of LTTE financiers and arms smugglers have been arrested by authorities in the US, Canada, Europe, and India; millions in assets have been seized or frozen.

Separatists could turn to guerrilla tactics

Still, the current offensive may have yet to encounter the full weight of the LTTE - or its long-term ability to feed conflict. One Colombo-based analyst, speaking on condition of anonymity, points out that Prabhakaran is a master tactician who still commands hundreds of ultra-loyal fighters protecting him and possibly even chemical weapons. In the past, the Tigers have given up territory to draw government forces in and then counterattacked, he adds.

Even if LTTE is soon broken as a conventional fighting force, it could regroup in remote jungle areas to wage a protracted guerrilla war. This would include greater reliance on suicide and hit-and-run attacks to "bomb themselves back onto the agenda" as they have done in the past, says Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, director of the Center for Policy Alternatives, a think tank in Colombo.

Despite the military's recent gains, he adds, unrest will not cease until the economic and political deprivations that fuel Tamil discontent are addressed by the government, which has favored the Sinhalese majority. Even Sri Lankan Army commander Gen. Sarath Fonseka has warned that conflict could sputter along for another two decades unless a political resolution is reached.

More than 100,000 people displaced

Meanwhile, the stepped-up fighting has deepened a humanitarian crisis inside rebel-held territory. The United Nations says that in the past two months more than 112,000 ethnic Tamils have been displaced, bringing the total number of refugees to 145,000. Aid agencies in the north are trying to provide some relief to those displaced, but supplies are running low and access limited due to shifting front lines. So far clashes along the southern edge of the war zone have made some exit points off-limits, trapping people inside, the military has confirmed.

Human rights group Amnesty International says the LTTE is forcibly recruiting women and children to fill depleted ranks, as well as moving families toward the capital to serve as a human shield. Pro-LTTE media reports counter that people are freely enlisting by the hundreds.

* This article was reported with a grant from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting.

(c) Copyright 2008. The Christian Science Monitor

Load-Date: August 27, 2008

LTTE claymore kills 21

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

June 7, 2008 Saturday 2:19 PM EST

Copyright 2008 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 587 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 7 -- At least 21 civilians including eight women were killed and over 70 others injured when the LTTE triggered off another claymore mine targeting a packed passenger bus at Katubedda, Moratuwa during the morning rush hour yesterday.

The private bus plying from Kottawa to Mt. Lavinia caught a claymore mine which was placed in a thicket patch along the roadside in Katubedda yesterday around 7.45 a.m, police media spokesman SSP Ranjith Gunasekera said.

"The roadside bomb was placed at a thicket between Shailabimbaramaya Buddhist temple and the University of Moratuwa targeting the bus bearing number 29-1885 that was travelling from Kottawa to Mount Lavinia on route number 255," he added. The Security Forces and police beefed up security in the area including the Moratuwa University campus and arrested 15 suspects.

"In a subsequent search operation police arrested 15 suspects for questioning from the area and the search operation is still proceeding," SSP Gunasekera told the Daily News.

Eight special police teams were deployed to conduct further investigations, he added.

At the time of the blast the ill-fated bus was travelling at capacity level with more than 100 passengers on board sources said.

Military Spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara told the Daily News that authorities had confirmed the explosion was due to a claymore mine and that investigations were continuing to ascertain whether it was triggered using a remote controlled device or not. Government Analyst P.R.N.M. Liyanarachchi said a typical claymore mine weighing around 2 kg high explosives was placed inside a thicket facing the road side.

"We believe that the claymore mine was detonated by a remote control device. The casualties were high due to metal balls of the claymore mine which hit the passengers travelling on the foot board of the ill fated bus," he added.

The injured had been rushed to Kalubowila, Lunawa and Colombo General Hospitals. Director of the Kalubowila Hospital Dr. Wilfred Kumarasiri told the Daily News that over 70 injured people had been admitted to the hospital and he had taken steps to transfer five of them who had sustained serious injuries to Colombo.

LTTE claymore kills 21

According to Dr. Kumarasiri 12 of the injured had been subjected to surgery and were in a critical condition and by yesterday evening 47 patients were receiving treatment at the hospital.

The Director of the General Hospital Hector Weerasinghe said that they had received five critically injured patients transferred by the Kalubowila hospital. According to Dr. Weerasinghe all five had received serious head injuries and were undergoing treatment at the emergency unit.

The head of the Lunawa hospital Dr.A.P. Rathnasingham said that 16 injured people had been brought to the hospital immediately after the blast, and subsequently he had taken steps to transfer eight of them who had sustained serious injuries to the Kalubowila hospital.

The others who had received minor injuries were treated and had already left, he said while adding that only one patient was still receiving treatment.

He was not in a serious condition. Meanwhile, authorities immediately took steps to impose a Police curfew in the Moratuwa area as both the Police and Army took steps to launch a combined search operation.

SSP Gunasekera urged the public to be extra vigilant.

"We request public to be vigilant and be alert on their surroundings, as well as on suspicious parcels and suspects," he said.

Report from Daily News Sri Lanka brought to you by HT Syndication.

-683869

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

Load-Date: September 16, 2008

'There is no freedom' in Jaffna; City an open prison where fear, bloodshed reign

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

September 22, 2008 Monday

National Edition

Copyright 2008 National Post All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 1569 words

Byline: Stewart Bell, National Post

Dateline: JAFFNA CITY, Sri Lanka

Body

The streets around Jaffna City's downtown bazaar are filled with bicycles, trishaws and sari-clad **women** carrying umbrellas to shade themselves from the harsh tropical sun.

There are also a lot of soldiers. They patrol the streets with automatic rifles and stop buses to check the identity cards of passengers.

In this northern city, the population is almost entirely Tamil -- which to the soldiers means that any of the people on these streets might be **Tamil Tigers** guerrillas.

Jaffna City was once the second-largest centre in Sri Lanka, after the capital, Colombo, but the rows of empty, bullet-pocked houses on the outskirts of town are a reminder that the civil war has hit hard here.

The **Tamil Tigers** controlled Jaffna until the Sri Lankan forces retook it in 1995, but more than a dozen years later, daily life could hardly be described as normal.

Troops are everywhere; a curfew remains in effect; nobody dares step outdoors without their National Identity Card; and residents cannot leave without the army's permission.

Locals say the military routinely cordons off neighbourhoods, takes everyone to a school or a playground and holds them overnight for questioning.

Getting out of Jaffna means a two-week wait for military permission and a 24-hour boat trip.

That's because the region is cut off from the rest of the country by the war zone.

"It's like an open prison," says Gajen Ponnambalam, the Member of Parliament for Jaffna and a member of the country's main Tamil opposition party, the Tamil National Alliance.

Even though he is an elected representative for the region, Mr. Ponnambalam lives 400 kilometres away in Colombo. Jaffna is too dangerous. Two TNA MPs were assassinated in 2005 and 2006.

'There is no freedom' in Jaffna ; City an open prison where fear, bloodshed reign

"There is absolutely no security. All the TNA members of parliament from Jaffna have been threatened ... the government uses paramilitary groups to carry out these threats."

He says his phone calls to Jaffna are monitored, and when the discussions turn to topics considered sensitive by the government, the line gets cut. "It's a police state, so everything is being monitored."

Journalists considered sympathetic to the Tamil cause live in constant fear. Bullet holes mark the walls inside the Jaffna office of the Uthayan newspaper. A stack of computers sits idle, their screens blasted by gunshots.

Editor M. V. Kaanamylnathan thumbs through a book filled with photos of his reporters and staff, all killed in recent attacks. The newspaper continues to publish regardless.

"We have decided that despite what happens, we have a duty to our readers," he says. "We are just speaking for the rights of the people. This is a newspaper's function."

The civil war that has torn apart Sri Lanka and driven tens of thousands of refugees to Canada has been notable for its horrors. Both sides have been accused of abuses.

The list is long: Suicide bombings, abductions, recruitment of children, torture, ethnic cleansing, political assassinations, unlawful killings and arbitrary arrests and detentions.

Ethnic Tamils can be arrested for "suspicion," which requires no more than a belief they are linked to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas waging a separatist war against the government. Some are released. Some are never seen again.

"Outside of the war zones, Tamils are very vulnerable to human rights violations, which come in the form of their houses being raided in the night or being searched in the night," says Jehan Perera, executive director of the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka. "They have to prove their innocence, that they are not LTTE."

Disappearances and killings have occurred in Colombo, but they are said to be worst in Jaffna, he says, although he adds that there are no reliable statistics. Adding to the concerns is the sense that nobody is ever brought to account for the abuses, he says.

"There is a problem of terrorism, people need to be arrested, but this can't be done arbitrarily," he says. "It is happening enough that all Tamils are frightened."

Since the collapse of Sri Lanka's ceasefire in January, international human rights groups have become increasingly alarmed as government forces drive north in an attempt to defeat the Tamil Tigers, and the guerrillas resume their random terrorist attacks.

Deaths of civilians have reached "appalling levels," according to a February report by the International Committee of the Red Cross, which says almost 200 civilians died in the first six weeks of 2008.

A Human Rights Watch report released in March blamed pro-government forces for abductions and disappearances of suspected rebels as well as clergy, aid workers and journalists.

In April, Amnesty International accused both the government and the guerrillas of intentionally targeting civilians and conducting indiscriminate attacks. "Since 2006, the conflict in Sri Lanka between government forces, the LTTE and other armed groups has escalated and has continued to be marked by widespread human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law," Amnesty wrote.

A young Tamil man, too afraid to allow his name to be published, spoke nervously about the August night his life was turned upside down.

It was after dark and he was with a friend. They went to meet another friend. All were Tamils. Someone saw them together and told the police.

'There is no freedom' in Jaffna ; City an open prison where fear, bloodshed reign

"I didn't expect they were going to put me in jail," he says, but the next thing he knew, he was taken to a cell. "They took us to a bad ward. There were 250 people staying in a single hole."

The cell was full of hard-looking men, some of whom were smoking ganja. Until that night, he had never even seen the inside of a police station. He was held for a week before being released without any charges.

Now he is uneasy. He believes the police will be watching him. He says if police pick him up again, he will never get out. He says he will no longer venture outside after 8 p. m. "Earlier, I never thought about these things. But now I am afraid."

The Sri Lankan government does not deny that abuses occur, but says they are not state policy and that those found responsible are held accountable.

Attorney-General C. R. De Silva told the United Nations that a Presidential Commission of Inquiry was looking into disappearances, and that police had formed a Disappearances Investigation Unit.

In the past year, 61 police officers have been charged with torture, he says, while in the past decade, 599 members of the security forces and police have been charged in connection with abductions and extra-judicial killings.

Mr. Ponnambalam, the Tamil MP, says that in the past, international pressure could be wielded to curb government excesses. But unlike past Sri Lankan governments, the current administration lacks strong links to Western countries that have typically pushed for negotiations to end the conflict. "President [Mahinda] Rajapaksa is someone of a totally different mindset. He has no such hang-ups basically."

Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, the Defence Secretary and the President's brother, says some people reported as disappeared have actually joined the guerrillas. He cites the case of a man reported missing by his mother. It turned out the man had died while committing a suicide attack near the Colombo Hilton Hotel.

Searches, arrests and detentions are all necessary to prevent terrorist attacks, he says.

"Now we know that each and every Tamil person is not a terrorist, but unfortunately 98% of the terrorists are Tamil because this started as a freedom movement, it started from the Tamils," he says.

"So when you adopt certain control measures, of course the Tamil population will be targeted. You go and search where there are more Tamil people, then you question with a doubt when you see people coming from the north and east. So for these things we get a lot of criticism, but at the end, you save a lot of lives."

The National Post hitched a ride to Jaffna on an Air Force transport and travelled through the high-security zone to the city in a Unicorn armoured vehicle before leaving the company of the military to explore.

Jaffna's roughly 600,000 residents had a brief respite from the war during the ceasefire that began in 2002. The A-9 highway that links the region to the south was reopened for the first time in decades, but the ceasefire soon collapsed and the road was closed once again.

The guerrillas and the army face each other on the eastern edge of Jaffna, where 100 metres of no-man's land separates the forward line of the Sri Lankan Army from the Tamil Tigers. Both lob mortars at each other on a daily basis.

"A lot of skirmishes are going on -- last night there were 12 attacks," says Major General Gammampila Chandrasiri, Area Commander for Jaffna. But he insists life in Jaffna is "coming back to normal."

One prominent Tamil man scoffs at the positive image painted by the General. He says the Tamils of Jaffna are treated like second-class citizens and live in constant fear of the security forces.

"It has gone to the depths, there is no freedom," he says. "Whether you are three or 65 years, they will stop and check your ID card. Now they are suspecting every citizen."

'There is no freedom' in Jaffna ; City an open prison where fear, bloodshed reign

"How can you say that we are living peacefully, how can you say that there is no problem?" he says, afraid to have his name published.

"It is 100% occupation."

TOMORROW

Stewart Bell visits the eastern city of Trincomalee, where he meets a former child guerrilla who left the **Tamil Tigers** and now serves in the government.

Graphic

Color Photo;; ; Black & White

Photo: Stewart Bell, National Post; "It's like an open prison," says Gajen Ponnambalam, the Member of Parliament for Jaffna, regarding the way officials treat the city's Tamil population. Black & White

Photo: Stewart Bell, National Post; Security officers stop a bus in Jaffna City to check the identity cards of Tamil passengers. The northern war zone cuts the city off from the rest of the country. ;

Load-Date: September 22, 2008

End of Document

Trapped Sri Lankans need international intervention - and soon Mounting atrocities in civil war imperil as many as 180,000 civilians.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

March 20, 2009 Friday

THIRD EDITION

Copyright 2009 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. A9

Length: 597 words

Byline: By Lakhdar Brahimi From The International Herald Tribune

Dateline: 0

Body

The already severe humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka is on the brink of catastrophe. It will take the quick arrival of humanitarian relief and high-level international political muscle to bring the nightmarish situation to an end and prevent a slaughter. As many as 180,000 civilians are now trapped in a tiny pocket of land between Sri Lankan military forces, whose artillery shells regularly fall among them, and the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, who shoot at them if they try to escape. Food, clean water and medical assistance are all increasingly scarce.

According to U.N. figures, 2,300 civilians have already died and at least 6,500 have been injured since January. Some 500 children have been killed and over 1,400 injured. What happens to the rest of those caught in the middle of the government's onslaught and the Tigers' fight to the death depends not only on the two parties but on the international response as well. The crisis is born of acts by both sides that most probably amount to serious violations of humanitarian law and perhaps to war crimes or crimes against humanity. As it has withdrawn before the government forces, the **LTTE** has sought refuge in the civilian population. It has been holding men, **women** and children as hostages, forcibly recruiting them and using them as human shields. The government has responded with attacks that independent observers describe as indiscriminate. Distinguishing combatants from noncombatants has become impossible with fighters and civilians packed so closely together. Alarming reports are coming in that government forces are shelling even those areas they themselves have declared "no-fire zones." If both groups do not end the fighting immediately, the lives of tens of thousands of civilians are at risk. The situation is even more tragic because it represents an unnecessarily devastating coda to a war that is already over. Totally overwhelmed by government forces, the **LTTE** has lost. While the government may achieve its long-cherished victory over the rebels, indiscriminate killing of civilians could result in terrorism in other parts of the globe. Opinion among the millions of Tamils around the world, especially those in southern India, is being dangerously radicalized by images and stories of intense civilian suffering in the rebel-held areas. If the international community fails to act, the already desperate situation may end up an all-out humanitarian catastrophe. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon could insist on immediate access for U.N. staff to no-fire zones in order to assess the needs of the population. He could appoint a special representative to work with the government of Sri Lanka and all the relevant parties to guarantee the rights and protection of the endangered civilians. On the political side, other international leaders - in particular, President Barack Obama, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and other leaders from Asia, the nonaligned movement and the Commonwealth - could use their leverage to persuade the Sri Lankan government to stop its offensive. They could help shift the government from a strategy of total annihilation to one of containment by

Trapped Sri Lankans need international intervention - and soon Mounting atrocities in civil war imperil as many as 180,000 civilians.

addressing government fears that **LTTE** leaders will use a pause in the fighting to flee and regroup. The United States and India could also offer to increase naval surveillance in order to prevent remaining Tiger fighters from escaping by sea. None of these measures are easy to achieve. The government and the **LTTE** are locked in a war to the last man and seem oblivious to the civilian death toll around them.

Notes

commentary

Graphic

PHOTO - Thousands of Tamils protest Monday against Sri Lanka's military offensives in territories held by the rebel **Tamil Tigers**. The demonstration was in front of the European headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva. The Associated Press GRAPHIC - Map of Sri Lanka. Associated Press.

Load-Date: March 23, 2009

End of Document

Shelling kills 16 at Sri Lanka hospital: ICRC

Agence France Presse -- English

February 10, 2009 Tuesday 8:23 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 559 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 11 2009

Body

Sixteen patients at a makeshift hospital in Sri Lanka's war zone were killed when the facility was shelled, the Red Cross said Tuesday, as Colombo accused Tamil rebels of gunning down 19 civilians.

The news of Monday's attack on the hospital in northern Putumattalan came as non-combatants poured across the frontlines to escape the territory held by the **Tamil Tigers**, who have battled for decades for an independent Tamil homeland.

Sri Lanka's army is pushing ahead with a massive offensive to crush the cornered rebels, who have been accused by the government of using civilians in the war zone as "human shields".

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said the 16 patients killed on Monday had already been evacuated from another facility, without specifying who was responsible for the shelling.

"We are shocked that patients are not afforded the protection they are entitled to," Paul Castella, head of the ICRC delegation in Colombo, said in a statement.

"Once more, we call on both parties to meet their obligation under international humanitarian law to spare at all times the wounded and sick people, medical personnel and medical facilities at all times."

The ICRC said earlier that it had evacuated 240 patients from coastal Putumattalan to a safer area following security guarantees from both sides.

Earlier in the day, the military accused the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) of gunning down 19 civilians and wounding another 75 who tried to escape from the dwindling area still under rebel control.

Survivors of the attack who arrived at a military post told how the Tiger fighters had fired on a group of 1,000 people trying to cross the frontlines to safety, military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

"The civilians came to an army position carrying the dead and the wounded, who had gunshot injuries," Nanayakkara said. Twelve men, five **women** and two children had been killed.

Shelling kills 16 at Sri Lanka hospital: ICRC

On Monday, a **female** Tiger suicide bomber killed 30 people at a centre for displaced civilians, in what Sri Lankan authorities and the United States said was another attempt to stop people from leaving rebel territory.

The government says 25,000 non-combatants have already fled the war zone so far this month, with thousands more crossing the frontlines every day.

The defence ministry said government forces on Tuesday kept up attacks against the rebel holdouts, with 27 of them killed.

Foreign Secretary Palitha Kohona said the Colombo government hoped those non-combatants escaping the fighting would be able to return to their homes within about a year after the war zone is swept for mines.

The Tigers have issued no statements about the latest violence, and no independent verification was available as journalists, aid groups and international observers are banned from independently reporting from the area.

Rights watchdog Amnesty International said the government's restrictions made it impossible to know what was happening on the ground.

"In a war with no witnesses, it is the civilians who pay the price for both parties' disregard for international humanitarian law," it said.

Colombo has accused aid workers, diplomats and journalists of being supportive of the **Tamil Tigers**, who now only control an area of less than 100 square kilometres (38 square miles).

The unrest in Sri Lanka has claimed an estimated 70,000 lives since 1972.

Load-Date: February 11, 2009

War affected women urge all to work together to build nation

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

February 24, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 291 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 24 -- The Association of War Affected **Women** have urged stake holders in the Sri Lankan conflict to understand the gravity of the situation in the country and work towards creating a country where all its people can live in harmony and prosperity enjoying equal rights.

The Association notes that the three decade long war has taken its toll on each and every Sri Lankan in one way or another for a long time and has made the people of the country tired of war. "During President Rajapaksa's tenure we saw that the Eastern province been cleared of **LTTE** presence thus creating an environment where reconstruction is able to take place. Having being successful militarily in the eastern province in 2007 by the latter half of the 2008 Sri Lanka made significant advancement in to the Tiger strongholds. By the end of 2008 **Tamil Tigers** are confined to a relatively very small area of land and, though nearly hundred thousand of civilians are also trapped with Tigers, it is a matter of days for the Sri Lankan forces to capture the entire land which was controlled by the Tigers for nearly two decades," the organization said. It called on the President to ensure political parties hold an emergency meeting to discuss the situation and action needed to be taken to save civilian lives as well as postpone the western provincial council election, until such time the situation is back to normal while calling upon the APRC to come up with a viable solution which can be tabled at future negotiations. The Association of War Affected **Women** also said every development project in the north and east has to be done in consultation with the people of the relevant area. 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 1, 2009

DISTRIBUTION OF INDIAN FOOD TO START IN SRI LANKA

Indo-Asian News Service

December 3, 2008 Wednesday 1:59 PM EST

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 579 words

Byline: Asit Srivastava Report from Indo-Asian News Service brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Dec. 03 -- By M.R. Narayan Swamy New Delhi

Body

Dec. 03 -- By M.R. Narayan Swamy

New Delhi, Dec 3 (IANS) The distribution of nearly 1,700 tonnes of food and other relief material sent by India for civilians caught up in Sri Lanka's war zone is set to begin despite heavy rains.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is coordinating with Sri Lankan authorities as it reaches out to 40,000 distressed families each in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts, areas in the north the **Tamil Tigers** control.

The first of the trucks carrying the goods moved into the rebel zone Monday, and the distribution is to start "any time now", Paul Castella, head of the ICRC mission in Sri Lanka, said over telephone.

"It will be happening tomorrow, day after, even today," Castella, 45, told IANS. He said both Colombo and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) were being kept informed.

"A total of 625 tonnes have been transported into the conflict area. Most of it has gone to Kilinochchi. We are continuing to send more and more trucks even as I am talking to you," he said.

In November, following mass protests in Tamil Nadu, India shipped about 1,700 tonnes of relief material to Sri Lanka, saying ICRC will do the distribution.

The consignment - which Castella said was both "very large" and "very useful" - includes clothing for males and **females**, bed sheets, towels, hygiene items, rice, dal, tea and sugar.

"Aid sent by India is a very useful complement to what is already being distributed."

Tamil activists have alleged food shortages after thousands were displaced following fierce clashes between the military and the **LTTE**. India decided to chip in after street protests in Tamil Nadu, which is separated from Sri Lanka by a strip of sea.

Castella said the Indian shipment, which reached Colombo and was stored in ICRC warehouses, was first trucked to Vavuniya, a Tamil majority town about 250 km north of Colombo.

He said the ICRC sought trucks from the Sri Lankan authorities to move the goods, first to Vavuniya and then to the war zone, "because it is so difficult to get so many trucks and drivers when you are going into conflict areas".

DISTRIBUTION OF INDIAN FOOD TO START IN SRI LANKA

Castella, who has been in Sri Lanka for only two months, said while Colombo was facilitating the operations, the ICRC supervised the distribution. "We are in control and in charge and accountable for it."

