

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

Job Number: 223508107

Documents (100)

1. [*Toughest battle ahead: Fighting Tigers in jungles Arms caches uncovered as Sri Lankan military braces itself for war in dense forests of 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

2. [*Raging at daybreak; On the front lines in a country consumed by 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

3. [*Sri Lanka has terrorist Tigers backed into corner; Military victory may herald bloodier insurgency*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [*Civilians pour out of Sri Lankan war zone: govt*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [*Sri Lanka : An 'island of blood'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Voting in Sri Lanka 's lawless east Reports of violence and coercion bring fears of rigged results](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Amnesty International forgets suicide bombers kill people](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Civilians pour out of Sri Lanka war zone: govt](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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 Lankan Jets Destroy Rebel Hideout](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Sri Lanka says 17 rebels killed in sea clash](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

11. [*Nugget of a good play but short on serendipity*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

12. [*Tigers leader's bunker captured*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

13. [*SRI LANKA Thousands of innocents still in line of fire as enemies battle to the bitter end Tamil Tiger by the tail in not so 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

14. [*THE LAST BATTLE AND NATIONALISM*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

15. [*The history of ceasefires revisited*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

16. [Fierce clashes in Lanka; leave 33 combatants dead](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

17. [A way out for the civilians or for the others?](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

18. [Sri Lankan Army says rebels fired at fleeing 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

19. [Three-hour battle at key military 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

20. ['Tigers in for another jolt in Wanni shortly'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

21. [*Air strike, ground battles killed 28 rebels, five soldiers in Sri Lanka , military says*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

22. [*Sri Lankan Says 49 Killed in 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

23. [*UN , U.S. condemn suicide attack in Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

24. [*Airstrike, ground battles killed 36 rebels, five soldiers in Sri Lanka , military says*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

25. [*Sri Lankan Air Force pound 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

26. [*Tigers snatch children to guard themselves*](#)

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. [Air Force launches multiple-air raids](#)

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. [An excellent relationship](#)

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. [Heavy casualties on both sides](#)

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. [Raging battles in north, heavy casualties](#)

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. [Teacher-turned Tiger 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

32. [*Delighted to beat you*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [*More people cross over*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [*Battered Tigers irked by Southern unity against terrorism*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

35. [*3 artillery attacks hit hospital in Sri Lanka rebel zone*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

36. [*Wanni operation enters into fast track*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Sri Lanka : An analysis of military operations](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [At Least 9 Killed by Shelling at Sri Lanka 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

39. [Civilian influx into safe areas continues](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Ramya depicts fleeing 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

41. [End in sight](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

42. [Sri Lanka accuses international rights groups of bias](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [From Pooneryn to the Two Terror Bastions](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Airstrike, ground battles killed 43 rebels, six soldiers in Sri Lanka , military says](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

45. [34 Sri Lankan rebels killed in army attack](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

46. [Sri Lanka 's military says airstrike, ground battles kill 43 rebels and 6 government soldiers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

47. [Forces knocking on the gates of Tigers' last bastion](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [R. SAMPANTHAN'S LAMENT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [23 killed, over 60 wounded in Wanni suicide blast in Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

50. [Captured English teacher cum terrorist narrates harrowing tale](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Troops poised to capture Periyamadu](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [THE PRICE OF ALLEGED 'PEACE TALKS?\(EURO\)\(TM\)](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [THE THREE BASIC PARAMETERS FOR LASTING PEACE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

54. [Fleeing civilians, easy victims of Tiger savagery](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Gallant forces gallop on the last lap to liberation](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Air Force targets 'Charles Anthony' hqrs, training camps](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

57. [VIPs advised to strictly adhere to security measures](#)

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, 200958. [End of road for Tigers as troops close in on Pooneryn](#)**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, 200959. [Prabhakaran's swansong](#)**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, 200960. [Advancing troops brave lashing rains to reach Tiger hole](#)**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, 200961. [Back to democracy under Pilleyan](#)**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, 200962. [Army's kindness perfect antidote to Tigers' inhumanity](#)**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

63. [*People ready for polls amidst confidence on Forces*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

64. [*Sri Lankan military says 17 Tamil rebels killed in latest clashes*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

65. [*Sri Lanka says 17 rebels killed in 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

66. [*A cowardly act*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [*Forces repulse attack on Vavuniya security complex*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

68. [*19 fleeing civilians killed by Sri Lankan rebels: 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

69. [Suicide blast kills 12 police personnel amid 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

70. [Recent Developments 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

71. [Countdown to final battle begins](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Tamil Nadu and the Sri Lankan ethnic issue](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Reward for woman CDF member who detected rail bomber](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

74. [A vote for UNP, a vote for Tigers - TMVP](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Bus explosion injures 18 in Sri Lankan capital](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

76. [32 killed in Sri Lanka clashes: 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

77. [Democracy the loser if terror wins -President](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

78. [More patients evacuated from rebels' area in Sri Lankan](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Tigers kill 19 more civilians, injure 75](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [As Sri Lanka Fighting Seems Near an End, Fears Rise Over What Comes Next](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

81. [Sri Lankan Air Force bombs rebels' administrative center](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [FILM: SRI LANKA DECRIES DOCUMENTARY ON TAMIL SUICIDE BOMBERS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

83. [Troops regain Palampiddy](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [*Sri Lanka celebrates 60th anniversary as bus attack blamed on rebels kills 12 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,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

85. [*More civilians enter 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

86. [*WANNI WAR AND THE TRAGIC PLIGHT OF TRAPPED 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,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

87. [*Tigers exert maximum pressure on 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,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

88. [*Sri Lanka risks becoming next Zimbabwe , widow warns*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

89. [*Sri Lanka suicide blast kills 28*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

90. [*Displaced killed in 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

91. [*With UN High Commissioner for Human Rights*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

92. [*North-South bridges*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

93. [*Sri Lanka celebrates the 60th anniversary of its independence RIGHTS- SRI LANKA : Civilian Lives Going Cheap*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

94. [*India endorsed our road map for democracy*](#)

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

95. [Sri Lanka 's most wanted Tiger running out of options](#)

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

96. [14 killed in northern Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

97. [Terrorism: Lanka's greatest post colonial challenge - Kohona](#)

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

98. [FBI sought arrest of Tamil suspect](#)

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

99. [Lanka's most intractable problem](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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. [Troops in Welioya capture Gajabapura](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search 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

Toughest battle ahead: Fighting Tigers in jungles; Arms caches uncovered as Sri Lankan military braces itself for war in dense forests of Wanni

The Straits Times (Singapore)

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 644 words

Byline: Ravi Velloor, South Asia Bureau Chief

Body

SRI Lankan troops have stumbled on munitions left behind by the retreating **Tamil Tigers** that include thermobaric weapons which produce more explosive energy than other conventional explosives, as fighting centres on the impenetrable tropical forests in the north - known as the Wanni.

The well-prepared fortifications, underground settlements and booby-trapped approaches into the jungle may allow the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) to hold off the troops for months, people with expert knowledge of the terrain say.

Over the weekend, troops found Tippmann A-5 guns capable of firing chemicals, 120mm cannon and thermobaric weapons that follow a two-stage explosion ending with a blast sucking all the air out of the area.

One of the vital discoveries was the presence of 'undersea craft' still under construction.

The largest underwater craft discovered by troops was about 10m in length and fitted with armour plates, while the other three appeared to have been in the process of being built.

The arms caches underscored the military muscle of the Tiger war machine, depleted though it has been in recent times. It was a warning to advancing troops as well, on what to expect as the **LTTE** rebels try to draw the troops into the jungles.

'The Tigers fought us in Jaffna as though they were a conventional army, repeating a mistake they made with the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in 1987 and 1988,' said a senior official in Colombo. 'They have realised their disadvantage in the towns and now want to bleed us in the jungles.'

Those jungles are almost impenetrable, except on foot. The foliage can be so dense that even sunlight cannot filter through the canopy of the trees. The army cannot roll its battle tanks into the area. Nor is artillery of much use. Air force jets looking to strafe or bomb the place have no visible targets.

Then again, a warren of tunnels dug by the Tigers criss-cross the Wanni. Some bunkers are located 20m to 25m below solid rock, out of harm's way even from sustained shelling. Tiger cadres themselves are trained to stay rock steady for hours during artillery or infantry assaults, a discipline known only to the most elite commando units.

'The process of jungle bashing involves longer time and more casualties because soldiers are exposed to direct fire. Secondly, the area tends to be booby-trapped,' retired lieutenant-general A.S. Kalkat, who served as overall commander of the IPKF, told The Straits Times.

Toughest battle ahead: Fighting Tigers in jungles Arms caches uncovered as Sri Lankan military braces itself for war in dense forests of Wanni

'But you have to go through this phase. It has to be seen how sustained the effort can be and how many army casualties are politically acceptable for the Sri Lankan government,' he added.

Colombo has said that its troops now control 95 per cent of the areas where the writ of the Tigers ran not too long ago. Still, for all its remarkable battlefield successes, Sri Lanka's army has its work cut out in the Wanni.

It is also pursuing a quarry with a remarkable sense of self-preservation.

When Indian troops stumbled on a bunch of women guerillas in late 1988, they realised that significant Tiger facilities must be nearby. It took them 36 hours to discover the Tiger base. By then, the group's leader Velupillai Prabhakaran had melted away to a camp in Mullaitivu district.

The foliage there is said to be even thicker. Prabhakaran named his camp Base One Four and stayed out of reach of the Indians.

Base One Four's facilities include a firing range, living quarters for hundreds of people and even a field hospital. Yet, it cannot be spotted from the air.

'These are not just hideouts but also actual bases,' said Lt-Gen (Ret) Kalkat. 'They would have stored ammunition and rations for prolonged periods of sustenance. To say they (Sri Lankan troops) have control, they will have to destroy and overrun these bases. You could say you control the Tigers' areas only when you have overrun those bases.'

velloor@sph.com.sg

Load-Date: February 2, 2009

End of Document

Raging at daybreak; On the front lines in a country consumed by civil war

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

September 20, 2008 Saturday

National Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 1950 words

Byline: Stewart Bell, National Post

Body

The hotel windows pounded in unison when the shock wave from the artillery gun hit. The windows seemed ready to implode.

But in the dingy restaurant at the Nelly Star Hotel, the waiter just smiled and continued serving ginger beer and plates of spicy chicken and rice.

No problem, he shrugged, it was only the Sri Lankan Army base down the road, firing its big guns into the jungles inhabited by **Tamil Tigers** guerrillas.

Then the rebels hit back.

At just after 3 a. m., gunfire erupted and rebel shells started raining in, whooshing as they descended before exploding on impact.

An air raid siren whined and red gunfire spat into the sky. A spotlight scanned the dark, looking for the two **Tamil Tigers** aircraft that were overhead dropping bombs.

The city lost power. Troops closed the roads and went on patrol. The fighting was still raging at daybreak.

This civil war is supposed to be almost over; the government says its victory over the **Tamil Tigers** is imminent.

That may be, but clearly not yet.

Sri Lanka is a country of misty tea estates, noisy commercial strips, serene Buddhist landmarks and palm-lined beaches that can make you forget the island's tragic storyline.

For 25 years, the country known as Ceylon during British colonial times has been consumed by civil war. The Sri Lankan armed forces are fighting to keep the country united, and well-armed guerrillas are fighting for independence for the country's ethnic Tamil minority.

The northern province where the civil war is mostly being fought is officially off limits to the press. Military checkpoints have sealed the region from the south and entry is prohibited without government permission.

Raging at daybreak; On the front lines in a country consumed by civil war

But earlier this month, the National Post was able to enter the north for an exclusive tour of the front lines. Armed with a flak jacket and a letter from the Ministry of Defence, the Post travelled through the wartorn northern districts of Mannar, Vavuniya, Jaffna and the eastern Wanni. A reporter travelled unescorted, except in parts of Jaffna that the military deemed too dangerous for foreigners. A request to visit the rebel capital Kilinochchi was denied.

The newspaper also interviewed the country's most powerful figures, including the president and defence secretary, as well as leading Tamil politicians, former high-ranking Tamil Tigers guerrillas, human rights campaigners, soldiers and civilians.

This is an "island of blood," as the Indian journalist Anita Pratap called it. The Tamil Tigers control the northern Wanni region, and periodically venture south to the capital Colombo to bomb buses and assassinate politicians. The government uses artillery, air strikes and ground forces to weaken the rebels.

More than 60,000 people have died. Attempts at peacemaking have come and gone. Hundreds of thousands have fled the country, many to Canada, which is now home to the world's largest Tamil diaspora--as well as an illicit terrorist financing network that the RCMP says has raised millions to arm the Tamil Tigers.

The Conservatives responded by banning both the Tamil Tigers and, in July, a Toronto-based non-profit group called the World Tamil Movement.

Canada is one of the Tamil Tigers' "biggest resource pools in terms of fundraising, in terms of propaganda," Sri Lanka's Foreign Secretary, Palitha Kohona, said during a recent visit to Toronto. "And they have also begun to influence lawmakers."

But all of a sudden, many in Sri Lanka are talking about victory, possibly by the end of the year. The government forces have been steadily advancing into rebel-held territory, capturing one town after the next, and are now only a few kilometres from the guerrilla stronghold of Kilinochchi.

Critics complain the government has failed to protect civilians in the war zone, trampled human rights and lacks a political solution to the country's ethnic divide. But riding a wave of popularity, President Mahinda Rajapaksa has pushed on and confidently predicts the Tamil Tigers are near collapse.

That may be wishful thinking, but the Sri Lankan forces have made significant territorial gains. In two years, they have pushed the Tigers out of the country's east and into a shrinking pocket in the north. Rebel bases have been captured and destroyed, and key commanders killed in air strikes. The government claims to have killed more than 6,000 rebels so far this year, while losing some 600 of its own troops.

Expectations are high. "Total victory imminent for security forces," read a recent headline in the Daily News. "If the terrorists are kept under similar pressure, I don't think they will last even a year," Lieutenant-General Sarath Fonseka, the army commander, said in an interview. "We have gotten stronger and stronger, they have gotten weaker and weaker."

A roadblock five hours north of Colombo separates southern Sri Lanka from its northern war zone. Past the city of Anuradhapura, armed police divert traffic into a compound of buildings made of sticks and mud.

Cars are directed to park over a trench into which a police officer descends to look under the vehicles for weapons and contraband. Truck drivers are required to unload their cargo, only to reload it after inspection.

Papers are checked. Bags are searched. Questions are asked. Those allowed to proceed north get a green pass, which they must hand to the police guarding the checkpoint.

The A-9 road that heads north is crowded with soldiers -- on foot, on bicycles, riding double on motorbikes and in Unicorn armoured vehicles. Just before Vavuniya, a billboard wishes the troops success in their fight against terrorism.

Raging at daybreak; On the front lines in a country consumed by civil war

Vavuniya is home to a mix of Tamils and Sinhalese, some of whom have fled the fighting to the north. A statue on the downtown commercial strip depicts a stout general holding a Sri Lankan flag.

This is a garrison town, its most prominent feature the Security Forces Headquarters -- Wanni, a military base surrounded by razor wire, bunkers and gun nests.

There is also a radar installation, which is what the **Tamil Tigers** were trying to knock out when they attacked Vavuniya on Sept. 9.

At 3:05 a. m., members of the Black Tigers suicide squad attacked from the ground, trying to fight their way into the base. At the same time, the rebels fired artillery guns positioned north of here at Puliyankulam.

A muffled boom in the distance signalled that another artillery round was on its way, its arrival announced by an eerie whistle as the shells descended and exploded.

Then two light aircraft, part of the guerrillas' makeshift air force, flew in from the north and dropped bombs on the camp. The Sri Lankan Air Force scrambled two F-7 fighter jets for the first dogfight of the civil war.

The fighting came in waves. The artillery guns pounded and heavy machine guns fired in long bursts but then all went quiet, until it erupted again. At one point the gunfire was so intense the air turned thick with foul-smelling smoke.

At dawn, two Sri Lankan soldiers walked cautiously in front of the hotel, their rifles pointed in the air. A black cow followed them. Men wearing sarongs and white shirts emerged from their homes and stood at the road's edge, trying to find out what was happening.

More troops appeared, walking single file, their faces tense. Except for the odd bicycle, there were no civilians on the streets. The downtown shops remained shuttered all day.

Near the military base, craters pierced the dry mud where wayward **Tamil Tigers** shells had landed without causing significant damage.

With the fighting mostly over by 6:30 a. m., the propaganda war began.

The rebels called the operation a success and claimed to have destroyed a radar installation, communications tower, anti-aircraft defences and ammunition dump, and said the two planes had returned safely.

The Sri Lankan military said the attack had been "completely foiled" and that one of the Tigers' planes had been shot down. Eleven **Tamil Tigers** were reportedly killed, six men and five **women**. Photos of sprawled bodies were posted on the Sri Lankan military Web site.

The military said it had seized their weapons: a multi-purpose machine gun, two rocket-propelled grenade launchers, one 40mm grenade launcher, six T-56 rifles, 27 hand grenades, four radios, three suicide jackets, 32 pistol rounds, a GPS.

Thirteen Sri Lankan soldiers also died and 18 were wounded, while a police constable was also killed and eight others injured along with five Air Force personnel, the military said.

"They were firing a lot of artillery into the area so we have some casualties due to artillery fire," Lt.-Gen. Fonseka said in an interview later at Army Headquarters in Colombo.

In the grand scheme of the war, it was no more than a nuisance attack, but after so many losses, the **Tamil Tigers** leader Velupillai Prabhakaran needed to do something to keep the rebel dream alive, he said.

"All the attacks with these aircraft have been basically desperately trying to achieve something, to show the outsiders and the Tamil diaspora that he is still capable of achieving some results," the general said. "But I think anyone can do this type of thing if you are willing to sacrifice 10 of your men."

Raging at daybreak; On the front lines in a country consumed by civil war

"He is very desperate."

Hours later, Sri Lankan fighter jets bombed the north and lawmakers voted 99-11 to extend the country's state of emergency until October.

Another month of war was on the horizon.

NEXT WEEK

MONDAY Jaffna: The human rights story.

TUESDAY Trincomalee: Ex-guerrillas speak.

WEDNESDAY Madhu: A church in the war zone.

THURSDAY Welioya: The army commander at the front.

FRIDAY Colombo: Interview with the President.

SRI LANKA

Population: 21 million

Ethnic groups: Sinhalese 74%, Tamils 9%

Religions: Buddhist 69%, Muslim 8%, Hindu 7%, Christian 6%

Languages: Sinhala 74%, Tamil 18%, Other 8%

Independence: 1948

Sinhalese nationalism:

Post-independence, government makes Sinhala the official language and limits Tamil university enrolment. Anti-Tamil riots erupt in 1958, 1977 and 1983.

Tamil nationalism: Facing discrimination under the Sinhalese, Tamils advocate independence for the Tamil-dominated north and east.

Civil War: The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam formed in 1976 to fight for Tamil independence; all-out war erupts in 1983.

Terrorism: In addition to fighting on the battlefield, the **Tamil Tigers** commit hundreds of suicide bombings and the assassinations of political foes, among them Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Current status: President Mahinda Rajapaksa has ordered his forces to wipe out the Tigers and bring the war to an end; Sri Lankan forces are now close to the rebel capital Kilinochchi; a decisive battle may be imminent.

SOURCE: SRI LANKA MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

THE CANADIAN CONNECTION

Raging at daybreak; On the front lines in a country consumed by civil war

What does Sri Lanka's civil war have to do with Canada? - Canada is home to one of the world's largest populations of ethnic Tamils. Most live in Toronto. - Canada is also one of the **Tamil Tigers**' most important sources of external support. According to an RCMP counterterrorism probe, Canada has wired more than \$3-million to overseas accounts linked to the guerrillas. - On July 16, for the first time, the Canadian government used the powers of Anti-Terrorism Act to outlaw a non-profit community group, the Toronto-based World Tamil Movement, which the RCMP accuses of raising money for the **Tamil Tigers**. - On March 14, the RCMP arrested Prapa Thambithurai of Maple, Ont., for allegedly collecting money in B. C. for the **Tamil Tigers**. He is the first and only person ever to be charged with terrorist financing in Canada. - In 2006, a joint RCMP-FBI investigation called Project O-Needle resulted in the arrests of three people in Canada and several more in the United States. They are accused of procuring weapons for the **Tamil Tigers**.

MIKE FAILLE / NATIONAL POST

Graphic

Color Photo: Stewart Bell, National Post; (See hardcopy for Photo Description) ; Black & White

Photo: Stewart Bell, National Post; A soldier cycles on the road leading from the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo, to the northern war zone. Map;; (See hardcopy for Map) ;

Load-Date: September 22, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lanka has terrorist Tigers backed into corner; Military victory may herald bloodier insurgency

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

January 7, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: CANADA & WORLD; Pg. B8

Length: 837 words

Byline: Dean Nelson, Daily Telegraph

Body

If the Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa is to be believed, the ***Tamil Tigers***, the terrorists who inspired a new generation of suicide bombers, are about to be defeated, bringing his country's 25-year civil war to an end.

In the week since his army captured Kilinochchi, the Tigers' administrative capital in the north of Sri Lanka, Rajapaksa has made a series of triumphalist claims, including the boast that this key victory was won without a single civilian casualty.

There is no doubting the military significance of the loss of the Tigers' capital. Since the government abandoned a ceasefire in January last year, it has pushed the Tigers back toward their last strongholds on the far north of the island.

The civilian courts, police forces and the other trappings of statehood run by the rebels have been abandoned in the face of the government's relentless advance. And as the Tigers have run for cover in the jungle, their "Sea Tigers" naval force and squadron of "Air Tigers" have had less room to manoeuvre.

Rajapaksa anticipates a final victory and is salivating at the prospect. Earlier this week, he compared his "zero civilian casualty" policy with the bloodshed in Gaza and claimed his main priority was feeding civilians trapped behind Tiger lines, even if it meant feeding Tamil fighters, too.

"We are feeding the ***LTTE*** [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. We won't keep them hungry," he said.

The Tamil cause and the military campaign for autonomy took off significantly in 1983 when youths from the majority Sinhalese Buddhists in the south of the country savaged their Tamil countrymen in a series of pogroms. An estimated 3,000 Tamils were beaten and hacked to death in retaliation for a Tamil Tiger ambush which killed 13 Sri Lankan soldiers. Remembered as the "Black July" killings, they had the effect of radicalizing young Tamil students, who then joined the Tigers and other militant groups in large numbers.

The Tigers became one of the world's most brutal and successful terrorist groups. They refined suicide bombing to a new martial art, and carried out targeted assassinations of political leaders and attacks on military bases.

Sri Lankan president Ranasinghe Premadasa was killed by a suicide bomber on a bicycle at a May Day rally in 1993. Three and a half years before that, former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was killed by a ***female*** Tiger,

Sri Lanka has terrorist Tigers backed into corner; Military victory may herald bloodier insurgency

who detonated a suicide vest at an election rally in revenge for his role in sending an Indian peacekeeping force into the country.

The group's creation of Sea Tigers, using small speedboats to attack Sri Lankan navy vessels, is believed to have inspired the al-Qaida attack on the U.S. destroyer Cole off Aden in 2000.

The **LTTE** is also regarded as one of the world's most successful illegal fundraising organizations. Now, with Sri Lankan troops in control of the Tamil capital, the stage is set for the Tigers' last stand as a conventional military force. They must defend the only part of the island they still control: the Elephant Pass and the jungle coast of the Mullaithivu district.

Rajapaksa may be mistaken if he thinks the war will end quickly, or that crushing Tamil resistance will bring peace to his ravaged country.

Diplomats fear the government's "final solution," focusing on crushing the Tigers militarily, may prove to be the recruiting sergeant dreamed of by rebel leaders and herald a newer, bloodier insurgency.

As Rajapaksa's army has pressed north, Tamil civilians have abandoned their homes and followed the retreating Tiger commanders. According to diplomats, they have effectively been taken hostage, and are being used as human shields in an attempt to force the army to back off or face a propaganda defeat.

Thousands are believed to have abandoned their homes and some have been forced to move as many as 13 times. Those who stayed put have been forced into government "welfare camps," where they are prevented from working or returning to their lives while they are screened.

As the Tigers prepare for their last stand, diplomats predict a long and bloody battle -- **LTTE** officials knew they would not be able to defend their capital and instead shifted their heavy artillery, planes and armed speedboats to safe areas. They now have nothing to lose and nowhere to run.

Sadly, there is no plan to transform a military victory into political peace. An all-party committee has failed to produce proposals to address the grievances which sparked the Tamil rebellion, and diplomats fear Rajapaksa's victory will simply change the nature of the conflict into a more dangerous and unpredictable one in which more civilians and tourists could be caught in the crossfire. The great tragedy for Sri Lanka is that few now care. To date more than 70,000 people have been killed in 25 years of conflict on the island, but the endless war between Tamil and Sinhalese, Buddhist and Hindu, on a small tropical island is a long way from the dusty front lines of the global war on terror.

online

World news updated 24/7 at vancouver.sun.com/world

Graphic

Colour Photo: Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa says victory is near. ;

Load-Date: January 7, 2009

Civilians pour out of Sri Lankan war zone: govt

Agence France Presse -- English

February 8, 2009 Sunday 6:54 AM GMT

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Length: 486 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 8 2009

Body

At least 10,000 civilians have escaped Sri Lanka's war zone in the last four days, the government said Sunday, as the president warned Tamil Tiger rebels to surrender unconditionally or be killed.

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.

"Over 10,000 civilians have come to Kilinochchi while 139 others have come to Jaffna since the Independence Day (Wednesday)," the ministry said. "Among the rescued civilians are over 2,800 children and about 3,000 women."

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."

Government reports of the civilians' movement and recent army advances cannot be verified as journalists, aid groups and international observers are not allowed into the conflict zone.

Hundreds of non-combatants have been killed this year, according the International Committee of the Red Cross, and global concern has mounted that a major humanitarian crisis is unfolding away from the public's gaze.

President Mahinda Rajapakse late Saturday warned the remaining rebels to surrender or face death as government forces tightened the noose.

"I want to tell the Tigers: 'Lay down arms and surrender to security forces,'" the president told a rally of supporters.

He said the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) -- as they are formally known -- 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," he said to resounding applause. "I must warn them we will not halt our operations against terrorism until we reach our final objective."

Civilians pour out of Sri Lankan war zone: govt

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.

It said the guerrillas used an improvised armoured vehicle, which was later destroyed by anti-tank weapons.

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.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has led calls for a "temporary no-fire period" to allow more civilians to get out of the combat zone.

Load-Date: February 9, 2009

Sri Lanka: An 'island of blood'

Canwest News Service

September 19, 2008 Friday

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Length: 1635 words

Byline: Stewart Bell, National Post

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. His six-part series begins today in wartorn Vavuniya.

The hotel windows pounded in unison when the shock wave from the artillery gun hit.

The windows seemed ready to implode.

But in the dingy restaurant at the Nelly Star Hotel, the waiter just smiled and continued serving ginger beer and plates of spicy chicken and rice.

No problem, he shrugged, it was only the Sri Lankan Army base down the road, firing its big guns into the jungles inhabited by **Tamil Tigers** guerrillas.

Then the rebels hit back.

At just after 3 a.m., gunfire erupted and rebel shells started raining in, whooshing as they descended before exploding on impact.

An air raid siren whined and red gunfire spat into the sky. A spotlight scanned the dark, looking for the two **Tamil Tigers** aircraft that were overhead dropping bombs.

The city lost power. Troops closed the roads and went on patrol. The fighting was still raging at daybreak.

This civil war is supposed to be almost over; the government says its victory over the **Tamil Tigers** is imminent.

That may be, but clearly not yet.

Sri Lanka is a country of misty tea estates, noisy commercial strips, serene Buddhist landmarks and palm-lined beaches that can make you forget the island's tragic storyline.

For 25 years the country known as Ceylon during British colonial times has been consumed by civil war. The Sri Lankan armed forces are fighting to keep the country united, and well-armed guerrillas are fighting for independence for the country's ethnic Tamil minority.

Sri Lanka : An 'island of blood'

The northern province where the civil war is mostly being fought is officially off limits to the press. Military checkpoints have sealed the region from the south and entry is prohibited without government permission.

But earlier this month, the National Post was able to enter the north for an exclusive tour of the frontline areas. Armed with a flak jacket and a letter from the Ministry of Defence, the Post travelled through the war-torn northern districts of Mannar, Vavuniya, Jaffna and the eastern Wanni. A reporter travelled unescorted, except in parts of Jaffna that the military deemed too dangerous for foreigners. A request to visit the rebel capital Kilinochchi was denied.

The newspaper also interviewed the country's most powerful figures, including the president and defence secretary, as well as leading Tamil politicians, former high-ranking Tamil Tigers guerrillas, human rights campaigners, soldiers and civilians.

This is an "island of blood," as the Indian journalist Anita Pratap called it. The Tamil Tigers control the northern Wanni region, and periodically venture south to the capital Colombo to bomb buses and assassinate politicians. The government uses artillery, air strikes and ground forces to weaken the rebels.

More than 60,000 people have died. Attempts at peacemaking have come and gone. Hundreds of thousands have fled the country, many to Canada, which is now home to the world's largest Tamil diaspora - as well as an illicit terrorist financing network that the RCMP says has raised millions to arm the Tamil Tigers.

The Conservatives responded by banning both the Tamil Tigers and, in July, a Toronto-based non-profit group called the World Tamil Movement. It was the first time Canada had used the powers of the Anti-Terrorism Act against a non-profit group.

Canada is one of the Tamil Tigers' "biggest resource pools in terms of fundraising, in terms of propaganda," Sri Lanka's Foreign Secretary, Palitha Kohona, said during a recent visit to Toronto. "And they have also begun to influence lawmakers."

But all of a sudden, many in Sri Lanka is talking about victory, possibly by the end of the year. The government forces have been steadily advancing into rebel-held territory, capturing one town after the next, and are now only a few kilometres from the guerrilla stronghold of Kilinochchi.