He said the ICRC would identify the most needy families from the lists prepared by government agents (GAs) - equivalent to district magistrates. "Discussions are on between ICRC and GAs to select the right beneficiaries. Once they have been identified, the distribution will be done, again under the supervision of ICRC."

Castella said he was happy with the progress of plans for distribution. "The huge logistical constraints have been overcome despite the heavy rains. Now the roads are a bit better because the water is receding."

But he pointed out that there were problems concerning the changing entry and exit points of the war zone because of military advances against the LTTE.

Castella said initial objections raised by the Sri Lankan government to the ICRC-led distribution had been overcome.

"All that is completely settled. The ICRC is not used to distributing food in this country. It has never been doing this. I think the government was a bit surprised," he said. "That created some misunderstanding. Since it is an exceptional case, I believe, it was easy to sort out the issues."

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

-906413

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

Load-Date: December 3, 2008

Suicide bombing on Sri Lanka train kills seven

Agence France Presse -- English

February 3, 2008 Sunday 10:05 AM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 507 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 3 2008

Body

A suicide bomb ripped through a train in Sri Lanka's capital Colombo on Sunday, killing at least seven people and injuring nearly 100 on the eve of independence celebrations, officials said.

The attack on a suburban train arriving in Colombo's main station came just hours after six people were hurt in a hand grenade attack at Sri Lanka's main zoo, on the outskirts of Colombo, prompting authorities to boost security.

A police spokesman said the train attack was carried out by a suspected ***female*** operative of the ***Tamil Tigers***, the rebel group fighting to carve out a separate homeland in the ethnic Sinhalese-majority island nation.

"The bombing has all the hallmarks of the Tigers," a police officer at the rail station said. "The head of the woman suicide bomber was found on a platform."

A spokeswoman at Colombo National Hospital, Pushpa Soysa, said seven people were dead on arrival, and 97 others admitted for treatment.

Earlier, the blast in the aviary of the Dehiwala zoo caused panic among visitors, but police moved reinforcements to the area and urged calm.

The zoo was later closed to visitors, officials said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the two attacks, which came only one day after a powerful bomb ripped through a bus in the north-central town of Dambulla, killing 20 passengers.

Sri Lankan police and security forces have maintained a high state of alert ahead of Monday's celebrations to mark the country's 60th anniversary of independence from Britain.

Police sought public help to track down two men believed to have planted a parcel bomb on an overhead rack of the bus to the northern Buddhist pilgrimage town of Anuradhapura, detonating the device by mobile phone.

"We have information that two people got off the bus before the bomb went off," police Deputy Inspector-General Kingsley Ekanayaka said. "We are trying to track them down. A search is underway."

Suicide bombing on Sri Lanka train kills seven

Police said 68 people injured in the bus attack were being treated at three hospitals, adding that no foreign tourists were among the wounded.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) set off a powerful suicide truck bomb in the same area in October 2006, killing at least 116 sailors heading home on leave.

President Mahinda Rajapakse condemned the bus bombing and urged Sri Lankans not to be provoked by what he called the "savage attack" by the **Tamil Tigers**.

The latest attacks came as the defence ministry said 46 combatants were killed in fresh fighting across the embattled north at the weekend.

Government troops backed by heavy artillery fire killed at least 44 suspected Tamil Tiger rebels on Saturday, while only two soldiers were killed, the defence ministry said in a statement.

Meanwhile, the Tigers accused the military of blowing up a school bus inside rebel-held territory last month, killing 18 people, including 11 children.

The government in January pulled out of a tattered peace pact with the rebels, who have been fighting for a separate Tamil homeland since 1972 in a conflict that has left tens of thousands dead.

mg-aj/sst/km

Load-Date: February 4, 2008

21 killed, 50 injured in blast near Colombo

Indo-Asian News Service

June 6, 2008 Friday 1:39 PM EST

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 285 words

Byline: Report from Indo-Asian News Service brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 6 -- At least 21 people were killed and 50 injured when a powerful bomb went off next to a packed public transport bus in Moratuwa on the outskirts of the Sri Lankan capital Friday, the defence ministry said. The bus took most of the blast impact.

The roadside bomb, targeting the bus going from Kottawa to Mount Lavinia, went off at about 7.30 a.m. near the Moratuwa University, about 20 km south of Colombo on the Pilyandala-Kaddupedda road.

"**LTTE** (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) terrorists exploded a bomb targeting a crowded public transport bus close to the Shailabimbaramaya Buddhist temple at Katubedda, Moratuwa this morning. Twenty-one people, 13 men and eight **women**, were killed while over 50 were injured," the defence ministry said in a statement.

The bus was badly damaged and the ministry said preliminary investigations revealed that "the terrorists exploded a roadside bomb, which had been triggered by remote control".

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said police and military teams have been rushed to the blast site to carry out a search, while the injured have been sent to hospitals in Kalubowila and Lunawa.

This is the third blast targeting public transport within two weeks in and around Colombo, amid fierce fighting between government troops and the **Tamil Tigers** in Mannar, Welioya and Wanni regions in the north of the country.

On Wednesday, 18 people were injured when a bomb targeting a passenger train exploded at Dehiwela, on the outskirts of Colombo.

On May 26, nine civilians were killed and over 90 wounded when a powerful bomb ripped through a crowded train coach, also in Dehiwela.

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: June 6, 2008

21 killed, 50 injured in blast near Colombo

End of Document

Rights groups deplore Karuna's release

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

July 5, 2008 Saturday 1:02 PM EST

Copyright 2008 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 598 words

Byline: Report from Daily Mirror brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 5 -- International human rights groups yesterday deplored the release and deportation of Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan alias Karuna Amman from Britain and urged Sri Lanka to prosecute him for human rights abuses committed by him as an **LTTE** leader and later as the leader of the TMVP.

"The British government had an alleged war criminal in its custody for six months but failed to file charges. This was a rare opportunity to bring to justice a Tamil Tiger leader accountable for horrific human rights abuses, but the British government blew it," Human Rights Watch Asia director Brad Adams said.

The HRW said the **LTTE** under Karuna's command was directly involved in some of the worst crimes during Sri Lanka's ongoing civil war, including torture, summary execution, and use of children as soldiers.

Amnesty International also expressed disappointment at Karuna's deportation and said it too had received testimonies from potential witnesses but they were unwilling to testify or present their testimonies to the Metropolitan Police for fear of reprisals in Britain and Sri Lanka.

"The deportation of Karuna now means the investigation by British authorities into these allegations has come to an end. Karuna is entitled to be presumed innocent, until and unless guilt can be proved beyond reasonable doubt in a fair trial. We will, however, be writing to the Sri Lankan authorities calling for an investigation into these allegations," the AI said.

It said the organization was aware of at least one witness in Sri Lanka who provided information to the Metropolitan Police and who is still in Sri Lanka, without having been given any protection in that country, or having been given the choice of being relocated elsewhere.

Amnesty International is concerned that this witness may now face a real risk of reprisals for having given information to the police investigation into Karuna.

"We have expressed our concerns to the Metropolitan Police that not enough may have been done to protect witnesses, and reassure potential witnesses, as they conducted their investigation. We would like to see the UK authorities introduce new measures in the future to try war criminals and protect witnesses," AI said.

British law permits the prosecution of individuals for serious violations of international law, including torture and war crimes, committed abroad. For example, in 2005, British courts convicted a former Afghan warlord, Faryadi Sarwar Zardad, for acts of torture and hostage-taking in Afghanistan.

Rights groups deplore Karuna's release

Tamil Tiger forces under Karuna's command were directly involved in some of the worst crimes of Sri Lanka's ongoing civil war. In June 1990, some 600 police officers who surrendered to the LTTE were bound, gagged, and beaten. The Tamil Tigers, including forces under Karuna's control, then executed the Sinhalese and Muslims among them. In July 1990, Karuna's forces stopped a convoy of Muslims traveling in Batticaloa district and executed about 75 of them, including women and children. In August 1990, Karuna's forces killed more than 200 civilians in two incidents in Batticaloa district.

"Karuna's escape from justice in Britain is a failure for international justice," Mr. Adams said. "Now that Karuna is back in Colombo, the spotlight is on the Sri Lanka government to do the right thing or be deemed complicit in his crimes."

Amnesty International wrote to the Metropolitan Police raising concerns about the investigation on May 14 and again on June 4 but has not yet received any replies to these letters.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror.

-720014

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

Load-Date: August 11, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lanka rebels attack bus carrying refugees: military

Agence France Presse -- English

February 14, 2009 Saturday 12:01 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 506 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 14 2009

Body

Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels lobbed a grenade and opened fire at a bus transporting civilians out of Sri Lanka's war zone Saturday, killing one woman and wounding 13, the defence ministry said.

The rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) attacked the bus at Puliyanikulam in the island's north while it headed to the government-held town of Vavuniya, the ministry said.

It said four **women** and two girls were among those shot by the gunmen in the pre-dawn attack.

Airforce fighter jets kept up attacks on rebel positions Saturday and bombed the northern beach strip of Mullaittivu where suspected guerrilla boats were anchored, the military said.

The bombings come as artillery shells Friday killed four residents of a home for the elderly inside a demarcated safe area within Sri Lanka's war zone, a doctor said Saturday.

Many elderly people were also injured in the shelling in the northeast coastal area of Puttumattalan, said T. Satyamurthy, a doctor working out of the makeshift community centre hospital.

He said hundreds of civilians were being treated in the hospital, which was running out of drugs and lacked clean toilets and clean water.

Security forces and police were also deployed Saturday at a local election for two provincial councils in the central and north-western parts of the country, officials said.

The government of President Mahinda Rajapakse turned the election into a referendum on its handling of the battle against Tamil Tiger rebels. Police said the vote went through peacefully and results are expected Sunday.

This week, the Red Cross evacuated more than 600 patients and family members from Puttumattalan by sea to the northeastern coastal town of Trincomalee.

Satyamurthy said another 600 badly wounded people needed to be evacuated for further treatment.

Sri Lanka rebels attack bus carrying refugees: military

More than 200 patients suffering from chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease and kidney problems were also in need of urgent evacuation.

The government accuses the LTTE of using some 100,000 Tamil civilians as a human shield after military forces cornered the guerrillas in a narrow strip of jungle in the island's north-east.

However, official figures showed 37,420 people had crossed the front lines this year, with nearly 35,000 making the hazardous journey this month alone to seek shelter with security forces.

The Red Cross says hundreds of non-combatants have already been killed.

The government, which says it is on the brink of crushing the rebels, has resisted international calls to halt its offensive against the Tigers, who have fought since 1972 for the creation of an independent Tamil homeland.

On Thursday, Sri Lanka set up a new safe zone for non-combatants along a 12-kilometre (7.5-mile) stretch of coastline, effectively scrapping a smaller designated no-fire area.

Sri Lanka has resisted calls for a "no-fire period," amid claims from relief agencies that a "humanitarian catastrophe" was unfolding in the island's war zone.

Foreign governments as well as rights groups have asked Tamil Tigers to allow civilians free movement.

Load-Date: February 15, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lanka's battle-hardened Tigers

Agence France Presse -- English

January 2, 2009 Friday 9:33 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 513 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Jan 2 2009

Body

Sri Lanka's ***Tamil Tigers*** have a reputation as one of the world's most effective and ruthless guerrilla groups, using surprise and suicide bombers to maintain their struggle against overwhelmingly superior forces.

Formed in 1972 by Velupillai Prabhakaran, a school dropout, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) have spent more than 30 years confounding expectations of their imminent military defeat.

In the fight for a separate Tamil homeland, Prabhakaran, 54, pioneered the use of suicide bombers who carried out deadly attacks against high profile targets, including spectacular strikes against economic installations.

Former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a ***female*** Tiger suicide bomber in 1991, in retaliation for the despatch of Indian peacekeepers to Sri Lanka in 1987 who ended up fighting the rebels.

The Tigers were also blamed for the 1993 killing of Sri Lankan president Ranasinghe Premadasa and the bombing of the Central Bank which left 90 dead.

Prabhakaran's naval unit known as the Sea Tigers is a rarity for any guerrilla group, and he also operates a mini air force, comprising a few light aircraft that have carried out bombing raids against military and economic targets since mid 2007.

The outfit has a well-established international network and raises money from more than a million Sri Lankan Tamils living abroad.

Human rights groups have accused the Tigers of rampant extortion and criticised their recruitment of child fighters.

In one of their most audacious attacks in 2001, the rebels blew up more than a dozen fighter aircraft at a military base just north of Colombo and destroyed six passenger liners parked at the country's only international airport.

The Tigers have been labelled a terrorist group by the United States, the European Union and neighbouring India, but had the backing of the international community when Oslo-backed peace talks were underway from 2002.

Sri Lanka 's battle-hardened Tigers

Those negotiations collapsed and the process died a natural death in January 2008 when President Mahinda Rajapakse pulled out of a moribund truce.

Government forces entered Kilinochchi -- the LTTE's political headquarters -- on Friday after the biggest military offensive in the history of what has become Asia's longest running ethnic conflict.

Prabhakaran in his annual speech in November vowed to defend his territory and suggested that the rebels would revert to hit-and-run attacks as their area shrank.

"No sane voice is being raised either to abandon war or to seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict," Prabhakaran said.

The Tigers lost their Jaffna peninsula base in December 1995 and were driven out of the east of the island in mid 2007, leaving them with a much smaller area of control.

Prabhakaran's forces have now largely withdrawn to the thick jungles of the northeastern district of Mullaittivu.

Time and again, the Tigers have shown their ability to rebound from even the most dire situations.

Barely six months after government troops captured Jaffna in 1995, the Tigers overran a military base in Mullaittivu, killing more than 1,200 soldiers.

Load-Date: January 3, 2009

End of Document

Croydon Tamils count cost of Sri Lanka war

Your Local Guardian

March 4, 2009

Copyright 2009 NewsQuest Media Group Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: UPLOAD NEWS ARTICLES

Length: 741 words

Body

With tears in his eyes the owner of a Croydon restaurant holds a picture of his mutilated daughter, killed by artillery shells.

Premananthan Sundram, the owner of Spiceland in London Road, Croydon, only discovered he had lost his beloved daughter in December last year after checking an internet site.

Six-year-old Arulanandam Nirojini was killed when, according to the website tamil.net, the Sri Lankan army fired artillery shells in her road.

She had been making her way home from school, which had already been closed due to an earlier artillery barrage.

The proof of her death is horrific.

A picture of his little girl, lifeless in a pink sari, is published on the website.

 **Prem Sundram and his colleague Sakthi Kunam both have families they haven't heard from for some time**

Mr Sundram has made the image and others, even more horrific than those of his daughter, into posters to highlight the atrocities committed on children.

Mr Sundram said: "Every day I check the internet to try to find information about the rest of my family.

"Our country is a beautiful place that has been ruined by war.

"The government claims they are targeting **Tamil Tigers**, but what involvement did my daughter have with them?

"This is not about Tamil or Sinhalese any more, it is about innocent people dying, children and **women** who have nothing to do with either sides' grievances.

"Nobody is helping the Tamil people, the British Government doesn't care about what is happening in our country and our people need help."

The Sinhalese government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**Ltte**) have accused each other of war crimes throughout the entire, bloody conflict and continue to fight in Vanni in the north of the country.

Croydon Tamils count cost of Sri Lanka war

The **Ltte** has accused the government of knowingly attacking civilian targets and the government has accused the **Ltte** of recruiting children and using civilians as human shields.

%image(835881) **Prem's sister-in-law Magesvary Arulananthan (left) with her daughter Nirosini and son Disanthen**

Rajaratnam Rajiyanthen, another Croydon resident, has also lost loved ones.

Over the last month his aunt and cousin were killed by Sri Lankan army artillery shells.

He said: "This has gone on for so long now it is getting ridiculous.

"The **Ltte** have told the Government it is ready for a ceasefire, but the Government won't accept it. They just keep killing each other and it is innocent people that are being hurt by it the most."

Croydon Central MP has been campaigning for a resolution to the conflict and has been active, along with Tamil Community leader Patrick Ratnaraja, in taking the plight of Croydon's Tamil community to Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

He said: "Croydon residents with links to Sri Lanka are very concerned about the loss of innocent lives.

"What is good is the way that Tamils and Sinhalese have prayed together in Croydon for peace and reconciliation.

"The loss of life at churches, temples, hospitals, schools and so-called safe zones concerns me and Croydon Tamils greatly.

"We need action at the UN, although others block debate or motions there.

"Economic sanctions, international arms sales embargoes, freezing assets of senior leaders and trying the guilty for genocide are important.

"Meetings I have attended with Gordon Brown and David Milliband suggest that the Government is trying its best to persuade the Sri Lankan government to stop killing innocent Tamils. But we can't wait much longer before the sanctions above are enacted."

Croydon Tamil leader Patrick Ratnaraja said: "I am deeply concerned about the ongoing situation in Sri Lanka.

"The long, protracted, cruel war in Sri Lanka has been savage in the last three years, taking the lives of more than 10,000.

"In the last two months alone, with a loss of nearly 2,500 lives and nearly 5,000 injured. A number of Tamil families in Croydon have lost friends and relatives in this conflict."

In a report produced on February 19, Human Rights Watch said: "Sri Lankan forces are shelling hospitals and so-called safe zones and slaughtering the civilians there. This 'war' must stop.

"In the last two weeks there has been a section of United Nations Security Council that has been pressing for an immediate ceasefire.

"The UN Secretary General has called only for a cessation of hostilities and is yet to call for a ceasefire.

"My hope is politicians from all parties will ask the British Government to put pressure on the Sri Lankan government to stop this meaningless war."

Load-Date: March 3, 2010

Croydon Tamils count cost of Sri Lanka war

End of Document

Sri Lanka warns Western sanctions can stoke ethnic conflict

Agence France Presse -- English

May 29, 2008 Thursday 11:06 PM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 526 words

Dateline: WASHINGTON, May 29 2008

Body

Sri Lanka called on Western powers Thursday to be wary of imposing sanctions for its alleged human rights violations, warning that the action could worsen the island's long-running ethnic conflict.

The United States and the European Union have withheld various aid programs and are debating whether to withdraw special trade benefits from Sri Lanka amid concerns the human rights situation has deteriorated since the government pulled out of a Norwegian-brokered truce with the **Tamil Tigers** in January.

"It really is necessary to have sympathy for and understanding of the problems of a developing country that is grappling with terrorism," Sri Lanka's minister of international trade G.L. Peiris said in Washington.

"And to cut off resources, to threaten to withdraw trade benefits, GSP (General System of Preference) and so on -- all of that is unhelpful because that will only mean the dissemination of poverty, deprivation and adversity," he told AFP.

Peiris said under such sanctions and other pressures on "a democratic government pitted against terrorism, you can't possibly prevail."

Peiris was in Washington for talks with US officials and to woo US investors to set up shop in Sri Lanka's eastern province, where Tamil Tiger rebels were removed from enclaves after heavy fighting last year.

Sri Lanka's President Mahinda Rajapakse vowed this week to press on with a military campaign to crush the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), who have been fighting for a homeland since 1972.

Expressing concern over the rights violations and the raging civil war, the US State Department said Thursday that there was no military solution to the ethnic conflict, and emphasized the need for a political settlement.

"We have said repeatedly that there is no military solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka and there needs to be a political solution," said Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Evan Feigenbaum.

"So we are encouraging everybody not least the government to pursue a political solution," Feigenbaum said.

Washington considers the **LTTE** as a terrorist group.

Sri Lanka warns Western sanctions can stoke ethnic conflict

Sri Lanka was thrown out of the UN's Human Rights Council this month, with the watchdog group Human Rights Watch even branding them as one of the world's worst perpetrators of "disappearances" and abductions.

According to the New York-based group, at least 1,500 people "disappeared" between 2006 and 2007 -- mostly ethnic Tamils living in the Sinhalese-majority island's restive north and east.

Peiris cited 60 indictments sent out recently by the office of Sri Lanka's attorney general seeking criminal prosecution on suspected rights abusers, as well as Colombo's action to halt the conscription of child soldiers among paramilitary troops.

If the Western powers pulled back GSP preferential duty-free privileges from Sri Lanka, he said, "then hundreds of thousands of poor people are going to be thrown out of employment.

"It is not going to be a measure directed against the government as 65 to 70 percent of garment factories is situated in the rural sector and people working on garment factories are women who have become breadwinners of families," he said.

Load-Date: May 30, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lanka fears more bombings as bus toll hits 26

Agence France Presse -- English

April 26, 2008 Saturday 8:11 AM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 499 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, April 26 2008

Body

The death toll from a bus blast outside Colombo rose to 26 on Saturday as Sri Lanka warned of more indiscriminate attacks against civilians while security forces remained locked in combat against Tamil rebels.

President Mahinda Rajapakse said Friday's blast was the work of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) guerrillas who are resisting a major military campaign in the north of the island.

The president in a statement warned that the rebels could resort to further indiscriminate attacks and urged residents to exercise more caution.

A powerful time-bomb ripped through an overcrowded bus, blowing off its roof, as it pulled out of the Piliyandala terminal into rush-hour traffic on Friday on the outskirts of the capital.

"Two more passengers died in hospital and the number of people remaining in hospital this morning is 64," a police spokesman said.

Grief-stricken relatives gathered outside two hospitals to claim the dead from the explosion on the bus, which was jammed with office workers and schoolchildren returning from private classes.

Among those killed were a 10-year-old boy, a Buddhist monk and eight **women**.

"The president deplored the **LTTE** bomb attack on a packed bus in Piliyandala, saying terrorists had once again resorted to killing innocent civilians in the face of heavy setbacks in the battlefield," Rajapakse's office said.

The bombing was the "latest in a series of indiscriminate attacks aimed at civilians," Rajapakse said in the statement, appealing to the public to be more vigilant and to help troops to foil the "destructive plans" of the rebels.

A police spokesman said they expected the Tigers to try to carry out more attacks against civilians as military pressure mounts against them in the north of the country.

Sri Lanka fears more bombings as bus toll hits 26

Three similar explosions in February killed 34 and wounded over 90 bus passengers, while 28 were killed in another bus blast in January. Authorities have been warning passengers to exercise caution when using public transport.

The latest attack came as fierce fighting continued between security forces and Tamil Tiger rebels in the north of the country, where both sides were reported to have suffered heavy casualties.

Sri Lanka's army chief, Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka, in remarks published Saturday, vowed to step up pressure on the mini-state of the **Tamil Tigers** in the north.

Fonseka in an interview with the privately-run Island newspaper denied media reports that security forces lost over 150 soldiers in a major confrontation with the Tigers on Wednesday and insisted the losses were far smaller.

The defence ministry had claimed killing over 100 Tigers in Wednesday's battle while the rebels too said they killed over 100 government soldiers. Both are known to play down their own casualties and exaggerate those of the other.

The rebels have been fighting to carve out an independent homeland for the Tamil minority since 1972. Tens of thousands of people have died on both sides in the conflict in the Sinhalese-majority nation.

Load-Date: April 27, 2008

18 hurt in Sri Lanka rail bombing: officials

Agence France Presse -- English

June 4, 2008 Wednesday 4:17 AM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 336 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, June 4 2008

Body

At least 18 people were wounded Wednesday in a rush-hour bomb attack on a packed train just outside Sri Lanka's capital, officials said.