Critics complain the government has failed to protect civilians in the war zone, trampled human rights and lacks a political solution to the country's ethnic divide. But riding a wave of popularity, President Mahinda Rajapaksa has pushed on and confidently predicts the Tamil Tigers are near collapse.

That may be wishful thinking but the Sri Lankan forces have made significant territorial gains. In two years, they have pushed the Tigers out of the country's east and into a shrinking pocket in the north. Rebel bases have been captured and destroyed, and key commanders killed in air strikes. The government claims to have killed more than 6,000 rebels so far this year, while losing some 600 of its own troops.

Expectations are high. "Total victory imminent for security forces," read a recent headline in the Daily News. "If the terrorists are kept under similar pressure, I don't think they will last even a year," Lieutenant-General Sarath Fonseka, the Army Commander, said in an interview. "We have gotten stronger and stronger, they have gotten weaker and weaker."

A roadblock five hours north of Colombo separates southern Sri Lanka from its northern war zone. Past the city of Anuradhapura, armed police divert traffic into a compound of buildings made of sticks and mud.

Cars are directed to park over a trench into which a police officer descends to look under the vehicles for weapons and contraband. Truck drivers are required to unload their cargo, only to reload it after inspection.

Sri Lanka : An 'island of blood'

Papers are checked. Bags are searched. Questions are asked. Those allowed to proceed north get a green pass, which they must hand to the police guarding the checkpoint.

The A-9 road that heads north is crowded with soldiers - on foot, on bicycles, riding double on motorbikes and in Unicorn armored vehicles. Just before Vavuniya, a billboard wishes the troops success in their fight against terrorism.

Vavuniya is home to a mix of Tamils and Sinhalese, some of whom have fled the fighting to the north. A statue on the downtown commercial strip depicts a stout general holding a Sri Lankan flag.

This is a garrison town, its most prominent feature the Security Forces Headquarters-Wanni, military base surrounded by razor wire, bunkers and gun nests.

There is also a radar installation, which is what the **Tamil Tigers** were trying to knock out when they attacked Vavuniya early on the morning of September 9.

At 3:05 a.m. members of the Black Tigers suicide squad attacked from the ground, trying to fight their way into the base. At the same time, the rebels fired artillery guns positioned north of here at Puliyankulam.

A muffled boom in the distance signaled that another artillery round was on its way, its arrival announced by an eerie whistle as the shells descended and exploded.

Then two light aircraft, part of the guerrillas' makeshift air force, flew in from the north and dropped bombs on the camp. The Sri Lankan Air Force scrambled two Chinese-made F-7 fighter jets for the first-ever dogfight of the civil war.

The fighting came in waves. The artillery guns pounded and heavy machine guns fired in long bursts but then all went quiet, until it erupted again. At one point the gunfire was so intense the air turned thick with foul-smelling smoke.

At dawn, two Sri Lankan soldiers walked cautiously in front of the hotel, their rifles pointed in the air. A black cow followed them. Men wearing sarongs and white shirts emerged from their homes and stood at the road's edge, trying to find out what was happening.

More troops appeared, walking single file, their faces tense. Except for the odd bicycle, there were no civilians on the streets. The downtown shops remained shuttered all day.

Near the military base, blackened craters pierced the dry mud where wayward **Tamil Tigers** shells had landed without causing any significant damage.

With the fighting mostly over by 6:30 a.m., the propaganda war began.

The rebels called the operation a success and claimed to have destroyed a radar installation, communications tower, anti-aircraft defences and ammunition dump, and said the two planes had returned safely.

The Sri Lankan military said the attack had been "completely foiled" and that one of the Tigers' planes had been shot down. Eleven **Tamil Tigers** were reportedly killed, six men and five **women**. Photos of sprawled bodies were posted on the Sri Lankan military website.

The military said it had seized their weapons: a multi-purpose machine gun, two rocket-propelled grenade launchers, one 40mm grenade launcher, six T-56 rifles, 27 hand grenades, four radios, three suicide jackets, 32 pistol rounds, a GPS.

Thirteen Sri Lankan soldiers also died and 18 were wounded, while a police constable was also killed and eight others injured along with five Air Force personnel, the military said.

Sri Lanka : An 'island of blood'

"They were firing a lot of artillery into the area so we have some casualties due to artillery fire," Lt.-Gen. Fonseka said in an interview later at Army Headquarters in Colombo.

In the grand scheme of the war, it was no more than a nuisance attack, but after so many losses, the **Tamil Tigers** leader Velupillai Prabhakaran needed to do something to keep the rebel dream alive, he said.

"All the attacks with these aircraft have been basically desperately trying to achieve something, to show the outsiders and the Tamil diaspora that he is still capable of achieving some results," the general said. "But I think anyone can do this type of thing if you are willing to sacrifice 10 of your men.

"He is very desperate."

Hours later, Sri Lankan fighter jets bombed the north and lawmakers in Colombo voted 99-11 to extend the country's state of emergency until October.

Another month of war was on the horizon.

National Post

sbell@nationalpost.com

Load-Date: September 19, 2008

Voting in Sri Lanka's lawless east; Reports of violence and coercion bring fears of rigged results

The International Herald Tribune

March 10, 2008 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 3

Length: 1107 words

Byline: Somini Sengupta - The New York Times Media Group

Dateline: VAVUNATHIVU, Sri Lanka

Body

Lawless, contested, notorious for a string of abductions and unsolved killings, this region has long been known as Sri Lanka's Wild East.

For years, the guerrilla army known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam had the run of the region, only to be driven out last summer by the military, with help from a breakaway Tamil rebel faction. The houses here are still pummeled from the fighting. Its people are still rattled from having to run.

On Monday, voters in the east go to the polls in the first local elections in a dozen years. Beyond deciding who will serve in local posts, the vote stands to demonstrate whether, after 25 years of civil war, the government can restore a semblance of normalcy for the area's ethnic Tamil majority.

Questions remain as to whether the election will be free and fair, or simply a means for the government of President Mahinda Rajapaksa to consolidate its hold on the region through the breakaway faction that helped it push the **Tamil Tigers** out. That faction has now reinvented itself as a political party, called the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal Party, or TMVP, and it has been endorsed by the Rajapaksa government.

Until recently, TMVP gunmen openly patrolled the east. The group is accused by human rights organizations, as well as United Nations officials, of recruiting child soldiers. Fear pervades, and critics worry that its cadres will browbeat or ballot-stuff its way to an election victory.

Some opposition politicians have refused to run for fear of a TMVP backlash. Amnesty International last week described the case of one man who was abducted after having reportedly refused to run on a TMVP ticket.

Today, the party's heavily barricaded offices are festooned with its symbol - a boat - along with garish murals dedicated to their slain fighters. "Vote for the Boat," goes one slogan. "It will ferry the wounded Tamils to the shore."

Oddly enough, the leader of the breakaway faction, the former Tamil Tiger eastern commander known as Karuna, is not even on these shores. He was detained in Britain late last year on charges of having traveled with a forged passport.

Voting in Sri Lanka 's lawless east Reports of violence and coercion bring fears of rigged results

The TMVP is hardly safe from violence itself. On a Sunday morning in February, a suicide bomber blew himself up in a village not far from here, killing two TMVP party workers who had tried to frisk him for weapons near the site of an election meeting. The government swiftly blamed the **Tamil Tigers**.

Neither the TMVP nor other Tamil parties who oppose the Tigers have laid down their arms. The pro-Tiger party is not fielding candidates in these elections, saying they are not safe.

Paffrel, an independent monitoring group, has called on all political parties to disarm. In a pre-election assessment report in February, it concluded that while steps had been taken to improve law and order in the weeks leading up to the elections, several rival political parties and community leaders had told its observers that the presence of armed men "was considered an obstacle to free and fair elections." Its observers found little enthusiasm for voting for particular candidates.

Likewise, a pre-election assessment by the Center for Policy Alternatives, a nonpartisan research organization in Colombo, found a climate of fear and cynicism among civilians.

"Many felt that the elections will not drastically change the ground situation," said its report, released in mid-February. "The only change envisaged is that the TMVP and other armed actors will be elected into office and claim legitimacy for their role and activities in the area."

Several accusations of coercion and violence have been made in recent weeks. Last week, two men on a motorcycle told **women** leaving a political meeting of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front, a rival of the TMVP, that their husbands would not live if they voted for the Liberation Front, according to the party's leader, Erasaiyah Thurairatnam. Elsewhere, Thurairatnam said, armed cadres entered a party office and verbally threatened its workers. A member of another party, he said, was roughed up near a TMVP office a few days earlier.

"People are not in a mood to vote," Thurairatnam contended. He said he feared that the results would be rigged, and predicted that voters in some areas dominated by the TMVP would be too afraid to vote for anyone else.

Thurairatnam's party was hardly sitting idle. On a recent day, an army of **women** bearing parasols to defend themselves against the midday sun marched through the narrow roads of nearby Batticaloa, stumping for their candidate. A woman with a bullhorn brought up the rear. "We think this election has been imposed on us," she announced, and went on to urge people to vote.

The candidate, Sellapillai Asirvithan, in a crisp white shirt and traditional wraparound loongi, knocked on doors and handed out leaflets. "Exercise your democratic right," a supporter bellowed through the bullhorn. "You have the right to vote for the candidate of your choice."

Atanidas Arulanatham, poring over one of the leaflets, said that he and his wife planned to vote. Asked whether people would be able to choose freely, he laughed.

"Not sure," was all he would say. "We hope those who win will bring peace."

Here in Vavunathivu, under a wide-armed tree in the courtyard of a Hindu temple, sat a TMVP candidate named Jegannathan Jeyaraj. Once a child soldier, he had become known as Comrade Suranga. For a while, he went to India to study computers. He was now trying to make it as a politician.

He told his audience that his party had given up hopes for an independent ethnic Tamil homeland and had renounced armed struggle (though not yet their arms, for fear of attacks by their rivals). He pledged economic development for the area. And he branded as terrorists his former masters, the **Tamil Tigers**, whom he had joined at age 7.

The audience kept quiet, except for a very old woman. "I cultivated three acres and got nothing because of the war," she told him.

"The past is past," he replied. "The TMVP will pave a new way."

Voting in Sri Lanka 's lawless east Reports of violence and coercion bring fears of rigged results

Undeterred, the woman wagged a finger. "You admit you broke away from the LTTE," she said. "Why are you blaming them now?"

Then, finally, she said the unspeakable: "Why don't you ask the government to give us a separate state?"

Sri Lankan soldiers stood at the edge of the meeting, machine guns at the ready. Clumps of young men wearing TMVP jerseys stood in the shade.

Asked if she planned to vote, a woman sitting in the crowd nodded yes. Asked if she felt free to vote her conscience, she shook her head and quietly said, "No."

She smiled and looked down at the ground, refusing to say more.

Load-Date: March 16, 2008

End of Document

Amnesty International forgets suicide bombers kill people

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

February 12, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 937 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 12 -- The Secretariat for Coordinating the Peace Process in Sri Lanka regrets the disregard shown for human life in the press release issued by Amnesty International regarding the suicide bombing that took the lives of 28 Sri Lankans.

The release seems to be largely the work of Yolanda Foster, now described as AI's Sri Lanka expert. Ms Foster's expertise derives from a stint in Colombo as one of the satellites revolving around the International Centre for Ethnic Studies, which was recently in the forefront of presenting Sri Lanka as a country ripe for exercise of Gareth Evans' Responsibility to Protect. Though the old warhorse Evans himself has now decided to retire, Yolanda seems inclined still to flog the R2P in Sri Lanka horse to life again. Suicide bomber Hence her stress, even when a suicide bomber kills female as well as male soldiers and civilian women and children, on problems that might be created by the Sri Lankan forces. So the headline stresses the fact that 'Suicide bombing breaches international law' and goes on to say, as though that were the problem, not the actual murders, that 'such tactics violate the international legal prohibition on perfidious attacks and expose civilians to increased danger'. After that little excursus Yolanda really goes into action. Suicide bombing means in her book that '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.' Since clearly the Tigers have shown (in a way that must be obvious to everyone through this suicide bombing, if it were not obvious before) that they do not particularly care if civilians are killed, this particular statement of Yolanda's is obviously intended, with its mention too of reprisals, to draw attention to what the Sri Lankan forces might do. Then AI engages in its usual ambiguity about the bombing itself. Though they have a history of using suicide bombers, AI notes that they 'have not assumed responsibility for the attack today.' Despite this Yolanda goes into finger wagging mode and asserts that "The Tamil Tigers must immediately and publicly disavow the use of tactics such as suicide bombers disguised as civilians". Delusions Incidentally, if this were not sufficient evidence of the world of delusions in which the woman lives, it should be noted that the first paragraph of the release uses that splendid Amnesty word 'reportedly' to say that the suicide bomber was 'reportedly dressed as a civilian', ie it is conceivable that she was in full military uniform (or possibly Salvation Army dress) when she joined the queue of thousands of civilians fleeing the conflict zone. Ad then, after her clarion call to the Tigers to disavow 'the use of tactics such as suicide bombers disguised as civilians' (as though it would be alright if they were dressed as the army or the Salvation Army), Yolanda then lays emphasis on her real area of concern. The para is worth quoting in full - "It is important to remember that the use of such attacks by one party to an armed conflict does not excuse unlawful attacks in response. This perfidious assault should not be used as an excuse by the Sri Lankan military to abuse displaced civilians who should still be treated in accordance with international law," Yolanda Foster said. "The Sri Lankan security forces must still make sure that their actions are directed against military targets and not civilians." Unquestionable That word 'still' implies that Yolanda understands that the security forces do direct their actions against military targets, but Yolanda's shaky command of the English

Amnesty International forgets suicide bombers kill people

language means that that sentence is at best a Freudian slip in her relentless targeting of the Sri Lankan forces. She ends by asserting, as though it was unquestionable, that both parties evince disregard for international humanitarian law" and it is 'the civilians who pay the price'. The fact that there has been no evidence whatsoever for claiming that Sri Lankan forces violate such law (given that the Amnesty diatribe about cluster bombs turned out to be based on a mistaken long distance UN verbal identification that was subsequently withdrawn) is ignored in this blatant attempt to attack the Sri Lankan forces after the LTTE employs a suicide bomber. It should also be noted that soldiers too should benefit from international law, and it is sad that Yolanda simply disregards the soldiers, including female soldiers, who were killed by the suicide bomber. Sri Lanka has been assisting the civilians escaping from the clutches of the LTTE in increasing numbers, despite the efforts of Yolanda and her ilk to claim that abuse awaited them in government controlled territory. They are coming in ever larger numbers, and the soldiers, in the midst of desperate assaults by the LTTE, are coping admirably. At the time the suicide bomb exploded, the Ministry of Resettlement was, as requested by the forces at the checkpoints, working overtime to ensure a supply of water for the civilians crossing over. The checking was being performed with total regard for the dignity of those coming over, female soldiers checking on the women and children. It was in the midst of such commitment that the suicide bomber struck. Yolanda may well believe, as we all do, that the lives of civilians should be sacrosanct, but her abject failure to spare a thought for the soldiers killed so unexpectedly in the midst of humanitarian work is also horrifying. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 1, 2009

End of Document

Civilians pour out of Sri Lanka war zone: govt

Agence France Presse -- English

February 8, 2009 Sunday 1:33 PM GMT

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Length: 575 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 8 2009

Body

At least 10,000 civilians have escaped Sri Lanka's war zone in the last four days, the government said Sunday, as the president warned Tamil Tiger rebels to surrender unconditionally or be killed.

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 armed campaign for an independent ethnic Tamil homeland, launched in 1972.

Two Tiger boats fleeing the fighting were attacked and sunk by the navy on Sunday off the coast of Mullaittivu, navy spokesman Captain D. K. P. Dassanayake said, adding that they recovered the bodies of two rebels.

He said there were no casualties among navy sailors who had tracked the two rebel boats for over an hour before blasting them out of the water.

The sea clash came as civilians were also fleeing the fighting.

"Over 10,000 civilians have come to Kilinochchi while 139 others have come to Jaffna since the Independence Day (Wednesday)," the defence ministry said. "Among the rescued civilians are over 2,800 children and about 3,000 women."

The ministry added that medical care, food and water was being provided at the frontlines for the fleeing civilians, who it says were among those held by the Tigers as "human shields."

Many of the Tigers' cadres at the battlefield were in civilian clothing, the ministry said, adding that meant the rebels could claim that civilians were attacked when its own cadres got killed or wounded.

There was no immediate reaction from the Tigers, but the pro-rebel Tamilnet.com website said that 120 civilians had been killed in two days of shelling.

Claims by both sides cannot be verified because journalists, most aid groups and international observers are not allowed into the conflict zone.

Civilians pour out of Sri Lanka war zone: govt

Hundreds of non-combatants have been killed this year, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross, and global concern has mounted that a major humanitarian crisis is unfolding away from the public's gaze.

President Mahinda Rajapakse late Saturday warned the remaining rebels to surrender or face death as government forces tightened the noose.

"I want to tell the Tigers: 'Lay down arms and surrender to security forces,'" the president told a rally of cheering supporters.

He said the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) -- as they are formally known -- had been encircled in a narrow strip of land in the north of the island and had taken thousands of civilians hostage.

"They must let the civilians go and then unconditionally give themselves up," he said. "I must warn them we will not halt our operations against terrorism until we reach our final objective."

The United States, European Union, Japan and Norway last week asked the rebels to lay down their arms and take part in 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 Tigers, including a top leader.

The Tigers on Saturday mounted several counter-attacks in the Mullaittivu 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 of less than 100 square kilometres (38 square miles) in Mullaittivu, where officials estimate 120,000 civilians are still trapped.

Load-Date: February 9, 2009

Sri Lankan Jets Destroy Rebel Hideout

Associated Press Online

January 17, 2008 Thursday 1:00 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 575 words

Byline: By KRISHAN FRANCIS, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka's military said air force jets destroyed a hideout used by senior Tamil Tiger rebels Thursday and soldiers captured a strategic stretch of road in a battle that left nine insurgents dead.

The offensives came a day after suspected insurgents killed 27 people in an attack on a civilian bus, an assault that coincided with the government formally ending a cease-fire that had been largely ignored in recent years.

Air force jets bombed a rebel hideout near Kilinochchi, the insurgents' de facto capital, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

He said top rebel officials used the compound, but did not know who was there at the time of the attack. The pro-rebel TamilNet Web site said the jets had struck a civilian area and seven people had been wounded.

However, Nanayakkara said the military had no reason to target a civilian settlement.

"It was definitely an **LTTE** leaders' camp. They won't let civilians settle in that area," he said, referring to the rebels by the initials of their formal name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The military also said it captured a strategic stretch of road in northern Mannar district Wednesday after a battle that killed nine rebels. Commandoes then advanced into rebel territory in Mannar and destroyed a bunker, killing four **female** rebels, Nanayakkara said.

Nanayakkara said nine other rebels were killed during a clash elsewhere in Mannar on Wednesday.

Defense officials reported the deaths of seven rebels in several clashes across the north Wednesday. A lone rebel Thursday exchanged gunfire with soldiers in northern Jaffna before committing suicide to avoid being captured, Nanayakkara said.

Rebel officials could not immediately be reached for comment on the clashes.

The violence came a day after a 45-pound roadside bomb destroyed a passenger bus as it traveled through the town of Buttala, about 150 miles southeast of Colombo. Gunmen then shot the panicked passengers as they tried to flee, witnesses said.

Sri Lankan Jets Destroy Rebel Hideout

Twenty-seven people were killed most of them from gunshots and another 61 people were injured, Nanayakkara said. The assailants then retreated into the bush, shooting and killing six farmers along the way, he said.

The U.S. Embassy condemned the bomb blast, saying "it bears all the hallmarks" of the rebels.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa said although the attack on the bus was timed to coincide with the government's official withdrawal from the cease-fire, it simply mirrored other attacks by the separatist group in recent months.

Soon after the attack, a second roadside bomb struck an armored military vehicle in the same region, injuring three soldiers, Nanayakkara said.

Soldiers confronted a group of rebels in the jungles Thursday near the site of the bus bomb and one soldier was wounded in the clash, Nanayakkara said.

The European Union on Thursday condemned the attack on civilians and reiterated "strong concerns" on the government's decision to abrogate the cease-fire.

"This deadly spiral of violence has to stop immediately, and I once again urge all parties to comply with their obligations under international law to protect civilians," EU External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner said in a statement.

The **Tamil Tigers** have been fighting since 1983 for an independent state for Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil minority in the north and east after decades of being marginalized by Sinhalese-dominated governments. The fighting has killed more than 70,000 people.

Load-Date: January 18, 2008

Sri Lanka says 17 rebels killed in sea clash

Associated Press International

November 1, 2008 Saturday 12:27 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 339 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka's navy fought a fierce battle Saturday against **Tamil Tigers** in the northern sea, destroying six rebel boats and killing 17 guerrillas with the help of air strikes by military bomber planes, military officials said.

Also Saturday, soldiers captured 15 rebel bodies after an infantry battle in the north, the military said.

Navy spokesman D.K.P. Dassanayake said the sea battle took place in the early morning off the Jaffna peninsula when the navy observed a cluster of rebel boats and attacked them.

The clash killed 14 rebels and destroyed four boats, while five sailors were wounded in the fighting, he said.

Air force planes later chased fleeing rebel boats and bombed them at their landing point, destroying two more boats and killing three more rebels, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

The **Tamil Tigers** could not be contacted for comment because communication lines to rebel-held territory have been severed.

However the rebel-affiliated TamilNet Web site reported that rebel suicide fighters had sunk two navy vessels and damaged another. Seven rebels were killed in the mission, the report said.

About 20 boats took part in the attack, the report said.

The sea battle Saturday came amid intensified military attacks against the rebels on land. Authorities have vowed to crush the rebels and end their decades-old campaign for a separate state in the island nation.

Soldiers used "massive firepower" to breach part of a defense line near rebel headquarters in Kilinochchi on Saturday, destroying several bunkers, the military said in a statement.

Troops captured 15 rebel bodies, including those of 10 **women**, the statement said.

It is difficult to get independent accounts of battles in Sri Lanka's civil war because reporters are barred from the war zone.

The **Tamil Tigers** have fought since 1983 to create an independent homeland for ethnic minority Tamils, who have suffered marginalization at the hands of successive governments controlled by ethnic Sinhalese.

Sri Lanka says 17 rebels killed in sea clash

More than 70,000 people have been killed in the violence.

Load-Date: November 2, 2008

End of Document

Nugget of a good play but short on serendipity

The Dominion Post (Wellington, New Zealand)

March 21, 2009 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 9

Length: 344 words

Body

WHAT: Serendipity by Sugu Pillay, directed by Bronwyn Tweddle WHERE: Bats Theatre, until March 28
REVIEWED BY: Laurie Atkinson ----- SOMEWHERE in the muddle that is Serendipity, there is a play struggling to get out. The play grew out of the playwright's need to understand the inter-racial tensions in Sri Lanka, where her parents were born.

It is also about inter-racial tensions in New Zealand between the central character, Malini, a Sri Lankan New Zealander, and Jeff, her Maori partner, whom she deserted when she returned to Sri Lanka to join the **Tamil Tigers**.

A programme note awkwardly describes all this as the problematisation of identity in terms of ethnic and cultural boundaries. But the play is also about how the tentacles of a faraway war entangle people in New Zealand and how love can evolve into hatred, fanaticism and revenge, even at a wedding in a peaceful backwater like Christchurch, where it all takes place apart from a scene in the Sri Lankan jungle.

A Hindu priest has been brought over from Sri Lanka to officiate at Malini's sister's arranged wedding. He is haunted by the abduction of his 13-year-old son by the **Tamil Tigers**. He immediately recognises Malini as having fought with the **Tamil Tigers** and probably the person who recruited his son. The long arm of coincidence is stretched too far, and gets stretched further still in the final scene when Jeff reveals to Malini the truth about what happened years before.

Serendipity is a disjointed play with a mix of styles, clumsily structured scenes, and some poetic moments that sit uneasily among scenes that are melodramatic and, on one occasion, unintentionally funny.

The production hasn't helped at all, with two lengthy scene changes and some very odd movements by Jeff and Malini in their opening scene that have them moving like robots with no relation to what is being said.

In the jungle scene, two **female** Tamil Tiger fighters attack Malini for not being fanatical enough and they all bob up and down like jack-in-the-boxes. Maybe it was the heat or the insects.

Load-Date: March 20, 2009

Tigers leader's bunker captured

The Australian

February 4, 2009 Wednesday

1 - All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 12

Length: 658 words

Byline: AMANDA HODGE, SOUTH ASIA CORRESPONDENT

Body

THE Sri Lankan army said yesterday it had captured an elaborate underground bunker complex believed to have been the home of the leader of the *Tamil Tigers*, giving credence to the Government's claim that it was on the verge of crushing therebels.

Soldiers seized the facility amid a fresh escalation of fighting in the northeast, where government troops are pressing on with an all-out assault on the remaining patch of jungle held by the guerillas.

The captured two-storey-deep bunker had sound-proof electricity generators, airconditioning and medical supplies and was hidden in a coconut grove in Mullaitivu district, the Defence Ministry said. It described the site as the "main hideout" of the Tigers and "a major residential site" of rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran.

The renewed fighting came as the Government said the battle against the cornered Tigers was at a "decisive stage" and that it could not guarantee the security of tens of thousands of civilians trapped in rebel-held territory.

"The Government cannot be responsible for the safety and security of civilians still living among *LTTE* (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) terrorists," spokesman Lakshman Hulugalle said, without explaining how the civilians could move if they were being held against their will.

The warning prompted outrage among humanitarian agencies and a growing call for both sides to declare a ceasefire to allow an estimated 250,000 people trapped in the war zone to escape the fighting.

As one aid worker in Sri Lanka told The Australian yesterday: "They're doing what the Israelis have done in Gaza, which is drop leaflets in the area warning people to get out.

"That's fine but if, as the Government says, the Tigers are holding civilian hostages, then they can't say they have given fair warning to people to leave the area and then go ahead and bomb it. That is just staggering."

The International Committee of the Red Cross and Catholic aid agency Caritas both reiterated their appeals to the Government and the rebels to allow civilians to leave the conflict zones.

The Government has declared safe zones for civilians and accuses the Tigers of bringing artillery into the areas. Tamils say the army is carrying out indiscriminate shelling of civilians in the zones.

Tigers leader's bunker captured

“The need to bring humanitarian aid is becoming critical,” said Monica Zanarelli, the ICRC's deputy head of operations for South Asia. “The majority of the people are displaced and have become completely dependent on aid coming from outside the conflict zone.”

While the Government has pledged not to attack the safe zone, the 30sqkm area has come under repeated artillery attack, according to local health officials and human rights groups.

US Democratic senator John Kerry and Republican senator Richard Lugar added their voice to the growing chorus demanding safe passage for civilians, saying they were “greatly concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian situation”.

Also yesterday, the first pictures emerged of civilian casualties within the war zone from what the Government says is the final stage of the bloody 25-year civil war.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa has consistently denied that the Government is responsible for any civilian deaths in the northeast of the country.

But health officials and humanitarian aid agencies with staff working inside the conflict zone have reported that hundreds of people have died and more than a thousand have been wounded in the past few weeks as government forces continue their rapid advance.

Footage taken last week by independent observers and released by Associated Press yesterday offers a rare glimpse into the spiralling toll the war is taking on local Tamils, who are caught in the crossfire between the two sides.

A video shows the overcrowded pediatrics ward at the Puthukkudiyiruppu hospital in Vanni, which was shelled on Sunday night. Children and women with amputated limbs lie on hospital beds or thin mats on the floor.

Load-Date: February 3, 2009

End of Document

SRI LANKA Thousands of innocents still in line of fire as enemies battle to the bitter end Tamil Tiger by the tail in not so civil war

The Advertiser (Australia)

February 7, 2009 Saturday

1 - State Edition

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 56

Length: 1338 words

Byline: RAVI NESSMAN, BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, COLOMBO

Body

AFTER a quarter-century of civil war that has killed tens of thousands, the Sri Lankan Government is poised to crush the Tamil Tiger rebels.

As fears grow for the safety of civilians caught in the fighting, Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake has rejected calls from several countries for a ceasefire and instead demanded the rebels' unconditional surrender.

Sri Lankan forces captured the insurgents' biggest sea base yesterday - cutting off their main supply point in the latest in a string of victories that has squeezed the **Tamil Tigers** into a 85sq km sliver of coastal land.

Even before the base was taken, Mr Wickremanayake told Parliament that the ``last moment" of the rebels' 25-year-old fight for a separate Tamil homeland was near. More than 70,000 people have died in the conflict and hundreds of civilians are reported to have been killed in the most recent fighting.

``Our forces have now surrounded the last stronghold of the terrorists," Mr Wickremanayake said. ``Our troops are challenging the Tigers, waiting in front of their den. The last moment of the Tigers will be painful, as well as decisive." The statement effectively rejected a call by the U.S., Britain and Canada for both sides to ceasefire to allow civilians and the wounded to leave the area.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said 1282 civilians crossed from the rebel area to government land on Wednesday and Thursday. But the United Nations and other aid agencies have said some 250,000 civilians are still trapped.

A multi-pronged offensive launched early last month led to a rapid collapse of the rebels' control of what had been near-autonomous territory on this idyllic island state in the Indian Ocean.

The civil war began in 1983 as a rebellion by ethnic Tamils, who are Christians and Hindus, and originally sought the right to speak their own language.

The Tamil rebels opposed the Sinhala-speaking majority, which is mainly Buddhist. A rag-tag assault on Sri Lankan troops that year led to the massacre of as many as 3000 Tamils and in 1984 the real civil war began.

SRI LANKA Thousands of innocents still in line of fire as enemies battle to the bitter end Tamil Tiger by the tail in not so civil war

It has been one of the most brutal conflicts on earth, with both sides often using a "take-no-prisoners" policy, which became still more lethal when the rebels developed a new tactic - suicide bombing - that spread to the Middle East, Europe and beyond.

A combination of greater motivation, better conditions for troops and new tactics helped bring about what one foreign diplomat in Colombo called "this indisputable military victory" for the Government.

The main concern of international aid organisations is the 250,000 civilians who are caught in the crossfire. They fear the rebels are using civilians as human shields to protect their leadership.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa yesterday gave the Tigers 48 hours to allow civilians to pass to "safe zones" the Government has set up. However, the Tigers, who wear cyanide capsules around their necks to swallow in case they are captured have never responded to government demands.

The so-called "safe zones" also appear less than safe, based on photographs and video footage the media has received of civilian casualties from independent observers.

The images show that despite repeated Government denials, civilians are being killed and maimed in the fighting. Some victims were attacked inside a Government-declared "safe zone" in rebel-held territory and the wounded were brought to the nearby Puthukkudiyiruppu hospital, which itself has come under attack.

The hospital, overflowing with wounded civilians, was shelled on Monday for the fourth time in two days, killing two patients, a health official said. Eleven people had been killed since the first attack on the hospital on Sunday afternoon, he said. The UN said the Government could not absolve itself of responsibility for the safety of the civilian population. "You can't cherry-pick from the laws of war. The warring parties remain responsible for civilians at all times," UN spokesman Gordon Weiss said.

Even if the conflict were to end, the Government still faces a major challenge beyond the battlefield: Resolving the ethnic conflict that fuelled the uprising.

Mr Rajapaksa has consistently expressed support for a deal to give the ethnic Tamil minority more say in a government long dominated by the Sinhalese majority.

Critics welcome the words, but they say little has actually been done to reconcile the ethnic groups. "The military machine is in full action . . . in the political arena there is no movement at all," said independent politician Mano Ganesan, who is Tamil.

"The causes that led to the creation of Tamil nationalism and from Tamil nationalism to Tamil extremism and from Tamil extremism to Tamil terrorism very much exist today."

The Government says that once it finishes off the rebels it will be willing to devolve some power to the provinces, giving Tamils, with large populations in the north and east, a significant say in local affairs.

"With increasing prosperity the temptation to take up a gun and go to the jungle might be less," Foreign Secretary Palitha Kohona said. "We also feel that once the back of the LTTE is broken completely, the violence in the country will gradually fade away." But many Tamils retain deep suspicions of the Government, exacerbated by reported statements from politicians and military leaders about maintaining the Sinhalese, Buddhist nature of the country.

Mr Rajapaksa predicted mid-week that the war could be over within days. But many experts warn that the rebels still have plenty of fight left.

Military analyst Susantha Seneviratne, a retired colonel, said Tamil Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran has proven himself a wily strategist. "He's waiting for an opportunity," Mr Seneviratne said. "This is not going to be the end of the fight."

SRI LANKA Thousands of innocents still in line of fire as enemies battle to the bitter end Tamil Tiger by the tail
in not so civil war

Others suggest that even if the bulk of the rebels are wiped out, insurgents may blend into the civilian population and stage guerilla attacks for years to come.

And even if the rebel movement is destroyed, a new one could rise if nothing is done to resolve ethnic strife, experts say.

The Government says it will use the example of east Sri Lanka, which it captured from the rebels in 2007, as a blueprint for resolving tensions in the north.

Officials spent huge amounts on development projects in the east and held polls that ended with a former rebel leader, who defected to the government side, winning election as the region's chief minister.

But human rights groups and residents say the east is still riven by chaos and violence.

25 YEARS OF AGONY

* The **Tamil Tigers** were one of several separatist groups in the 1980s that launched a guerrilla war for independence for the northern and eastern provinces, home to most of Sri Lanka's predominantly Hindu Tamils.

* The separatists claimed years of persecution by the Sinhalese, the mostly Buddhist majority, which controls the central government.

* The Tigers had their own air and sea wings, and they pioneered the use of the suicide explosive belt, **female** suicide bombers and the suicide cyanide capsule for captured fighters.

* The Tigers supported by a wide Tamil diaspora, especially that of the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu - at one point had 15,000 fighters.

* India sent peacekeeping troops to Sri Lanka in 1987.

* After a suicide bomber associated with the **Tamil Tigers** assassinated Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at a rally in 1991, the Indian government withdrew its forces, declared the Tigers a terrorist group and backed out of any lead role in the conflict.

* Norway took a lead role in mediation and helped the government and the rebels to negotiate a cease-fire in 2002.

* However, after the election of President Rajapaksa, an outspoken nationalist, in 2005 and the assassination of Sri Lanka's Tamil foreign minister, Lakshman Kadirgamar in 2006 apparently by the rebels - ceasefire was in tatters.

* After decisive victories for a reinvigorated Sri Lankan defence force, the Government now says it has surrounded the last stronghold of the Tigers.

Load-Date: February 6, 2009

THE LAST BATTLE AND NATIONALISM

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

September 9, 2008 Tuesday 1:26 PM EST

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Length: 1346 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Sept. 9 -- There is a growing opinion that the last battle is being fought in the north. It was the LTTE that popularized this usage of language. This was in 2004, well before the present phase of war. At that time the Ceasefire Agreement was in existence. But it was coming under increasing stress.

The government of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe which had signed the agreement had been sacked by President Chandrika Kumaratunga and defeated in the general election that followed. Around this time the LTTE began a massive fund raising campaign internationally and recruitment drive locally. Their argument was that the ceasefire had brought no benefit to the Tamil people, and therefore they would fight the last battle to obtain independence.

The 2002 Ceasefire Agreement had given the LTTE the space to plan for war in conventional terms. The LTTE used that time to further transform its military structures, including a massive recruitment campaign. The CFA also ensured forward defence lines and demarcation of borders that separated government and LTTE controlled territory, and the legitimacy awarded by the peace process was used to build state-like structures with the support of expatriate and donor funds. Simultaneously this development reduced its flexibility to fight a guerrilla war. Further, the split in the LTTE with its Eastern Command, led by Colonel Karuna, weakened the organisation's conventional strength.

The Asian tsunami of December 2004 led to a postponement of the last battle. The election of President Mahinda Rajapaksa in November 2005 on an anti-ceasefire platform, was facilitated by the LTTE by its imposed boycott of Tamil voters. With the new President in office, the open and visible preparation for the last battle commenced anew. The LTTE repeatedly provoked the new government within a month of President Rajapaksa's election by ambushing government troops.

Ironically, it appears that the LTTE miscalculated its strength in relation to resolve of the government and the strength of the Sri Lankan state. The government forces have proved to be more capable in conventional warfare than the LTTE, with significantly more advanced firepower and much larger numbers. With no independent journalists in the field, the only sources of information are the media releases of the government and LTTE. But the weight of evidence is that the government has the upper hand. According to maps produced nearly one half of previously LTTE controlled territory in the north is now under government control. Every kilometre lost by the LTTE also brings the firepower of government artillery closer to key LTTE targets.

Government Advantages

THE LAST BATTLE AND NATIONALISM

The government forces have two major advantages over the LTTE for the control over territory. The first is that the LTTE is being forced to fight like a conventional army in its defence of territory including military bases, towns and buildings. The government forces are superior in numbers and firepower to fight a conventional war. The second advantage that the government has is that it is being backed by international powers, both in terms of military equipment and surveillance, whereas the LTTE is finding its members on the run internationally leaving it to rely largely on its internal resources.

In the face of these major disadvantages to itself, the only way that the LTTE can hold the government at bay would be by unconventional means. Over the decades the LTTE has shown itself capable of springing surprises.

Terrorist and suicide attacks in which the LTTE has specialized are meant for surprise. The development of an air wing is another example of a development that caught the world by surprise, although this has had only limited effectiveness as a military tool. In addition the LTTE is also using the civilian population as part of their defence strategy.

In recent weeks international humanitarian organizations have been reporting that the LTTE is not permitting civilians to leave the LTTE controlled areas. Even the family members of the local staff of international humanitarian organizations are being denied permission to leave. Instead, the entire population is being compelled to withdraw along with the LTTE ever deeper into the LTTE controlled territory. People are forced to live in temporary shelters or under trees. Repeated appeals by the UN and international humanitarian organisations to let the civilians leave the LTTE controlled areas, and to seek shelter in government controlled areas have been turned down or not responded to by the LTTE.

The appalling conditions of living of the civilian population are made much worse by the fact that the LTTE is compelling the people to join the combat. There are reports of brothers or sisters of wounded cadres now having to succeed them in the LTTE's ranks. Civilians, including women and older people, are being given self-defence training and more members of each family are being pressed into semi-military service. If the government forces choose to attack LTTE targets with their long range artillery and air power, they risk making collateral attacks on the civilians.

Civil Society

The very term Last Battle suggests a fight to the finish regardless of the human costs. As the government and LTTE are in complete control of their respective war machines, there is little that either the international humanitarian community or local civil society can do to thwart them. Neither the government nor LTTE appear to believe in a political solution with the other. Civil society pleas for negotiations have gone unheeded, as each of the protagonists places its faith in its armed forces. But at the conclusion of the very costly battles for the north there will not be peace, even if more territory passes from one side to the other. This can be seen even today in the east. Peace is not only the absence of war, it is about creating the conditions for human rights and economic growth.

The government was able to militarily defeat the LTTE and retake the entirety of the territory in the east that the LTTE once controlled. The government has even held provincial elections in the east. However, any visitor to the east would not see any normalcy there, but a highly militarized environment in which there are soldiers all over. Periodically there are killings of soldiers, LTTE cadre and civilians. Tension is rife amongst the people and security forces.

Even if the government succeeds in capturing the entirety of the north, and driving the remnants of the LTTE into the jungles, the instability and tension will continue.

The fact is that eradicating a symptom cannot end the cause of the problem. Even if the government were to defeat the LTTE it will not be able to eradicate Tamil nationalism. The desire of Tamil people to enjoy equal rights and to have real decision making power in Sri Lanka is not limited to the LTTE-controlled Wanni. It exists in the same measure in other parts of the north and east, in Colombo and elsewhere in the country.

THE LAST BATTLE AND NATIONALISM

In addition, there is a reservoir of Tamil nationalism in the Tamil expatriate community that lives abroad, that no amount of military solutions in Sri Lanka can ever hope to subdue. There is only one answer to Tamil nationalism and that is a just political solution.

The danger also exists that military victory will be seen in ethnic terms that will be alienating and not unifying. When Jaffna was retaken from the LTTE in 1995, it was seen as a crushing defeat for the LTTE from which they would not recover. At that time Jaffna was the administrative capital of the LTTE.

The manner in which President Chandrika Kumaratunga formally received a scroll in Parliament from Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte informing her of the capture of Jaffna was like a replay of ancient history when the Sinhalese kings fought battles. This mistake must not be repeated. The symbols and agenda of the Sri Lankan state need to be multi ethnic and not mono ethnic if peace is to be the lasting outcome.

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The history of ceasefires revisited

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

February 12, 2009 Thursday

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Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 12 -- 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. In June 1985, on an initiative of the Government of India, the leaders of the Tamil militant movements agreed to a 'cease-fire' on grounds of creating a 'congenial' atmosphere for 'peace talks'. Sponsored by India the talks took place in Thimpu, capital city of Bhutan in July and August of 1985.

The Thimpu talks are historic to the Sri Lankan conflict in many ways. It was the first time the LTTE sat across the then government of Sri Lanka for negotiations. It also goes in to the record books as being the beginning of a continued trend of breaking ceasefires with successive governments and using the interim periods to militarily strengthen itself. The LTTE walked in to the talks in 'solidarity' with 5 other Tamil militant groups, who also later jointly walked out of the talks. They were the same groups that the LTTE subsequently used the weapons hoarded during the talks, on. Using the same unfair leverage the LTTE went on to gain control over the entire Jaffna peninsula. Then the LTTE used a ceasefire declared by the then government on account of the Sinhala and Tamil New Year in 1987 to murder 120 Sinhala civilians by ambushing the buses they were travelling in Polonnaruwa. The third time the LTTE breached all norms of bilateral conduct was when they on the pretext of surrendering arms to the Indian Peace Keeping Force in the first week of October 1987, went on to massacre at least 225 Sinhalese and Muslim civilians along the Eastern coast. Then on June 11, 1990 the LTTE seized the police station in Batticaloa abducting and killing over a five hundred unarmed Sinhalese and Muslim Policemen who had surrendered to them ending a ceasefire that stood for 14 months. They also walked out of a peace process started with the Kumaratunga regime. More recently the LTTE having violated the CFA signed with the Wickremesinghe regime violated the conditions over 1313 times over the 162 of the government troops. According to records the LTTE had recruited 7763 new cadres within the first year of signing the agreement alone. Between that year intelligence reports confirms the LTTE of having received at least 6 ship loads of arms. Indian intelligence in December 2002, reported the presence of an arms ship attempting to smuggle goods in to Mullaitivu, but evaded arrest. By end 2002, none other than the SLMM itself reported that the LTTE had violated the truce 502, (90%) over that of the government troops. In February 2003, just hours before the fifth round of peace talks were to begin in Berlin, three LTTE cadres blew themselves up and the boat they were traveling in when caught transporting weapons and ammo. Immediately following the inauguration of President Rajapaksa the LTTE launched a series of attacks against the forces, leading to serious questions on the validity of the CFA. The LTTE subsequently agreed to return to negotiations the first round of which took place in Geneva in February 2006. They however refused to attend a second round of talks scheduled for April. Then in June the same year they agreed to sit down for talks, travelled all the way to Oslo and simply refused to sit down for talks quoting various excuses. Then came the senseless attack on a civilian bus carrying more than 150 persons in Kebithigollewa in 15th June, 2006 leaving 64 Sinhalese civilians dead, including 12 children, and 75 injured. Merely two months later the LTTE launched two

massive attacks in the North and the East. This is the LTTE's track record as far as peace talks and ceasefires are concerned. The LTTE did not only use the ceasefire periods to ridicule every successive Sri Lankan government in power but also several international facilitators. The LTTE clearly defied the international community on February 27, 2007 when it fired mortars at the aircraft carrying US ambassador, Robert O' Blake, Italian Ambassador Pio Mariani and German Ambassador Juergen Weerth as they were getting down from the aircraft in the East. The Ambassadors were on a visit to assess the progress made in re-settlement of Internally Displaced People. The LTTE in 2007 flatly refused to meet Japanese peace envoy Yasushi Akashi in Kilinochchi. When Norway failed to get Tamils talking peace, all hope was bent on the Japanese. Five days was a long time for a Japanese state official to spend anywhere if they didn't think it would bring results. According to highly placed diplomatic sources, they are 'very disappointed' about the failure to get LTTE consent for talks. But no government can possibly talk about the duplicitous nature of the LTTE in dealing with peace processes than India. The Indo Lanka accord experience speaks volumes of the irresponsibility of the LTTE Leader in negotiations. Despite amply established evidence that the outline of the Agreement was discussed with the LTTE Supremo and other LTTE Leaders in Jaffna by Hardi S. Puri on 19th July 1987 and 20th July 1987 and agreement reached upon, Prabhakaran denied any knowledge of the contents of the agreement, when he wanted to get out of it. It is recorded that the agreement was discussed when Prabhakaran and other members of the Delegation were airlifted to Delhi. At Ashoka Hotel, Delhi, several meetings had taken place with the Indian officials, where the LTTE leaders including Prabhakaran discussed with the Chief Minister, M.G. Ramachandran and another Minister S. Ramachandran and the final talks had taken place with the Prime Minister. All implications of the Agreement and all other practical problems were discussed and the LTTE leaders had agreed for implementation of the Agreement on their part. But on 4th August 1987 Prabhakaran told a public rally in Jaffna that "Until I went to Delhi, I did not know anything about this Agreement. Saying that the Indian Prime Minister desired to see me, they invited me and took me quickly to Delhi. This Agreement was shown to us after I went there. "Accordingly, we made it emphatically clear to the Indian Government that we are unable to accept this Agreement", he said. The fact remains that Prabhakaran backed out and refused to surrender arms and resorted to large scale violence which forced the Indian Army to initiate operations and dis-arm them. 'As India is aware that the LTTE will not accept any solution that will not guarantee lasting peace to the Tamils, it is trying to annihilate the LTTE and its leaders. India is mistaken if it thinks that it can impose the bond of slavery namely, the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement on Eelam Tamils with the help of quislings and by annihilating the LTTE and its leaders. If these killings by India continue, Eelam Tamils will have no other option than to stop the peace talks and to prepare for a prolonged war against foreign aggression', warned Prabhakaran on July 9, 1988 against the Indian Peace Keeping Force. He was by this time ready to fight back having used the interim period to strengthen himself once again. The Jain Commission Interim Report on the Indo Lanka Agreement following its subsequent abrogation noted that, 'The Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement was a remarkable diplomatic feat which if sincerely and faithfully implemented, the ethnic crisis would have been over and peace restored but its breach and opposition on the part of President Premadasa and his Government and their entering into an unholy alliance with the LTTE, not only completely destroyed the Agreement but even the gains were also lost. The unholy alliance left no alternative with India except to pull out its Force from the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka without fulfilling its goals and objectives, after paying a very heavy price.' The report further accused LTTE of refusing to surrender arms when in October 1987, 12 LTTE cadres, who were in custody and were being transported to Colombo, consumed cyanide and committed suicide. 'In view of such a situation, hostility had started between the IPKF and the LTTE. IPKF, in order to disarm the militants, particularly the LTTE, had to commence its operations. The LTTE set its propaganda machinery in full swing. 'With a vast network in various countries where its publicity wing is engaged in creating public opinion through publication of various types of materials it highlighted and focused the alleged atrocities by the IPKF against 'innocent Tamil civilians,' it added. This was the continued modus operandi of the LTTE in gaining international support for its atrocities against humanity. It is also the same 'heavy price' that India learnt bitterly to pay, that the international community today seem bent on forcing the government towards. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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The history of ceasefires revisited

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Fierce clashes in Lanka; leave 33 combatants dead

UNI (United News of India)

January 9, 2008 Wednesday 12:36 PM EST

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Length: 259 words

Byline: Report from UNI brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Jan. 9 -- At least 33 combatants were killed and over 35 wounded when advancing government troops and the Tamil Tiger rebels clashed in the north-western Mannar district, according to claims by both sides.

The Ministry of Defence said the troops backed by artillery and aerial bombardments "forced into LTTE positions ahead of Parappakandal defences yesterday around 1630 hrs (local time), killing at least 19 terrorists including a female LTTE leader and wounding over 30 others."

"According to intercepted LTTE communication, an LTTE female area leader Sudarmalar and 18 terrorists were killed during the confrontations. Several LTTE bunkers were destroyed while troops overran LTTE positions ahead of Parappakandal, Mannar," the Defence Ministry claimed.

It also said troops have repulsed an LTTE offensive attempt towards the military established defences at North of Parappakandal a couple of hours later.

"One soldier was killed while five others sustained injuries during the confrontations. Troops are now consolidating the defences, ground sources report," the Defence Ministry said.

However, a pro-LTTE Tamilnet.com website quoting the LTTE sources in Mannar said at least 14 government soldiers were killed and 40 more wounded when a ground movement by the troops was "thwarted at Mullikkulam in Mannar after three hours of stiff resistance by the LTTE."

Independent verification on the death toll was not possible as journalists were barred from visiting the battle front.

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Load-Date: May 4, 2008

A way out for the civilians or for the others?

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

February 7, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 1048 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 7 -- What is the meaning of President Mahinda Rajapaksa's request on January 29 for the LTTE to allow free movement of civilians within 48 hours? The statement issued by the government Information Department quoted the President as saying "I urge the LTTE, within the next 48 hours to allow free movement of civilians to ensure their safety and security." What was new in this announcement?

Even before this announcement, it was the government's stance that the LTTE ought to allow the people to leave the small area now under the outfit's control. Also, this announcement could not amount to be a ceasefire announcement between the government troops and the LTTE. Disaster Management and Human Right Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe, one of the public faces of the government in the outside world asserted that it was not such an announcement. Civilians fleeing LTTE strongholds Number of males 2099 Number of females 1348 ChildrenBoys 681 Girls 497 Total 2926 (figures last updated on 18.01.09) Then, what was it? What, if the LTTE did not allow the people to leave the entrapped area in Mullaithivu? President did not say that. Did he announce a fresh safe zone? No, he didn't. There was one that was announced already. Then, what was the announcement all about? Most numerical figures pertaining to the Sri Lankan ethnic problem are highly controversial. The number of displaced people in the entrapped Puthukudyiruppu area is among them like the number of people killed in the three-decade-old ethnic strife and the number of Sri Lanka refugees in Tamil Nadu. Media Minister Laksman Yapa Abeywardene says that only 130,000 displaced people are entrapped in Mullaithivu while international NGOs and UN agencies put the number in the range between one quarter of a million and 300,000. UNP parliamentarian Dr. Jayalath Jayawardene at a press conference said recently that around 400,000 people are living in the area. Thirumavalavan, leader of the Viduthalai Chiruthaigal party in Tamil Nadu puts the number as 500,000. Whatever the number is, the fate of these people and the rapidity of the military operation to capture the remaining small area where the LTTE is still wielding its fast diminishing writ seem to be interdependent. Government wants these people to come out of the area and the LTTE wants the opposite. It is unrealistic on the part of the LTTE to think that the world opinion would rise against the Sri Lankan government due to the fate of these people and they could build their kingdom again, given the fast changing attitude of the of the world towards the present Sri Lankan situation. Therefore, it is now clear that Tigers are holding the people with them purely for the safety of their cadres and not the other way round or for any long term political objectives. However, now this problem has become an impasse, for some extent, in the military campaign as well. The irony is that while entrapped people are looking for a way out of the Tiger grip, Sri Lankan government and the international community too are attempting to find a way out of this impasse. Therefore, all are putting forward various solutions, some of which are ludicrous and interesting. It is funny to note how Tamil Nadu leaders react to this impasse. It was Jeyalalitha, the outspoken opposition leader of the state who turned the trend from one of pro-LTTE to that of somewhat anti-LTTE. While almost all in the state were calling for a ceasefire in Sri Lanka she dared to say "if the LTTE does not let the people go, it would responsible for the disaster that follow military operations" and another outspoken opinion maker and Janatha Party leader Dr.

A way out for the civilians or for the others?

Subramaniam Swamy fully endorsed her stance. Her argument was so contagious that even the so far seemingly pro-**LTTE** Chief Minister of the state Muthuvel Karunanidhi too astonished the world on Tuesday by saying that **LTTE** lost the sympathy of his party, DMK as far back as 1987 when **LTTE** leader expressed his willingness to establish a dictatorial state in "Tamil Eelam and he is sick of the **LTTE**." What Karunanidhi expects the world to forget is that his government has been toppled twice before since 1990 owing to his support to the **LTTE**. It was during his tenure that EPRLF founder leader K Pathmanaba and ten others were killed in Kodambakkam near Chennai in June 1990 and police visited the house where the killers were residing to request them to come to the police station next day. Most of the Indian leaders treat President Rajapaksas's 48 hour deadline as a truce and attempt to give its credit to the Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee's visit to Sri Lanka while Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe categorically said it was not something of the sort. That is how Indians found a way out. Even UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon may have thought that it is something like a ceasefire and called the **LTTE** to make use of the period and allow the free civilian movement. Minister Laksman Yapa Abeywardene has attempted to find a way out by saying at a press conference that those who stay back in the **LTTE** controlled area would be considered as LTTEers. This contention is wrong as the President himself "urged" the **LTTE** to "allow" the civilians to leave the area. Meanwhile US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband have called on both the Government of Sri Lanka and the **LTTE** to agree to a temporary no-fire period in order to allow civilians and wounded to leave the conflict area. In practical sense this is a suggestion that would be detrimental to the **LTTE** as once the civilians leave the entrapped area the security forces will pounce on the **LTTE**. If the **LTTE** take this suggestion together with the call by the Co- Chairs of the Tokyo Aid Conference for the outfit to lay down arms, probably the harshest demand drawn from the International community, they would realize Fidel Castro's observation that the "people are behind heroes (winners)." The Sinhala equivalent to this is "Wasi Pettata Hoyya." It is not a time for the **LTTE** to weigh the merits of these remarks; rather it has to realize that they are all alone not only in Mullaitivu jungles, but also in the world and act accordingly. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 1, 2009

Sri Lankan Army says rebels fired at fleeing civilians

Xinhua General News Service

February 27, 2009 Friday 2:55 AM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 289 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Feb. 27

Body

The Sri Lankan Army said on Friday that at least four civilians were injured when the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) fired at them on Thursday in the last hold of the rebels in the northeast coast of the country.

Army officials said two children and two **women** were injured in the shooting Thursday when a group of civilians attempted to leave the clutches of the rebels and reach the Army's 58 division in Mullaittivu.

The government says some 70,000 civilians are currently being held by the **LTTE** as human shields in the present military clashes.

The Army said the indiscriminate fire from the rebels had caused injuries to civilians.

Many more other civilians had to turn back and return to the **LTTE** held-areas once again in fear of their lives as a result of the shooting.

International aid agencies have blamed the **LTTE** for holding the civilians against their wishes and have urged them to allow the freedom of movement.

Defense Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse this week accused the **LTTE** of holding the civilians until such time the **LTTE** leaders are able to flee for safety in the face of military advance.

Some 36,000 civilians have already fled the rebel area, government officials say.

The military said the military offensive against the **LTTE** is entering its final stage as the rebels have been cornered in an area less than 60 sq km in Mullaittivu.

The **LTTE** sought to set up a separate homeland for the minority Tamil community in the north and east claiming discrimination at the hands of the Sinhalese majority ruling community.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in the country since the **LTTE** launched their armed campaign in the mid-1980s.

Load-Date: February 28, 2009

Sri Lankan Army says rebels fired at fleeing civilians

End of Document

Three-hour battle at key military base

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

September 10, 2008 Wednesday 2:35 PM EST

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Length: 619 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Sept. 10 -- The Air Force claimed it had shot down one of the three LTTE light aircraft over the Mullaitivu area yesterday minutes after the Tigers launched a pre-dawn combined air and ground attack on the Vavuniya Security Forces joint operations complex targeting a key radar tower.

More than three hour long confrontation resulted in at least 24 deaths including twelve soldiers, a policeman and a civilian. The military said the 10 LTTE cadres who launched the ground attack on the base were also killed. "We were able to bring down one of the three aircraft of the LTTE, marking a historical day for the air force," Air Force Spokesman Janaka Nanayakkara told the media.

He said the pilots of F-7 fighter jets which took off from the Katunayake military air port confirmed that one of the two rebel light air craft, that took part in the attack on the military base in Vavuniya, was destroyed. "We can confirm it now," he said.

Meanwhile, the Tamilnet website reporting on the raid said there "was no indication of any aircraft coming down, according to civilian sources. The Black Tiger commandos entered the base, making use of the time, and engaged in 'calculated destruction' to the facilities inside the Wanni Security Forces Headquarters."

Meanwhile, military Spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said Army and Air Force personnel jointly repulsed the Tiger attack. "The Pre - dawn LTTE attempt with twin goals of ground and aerial attacks on the Wanni Security Forces Headquarters Complex in Vavuniya was effectively resisted and countered after gunning down at least ten Tiger terrorists on the terrorist mission," he said.

"More than 70 artillery rounds had been fired by the rebels into the camp," he said.

Several houses in the Thekkawatta area were also damaged due to the LTTE artillery fire.

He said around 2.50 am, the LTTE stormed the Wanni Security Forces Headquarters Complex, covering the Sri Lanka Air Force airfield, backed by a string of LTTE artillery fire from uncleared areas in North of Omanthai.

"Though we lost ten soldiers, a policeman and a civilian, the LTTE was unable to fulfill its main target which was to destroy the sophisticated Radar system set up inside the air force base" Brigadier Nanayakkara said.

When asked about reports that some foreigners were also injured during the attack, Government Cabinet Spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella said there was no truth about it. "We have enough strength to deal with such kind of situation, so we no need foreigners for that."

Three-hour battle at key military base

He also revealed the radar and other equipments were intact despite the attack. As the **LTTE** artillery rounds fell, two **LTTE** light air craft flew over the Wannu Security Forces Headquarters complex and started dropping two bombs at about 3.30 a.m. Those bombs fell on the officers' mess area and another office complex in the Area Headquarters.

Fifteen Soldiers, seven airmen, nine Police Constables and one civilian were injured as a result of exchange of heavy fire.

During the clearing operations the military recovered ten **LTTE** bodies, including five **female** cadres, along with small arms, communication sets and Rocket Propeller Guns (RPGs) and three suicide kits.

Following the attack, the Vavuniya town became virtually desert as the security forces continued to search the area.

Hours after the **LTTE**'s pre-dawn attack fighter jets bombed an identified **LTTE** camp located two kilometres South of Kanagarayankulama, East of A-9 trunk road, Vavuniya.

Wing Commander Nanayakkara, said that the sorties were made on accurate information received on intense terrorist activity in the area. "Heavy **LTTE** casualties are expected in the air strike," he said.

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Load-Date: September 10, 2008

'Tigers in for another jolt in Wanni shortly'

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

April 27, 2008 Sunday 2:43 PM EST

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Length: 1165 words

Byline: Report from the Sri Lanka Sunday Observer brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 27 -- With a firm belief in the successes of the on-going battles in the North, the Commander of the Army reiterated that the military will destroy the **LTTE** terrorists and would capture Wanni, shortly.

In a special interview soon after the military captured the Madhu Shrine, Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka said that those who rejoiced with a false notion of last week's attack on Muhamalai can very soon witness the capture of Wanni, the last bastion of the **LTTE** outfit.

He said that the **LTTE** Leader Prabhakaran would never make his dream - Eelam - a reality during his lifetime and if he wanted to realise that dream still it would take some long years to rise from the present situation.

"His dream will come to an end soon as the military has already entered into the Kilinochchi boundary. We are 12 kilometres ahead of the Madu area and six kilometres away from the Omanthi checkpoint", he said.

The Army Chief is confident that the situation in the North would completely change if the military advance further another 10 kilo metres along the Vavniya-Madu front." The morale of the soldiers in all ranks is high.

The Military is receiving the correct guidance. The welfare of the soldiers is looked after by the military. All the precautionary measures have been taken to protect the soldiers in the battle front. So we do not have barricades in slowing down advancing into Kilinochchi", he said.