The bomb exploded between Colombo's Wellawatte and Dehiwela areas when the train was rolling past, police spokesman Ranjith Gunasekera said.

"Eighteen civilians, 15 males and three females, who suffered minor injuries have already been admitted to the nearby Kalubowila hospital," the defence ministry said.

"The train was packed. There were about 1,500 passengers, mostly office workers travelling from Panadura (south of Colombo) to the city," the train's driver, S.K. Jayawardene, told an AFP photographer at the scene.

"All those injured were in the second carriage behind the engine," Jayawardene said.

Police commandos at the scene told AFP that the bomb, which weighed around five kilogrammes (11 pounds), had been laid on a stretch of track parallel to where the train was passing.

"It is believed that the bomb had been triggered to target the Colombo-bound and highly crowded passenger train," the defence ministry said.

Colombo has been hit by a string of recent bombings, with officials blaming Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Last month, a bomb aboard a crowded commuter train killed 11 people during the evening rush-hour just outside Colombo.

Sri Lanka's defence ministry did not say who was responsible for Wednesday's attack.

There was no immediate comment from the rebels, who are fighting to carve out a separate Tamil homeland in the north and east of the ethnic Sinhalese-majority island.

Fighting has escalated in Sri Lanka since the start of the year, when the government pulled out of a Norwegian-brokered truce with the Tamil Tigers.

18 hurt in Sri Lanka rail bombing: officials

Since then, both sides have traded allegations that each others' forces are targeting civilians -- whether it be Tamil bombers operating in the south or army commandos operating inside the rebel-held north.

Sri Lanka's war with the Tamil rebels, who staged their first attacks in 1972, has left tens of thousands of people dead.

Load-Date: June 5, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lankan rebels shoot dead 19 civilians: military

Agence France Presse -- English

February 10, 2009 Tuesday 4:49 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 559 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 10 2009

Body

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger guerrillas on Tuesday shot dead 19 civilians and wounded 75 others fleeing territory still under rebel control, the military said.

Survivors of the attack who arrived at a military post told how the Tiger fighters had fired on a group of 1,000 people trying to cross the frontlines to safety, spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

"The civilians came to an army position carrying the dead and the wounded, who had gunshot injuries," Nanayakkara said. Twelve men, five women and two children had been killed.

The government says 25,000 non-combatants have already escaped this month from the rebels, who are struggling to keep up their decades-long armed campaign for an independent Tamil homeland.

The attack came a day after a female Tiger suicide bomber killed 30 people at a centre for displaced civilians, in what Sri Lankan authorities said was another attempt to stop people from leaving the rebels' shrinking territory.

But thousands of Tamils are crossing the frontlines in the north of the island each day, the government has said, as the army pushes on with a massive offensive to crush the Tigers after over three decades of unrest.

The defence ministry said government forces on Tuesday kept up attacks against the rebel holdouts, with 27 of them killed.

Foreign Secretary Palitha Kohona said the Colombo government hoped those non-combatants escaping the fighting would be able to return to their homes within about a year after the war zone is swept for mines.

The International Committee of the Red Cross on Tuesday evacuated 240 patients from a make-shift hospital in the rebel-held part of Mullaittivu district, a spokeswoman said.

Sri Lanka accuses the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) -- as the rebels are formally known -- of holding the civilians as "human shields."

Sri Lankan rebels shoot dead 19 civilians: military

Colombo says the number of civilians trapped by the conflict is now less than 100,000, though UN agencies recently placed it as high as 250,000.

"What we are seeing is that more people are coming over to our side," Nanayakkara said. "The Tigers have also been firing mortars at the routes taken by the civilians, but still they want to escape from the fighting."

Nanayakkara said 10 civilians were among the 30 people killed in Monday's suicide attack, which was condemned by the United Nations and the United States.

The US embassy here called the attack an "apparent effort by the LTTE to discourage Tamils from leaving the conflict area."

Amnesty International also denounced the bombing but urged the government not to retaliate.

"The use of such attacks by one party to an armed conflict does not excuse unlawful attacks in response," the group's Sri Lanka specialist Yolanda Foster said in a statement.

The Tigers have issued no response to the latest violence, and no independent verification was available as journalists, aid groups and international observers are banned from independently reporting from the area.

Amnesty said the government's restrictions made it impossible to know what was happening on the ground.

"In a war with no witnesses, it is the civilians who pay the price for both parties' disregard for international humanitarian law," it said.

Colombo has accused aid workers, diplomats and journalists of being supportive of the Tamil Tigers, who now only control an area of less than 100 square kilometres (38 square miles).

Load-Date: February 11, 2009

Sri Lanka braces for bloodier Tiger battles

Agence France Presse -- English

February 15, 2009 Sunday 4:37 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 706 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 15 2009

Body

Sri Lanka's government hoped Tamil Tiger rebels could be defeated in days, but both sides are now warning bloodier battles may lie ahead -- and civilians are likely to pay a heavy price.

Security forces have cornered the retreating Tigers in the north of the island after over three bloody decades of fighting, the rebels' de facto state has been smashed and Sri Lanka's army says there are only 700 guerrillas left.

Only last month it seemed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), or Tamil Tigers, and their often brutal campaign for an independent homeland were all but defeated.

But like on previous occasions when the guerrillas appeared to be on their knees, the government says the Tigers are putting up strong resistance -- including using civilians as "human shields."

They have launched ferocious counter-attacks since the beginning of this month in a bid to regain some of their lost territory and save their remaining heavy weaponry, defence secretary Gotabaya Rajapakse said.

"There were very heavy attacks from the first to the fourth of this month. We suffered casualties," Rajapakse told the Sinhalese-language Sunday Lankadeepa weekly.

"But we repulsed the attacks successfully."

The ever-bullish Rajapakse, who is President Mahinda Rajapakse's younger brother, said the government believed that Tiger supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran, 54, had lost his ability to launch major attacks.

But he said Prabhakaran would use civilians trapped in the war zone as his "final trump."

In the latest incident targeting civilians, suspected Tiger rebels lobbed a grenade and opened fire at a bus transporting refugees out of the conflict area on Saturday, killing one woman and wounding 13, the defence ministry said.

Claims by either side cannot be verified as human rights groups, diplomats and independent journalists are not allowed to report freely from the conflict area.

Sri Lanka braces for bloodier Tiger battles

But as security forces encircle the rebels in a 100-square-kilometre (38-square-mile) coastal jungle area -- less than two percent of land they controlled two years ago -- concern has mounted for non-combatants.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has said that "hundreds" of civilians had been killed and many more wounded since fighting intensified from January.

It has not said who was responsible for the civilian deaths.

"We are now entering the toughest phase of fighting because it is done in an area where there are lots of civilians," said retired army brigadier general Vipul Boteju.

"The civilians are the last weapon in the Tiger armoury."

A serving general who declined to be named agreed the fighting would be harder from now on because of the heavy concentration of civilians trapped in the conflict area.

"The Tigers are slowing us down by holding civilians with them," he said.

There have been calls, led by the US and Britain, asking the Tigers to allow civilians free passage out of the conflict zone, but the guerrillas have insisted that men, women and children were staying of their own accord.

However, the ICRC has warned that a "humanitarian catastrophe" was unfolding. It provoked calls from the United Nations, US and Britain for a limited truce which was swiftly rejected by Colombo.

"What we are asking the international community is to pressure the Tigers to free the civilians," Sri Lanka's foreign secretary Palitha Kohona said. "The Tigers are using a human shield."

Even beyond the end of the conventional military campaign, Colombo knows Tamil guerrillas will continue to menace the island.

"Just because we capture territory that does not mean the end of the war," Rajapakse said. "The LTTE will not give up easily. For over 30 years they have grown here and abroad. They can start again.

"My next step is to bring stability and then consolidate peace."

Most analysts believe that the Tigers are likely to go back to the classic guerrilla tactics they adopted after they formed the LTTE in 1972.

Earlier this month a female Tamil Tiger suicide bomber killed 30 people and wounded 75 at a camp for civilians who had fled the war zone.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said the authorities may have to maintain tight security and road blocks in the country for another two years even after the Tigers are crushed.

Load-Date: February 15, 2009

2 days of shelling on Sri Lankan hospital kills 11

Associated Press International

February 2, 2009 Monday 10:30 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 610 words

Byline: By VIJAY JOSHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Artillery shells slammed into an overcrowded hospital for the second day in Sri Lanka's northern war zone, bringing the death toll to at least 11 people, officials said Monday as the army claimed it found an abandoned luxury hide-out of the elusive rebel leader.

The attacks on the hospital intensified concern for the fate of some 250,000 civilians trapped in the shrinking war zone where the **Tamil Tigers** have been boxed in. The Sri Lankan army believes it is on the verge of destroying the rebels and ending one of the longest running civil wars in the world.

In the chaos of war, where claims and counterclaims have become impossible to verify independently, the **Tamil Tigers** said they killed 150 soldiers and injured more than 300 since Sunday. The army denied it lost any men.

"There is no truth to that. There were small confrontations, but we didn't suffer any casualties," military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara told The Associated Press.

The fighting is taking place in Puthukkudiyiruppu area, where three artillery barrages slammed into the pediatrics and **women's** wards of the Puthukkudiyiruppu hospital on Sunday, the Red Cross said.

The shells, which also hit a kitchen and a chapel, killed nine patients Sunday and wounded 20, Red Cross spokeswoman Sarasi Wijeratne said Monday.

Kandasamy Tharmakulasingham, a local health official, confirmed the attacks, and said more shells hit the hospital Monday morning, killing two more people and wounding six others.

Sarasi and Tharmakulasingham couldn't say who fired the shells.

But Dr. Thurairajah Varatharajah, the top government health official in the area, said two of the attacks appeared to have come from the army.

He said the shelling caused extensive damage to the overcrowded hospital, one of the last functioning health institutions inside rebel-held territory,

The U.N. confirmed the hospital was struck Sunday by artillery shells throughout the day.

2 days of shelling on Sri Lankan hospital kills 11

"It seems to have struck the pediatric ward, a 30-bed ward filled to overflowing," U.N. spokesman Gordon Weiss said. He did not cast blame on either side.

Nanayakkara said the army was not responsible for the attacks and accused the rebels, formally known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, of "desperately" firing artillery shells at random.

He said troops discovered Sunday an underground three-room apartment in Vishwamadu village, fitted with a luxury bathroom, high quality furnishings, a generator and electrical appliances.

"We believe it belongs to **LTTE** leader (Velupillai) Prabhakaran," he said. "With the luxury items which we have come across there, it definitely has to be the leader's house."

The Tigers did not immediately comment on the report, but claimed they pushed back army troops and tanks in Puthukkudiyiruppu, killing 150 soldiers and wounding more than 350, on Sunday, S. Puleedevan, a top rebel official, said in a statement.

Independent reports from the war zone are not available because journalists and aid groups are barred from the area.

Aid groups say the fighting has spawned a humanitarian crisis, exacerbated by the strikes on the hospital.

The Red Cross said more than 500 patients were in the hospital, and the wounded continued to arrive despite the afternoon attack on the facility.

The hospital is so crowded that many patients were forced to sleep on mattresses in the corridor, it said.

The rebels have been fighting since 1983 for a separate homeland for ethnic minority Tamils in the north and east after decades of marginalization by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the civil war.

Associated Press writer Ravi Nessman contributed to this report.

Load-Date: February 3, 2009

Civilians flee war zone as Sri Lanka snubs Britain

Agence France Presse -- English

February 13, 2009 Friday 11:04 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 581 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 13 2009

Body

Thousands more civilians fled Sri Lanka's war zone, the defence ministry said Friday, as Colombo angrily rejected Britain's appointment of a special envoy to address the island's humanitarian crisis.

Men, women and children from the minority ethnic Tamil community crossed the front lines in the district of Mullaitivu where the army has cornered holdout forces of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

"The people fled despite a series of barricades imposed by the LTTE to stall the civilian influx," the ministry said in a statement.

Official figures showed 37,420 people had crossed the front lines this year, with nearly 35,000 making the hazardous journey this month alone to seek shelter with security forces.

The government has accused the Tiger rebels of using civilians trapped by the fighting as "human shields" and of preventing them from leaving the area. The Red Cross says hundreds of non-combatants have already been killed.

The latest flight of civilians came as Britain said it had appointed former defence minister Des Browne as a special envoy to focus on the growing humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka.

The move by the former colonial power was swiftly condemned by Colombo.

"It is tantamount to an intrusion into Sri Lanka's internal affairs and is disrespectful to the country's statehood," Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama told AFP.

The minister warned of "major repercussions" for relations with Britain.

"There is no further discussion with London on the matter," Bogollagama said, after the British Foreign Office had said talks were ongoing to resolve the dispute.

The foreign ministry in a formal statement said the cabinet of ministers rejected the unilateral appointment.

Civilians flee war zone as Sri Lanka snubs Britain

"The government of Sri Lanka categorically states that this appointment is in contravention of the basic principles governing international relations and the requirement for consultation and reciprocity," the statement said.

A senior administration official noted that Japan, Sri Lanka's main aid donor, had bilateral consultations before appointing Yasushi Akashi as a special peace envoy in 2002.

"Japan gives us over 600 million dollars a year and yet they asked us before appointing Akashi," the official said. "The British give us less than six million dollars a year and they think they own us."

Sri Lanka's antipathy towards any international involvement was underscored when demonstrators shouted slogans outside the British High Commission (embassy) earlier this week denouncing what they called foreign interference.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown's office said Browne, who left office last October, would work with all sides.

The government, which says it is on the brink of crushing the rebels, has resisted international calls to halt its offensive against the Tigers, who have fought since 1972 for the creation of an independent Tamil homeland.

On Thursday, Sri Lanka set up a new safe zone for non-combatants along a 12-kilometre (7.5-mile) stretch of coastline, effectively scrapping a smaller designated no-fire area.

Sri Lanka has resisted calls for a "no-fire period", amid claims from relief agencies that a "humanitarian catastrophe" was unfolding in the island's war zone, where tens of thousands of civilians are trapped.

Britain and other governments as well as rights groups have asked **Tamil Tigers** to allow civilians free movement.

Britain banned the Tigers as a foreign terrorist group in 2001, five years before an European Union-wide ban on the Tigers.

Load-Date: February 14, 2009

MORE CIVILIANS KILLED IN SRI LANKA FIGHTING

States News Service

February 10, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 States News Service

Length: 590 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: NEW YORK, NY

Body

The following information was released by Amnesty International USA:

More civilians are being killed in north-east Sri Lanka, as the fighting continues between government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

A **female** suicide bomber is reported to have killed 28 people and wounded dozens of others on Monday, when she blew herself up at a checkpoint for civilians fleeing the conflict zone. According to the Sri Lankan military, the woman was dressed as a civilian.

The attack happened in the Vishwamadu area of Mullaitivu district, as soldiers searched civilians trying to enter a government-declared safety zone. Thousands are said to be trying to cross to safety every day.

The **LTTE** have a long history of using suicide bombers and have, in the past, targeted civilians. They have not assumed responsibility for this attack.

Such tactics violate the international legal prohibition on perfidious attacks and expose civilians to increased danger.

"Blurring the distinction between civilians and combatants means that thousands of ordinary people, desperate to flee the conflict area, are at greater risk of reprisals and getting caught in crossfire," said Yolanda Foster, Amnesty International's Sri Lanka expert.

"The **Tamil Tigers** must immediately and publicly disavow the use of tactics such as suicide bombers disguised as civilians."

Yolanda Foster added that it was important to remember that the use of such attacks by one party to an armed conflict did not excuse unlawful attacks in response.

"The Sri Lankan security forces must still make sure that their actions are directed against military targets and not civilians," said Yolanda Foster.

There is reported to have been ongoing shelling in the government-declared safety zone an area 7km long and 4km wide, declared by the government on 21 January.

MORE CIVILIANS KILLED IN SRI LANKA FIGHTING

According to information received by Amnesty International, 48 people were killed and 174 injured during heavy shelling on 6 February. Mahtalan, Thevipuram, Suthantirapuram, Moongilaru, Udayarhaddu and Vallipunam were shelled all day. Amnesty International cannot confirm where the shells originated.

On Saturday, 126 civilians including 61 patients were killed and 238 persons were fatally injured, when shelling was directed on the Puthukudiyirupu area. Some shells fell on Ponnampalam Memorial hospital killing the warded patients there. The area was also subjected to aerial bombing and cluster bombs fired from cannons.

Shelling and cannon firing was also directed on the people displaced from Suthanthirapuram area, resulting in the death of 80 civilians and fatally injuring 198 persons.

Hundreds of civilians have now lost their lives. The situation for families trapped in between the fighting parties is horrific. Both sides should stop their operations long enough to allow the civilians to leave and aid to reach those who cant leave, said Yolanda Foster.

The government has restricted media access to conflict areas making it impossible to verify accounts of what is happening on the ground.

The BBC World Service said on Monday that it was suspending the provision of FM radio programming to Sri Lankan national broadcaster SLBC, because it was selectively leaving out programmes and news reports in English, Sinhala and Tamil.

According to the BBC, parts of programmes have repeatedly been blotted out with music. Sometimes whole programmes have been blocked.

"In a war with no witnesses, it is the civilians who pay the price for both parties' disregard for international humanitarian law," said Yolanda Foster.

Load-Date: February 11, 2009

Guardian Weekly: International news: Shells kill civilians in 'final' Tamil battle

Guardian Weekly

February 6, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

*The***GuardianWeekly**

Section: Pg. 4

Length: 658 words

Byline: Randeep Ramesh

Body

Five artillery shells struck the children's ward of a hospital in rebel-held territory in Sri Lanka on Monday, leaving at least nine people dead and 20 injured, according to aid agencies. More than 250,000 civilians were caught in the battle zone as government forces and rebels edged towards the final battle after 25 years of civil war. The military claims that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) is down to its last 600 fighters.

Sri Lanka's president said that the army was on the brink of crushing the Tamil Tiger movement. "The strongholds of terror once believed to be invincible . . . have fallen in rapid succession, bringing the final elimination of terror from our motherland," President Mahinda Rajapaksa said in a message to mark the country's 61st independence day on Wednesday.

The destruction at the hospital, witnessed by aid workers, highlights how bloody the fighting has become. The first shell hit the hospital in Puthukkudiyiruppu, known as PTK, last Sunday, killing two people and injuring five, the Red Cross said. The UN said the attacks continued and its 15 staff and 81 family members had taken refuge in bunkers. The dead included a four-year-old girl, a relative of a UN staff worker.

Gordon Weiss, a spokesman for the UN in Colombo, said the hospital was one of the last functioning health institutions in rebel-held territory, with beds for 500 patients. He could not say why anybody would target it.

"Our office is next to the hospital in PTK," Weiss said. "The hospital is the main refuge for people in the area. It is overflowing with kids and **women**. We are very concerned as both sides are using artillery. The last communication that we had from our staff members on the ground was that they were still counting the dead."

The Red Cross called on both sides to stop shelling, saying in a statement that "wounded and sick people, medical personnel and medical facilities are all protected by international humanitarian law. Under no circumstance may they be directly attacked."

The country's defence secretary, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, told Sky News the hospital should not be there, but denied the army had targeted it. "No hospital should operate in the area," he said. "That is why [we asked] all the patients to move."

Guardian Weekly: International news: Shells kill civilians in 'final' Tamil battle

The death toll has been largely undocumented. The Sri Lankan government has barred journalists from the area controlled by the army. On Monday the Associated Press said it had been given images from the war zone by independent observers who wished to remain anonymous for fear of government retaliation.

One from the town of Udakattu, in a government "safe zone", showed a family apparently killed in their sleep by artillery in January. The mother and father lay dead on mats on the floor, still cradling their two children between them. Other pictures were of wounded children.

Dr Thurairajah Varatharajah, the top government health official in the area, estimated that more than 300 civilians had been killed in recent fighting.

The army has denied killing civilians in its attempt to "eradicate" the rebels. The defence secretary blamed the **Tamil Tigers**. "The **LTTE** is trapped," said Rajapaksa. "They are firing shells everywhere . . . these have fallen on civilians.

"We were accused of shelling homes and the proof was that the roof was missing. But it was the **LTTE** who had taken the roofs off the houses. There were no blast marks on the walls."

Last month a former US deputy attorney general, Bruce Fein, a long-time supporter of Tamil causes, said there was enough evidence to prosecute both the defence secretary and Sri Lanka's army chief under the United States's Genocide Accountability Act. Sri Lanka's defence secretary is a US citizen and the army chief holds an American green card.

The rebels have fought since 1983 for a separate homeland after decades of marginalisation by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the civil war.

Load-Date: February 8, 2009

End of Document

Lankan President vows to flush LTTE out of north

UNI (United News of India)

February 4, 2008 Monday 10:36 AM EST

Copyright 2008 UNI All Rights Reserved

Length: 423 words

Byline: Report from UNI brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 4 -- Claiming that the Tamil Tiger rebels were 'receiving an unprecedented defeat,' Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa today vowed the government troops would flush out the Tamil Tiger rebels from their Wanni heartlands in the north in the near future.

President Rajapaksa made these observations in his address to the nation during the 60th Independence Day celebrations here at the Galle Face green in Colombo this morning amidst tight security.

"We will liberate the north from the clutches of terrorism and also provide a political solution and bring political freedom to the people there," President Rajapaksa said minutes before the military parade that showcased the military might in terms of men and materials.

Claiming that defeating terrorism and the development of the country were the two challenges the island nation was faced with, President said that his government has already 'liberated' the large eastern province from the **LTTE** and 'confined' them to two districts in the north within two years.

"During the last two years, however, we faced these challenge squarely without avoiding it. Our security forces are today achieving victories against terrorism unprecedented in the history," President Rajapaksa said.

Sri Lanka marks its Independence Day today with unprecedented security arrangements amidst fears that Tamil Tiger rebels may repeat their deadly suicide bombings after weekend attacks left at least 34 dead and over 150 wounded.

A suspected **female** suicide bomber of the Tamil Tiger rebels blew herself up at a crowded railway station in the heart of the capital city of Colombo yesterday afternoon killing 11 people and wounding over 100 on the eve of the 60th Independence celebrations.

Commenting on his efforts to workout a political solution, Mr Rajapaksa said that any solution should be practically possible and cannot be experimental.

"We cannot experiment with solutions when so much blood has been shed and tens of thousands of lives have been lost. That is why we selected a solution which can be implemented and about which we have experience," President Rajapaksa stated.

He said that his coalition government has established new relations with Arab Emirates and Buddhist states and said their assistance have been beneficial to the development of the country.

Lankan President vows to flush LTTE out of north

"As a policy we do not have cosmetic and shallow associations with the western countries. Our relations with them are true and real," President Rajapaksa added.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from UNI.

-581372

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

Load-Date: May 4, 2008

End of Document

Suicide bombing kills 12 at Sri Lanka train station

Agence France Presse -- English

February 3, 2008 Sunday 4:33 PM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 631 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 3 2008

Body

A suicide bomber attacked a train at Colombo's main railway station Sunday, killing at least 12 and injuring 100 others on the eve of Sri Lanka's independence day celebrations, officials said.