Lt. Gen. Fonseka said those who wanted the military to end terrorism could patiently wait. "Those who have hopes can keep their hopes", the army chief said.

A veteran commander who fought several major battles, the army chief said that the twenty-five-year-old wound - the **LTTE** terrorism - could not be easily healed and would take some years to disappear the scars though it was healed through militarily.

According to Lt. Gen. Fonseka, the military took the initiatives to clear the East, after the Vakarai battle and the **LTTE** lost its ground gradually. He said that military did not achieve its target easily as some people claimed but the dedication of all soldiers brought the military victories starting from mid 2006.

"Our dedicated soldiers are on battle fronts round the year and they did not leave for the new year nor on poya days. When the people in the South celebrated New Year with fire crackers, the soldiers in Northern battlefield celebrated it with multi-barrels", he said.

'Tigers in for another jolt in Wanni shortly'

Refuting the allegations that over 150 soldiers died at the last week's Muhamalai attack, Lt. Gen. Fonseka said that over 43 soldiers were killed, 33 missing and nearly 300 were injured.

According to his assessment, only 100 soldiers got serious injuries, which need long-term treatment and the rest with minor injuries had already reported to the battle front.

"This is not a big blow to the military," he said. In the last battle at Muhamalai over 160 soldiers died and reported heavy casualties", he added.

Taking about the damage caused to the LTTE, the Army Chief said, according to military intelligence, over 160 terrorists have been killed and it is difficult to say the exact number of LTTE cadres died at the LTTE treatment centres.

He said the LTTE suffered heavy casualties and it was four times greater than the number of army casualties. The LTTE transmissions revealed that truck loads of dead bodies and casualties of the LTTE cadres were taken into Wanni.

"In their web-site they have announced the number of cadres killed at the attack and it was 92. Over 50 percent of the LTTE cadres in the FDLs were killed", he said.

Leading an army of 167,000 men, Gen. Fonseka said the last week attack on Muhamalai would not hinder any further military offensives against the LTTE in any of the battle fronts and the well trained soldiers know that they would die in achieving the military targets with national interests.

The Army Chief claimed that those who groomed the LTTE and brought them to this level should be blamed for these losses and they should be held responsible for when a soldier lost a limb.

He said that the military does not want to underestimate the fighting capabilities of the LTTE, though it is facing a major defeat due to less man and fire power, but would gradually and steadily weaken the outfit soon. The LTTE, which put its all efforts and strength to hold their strong points, while trying to survive with limited resources, still make efforts to capture Jaffna Peninsula.

"Still they hope that they can capture Jaffna. Instead to realising that dream they are moving away from their targets daily due to strong and continuous military offensives, when over 34,000 soldiers with two additional battalions - 53 and 55 - are fighting to protect the Peninsula from the LTTE", he said adding that the end of the LTTE would be the day the outfit try to capture Jaffna Peninsula.

According to the Army Chief, the military is strong in and out of the Peninsula and there are over 1,400 terrorists including 1,000 fighting cadres in Jaffna and over 7,000 terrorists have been killed since 2006 August.

He said that according to intelligence there were 10,000 LTTE cadres in the Peninsula and 2000 in the East. He said that these numbers would not say that the LTTE's manpower has been reduced to 3,000.

"The number keeps on increasing as they recruit young and old to the outfit forcibly", he said giving the estimated number of LTTE terrorists - 1,400 in Muhamalai, 1,500 in Weli Oya, Vavuniya and Mannar and another 1,000 standby.

Gen. Fonseka said that the dead bodies belong to Sea Tiger cadres and confirmed that they lack cadre strength. Female cadres of the Sea Tigers, the LTTE Police cadres were among the dead, he said.

He also said that the LTTE could not survive at the rate their cadres were getting killed and difficult to continue attacks for long periods with fresh untrained cadres, mostly who were taken to arms forcibly."

People have realised the situation as the LTTE is continuously losing its ground. They have started coming to the government-controlled areas. Last month 70 have fled the LTTE controlled-areas and during this month it was 70",

'Tigers in for another jolt in Wanni shortly'

he said, adding that if this trend of people fleeing the LTTE, controlled areas continues, this would seriously affect the outfit.

The Army Chief said that his men, who were battling strongly and confidently against the LTTE, would not be demoralised easily but unfortunately their morale was affected due to mud-slinging campaigns by those in the South who do not want to accept that military achieve success since the Vakarai battle.

He said that until the last LTTE terrorist was destroyed from the East, the military will continue to maintain the security in the East.

Vowing to wipe out the LTTE terrorism before the end of his tenure, Lt. Gen. Fonseka said that the major hindrance faced by the military was the unrealistic criticisms by those who want to underestimate the military capabilities of the soldiers.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from the Sri Lanka Sunday Observer.

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Load-Date: October 1, 2008

End of Document

Air strike, ground battles killed 28 rebels, five soldiers in Sri Lanka, military says

Associated Press International

February 25, 2008 Monday 6:37 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 263 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lankan forces launched an airstrike against a Tamil Tiger naval base and attacked rebel fortifications in a wave of violence that killed 28 rebels and five soldiers, the military said Monday.

The heavy fighting came amid a government offensive against the rebels' de facto state in parts of the north. Top government officials have vowed to destroy the **Tamil Tigers** and win the 25-year-old war with the separatist group by the end of the year.

In fresh fighting Sunday, government troops launched a series of raids against rebel bunkers along the front lines in the Mannar region, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said. The fighting killed 17 rebels and five soldiers, he said.

Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan was not immediately available for comment, but the pro-rebel TamilNet Web site said 11 Sri Lankan troops were killed in the battle. It gave no figures for rebel casualties.

The two sides often give vastly different casualty figures, and independent confirmation is unavailable because journalists are barred from the conflict zone.

In another attack Sunday, air force jets bombed a training camp used by **female** members of the Sea Tigers, the rebels' naval wing, killing 10 fighters, the military said. Another rebel was killed in fighting in the northern Jaffna peninsula, Nanayakkara said.

The **Tamil Tigers** have been fighting since 1983 to create an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's minority ethnic Tamils after decades of being marginalized by governments controlled by the majority Sinhalese. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

Load-Date: February 26, 2008

Sri Lankan Says 49 Killed in Fighting

Associated Press Online

February 25, 2008 Monday 11:33 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 297 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lankan forces attacked rebel fortifications by ground and staged an airstrike on a Tamil Tiger naval base in a wave of fighting that killed 43 rebels and six government soldiers, the military said Monday.

The heavy fighting came amid an offensive against the rebels' de facto state in parts of this South Asian island state's north. Top government officials have vowed to destroy the **Tamil Tigers** and win the 25-year-old war with the separatist group by the end of the year.

In fighting Monday, soldiers attacked a rebel position in the northern Welioya region, killing seven guerrillas, the military spokesman, Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara, said. One soldier died and three suffered wounds, he said.

On Sunday, government troops launched a series of raids on rebel bunkers along the front lines in the Mannar region, Nanayakkara said. That fighting killed 17 rebels and five soldiers, he said.

Rebel spokesman Rasiyah Ilanthirayan was not immediately available for comment, but the pro-rebel TamilNet Web site said 11 government soldiers died. It gave no figures for rebel casualties.

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In another attack Sunday, air force jets bombed a training camp used by **female** members of the Sea Tigers, the rebels' naval wing, killing 10 fighters, the military said. It said other battles in Mannar, the neighboring Vavuniya district and the northern Jaffna peninsula killed nine rebels.

The **Tamil Tigers** have been fighting since 1983 to create an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil minority after decades of being marginalized by governments controlled by the majority Sinhalese. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

Load-Date: February 26, 2008

UN, U.S. condemn suicide attack in Sri Lanka

Xinhua General News Service

February 9, 2009 Monday 11:40 AM EST

Copyright 2009 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 430 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Feb. 9

Body

The United Nations and the United States have both condemned the suicide attack launched by suspected Tamil Tiger rebels in an internally displaced people's camp in northern Sri Lanka which left 28 people killed and 64 injured Monday morning.

"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 UN's Sri Lankan office said Monday in a statement.

"The United States condemns today's suicide attack ... This apparent effort by the **LTTE** to discourage Tamils from leaving the conflict area wounded and killed many Tamil civilians," said the U. S. embassy in a statement.

The U.S. statement also urged the **LTTE** to allow civilians' freedom of movement.

Sri Lanka's military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said 20 soldiers and eight civilians were killed when a **female LTTE** suicide bomber launched the attack around 11:30 a.m. local time (0600 GMT) at the North of Visuamadu in Mullaittivu.

"Twenty-four soldiers and 40 civilians were also injured in the explosion, most of them in critical condition," said Nanayakkara.

The Ministry of Defense said in a statement that the **LTTE** carried out the attack targeting the civilians in reprisal, for defying **LTTE**'s orders to take-up arms.

The **female** suicide bomber had arrived mixing up with the civilians who were seeking protection with security forces and she had blown herself before being screened.

The civilians have begun to leave the war zone as the military gained territory from rebel control, officials said.

The government accuses the **LTTE** of using the civilians as human shields in the present military clashes, but the **LTTE** says the civilians are retreating with them due to their fear for government troops.

The government has urged the rebels to allow free movement for some 120,000 civilians. The international aid agencies say some 230,000 civilians are still trapped in the battle zone.

UN , U.S. condemn suicide attack in Sri Lanka

The **LTTE** has been confined to an area less than 200 square km in the Mullaittivu district after losing most of its strongholds in the government's military offensive started in July 2006.

Claiming discrimination at the hands of Sinhalese dominated governments, the **LTTE** has been fighting for more than two decades to carve out a Tamil homeland in the north and east for the minority Tamils.

More than 70,000 people have been killed so far in the Asia's longest civil war.

Load-Date: February 10, 2009

End of Document

Airstrike, ground battles killed 36 rebels, five soldiers in Sri Lanka, military says

Associated Press International

February 25, 2008 Monday 8:24 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 270 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lankan forces launched an airstrike against a Tamil Tiger naval base and attacked rebel fortifications in a wave of violence that killed 36 rebels and five soldiers, the military said Monday.

The heavy fighting came amid a government offensive against the rebels' de facto state in parts of the north. Top government officials have vowed to destroy the **Tamil Tigers** and win the 25-year-old war with the separatist group by the end of the year.

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Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan was not immediately available for comment, but the pro-rebel TamilNet Web site said 11 Sri Lankan troops were killed in the battle. It gave no figures for rebel casualties.

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In another attack Sunday, air force jets bombed a training camp used by **female** members of the Sea Tigers, the rebels' naval wing, killing 10 fighters, the military said. Other battles in Mannar, the neighboring Vavuniya district and the northern Jaffna peninsula killed nine rebels, the military said.

The **Tamil Tigers** have been fighting since 1983 to create an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's minority ethnic Tamils after decades of being marginalized by governments controlled by the majority Sinhalese. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

Load-Date: February 26, 2008

Sri Lankan Air Force pound rebel base

Xinhua General News Service

February 24, 2008 Sunday 1:16 AM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Military

Length: 283 words

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

The Sri Lankan military said its Air Force jets bombed a camp of Tamil Tiger rebels in the north on Sunday, amid conflicting reports of another bombing carried out by the Air Force on Friday.

Officials from the Media Center for National Security said Air Force jet aircraft pounded a leaders' camp of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) around 9 a.m. (0330 GMT) on Sunday in the Mannar district.

Air Force officials said the target was successfully engaged.

Meanwhile, defense officials said 10 **LTTE** rebels were killed and nine were injured in Kilinochchi district in another air attack against a Sea Tiger training camp on Friday.

They said a **female** Sea Tiger leader named Kalai Arasi was among the killed and many **LTTE** fighter boats were damaged in Friday's bombing.

The government's claim came after an **LTTE** report saying the Air Force bombed a civilian settlement on Friday, killing eight civilians and injuring 14 others.

In the eastern Batticaloa district, an **LTTE** suicide bomber exploded himself Sunday morning and killed two members of the TMVP (Tamilleela Peoples Liberation Tigers), a breakaway political and military group split from the mainstream **LTTE** in 2004.

Government troops and the **LTTE** are currently engaged in intensive military conflicts in the north, with the government determining to defeat the **LTTE** before the end of this year.

The military said more than 700 people have been killed in the escalating conflict since the beginning of this year.

The **LTTE** has been fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east for more than two decades, resulting in the death of more than 70,000 people.

Load-Date: February 26, 2008

Tigers snatch children to guard themselves

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

March 9, 2009 Monday

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Length: 485 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, March 9 -- Children in the LTTE controlled areas have become the latest victims of the Tigers' human shield to keep the military away.

The civilians trapped in Puthukudiyiruppu are now keeping their children-infants to teenagers, out of the LTTE's evil eyes in fear of abductions. According to civilians who have escaped the LTTE grip, the LTTE snatch children even new born babies to hold back the civilians with them. They said parents protect their children by keeping them inside barrels and holes dug in the nearest forest patches for days.

" It is very heartening that some young mothers hide their children in small bunker like holes and spend sleepless nights guarding these places. They literally live in these places to avoid the LTTE abducting their babies," they said. They also revealed that the LTTE attacks the troops with heavy guns kept within the civilians to provoke the military to counter attack. According to civilians, the Tigers have continued to fire at troops using heavy weapons while being in the Safe Zones - Mullaivaikkal, Vellamullaivaikkal, Mathalan and Puthumathalan. All communication links are shut to the cadres and civilians. According to civilians, the LTTE still boasts of victory. " The Tigers want to keep us with them saying they need our support to win the battle. They warned that those go against the orders of the LTTE would face death. They shot indiscriminately at the civilians who fled in groups and most of them, including children and elders, were found dead, they said. Meanwhile, the escapees of the ill-fated boats which sank in the sea of Puthumathalan said the LTTE has deployed Sea Tigers to chase the boats and teppam with civilians to kill them. Twenty six-year-old Soosei Jemarasa who escaped death with some of his family members sought refugee with the 55 Division. He said over 500 civilians planned to escape in 50 boats and they have started their journey at 11.30 pm disobeying the orders of the LTTE. "Twelve of us got into a boat. Two boats carrying over 50 civilians were sailing before us and the Tigers started shooting at them," said Asiriwathan Soosainathan, 42, Principal of Thirimurukkandi Vidyalaya, recalling how he saw civilians including children falling into the sea following the LTTE carnage. He said the Tigers shot at their boat and his brother's son was shot. "We started pleading with the LTTE not to shoot at us but they did not listen. We could not surrender to the Tigers as they punish the civilians who try to flee. We drove the motor boat at high speed while the LTTE was shooting at us. I saw the son was screaming as he was injured and the women and children in the boat were crying," he said. The group came to Thaleaddi and the troops of the 55 Division found them in the following morning. They were given medical treatment, they said. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 1, 2009

Tigers snatch children to guard themselves

End of Document

Air Force launches multiple-air raids

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

October 2, 2008 Thursday 3:36 PM EST

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Length: 233 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 2 -- Air Force yesterday launched multiple-air raids at **LTTE** targets in the Kilinochchi district, including a **LTTE**'s Charles Anthony Unit, the air force said.

The first air raid carried out by the fighter jets at an **LTTE** gathering point located at 3 km North East of Piramanthalkulam, Kilinochchi around 5.30 a.m. "The target was well identified and the site was a prominent hideout of senior **LTTE** terrorists," air force Spokesperson Janaka Nanayakkara said.

He also said that later around 10.25 a.m. fighter jets launched simultaneous aerial raids at two key **LTTE** facilities with precision, located North of Thiruvaiaru in Kilinochchi.

"A target engaged was identified as a major foothold of the **LTTE**'s 'Charles Anthony Unit', while the other was described, a hardcore **female** terrorist training facility," he said.

The targets were acquired on real-time ground and aerial reconnaissance information received, he added.

In another attack, fighter jets bombed three administrative and logistical facilities of the **LTTE**, 3.5 kilometres south of Kilinochchi town (West of A-9).

Meanwhile, the **LTTE** claimed that Sri Lanka Air Force attacked a civilian settlement 1 km south of Kilinochchi town, close to A9 Road, killing two civilians and wounding 13, yesterday morning.

However, the military vehemently denied the **LTTE** allegations.

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Load-Date: October 2, 2008

An excellent relationship

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

October 31, 2008 Friday 2:52 PM EST

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Length: 1274 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 31 -- During my visit, I was fortunate to have an interview with Mrs. Gandhi at her office in Parliament. In the course of the meeting, she touched on some agitation that was going on in Tamil Nadu, and said that an extremist communal political party had begun making noises, but that she was not giving much cognizance to the rabble rousers.

During my stay, I gathered that the seeds of secession had begun to be sown in the south Indian State.. That was nearly 40 years ago. Some parties were raising their chauvinistic heads and beating the communal drum in order to launch a separatist movement.

This time around, they have seized on the impending defeat of the **LTTE** spreading a vile canard that the Tamils were facing genocide in Sri Lanka.

As former High Commissioner for India in Sri Lanka N.N. Jha has said the DMK was a small party in the ruling UPA and it does not speak for the whole of Tamil Nadu. The senior Indian diplomat said there was a very broad consensus of non-interference by India.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa reiterated his unwavering commitment to a political solution while defeating the **LTTE** militarily. This has been welcomed by the Indian Government which has categorically stated that it was strongly supporting this country in its battle against terrorism, while calling for a negotiated settlement of the ethnic problem.

The virulent agitation for the intervention of the Centre in New Delhi collapsed after Special Presidential Envoy Basil Rajapaksa briefed the Indian leaders on the factual situation in Sri Lanka. .

I have been to Jaffna when Prabhakaran held the peninsula except for the Palaly Military Base. I saw for myself that the population lived in absolute fear of the terrorists, who ruled them from the barrel of a gun. I have seen **LTTE** leaders travelling in luxury cars in Jaffna, while the rest of the population had to trek long distances, with only a few ramshackle kerosene-operated coaches on dusty, ill-kept roads. I have seen the shops and boutiques bereft of goods while the terrorist leaders enjoyed la dolce vita. In fact, I have even partaken of some of the tasty, succulent rolls, pastries, cakes cooked in the well-equipped terrorist leaders' kitchens.

Special envoy, Presidential Advisor Basil Rajapaksa must be congratulated for the resounding success of his visit to New Delhi, where he briefed the Indian leaders on the actual situation. At the conclusion of Presidential Advisor's talks, it was announced that India and Sri Lanka asserted that terrorism should be countered with resolve.

An excellent relationship

Basil Rajapaksa reportedly reiterated the Sri Lankan government's firm commitment to a political solution, briefed the Indian Government in detail on the measures taken to protect the Tamil civilians, providing food, clothing and shelter to those trapped by the LTTE in the Wanni and the internally displaced. .

The agitation was described by the Hindu and many other Indian newspapers as pro-LTTE, Tamil secessionism, and that its as much against India as against Sri Lanka. A report highly critical of the agitation by Senior Indian commentator and authority on Sri Lanka Malini Parasarathy who is also a Director of the 'Hindu' was followed by mobs attacking the newspaper's office, seizing and burning thousands of copies of the newspaper on sale. As for the charge that the Sri Lankan military is committing genocide of Tamil civilians, the TULF leader in a letter titled "Appeal to the leaders of political parties and people of Tamil Nadu" that there has not been any attempt to exterminate anyone deliberately or otherwise.

A few deaths had taken place in the war zone, but that cannot be classified in any way as genocide. He further states that for more than quarter of a century, the LTTE has taken the Tamil people for a ride. The Tamils need liberation only from the LTTE. The military has already liberated large areas from the LTTE, the East in full and in the North well over 75 per cent. Now, only a small area is left. It is here all the displaced persons from Mannar, Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi and Vavuniya are driven into. The LTTE has brought them there under compulsion for the LTTE's own protection. The terrorists are using these hapless civilians as a human shield.

TULF leader Anandasangaree categorically states the LTTE charge that the government of Sri Lanka is engaged in genocide is a big farce. More than 50 pc of the Tamil people now live among the Sinhalese and Muslims, most of them fleeing from LTTE controlled areas. Further, LTTE attempts to provoke a backlash in Sinhalese areas has failed. He accuses the LTTE of staging claymore mine explosions in Sinhalese areas, targeting service personnel and civilians in order to spark off communal riots.

The dispute in the country is not between any ethnic groups.

If the LTTE gives up its demand for separation and agrees to lay down its arms, we will help them to play an important role in negotiations, says the TULF leader. Everyone in India, Sri Lanka and even in many parts of the world, know fully well that a creation of a separate state of Eelam is an impossible task. The Government of India is vehemently opposed to it. And, so is the international community, says the most senior Tamil politician.

Kuldip Nayar, the famous Indian writer, pre-independence freedom fighter, veteran political commentator, one-time diplomat and Rajya Sabha member of India, whom I had the privilege of meeting in Colombo when he called on me when I was editor of The Daily News says that the cat was out of the bag when some parties in India asked for a ceasefire with the LTTE.

Writing a column in a Sunday newspaper, Nayar says that asking an independent country not to march against forces it considers rebels amounts to belittling its sovereignty. There are ways and means of expressing concern over the violation of Tamils' human rights.

He says he cannot understand how the LTTE represents the Tamils. It is a banned organisation in India and it has been proved beyond doubt that LTTE chief Velupillai Prabhakaran was responsible for the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The LTTE is a band of terrorists. They cannot be allowed to hijack the Tamil community.

The LTTE charge of genocide of Tamil civilians is a palpable falsehood. In fact, according to the Peace Secretariat, Tamil newspapers and websites closely associated with the LTTE reported that as a result of SLAF raids not more than 106 civilians lost their lives during the last two-and-a-half years. This covers the period from June 2006 to October 2008.

As against this, the LTTE has killed many thousands of Sri Lankan civilians, a majority of them Tamils in its insatiable lust for blood. This includes the brutal massacres of thousands of Sinhalese and Muslim civilians, hundreds of monks, men, women and children.

An excellent relationship

In addition, Prabhakaran wiped out the leadership and over 1,000 members of TELO organisation in one night, while the EPRLF leadership was mowed down by LTTE gunmen as they held a meeting in Madras.

The LTTE has also brutally murdered over 23 Tamil political leaders who were totally committed to winning their demands through the democratic process. It has assassinated a Sri Lankan President, a former Indian Prime Minister, an opposition leader, a foreign minister and several other ministers and seriously injured a former President, ethnically cleansed Jaffna and parts of the Wanni it controls of all Sinhalese and Muslims.

The LTTE concocted genocide propaganda is a mere myth to save Prabhakaran and his band of bloodthirsty LTTE brigands.

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

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Load-Date: October 31, 2008

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Heavy casualties on both sides

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

September 4, 2008 Thursday 3:28 PM EST

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Length: 548 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Sept. 4 -- Heavy casualties were reported from both sides after fierce fighting throughout Tuesday, in the Nachchikudah area in the Kilinochchi district as the military claimed that troops captured another patch of about 400 metres in the area.

"The **LTTE** in return launched four counter attacks against the troops but the troops overcame the threat," Army Headquarters said yesterday. It also said that fighting was continuing in Terankandal and Akkrayankulam areas, north-east of Nachchikudah.

The Army also put the death toll of the military as six soldiers killed and 31 others injured. "Seven more soldiers have gone missing while resisting terrorist threats in Nachchikudah area," it said.

It also claimed that during this fighting at least 27 **LTTE** cadres were killed and 45 others injured. Later on, troops searched

the area and found two bodies, one **female** and a male along with several military items.

Meanwhile, according to the military, in Andankulam in Welioya area six Tigers were killed and about eleven injured throughout the day. Similarly, clashes that erupted to the north of Palamoddai in the Vavuniya sector resulted in 19 **LTTE** cadres being killed and 23 injured.

Meanwhile, the **LTTE** said that its fighters had confronted troops at Nachchikudah, killing 45 soldiers and wounding 51 others.

"Another 30 soldiers were killed in clashes elsewhere in the north on Tuesday. The Tigers had recovered the bodies of 17 soldiers, the pro-**LTTE** Tamilnet said. However, rejecting the claims, the military said the number of security forces casualties was lower than what the **LTTE** claimed.

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Load-Date: September 4, 2008

Raging battles in north, heavy casualties

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 20, 2008 Tuesday 1:17 PM EST

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Length: 364 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 20 -- Heavy clashes which erupted between government troops and the LTTE in Mannar on Sunday, left several dead on both sides. The figures however could not be independently verified.

The government claimed that at least 55 LTTE cadres and thirteen soldiers were killed during clashes in the northern battlefield.

According to military sources, a highlight of the battle was when the army thwarted at least two attempts by the LTTE to advance on the Mannar front by attacking the Nadunkandal army deployments.

"The Tigers fired heavy mortars at the military deployment, but troops thwarted the manoeuvre successfully" Military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said.

He said the clash lasted more than an hour and 21 LTTE cadres were reported killed, while twelve others sustained injury. Five soldiers were also killed during the confrontation and three injured" he said.

The Tamil Net website however quoted the LTTE as claiming it had thwarted a ground movement launched by the army from Irungkandakulam towards Vannaakulam in Mannaar./ It claimed at least 26 soldiers were killed and more than 50 wounded.

Tamil Net quoted LTTE officials as saying the LTTE had recovered 6 bodies of the soldiers in the clearing mission as well as some weapons. Three LTTE cadres were reported killed in action.

The LTTE claimed the military had opened another front towards Vannaakulam from Karungkandal on Sunday night. Heavy fighting was continuing yesterday amid artillery and mortar barrages from the army.

The military said casualties were reported on both sides during separate clashes in Vavuniya, Welioya, and Jaffna. Military spokesman said twelve civilians who arrived from Tamil Nadu, India sought refuge with the security forces in Talaimannar. Two others who escaped from uncleared areas reported to a navy detachment in Pallaimadu in Mannar,.

He said measures had been taken to provide food and accommodation to the civilians.

In another development, seven bodies of LTTE cadres, -6 females and a male - killed in recent confrontations in Vavuniya were handed over to ICRC on Sunday at the Omanthai entry/ exit point.

Raging battles in north, heavy casualties

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Load-Date: August 11, 2008

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Teacher-turned Tiger captured

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

November 13, 2008 Thursday 1:27 PM EST

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Length: 355 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Nov. 13 -- The Army yesterday said that security forces have captured an **LTTE female** fighter who happened to be a graduate English teacher still drawing her Government salary.

"One of the four **female** Tigers captured in the Palavi area on Tuesday after fierce clashes on the Mannar-Pooneryn road happened to be a Government English teacher of a reputed school," Army Headquarters said.

It said that this teacher turned **LTTE** cadre, identified as Nilaveli (28) was teaching in Grade 6-10 classes until she joined the **LTTE**'s 'Saiver' Regiment to forestall conscription of her beloved teenage brother and sister by the **LTTE**.

Graduated from the reputed Kopay College of Education (English Faculty), she has still been drawing her Government salary and all other perks from the Education Department in Kilinochchi as a trained English teacher, it said.

She was arrested at Vallayarkuttirukkumodai, about 4 km to the east of the 7th Mile Post on the A-32 Road, close to Palavi area.

The other two captured **female** Tigers have been identified as Kilavedi (18) and Thuruveli (19), all four of them originally from Kilinochchi, Paranthan and Mallavi areas.

"She had confessed to the military that more than one hundred (100) of her counterparts, some of who are also her own batch mates, still remain with the **LTTE** organization, either after they were conscripted or made to join it in fear of Tiger reprisals," it said.

She had also said that she was compelled to join the **LTTE** purely to save the lives of her beloved teenage brother and the sister from the notorious **LTTE** conscription, since the **LTTE** has strictly ordered the surrender of at least one family member to the outfit from each family.

In the same manner, almost all officials, clerks, lower grade employees of the Agriculture Department, several other Government agencies as well as officials of Kilinochchi-based Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), following **LTTE** diktats have been forced to serve in the front lines whether they liked it or otherwise, the Army said quoting the captured **LTTE female** cadre.

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Teacher-turned Tiger captured

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Load-Date: November 13, 2008

End of Document

Delighted to beat you

The Sun Herald (Sydney, Australia)

November 30, 2008 Sunday

First Edition

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Section: TRAVEL; Pg. 15

Length: 1016 words

Byline: Sam Vincent

Body

With cricket being played all around him, Sam Vincent decides to pad up and play mascot for the Baggy Green.

Englishman Robert Knox, observing the Sri Lankan people during his captivity on the island in the 17th century, wrote: "They have but few sports, neither do they delight in play."

How times change. Today cricket is the pulse of the nation and the greatest of icebreakers for any tourist with a love for the game. When a local finds out you come from Australia, the response will always relate to cricket, often ended by the peculiar habit of adding "no" to an interrogative.

"Australia? First-class cricket team, no?"

It's never anything else about our country. To most Sri Lankans, Australia may as well end at the gates of the MCG. Revelling in my status as mascot for the Baggy Green, I decide to use cricket as a way of getting under this island's skin. Every time I see a game being played, I will join in.

My journey starts in Colombo, the country's capital and unofficial shrine to Muttiah Muralitharan. The great Tamil tweaker can be seen on billboards throughout the city, flogging everything from engine oil to yoghurt, always sporting a toothy, goofy grin. Beside one such sign, 15 men play in a narrow alley. Caught off the walls is out; a straight hit into the adjoining bazaar is four; if it makes it onto the roof, six. A coconut acts as the stumps at the bowler's end, while a menacing gang of crows form the slips cordon.

I take up position at cover, beside an old man leaning on a walking stick. I ask him why Sri Lanka's team has slipped down the world rankings the past few years after winning the World Cup in 1996. After a moment pondering my question, the man looks up, eyes bursting from behind a grey mane. He promptly plays a cover drive for four with his stick before delivering a fiery response. "There's no leadership," he says. "We need a guy like [former captain] Arjuna Ranatunga. That's why I loved him; he wasn't afraid to stick it up the opposition. He was like our ancient kings who fought the invading Indian armies. He made me sooo proud to be Sri Lankan."

By now his stick has been transformed from bat to sword, held aloft in preparation for some invading Indian warriors.

Delighted to beat you

Heading east, Colombo slowly gives way to swamps and paddy fields, where buffalo teams toil in the heat. As the train climbs, sprawling tea plantations emerge. Tamil women pick this green bounty, heaving it into baskets suspended from their backs.

The British established Nuwara Eliya in the 19th century as a summer escape from the oppressive coastal heat. An odd place, quaint reminders of colonialism fuse bizarrely with South Asian mayhem. The racecourse is a case in point, with white paint peeling from the crumbling grandstands while nearby, people and cows fossick through rubbish.

On its outskirts three games of cricket are taking place. The players range from eight-year-old children to one guy who looks well over 60. All are amazing fielders, with each direct hit sending the little ones into a frenzy.

Sixty per cent of Nuwara Eliya's population are Tamils. Totally distinct from those in the troubled north, they are the offspring of low caste south Indians brought by the British to work the tea plantations in the 1930s. Despite this, they are often the target of racism by the majority Sinhalese, who accuse them of supporting the Tamil Tigers. Sathees, a hotel worker and part-time opening batsmen, tells me he has spent two nights in a Colombo prison simply because of his ethnicity.

Luckily, cricket is a fine leveller. Each evening staff at my guesthouse play together: gardeners, cooks; Tamils and Sinhalese. Even the rapacious owner takes time out from his tourist-scamming activities to join in.

Trying to negotiate the vehicular chaos that is Sri Lanka, it is difficult to comprehend why the orderly game of cricket has thrived here. But like the Brazilians with soccer, the Sri Lankans have added their own flamboyance to the sport. In the 1990s they revolutionised one-day cricket, with swashbuckling batsmen like Sanath Jayasuriya and Aravinda de Silva.

In the southern town of Galle, two colonial throwbacks blend beautifully. A cricket game takes place in the old Dutch fort, fielders placed among the ramparts in positions you won't find in any cricket manual. A cow munches lazily at mid-on, while long-off is wedged between two turrets. Behind him the fort walls drop into the Indian Ocean. A decent hit is six and out. The players here show signs of the influence left by travelling surfers, some boasting dreadlocks, all playing in bare feet and board shorts.

When I bat I get a thick top edge, the ball hanging in the air for what seems an eternity. Just as a fielder looks set to make the catch a tuk-tuk gets in the way, allowing the ball to bounce away safely and roll under the gate of the local Buddhist temple, where it interrupts a young monk from his sweeping duties. He picks it up and throws with all his might, unfurling his saffron robe in the process.

Fielding in the slips, Nana is one of several hundred Muslims who live within the fort walls. His ancestors came here as early as the seventh century, attracted by the gem trade. He tells me that one Galle landmark destroyed by the 2004 tsunami was the cricket stadium just outside the fort ramparts. While the pitch and outfield survived unscathed, the rickety grandstands were washed away.

After nearly three years of restoration, the picturesque old ground made its international comeback with a Test match against England last December. "We missed it," says a smiling Nana. It seems where cricket is concerned, these people do indeed "delight in play".

TRIP NOTES

* Getting there Sri Lankan Airlines (www.srilankan.lk) flies from Sydney to Colombo via Singapore from \$1750.

* Further information The Australian Government suggests travellers should reconsider visiting Sri Lanka because of the conflict in the north between Sri Lankan government forces and the LTTE (Tamil Tigers). For travel advice, see smartraveller.gov.au. For official tourist information, see www.srilankatourism.org.

Delighted to beat you

Graphic

PHOTO: Wet wicket ... any flat surface, no matter how close the boundaries or spectators, presents an opportunity to play a few overs. Photo: Getty Images. Map: Sri Lanka

Load-Date: November 30, 2008

End of Document

More people cross over

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

February 6, 2009 Friday

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Length: 313 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 6 -- Nearly 1,000 civilians arrived in Tharmapuram and Visuamadu after fleeing from the **LTTE** during the past 48 hours in a sign of an acceleration of the exodus of civilians from Mullaitivu seeking protection under the Armed Forces.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said over 700 civilians fleeing from the **LTTE** controlled areas sought protection with troops of the 58 division consolidating their positions in Tharmapuram and Visuamadu. He said arrival of civilians from the clutches of the **LTTE** had increased considerably. Over 264 civilians had reached Tharmapuram and Visuamadu on Wednesday. "There were children, elderly people and **women** among the 700 civilians who arrived from Mullaitivu" . "Civilians taking a risk crossed the uncleared area and reached the safety zone", he added. He said civilians who arrived from the uncleared areas were put through a severe ordeal by the **LTTE** .Many of them were suffering from dehydration. "We expect many more stranded civilians to arrive in the safety zone seeking the Security Forces' protection. Troops had taken measures to provide the influx with food, dry ration, medicine and other essentials. "The **LTTE** cadres losing their battle against the Security Forces in the North and the Wanni were using civilians as a human shield to prevent troops advancing into the last domain of the Tigers in Mullaitivu. It is believed that the **LTTE** are holding over 118,000 civilians captivity in Mullaitivu. Many IDPs who arrived from the **LTTE** clutches, recounted their ordeal in the uncleared areas. They told the Security Forces that the Tigers are forcing and dragging civilians regardless of age or gender to man their defence lines. There are many thousands of civilians waiting for the opportunity to escape from the clutches of the **LTTE**.Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 5, 2009

Battered Tigers irked by Southern unity against terrorism

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

October 10, 2008 Friday 3:44 PM EST

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Length: 2066 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 10 -- It has been a proven fact that the LTTE never tolerated any unity in the Southern polity. Their attempts always aimed at disturbing the South once they observed signs that the South is uniting against LTTE terrorism. The LTTE observed that Southern polity is reaching towards consensus at this decisive juncture as the military defeat of the LTTE is nearing.

Though many politicians cry foul about military successes to appease their disgruntled political leaders, they are supportive of the military successes against the LTTE.

The politicians who are supportive of defeating the LTTE militarily, at this juncture, cannot wait silently without coming out with their feelings towards the war heroes sacrificing their lives and limbs for the sake of their Motherland, finally to see an end to decades long terrorism in the country.

They were to come out of their narrow cells and extend their support openly within the past few weeks as they realised that the military successes in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu front were not mere successes highlighted only through Government media but realistic victories achieved by the Security Forces under the correct political leadership given to them by this Government.

Politicians like Sajith Premadasa, who was one of the victims of the LTTE terrorism when his father, former President Ranasinghe Premadasa was assassinated by a suicide cadre, openly expressed the view that the main Opposition should extend their support for the Security Forces' effort to defeat LTTE.

Defeat LTTE

In the same way many politicians, who were critical of Government efforts to defeat LTTE militarily in many ways extended their unconditional support to the Security Forces.

It was a time the politicians were ready to shed their differences at least for the sake of the country with the genuine support of the common masses, and were humble enough at least to visit the war heroes undergoing treatment at hospitals.

This was not a good sign for the LTTE which is now desperately hanging on to the support of the Tamil Nadu politicians who are engaged in various campaigns to exert pressure on the central government of India to stop the military thrust on the LTTE by the Sri Lankan Government.

Battered Tigers irked by Southern unity against terrorism

It was in such a background that the unfortunate incident took place in the sacred city of Anuradhapura on October 6 at 8.45 a.m. in which one of the brave officers who served in the Army fighting fearlessly against the LTTE, fell victim to one of the Tiger suicide cadres along with several other UNP politicians.

Major General (Rtd) Janaka Perera who was the Opposition leader of the North Central Provincial Council and his wife Wajira Perera who was also an ex-officer of the first battalion of the Sri Lanka Army Women's Corps, Raja Johnpulle, the UNP Manger in the Anuradhapura district and his wife Jenita Johnpulle, NCP Councillor Sunil Dissanayake, A.C.S Hameed and his wife were among the 27 people who fell victim to the suicide bomber who rushed into the opening ceremony of the Anuradhapura district UNP office at a time the participants were ready for refreshments on the invitation of Major General Janaka Perera.

Janaka Perera was a long awaited target of the LTTE from his precious days in the Army as a young officer and as a General as he gave a hard time for the LTTE. A tip off given to him by a civilian made him one of the biggest war heroes in Lankan military history with the ambush laid by the Army surrounding the 223 Brigade in Weli Oya.

More than 500 Tiger cadres were killed in this confrontation with troops recovering more than 400 bodies of the Tiger cadres who came to overrun the Weli Oya Brigade in June 1995.

That was most probably the single largest recovery of Tiger bodies by the Security Forces in the three decades long conflict in the country.

Tiger attempt

Apart from this Major General Janaka Perera was also instrumental in stopping the Tiger attempt to overrun Jaffna in 2000.

But the LTTE waited for their mission till the most unexpected time to take his life. For the LTTE assassinating Janaka Perera was a multi directional bomb.

On one hand it had taken one of their long-awaited targets and on the other, they are giving a warning for the politicians who are trying to extend their support to Government efforts to defeat the LTTE militarily as many active UNP supporters in Anuradhapura were killed in this suicide blast.

Above all the LTTE has been able to create a big political issue over the assassination of the Janaka Perera as the UNP leader Ranil Wickremesinghe has already pointed his finger at the Government. The politicians who were trying to take advantages out of this assassination are taking the coffin of this one time Army officer amidst objections from the his own sons and daughters.

Therefore, the LTTE has created a scenario for the politicians to fight each other at a time they are expected to unite for the sake of the country realizing the obvious fact that there is no other element other than the LTTE to commit such a brutal act of this nature by deploying a suicide cadre.

This time they could not find the head of the suicide cadre as the entire body of this suicide cadre except for his legs below the knee has been shattered into pieces as a large quantity of explosives have been used for the suicide jacket.

The only clue about the suicide bomber can be found through the video footage shot by the Sirasa and MTV correspondent in Anuradhapura Rashmi Mohammed's video camera. Rashmi Mohammed who sustained injuries in this blast succumbed to his injuries after being admitted to Anuradhapura hospital along with his father and mother lawyers Mr. and Mrs. Hameed.

Police teams are investigating to ascertain details about the suicide cadre. Their investigations should be aimed at tracing the people who had assisted the suicide cadre in accomplishing his target as that will help prevent incidents of this nature at a crucial point in the country.

Battered Tigers irked by Southern unity against terrorism

This country has already experienced situations in which the LTTE has made use of volatile situations of this nature to accomplish their terror plans. On all these occasions the politicians had hair splitting arguments to prove that their main opponents were behind such assassinations but ultimately it was the LTTE which had always been behind those assassinations.

Therefore, all politicians who are trying to point a finger at the Government for the incident must realise the fact that they have already fallen victim to the LTTE's trap at this decisive moment when the country is at the doorstep of victory against the LTTE.

The LTTE has given a signal that they will not spare any politician whether they are from the Government or from the Opposition.

In yesterday's incident in Boralesgamuwa, a female LTTE suicide cadre attempted to take the life of Minister Maitiripala Sirisena after jumping into the path of his motorcade while returning from the Vap Magul ceremony in Bandaragama.

Therefore, all politicians should shed their political differences to unite against the LTTE at this decisive moment in which the Security Forces are poised to defeat the LTTE in their strongholds.

The country witnessed these unfortunate incidents as fierce fighting erupted on all three major battlefronts in the Wanni liberation operation within the past few days as continued resistance came from the LTTE toward the troops now awaiting to the final push against the LTTE now dominating Kilinochchi.

As mentioned in this column earlier the Kilinochchi town which was considered the so-called Tiger capital has already been abandoned by the civilians as they have moved out of the town with the troops reaching towards the outskirts of Kilinochchi town.

The Tiger leadership continued to pour their cadres into these three major battles in Kilinochchi in the East and west of Akkarayankulam, on the Nachchikuda front and on the Mullaitivu front taking maximum use of their reserve battalions as they are aware that no other battles will be left for them to defend their so-called Tamil Eelam after their defeat in Kilinochchi.

Final battle

Now the ground has already been prepared for the final battle in Kilinochchi with the LTTE mounting counter attacks to push back the troops from their defences. Troops attached to the 572 Brigade which was under the command of Colonel Senerath Bandara is now operating just one and half Kilometres from the south west of Kilinochchi.

The 572 Brigade has now been taken over by Lt. Colonel Dhammika Jayasundera as Colonel Senerath Bandara is due to visit India for a Senior Command course.

The 8 Sri Lanka Light Infantry Battalion under the Command of Lt. Colonel Epsitha Dissanayaka was able to capture a 300 metre stretch of the huge earth bund that has been constructed by the LTTE from east to west from Iranamadu to north west of Akkarayanakulam side.

Troops detected this earth bund last week as they were advancing along Akkarayan Murikkandi road. This earth bund is separated from the earth bund that has been constructed from Nachchikuda to Akkarayankulam. This new earth bund has been constructed north of Akkarayankulam from east to west direction to cover the Kilinochchi front.

In Monday's fighting 17 LTTE cadres were confirmed killed and nine others reportedly injured. There were three waves of Tiger cadres to push back the troops from the earth bund but they failed in all their attempts as troops are strongly holding this stretch of the earth bund.

The LTTE continued to launch gas attacks targeting the troops. Amidst such resistance troops are poised to further expand their areas along this newly captured earth bund which stretches for nearly 10 to 11 Kilometres.

Battered Tigers irked by Southern unity against terrorism

Troops from the 4 Sinha Regiment under the command of Lt. Colonel Subashana Welikala and the 3 Gajaba Regiment under the command of Sanjeewa Fernando are ready to link up with the 8 SLII troops to further expand the control over this earth bund amidst heavy resistance from the LTTE.

Command

Meanwhile, the 571 Brigade under the command of Colonel G.V. Ravipriya also operating in the West of Akkarayankulam, is posing a major threat to the LTTE.

The newly formed 574 Brigade under the command of Lt. Colonel Senaka Wijesuriya and 573 Brigade under the command of Lt. Colonel Prathap Thillekeratne are holding the ground parallel to the Jaffna - Kandy A-9 road from Mankulam to Murikandy in the south of Iranamadu.

The LTTE has not been given any room to operate on this stretch of A-9 road though troops have not taken control of the road. The 7 Sri Lanka Light Infantry battalion operating in Kokavil area destroyed a canter truck carrying 17 Tiger cadres when it was about to turn into the A-9 road.

The LTTE has also booby trapped and laid heavy mine fields preventing troops from reaching the A-9 road as they are aware that there will be deadly effects on them if they leave the A-9 road for free movements of the troops.

With troops attached the 57 Division heading towards Kilinochchi troops attached to the 58 Division under the command of Brigadier Shavendra Silva have made progress in the north-east of Nachchikuda. Troops are advancing further North of Karambakulam earth bund facing stiff resistance from the LTTE.

The 58 Division has further expanded their control over this ditch cum earth bund in Kambivelliyavillu, Pandiveddiaru and Maniyankulam areas.

From the earth bund troops have advanced four Kilometres Northwards and are operating just 10 Kilometres off Pooneryn in their bid to open another gateway to Jaffna.

During the week that ended on Wednesday the troops attached to the 58 Division has got confirmation that 74 Tiger cadres have been killed on this front.

The LTTE is pumping cadres to this front as they are aware that losing this vital ground will deprive them of logistics support from the South Indian coast.

Intelligence reports indicate that the LTTE is still receiving vital arms and ammunition stocks from the remaining stretch of coastal area in the North Western coast despite strengthening Naval operations in this vital section of the coast close to Valaipadu area.

Fierce fighting erupted in the Mullaitivu front as troops continuously engaged with the LTTE along the 12 Kilometres stretch of front in this sector. Fierce fighting erupted in the Mullaitivu front on Wednesday too from 2 pm with troops engaging Tiger defences.

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

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3 artillery attacks hit hospital in Sri Lanka rebel zone

The International Herald Tribune

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 3

Length: 529 words

Byline: Somini Sengupta - The New York Times Media Group

Dateline: NEW DELHI

Body

As the Sri Lankan military continued to push into a small corner of the island controlled by separatist guerrillas, three artillery attacks struck a hospital overflowing with wounded patients, the last of them hitting a ward of women and children, according to international agencies and health workers. At least nine people were killed and 20 wounded, and the dead were still being counted Monday morning.

On Sunday, the first shell hit the hospital at Puthukkudiyiruppu, killing at least two and wounding five, the International Committee of the Red Cross said in a statement. The second attack claimed five lives, The Associated Press reported, citing a government health official at the hospital. The third landed in the pediatric ward, a United Nations spokesman, Gordon Weiss, said by telephone Monday from the capital, Colombo.

A telephone text message from a United Nations worker described the carnage this way, Weiss said: "Women and kids wards shelled. God, no words. Still counting the dead bodies."

It was impossible to ascertain whether the shelling came from the military or the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The hospital is within a small wedge of land still controlled by the Tamil Tigers in the island's northeast.

Over the weekend, a senior government official threatened to expel foreign diplomats, aid agencies and journalists who appeared to be sympathetic to the rebels by, for instance, broadcasting images of civilian casualties.

The defense secretary, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, in an interview with the newspaper The Island on Sunday, singled out CNN, the BBC and Al Jazeera. "They will be chased away," he was quoted as saying.

The fighting has been intensifying between Sri Lankan forces and the rebels, accompanied by a spate of attacks on journalists. The fighting has raised alarm about the fate of civilians trapped in a fast-shrinking zone still controlled by the Tamil Tigers near the island's northeastern coast.

Hospitals and ambulances have faced particular difficulty, with hospitals being shelled in recent days and critically wounded patients being unable to cross the front line. The United Nations and other agencies have urged the Tamil Tigers to allow civilians to leave the combat zone and urged the government to spare known civilian sites. The rebels have denied holding civilians hostage and have called for a cease-fire.

The government bars journalists from traveling to the war zone, except on guided tours of areas seized by the army. The government says its offensive has carefully spared civilians.

3 artillery attacks hit hospital in Sri Lanka rebel zone

The hospital that was struck by shelling is in Puthukkudiyiruppu village and was filled beyond capacity, with more than 500 wounded patients, some lined up on mattresses on the floor, said officials of the Red Cross, which helps run the hospital. The agency said that many patients had been waiting to be taken to a government-run hospital across the front line.

"Wounded and sick people, medical personnel and medical facilities are all protected by international humanitarian law," Paul Castella, head of the Red Cross delegation in Sri Lanka, said in a statement. "Under no circumstance may they be directly attacked."

Load-Date: February 8, 2009

End of Document

Wanni operation enters into fast track

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

June 29, 2008 Sunday 2:59 PM EST

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Byline: Report from the Sri Lanka Sunday Observer brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 29 -- The situation in the Wanni is appearing to be more disastrous to the Tiger outfit during this week as their strongest positions in the Western edge of the Wanni battlefield started to fall to the Security Forces one after the other. It was not a situation expected by the LTTE leadership at all, as the Security Forces in surprise moves took all these strongholds.

But this was not an overnight victory achieved by the Security Forces. Their dedication, commitment and the sacrifices made within a period of two and a half years were the basis of all these achievements despite many political parties hell bent on crippling the military pressure on the LTTE, trying to undermine the progress achieved by the Security Forces.

Those critics were sceptical about the battlefield victories as they were more or less obsessed with the number of square kilometres captured by the troops during these operations!

The question here is not the capturing of "square kilometres" but the destruction of LTTE's military prowess and the major defences which had been created by the LTTE under the guise of the Ceasefire Agreement for more than four years.

The speedy progress achieved by the Security Forces within past few days in the Vavuniya and Mannar fronts was due to the gallantry of the ground troops in destroying LTTE main defences one after the other.

As this edition was going to press many of the Tiger strongholds in the Mannar and Vavuniya fronts would have fallen to the Security Forces driving the Wanni liberation into a critical and decisive phase!

It was not surprising to note that the troops attached to the 573 Brigade under the Command of General Officer Commanding 57 Division, Major General Jagath Dias made the biggest hit in the Wanni battlefield killing and capturing the bodies of 25 Tiger cadres from the 'Charles Anthony Brigade', after surrounding it from three fronts.

It was a big morale-booster for the troops operating in the Wanni battlefield, as they were able to capture a bigger haul of weapons including one 12.7 mm gun along with the 25 bodies of the Charles Anthony Brigade cadres.

The troops attached to the three Gajaba Regiment (3GR) under the command of Major Fernando launched this attack in Cheeraddikulam, located well within the Mullaitivu district, after surrounding the Tiger base for more than three days unnoticed to the LTTE.

Wanni operation enters into fast track

It was on Thursday evening they made this hit and captured Tiger bodies now being dispatched to the LTTE through the ICRC. The effect of this blow on the LTTE was so huge that the LTTE is not even talking about the incident through their radio transmissions since it would demoralize their cadres operating in the battlefield in Wanni.

The location of this Tiger base is such that it had been used by the LTTE to keep their reserve forces to be deployed for the Mannar and Vavuniya fronts in case their bases come under Security Forces attacks. So the fall of this Tiger base identified as "5-4 Base" will upset the entire operation plan of the LTTE in the Mannar and Vavuniya battlefield.

The Security Forces took this biggest hit just one day after they consolidated their positions in the Periyamadu village, located in the Mullaitivu and Mannar district border.

It was the third LTTE location fallen to the Security Forces operating in the Vavuniya front. Forces have started heading towards Mannar and Mullaitivu districts in two directions.

The surprise deployment of troops has restricted the movements of the LTTE within Wanni especially in the Mullaitivu and Mannar districts as almost all the supply routes connecting the Mullaitivu nerve centre and the North Western Coast are now being cut off by the troops operating in the 57 Division and also by the Task Force II now being deployed in the North of Mundumurippu.

The coming weeks are more decisive as the troops are now poised to liberate Mannar 'Rice Bowl' area stretching for more than 50 square kilometres.

The troops operating in the Mannar front made speedy progress within the past few days with troops capturing key LTTE locations, which had been used by them to retain the control over Mannar.

The LTTE cadres operating in the Mannar 'Rice Bowl' area basically depended on two supply routes linking them to the North. The main supply route available to them was the Pooneryn-Vedithalthivu-Mannar road from the Western edge, which goes through Pappamoddai. The other linkage they had to the Mannar 'Rice Bowl' was through the Pappamoddai-Adampan -Uyilankulam road.

Another supply line they had in the Mannar front was the Uyilankulam- Andankulam Vedithalthivu Road, which is connected to the Mannar-Pooneryn Sanguppiddi Road from the 12th Mile Post on the A-32 road in Nedunkandal, located two Kilometres South of Vedithalthivu.

The LTTE lost the supply route through Pappamoddai-Adampan road with the fall of their strategic base in Adampan which the LTTE declared as one of their impregnable basis. The troops operating under the 58 Division however debunked the LTTE belief by taking the strategic Adampan town in a surprise move.

Then the LTTE had to depend on the Vedithalthivu-Andankulam road for their supplies to their front lines since the troops operated more biased towards the Western side of the Adampan - Pappamoddai road.

The LTTE depends on this supply route as they never thought that the troops will cross the massive open area stretching more than two and half kilometres to capture this road.

However, the troops attached to the 58 Division made use of their expert knowledge having operated in open terrain for nearly one year and crossed this massive open to capture the villages in the West of Andankulam Vedithalthivu road.

On Thursday the troops attached to the 6 Gemunu Watch under the command of Lt. Colonel Kamal Pinnawala and the troops of the 8 Gemunu Watch under the Command of Lt. Colonel Sumeda Jayasundera captured Marattikanndalkulam and another area located North West of Andankulam simultaneously crossing the massive open.

Wanni operation enters into fast track

The troops dug massive trenches and made use of green polysacks bags to take cover from the LTTE when crossing this massive open area.

On Thursday they completed their mission after engaging in a fierce battle with the LTTE and capturing a stretch of about 1700 m between Chalampan and Marattikannadalkulam pushing already beaten terrorists further into northern jungles.

With the capture of this section of terrain the LTTE cadres were deprived of the sole supply route they had from the Vedithalthivu side to the Andankulam sector which was their main base in the Mannar 'Rice Bowl' area.

At least twelve Tiger cadres were reportedly killed during this battle. As this military pressure was put on the LTTE, Lakshman, the area leader who was commanding the Tiger cadres in the Mannar front and Vidusha, the Women Military Wing leader shifted their commanding bases further towards the North as they saw no escape from the advancing troops.

As these operations were continuing the infantry troops of the 9 Gemunu Watch under the command of the Lt. Colonel. Lal Chandrasiri and the elite commandoes attached to the 2nd Commando Regiment under the Command of Lt. Colonel Jayantha Balasuriya had surrounded Andankulam town while Special Force troops were giving their support from the Northern flank.

The Commando troops sealed off the area from the Eastern edge of Andankulam from the Madhu forest reserve while 9 GW troops sealed off from the South. It was only on Friday afternoon the LTTE realized that they had been sealed off from all directions and started fleeing the location leaving behind their belongings.

According to ground troops the LTTE used to shift all their logistics as they felt the location was not secure for them. But in Andankulam they had no choice but to flee from the area in the face of advancing troops.

Troops attached to the 58 Division under the Command of Brigadier Shavendra de Silva was in the process of securing Parappakandattan, the last and biggest village at the Eastern edge of the Mannar 'Rice Bowl'. They were due to complete their mission last evening as this edition was going to press.

Therefore, the 58 Division or the Task Force -I is now on the verge of completing the Operation, 'Rice Bowl' in the Mannar front so as to enter into one of the most critical stages of the operation keeping their feet on the border of Vedithalthivu.

They are now operating just three miles south from Vedithalthivu on the Mannar -Pooneryn Sanguppiddi A-32 road and some six Kilometres south of Vedithalthivu, which could be the next vital target in the Mannar front.

The task undertaken by them and all the Divisions engaged in the Wanni battle were hindered during the first four months of the year due to heavy rains lashing the Wanni front. But they brave all these challenges to fulfil their mission.

The situation is becoming more critical to the LTTE in their bid to defend Vedithalthivu, the last post for logistical supplies. Intelligence reports indicate that they are preparing to face both fronts by creating a massive defence in Pallamadu area. For the first time in the history of the North-East conflict the LTTE is now having the highest pressure on them as they have to face four battlefront in the Wanni with their dwindling numbers.

The LTTE has also put huge pressure on the civilian population entrapped in the Wanni. The number of civilians entering the cleared areas braving the Tiger guns is on the increase in the past few weeks. More than 150 civilians have crossed over to the cleared areas in Mannar during this month alone.

These civilians have arrived in the cleared areas amidst intense security measures put in place by the Tiger cadres to keep the civilian population within Wanni as they are fast losing their manpower.

The LTTE displayed its brutality towards these civilians at a number of occasions, with the most recent incident being reported from the sea off Pulipanchikal between Mullaitivu and Trincomalee.

Wanni operation enters into fast track

A group of Tamil civilians on the flee from Chundikulam in Kilinochchi was surrounded by **LTTE** boats and had assaulted the coxswain in their bid to stop the mission. Tiger cadres had dumped Selvamohan Rathakrishnan the coxswain of the boat after assaulting him mercilessly, the fleeing civilians claimed.

But his wife and three-year old daughter had managed to flee along with the other civilians who dared to escape from the **LTTE** boats.

Such is the pathetic situation faced by the innocent civilians entrapped in the Wanni. Many civilians who dared to escape the tiger terror ended up in **LTTE** and their bunkers. That is the real way how the **LTTE** is forcibly deploying civilians for bunker duties against their wish and providing them weapon-training and conscripting children for military service.

But they all have to face the death against their wishes as they are entrapped between the **LTTE** and the Security Forces during confrontations.

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Sri Lanka: An analysis of military operations

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 31 -- There should be no illusion that despite the flare of success in repelling a division strong security forces offensive at Muhamalai in April 2008, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is fighting a war of survival. The continuing ground and air operations of the security forces after the Muhamalai debacle and the progress they have made during this month in the Mannar sector, capturing Adampan and other outlying LTTE defences have further constricted the territory under active LTTE control in the Northern Province.

The fall of key LTTE defences in the Mannar sector indicate that the LTTE probably pulled out some of its forces earlier to reinforce Muhamalai-Kilinochchi. This would enable the LTTE to repel future forays of security forces into the vital heartland of the LTTE from the north.

As the troops advance further in the Mannar and Vavuniya sectors, and as pressure builds up in Welioya, even without a major offensive along Muhamalai, the LTTE's options would be reduced further. As the war prolongs further, the constraints of conventional warfare dictate that the LTTE has to progressively pull back its defences, and reduce its frontage to conserve its strength to offer better resistance. This would be the long term picture even if the security forces have a few debacles along one or more fronts in their offensive, as long as they do not give up half way.

There had been few pro-active LTTE operations after Muhamalai. These were limited to dropping of three bombs on the security forces in the Welioya front by two Air Tiger aircraft, and sinking of A 520 (MV Invincible), a naval logistics vessel in a clever underwater suicide operation by the Sea Tigers in Trincomalee harbour during mid May. This would show the LTTE has severe limitations in its conventional operational capability.

The security forces have carried out relentless bombing of suspected LTTE assets. The LTTE has accused the security forces' deep penetration unit of killing 17 people, including women and children in a claymore blast well inside the LTTE territory in Vanni. This is the third time the LTTE has accused the security forces of carrying out such clandestine attacks deep inside its territory. The security forces have routinely denied these allegations.

While they do not directly impact the current operational situation, they impose caution on movement of cadres and spread insecurity and panic among the population. These could get worse as the war makes further inroads. If the LTTE accusations are true, they show the weakening ability of the LTTE to dominate areas under its control.

Recourse to unconventional war

Sri Lanka : An analysis of military operations

The LTTE's strong suite had always been its guerrilla capability in areas outside its direct control. Under present circumstances, to compensate its limitations in conventional operations, the LTTE appears to have stepped up its unconventional actions with a series of bomb blasts in areas outside the battle zones.

The LTTE attacks outside the theatre of operations started the day after the Muhamalai attack, with the killing of 26 civilians in a bus bomb blast at Piliyandala on April 28, 2008. This was followed by the Amparai café parcel bomb blast on the eve of the eastern provincial council elections in which 11 people were killed and 29 others wounded. There was a motorcycle-borne suicide attack on a police van in Colombo on May 16, 2008 killing 10 persons including seven policemen. The latest in the series was the bomb blast carried out in a train at Dehiwela near Colombo on May 26, 2008 in which nine people were killed and 73 others were injured. Only two days before the train bombing, three time bombs were defused before they exploded - two on passenger buses near Colombo and one in the Kandy area.