The blast near a suburban train as it arrived at the Fort terminal came just hours after six people were hurt in a hand grenade attack at Sri Lanka's main zoo on the outskirts of Colombo, prompting authorities to boost security.

Fearing more such attacks, the government put off by three days Monday's opening of a public exhibition marking Independence Day, officials said, adding that it was due to "security considerations."

A police spokesman said the train attack had been carried out by a suspected female operative of the Tamil Tigers, the rebel group fighting to carve out a separate homeland in the ethnic Sinhalese-majority island nation.

"The bombing has all the hallmarks of the Tigers," a police officer at the scene said. "The head of the woman suicide bomber was found on a platform."

The officer said initial reports indicated that the woman had blown herself up aboard the train, but forensic experts later determined that she had carried out the attack on the platform as passengers were exiting the train.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, but defence officials said they believed it to be the work of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The United States, one of Sri Lanka's main financial backers, condemned the spate of bombings and asked all sides in the decades-old conflict to ensure the safety of civilians.

"Only a political solution to the country's conflict that responds to the aspirations of Sri Lanka's Tamil and other communities offers a way out of the current cycle of escalating violence," the US embassy here said in a statement.

A spokeswoman at Colombo National Hospital, Pushpa Soysa, said seven people were dead on arrival and five others later succumbed to their injuries. Among the dead were four boys from a school baseball team and their coach.

Suicide bombing kills 12 at Sri Lanka train station

Two young girls aged 12 and 13 were also killed, Soysa said.

A total of 101 others were still receiving treatment, Soysa said. There were no foreigners among the casualties, hospital sources added.

Earlier, the grenade blast at the aviary of the Dehiwala zoo caused panic among visitors, but police moved in reinforcements and urged calm. The zoo was shut indefinitely for visitors, officials said.

There also was no claim of responsibility for that attack.

The two explosions came a day after a powerful bomb ripped through a bus in the north-central town of Dambulla, killing 20 passengers and wounding 68.

Sri Lankan police and security forces have been on high alert ahead of Monday's celebrations to mark the country's 60th anniversary of independence from Britain.

President Mahinda Rajapakse condemned the bus bombing and urged Sri Lankans not to be provoked by what he called a "savage attack" by the **Tamil Tigers**.

The string of three attacks in two days came amid fresh fighting between government forces and Tamil rebels across the embattled north at the weekend that left dozens dead, according to the defence ministry.

Troops backed by heavy artillery fire killed at least 44 suspected rebels on Saturday, while only two soldiers were killed, the ministry said in a statement.

Casualty claims from both sides cannot be independently verified.

Since the beginning of this year, at least 908 rebels and 36 soldiers have been killed in heavy fighting, according to defence ministry figures. At least 137 civilians have also died during the same period, according to both sides.

The government in January pulled out of a tattered truce with the rebels, who have been fighting for a separate Tamil homeland since 1972 in a conflict that has left tens of thousands dead.

Load-Date: February 4, 2008

Army closes in on Sri Lanka rebels; War zone Shelling kills 11 in hospital

The Telegraph-Journal (New Brunswick)

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 CanWest Interactive, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publications Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS;NEWS; Pg. A7

Length: 598 words

Byline: Vijay Joshi THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Body

Artillery shells slammed into an overcrowded hospital for the second day in Sri Lanka's northern war zone, bringing the death toll to at least 11 people, officials said Monday as the army claimed it found an abandoned luxury hide-out of the elusive rebel leader.

The attacks on the hospital intensified concern for the fate of some 250,000 civilians trapped in the shrinking war zone where the **Tamil Tigers** have been boxed in. The Sri Lankan army believes it is on the verge of destroying the rebels and ending one of the longest running civil wars in the world.

In the chaos of war, where claims and counterclaims have become impossible to verify independently, the **Tamil Tigers** said they killed 150 soldiers and injured more than 300 since Sunday. The army denied it lost any men.

"There is no truth to that. There were small confrontations, but we didn't suffer any casualties," military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara told The Associated Press.

The fighting is taking place in Puthukkudiyiruppu area, where three artillery barrages slammed into the pediatrics and **women's** wards of the Puthukkudiyiruppu hospital on Sunday, the Red Cross said.

The shells, which also hit a kitchen and a chapel, killed nine patients Sunday and wounded 20, Red Cross spokeswoman Sarasi Wijeratne said Monday.

Kandasamy Tharmakulasingham, a local health official, confirmed the attacks, and said more shells hit the hospital Monday morning, killing two more people and wounding six others.

Sarasi and Tharmakulasingham couldn't say who fired the shells.

But Dr. Thurairajah Varatharajah, the top government health official in the area, said two of the attacks appeared to have come from the army.

He said the shelling caused extensive damage to the overcrowded hospital, one of the last functioning health institutions inside rebel-held territory,

The UN confirmed the hospital was struck Sunday by artillery shells throughout the day.

"It seems to have struck the pediatric ward, a 30-bed ward filled to overflowing," UN spokesman Gordon Weiss said. He did not cast blame on either side.

Army closes in on Sri Lanka rebels; War zone Shelling kills 11 in hospital

Nanayakkara said the army was not responsible for the attacks and accused the rebels, formally known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, of "desperately" firing artillery shells at random.

He said troops discovered Sunday an underground three-room apartment in Vishwamadu village, fitted with a luxury bathroom, high quality furnishings, a generator and electrical appliances.

"We believe it belongs to **LTTE** leader (Velupillai) Prabhakaran," he said. "With the luxury items which we have come across there, it definitely has to be the leader's house."

The Tigers did not immediately comment on the report, but claimed they pushed back army troops and tanks in Puthukkudiyiruppu, killing 150 soldiers and wounding more than 350, on Sunday, S. Puleedevan, a top rebel official, said in a statement.

Independent reports from the war zone are not available because journalists and aid groups are barred from the area.

Aid groups say the fighting has spawned a humanitarian crisis, exacerbated by the strikes on the hospital.

The Red Cross said more than 500 patients were in the hospital, and the wounded continued to arrive despite the afternoon attack on the facility.

The hospital is so crowded that many patients were forced to sleep on mattresses in the corridor, it said.

The rebels have been fighting since 1983 for a separate homeland for ethnic minority Tamils in the north and east after decades of marginalization by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the civil war.

Load-Date: February 3, 2009

Bus bombing kills 24 as Sri Lanka ceasefire ends

Suna News Agency

January 16, 2008 Wednesday 4:38 PM EST

Copyright 2008 U.P.I.
All Rights Reserved
ARABIA 2000
Copyright 2008 by Sudan News Agency Distributed by UPI



Length: 656 words

Body

COLOMBO,

16/01/2008 ,(AFP) - At least 24 civilians were killed and scores wounded Wednesday in a suspected Tamil Tiger bomb attack on a crowded bus in southern Sri Lanka coinciding with the end of the island's ceasefire.

The defence ministry said the bus packed with schoolchildren was hit by a powerful Claymore-type mine -- a bomb packed with explosives and ball-bearings. It also said the bus was shot at after the blast.

With the island sliding back into all-out war, Nordic truce monitors packed their bags and made a renewed appeal for the government and the Tigers to return to talks -- arguing that neither can win the decades-old war.

But Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse said the bus bombing was precisely the kind of "act of savagery" that justified his decision to abandon a Norwegian-brokered 2002 truce.

The ceasefire officially ends at midnight Wednesday.

According to the defence ministry, **Tamil Tigers** "exploded a Claymore mine targeting the bus and subsequently opened fire at the survivors."

More than 60 people were wounded in the incident, which took place at Welikada, 230 kilometres (150 miles) southeast of the capital Colombo.

Eight were reported to be in critical condition, with many **women** and children among the casualties. The government appealed for blood donors and ordered schools in the province to close for three days.

The military said an army vehicle in the area was hit in a second bomb attack, and a villager also shot dead -- blaming the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), who are known to occasionally strike in the far south of the island.

Bus bombing kills 24 as Sri Lanka ceasefire ends

It also repeated its view that the rebels, who want to carve out a separate homeland for Tamils in the north and east of the ethnic Sinhalese-majority tropical island, were "a ruthless terrorist outfit."

The government withdrew from the ceasefire two weeks ago, arguing that there was no point in attempting to negotiate with "terrorists" and that the Tigers had merely used the ceasefire to smuggle in more weapons.

The Norwegian-led Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM), set up to keep an eye on the tattered truce, meanwhile closed down its operations.

"We are absolutely convinced that this complex conflict cannot be solved by military means," SLMM chief Lars Jon Solvberg told reporters hours before the 31-member Norwegian and Icelandic team were to leave the island.

"We have been hated over the past six years... But that's the nature of our job. We tried to be neutral in every single incident," said Solvberg, a retired Norwegian army general.

He said his team was "disappointed" by the island's return to war, and that he hoped there would be a return to talks "sooner rather than later."

A statement from the United States embassy condemned Wednesday's bombing, but also pointedly called for both parties to hammer out a political solution.

Sri Lankan defence officials, however, are convinced they have the upper hand in the 36-year-old conflict, and have said peace will only be possible when they kill the LTTE's leaders and capture their northern mini-state.

A Sri Lankan soldier searches for explosives in Colombo

©AFP - Sanka VidanagamaThe attack also came amid an escalation in fighting in the north, with Colombo claiming it has killed 405 rebels since the start of the month against 20 soldiers killed. More fighting was reported Wednesday in the northeast.

The island's military began the New Year with a vow to crush the Tigers by June, and set a target to kill 3,000 guerrillas in the first six months of the year.

But casualty claims are almost impossible to verify, as Sri Lankan authorities routinely prevent journalists and diplomats from travelling to frontlines or the northern jungles controlled by the LTTE.

Both sides have accused each other of killing civilians, including children. Two months ago a Sri Lankan army commando unit operating behind rebel lines was accused of killing 11 schoolchildren in a Claymore attack on a bus.

A.SAFI

Load-Date: January 18, 2008

How to protect civilians

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

March 5, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 2271 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, March 5 -- After a conflict of more than a quarter of a century of terrorism and civil war that killed 70,000 people, Sri Lankans finally think they have defeated the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), perhaps the world's most murderous terrorist organization.

Why and how a small country of 21 million succeeded in defeating such a group where much bigger powers have failed is a good lesson for those who study terrorism and counterinsurgency. These lessons are primarily political and legal, but also military and diplomatic, and they include both successes and pitfalls in a small country's road to peace and development. Diverse population Sri Lanka, an Indian Ocean country the size of West Virginia, has a diverse population - 81 per cent is Sinhalese, most of them Buddhist; some 11 per cent are Tamils, who are generally Buddhist, either immigrants from India or native. Eight per cent of the population are Muslims. As is so often the case in the former British Empire, the native group most adept to Western education and adaptable to British interests - in this case the Tamils - were disproportionately represented among the educated at the time of independence (1948), and thus resented by the majority. Free elections repeatedly brought to power Sinhalese populists/socialists. Tamils were pushed aside and the majority language declared the only official one. The result was, and to some extent remains, Tamil resentment and demands for autonomy, at least in the Northern (Jaffna) and Eastern (Trincomalee) areas where they predominate. **LTTE** supporters Key to understanding why the **LTTE** lasted for so long and why India was involved in Sri Lanka on and off at various times is the fact that some 60 million Tamils live in three Southern Indian States, primarily Tamil Nadu, and many of those support the **LTTE** out of ethnic solidarity. Equally, if not more, important, there is a large (ca.800,000) Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, mostly in Canada, the UK, Australia, the U.S., and SouthEast Asia. This diaspora is radicalised and, like most diasporas living in safety, more radical than co-nationals in the country of origin. It still provides the funds, propaganda support, and public relations vital to the **LTTE**s survival. The **LTTE** pretends to fight for a separate Tamil state (Tamil Eelam) in the Northern and Eastern parts of the island, and it has actually established a de facto state in those areas for almost a decade, complete with administration, courts, taxation, education, etc.- until it lost it all following the Sri Lankan Army (SLA) offensive since the beginning of 2008. What did that 'State' look like? "Though receiving considerable popular support, the **LTTE** regime was (is) a command state. It has always been a military outfit and the insurrectionary war situation hardly encouraged anything other than dictatorship, but Vellupillai Prabhakaran's personal proclivities and the veneration he received as a demi-god would have accentuated this characteristic. Command State meant (means) command economy. State enterprises in transport, restaurants, etc. augmented the returns from taxation and import duties. A critical dimension of its local resources was the supply of monies from the SL Government in Colombo, namely, salaries and pensions paid to a wide range of Tamil-speaking administrators, including health officials, who were employees of the central state." [1] To begin with, the **LTTE**, despite its claims and effective propaganda, does not represent the Tamils. It never submitted itself to elections; to the contrary, it is a quasi-cult terror group, subservient to the whims of one person, Prabhakaran. His

How to protect civilians

decisions, rather than any nationalist goal, send people to their death, train them for death, preferably from childhood, and have long murdered any moderate or non-violent Tamil politician in the country. In that, and many other respects, the LTTE are similar to other cult-like revolutionary terrorists, such as the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) of Abdullah Ocalan in Turkey and Abimael Guzman's Communist Party of Peru, a.k.a. Shining Path. Special units Compared to those, Stalin and Mao had and officially claimed fewer powers. To comprehend LTTE, imagine Jim Jones' Temple cult of Guyana in possession of a 'navy' and 'air force,' as well as (at its height) some 20,000 fanatical and armed zombie followers. Prabhakaran imposed a blood tax on the people under his control. Each family had to provide a son to the LTTE - a pattern condemned by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the UN. LTTE made every follower bear a cyanide pill (thus few 'Tigers' were ever captured) and established special units, such as the 'Black Tigers,' for murder and assassination. In fact, until the early 1990s, the LTTE led the world in suicide bombings, with victims including a President and many Ministers of Sri Lanka, as well as a former Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi (1991). Unsurprisingly, the UN, EU, U.S., and India all declared the LTTE a terrorist group. Still, in the rich West, pro-LTTE groups were allowed to collect funds (and occasional recruits), always illegally and under threat, usually under the pretext of 'freedom of expression' but, in places like Canada, for electoral considerations. The result was that for two decades the LTTE was one of the world richest terror groups, able to create its own 'navy' and 'air force' - two bad ideas turning against itself as it happened. That wealth and Prabhakaran's unlimited ambitions led the LTTE to establish a conventional military force, helped, officially and economically by the do-gooders from Norway - a wealthy country with overseas ambitions and best intentions, serving as a 'mediator' between Sri Lanka and the LTTE. It was precisely the Norwegian mediation that, for almost a decade, allowed the LTTE to establish its de facto state in the North and East and Prabhakaran to use that for creating his totalitarian 'state' there. Western donors With an economy based on tourism, rubber, and tea and heavily dependent on foreign aid, Sri Lanka was obviously vulnerable to terrorism, especially in regard to tourism - and to the influence and sensibilities of Western donors. The latter, as usual, are themselves 'sensitive' to the enormously effective, and wealthy, pro-LTTE Tamil diaspora and the international 'human rights' lobbies - such as AI and HRW. Each of those, over time and for its purposes, acted to prolong the conflict, protect the LTTE, and thus have more Sri Lankans killed. At no time is that deadly coalition's impact more obvious than now, when the LTTE is on its deathbed. By the end of 2007, the Sri Lankan electorate was tired of a war that never ended, of a de facto division of the country; and of the war's continuing when a major part of the LTTE, under a defecting leader (second in command to Prabhakaran, Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan, a.k.a. 'Karuna') was ready to cripple the 'Tigers.' He did so, and is now the official leader of Eastern region - and as a former 'Tiger' he effectively controls, legally or not, a key area. Under President Mahinda Rajapaksa, whose brother Gotabaya Rajapaksa is the Defense Minister, and under the very competent military leader Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka, the Government decided that the Norwegian-mediated 'peace process' only led to more terrorism from the LTTE, the de facto partition of the island, and no solution to the Tamil problem. The result was its formal withdrawal from the 'process,' its declaration of LTTE as a 'terrorist organisation,' and a serious military campaign aimed at the destruction of the 'Tigers' as an Armed Force. Starting last year, the SLA's better trained and armed elements - some 50,000 altogether - began a steady offensive against LTTE-controlled areas in the North and NorthWest (the east, following Karuna's defection, was already 'Tiger' free). By January 2009 Kilinochchi, Prabhakaran's 'capital,' and Mullaitivu, his last major stronghold, fell. From a height of over 7,000 square miles, the LTTE area of control shrank to some 30 square miles-all surrounded by the military, from land and sea. While there are conflicting views over Prabhakaran's fate, it is most likely he is still in that area - after all, he is a wanted man by the Interpol and most area countries. It is in this environment that the so-called 'human rights' NGOs and their political supporters are actively, whether willingly or not, supporting the survival of the LTTE. Trapped civilians Most sources, from AI to HRW, the Red Cross, and even Colombo, agree that some 200,000 or more civilians are trapped in the shrinking LTTE-controlled area. AI's Yolanda Foster admitted that "We just don't know what's been happening in the last few weeks in Sri Lanka.[2] Her HRW colleagues, based on the same information, condemned the Sri Lanka regime for "failing to distinguish between the trapped civilians and the rebels. "The Government, she noted, has launched "indiscriminate artillery attacks on civilians" who are trapped in the war zone, shelling hospitals and other designated humanitarian 'safe zones.' She also admitted that, "Cornered and desperate, the Tamil Tigers, have responded by using civilians as human shields and forcing others, including children, into service as fighters and porters on the battlefield." (3) If there are indeed some 200,000 or more civilians in the 30 square miles under LTTE control (that would make that area one of the most densely populated in the world, at 6.6 people per square mile), how is the army going to separate them from the LTTE cadres? Can any army do that? Obviously not, which is why

How to protect civilians

the 'solution' advocated by the NGOs and, more logically, by the Tigers' propaganda machine in the West and Southern India, is a 'cease-fire,' ostensibly to allow the evacuation of civilians. That is why LTTE sympathizers are demonstrating in India, England, and Canada, ostensibly in favour of a cease fire - one that would allow the LTTE, once again, to escape final defeat, come back and, of course, repeat the circle again: civilian hostage taking, use, manipulation and indoctrination included, as well as rearming. We have seen this movie before, and many Sri Lankans, mostly Tamils, have paid with their lives for it. On the other hand, the Government intends to establish rehabilitation camps for Tamil refugees from Tiger controlled-areas - and impose security controls as well. Many of those refugees are traumatised by the LTTE and war conditions, but some, like a recent female suicide bomber disguised as a refugee, are infiltrators who have to be neutralised, which takes time and individual interrogations. The NGOs' answer to this common sense? War zone "The LTTE's grim practices are being exploited by the Government to justify its own atrocities. High-level statements have indicated that the ethnic Tamil population trapped in the war zone can be presumed to be siding with the LTTE and treated as combatants, effectively sanctioning unlawful attacks." (4) What are the Government 'atrocities'? Temporary camps, with schools and clinics, for some two years for civilians formerly under Tiger control and indoctrination - and plausibly infiltrated by terrorist cadres. Ultimately, the issue is quite simple, both morally and practically. The eradication of the LTTE, at least as a conventional force, saves civilian lives. Misguided or, in the case of pro-Tiger diaspora groups, dishonest calls for a ceasefire would inevitably lead to more civilian casualties and a revival of terrorism. Reason, rather than pacifist or irrational thinking as manifested by the human rights establishment, would suggest that their efforts should be directed toward aid to Sri Lanka for the reinsertion of Tamil civilians and not toward throwing a line to the sinking LTTE. For more than a decade Western liberal elites gave the LTTE a pass under the pretext that they represent real grievances of Sri Lanka's Tamils. Ottawa, Washington, and Delhi closed their eyes to their own Tamil citizens' being forced or manipulated into paying for the murder of civilians in Sri Lanka, despite officially declaring the Tigers a terrorist group. Military sanctions were imposed on Colombo, aid was conditioned on tolerance of, or 'peace negotiations' with, Prabhakaran - and the Tiger cancer grew. All of this pushed the government in Colombo into some dubious friendships (Iran and Venezuela come to mind), counterproductive and unnecessary if common sense in London or Ottawa would have been the main policy criterion. Human rights Ultimately, Western views and policies vis-a-vis Sri Lanka prove that humanitarian feelings and 'human rights' are no policy alternative to common sense, and that even small countries, if desperate enough, could solve their secessionist/terrorist problems even despite the powerful human right NGOs pressures to commit national suicide. Second, and most important and with wider implications, short term, obsessive preoccupation with 'civilian casualties' is often a death sentence to civilians in a civil war. The longer the war, especially when the victor is obvious, the more civilian casualties. Hence a military solution is, in some circumstances, the best way to save civilian lives. In general, pacifism, disguised as 'human rights' or not, always leads to more death, especially in remote, third world, small countries vulnerable to the influence of AI or HRW. Ending a war - by force if need be - protects more civilians than prolonging it under any pretexts. 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 1, 2009

Suicide bombing kills 11 at Sri Lanka train station

Agence France Presse -- English

February 3, 2008 Sunday 1:49 PM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 586 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 3 2008

Body

A suicide bomber attacked a train at Colombo's main rail station Sunday, killing at least 11 and injuring more than 100 others on the eve of Sri Lanka's independence day celebrations, officials said.

The blast near a suburban train as it arrived at the Fort terminal came just hours after six people were hurt in a hand grenade attack at Sri Lanka's main zoo on the outskirts of Colombo, prompting authorities to boost security.

A police spokesman said the train attack had been carried out by a suspected ***female*** operative of the ***Tamil Tigers***, the rebel group fighting to carve out a separate homeland in the ethnic Sinhalese-majority island nation.

"The bombing has all the hallmarks of the Tigers," a police officer at the scene said. "The head of the woman suicide bomber was found on a platform."

The officer said initial reports indicated that the woman had blown herself up aboard the train, but forensic experts later determined that she had carried out the attack on the platform as passengers were exiting the train.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, but defence officials also said they believed it to be the work of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***).

The United States, one of Sri Lanka's main financial backers, condemned the spate of bombings and asked all sides in the decades-old conflict to ensure the safety of civilians.

"Only a political solution to the country's conflict that responds to the aspirations of Sri Lanka's Tamil and other communities offers a way out of the current cycle of escalating violence," the US embassy here said in a statement.

A spokeswoman at Colombo National Hospital, Pushpa Soysa, said seven people were dead on arrival and four others later succumbed to their injuries. Among the dead were two young girls aged 12 and 13.

A total of 102 others were still receiving treatment, Soysa said. There were no foreigners among the casualties, hospital sources said.

Suicide bombing kills 11 at Sri Lanka train station

Earlier, the grenade blast at the aviary of the Dehiwala zoo caused panic among visitors, but police moved in reinforcements and urged calm. The zoo was shut indefinitely for visitors, officials said.

There also was no claim of responsibility for the zoo attack.

The two explosions came a day after a powerful bomb ripped through a bus in the north-central town of Dambulla, killing 20 passengers and wounding 68.

Sri Lankan police and security forces have been on high alert ahead of Monday's celebrations to mark the country's 60th anniversary of independence from Britain.