Of course, there was the tragic, gangster style LTTE killing of Ms Maheswary Velayutham, while visiting her ailing mother in her Jaffna home. She was better known for years of yeoman service in the cause of human rights and Tamil refugees than for her later day role as advisor to the Eelam Peoples Democratic Party (EPDP). And how her killing makes it easier to gain Tamil Eelam is a question only the LTTE's warped logic can answer.

Essentially an insurgent force, the LTTE probably feels more comfortable in carrying out bomb blasts, suicide killings, and other such attacks targeting civilians. Such acts by themselves do not win wars. But they tend to create panic among the population and psychologically pressurise the government to ease military operations if the social and political environments encourage such developments. Whether these happen or not in the current situation in the country, the feeling of insecurity among Tamils living in Sri Lanka will be increased every time the LTTE carries out such strikes due to the inherent ethnic overtones of such acts. In any case President Rajapaksa appears to be undeterred in his intention to crush the LTTE after each bomb blast. In fact, he has reiterated the same sentiment after the May 26 train blast. And after his successful election foray in the east he would have no hesitation to enlarge its scope further.

Human rights issue

The failure of Sri Lanka's bid for getting elected to the membership of the UN Human Rights Council for a second term was not unexpected. On this count the President had probably underestimated the increasing importance attached to human rights questions in many democracies regardless of their own human rights record. At present no counter insurgency operation can be carried out with utter disregard to human rights issues. The international group of eminent persons called upon to advise the commission of inquiry into killings quit in disgust after a long tussle with the bureaucracy. Strong arm tactics have continued to suppress dissonant voices of the media. Reputed international NGOs have reportedly been castigated and prevented from entering or working freely in Sri Lanka. And Sri Lanka has persisted in refusing to allow a representative of the UN HRC to be positioned to monitor its human rights performance.

Notwithstanding the rhetoric of Bruce Fein and the detailed reports of Human Rights Watch, even nations which voted against Sri Lanka are unlikely to pressurise Sri Lanka to curb the President's pursuit of the war effort immediately. Such pressure is applied in small doses and often gets diffused due to diplomatic and political compulsions of different nations. Moreover, globally counter terrorism and human rights aberrations are far from being equated as a zero sum game. Perhaps, the flow of foreign aid and the vigour of foreign trade would be affected if Sri Lanka persists in errant ways on human rights. But the President retains the option of visibly improving his human rights record and carrying on with the military operations when the chips are down.

Sri Lanka security forces

Muhamalai was undoubtedly a cause of concern for the security forces in that they suffered probably double the number of casualties suffered by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. However, the operation should be put in perspective while assessing the future capability of the security forces.

Sri Lanka : An analysis of military operations

First, it was not coordinating the Muhamalai offensive with other simulated or actual operations on other fronts. That would have prevented the **LTTE** from beefing up its Muhamalai defences by milking forces from other sectors on the eve of operations. Though operations have been launched in multiple fronts for some time, the security forces appear to have failed to take advantage of creating confusion in the minds of opposition by coordinating them and fine tuning them to derive maximum advantage. Despite expanding the army, this weakness to coordinate formation level operations on multiple fronts exhibited in earlier Eelam wars has persisted in the higher direction of war.

The second relates to tactical intelligence. The security forces probably went in for a silent attack, a very sound proposition if the surprise element was there. But there were enough battle indications in the Jaffna peninsula for at least ten days in advance about the impending operation in this front. When surprise was neutralised the silent attack becomes a futile effort.

The third major weakness is strategic. Sri Lankan operations are slow and plodding, which fails to take advantage of tactical success in conventional operations. It also gives sufficient time for the opposition to readjust, reinforce or pull out from defences. There could be non military reasons for not pushing through with the offensive for fear of suffering more casualties. According to the figures of the government, since January, 3,873 **LTTE** cadres have been killed as against the loss of 298 soldiers in operations. While these figures might be disputed, there is no doubt the **LTTE** losses had been heavier. But the operation has gone into the third year, and the indications are that it would be a long haul if present strategies are continued.

Future course

Overall, **LTTE** actions outside the operational zone are unlikely to discourage President Rajapaksa from his pursuit of a military option. And if he stays determined and the security forces do not blink as they did in their infamous Elephant Pass disaster in 2000, the military operations are likely to gobble up further territory in the Mannar sector in the coming months. The **LTTE** attacks on civilians are not going to put a stop to the military operations. They only show that the **LTTE** for all its pretensions of de facto governance has not changed its Tiger stripes.

(Col. R. Hariharan, a retired Military Intelligence specialist on South Asia, served as the head of intelligence of the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka 1987-90.

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At Least 9 Killed by Shelling at Sri Lanka Hospital

The New York Times

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

The New York Times on the Web

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Section: Section ; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg.

Length: 559 words

Byline: By SOMINI SENGUPTA

Dateline: NEW DELHI

Body

As the Sri Lankan military continued to push into a small corner of the island controlled by separatist guerrillas, three separate artillery attacks on Sunday struck a hospital overflowing with wounded patients, the last of them hitting a ward of women and children, according to international agencies and health workers. At least nine people were killed and 20 were wounded and the dead were still being counted Monday morning.

On Sunday, the first shell hit the hospital at Puthukkudiyiruppu, killing at least two and injuring five, the International Committee of the Red Cross said in a statement. The second attack claimed five lives, The Associated Press reported, citing a government health official at the hospital. The third landed in the pediatric ward, the United Nations spokesman, Gordon Weiss, said by telephone Monday from the capital, Colombo.

A telephone text message from a United Nations worker described the carnage this way, Mr. Weiss said: "Women and kids wards shelled. God, no words. Still counting the dead bodies."

It was impossible to ascertain whether the shelling came from the military or the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The hospital is located in a small wedge of land still controlled by the Tamil Tigers in the island's northeast.

Meanwhile, a senior government official threatened to expel foreign diplomats, aid agencies and journalists who appeared to be sympathetic to the rebels by, for instance, broadcasting images of civilian casualties.

The defense secretary, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, in an interview with the newspaper The Island on Sunday, singled out CNN, the BBC and Al Jazeera. "They will be chased away," Mr. Rajapaksa was quoted as saying.

The comments come amid intensifying fighting between Sri Lankan forces and the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, accompanied by a spate of attacks on journalists. The fighting has raised alarm about the fate of civilians trapped in a fast-shrinking zone still controlled by the Tamil Tigers near the island's northeastern coast. Hospitals and ambulances have faced particular difficulty, with hospitals being shelled in recent days and critically wounded patients being unable to cross the front line. The United Nations and other agencies have urged the Tamil Tigers to allow civilians to leave the combat zone and urged the government to spare known civilian sites. The rebels have denied holding civilians hostage and called for a cease-fire.

At Least 9 Killed by Shelling at Sri Lanka Hospital

It is impossible to know what is happening behind the front line because the government bars journalists from traveling to the war zone, except on guided tours of areas seized by the army. The government says its offensive has carefully spared civilians.

The hospital that was struck by shelling is in Puthukkudiyiruppu village and was filled beyond capacity, with more than 500 wounded patients, some lined up on mattresses on the floor, said officials of the Red Cross, which helps run the hospital. The agency said that many patients had been waiting to be taken to a government-run hospital across the front line.

"Wounded and sick people, medical personnel and medical facilities are all protected by international humanitarian law," Paul Castella, head of the Red Cross delegation in Sri Lanka, said in a statement. "Under no circumstance may they be directly attacked."

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Civilian influx into safe areas continues

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

March 15, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 304 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, March 15 -- A group of 307 Tamil civilians, had reached the 53 division area seeking protection, amidst the troop movements to the east on the A35 road. This group which included 85 children, 122 women and 100 men, reached the areas of security forces yesterday during the wee hours, the Army sources stated.

Officers of the division, under the supervision of the Division Commander Major General Kamal Gunaratne have made all arrangements for the welfare of the escapees and later to hand them over to the Civil Authorities. Another group of 135 civilians reached the 58 division area on the same day. Earlier, on last Friday, 58 people including 22 children reached the 58 division where a 15-year-old boy was killed when the LTTE fired at them injuring several others. Among the civilians there were several LTTE cadres identified themselves as the members of 'Makkal Padai' an auxiliary force of the LTTE. As the tide was rising high in the Nanthikandal lagoon and the sea, people faced difficulties in crossing over to safer areas. However, the escapees reached the Security Forces of the Vanni Defence line amidst the thick battles. In the meantime, the 58 division troops, commanded by Brigadier Shavendra Silva in their advance towards the east of Kombavilkulam, 4 km North of Puthukuduiyuruppu, discovered a well-equipped hospital of the LTTE, named 'Ponnambalam Hospital'. According to the ground troops the hospital was exclusively reserved for the LTTE leadership. LTTE had fought a hard battle to secure this hospital from the advancing troops, the intercepted LTTE communications revealed. The LTTE is at present cornered to a less than 35-square-kilometre area of which the 'no war zone' is approximately 16 square kilometres. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (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

Ramya depicts fleeing civilians

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

March 1, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 946 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, March 1 -- Her voice, with vigour is echoed in every corner of the hospital. Perhaps, her curses are powerful enough to penetrate through the thick jungles of Puthukuddiyiruppu to reach the ears of the LTTE leader for making her disabled.

Apart from the pain that Ramaya is undergoing due to an anti-personnel mine that blew her left leg, burned the right leg and injured her from the waist downwards, the swollen breasts are an added pain. More than the severe wounds on her body, the 26-year-old mother is suffering mentally and physically as she could not breast feed her tiny son. Ramya does not know the whereabouts of Yelarasan (one year-old) who was taken by her sister before her leg was blown off. Unable to think how to weave their lives, Ramya's husband Janarthan (29) grieves and prays for the God to let them see their little son. The young man Janarthan, who escaped the LTTE cadres who surrounded their makeshift hut many times to hunt him, had spent day and night in jungles. He came only to see his son and to get some food. Decided to cross "We heard that the troops had reached near us. With over 100 civilians and with their parents and sister we had decided to cross. It took three days to cross the LTTE FDLs as we only could walk at night", they recall. Janarthan's family have been displaced several times. Being the residents of Udayarkattu, with the fall of Akkarayankulam, they were ordered to move from place to place by the LTTE, which became tough to civilians whom they keep as human shields. Their journey from Akkarayankulam to Sudanthrapuram took over 45 km. "We lived in huts like animals. We did not have food for days. His friends were taken by the LTTE to fight the Army. I pleaded with the LTTE cadres but they ordered Janarthan to surrender", Ramya cries. The couple, grew and did schooling under LTTE control and know nothing about the outside world. The only mantra they learnt was that Sinhalese and Sinhala military were barbarics and if women were caught they get raped and the males would be tortured and killed. But the moment the Army soldier lent his hand to Janarthan to lift his badly injured wife, the misconception faded and new hopes emerged. If not for the soldiers who were just a few metres away from the LTTE's FDL at Irrattumadu, the young man would have lost his wife due to high bleeding. "The LTTE did not spare any one. They shot at the young and the old equally. They asked us not to leave. We could not bring the seriously injured civilians", says Janarthan. Both do not know about their future as they still want to find out about their little son and the in-laws. "I do not know how I could look after my son. I am now disabled", Ramya grieves while pleading to find her son. Janarthan is not allowed to stay near Ramya, but he spends day and night at the hospital corridor staring at the ward. Meanwhile, 10-year-old Tirimalei Vasan only knows that his head is paining. He can vaguely remember how the LTTE shot them. "We ran here and there. I was with my two sisters and small brother. We all held our hands and ran with our father. But they shot at us while ordering us to stop". That is all Vasan can remember. His voice is shivering and he looks around frightened. They were threatened that if they step an inch further they would be shot to pieces. But in their 'walk to freedom' they ignored those orders and crossed the LTTE FDLs. Gunaratnam, the boy's father who is there to look after him sleeps under the hospital bed. His other children are in the IDP camp with a relative. Abducted children "We lived in

Ramya depicts fleeing civilians

Pallai. As my children are too small the LTTE did not come to take them. But they abducted the children who are older than 13 years. We know that the Army is close to us and the villagers got together and walked until the LTTE surrounded us at Irrattumadu. They threatened us. We did not listen to them and then the LTTE started shooting at us", he recalls. Before his own eyes, Vasan fell down after the LTTE fired at them indiscriminately. The pale eyes of both the father and son hold no hope. "Enadu Thalai Valikirathu", (My head is paining), Vasan constantly complains. The helpless father cries. It is pathetic to hear their tell-tales: Their rights for decent lives were breached under the rigid LTTE rule and spans over three decades. They had never enjoyed the true meaning of development though the government pumped in billions of money to enlighten their lives. They tolerate the broken promises of their so-called sole representatives who had built roads running to LTTE military camps where they abuse the drugs sent to innocent people. While they were drowned in poverty and lived in makeshift huts, the LTTE used huge amounts of money to build under ground bunkers for their safety. But, the day the troops stepped in to liberate Vanni people, the LTTE's hell hole cracked and exploded as thousands of civilians flee the LTTE controlled areas. The saddest episode of this saga is that still the LTTE terrorists, who are now boxed into a small patch of land, hold whom ever civilians under their custody for the sake of their survival. According to sources, over 36,000 civilians have fled to government controlled areas since January 1, despite warnings by the LTTE to stay behind. From Ramya to Gunaratnam to Thangamani, the 76-old- whose leg too was blown by an AP mine to Thurairaja, the 20-year-old who suffers gun shot injuries to an arm and legs and warded at the Vavuniya Hospital, utter only few words. That is "Andawane Prabhakaran Aliyawendum" (God, Prabhakaran should get destroyed).Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Load-Date: April 1, 2009

End of Document

End in sight

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

March 22, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 2046 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, March 22 -- The public attitude towards the ongoing humanitarian operations by the Security Forces is changing very fast. They have become the keenest observers of this drama. Sometimes their observations are much advanced than those of the people who are really involved in this process and extra sensitive towards any incident taking place there.

What they want is to see an end to the war very soon. At the same time they too are sympathetic towards the plight of the Tamil people who have been trapped inside the small territory that remains under the control of the LTTE. Therefore, the Security Forces have to engage in a balancing game at present. From one side they want to end this battle without unnecessary delay and at the same time they have to be extra sensitive towards the growing concerns about the plight of the besieged civilians since they are at high risk at present. Remaining areas Under these circumstances the Security Forces have to address these two concerns together. They cannot expedite the process of liberating the remaining areas under the Tiger grip due to the presence of the civilians and they cannot liberate the civilians as LTTE is not allowing them to move out of their territory. The fact remains here that the Security Forces who are acting very humanely have to face the ruthless acts of the LTTE making it a battle between a ruthless terror outfit and a well disciplined and humane Security Forces. The civilians fleeing the Tiger grip have thousands of stories to tell the Tamil Diaspora across the globe funding this ruthless campaign, about atrocities committed by the LTTE against their own community. They say how they grabbed their prestigious wealth, their children from their hands and brutally killed their beloved ones when they stood against the LTTE, and how they fire at them when they flee from the Tiger controlled areas seeking refuge in military controlled areas. But all these cries go unheard by international organizations who are compiling reports about the Sri Lankan situation. May be they are still suffering from the minority complex as it happens anywhere in the world. What they don't realise is that the LTTE has always fooled them in the past and are trying to fool them again to obtain their assistance at this last moment to come out of this humiliating defeat. Therefore, it is incumbent on the international community to find the truth themselves and address the issue with a true picture in their mind without being misled by false statements by pro-LTTE networks. This week there is considerable progress regarding the arrival of civilians into the military controlled areas with over 1,000 civilians arriving in military controlled areas on a daily basis commencing from last Sunday. Total of 1185 Tamil civilians who had been forcibly held by the LTTE terrorists arrived in Government controlled areas on Friday. The civilians reached the troops of 58 Division on offensive in general area of Puthukkudiyirippu. Among the escapees are 326 males, 338 females, 279 male children and 242 female children. They were directed to the welfare centres established in Kilinochchi after providing them with meals, medical treatment and other necessities. Civilians are also reaching South of Puthukudiyirippu crossing the Nanthikadal lagoon to reach the 53 Division area. According to statistics nearly 50,000 civilians have already arrived in Government controlled areas as of yesterday and this trend will continue in the coming days too without any disruption as the possibilities are very low for the LTTE to stop them. Many of them are arriving in Government

End in sight

controlled areas from the Northern and Southern edges of the No Fire Zone as troops are confronting the LTTE from the Western part of the No Fire Zone. Civilians are also taking the sea route to reach Security Forces controlled areas in Jaffna and the Sri Lanka Navy is taking care of these civilians once they reach towards the Northern Naval area. The ground troops are taking an additional burden on them to look after these civilians and give them a humanely treatment at their arrival in the Security Forces controlled areas. The most fearing factor is the arrival of suicide cadres towards the military controlled areas mingling with these civilians. Therefore, the screening of each civilian is inevitable to avoid any incident similar to what occurred in Visuamadu early this year. Hapless civilians The civilians who have arrived in Government controlled areas have revealed that the LTTE is taking cover of the No Fire Zone to direct fire at the Security Forces amidst protests by the civilians. But those hapless civilians cannot make any voice against them since it would be the end of their life. But many civilians living inside the No Fire Zone are reluctant to arrive in Government controlled areas as their children have been forcibly recruited to the Tiger outfit. The surveillance craft of the Sri Lanka Air Force collected clear evidence to prove how the LTTE has used their heavy weapons located in the No Fire Zone against the advancing Security Forces and the way the LTTE is providing weapon training to the besieged civilians in the No Fire Zone. Day by day the LTTE is strengthening its depleting ranks after providing weapon training to the civilians. According to latest revelations they are recruiting 100 to 200 civilians between the age 14 to 45 on a daily basis and providing them weapon training to face the advancing Security Forces. Taken control Amidst the LTTE trying their best to strengthen their depleting ranks the Security Forces have already arrived in the centre of Iranapalai as of yesterday taking the control of the Iranapalai school complex. The 58 Division under the command of Brigadier Shavendra Silva advancing from the West to East direction from the North of A-35 road have been able to recover the bodies of at least ten well trained cadres per day after killing more than 20 to 30 cadres per day. The 58 Division has been able to capture the entire road stretch from Puthukudiyirippu to Puthumattalan with the capture of the Iranapalai centre from the Tiger grip. Iranapalai being the last build up area under their control, the LTTE is providing stiff resistance towards the advancing troops. It was on Tuesday troops attached to the 58 offensive Division advanced further into LTTE hiding areas with the falling of strategically vital Iranapalai junction in Puthukkudiyirippu. Infantrymen of 11 Sri Lanka Light Infantry (11 SLLI), 7 Sinha Regiment (7 SR), 10 Gajaba Regiment (10 GR), 9 Gemunu Watch (9 GW), 12, 8 and 20 Gajaba Regiments continued the advance and strengthened their defenses in Iranapalai east amidst heavy LTTE resistance. However, troops were able to inflict maximum damages to the LTTE, battlefield sources confirmed citing intercepted terror communication channels. Following the clashes ensued since last morning troops found 10 bodies of LTTE cadres, 25 T-56 rifles, 01 Light Machine Gun and 12 radio communication sets. Further, the snipers deployed in the forward defences confirmed 3 LTTE terrorists were killed during this battle. Such stiff resistance is coming towards the Security Forces as many of the LTTE's top rung Tiger leaders, operational centres including that of Pottu Amman the Second-in-Command of the LTTE and Sea Tiger leader Soosai are located there in Iranapalai. Troops have recovered large number of military equipment and Tiger bases during their operations to capture Iranapalai from the Tiger grip. It was amidst troops conducting operations in Iranapalai, one of the hideouts of the Intelligence Wing leader Pottu Amman came under Security Forces attack on March 16 during day time. Though there is no proof to indicate that Pottu Amman was there inside that hide out the impact of this attack was evident on Wednesday when as the driver of Pottu Amman who managed to survive from this attack arrived in Government controlled areas mingling with the civilians. He had divulged that the LTTE is still maintaining a considerable strength with them and top rung leaders who used to travel in super luxury vehicles are now using motorbikes as their mode of transport. He has told the interrogators that Pottu Amman is still living with his wife Vathsala and his three children. Vathsala is also attached to the LTTE and acting as a Tiger cadre. He has divulged that the Tiger leader Prabhakaran and his son Charles are still living there and the Tiger leader is sending a vehicle once he wants to meet Pottu Amman personally. Body According to him even Pottu Amman cannot reach Prabhakaran using his personnel vehicle. Security Forces have also observed that the LTTE had made use of disabled cadres to man their defences as troops attached to the 53 Division have found a body of a female Tiger cadre who was with an artificial limb and a hand. The 53 Division under the command of Major General Kamal Gunaratne and Task Force VIII under the command of Colonel G.V. Ravipriya are also making headway towards the Southern edge of the No Fire Zone having advanced to the Northern edge of the Nanthikadal lagoon . The LTTE is strongly defending this terrain as they are aware that its loss will be the end of their journey. But the troops attached to 5 Gajaba Regiment, 5 Gemunu Watch, 6 Gajaba Regiment, 18 Gemunu Watch, 15 Sri Lanka Light Infantry Regiment and 1 Gemunu Watch Battalions are heading towards this terrain. Amidst troops advancing towards the last terrain held by the LTTE, which is nearly 28 square kilometres in size including the no fire zone the

End in sight

Security Forces are strengthening their positions in all fronts expecting a worse type of attack from the LTTE at the last moment. Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka during his visit to Vanni Security Forces Headquarters on Thursday alerted all the field commanders about possible options the Tigers might resort to at the last moment. So far the LTTE has made several attempts to breach the Security Forces defences. The first major attempt was on February 01 and it came using large number of Tiger cadres in the Western edge of the Nanthikadal lagoon. During this counter attack troops of the 59 Division had to readjust their defences as their defences were breached by the LTTE using explosive laden vehicle. It was only Friday the Task Force VIII and 53 Division troops managed to reach the original defences the 59 Division was holding in the West of Nanthikadal lagoon as of February 01. Foil But Security Forces were able to foil a major attempt by the LTTE to recapture Mullaitivu and extend their defences upto Oddusudan and Mankulam on February 04 at the time Sri Lanka was celebrating the Independence Day. The second and third attempts were made a month after their first attempt to breach the Security Forces defences towards the 58 Division from the North of Puthukudiyiruppu. The 58 Division supported by the Commando and Special Forces troops were able to foil this attempt killing more than 200 well trained Tiger cadres. During this attack a number of top and middle rung leaders were killed among the 200 Tiger cadres killed at the hands of the Security Forces. There is no indication what so ever about Tiger leader Swarnam after this attack. Security Forces believe he was either badly injured or dead after this attack. Army Commander Lt. General Fonseka is also concerned about a possible major suicide attacks by the LTTE at the last moment of their defeat and has reportedly advised the field commanders to be prepared for the worst kind of attack at the last moment. Therefore, what is left for the Security Forces at this moment is to take defensive actions and move further into the LTTE territory until they let free all the civilians besieged in the No Fire Zone and ensure that the last inch of land under LTTE is taken under Security Forces control. But there are strong indications that the LTTE would give up the battle once the last terrain under their control outside the No Fire Zone is captured by the troops. Yet it is a decision yet to be taken by Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran considered to be the most ruthless terrorist in the world. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Load-Date: March 25, 2009

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Sri Lanka accuses international rights groups of bias

Xinhua General News Service

February 13, 2008 Wednesday 1:17 AM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 225 words

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

The Sri Lankan government on Wednesday accused international rights groups of bias for their alleged failure to condemn the killings of students by Tamil Tiger rebels.

Keheliya Rambukwella, the minister of Foreign Employment and the government's defense spokesman told reporters that some 14 school children had been killed as a result of recent bomb explosions blamed on Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels.

"These groups who are very quick to blame the government have remained silent on the LTTEs killing of students," Rambukwella said.

An LTTE female suicide bomber killed 14 civilians including six students at the Colombo's busy Fort railway station on Feb. 3.

The students from a leading Colombo school were members of the baseball team and were returning to Colombo from the central town of Kandy when caught in the explosion.

Rambukwella said some international rights organizations are biased against the government "by not blaming the LTTE of killings they are out to discredit the sovereign government of Sri Lanka."

Udaya Nanayakkara, military spokesman, said that 560 people including LTTE rebels, troops and civilians were killed from Jan. 31 to Feb. 12.

"We will continue pressurizing the LTTE despite their action to create panic in other parts of the country," Nanayakkara said.

Load-Date: February 15, 2008

From Pooneryn to the Two Terror Bastions

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

November 18, 2008 Tuesday 3:25 PM EST

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Length: 786 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Nov. 18 -- The nation owes a debt of gratitude to the Sri Lankan Security Forces for combining humanitarian element with military strategy, heroism, and patriotism from the time they accepted the gauntlet thrown by LTTE in Mavil Aru to the capture of Pooneryn, last week.

For the country and the Security Forces it has been an honourable, heroic and humanitarian journey undertaken against one of the most ruthless terrorist outfits in the world, amidst obstacles strewn in the path by some elements of the international community and tragically some sections of the local media and power-seeking political leaders.

Why write this piece at the fall of Pooneryn? The loss of Pooneryn is disastrous for LTTE for two reasons. The supply route from the North-west has been sealed, while the LTTE's ability to harass troops in Jaffna and Palaly has also been curtailed. More importantly the fall of Kilinochchi is nigh as the garrison town is now open to military thrusts from the South, West, and the North. Thus the defeat of LTTE is now a matter of time.

The nation should be doubly grateful to our Security Forces for their humanitarian approach to the conduct of the battle. We know that the Forces are taking many precautions to protect civilians even if this means exposing themselves to the despicable ruses of LTTE.

The humanitarianism of our troops has been extended to LTTE cadres too. The story of Kugatharshini, (presented in the defence web page) the English teacher who was compelled to become a terrorist to save her younger siblings, is the most recent example of our soldiers' humanity and magnanimity. Despite the LTTE brainwashing her to believe that surrendered women cadres would be raped and tortured by the Sinhala soldiers, she decided to surrender, as she wanted to live.

The utmost sympathy and respect shown by our soldiers to Kugatharshani and her two other colleagues symbolises the human qualities of our soldiers.

There have been many instances of such magnanimity over the last two and a half years by members of the Security Forces.

These military and humanitarian achievements have been possible due to the singular focus and political will of President Rajapaksa and the Government, the unwavering resource support and guidance extended by Gothabaya Rajapaksa, the Defense Secretary, to our Security Forces, and the highly professional and patriotic leadership of the Service Commanders.

From Pooneryn to the Two Terror Bastions

The support of the vast majority of Sri Lankans was and is continuing to be vital to the success of the battle against terrorism. Our citizens including rank and file supporters of main opposition parties support President Rajapaksa and the Security Forces as they believe that based on LTTE's past devious tactics, the only solution to the national problem is the military defeat of the LTTE and the offer of a reasonable political solution to the genuine grievances of the minority communities.

The reason for the success on the humanitarian front is the strict policy pursued by the present Government and the military establishment on avoiding civilian casualties and the traditional values and cultural conditioning of our troops, although many analysts and LTTE websites take pot shots at the predominantly Sinhala Buddhist background of our troops.

This is a highly critical period for the nation. It is as critical as the 'wait' for the opening of Mavil Aru gates. The LTTE, its lobbyists and apologists would try their utmost to constrain the march of our troops to the two terror bastions.

They may launch last-gasp military attacks or terrorist strikes against our troops as well as civilians. There may be many other indirect obstacles, political, propagandist and diplomatic. We the citizens, Tamil, Muslim and Sinhala should identify these obstacles, 'read' them intelligently so that the traps laid by the LTTE, and their lobbyists could be wisely avoided.

It is the duty of each and every Sri Lankan citizen irrespective of political leanings, to support the Sri Lankan Security Forces in the national battle against LTTE terror, at this most critical time in the history of three decades of terrorist oppression. Let's support our Security Forces, despite probable last-gasp military or terrorist heroics of the LTTE, the anti-battle pronouncements of some Southern as well as North and Eastern political leaders who are still unable to learn lessons thrust on them by the LTTE, and some media analysts whose analytical tools seem to be losing academic rigour.

Let us all understand that without militarily defeating LTTE, the chances of effecting any political solution (barring the offer of Eelam) is next to zero.

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

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Load-Date: November 19, 2008

Airstrike, ground battles killed 43 rebels, six soldiers in Sri Lanka, military says

Associated Press International

February 25, 2008 Monday 4:16 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 305 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lankan forces launched an airstrike against a Tamil Tiger naval base and attacked rebel fortifications in a wave of violence that killed 43 rebels and six soldiers, the military said Monday.

The heavy fighting came amid a government offensive against the rebels' de facto state in parts of the north. Top government officials have vowed to destroy the **Tamil Tigers** and win the 25-year-old war with the separatist group by the end of the year.

In the latest fighting Monday, government troops attacked a rebel group across the front lines in the northern Welioya region, killing seven guerrillas, said military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara. The confrontation killed one soldier and wounded three others, he said.

On Sunday, government troops launched a series of raids against rebel bunkers along the front lines in the Mannar region, Nanayakkara said. The fighting killed 17 rebels and five soldiers, he said.

Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan was not immediately available for comment, but the pro-rebel TamilNet Web site said 11 Sri Lankan troops were killed in the battle. It gave no figures for rebel casualties.

The two sides often give vastly different casualty figures. Independent confirmation is unavailable because journalists are barred from the conflict zone.

In another attack Sunday, air force jets bombed a training camp used by **female** members of the Sea Tigers, the rebels' naval wing, killing 10 fighters, the military said. It said other battles in Mannar, the neighboring Vavuniya district and the northern Jaffna peninsula killed nine rebels.

The **Tamil Tigers** have been fighting since 1983 to create an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's minority ethnic Tamils after decades of being marginalized by governments controlled by the majority Sinhalese. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

Load-Date: February 26, 2008

Airstrike, ground battles killed 43 rebels, six soldiers in Sri Lanka , military says

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34 Sri Lankan rebels killed in army attack

IRNA

January 21, 2008 Monday 3:42 AM EST

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ARABIA 2000

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Length: 259 words

Body

New Delhi, Jan 21, IRNA

Sri Lanka-Army Offensive-**LTTE**

Stepping up the offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) sans the ceasefire, Sri Lankan army killed at least 33 rebels, including two **women**, in the embattled north and lost one of its soldiers, news reports said.