President Mahinda Rajapakse condemned the bus bombing and urged Sri Lankans not to be provoked by what he called a "savage attack" by the **Tamil Tigers**.

The string of three attacks in two days came amid fresh fighting between government forces and Tamil rebels across the embattled north at the weekend that left dozens dead, according to the defence ministry.

Troops backed by heavy artillery fire killed at least 44 suspected rebels on Saturday, while only two soldiers were killed, the ministry said in a statement.

Casualty claims from both sides cannot be independently verified.

Since the beginning of this year, at least 908 rebels and 36 soldiers have been killed in heavy fighting, according to defence ministry figures. At least 137 civilians have also died during the same period, according to both sides.

The government in January pulled out of a tattered truce with the rebels, who have been fighting for a separate Tamil homeland since 1972 in a conflict that has left tens of thousands dead.

Load-Date: February 4, 2008

10 dead, 100 hurt in Sri Lanka train suicide blast

Agence France Presse -- English

February 3, 2008 Sunday 11:39 AM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 620 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 3 2008

Body

A suicide bomber attacked a train at Colombo's main rail station Sunday, killing at least 10 and injuring more than 100 others on the eve of Sri Lanka's independence day celebrations, officials said.

The blast near a suburban train as it arrived at the Fort terminal came just hours after six people were hurt in a hand grenade attack at Sri Lanka's main zoo, on the outskirts of Colombo, prompting authorities to boost security.

A police spokesman said the train attack had been carried out by a suspected **female** operative of the **Tamil Tigers**, the rebel group fighting to carve out a separate homeland in the ethnic Sinhalese-majority island nation.

"The bombing has all the hallmarks of the Tigers," a police officer at the scene said. "The head of the woman suicide bomber was found on a platform."

The officer said initial reports indicated that the woman had blown herself up aboard the train, but forensic experts later determined that she had carried out the attack on the platform as passengers were exiting the train.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, but defence officials also said they believed it to be the work of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

Train services were suspended as investigators combed the scene for evidence.

A spokeswoman at Colombo National Hospital, Pushpa Soysa, said seven people were dead on arrival and three others later succumbed to their injuries. Among the dead was two young girls.

A total of 103 others were admitted for treatment, she said.

There were no foreigners among the casualties, hospital sources said.

Earlier, the grenade blast at the aviary of the Dehiwala zoo caused panic among visitors, but police moved in reinforcements and urged calm. No animals were hurt, but the zoo was shut indefinitely for visitors, officials said.

10 dead, 100 hurt in Sri Lanka train suicide blast

There also was no claim of responsibility for the zoo attack. The two explosions came only one day after a powerful bomb ripped through a bus in the north-central town of Dambulla, killing 20 passengers and wounding 68.

Sri Lankan police and security forces have been on high alert ahead of Monday's celebrations to mark the country's 60th anniversary of independence from Britain.

Police sought public help to track down two men believed to have planted a parcel bomb on an overhead rack of the bus. Investigators believe the bomb was then detonated by mobile phone.

"We have information that two people got off the bus before the bomb went off," police Deputy Inspector-General Kingsley Ekanayaka said. "We are trying to track them down. A search is underway."

The Tigers set off a powerful suicide truck bomb in the same area in October 2006, killing at least 116 sailors heading home on leave.

President Mahinda Rajapakse condemned the bus bombing and urged Sri Lankans not to be provoked by what he called a "savage attack" by the **Tamil Tigers**.

The string of three attacks in two days came amid fresh fighting between government forces and Tamil rebels across the embattled north at the weekend that left dozens dead, according to the defence ministry.

Troops backed by heavy artillery fire killed at least 44 suspected rebels on Saturday, while only two soldiers were killed, the ministry said in a statement.

Casualty claims from both sides cannot be independently verified.

Since the beginning of this year, at least 908 rebels and 36 soldiers have been killed in heavy fighting, according to defence ministry figures. At least 135 civilians have also died during the same period, according to both sides.

The government in January pulled out of a tattered peace pact with the rebels, who have been fighting for a separate Tamil homeland since 1972 in a conflict that has left tens of thousands dead.

Load-Date: February 4, 2008

Unresolved issues dog Tamil Nadu into 2008

Indo-Asian News Service

January 1, 2008 Tuesday 1:46 PM EST

Copyright 2008 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 607 words

Byline: Report from Indo-Asian News Service brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Chennai

Body

Chennai, Jan. 1 -- The year 2008 has begun for Tamil Nadu with a lot of political baggage that is bound to influence the growth and economy of one of India's biggest states.

The state is tragedy-prone. The midnight revelry saw a stage set up on a swimming pool crash at a city hotel, injuring two. As many as 150 people were on that stage, and the danger could have been greater.

Not only did Tamil Nadu bear the brunt of the tsunami in 2004, it has also witnessed gruesome incidents of neglect and political violence such as a school fire at Kumbakonam in which more than 90 children were burnt to death.

At Erawadi, nearly 30 mentally challenged people were charred, and a bus burning at Dharmapuri saw the lives of three young women snuffed out.

In November 2006, at least 17 people travelling in a truck carrying 80 were killed in Krishnagiri district as the vehicle collapsed in a hill area. The year gone by saw several more such accidents.

One at a rail crossing in Kancheepuram district in April killed 13 people.

The new year has begun with an alert from National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan that there could be attacks by extremists on leaders and public places in Tamil Nadu.

According to intelligence reports, threats from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and Maoist guerrillas have been growing.

The warning from India's top security adviser came in the wake of year-end reports that LTTE chief Velupillai Prabhakaran is dead or dying and Sri Lanka's navy chief saying the guerrillas were starved of supplies.

"The arms and ammunition they receive at present come only from Tamil Nadu (in southern India)" the Daily News newspaper of Sri Lanka quoted Wasantha Karannagoda as saying.

With Colombo likely to go on the offensive against the LTTE by April this year, Tamil Nadu opposition politicians like J. Jayalalitha too have expressed fears that the Tamil Tigers are shifting base into the state.

This means greater security concerns for Tamil Nadu in the year ahead. Says Jayalalitha: "Only god can save Tamil Nadu now."

Unresolved issues dog Tamil Nadu into 2008

Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi ended the last day of 2007 with a high-level meeting of security agencies that have beefed up cover for politicians and at crowded places of religious worship.

The year 2007 saw a lot of attacks on leaders of the Congress party in Tamil Nadu, now riddled with factionalism. This is going to intensify in 2008, with a clear leader of the state Congress expected to emerge in two years.

The Dravidian parties face several threats. Bahujan Samaj Party leader Mayawati gave a year-end call to the Dalits in the state to unite with the marginalized Brahmins to defeat "caste-based" Dravidian politics.

At a rally of 20,000 Dec 30 in Chennai, Mayawati said that for the last 60 years the Dravidian parties had "not done anything to uplift the weaker section".

The DMK and AIADMK also face competition from the ambitious PMK and actor Vijayakanth's DMDK. While the DMDK expects to strengthen its position, the PMK is expected to shift loyalties from the DMK to AIADMK.

There is also talk that the opposition AIADMK is wooing the Congress and vice versa, with the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) unhappy with the DMK's politics in 2007.

With the aging, post-80, leadership at the helm, the ruling DMK is likely to see a number of changes.

The fate of Karunanidhi's son and chief-minister-in-waiting M.K. Stalin is still hanging by a thread that leads deep south to his brother M.K. Azhagiri. A possible succession battle is expected to play out this year.

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: January 1, 2008

14 dead in Sri Lanka bombings, president says winning war

Agence France Presse -- English

February 4, 2008 Monday 1:34 PM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 540 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 4 2008

Body

At least 14 people were killed in two roadside bombings in Sri Lanka on Monday, as the island's president marked independence day by insisting he was winning the war against Tamil Tiger rebels.

A bomb in the northeast of the ethnically-divided island killed 13 bus passengers and wounded 16 others, including children, the military said, adding that among the dead were two women and two off-duty soldiers.

A similar blast in the south against a military vehicle killed one soldier. Three other soldiers escaped with injuries.

The attacks, both blamed on the Tamil Tigers, came hours after an annual military parade at Colombo's seaside Galle Face promenade to mark Sri Lanka's 60th anniversary of independence from Britain.

In an address to the nation, President Mahinda Rajapakse said the "challenge bestowed upon us by history is the defeat of terrorism," and said government forces had cornered the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the north.

"We faced this challenge squarely without avoiding it. Our security forces are today achieving victories against terrorism unprecedented in history," he said.

"Terrorism is receiving an unprecedented defeat," said Rajapakse, whose government last month pulled out of a tattered truce with the rebels, who are fighting for an independent ethnic homeland in the Sinhalese-majority island.

According to the defence ministry, the rebels have lost at least 908 fighters since the beginning of the year, compared to just 37 government soldiers killed.

Scores of civilians have also died during the same period, according to both sides.

Monday's celebrations went ahead despite threats from the LTTE, and following two weekend bomb attacks that killed 34 civilians and wounded nearly 200 others.

Two more blasts just outside the capital earlier Monday did not cause any casualties, but an electricity transformer was destroyed in one of the attacks, police said.

14 dead in Sri Lanka bombings, president says winning war

The government ordered all schools in the capital to shut for a week as students mourned seven colleagues who perished in a weekend bomb attack.

Ringed by tight security, Rajapakse also brushed off threats of foreign aid cuts due to the worsening ethnic conflict and human rights situation.

The president said Sri Lanka had "established new relations with our neighbouring states, Arab states and Buddhist states."

"Our neighbouring states trust us. Our problems and issues are also problems and issues of our neighbouring states," he said.

His remarks followed a thinly veiled warning from Japan, the island's main financial backer, that it may review its aid policy unless there is a decline in the level of violence.

The United States and Britain, Sri Lanka's former colonial ruler, last year announced aid cuts to the island citing human rights violations and high defence spending by the government.

Washington has also stopped selling lethal military hardware to Colombo.

"We have been able to obtain and use aid that is beneficial to the development of the country," the president said at the military parade, which featured multi-barrel rocket launchers, and Israeli-built Kfir and Russian MiG-27 war planes.

To mark independence day, the island's prisons chief said around 2,280 inmates serving time for minor offences had received amnesties.

Load-Date: February 5, 2008

14 killed in Sri Lanka bombings, president says winning war

Agence France Presse -- English

February 4, 2008 Monday 3:54 PM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 582 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 4 2008

Body

At least 14 people were killed in two roadside bombings in Sri Lanka on Monday, as the island's president marked independence day by insisting he was winning the war against Tamil Tiger rebels.

A bomb in the northeast of the ethnically-divided island killed 13 bus passengers and wounded 16 others, including children, the military said, adding that among the dead were two women and two off-duty soldiers.

A similar blast in the south against a military vehicle killed one soldier. Three other soldiers escaped with injuries, police said.

The attacks, both blamed on the Tamil Tigers, came hours after an annual military parade at Colombo's seaside Galle Face promenade to mark Sri Lanka's 60th anniversary of independence from Britain.

In an address to the nation, President Mahinda Rajapakse said the "challenge bestowed upon us by history is the defeat of terrorism," and said government forces had cornered the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the north.

"We faced this challenge squarely without avoiding it. Our security forces are today achieving victories against terrorism unprecedented in history," he said.

"Terrorism is receiving an unprecedented defeat," said Rajapakse, whose government last month pulled out of a tattered truce with the rebels, who are fighting for an independent ethnic homeland in the Sinhalese-majority island.

According to the defence ministry, the rebels have lost at least 908 fighters since the beginning of the year, compared to just 37 government soldiers killed.

Scores of civilians have also died during the same period, according to both sides.

A mass funeral was conducted Monday for five students and their baseball coach killed in a suicide bomb attack at a train terminal here on the eve of the independence day celebrations.

14 killed in Sri Lanka bombings, president says winning war

The coffins of two more students killed in the same blast were to be taken to their school later Monday. The government ordered all schools in the capital to shut for a week.

However, Monday's freedom day celebrations went ahead despite threats from the LTTE, and following two weekend bomb attacks that killed 34 civilians and wounded nearly 200 others.

Two more blasts just outside the capital earlier Monday did not cause any casualties, but an electricity transformer was destroyed in one of the attacks, police said.

Ringed by tight security, Rajapakse also brushed off threats of foreign aid cuts due to the worsening ethnic conflict and human rights situation.

The president said Sri Lanka had "established new relations with our neighbouring states, Arab states and Buddhist states."

"Our neighbouring states trust us. Our problems and issues are also problems and issues of our neighbouring states," he said.

His remarks followed a thinly veiled warning from Japan, the island's main financial backer, that it may review its aid policy unless there is a decline in the level of violence.

The United States and Britain, Sri Lanka's former colonial ruler, last year announced aid cuts to the island citing human rights violations and high defence spending by the government.

Washington has also stopped selling lethal military hardware to Colombo.

"We have been able to obtain and use aid that is beneficial to the development of the country," the president said at the military parade, which featured multi-barrel rocket launchers, and Israeli-built Kfir and Russian MiG-27 war planes.

To mark independence day, the island's prisons chief said around 2,280 inmates serving time for minor offences had received amnesties.

Load-Date: February 5, 2008

'There is no freedom' in Jaffna City an open prison where fear, bloodshed reign

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

September 22, 2008 Monday

All But Toronto Edition

Copyright 2008 National Post All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. A1; In Jaffna City, Sri Lanka

Length: 1592 words

Byline: Stewart Bell, National Post

Dateline: JAFFNA CITY, Sri Lanka

Body

Hundreds of thousands have fled Sri Lanka's civil war, many of them to Canada. While the war zone has been off limits to journalists, the National Post's Stewart Bell recently toured the front lines just as the conflict appears headed for a decisive showdown. This is the second of a six-part series.

The streets around Jaffna City's downtown bazaar are filled with bicycles, trishaws and sari-clad women carrying umbrellas to shade themselves from the harsh tropical sun.

There are also a lot of soldiers. They patrol the streets with automatic rifles and stop buses to check the identity cards of passengers.

In this northern city, the population is almost entirely Tamil -- which to the soldiers means that any of the people on these streets might be Tamil Tigers guerrillas.

Jaffna City was once the second-largest centre in Sri Lanka, after the capital, Colombo, but the rows of empty, bullet-pocked houses on the outskirts of town are a reminder that the civil war has hit hard here.

The Tamil Tigers controlled Jaffna until the Sri Lankan forces retook it in 1995, but more than a dozen years later, daily life could hardly be described as normal.

Troops are everywhere; a curfew remains in effect; nobody dares step outdoors without their National Identity Card; and residents cannot leave without the army's permission.

Locals say the military routinely cordons off neighbourhoods, takes everyone to a school or a playground and holds them overnight for questioning.

Getting out of Jaffna means a two-week wait for military permission and a 24-hour boat trip.

That's because the region is cut off from the rest of the country by the war zone.

"It's like an open prison," says Gajen Ponnambalam, the Member of Parliament for Jaffna and a member of the country's main Tamil opposition party, the Tamil National Alliance.

'There is no freedom' in Jaffna City an open prison where fear, bloodshed reign

Even though he is an elected representative for the region, Mr. Ponnambalam lives 400 kilometres away in Colombo. Jaffna is too dangerous. Two TNA MPs were assassinated in 2005 and 2006.

"There is absolutely no security. All the TNA members of parliament from Jaffna have been threatened ... the government uses paramilitary groups to carry out these threats."

He says his phone calls to Jaffna are monitored, and when the discussions turn to topics considered sensitive by the government, the line gets cut. "It's a police state, so everything is being monitored."

Journalists considered sympathetic to the Tamil cause live in constant fear. Bullet holes mark the walls inside the Jaffna office of the Uthayan newspaper. A stack of computers sits idle, their screens blasted by gunshots.

Editor M. V. Kaanamylnathan thumbs through a book filled with photos of his reporters and staff, all killed in recent attacks. The newspaper continues to publish regardless.

"We have decided that despite what happens, we have a duty to our readers," he says. "We are just speaking for the rights of the people. This is a newspaper's function."

The civil war that has torn apart Sri Lanka and driven tens of thousands of refugees to Canada has been notable for its horrors. Both sides have been accused of abuses.

The list is long: Suicide bombings, abductions, recruitment of children, torture, ethnic cleansing, political assassinations, unlawful killings and arbitrary arrests and detentions.

Ethnic Tamils can be arrested for "suspicion," which requires no more than a belief they are linked to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas waging a separatist war against the government. Some are released. Some are never seen again.

"Outside of the war zones, Tamils are very vulnerable to human rights violations, which come in the form of their houses being raided in the night or being searched in the night," says Jehan Perera, executive director of the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka. "They have to prove their innocence, that they are not LTTE."

Disappearances and killings have occurred in Colombo, but they are said to be worst in Jaffna, he says, although he adds that there are no reliable statistics. Adding to the concerns is the sense that nobody is ever brought to account for the abuses, he says.

"There is a problem of terrorism, people need to be arrested, but this can't be done arbitrarily," he says. "It is happening enough that all Tamils are frightened."

Since the collapse of Sri Lanka's ceasefire in January, international human rights groups have become increasingly alarmed as government forces drive north in an attempt to defeat the Tamil Tigers, and the guerrillas resume their random terrorist attacks.

Deaths of civilians have reached "appalling levels," according to a February report by the International Committee of the Red Cross, which says almost 200 civilians died in the first six weeks of 2008.

A Human Rights Watch report released in March blamed pro-government forces for abductions and disappearances of suspected rebels as well as clergy, aid workers and journalists.

In April, Amnesty International accused both the government and the guerrillas of intentionally targeting civilians and conducting indiscriminate attacks. "Since 2006, the conflict in Sri Lanka between government forces, the LTTE and other armed groups has escalated and has continued to be marked by widespread human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law," Amnesty wrote.

A young Tamil man, too afraid to allow his name to be published, spoke nervously about the August night his life was turned upside down.

'There is no freedom' in Jaffna City an open prison where fear, bloodshed reign

It was after dark and he was with a friend. They went to meet another friend. All were Tamils. Someone saw them together and told the police.

"I didn't expect they were going to put me in jail," he says, but the next thing he knew, he was taken to a cell. "They took us to a bad ward. There were 250 people staying in a single hole."

The cell was full of hard-looking men, some of whom were smoking ganja. Until that night, he had never even seen the inside of a police station. He was held for a week before being released without any charges.

Now he is uneasy. He believes the police will be watching him. He says if police pick him up again, he will never get out. He says he will no longer venture outside after 8 p. m. "Earlier, I never thought about these things. But now I am afraid."

The Sri Lankan government does not deny that abuses occur, but says they are not state policy and that those found responsible are held accountable.

Attorney-General C. R. De Silva told the United Nations that a Presidential Commission of Inquiry was looking into disappearances, and that police had formed a Disappearances Investigation Unit.

In the past year, 61 police officers have been charged with torture, he says, while in the past decade, 599 members of the security forces and police have been charged in connection with abductions and extra-judicial killings.

Mr. Ponnambalam, the Tamil MP, says that in the past, international pressure could be wielded to curb government excesses. But unlike past Sri Lankan governments, the current administration lacks strong links to Western countries that have typically pushed for negotiations to end the conflict. "President [Mahinda] Rajapaksa is someone of a totally different mindset. He has no such hang-ups basically."

Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, the Defence Secretary and the President's brother, says some people reported as disappeared have actually joined the guerrillas. He cites the case of a man reported missing by his mother. It turned out the man had died while committing a suicide attack near the Colombo Hilton Hotel.

Searches, arrests and detentions are all necessary to prevent terrorist attacks, he says.

"Now we know that each and every Tamil person is not a terrorist, but unfortunately 98% of the terrorists are Tamil because this started as a freedom movement, it started from the Tamils," he says.

"So when you adopt certain control measures, of course the Tamil population will be targeted. You go and search where there are more Tamil people, then you question with a doubt when you see people coming from the north and east. So for these things we get a lot of criticism, but at the end, you save a lot of lives."

The National Post hitched a ride to Jaffna on an Air Force transport and travelled through the high-security zone to the city in a Unicorn armoured vehicle before leaving the company of the military to explore.

Jaffna's roughly 600,000 residents had a brief respite from the war during the ceasefire that began in 2002. The A-9 highway that links the region to the south was reopened for the first time in decades, but the ceasefire soon collapsed and the road was closed once again.

The guerrillas and the army face each other on the eastern edge of Jaffna, where 100 metres of no-man's land separates the forward line of the Sri Lankan Army from the Tamil Tigers. Both lob mortars at each other on a daily basis.

"A lot of skirmishes are going on -- last night there were 12 attacks," says Major General Gammampila Chandrasiri, Area Commander for Jaffna. But he insists life in Jaffna is "coming back to normal."

One prominent Tamil man scoffs at the positive image painted by the General. He says the Tamils of Jaffna are treated like second-class citizens and live in constant fear of the security forces.

'There is no freedom' in Jaffna City an open prison where fear, bloodshed reign

"It has gone to the depths, there is no freedom," he says. "Whether you are three or 65 years, they will stop and check your ID card. Now they are suspecting every citizen.

"How can you say that we are living peacefully, how can you say that there is no problem?" he says, afraid to have his name published.

"It is 100% occupation."

Graphic

Black & White

Photo: Stewart Bell, National Post; Security officers stop a bus in Jaffna City to check the identity cards of Tamil passengers. The northern war zone cuts the city off from the rest of the country. ; Black & White

Photo: Stewart Bell, National Post; "There is a problem of terrorism, people need to be arrested, but this can't be done arbitrarily," says Jehan Perera, executive director of the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka. ;

Load-Date: September 22, 2008

End of Document

Hard to see the peace for all the guns in Sri Lanka's civil war

The Sunday Independent (South Africa)

February 22, 2009

e1 Edition

Copyright 2009 Independent News and Media Ltd All Rights Reserved

Section: DISPATCHES; Pg. 16

Length: 1155 words

Byline: Emily Wax

Body

Trying to quiet her crying infant son, the young mother grabbed her 11-year-old's hand and told him to follow her. Starting out at dusk, they spent hours hiding in the jungle terrain, crouching amid the crossfire between the Sri Lankan army and Tamil Tiger rebels.

Like thousands of other civilians stuck in the epicentre of the seemingly final battles of this civil war, Sashi Kumari Selvarajha's family was struggling to flee through marshlands and across the front lines, hoping for safety, she said through tears. But just as they crossed the line, she said, rebel forces open fire.

"We started running. But we didn't think it was safe. So we stopped to sleep in the jungle. As the sun rose, we fled. But my husband and mother-in-law got killed," said a distraught Selvarajha, 31, as she unloaded her bags at a crowded camp for the war-displaced in government-held Vavuniya district. "I'm never going back to that place."

Hers is a rare first-hand account of the harrowing flight of thousands of civilians to this heavily fortified frontier town. It came as the Sri Lankan army said it would move out of a largely ineffective "safe zone", which health officials and diplomats said had been shelled by both sides. Instead, troops would set up a new safe zone on a 12km-long strip of land on the northeastern coast where civilians were already seeking refuge, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, a military spokesperson, said.

Most civilians who flee the fighting are put into military-run camps that officially do not allow outsiders. Stone-faced and red-eyed relatives line up behind sandbags, coils of barbed wire and machine-gun nests as soldiers check their identity papers before they can find missing loved ones.

A brother and sister stood weeping inside the camp and told how their 41-year-old father was shot dead when they attempted to cross into government-held areas. Their mother and sister are fighting for their lives in Vavuniya's hospital.

"We lost our father. We lost everything," said Rasendran Nitha, 17, who huddled with her brother, Rasendran Radanraj, 20. "We don't know what to do. We desperately need peace in Sri Lanka."

As the army continues its offensive to end the 25-year-long rebel war, the Sri Lankan government has come under increasing international pressure to halt its offensive and allow safe passage to an estimated 250 000 civilians trapped in the northern Wanni region.

Hard to see the peace for all the guns in Sri Lanka 's civil war

The government has refused and says the number of trapped civilians is lower. It argues that the Tigers, known for their frequent use of suicide bombers, are using civilians as human shields, a claim that rebels deny but that diplomats and human rights workers agree is taking place.

Letting up on the fighting would allow the rebels to escape along with the displaced, President Mahinda Rajapakse's government has said. The United States has labelled the Tigers a terrorist group. The government says tens of thousands of civilians have fled the ever-shrinking coastal strip controlled by the Tigers, now estimated at less than 160km².

In Vavuniya, many traumatised civilians said the past few weeks of fighting had left them confused about where to find safety.

John Manni, 38, spent a harrowing day this week trying to decide on which side to stay in Vallipunam, a forested area between the army and rebel lines. He believed the government side would be safest, but as his family crossed over the front lines, his 12-year-old niece, two uncles and an aunt were killed. He isn't sure who did the firing.

"Army said to come to their side. The **LTTE** said to stay with them," said Manni, using the abbreviation for the rebel group's official name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. "We thought we should come to army side. Then someone fired on us. We had to leave the bodies so we could run away. There were so many bodies lying in the jungle."

The government has largely sealed off the war zone to journalists, so reports have been impossible to verify. The refugee camps have also been closed to journalists.

The **Tamil Tigers** accuse the government of waging a genocide against ethnic Tamils - who make up about 18 percent of the island nation's population of 21 million people - in the north and east of the country.

"People wander from place to place seeking refuge and are forced to lead a life worse than animals in the marsh and jungles," the **LTTE's** political division said in a statement. "They are being shot."

Several diplomatic sources in Colombo said the **Tamil Tigers** had prevented civilians from leaving for three reasons. First, the civilians act as a human shield for the rebels. Also, they are a potential pool of conscripts and the rebel group's only real hope of survival now that large numbers of their own people have been killed. Finally, the civilian suffering could embolden the Tamil diaspora and others to force a cease-fire on the government.

The conflict has also raised a problem for those trying to help fleeing civilians, international aid workers in Vavuniya said. Some in the government worry that rebels are mixing among the civilian population.

The Tamil Tiger rebels are accused of forcibly recruiting at least one member of each family in their de facto state in the north. Those entering one of five camps in Vavuniya go through a series of screenings to make sure they are not fighters for the rebel group, aid workers running the camps said.

But checkpoints have become dangerous. On Monday, a **female** suicide bomber blew herself up and killed 30 people while pretending to be a refugee. At the same time, aid workers and some Tamil activists are concerned about government plans to create long-term "welfare villages", where civil war refugees would live for up to three years. The government has said it needs that much time so troops can clear mines and finish fighting, but experts warn of alienating an already fearful Tamil population.

"Yes, we have a problem since the population has for so long been under the Tigers. But Sri Lanka also has a real opportunity here to reach out to the Tamils in the camps," said Kumar Rupasinghe, chairperson of the Foundation for Co-existence in Colombo. "We urge the government to ensure that people are resettled quickly and given a good livelihood. Otherwise they will be angry and dependent on aid. It could ... increase ethnic tensions."

From Vavuniya, where Sri Lankan flags fly from every shop and armoured personnel carriers are driven through the main shopping district, civilians said they were too exhausted and terrified to move.

Hard to see the peace for all the guns in Sri Lanka 's civil war

Many families in surrounding villages have become members of the patriotic civilian paramilitary force, armed with AK-47s "to protect their villages" from ***Tamil Tigers***. The defence ministry last year sent a nationwide text message: "Young Patriots, come join our armed forces and be a part of a winning team."

But some worry about how a transition can be made from war to peace with so many guns around. - The Washington Post

Load-Date: February 22, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lankan suicide bomber kills 3, wounds 36

Associated Press International

February 9, 2009 Monday 7:49 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 360 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A **female** suicide bomber blew herself up Monday among a group of soldiers searching civilians fleeing Sri Lanka's northern war zone, killing three people and wounding 36 others, the military said.

The attack took place as the military boxed the Tamil Tiger rebels into a small strip of land on the northeastern coast and stood poised to defeat the group after fighting a 25-year-old civil war.

An estimated 250,000 civilians were trapped in the war zone along with the rebels. The military has accused the rebels of holding the civilians as human shields and called for noncombatants to flee to government-controlled areas. The rebels have accused the government of indiscriminately shelling the war zone, leading to increasing civilian casualties.

On Monday morning, more than 800 civilians had crossed the front lines and were being searched by soldiers before being sent to camps farther south, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

When the attacker was frisked, she set off the bomb she was wearing, killing one soldier and two civilians, he said. Another 21 civilians and 15 soldiers were injured, he said.

"The **LTTE** is now desperate because they don't have any control over the civilians now," Nanayakkara said, calling the rebels by the initials of their formal name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. "They wanted to stop these people coming in."

The attack appeared aimed at one of the military's weak points, the processing of the masses of civilians trying to flee the area. It also highlighted fears that even if the government defeats the rebels on the battlefield, they will simply blend in with civilians and fight on as a guerrilla insurgency.

With most communication to the north severed, the rebels could not be reached for comment.

The rebels have been accused of more than 200 suicide attacks and are listed as a terror group by the United States and the European Union.

The **Tamil Tigers** have been fighting since 1983 for a separate state for the nation's ethnic Tamil minority after decades of marginalization at the hands of governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

Sri Lankan suicide bomber kills 3, wounds 36

Load-Date: February 10, 2009

End of Document

LTTE targeting impoverished Lankans - British Magazine

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

July 2, 2008 Wednesday 3:43 PM EST

Copyright 2008 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 626 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 2 - The widely circulated Observer magazine distributed with the Observer newspaper in a four page in-depth article said by targeting innocent civilians the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam are fast losing whatever sympathies they had earlier.

The magazine in an article entitled, 'Lost in Paradise' said the Tigers "are going for the softest targets of all, the impoverished working people of Sri Lanka."

Referring to Sri Lanka's North, the magazine said: "Here are not only the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) but their offshoot, the Black Tigers, the suicide squads. According to Jane's information Group, between 1980-2000 the Tigers had carried out a total of 168 suicide attacks on civilian and military targets, easily exceeding those in the same period by Hezbollah and Hamas combined.

And now today, thwarted on their attacks on the government and the military, they are going for the softest targets of all, the impoverished working people of Sri Lanka.

"For all those decades of suicide practice, you'd think they might be getting the hang of it by now. But in Colombo's Fort Railway Station, a few weeks before my visit, it all went wrong again.

A **female** suicide bomber coming off a train from the South was spotted acting oddly by police-too many clothes for the cloying heat - and fled from the turnstile back into the station. By platform three she sat down and exploded. She took 11 others with her....The 11 dead included half a high school baseball team, and 92 were injured," wrote Observer staffer, Euan Ferguson.

Founded in 1791, the Liberal Democratic leaning left of center publication with a circulation of 455,000 also referred to an incident where the Tigers were not that successful in blowing up the impoverished working civilians: "One passenger, Indrani Fernando, saw a suspicious bag left under a seat near the back. 'When no one claimed it I told the crew and shouted at people to get off,' she says.

The bus halted in a middle of a junction and everyone filed off and began walking away, rather quickly and the police were called. Twenty seconds after the driver and conductor had climbed off, the bomb exploded.

Ten passers-by were injured, among them children. Indrani later took a congratulatory call from, President Mahinda Rajapaksa, thanking her for her vigilance. I go to see the bus, towed two miles away. The carcass is eviscerated, skeletal: no one would have survived."

LTTE targeting impoverished Lankans - British Magazine

How the Tigers have increasingly started targeting unarmed civilians Ferguson further wrote: "Just before I arrived in Sri Lanka, another bus had been blown up a couple of kilometers outside Dambulla, an ancient holy rest stop on the journey to the East.

The 18 killed were almost all pilgrims and included children. In the remote Southern town of Buttala the rebels had recently failed to kill most of the passengers on a bus with a simple bomb; so they gunned down 32 of them as they fled, in flames."

"Desperate tactics have been adopted by the Tigers, but there are increasing signs that by targeting innocent civilians they are fast losing whatever sympathies they once had within the majority Sinhalese population."

The writer who has returned to the country after the devastating Boxing Day tsunami calls Sri Lanka one of the most kind places on earth despite the violence:

"This is one of the kindest countries on earth. Smiles, genuine, empathetic, as natural as waterfall.

Even when I was here following the tsunami, I was struck repeatedly by the welcomes from those who had nothing, both the majority Sinhalese and Tamils. And, still you can head south from Colombo without a care in the world, take a breezy taxi to the beaches and beauty of Galle."

Report from Daily News Sri Lanka brought to you by HT Syndication.

-716658

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

Load-Date: September 16, 2008

Bus bombing kills 16 in Sri Lanka

Agence France Presse -- English

February 2, 2008 Saturday 3:19 AM GMT

Copyright 2008 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 383 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 2 2008

Body

Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels set off a powerful bomb inside a crowded bus in north-central Sri Lanka Saturday, killing at least 16 people and wounding another 30, police and hospital sources said.

The explosion ripped through the privately-owned bus parked at the bus station in Dambulla, 150 kilometres (93 miles) north of Colombo, police said.

"Thirteen people were dead on admission and three more succumbed to their injuries," a spokesman for the Dambulla hospital said, adding that 13 women were among those killed.

About 20 of the critically wounded were given initial treatment at Dambulla and transferred to two better equipped medical facilities in the region, the spokesman said.

The bus was taking Buddhist pilgrims from the central town of Kandy to north-central Anuradhapura town and had stopped at Dambulla to pick up more passengers.

Police cordoned off the blast site and an investigation was underway, a police officer in the area said by telephone.

"We suspect this is the work of the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam)," the police officer said.

He said initial reports suggested that the blast may have originated inside the bus when it was parked at the bus station, a key transit point for people travelling in the region.

Tamil Tiger rebels set off a powerful suicide truck bomb in the same area in October 2006, killing at least 116 sailors who were heading home on leave.

Saturday's attack came as Sri Lanka stepped up security ahead of Monday's celebrations to mark the country's 60th anniversary of independence from Britain.

Authorities had warned of bomb attacks by Tamil Tiger guerrillas who are battling government forces in the north of the country where they maintain a de facto separate state.

There have been a series of bomb attacks in the country this year.

Bus bombing kills 16 in Sri Lanka

On Friday, a suicide bomber on a bicycle killed four people in the northern peninsula of Jaffna. The military blamed the attack on the Tamil Tiger guerrillas.

The rebels were also blamed for bombing a bus in the south of the island last month, killing 27 bus passengers and later killing another 10 civilians in a separate attack in the same area.

The **Tamil Tigers** have been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland in the majority Sinhalese nation since 1972 in a conflict that has left tens of thousands dead.

Load-Date: February 2, 2008

End of Document

Hospital hit in clash between Tamil Tigers and Sri Lankan army

The New Zealand Herald

February 2, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 The New Zealand Herald All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; World

Length: 758 words

Body

COLOMBO - A hospital in Sri Lanka's chaotic war zone was hit twice by artillery attacks within hours yesterday, killing at least six civilians and wounding many others, the region's top health official and the Red Cross said.

Dr Thurairajah Varatharajah said the shells in the later attack appeared to have been fired by the Sri Lankan army and killed five.

He said they also caused extensive damage to the crowded Puthukkudiyiruppu hospital, one of the last functioning health institutions inside rebel-held territory. With beds full, many patients sleep in the corridor.

The Red Cross said the earlier artillery attack killed two people. It did not say which side fired those shells. Varatharajah said only one person was killed.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara did not answer calls seeking comment.

The military has repeatedly denied killing civilians in their offensive to wipe out the Tamil Tiger rebels and end the island nation's 25-year-old civil war with the ethnic separatist group.

Independent reports from the war zone are not available because journalists are barred from the area.

The attack on the hospital came amid reports of growing casualties among ethnic Tamil civilians trapped with the rebels inside a tiny patch of jungle and small villages. The Red Cross estimates 250,000 are in the area, while the government says the number is smaller.

Varatharajah, the top health official in the northern Mullaitivu district, estimated last week that more than 300 civilians had been killed in the recent fighting. The government denied that. Varatharajah has not updated his estimate.

Speaking by telephone from the hospital in Puthukkudiyiruppu, Varatharajah said the facility was hit by five artillery shells after 10 pm yesterday (5.30am today NZST). Most of the shells landed in the women's ward, he said.

"There are five dead and a lot of casualties," he said.

Hospital workers were having trouble counting the injured because many staff members were too scared to leave their fortified bunkers and the hospital was suffering power cuts, he said.

The Red Cross, which has offices in the hospital, said the earlier attack on the facility killed at least two people and injured at least five others.

Hospital hit in clash between Tamil Tigers and Sri Lankan army

"We're shocked that the hospital was hit, and this for the second time in recent weeks," Paul Castella, head of the Colombo delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross, said in a statement.

"Wounded and sick people, medical personnel and medical facilities are all protected by international humanitarian law. Under no circumstance may they be directly attacked."

Both the rebels and the army know the location of the hospital, Varatharajah said.

The attack took place on a day of heavy fighting in the area, he said.

"There's heavy shelling where there are civilians," Varatharajah said.

"They (the shells) are coming from the army side."

Well over 100 injured people came to the hospital during the day, he said.

The Red Cross said more than 500 patients were in the hospital, and the wounded continued to arrive despite the afternoon attack on the facility.

The hospital is so crowded that many patients were forced to sleep on mattresses in the corridor, it said.

The rebels have been fighting since 1983 for a separate homeland for ethnic minority Tamils in the north and east after decades of marginalisation by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the civil war.

On Sunday, the army said rescuing civilians from the war zone would be one of its top priorities. The government has accused the rebels of holding the civilian population hostage for use as human shields. The rebels deny the allegation.

"Our offensive now has two objectives - continuing operations to crush the (rebels) and to get the civilians released," Nanayakkara said.

The government had given the insurgents Friday and Saturday to let noncombatants leave the area. But only 236 civilians crossed the front lines into government-held areas during the two days, according to the military.

Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa warned yesterday that Western diplomats, foreign journalists and aid groups would be "chased" out of the country if they appear to favour the rebels.

The rebels, meanwhile, suffered further losses as troops captured two camps for the Black Tigers, the rebels' suicide squad, and recovered the bodies of 12 rebels apparently killed in the fighting, the military said.

Associated Press reporters Vijay Joshi and Bharatha Mallawarachi in Colombo contributed to this report.

- AP

Load-Date: February 2, 2009

MIA accused of supporting terrorism by speaking out for Tamil Tigers

Guardian.com

February 11, 2009

Copyright 2009 Guardian Unlimited (© Guardian Newspapers Limited) All rights reserved

theguardian

Length: 672 words

Highlight: The London-born rapper may have been the star of the Grammys, but her outspoken comments have caused outrage in Sri Lanka, where she has been dubbed a cheerleader for 'terrorists'

Body

To her fans, MIA, or Mathangi Maya Arulpragasam, is rap's belle de jour who performed while nine months pregnant with hip-hop's hottest acts at the Grammys. Sheathed in a black net dress, MIA stepped out - bump first - to the strains of her single Paper Planes, which features on the Slumdog Millionaire soundtrack, before segueing into Jay-Z's Swagga Like Us.

But for some, especially in her birth country of Sri Lanka, she is nothing less than a cheerleader for "terrorists" - separatist Tamil Tiger guerrillas - in the country's civil war. As the "only Tamil in the western media" MIA says she has a responsibility to say "what is going on" in the country.

In an interview with the Daily Beast website she described the situation in the north and east of the country, the scene of fighting between the rebels and the army, as "systematic genocide, ethnic cleansing ... it's just out and out Nazi Germany".

"I can't justify getting nominated for an Oscar or a Grammy, that to me wouldn't mean anything if I don't actually get to speak about this. It's not like I'm trying to sell records, I'm trying to stop the deaths of 350,000 people this month," she said.

Her politics, however, are beyond the pale in Sri Lanka where the majority of people view the rebels as "terrorists" who are the verge of being wiped out by government forces. Many musicians say they "respect her creativity" but are angry at "spreading blatant terrorist propaganda".

"I have a lot of respect for her creativity but there is no genocide here in Sri Lanka," said Santhush Weeraman, 31-year-old half of Sri Lanka's biggest pop group Bathiya and Santhush. "She is taking advantage of her fame and fabricating stories about Sri Lanka. It is basically lies and humbug."

MIA has not been afraid to take on her critics. When Sri Lankan rapper DeLon claimed she simply "wants war", MIA responded saying she did not "support terrorism and never has".

The Tigers have been fighting since 1983 for a homeland for ethnic Tamils, who are mostly Hindu, to protect them from discrimination at the hands of the ethnic Sinhalese majority, which is mainly Buddhist.

MIA accused of supporting terrorism by speaking out for Tamil Tigers

In recent weeks both sides have traded accusations over the killing of innocent civilians in the war zone - especially the shelling of a hospital, which is a war crime under international humanitarian law. The Sri Lankan army today denied responsibility for shelling a makeshift hospital on Monday, which the Red Cross said resulted in the deaths of 16 people. The Tigers meanwhile denied shooting dead 19 civilians trying to flee the conflict yesterday, a day after a suspected **female** Tiger suicide bomber killed 28 people.

Thirty-one-year-old MIA is herself a victim of a quarter of century of ethnic strife. Born in London, she was the daughter of a Tamil "revolutionary" who had trained with the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Her childhood was spent in war-torn northern Sri Lanka, before spending time in southern India and then returning to Britain.

A budding artist, she turned to music and put out a critically acclaimed first album, Arular, named after her father. Delivered in an unmistakable London dialect, she took on war, poverty and consumerism.

Arular Arudpragasam, MIA's father who lived in India for many years, has quietly endorsed her music. He recently admitted that his "association with the armed conflict has to a large extent affected her as a singer and as a person. She is a very emotional girl, but she is very brave".

MIA quickly outgrew London and moved to New York, making headlines for her outspoken views and engagement to Benjamin Brewer, the rock star scion of the billionaire Bronfman family.

Her baby was due on Sunday and the performance at the Grammys raised eyebrows - especially those of her father. There were rumours that she had scheduled a caesarean section right after the ceremony. MIA's father told the Hindustan Times, "I am quite excited, but concerned about her health. She is heavily pregnant and I had advised her not to perform and not to take too much stress".

Load-Date: February 11, 2009

Shelling on Sri Lankan hospital kills 9

Associated Press International

February 2, 2009 Monday 8:20 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 705 words

Byline: By VIJAY JOSHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Artillery shells slammed into an overcrowded hospital in Sri Lanka's northern war zone, killing at least nine patients, officials said Monday as the army claimed it found an abandoned luxury hideout of the elusive rebel leader.

The attack on the hospital intensified concern for the fate of some 250,000 civilians trapped in the shrinking war zone where the **Tamil Tigers** have been boxed in. The Sri Lankan army believes it is on the verge of destroying the rebels and ending one of the longest running civil conflicts in the world.

In the chaos of war where claims and counterclaims have become impossible to verify independently, the **Tamil Tigers** said they killed 150 soldiers and injured more than 300 since Sunday. The army denied it lost any men.

"There is no truth to that. There were small confrontations, but we didn't suffer any casualties," military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara told The Associated Press.

The fighting is taking place in Puthukkudiyiruppu area, where three artillery barrages slammed into the pediatrics and **women's** wards of the Puthukkudiyiruppu hospital, the Red Cross said.

The shells, which also hit a kitchen and a chapel, killed nine people and wounded 20, Red Cross spokeswoman Sarasi Wijeratne said Monday.

The aid agency, which has offices in the hospital, did not say which side fired the shells, but Dr. Thurairajah Varatharajah, the top government health official in the area, said two of the attacks appeared to have come from the army.

He said the shelling caused extensive damage to the overcrowded hospital, one of the last functioning health institutions inside rebel-held territory,

The U.N. confirmed the hospital was struck Sunday by artillery shells throughout the day.

"It seems to have struck the pediatric ward, a 30-bed ward filled to overflowing. The last communication that we had from our staff member on the ground was that they were still counting the dead," U.N. spokesman Gordon Weiss said Monday. He did not cast blame on either side.

Nanayakkara said the army was not responsible for the attacks and blamed the rebels, accusing them of "desperately" firing artillery shells at random.

Shelling on Sri Lankan hospital kills 9

He said troops discovered Sunday an underground three-room apartment in Vishwamadu village, fitted with a luxury bathroom, high quality furnishings, a generator and electrical appliances.

"We believe it belongs to **LTTE** leader (Velupillai) Prabhakaran," he said. "With the luxury items which we have come across there, it definitely has to be the leader's house," he said, referring to the acronym for the rebels' full name, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The Tigers did not immediately comment on the report, but one of its leaders claimed the rebels pushed back army troops and tanks in Puthukkudiyiruppu, killing 150 soldiers and wounding more than 350, on Sunday.

"Three battle tanks, two troop carriers, a military bus and two tractors were fully destroyed in the fighting so far," S. Puleedevan, a top Tiger official, said in a statement on a pro-rebel Web site, TamilNet.

Independent reports from the war zone are not available because journalists and aid groups are barred from the area.

Aid groups say the fighting has spawned a humanitarian crisis, exacerbated by the strikes on the hospital.

Varatharajah, the medical officer, said hospital workers were having trouble counting the injured because many staff members were too scared to leave their fortified bunkers and the hospital was suffering power cuts.

"We're shocked that the hospital was hit, and this for the second time in recent weeks," Paul Castella, head of the Colombo delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross, said in a statement.

The Red Cross said more than 500 patients were in the hospital, and the wounded continued to arrive despite the afternoon attack on the facility.

The hospital is so crowded that many patients were forced to sleep on mattresses in the corridor, it said.

The rebels have been fighting since 1983 for a separate homeland for ethnic minority Tamils in the north and east after decades of marginalization by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the civil war.

Associated Press writer Ravi Nessman contributed to this report.

Load-Date: February 3, 2009

Trapped by the dying Tigers; 150,000 people are being used as human shields by Tamil rebels who have promised to fight to the death. Nick Meo reports from Killinochi

The Sunday Telegraph (London)

March 29, 2009

Copyright 2009 Telegraph Media Group Limited All Rights Reserved

The Sunday Telegraph

Section: NEWS; International; Pg. 29

Length: 1098 words

Byline: Nick Meo

Body

THE haunted eyes of the grand-father who had just escaped from the **Tamil Tigers** at their most furious betrayed the horror he had left behind him. "I want to live, not die, and that's why I have come here with my family," he said.