Troops launched an attack and killed four militants in Madhu and Periyathampane areas of North-western Mannar Monday, PTI reported here quoting army sources.

The army found bodies of two **women LTTE** cadres after it attacked a line of **LTTE** bunkers 500 meters south of Adampan in Mannar.

In Jaffna, one soldier was killed in the Kilaly frontline that came under mortar fire last evening, the Defence Ministry said. "Troops retaliated and suppressed the militants' indirect fire," it said.

Despite the raging gunbattles and recent string of attacks by the **LTTE** after Colombo scrapped the 2002 ceasefire on Jan 16, the government said it will continue with the Feb 4 Independence Day celebrations, though an additional 4,00 troops will be deployed in the capital to bolster security.

On the Nagarkovil front in Jaffna, troops attacked **LTTE** bunkers and killed two **LTTE** cadres yesterday, the Media Centre for National Security (MCNS) reported.

On the Vavuniya front, troops stationed in Vilattikulam confronted a group of rebels on Saturday morning, the MCNS said. Ground troops confirmed that four militants were killed in the incident, it said.

At Mullikulam in North-western Mannar, troops attacked a group of militants and killed three rebels yesterday, the army said.

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34 Sri Lankan rebels killed in army attack

Load-Date: January 22, 2008

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Sri Lanka's military says airstrike, ground battles kill 43 rebels and 6 government soldiers

The Associated Press

February 25, 2008 Monday 11:33 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 297 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lankan forces attacked rebel fortifications by ground and staged an airstrike on a Tamil Tiger naval base in a wave of fighting that killed 43 rebels and six government soldiers, the military said Monday.

The heavy fighting came amid an offensive against the rebels' de facto state in parts of this South Asian island state's north. Top government officials have vowed to destroy the **Tamil Tigers** and win the 25-year-old war with the separatist group by the end of the year.

In fighting Monday, soldiers attacked a rebel position in the northern Welioya region, killing seven guerrillas, the military spokesman, Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara, said. One soldier died and three suffered wounds, he said.

On Sunday, government troops launched a series of raids on rebel bunkers along the front lines in the Mannar region, Nanayakkara said. That fighting killed 17 rebels and five soldiers, he said.

Rebel spokesman Rasiyah Ilanthirayan was not immediately available for comment, but the pro-rebel TamilNet Web site said 11 government soldiers died. It gave no figures for rebel casualties.

The two sides often give vastly different casualty figures. Independent confirmation is impossible because journalists are barred from the conflict zone.

In another attack Sunday, air force jets bombed a training camp used by **female** members of the Sea Tigers, the rebels' naval wing, killing 10 fighters, the military said. It said other battles in Mannar, the neighboring Vavuniya district and the northern Jaffna peninsula killed nine rebels.

The **Tamil Tigers** have been fighting since 1983 to create an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil minority after decades of being marginalized by governments controlled by the majority Sinhalese. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

Load-Date: February 26, 2008

Forces knocking on the gates of Tigers' last bastion

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

June 13, 2008 Friday 4:22 PM EST

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Length: 1825 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 13 -- Can Security Forces breach Tiger defences which turned out to be a killing field even for the Indian Peace Keeping Force in the late 1980's is the question raised by many people who are keen to know the latest developments in the ongoing military operations in the Wanni.

The thick jungle terrain in Mullaitivu was the breeding grounds for LTTE cadres as these provided a safer haven for their terror activities and to train thousands of Tiger cadres unknown to the outside world. Even Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran had chosen this thick jungle area as one of his hideouts during many phases of the Eelam War.

When the Indian Peace Keeping Force landed in Jaffna peninsula in the second phase of the Eelam War the LTTE decided to withdraw towards Kilinochchi and have their military bases in Mullaitivu. They dug underground bunkers inside thick jungle bases which had turned out to be impregnable bases in the successive battles in many phases of the Eelam War.

The history of the North East conflict provides many examples of how the LTTE turned of this strategic jungle patch into a killing field against the advancing troops at many occasions.

A major battle was fought in this Mullaitivu jungle patch when the Indian Peace Keeping Force was operating in the North-East to crush the LTTE activities there but they had to abandon their task after an entire battalion went missing in this killing field.

There were many battles in this jungle patch during the second phase of the Eelam War as troops based in Weli Oya sector launched Operation Akunupahara (Operation Thunder Strike) in 1991 under the overall command of Major General Denzil Kobbekaduwa to destroy Tiger military bases inside Mullaitivu jungles.

Brigadier Janaka Perera as the Brigade Commander of an independent Brigade and now Army Commander Sarath Fonseka then a Colonel as his Deputy conducted this operation for more than 30 days and destroyed Tiger bases in their advance from Gajabapura to Nityakaikulam but they withdrew from the jungle after destroying the Tiger bases.

Following those efforts troops continued to maintain military bases in Mullaitivu, Olumadu, Oddusudan to control Tiger activities to a certain level. However, the entire Mullaitivu area fell to the hands of the LTTE after they overran the Mullaitivu camp and troops withdrew from Oddusudan and Nedunkerni during the Wanni debacle.

Forces knocking on the gates of Tigers' last bastion

Defending the Tiger bases in the Mullaitivu jungle has become the number one priority for the LTTE at this juncture as they are now losing many of their strongholds in Wanni which were earlier considered impregnable. First it was to maintain their prestige as a so-called liberation movement.

The second factor is the loss of jungle bases in the South of Mullaitivu will be a severe blow on the LTTE as this would affect their sea operations which are now confined to narrow stretch between Kokkuthuduvai to Chalai.

The loss of jungle bases in Mullaitivu means that the LTTE is losing Nayaru lagoon from which the LTTE used to launch attacks on Navy movements and to maintain their supplies to Wanni.

Defeating the LTTE and destroying their military capabilities inside this thick jungle is also a key factor for the Security Forces in their bid to liberate the North in a similar effort they made in liberating the East by destroying their military capabilities inside the Thoppigala jungle.

Since the key assets of the Tiger outfit is hidden inside the bases inside this thick jungle terrain it is a must for the Security Forces to clear and dominate the area without leaving any room for the LTTE to reorganise themselves and counter-attack the Security Forces.

Due to these vital factors the battle now unfolding in the Mullaitivu jungles is now turning into one of the decisive battles in the current phase of the Eelam War.

Can Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran defend his jungle bases in the face of the fresh offensive launched by the Security Forces from the Weli Oya front is a big question mark before the public as well as the international community keenly following the developments of the battle front developments in the Wanni.

Therefore, the task before the 59 Division which was formed in January, this year under the command of Brigadier Nandana Udawatta has become a more challenging one as many predict that the fierce battles in the Wanni battle front are expected to erupt in the Weli Oya front advancing from Kokkuthuduvai to Kiriibbanvewa opening 12 kilometres long battle front.

So far the Security Forces have been successful in their efforts to crush the LTTE military capabilities in this jungle terrain. The troops attached to the 59 Division are now completely operating within the Mullaitivu district inside the Andankulam forest reserve south of Mullaitivu.

Three Brigades, 591 under the command of Lt. Colonel Aruna Ariyasinghe, 592 Brigade under the Command of Lt. Colonel Maneesha Silva and 593 Brigade under the Command of Lt Colonel Palitha Fernando and under the Acting Command of Lt. Colonel Jaliya Senaratne from three areas have advanced into the Andankulam forest reserve in the south of Mullaitivu is located in the Martime Pattu Division in the Mullaitivu district.

According to senior military officials from the three battle fronts now engaged in offensive operations in Weli Oya front, the Mullaitivu battle front would be the decisive front which can push the ongoing war into a turning point in the process of liberating the entire Wanni from the LTTE.

Though many experts predicted that the Mullaitivu jungle would be turned in to a killing field for the troops, the new concepts and strategies adopted by the troops in confronting the LTTE in this jungle terrain have made a vast difference in the operational methods of the Security Forces who are taking the upper hand in this jungle warfare.

Troops have adjusted to the jungle warfare pushing the LTTE into a desperate situation.

Due to the lack of manpower the LTTE is adopting explosives and trappings to delay the troops' advance rather than confronting the troops face to face in the battle front. The small team operations by the troops have been so far effectively used to capture Tiger positions inside the jungle.

Since the commencement of the operation in the Weli Oya front in some areas troops have advanced more than seven kilometres from the Kiriibbanvewa flank and three to four Kilometres from Janakapura facing the edge of Kokkuthuduvai while troops operating far ahead of these defences are confronting the LTTE in their defences.

Forces knocking on the gates of Tigers' last bastion

The battle in the Weli Oya front has now increased its momentum as Tiger bases inside this Andanakulam forest reserve are falling to the Security Forces' fold one by one. The Munnagam Base in the West of Janakapura was the first Tiger Base that fell to the hands of the Security Forces.

The way the **LTTE** had operated in this thick jungle terrain has been clearly witnessed by the way they constructed massive underground bunkers with all the state-of-the-art facilities. Such an underground bunker was found inside Munnagam Base or Sutheshan base according to military officials who engaged in Operation Thunder Strike in 1991.

Troops are now fully dominating the supply route constructed by the **LTTE** in the North of Janakapura, from Kokkuthuduvai to Thannimurippukulam tank which has been used by the **LTTE** to supply food for cadres dominating the Forward Defence Line.

Tiger cadres amidst surprise attacks of the troops have now withdrawn further towards the north creating yet another strong defence creating a massive open area removing the undergrowth of the thick jungle, so that they can detect the troops' movement through this open terrain.

The entire **LTTE** defence line ahead of the open terrain was engaged on June 8 with the objective of crossing this open terrain with a huge number of trappings and mines.

But the troops attached to the 7 Gemunu Watch battalion under the command of Lt. Colonel Priyantha Perera, and 14 Vijayaba Infantry Battalions under the command of Major Laksiri Perera crossed this open terrain amidst stiff resistance from the **LTTE** on Sunday.

They were able to capture Tiger points after crossing this open terrain which was given wide publicity by the media as troops made their first attempt to capture the One Four Base of the **LTTE**.

Intelligence reports indicate that more than 25 **LTTE** cadres have been killed during this offensive operation and 35 others sustained injuries. Twelve cadres including a **female** leader in the self-styled 'Lt. Colonel rank' have been killed in this attack.

The impression among the public is that it was the entrance to the One Four Base, yet another massive military complex hold by the **LTTE**. The box story on this page will give a clear picture about the **LTTE** One Four Base.

Fierce fighting erupted in this open terrain even on Wednesday as Tigers made desperate attempts to recapture the bunker line which were captured by the troops on Sunday after crossing the open terrain. A number of Tiger cadres reportedly died during this attack. One soldier was also killed and another seven soldiers injured during the fierce battle that continued for more than one hour.

The **LTTE** is trying to create a killing field in this open terrain to delay the speedy advance of the troops to vital Tiger bases in this stretch of jungle. But troops are braving to cross this open terrain in their bid to capture other Tiger bases within this terrain.

According to ground troops the **LTTE** is heavily depending on strong bunkers and trenches in defending their territory and on **female** cadres for forward domination while keeping trained cadres as their reserve to send them as reinforcements.

The **LTTE** leadership is reportedly facing a crisis with the advancement of troops into their vital bases including the One Four base complex. More than 500 Tiger cadres along with reserve groups are operating in the **LTTE** defences. They may face further pressure once the troops reach Nityakaikulam and towards Kumulamunai located just nine kilometres ahead of the areas where the troops are now operating.

The most expected turning point in this war will be reached once troops are able to engage vital Tiger bases north of Mullaitivu after advancing into Kumulamunai area in the Nayaru lagoon. Tiger leader Prabhakaran will have to face his do or die battle or will have to resort to other tactics if they want to avoid this situation.

Forces knocking on the gates of Tigers' last bastion

According to intelligence reports the **LTTE** leadership which is under heavy pressure due to this situation is left with no other option but to delay the advance of the troops by laying mine fields and traps as they have no manpower to defend their bases from the troops with many of the cadres fleeing from the Forward Defences in groups within the past few weeks.

The troops are now poised to enter this most vital Tiger territory in the coming months braving all these obstacles.

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

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Load-Date: September 16, 2008

R. SAMPANTHAN'S LAMENT

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

August 7, 2008 Thursday 1:15 PM EST

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Length: 1362 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Aug. 7 -- The leader of the so-called Tamil National Alliance, R Sampanthan is reported as having bemoaned in Parliament, the plight of the Tamil People particularly in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, he said that:-

“The war is prosecuted as if it is being waged against an alien enemy in total violation of International Human Rights Laws and International Humanitarian Laws and later sought, albeit obliquely, to justify the terrorism of the LTTE by saying that:- ‘The LTTE came into being on account of the lapses of the Sri Lankan State.’

What R Sampanthan calls the war is, no doubt, the military operations being launched by our Armed Forces with unprecedented success to redeem from the terrorists of the LTTE, the territory of Sri Lanka over which they have usurped control through force of arms, and to liberate all unfortunate citizens living in those areas from the thrall of the LTTE.

R. Sampanthan's lament that the war is being prosecuted as if it is being waged against an alien enemy needs comment.

Where a set of people, usurp control over a part of the territory of a sovereign state, the result is identical whether that group of people are aliens or citizens, namely, that the State is ‘robbed’ of a part of its territory and is hence possessed of the undoubted right to evict the usurper and reclaim its territory using all the force it can muster “ unless of course the usurper voluntarily and peacefully returns that territory to the lawful control of the State and surrenders all arms.

The usurper, which in this case happens to be a gang of citizens engaging in murder and destruction called the LTTE, has neither returned the territory over which they have usurped control nor surrendered the arms etc. leaving the State with no option but to forcibly reclaim such territory and disarm the LTTE “ for it is only then that peace and the rule of law can be restored to our tortured land.

Is R. Sampanthan opposed to the achievement of these goals ? Does he believe that the LTTE should be permitted to continue to exercise usurped power over a portion of our territory? Does R Sampanthan believe that the LTTE should be permitted to continue in the illegal possession of arms, and to murder those whom they do not like, such as R Sampanthan's erstwhile leader Amirthalingam and his erstwhile colleagues Thangathurai, Tiruchelvam, Yogeswaran, Thambimuttu, the heroine Sarojini Yogeswaran, Yogashangaree, Dharmalingam, Alalasunderam etc. etc. ? If he does not think so, how does he think that peace and the rule of law should be restored, given the indisputable fact that the LTTE has, by their outrageous conduct, scuttled all purported ‘peace talks’ and made manifest the fact that they will settle for nothing short of a separate state where the Tamils will have no right of self

R. SAMPANTHAN'S LAMENT

determination since the LTTE has already proclaimed themselves to be the sole representatives of the Tamil people? Surely it behoves R Sampanthan, in the interests of 'transparency', to enlighten the people about his views/beliefs in respect of these matters.

The fact that the terrorists of the LTTE are citizens of Sri Lanka only makes their treasonous conduct all the more abhorrent, and hence deserving of a more forceful response than if they had been aliens, just as much as the conduct of a son robbing his father of his property and murdering his mother and siblings is by far a more abhorrent crime than the commission of such robbery and murders by an outsider. R Sampanthan seems oblivious to these facts.

R Sampanthan's references to International Human Rights Laws and International Humanitarian Laws are nonsensical. Such laws do not preclude a country from using all the force at its command to reclaim its territory from the thrall of a usurper whether that usurper be a group of citizens or foreigners. Indeed he completely ignores the fact that the Republic of Sri Lanka has at all times, whether the Government was constituted by the greens or the blues fought the most humane war ever fought by any State. He cannot be unaware of the fact that our Governments have at all times supplied even those parts of the country over which the LTTE had usurped control with food, medicines etc. , paid the salaries of public servants stationed in those areas [who obeyed the orders of the LTTE and not of the Government], maintained hospitals and all services therein, leaving the LTTE free to utilize all their resources for the grisly purposes of murdering our troops in particular, Sinhalese and Muslims because they were Sinhalese and Muslims and Tamils whom they did not like. Our Governments did so and continue to do so while knowing that much of such food, medicines and medical services paid for out of public funds were used and will continue to be used to nourish, sustain and succour terrorists of the LTTE to enable them to continue to murder our troops and loyal citizens. Has any other country, at any time fought so humane a war?

R Sampanthan's sudden 'devotion' to International Human Rights Laws and International Humanitarian Laws is indeed remarkable. Such concern on his part was not to be seen when the LTTE went on a spree of murdering loyal Tamil citizens such as the late 'PLOTE' Mohan, who supported the Government, when they murdered busloads of unarmed troops proceeding on leave and returning from leave, when they exploded powerful bombs in several crowded city centres, trains and buses in and around Colombo between 1986 and 2008, when they murdered 140 Muslim civilians at prayer in the Meera Jumma and Husseinia Mosques at Kattankudy on 3. 8. 90, 127 at Eravur on 10. 8. 90, 56 at Alinchipotana on 29. 4. 92 and 171 at Palliyagodella and Ahamadpura on 15. 10. 92 or when they attempted to blow up and sink the ship Jetliner with over 700 unarmed troops aboard. I have mentioned, in particular, a few out of a large number of mass murders of Muslim civilians but not of Sinhalese because of the 'touching' purported 'concern' expressed by R Sampanthan for the plight of the Tamil Speaking People who include Muslims.

There can be no doubt that many Tamils in the North and East have undergone and are undergoing indescribable suffering. I myself have adverted to this undeniable fact in one of my recent articles published in the Daily Mirror. However, their plight is attributable directly to the fact of the LTTE having usurped control of a part of our country. If the LTTE surrenders arms and returns that territory peacefully, that suffering would end. R Sampanthan would doubtless be aware that there was no shelling, bombing etc. in the North or East until the LTTE and other terrorist groups [now in the democratic process] began their nonsensical treasonous exercise. If, therefore, R Sampanthan was genuinely concerned about the plight of those Tamils, he could not have failed to make a public appeal to the LTTE to surrender arms and return that territory to the lawful Government. Obviously R Sampanthan has not done so. Why?

The contention, obliquely advanced by R Sampanthan that the LTTE is fighting for the rights of the Tamils is patently ridiculous " for if such was the case why have they murdered so many Tamils and Muslims?

Far from fighting for the Tamils, the LTTE has been and continues to be the biggest 'curse' with which the Tamil people of this country have ever had to contend with at any time. Indeed by using young girls and women of child bearing age and other girls who have not even reached puberty as 'Canon Fodder', the LTTE is endangering the continued existence of the Tamil race in Sri Lanka. Is this not genocide?

R. SAMPANTHAN'S LAMENT

R Sampanthan, in his highly emotional and equally illogical/irrational lamentations is oblivious to these indisputable facts. However, it needs to be said that these leaders of so-called political parties which are nothing short of groups of supporters of the LTTE, have no alternative but to be oblivious to them " because they represent not the Tamil people but the LTTE to whom they owe their existence, and they know that when the puppeteer dies, the puppets too cease to have life.

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23 killed, over 60 wounded in Wanni suicide blast in Lanka

UNI (United News of India)

February 9, 2009 Monday

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Length: 464 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 9 -- Twenty three people, including eight internally displaced civilians, were killed and over 60 wounded in an **LTTE female** suicide bomb attack in the northern Wanni region, military sources said today.

"At least 23 people including eight civilians were killed and 60 others including 40 civilians reported injured when an **LTTE** woman suicide bomber blew herself at an IDP rescue centre, North of Visuamadu in Mullaitivu around 1130 am," the Ministry of Defence said. It said three woman soldiers were also among the military fatalities reported. "The **female** suicide bomber had arrived among the civilians who were seeking protection with security forces in guise. The bomber had blown herself before being screened," the Ministry of Defence said. It said the **LTTE** guerillas have perpetrated the attack "targeting the civilians in reprisal, for defying **LTTE**'s orders to take-up arms." "Exact casualty figures are yet to be estimated as tension prevails in the area. Security forces immediately cordon off the area, while medical units were rushed to the site," the sources said. "**Women** and children are said to be among the many reported killed and injured in the suicide bomb blast," the ministry report, quoting military sources on the ground said. There was no immediate word from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) in this regard. Twenty three people, including eight internally displaced civilians, were killed and over 60 wounded in an **LTTE female** suicide bomb attack in the northern Wanni region, military sources said today. "At least 23 people including eight civilians were killed and 60 others including 40 civilians reported injured when an **LTTE** woman suicide bomber blew herself at an IDP rescue centre, North of Visuamadu in Mullaitivu around 1130 am," the Ministry of Defence said. It said three woman soldiers were also among the military fatalities reported. "The **female** suicide bomber had arrived among the civilians who were seeking protection with security forces in guise. The bomber had blown herself before being screened," the Ministry of Defence said. It said the **LTTE** guerillas have perpetrated the attack "targeting the civilians in reprisal, for defying **LTTE**'s orders to take-up arms." "Exact casualty figures are yet to be estimated as tension prevails in the area. Security forces immediately cordon off the area, while medical units were rushed to the site," the sources said. "**Women** and children are said to be among the many reported killed and injured in the suicide bomb blast," the ministry report, quoting military sources on the ground said. There was no immediate word from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) in this regard. Published by HT Syndication with permission from United News of India.

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Load-Date: May 5, 2009

Captured English teacher cum terrorist narrates harrowing tale

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

November 13, 2008 Thursday 2:22 PM EST

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Length: 482 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Nov. 13 -- Troops engaged in fierce battles West of Kilinochchi once again displayed their humanity towards their enemy.

Capturing three **female** Tiger cadres alive even at the peak of battle, they were surprised to note that one of these **female** cadres was an English teacher who is still drawing her salary from the Government, Military Spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara told the Daily News.

The troops attached to the 58 Division confronting the **LTTE** in the South of Pooneryn captured these three **female** cadres, including the English teacher when they overran an **LTTE** defence line in Valayakuduyiruppumodai, six kilo metres East of the 7th Milepost of the A-32 Road on Tuesday.

The **female** English teacher identified as Nilaveli in a confession to the Security Forces revealed that many Government servants including teachers and agriculture officers have been forced to man **LTTE** defence lines in the Kilinochchi and Maullaitivu districts as they were not in a position to strengthen their depleting ranks.

She has also revealed that more than 100 of her batch mates, still remain in the **LTTE** after being conscripted or forced to join the terrorists in fear of terror attacks on their family members.

The other two **female** cadres captured by the Security Forces have been identified as Kilavedi (18) and Thuruveli (19), the spokesman added.

Troops from the 58 Division earlier also saved the life of an injured **LTTE female** cadre who had been found along with 13 Tiger bodies,

North East of Madam after fierce battles. She was flown to Colombo after been given basic treatment at the 58 Division by the troops.

"The Tiger cadre turned teacher who is fluent in English has divulged information regarding their hard life in **LTTE** bunker lines and how she had to join the Tiger ranks to save her teenaged brother and sister from being enlisted in the **LTTE**," the Brigadier added. Nilaveli was teaching in the Grade 6 to 10 classes until she joined the **LTTE**'s 'Saiver' Regiment after graduating from the Kopay College of Education (English Faculty).

In her confession she is still drawing her Government salary and all other perks from the Department of Education in Kilinochchi as a trained English teacher," the Brigadier said.

Captured English teacher cum terrorist narrates harrowing tale

She also revealed that more than 100 of her batch mates, still remain in the **LTTE** after they were conscripted or forced to join the terrorists fearing for the lives of their family members.

Nilaveli has also revealed that almost all officials, clerks, minor employees of the Agriculture Department and several other Government agencies as well as officials of Kilinochchi based Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have been forced to serve on the front lines against their will.

However, she has said that the **LTTE**'s on the verge of defeat and they will never be able to realise the Eelam dream.

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

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Load-Date: November 13, 2008

Troops poised to capture Periyamadu

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

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Length: 1913 words

Byline: Report from the Sri Lanka Sunday Observer brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 25 -- The last hope of the **LTTE** to sabotage the process of establishing true democracy in the Eastern province diminished on Thursday when M.L.A.M. Hisbullah was sworn in before President Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Eastern Province Minister of Health and Indigenous Medicine, Social Welfare, Probation and Child Care Services, **Women's** Affairs, Youth Affairs, Sports, Information Technology, Education, Co-op Development and Food Supply and Distribution.

The Muslim factions who expressed their dissatisfaction over the appointment of Sivanesathurai Chandrakanthan as the Chief Minister of the Eastern Provincial Council finally could brush aside the differences and agreed to join hands with other constituent parties of the UPFA to run the Eastern Provincial Council.

M.L.A.M. Hisbulla's decision to swear in as a Minister came at a time the **LTTE** was trying to take advantage of the uncertain situation in the Batticaloa district arousing communalism in the Eastern province. At least five people were reportedly killed amidst this uncertain situation.

Two Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP) members were gunned down by unidentified gunmen in Kaththankudi town on Thursday who had been identified as Shanthan, the party's chief organiser of Kaththankudi and Parasuraman, a party member.

The victims were riding a motorbike when they were shot by gunmen in front of the Kaththankudi bus stand around 11.55 a.m. on Thursday.

Two more civilians who were injured in this shooting incident were also admitted to the Batticaloa hospital. Following the incident, Police imposed a curfew in the area. Three more killings were later reported on Thursday.

However, the tense situation that prevailed in Batticaloa has returned to normalcy with M.L.A.M. Hisbulla expressing his solidarity with the appointment of Pillayan as the Chief Minister and with his decision to swear in as a Minister of the Provincial Council.

At last the Government has displayed its ability to bring warring parties together and form the Provincial Council that can set an example to the whole world about ethnic coexistence in Sri Lanka instead of the bad picture the international community is having about the ethnic conflict in the country.

Yet, it can set example to the whole world by continuing the administration in the Eastern province effectively enabling all ethnic groups living in the Eastern province to feel that the authorities running the Provincial administration are equally treating them.

Troops poised to capture Periyamadu

Despite the LTTE losing its last chance of sabotaging the process of establishing full democracy in the East, it had not given up the efforts yet.

According to intelligence reports Keerthi, the former intelligence leader in the Batticaloa-Ampara sector, had sent messages to the Tiger cadres clandestinely operating in Batticaloa to create a favourable environment in the Batticaloa district for his arrival.

It was after this message the many killings were reported in the Batticaloa district including the assassination of several Police officers in Batticaloa. The authorities in charge of the Batticaloa district has also been baffled by this situation, as they believe the incidents that are taking place in Batticaloa had been a result due to the political uncertainty in the district.

However, intelligence sources had confirmed, that the situation in the district has been created due to the activities of the Tiger cadres clandestinely operating in the district, capitalising on the political uncertainty in the district.

Therefore, the Security Forces and the Police - especially the Police Special Task Force in charge of security in the Batticaloa district - will have to make an extra effort to get rid of these Tiger elements from the Batticaloa district without allowing them to increase their presence in the district and establish a proper network for their effective operations.

LTTE base cracked

However the strong message that is springing on the part of the LTTE from all these failed attempts to sabotage the establishment of full democracy in the Eastern province. That is that the very basement of the LTTE has been cracked after the Government's decision to appoint Pillayan as the Chief Minister of the Eastern Provincial Council.

It was a severe blow on the LTTE. That has been proved beyond any doubt by the number of telephone calls received by Pillayan after he was sworn in as the Chief Minister of the Eastern Provincial Council.

Sources told this correspondent that a large number of LTTE cadres including Tiger leaders had phoned him with two intentions. Both love and hatred included in those calls that were received from the one time fellow members of Pillayan.

A section of Tiger cadres had wished him well for his appointment as the Chief Minister. At the same time he has also received threatening calls warning Pillayan that he will soon be assassinated.

However many senior Tiger cadres had called him out of jealousy, as it was a sore in their eyes to see such a junior LTTE cadre becoming Chief Minister of the Eastern Provincial Council.

The brief sketch of Sivanethurai Chandrakanthan alias Pillayan given elsewhere on this page will give a brief idea as to how he climbed to this position after joining the LTTE as a young Tiger cadre.

It was true that these senior Tiger cadres had been deeply upset to see Pillayan in his western attire taking oaths before President Mahinda Rajapaksa, but many of the Tiger cadres have expressed their willingness to join hands with the TMVP after observing the position that Pillayan is now having.

However it has now become a very difficult task for the TMVP to identify those who are genuine about joining with the TMVP and the Wanni cadres who are with the ulterior motive of assassinating Pillayan. Therefore, the TMVP leader will also have to follow strict security measures, like Social Services Minister Douglas Devananda, to protect from the threats from the Wanni LTTE cadres who are coming to him as friends.

Therefore, extreme vigilance has to be maintained in the process of handling personal security of the Eastern Province Chief Minister as he is the key figure who can throw a challenge to the LTTE at present in a bid to convey a positive message to the Tamil population entrapped under the iron boot of the LTTE that they too can enjoy the same rights once they are liberated from the Tiger grip.

Troops poised to capture Periyamadu

As the process is on full swing to establish full democracy in the Eastern province to give the true feeling of liberation to the people in the East, the Security Forces are now turning their military strategies into action to further paralyse the LTTE outfit now entrapped in Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi districts.

The sudden death of Balraj, the Military Wing leader of the LTTE, on Tuesday came as another severe blow on the LTTE, which had suffered enough with the lost of their leaders due to offensive operations by the Security Forces.

Balraj who was born on 27 November, 1965 was a member of the 9th batch of the LTTE along with Theepan, the present LTTE Military leader in Jaffna. Balraj had heart surgery in Singapore in 2003. The present Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka and Balraj fought during the Yaldevi operation in early 1990s and both sustained injuries.

Destiny

Destiny was that the Army Commander even survived a deadly suicide attack but Balaraj could not even survive from a heart attack after having best treatment in Singapore.

According to the LTTE the funeral of Balraj was held on Friday evening in Mullaitivu with the participation of several Tiger leaders.

It was amidst people preparing for the funeral of one of their top leaders that the LTTE announced the killing of 16 civilians in Mullankavil in Kilinochchi. Though the Sri Lanka Army's Deep Penetration Units were blamed for this claymore attack on the van, the Army denied any involvement in the attack.