The exhausted businessman was safe in a Sri Lankan army base after weeks trapped with 150,000 other civilians in a seven-square-mile strip of land on Sri Lanka's north-east coast, short of food and fresh water and incessantly pounded by shells.

The rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), who for the past 26 years have claimed to be fighting to protect Sri Lanka's Tamil ethnic minority, have forbidden the refugees to leave - on pain of death.

But as the civil war grinds slowly towards its end with the Tigers apparently facing final defeat, conditions within their enclave have become so grim that in the past week alone an estimated 5,000 men, **women** and terrified children have risked their lives to flee. Many have been shot by rebel gunmen and some of those caught have been executed.

The elderly man, wearing a grimy T-shirt and sarong and clutching a single bag that contained all that remained of his possessions, had managed to get out that morning.

He described how he had gathered his family and friends, as quietly as possible in the dead of night, before slipping past guards. They had been wading across a muddy lagoon towards Sri Lankan army lines when things went wrong. "We left at 2am today in a group of 23 but the Tigers fired at us and only 12 of us arrived here," he said as his bewildered granddaughter, aged seven, looked on. "I do not know what has happened to the rest. We became separated in the confusion."

The survivors were sheltering in the northern town of Killinochi, once the Tigers' capital.

Trapped by the dying Tigers 150,000 people are being used as human shields by Tamil rebels who have promised to fight to the death. Nick Meo reports from Killin....

What the man had to say about the Tigers would have been unthinkable for a subject of their dictatorial mini-state a few weeks ago. "The people do not like the Tigers any more," he said angrily. "They are trapped by them and they are scared. They want the Sri Lankan army to rescue them."

At their peak, early this decade, the Tigers controlled almost a third of Sri Lanka's territory - governing it with an iron fist while neglecting to develop its economy, spend money on schools or provide medical care. Much of the money that poured in from sympathisers abroad to support the cause was creamed off by corrupt leaders.

Three years ago the island's government launched an offensive that has steadily driven the rebels from almost all the territory they held in the north and east. Now the Sri Lankan army believes that the Tigers are finished militarily. All that stands between them and defeat is their ruthlessness in using civilians as a human shield.

The Sunday Telegraph was the first British newspaper to visit the Tigers' former capital since it fell in January, flying in by helicopter which skimmed low over the jungle canopy as the door gunner scanned below for guerrillas.

One of the architects of the Sri Lankan victory is Brig Shavendra Silva, a commander whose proudest boast is that his 58 Division has killed more than 5,000 Tigers since it began its bloody push north in 2006. He said the rebels could let all the civilians go free if they wanted to. "They were forcibly taken," he said. "That's the only weapon that the LTTE has left. They wanted human shields so we could not bomb them, and they needed a pool of recruits so they could keep on fighting."

Young Tiger fighters who have been captured alive have terrible stories to tell of the life they led within the enclave. Sennappu, a 25-year-old teacher, was forcibly recruited and sent into battle after just a month of weapons training with the Tigers' standard kit: an AK-47 for fighting and a cyanide capsule in case of capture. Assigned to a bunker in command of six younger women, she could not hold out for long and when they were surrounded two of her comrades decided to blow themselves up with a hand grenade. She begged them to surrender as shells exploded around them.

"Mathuvanthi, who was 23, really believed in the Tamil Tigers' cause. She preferred death to surrender," Sennappu said. "Nalliessa, who was 18 and had not long passed her O-levels, had been told she would be tortured if she fell into the hands of our enemies in the Sri Lanka army. She killed herself because she was terrified of capture."

Sennappu is now safe, but fears that her friends and relatives may well have been press-ganged as the Tigers' position becomes ever more desperate. In recent weeks gangs of Tiger gunmen have been roaming civilian camps under their control, at first taking one recruit from each family and then grabbing anyone over 14, putting guns in their hands and forcing them to the front line - where their life expectancy can be measured in days, or sometimes hours.

Fears are growing that the Tigers want mass civilian casualties, forbidding the refugees from leaving so they are killed by army shelling. Sri Lanka's president, Mahinda Rajapaksa, appealed yesterday for the separatists to lay down their arms, to ensure the safety of the trapped civilians.

Another frightening scenario is a mass suicide: Tiger cadres are ordered not to be captured alive, and they may be willing to force their families and neighbours to die with them.

The intensity of the battle is clear in what the Sri Lankan army calls the "liberated zone". Surrounding paddy fields and jungle, with patches of burnt and blackened trees marking bunkers where Tigers had fought to the death, were devoid of farmers. There was nothing to be seen of thousands of people who had lived in Killinochi, a ghost town now full of stray dogs and wandering goats. Much of the population must have gone willingly with the Tigers. The group had fanatical support in the area and people feared the army.

Sgt Sumeda Hettiarchchi, who was in transit in Killinochi returning to the front from 10 days' leave, said the fighting was the worst he had seen in 17 years service but worth it. "Our morale is high and we want to finish it now," he

Trapped by the dying Tigers 150,000 people are being used as human shields by Tamil rebels who have promised to fight to the death. Nick Meo reports from Killin....

said. "We feel very sad for the civilians who are trapped there. We want to help them, and the only way to do that is by finishing the **LTTE**."

Disease is spreading as rains lash the refugees, who have no proper shelter and no sanitation.

Another 18-year-old schoolgirl who was forced to fight but managed to escape said she cried every day at the thought of schoolfriends who were still trapped. "They are only there because of fear of the Tamil commanders," she said. "They told us so many lies. The people will hate them after this."

Load-Date: March 29, 2009

End of Document

Female suicide bomber kills 20 soldiers and 8 civilians in Sri Lanka

The Canadian Press(CP)

February 9, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 Press News Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 588 words

Byline: JEAN LEE, AP

Body

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka _ A suspected Tamil Tiger rebel who pretended to be a war refugee blew herself up Monday as Sri Lankan soldiers frisked her at a checkpoint. Twenty troops and eight civilians died.

State TV showed the carnage after the suicide bombing in Vishwamadu, a northeastern town where hundreds of civilians had been waiting to be sent to refugee camps: a woman in a blue dress curled up in the fetal position, her face and neck spattered with blood; plastic lawn chairs upended and piled in a jumble from the force of the blast.

A soldier briskly picked up a dead child who was sprawled face down in the dirt, yellow shorts peeping out from beneath her bloodstained pink-and-purple dress. He dropped her rag-doll body on top of another corpse in a truck, leaving their bloodied, bare feet jutting out the back.

The footage, released by the government, did not show the bodies of any soldiers.

The military has accused the rebels of using the civilians as human shields and called for noncombatants to flee to government-controlled areas. The rebels have accused the government of indiscriminate shelling, including in a government-designated "safe zone," leading to increasing civilian casualties.

On Monday morning, more than 800 civilians had crossed the front-lines and were being searched by soldiers when the bomber attacked, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

The accused bomber was being frisked when she set off the explosives, killing 28 people and wounding 24 troops and 40 civilians, he said.

The attack targeted a military weak point: the processing of the masses of civilians fleeing the area.

Military officials say the flow of civilians out of the war zone has increased in recent days, with 4,700 fleeing Sunday, bringing the total number of noncombatants to escape the war zone to 20,000 this year, Nanayakkara said.

The attack also highlighted concerns that the rebels were trying to blend in with the civilian population so they can fight on using insurgent tactics.

"The **LTTE** is now desperate because they don't have any control over the civilians," Nanayakkara said, calling the rebels by the acronym of their formal title, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. "They wanted to stop these people coming in."

Female suicide bomber kills 20 soldiers and 8 civilians in Sri Lanka

With most communication to the north severed, the rebels could not be reached for comment.

The U.S. Embassy in Colombo called on the rebels "to allow all civilians freedom of movement" and urged the Sri Lankan government to ensure that all civilians who flee the fighting are transferred to the camps "in accordance with international standards."

The United Nations also condemned the bombing.

"We deplore the loss of civilian life in this targeted killing. It's a blow for people who have suffered so much," said UN resident co-ordinator Neil Buhne.

The rebels have been accused of more than 200 suicide attacks in 25 years of civil war.

Hundreds of thousands of Sri Lankans, meanwhile, crammed into a patriotic exhibition displaying weapons, boats and even submarines captured from the rebels, underscoring growing optimism that decades of war could be drawing to a close.

"We are certain the end of the LTTE is very near. Look at the weapons captured from the Tigers," said Sumith Samarasinghe, 37, a small business owner.

The Tamil Tigers began fighting in 1983 for a separate state for the country's ethnic Tamil minority after decades of marginalization at the hands of governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

Load-Date: February 10, 2009

Warring Sri Lanka marks 60 years of independence

Suna News Agency

February 4, 2008 Monday 7:36 AM EST

Copyright 2008 U.P.I.

All Rights Reserved

ARABIA 2000

Copyright 2008 by Sudan News Agency Distributed by UPI



Length: 589 words

Body

COLOMBO February 4, 2008(Reuters) - A defiant Sri Lankan military paraded tanks and troops as fighter jets flew overhead on Monday to mark the country's 60th anniversary of independence amid fears Tamil Tiger rebels would attack the celebrations.

Thousands of police and troops were on high alert in the capital Colombo as the island's armed forces put on a show of military might along a promenade by the Indian Ocean.

The parade came a day after a suspected **female** Tiger suicide bomber killed 11 people and wounded 92 in an attack on the island's main train station, which sits a few hundred metres from the site of Monday's parade.

Hours after the parade, a soldier was killed and three were wounded when a suspected Tiger roadside bomb hit an army tractor near the south-eastern town of Buttala, the latest in a litany of attacks as a 25-year civil war escalates.

"Two years ago no-one believed that terrorists could be defeated but during the last two years we made it a reality in our motherland," President Mahinda Rajapaksa said in an address to assembled military top brass, politicians and diplomats, referring to territorial gains against the rebels in the east.

"We have had the cancer of terrorism for three of the six decades since independence," he added. "The challenge bestowed on us by history is the defeat of terrorism and the development of the country."

Troops and brass bands marched by after he spoke, accompanied by multi-barrel rocket launchers, armoured personnel carriers and artillery pieces. Navy fast-attack boats cruised past and attack helicopters and jets flew overhead to mark independence from Britain.

Sri Lanka's education ministry, which shut 12 schools ahead of Independence Day because of security operations, said about 40 state schools in Colombo district would remain shut this week because of fears of violence.

Warring Sri Lanka marks 60 years of independence

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said the armed forces expected the rebels to try to mount attacks to disrupt the celebration, which comes just weeks after Rajapaksa withdrew from a 6-year-long ceasefire pact with the rebels.

"There have been recoveries of suicide jackets and an LTTE cadre (fighter) last week. They are trying to disrupt the independence celebrations," he said. "We are expecting some kind of sabotage activity from the Tigers.

A caller claiming to be from a group Sri Lanka's military says is a wing of the Tamil Tigers on Monday warned of bomb attacks in a phone call to Reuters.

Sri Lanka's military said the group, Ellalan Forces, was a codename sometimes used by Tamil Tiger rebels behind attacks in the capital.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam were not immediately available for comment.

A man claiming to be from the group called Reuters in January 1996 one minute before suspected Tigers rammed a truck packed with explosives into the Central Bank in Colombo, killing up to 100 people and wounding 1,400.

Police said attackers destroyed an electricity transformer on the southern outskirts of Colombo early on Monday with explosives, but no one was injured and it was unclear who was responsible.

Fighting between the Sri Lankan military and the LTTE rebels has intensified since the government scrapped the truce last month, saying the rebels were using it to rebuild and re-arm and were not sincere about talking peace.

Hundreds of people have been reported killed in recent weeks and analysts say both sides tend to exaggerate enemy losses in a propaganda war that runs parallel to a conflict that has killed an estimated 70,000 people since 1983.

HU

Load-Date: February 5, 2008

SRI LANKA GOVT. SAYS 10,000 CIVILIANS HAVE ESCAPED FROM WAR ZONE

Hindustan Times

February 8, 2009 Sunday 2:16 PM EST

Copyright 2009 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 378 words

Byline: Report from Asian News International brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 08 -- (ANI): The Government of Sri Lanka on Sunday said that at least 10,000 civilians have escaped from the island-nation's war zone in the last four days.

Calling on the Tamil Tiger rebels to surrender unconditionally or be killed, President Mahinda Rajapakse said late on Saturday: "I want to tell the Tigers: 'Lay down arms and surrender to security forces.'"

He told party supporters that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) had been encircled in a narrow strip of land and had taken thousands of civilians' hostage.

"They must let the civilians go and then unconditionally give themselves up. I must warn them we will not halt our operations against terrorism until we reach our final objective," he warned.

"Over 10,000 civilians have come to Kilinochchi while 139 others have come to Jaffna since the Independence Day (Wednesday). Among the rescued civilians are over 2,800 children and about 3,000 **women**," said a statement from the defence ministry.

The ministry added that medical care, food and water were being provided at the frontlines for the fleeing civilians, who it says were among those held by the Tigers as "human shields."

The United States, European Union, Japan and Norway last week asked the rebels to lay down their arms and take part in a political dialogue to end Sri Lanka's vicious unrest which has claimed an estimated 70,000 lives since 1972.

Military officials said the air force at the weekend launched further strikes on the remnants of the **Tamil Tigers** after successfully bombing a key rebel hideout Friday and killing at least 11, including a top leader.

The Tigers Saturday mounted several counter-attacks in the Mullaitivu area -- which until recently was their military stronghold -- but security forces beat them back, according to the defence ministry.

The Tigers have been restricted to an area less than 100 square kilometres (38 square miles) in Mullaitivu, where officials estimate 120,000 civilians are still trapped.

The Tigers are fighting for survival after being driven back into a small patch of jungle by a military offensive that threatens to end their 30-year armed campaign for an independent ethnic Tamil homeland. (ANI)

SRI LANKA GOVT. SAYS 10,000 CIVILIANS HAVE ESCAPED FROM WAR ZONE

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Asian News International.

-983369

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

Load-Date: February 8, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lanka sees victory over rebels near; After 25-year fight, could Tamil Tigers be on verge of defeat?

Charleston Gazette (West Virginia)

January 11, 2009, Sunday

Copyright 2009 Charleston Newspapers

Section: NEWS; Pg. P12A

Length: 1061 words

Byline: Ravi Nessman, The Associated Press

Body

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka - When Hamilton Wanasinghe was Sri Lanka's military chief in the early 1990s, he tried to buy desperately needed weapons from Russia to fight the Tamil Tiger rebels.

Money was so short that he offered to trade crates of tea for arms.

The Sri Lankan treasury rejected the deal, Wanasinghe says. Then, three years ago, a new president took office and the coffers burst open.

Military recruitment swelled, training improved and hundreds of millions of dollars were spent on new hardware to crush the rebels and end a civil war that has lasted 25 years and killed more than 70,000 people on this teardrop-shaped island off India's southern tip.

"The sky is the limit. Whatever the country can afford, they get," Wanasinghe said.

Senior officials, analysts, diplomats and former military officers say President Mahinda Raja-paksa's commitment to the fight - coupled with a string of miscalculations by the **Tamil Tigers** - has brought one of the world's most sophisticated rebel groups to the brink of defeat.

In recent weeks, government forces have broken through the rebels' front lines, forced them out of much of their de facto state in the north and cornered them in a shrinking pocket of northeastern jungle.

Top officials predict the imminent demise of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and its dream of creating a breakaway state for the country's ethnic Tamil minority in the north and east.

If Sri Lanka succeeds, it could signal the end of one of Asia's most persistent and bloody insurgencies. A lasting peace, though, will depend on whether the 75 percent Sinhalese majority on the island of 20 million people can come to a political compromise with the Tamils.

The Tamils have long felt the government, dominated by the Sinhalese, has discriminated against them, their culture and their language.

Rajapaksa has said he would seek a political resolution to the ethnic conflict once the rebels were destroyed, but Sinhalese nationalist politicians have already said that, with victory in sight, there is no need for the sort of power-sharing arrangement seen as crucial to placating the Tamils and preventing a new outbreak of violence.

Sri Lanka sees victory over rebels near After 25-year fight, could Tamil Tigers be on verge of defeat?

By some estimates, the retreating rebels still have as many as 10,000 hardcore fighters and another 10,000 reservists still ready to fight.

Iqbal Athas, a military analyst for Jane's Defense Weekly, cautions against declaring an early victory. "The war is not yet over," he said. "It could be protracted."

Some of the insurgents could take off their uniforms, blend in with the mass of civilians still living in their stronghold and fight on as guerrillas, said Austin Fernando, a former defense secretary.

Army unprepared

The war that led to the murder of a former Indian prime minister erupted in 1983 after a rebel ambush in the northern Tamil city of Jaffna killed 13 soldiers. Vengeful Sinhalese mobs rampaged through Colombo, the capital 190 miles to the south, leaving more than 2,000 Tamils dead, according to human rights groups.

The army of about 40,000 was unprepared for the brutal fighting that ensued, said Wanasinghe.

"Our army was mainly for containing internal unrest. It was not trained for war," the ex-military chief said.

It soon realized that the rebels, with their rocket-propelled grenades and makeshift armored tractors, were better armed than the troops, he said. The air force was reduced to bombing the rebels with barrels of explosives rolled out the doors of transport planes, he said.

Over time, the violence would spike and ebb. India, with its own sympathetic Tamil community, sent in peacekeepers in 1987, but they soon became targets of the rebels and left in 1990. The following year, Rajiv Gandhi, who as Indian prime minister had ordered in the peacekeepers, was killed by a **female** Tamil Tiger suicide bomber in southern India.

Hoping to limit casualties and the mounting expense of the war, Sri Lankan governments vacillated between fighting and seeking peace, with different officials in the same government often working at cross purposes, said Fernando. While the military did its best to get new equipment and modernize - buying fighter jets and attack boats - it never was properly funded, he said.

A new commitment

Norwegian mediators brokered a cease-fire in 2002, but in 2005 Rajapaksa was elected president and after a brief stab at peace talks, he committed himself to all-out war.

A recruitment drive expanded troop levels by 40 percent, Defense Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa said, and the defense budget hit a record \$1.6 billion.

In previous administrations "the soldiers were getting mixed signals," said Rajapaksa, who is the president's brother.

"Here there was no ambiguity in the aim. It was very clear: destroy the [rebels]. That was clear from the first day to the last day."

As the war neared its apex last year, the government forced aid workers - the last independent witnesses - out of rebel-held areas.

Rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran had transformed the organization from little more than a street gang in the 1970s into a fearsome guerrilla group that ran a dictatorial regime that ruled a wide swath of the north, with its own police, courts and customs department.

The rebels dug in effectively, deployed heavy artillery, established a significant naval wing and a rudimentary air force that once bombed Colombo's international airport. It raised up to \$300 million a year from a network of fake

Sri Lanka sees victory over rebels near After 25-year fight, could Tamil Tigers be on verge of defeat?

charities and international smuggling of arms, drugs and possibly even people, according to Jane's Intelligence Review.

Prabhakaran was making costly errors, though, analysts said.

Gandhi's assassination alienated Prabhakaran's strongest allies in India.

During negotiations that followed the 2002 cease-fire, he rejected a deal that would have given the rebels broad autonomy over the north and east but not full independence. It was widely seen as the best deal he could ever get.

In 2004, a top commander known as Col. Karuna ran afoul of the Tiger leadership and defected to the government side with thousands of his rebel fighters.

With Karuna helping the government, the military was able to capture the east in July 2007. Then it turned its attention to the north and forced the rebels into a broad retreat.

Now the rebels are huddled in the northeastern jungles along with hundreds of thousands of civilians, many of them war refugees living in makeshift shelters.

Load-Date: January 12, 2009

End of Document

Clinton concerned over Sri Lanka 'safe zone' deaths

Agence France Presse -- English

March 13, 2009 Friday 8:13 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 462 words

Dateline: WASHINGTON, March 13 2009

Body

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa on Friday to express her "deep concern" over mounting deaths in a government safe zone, a US official said.

Clinton told him that Sri Lankan troops "should not fire into civilian areas of the conflict zone" and urged him to allow humanitarian groups full access to people in need, said a State Department spokesman, Gordon Duguid.

The secretary called Rajapaksa to "express the United States' deep concern over the deteriorating conditions and increasing loss of life" in the government-designated zone in the country's north, he said in a statement.

Last month the government in Colombo asked men, women and children to move to a stretch of coastline as troops advanced on rebel positions in the north in a bid to crush all remaining pockets of resistance by Tamil Tiger rebels.

"The secretary stated that the Sri Lankan Army should not fire into the civilian areas of the conflict zone," according to Duguid who was replying to a question from AFP about the substance of the phone call.

Earlier this month, New York-based Human Rights Watch alleged the military had "repeatedly and indiscriminately" shelled densely populated areas and hospitals inside the war zone.

Government forces have pushed Liberation Tiger of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels into a shrinking strip of land in the northeast and have said they hope to completely crush the guerrillas by April.

But tens of thousands of civilians are trapped behind the front line, according to relief agencies.

Duguid said Clinton "urged the president to give international humanitarian relief organizations full access to the conflict area and displaced persons camps, including screening centers."

With the exception of the International Committee of the Red Cross, aid agencies face many restrictions in their efforts to transport food and supplies to civilians caught up in the conflict.

Clinton "offered immediate and post-conflict reconstruction assistance," the statement said.

She also condemned the rebel actions toward civilians.

Clinton concerned over Sri Lanka 'safe zone' deaths

Human Rights Watch has accused the **Tamil Tigers** of holding civilians as "human shields," preventing people from leaving the areas under their control and forcibly recruiting children to fight the army.

Duguid said Clinton urged Rajapaksa to "devise a political solution" to the conflict.

"The United States believes that a durable and lasting peace will only be achieved through a political solution that addresses the legitimate aspirations of all of Sri Lanka's communities," he said.

"We call on the Sri Lankan Government to put forward a proposal now to engage Tamils who do not espouse violence or terrorism, and to develop power sharing arrangements so that lasting peace and reconciliation can be achieved."

Load-Date: March 14, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lanka military says fighting killed 63

The Associated Press

September 27, 2008 Saturday

Copyright 2008 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 463 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

A wave of gunbattles, artillery attacks and air strikes across northern Sri Lanka killed 60 Tamil Tiger rebels and three soldiers, the military said Saturday.

The fighting came during a major escalation of the nation's quarter-century civil war, with military forces pushing toward the rebels' administrative capital in the town of Kilinochchi and government officials promising to destroy the rebel group by the end of the year.

The fiercest battles Friday erupted in Kilinochchi district, deep in the rebels' heartland, where troops and guerrilla fighters waged at least a dozen separate battles that killed 46 rebels and one soldier, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Air force jets also pounded the area, hitting a rebel gathering point, logistics centers and a vehicle storage yard, the military said.

On Saturday afternoon, jets attacked a training base for **female** rebel suicide bombers, known as the Black Tigers, Nanayakkara said. However, the rebel-affiliated Web site TamilNet said one civilian was killed and two others, including a child, were injured in the attack.

Much of the fighting occurred as the troops, who were only three miles from the town of Kilinochchi, pushed forward with their offensive against the rebels, known formally as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, he said.

"At the same time, the **LTTE** is trying to attack the areas that we newly captured," he said.

Other battles in the Welioya and Vavuniya districts killed 14 rebels, while two soldiers were killed in a rebel artillery attack on the Jaffna peninsula, he said.

With nearly all communications to the north severed, rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan could not be contacted for comment.

It was not possible to verify the military's reports because most journalists and other independent observers are barred from the war zone. Both sides often exaggerate the damage inflicted on the other and underreport their own losses.

Sri Lanka military says fighting killed 63

Earlier this week, army commander Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka said troops were closing in on the rebel capital and were expected to fire their first rounds on the town by next week. He also compared rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran to "a caged animal."

British parliamentarians Shahid Malik and Lord Malloch Brown said the increased hostilities were of "acute concern" to Britain's government. They also urged the rebels, who have been accused of forcing civilians to remain in their territory despite the fighting, "to take urgent action to allow free movement of civilians," according to a statement Friday.

The **Tamil Tigers** have fought since 1982 to create an independent state for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils following decades of marginalization by governments dominated by the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

Load-Date: September 28, 2008

End of Document

Protest over Hindu temple

The Star (South Africa)

June 18, 2008 Wednesday

e4 Edition

Copyright 2008 Independent News and Media Ltd All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 670 words

Body

Bangkok - About 5 000 people today protested at the Thai foreign ministry against a deal that will allow Cambodia to seek UN recognition for a Hindu temple on the border dividing the two countries. The long-disputed Preah Vihear temple, located on a mountaintop, is in Cambodia, but the only way to reach it is through an entrance in Thailand. The protesters have rallied for more than three weeks.

Baghdad - The death toll from a devastating truck bombing in Baghdad rose to 63 today with US forces blaming a rogue Shi'ite militia for the attack. Four children and five women were among those killed by yesterday's blast near a crowded market in the predominantly Shi'ite neighbourhood of al-Hurriya in northwestern Baghdad. Another 75 people were hurt.

London - The accent was one style and fashion yesterday - the first day of the Royal Ascot meeting at Ascot in England. The annual horseracing event is spread over five days and is one of the highlights of the English social season.

Baghdad - An Iranian opposition group said today that the Iraqi government's move to ban dealings with it reflected "hysterical pressures" on Baghdad by the "religious fascism" ruling Iran. The statement followed an announcement yesterday by Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's Cabinet accusing the Mujahedeen Khalq organisation of interfering in Iraq's internal affairs.

Canberra - Australia's government is ready to take emergency control over the nation's oil stocks to meet energy shortages caused by an explosion at a natural gas plant. Western Australia state, a major exporter of iron ore and natural gas, lost 30% of its natural gas supplies on June 3 when Apache Energy's plant at remote Varanus Island was shut down by a pipeline explosion.

Rome - Italian police arrested 28 Sri Lankan Tamils today on charges of aiding and abetting the outlawed Tamil Tigers group fighting a separatist insurgency against the government in Colombo. They were arrested for suspected membership of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and of providing funding for the group. The LTTE is proscribed as a terrorist organisation by the EU.

New York - A first edition of the book in which Nicolaus Copernicus presented his earthshaking theory of the cosmos has fetched more than \$2,2- million (R17,600 000) at a New York auction. The 1543 copy of Copernicus' De revolutionibus orbium coelestium (On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres) puts forth the theory that the sun - rather than the Earth - is at the centre of the solar system.

Protest over Hindu temple

Jakarta - An Islamic militant awaiting execution in Indonesia for carrying out the 2002 Bali bombings has warned that al-Qaeda would be "very likely" to launch revenge attacks if authorities kill him, a magazine reported. Imam Samudra and two other Indonesian militants were sentenced to death in 2003 for their roles in the suicide attacks that killed 202 people.

Terra Haute - Call it a lemonade standoff. A young girl whose lemonade stand was robbed of \$17,50 (R140) chased the suspect to a nearby home and called the police, who spent nearly an hour trying to coax the man into surrendering. Officers eventually persuaded Steve Tryon (18) to come outside after 45 minutes and arrested him on a preliminary felony charge of robbery.

Kolkata - Indian military and civil authorities used speed boats to ferry food and drinking water to hundreds of thousands of villagers cut off by monsoon floods that have killed at least 27 people in the past week, officials said today. Local authorities also sought to use airforce helicopters to drop supplies to more than 50 000 people stranded in nearly 200 villages in West Bengal state.

Los Angeles - Cyd Charisse, the long-legged Texas beauty who danced with the Ballet Russe as a teenager and starred in MGM musicals with Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly, died today. She was 86. She appeared in dramatic films, but her fame came from the Technicolour musicals of the 1940s and 50s. She also forged a popular song-and-dance partnership with her husband, singer Tony Bennett.

Load-Date: June 18, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lanka military: 63 dead in airstrikes, battles

Associated Press Online

September 27, 2008 Saturday 10:07 AM GMT

Copyright 2008 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 439 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A wave of gunbattles, artillery attacks and air strikes across northern Sri Lanka killed 60 Tamil Tiger rebels and three soldiers, the military said Saturday.

The fighting came during a major escalation of the nation's quarter-century civil war, with military forces pushing toward the rebels' administrative capital in the town of Kilinochchi and government officials promising to destroy the rebel group by the end of the year.

The fiercest battles Friday erupted in Kilinochchi district, deep in the rebels' heartland, where troops and guerrilla fighters waged at least a dozen separate battles that killed 46 rebels and one soldier, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Air force jets also pounded the area, hitting a rebel gathering point, logistics centers and a vehicle storage yard, the military said.

On Saturday afternoon, jets attacked a training base for ***female*** rebel suicide bombers, known as Black Tigers, Nanayakkara said.

Much of the fighting occurred as the troops, who were only three miles from the town of Kilinochchi, pushed forward with their offensive against the rebels, known formally as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, he said.

"At the same time, the ***LTTE*** is trying to attack the areas that we newly captured," he said.

Other battles in the Welioya and Vavuniya districts killed 14 rebels, while two soldiers were killed in a rebel artillery attack on the Jaffna peninsula, he said.

With nearly all communications to the north severed, rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan could not be contacted for comment.

It was not possible to verify the military's reports because most journalists and other independent observers are barred from the war zone. Both sides often exaggerate the damage inflicted on the other and underreport their own losses.

Sri Lanka military: 63 dead in airstrikes, battles

Earlier this week, army commander Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka said troops were closing in on the rebel capital and were expected to fire their first rounds on the town by next week. He also compared rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran to "a caged animal."

British parliamentarians Shahid Malik and Lord Malloch Brown said the increased hostilities were of "acute concern" to Britain's government. They also urged the rebels, who have been accused of forcing civilians to remain in their territory despite the fighting, "to take urgent action to allow free movement of civilians," according to a statement Friday.

The **Tamil Tigers** have fought since 1982 to create an independent state for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils following decades of marginalization by governments dominated by the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

Load-Date: September 28, 2008

End of Document

Female suicide bomber kills 28 in Sri Lanka

Associated Press Online

February 9, 2009 Monday 2:20 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 703 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A woman with a bomb strapped to her body hid in a crowd of Sri Lankan civilians on Monday, blowing herself up as security forces frisked people fleeing the northern war zone and killing 28 people, the military said.

The suicide attack, which killed 20 soldiers and eight civilians, led to fears the Tamil Tiger separatists boxed into a small strip of land on the northeastern coast and on the verge of defeat will increasingly turn to guerrilla warfare in their battle against government forces.

The Red Cross estimates 250,000 civilians are also trapped in the area.

The military has accused the rebels of using the civilians as human shields and called for noncombatants to flee to government-controlled areas. The rebels have accused the government of indiscriminate shelling, including in a government-designated "safe zone," leading to increasing civilian casualties.

On Monday morning, more than 800 civilians had crossed the front lines and were being searched by soldiers when the bomber attacked, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

The accused bomber was being frisked when she set off the explosives, killing 28 people and wounding 24 troops and 40 civilians, he said.

Footage run on state television showed a child in a purple checked dress lying lifeless on the ground and other civilians lay dead nearby. Plastic chairs they were apparently sitting on as they waited to be processed were overturned, and blood stained the ground.

The attack targeted a military weak point: the processing of the masses of civilians fleeing the area.

Military officials say the flow of civilians out of the war zone has increased in recent days, with 4,700 fleeing Sunday, bringing the total number of noncombatants to escape the war zone to 20,000 this year, Nanayakkara said.

The attack also highlighted concerns that the rebels were trying to blend in with the civilian population so they can fight on using insurgent tactics.

"The **LTTE** is now desperate because they don't have any control over the civilians," Nanayakkara said, calling the rebels by the acronym of their formal title, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. "They wanted to stop these people coming in."

Female suicide bomber kills 28 in Sri Lanka

Independent confirmation of the attack was not available because journalists were barred from the war zone.

With most communication to the north severed, the rebels could not be reached for comment.

The U.S. Embassy in Colombo called on the rebels "to allow all civilians freedom of movement" and urged the Sri Lankan government to ensure that all civilians who flee the fighting are transferred to the camps "in accordance with international standards."

The United Nations also condemned the bombing.

"We deplore the loss of civilian life in this targeted killing. It's a blow for people who have suffered so much," said U.N. resident coordinator Neil Buhne.

The rebels have been accused of more than 200 suicide attacks in 25 years of civil war and are listed as a terror group by the United States and the European Union.

Hundreds of thousands of Sri Lankans meanwhile crammed into a patriotic exhibition displaying weapons, boats and even submarines captured from the rebels, underscoring growing optimism that decades of war could be drawing to a close.

"We are certain the end of the LTTE is very near. Look at the weapons captured from the Tigers," said Sumith Samarasinghe, 37, a small business owner.

The Tamil Tigers began fighting in 1983 for a separate state for the nation's ethnic Tamil minority after decades of marginalization at the hands of governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

Nobel peace laureate Jose Ramos-Horta, the president of East Timor, called on both sides to agree to an immediate cease-fire, to allow aid groups and independent journalists full access to the conflict zone and to begin immediate talks for a political resolution to the conflict. He also offered himself as a mediator.

Also Monday, the air force hit a camouflaged building inland where the rebels' sea wing hid its craft, Nanayakkara said. "The place was destroyed," he said.

The military also reported killing 34 rebels who tried to break through the front lines Saturday in an armored truck.

Load-Date: February 10, 2009

The Barbed Wire Returns; The Sri Lankan Army's plan for camps to intern Tamil civilians is brutal and illegal. It will help neither peace nor reconciliation in the island

The Times (London)

February 13, 2009 Friday

Edition 1

Copyright 2009 Times Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

THE TIMES

Section: FEATURES; Pg. 2

Length: 627 words

Body

It was one of the 20th century's most bestial images, and one that was invented by the British. The concentration camps set up by Lord Kitchener to intern Boer women and children were officially intended to shelter civilians while the British Forces conducted a scorched-earth policy to deprive Boer combatants of food and shelter. In fact, they were places of brutality, hardship and death. More than 26,000 people died in some 50 makeshift camps across South Africa.

Forty years later, millions more died in Nazi camps that borrowed the name and copied the brutal regime of starvation and death. Humanity vowed that never again would such atrocities be tolerated. Yet they have persisted: from the Soviet gulags to the killing fields of Cambodia and the Serb-run camps housing half-starved Bosnians. And now the barbed wire is going up again, as Tamil civilians are herded into makeshift compounds. The victorious Sri Lankan Army, sweeping across the last holdouts of the separatist Tamil Tigers, is proposing to imprison tens of thousands of non-combatants in a "safe zone" for up to three years as the area is "cleansed" of rebel supporters. Starvation, despair and death are all too easy to predict.

Some 250,000 civilians have been trapped by the fighting in the north east of the island. Hundreds have already been killed, either by Tiger fighters firing on them as they tried to escape or by government troops shelling the rebel enclave, now only some 70 square miles. Many of those fleeing the crossfire have been killed by mines. The International Committee of the Red Cross has done its best, but was forced yesterday to evacuate 160 patients from a makeshift hospital where artillery shelling killed 16 people earlier in the week. The United Nations is planning for an exodus of 150,000 people. But the troops appear intent on holding them, ostensibly for their safety but in fact to root out any supporters or relatives of the Tiger fighters (see page 39).

The army has good grounds for suspicion. Velupillai Prabakharan, the fanatical leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), has apparently escaped, probably by sea, but he has left behind more than 700 zealots, ready to fight to the death, and suicide bombers. Some have already blown themselves up, killing dozens of troops and civilians. For years the Tigers have forced each Tamil family to enlist one of its members in the rebel army. Until the last minute, Tamils have been assembling mortars, grenades and roadside bombs in workshops in Tiger-

The Barbed Wire Returns The Sri Lankan Army's plan for camps to intern Tamil civilians is brutal and illegal. It will help neither peace nor reconciliation in t....

controlled towns. Prabakharan's reign of terror has used civilians as human shields or forced them to build defences. Few have been able to stay out of the conflict.

The 50,000-strong army, however, is now bent on revenge. After 25 years of fighting, some 70,000 deaths and a war that has brutalised the country and stunted its economy, the hardline Government of President Rajapaska has resolved to crush the LTTE by force and destroy the basis of Tamil separatism. All earlier offers of devolution and autonomy have been withdrawn. Sinhala nationalism was the main issue of the last election, with parties in the south competing to denounce the Norwegian-brokered peace talks. There is no talk of political reconciliation.

Instead, Colombo appears to be giving free rein to the armed forces and turning a blind eye to civilian suffering. At the same time it is asking Britain for support to fund its five "welfare villages", ignoring protests from Indian and Sri Lankan MPs. Human rights activists have denounced these as illegal detention centres and demanded, as a minimum, international inspection and control. A century after Britain's shameful treatment of the Boers, this country should be the first to protest at this odious plan.

Load-Date: February 15, 2009

End of Document

Govt. warns US and EU against sanctions

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 31, 2008 Saturday 3:22 PM EST

Copyright 2008 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 440 words

Byline: Report from Daily Mirror brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 31 -- Sri Lanka called on Western powers Thursday to be wary of imposing sanctions for its alleged human rights violations, warning that the action could worsen Sri Lanka's long-running ethnic conflict.

The United States and the European Union have withheld various aid programmes and are debating whether to withdraw special trade benefits from Sri Lanka amid concerns the human rights situation has deteriorated since the government pulled out of a Norwegian-brokered truce with the **Tamil Tigers** in January.

"It really is necessary to have sympathy for and understanding of the problems of a developing country that is grappling with terrorism," international trade Minister G.L. Peiris said in Washington.

"And to cut off resources, to threaten to withdraw trade benefits, GSP (General System of Preference) and so on -- all of that is unhelpful because that will only mean the dissemination of poverty, deprivation and adversity," he told AFP.

Peiris said under such sanctions and other pressures on "a democratic government pitted against terrorism, you can't possibly prevail."

Peiris was in Washington for talks with US officials and to woo US investors to set up shop in Sri Lanka's eastern province, where Tamil Tiger rebels were removed from enclaves after heavy fighting last year.

Expressing concern over the rights violations and the raging civil war, the US State Department said Thursday that there was no military solution to the ethnic conflict, and emphasized the need for a political settlement.

"We have said repeatedly that there is no military solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka and there needs to be a political solution," said Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Evan Feigenbaum.

"So we are encouraging everybody not least the government to pursue a political solution," Feigenbaum said.

Washington considers the **LTTE** as a terrorist group.

Peiris cited 60 indictments sent out recently by the office of Sri Lanka's attorney general seeking criminal prosecution on suspected rights abusers, as well as Colombo's action to halt the conscription of child soldiers among paramilitary troops.

Govt. warns US and EU against sanctions

If the Western powers pulled back GSP preferential duty-free privileges from Sri Lanka, he said, "then hundreds of thousands of poor people are going to be thrown out of employment. "It is not going to be a measure directed against the government as 65 to 70 percent of garment factories is situated in the rural sector and people working on garment factories are women who have become breadwinners of families," he said.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror.

-677683

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

Load-Date: August 11, 2008

End of Document

Attempt to disrupt poll thwarted

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 16, 2008 Friday 2:57 PM EST

Copyright 2008 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1447 words

Byline: Report from Daily Mirror brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 16 -- It is now revealed that one of suicide cadre had carried out the attack against the A-520 cargo ship that was used as a supply vessel for the Sri Lanka Navy's Deep operations and had been instrumental in destroying several of the **LTTE**'s floating arms warehouses last year. They believe the Tiger cadre approached the supply ship, that was used as a transport vessel by the navy to transport soft cargo from Colombo to Trincomalee and Kankasanthurai and using explosives strapped to his body had damaged the ship. The 60 metres long and 10 metres tall ship that was anchored at the Ashraf Jetty went down due to a large hole created on its hull by the explosion that rocked the area at about 2.20 AM on May 10, the Eastern provincial council election day.

The day before the Eastern Provincial Council elections, a top government MP, who was flown to Trincomalee, was informed by intelligence officers of a series of arrests of well-trained Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) cadres from the eastern province.

The government Parliamentarian had congratulated the top intelligence officials over the arrest of these cadres on the eve of the Provincial Council election, held to elect 37 members for the Eastern Provincial Council.

These arrests took place after a series of intelligence gathering units including the military intelligence obtained information that at least 18 highly trained **Tamil Tigers** were present in Trincomalee and Batticaloa by May 9, a day before the Election Day. A total of 24 cadres had been sent to the eastern province by the **LTTE** leadership in order to disrupt the election by creating incidents of violence in the province, the intelligence sources revealed.

It is also learnt that six of them escaped arrest. However intelligence claimed that the remaining cadres were unable to carry out any type of violence except for a few incidents that had not directly affected the elections held on May 10 in the Batticaloa, Ampara and Trincomalee districts. They also suspect that the attack on the A- 520 Navy's cargo ship had been carried out by one of the six cadres who were at large.

Among the arrested cadres there were several **female** cadres as well. A few of them had entered the government areas through Omanthai posing as civilians while others had come through the sea route pretending to be fishermen.

According to intelligence sources these trained cadres were tasked to plant claymore mines and also use Rocket Propelled Grenade launchers to attack strategically important locations creating maximum damage to the public and property.

Attempt to disrupt poll thwarted

It is also learnt that these cadres had taken weapons and other military equipment from the caches of their earlier weapons dumps hidden in the Peraru jungles that had been left behind by the fleeing Tigers last year.

It is now revealed that one of suicide cadre had carried out the attack against the A-520 cargo ship that was used as a supply vessel for the Sri Lanka Navy's Deep operations and had been instrumental in destroying several of the LTTE's floating arms warehouses last year.

They believe the Tiger cadre approached the supply ship, that was used as a transport vessel by the navy to transport soft cargo from Colombo to Trincomalee and Kankasanthurai and using explosives strapped to his body had damaged the ship. The 60 metres long and 10 metres tall ship that was anchored at the Ashraf Jetty went down due to a large hole created on its hull by the explosion that rocked the area at about 2.20 AM on May 10, the Eastern provincial council election day.

Later the Navy found parts of the suicide cadre's body from the sea and also some diving equipment proving that the attacker had carried out an amphibian attack.

Hours after the attack the pro-LTTE Tamilnet reported that "Commandos from Kangkai Amaran unit of the Sea Tigers took part in this mission. The unit was named after a senior commander of the Sea Tigers killed by the Sri Lanka Army Deep Penetration Unit on 29 June 2001 in an attack in the Mannar district," the website said.

It also charged that the ship was taken into Navy custody in 2003 when it was reportedly involved in people-smuggling operations. Some 250 Pakistanis were on board.

In another development with the losing of the entire eastern province and the series of setbacks in the northern battle front, the LTTE is now seeking to create violence in the estate sector.

Several government intelligence units have warned that due to this situation a serious security threat prevails in the upcountry area with the involvement of several persons. In the recent past, the police arrested a top LTTE leader and later a principal and the deputy principal of a school in Hatton in connection with LTTE links.

Army moving forward in North

After days of heavy fighting in the front lines in the Wanni region, the military claimed that it was close to reach the Vedithalathivu-Pooneryn road, which is the road used by the Tigers as their main supply road.

Accordingly, 9 Gemunu Watch soldiers led by its Brigade Commander Colonel Sanjaya Wanasinghe are now some 1.7 kilometres away from the strategically important road that leads to Pooneryn.

These troops, advancing from Manthai north had to face many obstacles as the Tigers had laid a large numbers of mines and traps.

Meanwhile, in Palampiddi north of Madhu Church, troops are further advancing its lines. 57-1 Brigade Commander Colonel V. Ravipriya leading the team is exerting heavy pressure on the Tigers. It is also learnt that after several readjustments of the defence lines, the Tigers were currently setting up strong military defence lines.

The Palampiddi town was under siege for several days by the military as LTTE cadres fled the area.

Police officer's son injured in pistol mishap

The second son of a senior police officer in the Homagama area was allegedly injured following his eldest son mistakenly firing the pistol belonging to the Police Officer, but the incident was hushed up with the intervention of senior police officers in the area on a request by the police officer in question.

According to sources, on May 6, the said police officer had gone to his home in Homagama from his station and handed over his official pistol without unloading the ammunition to his seventeen-year old elder son to be hidden under the mattress of his bed. However, the elder son, who is studying in a popular school in Colombo, had played

Attempt to disrupt poll thwarted

with the gun resulting in it being fired and injuring the officer's fifteen year old second son, who had sat for the Ordinary Level examination. Due to the gunshot, the younger son was seriously injured and was immediately rushed to the Homagama hospital for treatment.

The boy had undergone surgery at the hospital due to his injuries to the stomach area and had stayed at least a day at the hospital.

However, the police officer in question did not allowed any type of police inquiry into the incident and some senior police officers in the Police Headquarters had ordered the area police station not to initiate any inquiry.

It is reported that the police officer, who has connections with top police officers in the area as well as the Police Headquarters is not carrying out his duties efficiently as a police officer.

Threat to Diyatalawa

Posing a grave security threat on the Diyatalawa area, it is reported that a top area Army Officer in charge of security is not taking any security measures to tighten the security in the area, but was carrying out political work to promote himself among the public with the help of several politicians.

It is learnt that recently the Army officer had allegedly demolished a Buddha statute in the Diyatalawa area amidst protests from the people. When a villager had inquired about the demolition of the statue from the Army officer, he had been allegedly assaulted by the officer.

Later the villager had gone to the Diyatalawa police station to lodge a complaint, but it is learnt that the police station had reportedly denied receiving the complaint against the said army officer.

It is also learnt that despite the prevailing security situation in the country and the upcountry areas, this particular officer was reportedly not carrying out the required security measures.

According to Police and intelligence reports the Diyatalawa area and its suburbs were very vulnerable to terrorist attacks. There were several intelligence warnings against such type of attacks targeting this area.

As was done earlier, this is not the way to tighten security after violence takes place but it is necessary to have a proper plan to strengthen the security before any incident occurs.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror.

-659558

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

Load-Date: August 11, 2008