The LTTE media machinery is in full swing to capitalise on this incident highlighting the deaths of these civilians to tarnish the image of the Security Forces and justify their brutal attack on civilian targets in the South.

With this background chances are very high for the LTTE to take another civilian target in the South in retaliation. The LTTE is engaged in this false propaganda highlighting the civilian victims even due to air raids as their movements are highly restricted with effective targets taken by the Security Forces.

At this point the Security Forces have been able to restrict the LTTE supplies to the Mannar and Vavuniya battlefronts cutting off many of the supply routes from Kilinochchi.

Troops operating in the Vavuniya front had shifted their operations to the Mullaitivu district close to the Mannar-Vavuniya border. The troops of the 57 Division are now poised to capture Periyamadhu as they have cut off all supply routes to Periyamadhu.

However, troops are expecting a severe resistance from the LTTE due to the importance of this strategic location, which they used to locate their long-range heavy caliber guns to pose a major threat on the Security Forces operating in the Vavuniya and Mannar fronts.

With the expansion of the area coming under the 57 Division, the Sri Lanka Army is now in the process of forming the 61 Division to back up the task of the 57 Division, which is functioning as an offensive division in the West of the A-9 road.

The basic idea of the formation of the 61 Division is to hold the ground captured by the 57 Division enabling them to further advance into the Tiger territory.

Therefore the 61 Division is expected to form as a defensive Division, most probably under the command of Major General Davulugala, who acted as the Acting General Officer Commanding of the 57 Division and 58 Division in the absence of the 57 GOC Major General Jagath Dias and 58 GOC Brigadier Shavendra Silva.

The formation of this new Division will be another step forward by the Sri Lanka Army to achieve its objective of bringing the ongoing battle in the Wannai to a turning point. As claimed by the Army Commander Lt. General Sarath

Troops poised to capture Periyamadu

Fonseka to bring the North East war into a turning point where the LTTE is pushed into the jungles of Wanni by August this year, is becoming a realistic one as Security Forces are achieving this task in a step by step process.

So far the Security Forces has not faced with a human resource problem as it got the highest number of army recruits to all its Regiments within the last year and within this year. Therefore, the formation of new Divisions will not be a problem for the Army.

According to latest statistics 9,000 Tiger cadres so far have been killed after the break out of the fourth Eelam War with 1,700 Security Forces personnel sacrificing their lives.

The current progress of the war predicts that the LTTE will soon have to face a decisive phase of the battle in the Weli Oya battlefield as troops have already advanced nearly seven Kilometres into the Tiger territory from the Weli Oya front.

They are now reaching towards the famously known 1-4 Base of the LTTE located in the Mullaitivu jungle close to the Nityakulam tank. Heavy fighting are expected in this region with the troops reaching this strategic LTTE bases in the Mullaitivu district.

With the fall of key LTTE locations after a long and arduous task by the Security Forces in the Mannar and Vavuniya front, the task of bringing the war into a turning point is becoming more and more realistic.

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Load-Date: October 1, 2008

THE PRICE OF ALLEGED `PEACE TALKS?(EURO)(TM)

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

July 21, 2008 Monday 2:45 PM EST

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 21 -- Peace can never be achieved through `Peace Talks?(EURO)(TM) where one party utilizes those `talks?(EURO)(TM) and the attendant `ceasefire?(EURO)(TM) to strengthen itself and strike the other at an opportune moment. This has been the experience of Sri Lanka, where every set of so called `peace talks?(EURO)(TM) only resulted in the **LTTE** getting stronger and the carnage and suffering among our People increasing in Geometric Progression.

It is indeed a paradox that while no set of so called `peace talks?(EURO)(TM) brought us even a fraction of a millimeter closer to peace, and every one of them only aggravated the conflict, the current military operations of our Armed Forces have brought us closer to peace than ever before.

Peace is clearly anathema to the **LTTE** "(EURO)" for it was terrorism, not peace, that made `somebodies?(EURO)(TM) of a bunch of `nobodies?(EURO)(TM) like Prabhakaran, Pottu Amman, Soosai etc., and the dawn of peace will end once and for all, the absolute power they exercised over hundreds of thousand helpless People, principally Tamils; their ability to murder, kidnap, abduct, imprison or torture whom they wished, how, when and where they wished; extort money and other property from anyone they wished in those areas where they enjoyed usurped power; and live lives of relative luxury and educate their children abroad with money robbed and extorted from the poor, the weak and the helpless and that contributed by their gullible supporters at home and abroad. `Peace?(EURO)(TM) to them, therefore, is a consummation devoutly to be `AVOIDED?(EURO)(TM) and not `wished?(EURO)(TM).

It is in this background that the **LTTE**, with their backs to the wall, watching what to them is the `spectre?(EURO)(TM) of peace coming closer and closer, are now trumpeting, with all the hypocrisy they can muster, another call for another ceasefire and another set of so called `peace-talks?(EURO)(TM) so that they can strengthen themselves once more and avoid the restoration of peace

It is pertinent, in these circumstances to recall the bitter fruits of the four previous sets of so called `peace talks?(EURO)(TM) and six ceasefires we in Sri Lanka have had to stomach in the past 23 years.

The first set of `Peace Talks?(EURO)(TM) were at Thimphu [the capital of Bhutan] in mid 1985. The **LTTE** came for those talks in ostensible brotherhood with eleven representatives of the TULF, PLOTE, TELO, EROS and EPRLF. All those Groups sabotaged those talks in unison with the **LTTE** and left Thimphu as `brothers in the cause of Tamil Eelam?(EURO)(TM).

THE PRICE OF ALLEGED `PEACE TALKS?(EURO)(TM)

However, so much had the LTTE strengthened themselves by taking advantage of the ceasefire that accompanied those talks that they achieved a total stranglehold on almost the whole of the Jaffna Peninsula, and were so confident of their strength and ability to establish a separate State of Tamil Eelam by themselves that they, to whom any kind of `power sharing?(EURO)(TM) was [and continues to be] anathema, murdered about 140 cadres of their `erstwhile brothers?(EURO)(TM) of the TELO including its leader `Tall?(EURO)(TM) Sri Sabaratnam and about 70 cadres of the EPRLF shortly after their return to Sri Lanka.

They also forbade their other `brothers?(EURO)(TM) the TULF to engage in any politics in the Northern and Eastern Provinces and commenced murdering their leaders. They later murdered the leader of the EPRLF, Pathmanabhai, Yogashangari MP and almost the entirety of its Politbureau on 19.6.90 at Chennai, but failed to murder Suresh Premachandran MP [who is now one of the LTTE?(EURO)(TM)s most loyal acolytes] because he was not present when the attack took place,

Of the 11 representatives of other separatist organizations who came to Thimphu with the LTTE as brothers, the LTTE have, SO FAR succeeded in murdering 3, namely, Amirthalingam (TULF), Vasudevan (PLOTE) and Ketheeswaran (EPRLF)], narrowly missed murdering a fourth, Sivasithamparam (TULF)] and caused a fifth Varadarajah Perumal (EPRLF)] to live in exile in India through fear for his life, while a sixth Sampanthan (TULF)] is now reduced to the pathetic fate of leading a band of lackeys/vassals of the LTTE, named the TNA. Thus the LTTE have, by such conduct, proved their incurable allergy to any kind of `power sharing?(EURO)(TM) and their total inability to arrive at a `political solution?(EURO)(TM) to conflicts EVEN WITH THOSE ESPOUSING THE SAME POLITICAL `CAUSE?(EURO)(TM) OF SEPARATION AS THEY.

The stranglehold the LTTE achieved over the Peninsula as a direct result of the ceasefire attendant upon the Thimphu Talks necessitated `Operation Liberation?(EURO)(TM) to liberate the Peninsula from the LTTE. This operation was sabotaged by India. The second `ceasefire?(EURO)(TM) was an unilateral `ceasefire?(EURO)(TM) declared by Minister Athulathmudali from the 11th to the 21st April 1987. The LTTE reciprocated by murdering 127 Sinhalese men, women and children at Kituluttuwa on the 17th April and a further 107 of all races and injuring 289 by exploding a powerful bomb at the Pettah bus terminus two days thereafter.

The third ceasefire was that occasioned by the Indo Lanka Accord. The LTTE who fraudulently claimed to have surrendered all their arms in terms of that Accord, continued hunting and murdering their erstwhile `brothers?(EURO)(TM) in the EPRLF, TELO, mPLOTE and the TULF, many of whom fled to and found refuge in the camps of our Armed Forces in the North and East.

Later, commencing on the 29th September 1987 they murdered about 200 Sinhalese and Muslim Civilians between Trincomalee and Chenkaladi within one week, attacked our Army Camps at Point Pedro and Thondaimannar on the 5th October and murdered eight helpless soldiers in their captivity on the 6th while the IPKF did nothing to halt the carnage. Finally the IPKF began fighting the LTTE only after the LTTE murdered some Indian soldiers.

The fourth ceasefire was occasioned by the second round of alleged ``Peace Talks?(EURO)(TM)?(EURO)(TM) at the Hilton Hotel in 1990. Characteristically, the LTTE used the opportunity to recruit new cadres, re-arm and otherwise prepare for `war?(EURO)(TM), partly with the material aid willfully given by the then UNP Government.

While their `delegates?(EURO)(TM) were in Colombo under the protection of the Police and the Forces, the LTTE foully broke the ceasefire?(EURO)(TM) and scuttled the `Peace Talks?(EURO)(TM) by attacking all police stations in the East and then murdering in captivity, over 600 unarmed police officers who had surrendered to them on the orders of the then Government.

Until those `Peace Talks?(EURO)(TM), the LTTE had never been able to over-run a single camp of the Army, Navy or Air Force, however small. The opportunity given to them by the `Peace Talks?(EURO)(TM) changed all that. So much had they strengthened themselves during the `Premadasa Peace Talks?(EURO)(TM) that the LTTE were able, within one week of the 11th June, to attack 20 Police Stations and 18 Army Camps in 8 Districts, over-running 13 Police Stations and causing the evacuation of 4 Army Camps. In this period they murdered 1120 troops and police officers and injured 412. Shortly thereafter, the LTTE over-ran the Army Camps at Kokavil, Mankulam,

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Mandativu and Janakapura and still later those at Mullaitivu, Pooneryn, and Elephant Pass and many others as well as the Naval Base at Nagathevanthurai.

Then came the fifth ceasefire consequent to the 3rd set of `Peace Talks?(EURO)(TM) which was initiated by CBK. That ceasefire lasted from the 5th January 1995 until the 19th April 1995 when the LTTE with characteristic perfidy broke the ceasefire and scuttled the talks by blasting two Naval Gunboats anchored at the Trincomalee Harbour, murdering 12 sailors and wounding 21. Thereafter on the 28th and 29th April the LTTE shot down and destroyed 2 Avro Aircraft of the Air Force using Surface to Air Missiles, murdering 48 soldiers, 24 sailors, 23 airmen, 2 policemen and 2 journalists who happened to be on board.

Until those `Peace Talks?(EURO)(TM) the LTTE had never been able to bring down a single aircraft.

From the 19th April onwards the LTTE, `revelling?(EURO)(TM) in the strength they had gained during those talks went on a spree of murder and mayhem and by the 31st August 1995 they murdered 445 soldiers, 39 sailors, 24 airmen, 49 policemen and 53 civilians and injured 388 soldiers, 37 sailors, 42 policemen, destroyed 3 aircraft in flight and sunk 4 ships. Further the LTTE?(EURO)(TM)s gang of Pirates called the ?(EURO)oeSea Tigers?(EURO) which was really nothing to speak of before the 1995 `Peace Talks?(EURO)(TM) and ceasefire became a very formidable force thereafter.

Then came the 6th ceasefire and the 4th set of `Peace Talks?(EURO)(TM) from 2002 to 2006. How the LTTE sabotaged those talks and the disastrous consequences of that ceasefire during which the LTTE captured Manirasakulam, fortified Sampur, murdered bus-loads of unarmed soldiers and sailors proceeding on and returning from leave by exploding Claymore Mines, sought to murder thousands of civilians living down-stream of the Mavil Aru Anicut by cutting off water to them, murdered loyal Tamil informants all over the country, attempted to murder the Army Commander, the Defence Secretary and Minister Devananda are too fresh in our minds to need repetition. Suffice it to say that the then Minister of Defence Marapana admitted that the LTTE had doubled their strength in about the 1st year of that ceasefire.

At long last we are recovering, and the elusive goal of PEACE is now within sight for the first time, thanks to the blood, toil, tears and sweat of our troops. Let not that goal elude us once more by another ceasefire and/or set of talks which can only end in disaster.

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THE THREE BASIC PARAMETERS FOR LASTING PEACE

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

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Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Aug. 12 -- The Sri Lankan government's ultimatum to all deserters from the armed forces to return to duty is one indication of the stresses that exist in society due to the ongoing war which is gaining in intensity in the north of the country. As the army advances deeper into LTTE controlled territory there is a greater need for larger numbers of troops to be deployed to secure the newly captured areas. The government needs to ensure that the LTTE will not infiltrate back into those areas even in small numbers, as these can harass and overrun small detachments of troops. Securing the territory is going to be a bigger problem in the north than it was in the east.

The difficulty that the army will be facing in the north is the mono-ethnic nature of the community located there, which is one hundred percent Tamil, as against the east, which is multi ethnic, and with a majority that is non-Tamil. Some parts of the north that have been recaptured were lost to the government some two decades ago. The problem of communication and getting information regarding LTTE movements from the community will be more difficult in view of the communication barriers between the Sinhala-speaking government forces and the Tamil-speaking population.

Another difficulty that the Sri Lankan army will face as it progresses deeper into LTTE-held territory is that the LTTE's own resistance is likely to grow stronger. This again will be unlike the situation that existed in the east, where the LTTE cadre did not resist to the last man but withdrew from the battle. When it came to the east, the LTTE leadership appears to have decided that discretion was the better part of valour and their cadre would be better utilized by redeploying them to defend in the north, rather than to fight to keep hold of the east.

On the other hand, when it comes to resisting the incoming Sri Lankan army in the north, the LTTE cadre will have nowhere else to go. This suggests that they will fight very hard to keep the Sri Lankan army from overrunning the entirety of the northern territory they control. As the Sri Lankan army's lines of communication get stretched with the need to defend more and more territory that is being captured, the LTTE lines of communication will grow tighter and their resistance greater. The reports of high casualties in the recent battles in the north suggest that the LTTE is still not collapsing under pressure.

Humanitarian crisis

There are also stresses in society due to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the northern war zones. Tens of thousands of people living in those areas have been displaced from their villages and homes. As the Sri Lankan army advances more and more areas are coming within range of the army's long range artillery. The alleged artillery attack on Mullaitivu town, and damage to civilian infrastructure and persons which the military

THE THREE BASIC PARAMETERS FOR LASTING PEACE

spokesperson has denied, is a sign of things to come. The LTTE's own strategy of setting up their camps in the vicinity of civilian settlements is likely to have collateral implications on the civilian population.

Reports from humanitarian agencies working in the north indicate that they cannot meet the demand for emergency shelter, water and sanitation to meet the needs of the rapidly growing displaced population. More than 50,000 persons were reported displaced in the month of July alone. They join the ranks of those displaced by earlier phases of war and the tsunami. Unfortunately, it appears that the humanitarian organizations are lacking in capacity to deal with this crisis, in part due to the restrictions that the government has placed upon them.

The government's legitimate concern would be that the LTTE will take a part or most of the supplies brought in by the humanitarian organizations for its own use, and to further strengthen its war machine. This may explain the restrictions on a host of materials, including cement, water pumps and fuel into the LTTE controlled territories. The government has recently been producing evidence to show that equipment and relief items sent in by humanitarian organizations have ended up in LTTE camps.

However, the welfare of Sri Lankan citizens ought not to be subordinated to military necessities. In an appeal to the government, the Bishop of Mannar, Rayappu Joseph, has given a first hand account of the plight of the people. He has referred to the displaced persons from his diocese of Mannar, whom he reports as mostly staying by the side of roads and in the adjoining jungles without adequate food, shelter, medicine and other basic needs. He has reported that the whole region is on the move, and that the worst affected in this situation are the children, women and elderly.

As a response to this humanitarian crisis, the Bishop has requested the government to spell out its plan for the safety and security of its citizens in the north. In the absence of any governmental initiative he has proposed that urgent action be taken to permit humanitarian organizations with access to these areas. He has also proposed the establishment of No Conflict Zones in each of the three northern districts affected by the present fighting.

Lasting peace

Unfortunately, the pleas of Bishop Joseph and those of a similar persuasion are unlikely to fall on receptive ears at the present time. This is because military imperatives have taken priority and the government is unlikely to do anything that can jeopardize its military effort. The chosen logic of both the government and LTTE, and their respective supporters, is that the war will be the foundation for a future solution. While the government seeks a total military victory, the LTTE resists being defeated. It is aiming for a situation of hurting stalemate as occurred in the period 1999-2001 which paved the way for the ceasefire of 2002. The underlying belief of both sides is that the ground situation, rather than justice and fairness, will determine the political outcome.

The values of democracy necessarily take a back seat in the face of this logic of war. In the LTTE controlled areas there is no democracy at all and in the government controlled areas a National Security State has come to the fore. This accounts for the frequent road closures, restrictions on parking, night time search operations of homes and unknown groups who supposedly operate with impunity in white vans. Accompanying these violations of the rule of law and democracy are regular reports from the government indicating that final victory is imminent. In these circumstances those who publicly challenge or criticize the logic of war and propose an alternative course of action, are castigated as traitors.

One of those who have taken a public stand on the issue of war and human rights violations has been the veteran social activist, Fr Tissa Balasuriya. A statement drafted by him has called for a southern consensus between the government and opposition, specially by the Government and the Opposition for a constitutionally guaranteed sharing of power within a United Sri Lanka, to be accompanied by a ceasefire monitored by international observers, with provision for the LTTE and the other Tamil and Muslim political parties also to share democratically in the administration of the North and East, and for the All Party Representatives Conference to include the TNA and be a body to work out the modalities of the ceasefire, and the constitutional reforms.

An initial draft of this statement met with considerable support from Tamils, including expatriates. At the same time the statement was strongly condemned by many Sinhalese, especially by those living abroad, who saw it as a

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conspiracy to keep the LTTE from being militarily defeated. When a subsequent draft of the statement included a reference to a commitment to lay down arms by the LTTE, the Tamil support dropped. The response to Fr Balasuriya's statement shows how on both sides of the ethnic divide the belief in the armed struggle continues to retain its hold. But this is the path to endless war and suffering, which Sri Lanka needs to get off if it is to prosper. A united country, a federal based political solution implemented by the government and the laying down of arms by the LTTE are the three basic parameters for lasting peace.

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Fleeing civilians, easy victims of Tiger savagery

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

March 22, 2009 Sunday

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Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, March 22 -- Survival would have been a nightmare for the civilians entrapped in LTTE-held area. It's totally different from chaos that anyone of us would have to face in life. Plight of the unarmed Tamil people, tragically kept as LTTE's human shield, is beyond description.

Selvi, a 40-year-old mother of two teenage girls and a teacher by profession broke down when they reached the safety shores. "I just couldn't properly feed my children for the last three days. We had no food," she wept with tears trickling down her cheeks while she explained their misery. This is just one sordid story as related by one of those 643 civilians who suffered the LTTE savagery. These unfortunate people, with 224 children and 212 women, had to venture into deep sea to escape LTTE firing. And at last they were rescued by the Navy deployed in the seas off Puthumathalan. Selvi is a native of Nelliady. She managed to escape with her two daughters and husband, a science and mathematics teacher himself. Her daughters were studying in Adampan Convent before the rise of LTTE atrocities. "My eldest is a son. We sent him to Nelliady a year before. He is safely carrying out his studies," Selvi said cuddling her 10-year-old daughter. "We don't have anything to eat. We don't get the relief items the Government sends us. If we managed to get a little bit of dhal we would have cooked it with a pinch of salt," a 50-year-old woman who wanted to be anonymous explained. Very expensive "We can't buy rice or coconut. They are very expensive. Rice is 150 rupees a kilo and even for 200 rupees one can't find coconuts," she added. "People are no longer with the LTTE. Now they don't have their support," 55-year-old Sellasamy, an escapee, said with anger and hatred. "I can't save my two sons from them (LTTE). They just can't bear the sight of young boys and girls. They drag them away," he said. Sellasamy was living in Kilinochchi town with his family before they had to escape to Murukandi. "From Murukandi LTTE drove us away, and at last we got stranded in the coastal line south of Puthumathalan". "They have kept their artillery and mortar guns just 50 metres away from where we were staying. They have placed some of them in the camps of displaced people like us", he further said. Sellasamy sent his two sons and wife in the first board which left the shores and managed to join the second one. "First we tried to escape very early in the morning. But LTTE Police came and tried to take the boys away. Then all of us protested and hit them, they went away," he added. The so-called LTTE Police came for the second time to forcefully take away the young boys and men in the crowd. As Sellasamy explained, an elderly mother came forward and scolded the Tiger for abducting their children. "The LTTE men turned furious and shot her in the throat blowing up her head. They shot and killed another man, a father who opposed them. The shooting injured little children and people around," Sellasamy kept on explaining the terrifying story. Late in the evening all of them decided to try once more to escape. Again the LTTE cadres came and assaulted them brutally. They dragged young boys, including Sellasamy's younger son and took them away through a coconut plantation close by. One boy hit a LTTE cadre and ran away and as the entire situation turned chaotic everyone started running all over. It gave these people a chance to escape in their boats which they kept hidden close to the shores. Then they sailed in to the rough sea - a deadly encounter. They were sandwiched between the devil and deep blue sea! "If we did not burn down the LTTE police

Fleeing civilians, easy victims of Tiger savagery

we couldn't have escaped their harassments," Nithya Rani, a mother of a 12-year-old girl said. "People who can manage to come to Puthumathalan junction can escape. But what about those who can't! We don't know how they are going to escape," she said. Upon rescuing, all were brought ashore at Point Pedro and provided with much-needed food, refreshments and medical assistance. The exodus of Tamil civilians escaping from **LTTE** clutches is now on the rise. Despite the risk of being shot at and maimed for deserting the **LTTE** which is dying a painful death, many civilians manage to reach the cleared areas in large numbers in a relatively steady stream. Terror outfit They have understood the futility of shielding a merciless terror outfit which pays little respect even to those who have once given them succour. Yet, how many of the Tamil Diaspora were bothered to feed or provide shelter to these innocent people who may perhaps be their own kith and kin, while the citizens of Sri Lanka have contributed to the Government, knowingly or unknowingly, to feed and cloth these unfortunate people? Haven't they only fattened **LTTE** arsenals which in return is used to kill their own people? Sri Lanka Navy has made special arrangements to assist the helpless Tamil civilians fleeing by sea amidst the deadly waves during this season. Expecting more of them naval personnel and vessels along with stand-by rescue and medical teams are on special deployment for this humanitarian mission in the North-eastern seas, Sri Lanka Navy stated. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Gallant forces gallop on the last lap to liberation

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

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Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 13 -- The incident that took place in Galge area on the Buttala-Kataragama Road on Friday was yet another indication that the LTTE is once again making desperate attempts to give false signal to the South taking the advantage of the uncertain situation created by the narrow-minded politicians holding the general public to ransom under the cover of soaring cost of living.

Four civilians including a mother and a son and another two females were killed and 24 others sustained injuries as the LTTE cadres hiding in the jungles opened fire at a Kataragama bound bus from Moneragala at the 49th kilometre post, just passing few kilometres from the Galge area.

It was a clear example that the LTTE is taking the best advantage out of politically uncertain situations in the South to go ahead with their desperate terror plans to destabilize the South as the incident took place after the day, the JVP and UNP backed trade unions staged a token general strike demanding a Rs. 5,000 salary increase.

As predicted by the Government and also by some politicians, the LTTE would have prayed for a uncertain political situation in the South through this general strike as such situations immensely help them to go ahead with their terror plans.

The LTTE proved that fact Friday itself by sending shockwaves especially in the Southern and Uva provinces at a time when people were participating in the Kataragama festival, which has been organized in a grand scale.

Therefore, the Opposition, which is hell-bent towards disrupting the ongoing military operations against the LTTE in the Northern battlefront should realize the obnoxious nature of the agenda they are working on at a time when the entire nation is facing one of the most decisive periods in the two and half decade long conflict in the North and East of the country.

If they are really conscious about the future of the country and its future prosperity and the current soaring cost of living, they should help find a permanent solution to this problem.

They should realize the fact that the entire nation can wriggle out of this economic and food crisis once we could get rid of LTTE terrorism which had crippled not only the economy of the country but also its food production as the ongoing conflict had engulfed nearly one third of the country?(EURO)(TM)s cultivable land.

The Mannar (EURO)~Rice Bowl?(EURO)(TM) which was liberated by the troops two weeks back was the classic example. The country had lost the rice production in this bountiful land for the past few decades when it was under

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LTTE domination. This paddy lands stretching over a 105 square kilometre area is being opened up for cultivation after its liberation by the 58 Division under the command of the Brigadier Shavendra Silva.

At the same time we had to impose restrictions on fishing in our territorial waters due to the **LTTE** terror tactics. The situation has enabled the fishermen from neighbouring India to poach in our seas and exploit our lucrative fishing resources.

What is required at this moment is to strengthen the hands of the Security Forces which are now engaged in the gallant task of not only liberating the entire country from the clutches of the **LTTE** terrorism but also bringing economic prosperity to the country by removing all barriers placed against the national economy and food production.

The need of the hour is to provide a strong backing to the Security Forces as they are already in the task of eliminating terrorism from the country under the correct military and political leadership.

What they need is a peaceful mind to concentrate on their military efforts to fight against the **LTTE** and to add value to every life and limb they sacrificed on behalf of the nation if the people in the South need to see an early end to the ongoing conflict?(EURO)(TM).

They should not bear any doubts in their minds, as troops have not suffered any debacles in their two year long military operations commencing from the Mavilaru in the Eastern liberation operation.

The troops are now successfully engaged in the Wanni liberation operation after advancing into the centres of Eastern and Western flanks of the Wanni battlefield. The **LTTE** is now facing a crisis as they have never expected such an advance from the Security Forces.

For the first time in the history the **LTTE** is facing the Security Forces in the middle of Wanni jungles where they had their strongholds unknown even to their own people in Wanni.

The greatest setback the **LTTE** facing today is that though they were supposed to be the experts in guerrilla warfare, they have never prepared for such a warfare with the Security Forces as they have focused mainly on the supply routes leading to the heart of Wanni.

The creation of a massive military front in the Western flank of the Wanni theatre with the linkage of 57 Division operating in the Vavuniya front and 58 Division operated in the Mannar front in the South West of Periyamadu on June 30, has given a bigger headache to the **LTTE** leadership as it had upset the use of their reserve forces.

The creation of the 61 Division to hold the ground captured by the 57 Division upto Palampiddi has lessened the burden on the latter which has been formed for offensive operations.

With the linkage of the 57 Division and the 58 Division, the 582 Brigade once again came under the command of the 58 Division and they are now operating in the West of Periyamadu and heading towards the Vedithalthivu from the East to North direction.

The Commando troops operating in Paramayankulam tank on Friday captured one Tiger bunker in the North of Paramayankulam tank killing five Tiger cadres.

Now troops are dominating more than seven square kilometres around Paramayankulam tank which is located between Periyamadu and Vedithalthivu.

They completely took control of the Paramayankulam tank by yesterday evening. This tank is the main source of water for the **LTTE** operating in the Vedithalthivu Sea Tiger base. In the Western bund of the tank there are five main sluice gates to feed 12 water canals, three of which connected to Vedithalthivu area.

Though dry weather conditions prevail in the area at present, the tank is filled to its full capacity. It is an indication that it was rich in water even during dry seasons.

Gallant forces gallop on the last lap to liberation

The Security Forces believe with the fall of this tank the LTTE cannot exist in Vedithalthivu area any longer as all their supply routes connecting Kilinochchi are being cut off by troops attached to the 57 and 58 Divisions.

As the Vedithalthivu Tiger base come under threat from the Western edge from Periyamadu direction with troops advancing some four kilometres West of Vedithalthivu, the troops attached to the 58 Division operating from the South of Vedithalthivu also made a major breakthrough on Thursday capturing main Sea Tiger base located in the Northern tip of Pappamoddai. The area has been identified as Plakaimunai.

This area had been used by the LTTE to launch their boats and maintain links with the Mannar town and Vedithalthivu.

All the contraband from Mannar town had been transported to Vedithalthivu through this Sea Tiger Base.

Relatively a high ground located in the coast, anyone can observe the movements in Mannar from this location, according to Security Forces.

The Infantry troops were able to capture nine Tiger bunkers jacking out to Vedithalthivu during this operation.

Therefore, troops are now poised to capture the main bases of the LTTE located in Vedithalthivu in the coming weeks as it being surrounded from three directions, the North, West and from the South.

With these developments the LTTE may have shifted their logistic bases further North towards Illupukadaveli, Iranathivu and Devil?(EURO)(TM)s Point.

As the 58 Division is making incursions into Vedithalthivu the troops attached to the 57 Division is heading towards Thunukkai one of the two main townships in the Western flank of the Wanni. The troops attached to the 57 Division made major breakthrough with the capture of Naddankandal in the South of Thunukkai.

The area was totally taken under control of the Security Forces by Friday afternoon advancing the troops towards six kilometres South of Thunukkai.

The LTTE is now preparing to defend Thunukkai the main township in the West of Wanni after Mallavi.

The International NGOs including the ICRC is still present in Mallavi area adjacent to Thunukkai? Once Thunukkai falls into the hands of the Security Forces, Mallavi too would follow.

The LTTE has created a defence line covering Thunukkai as they were expecting troops from this direction. The Security Forces too for the first time took some targets through their long-range artillery guns.

Though the LTTE is facing a severe shortage of manpower at this point of time the intelligence sources indicate that they have increased the number of Tiger cadres to 5,000 with the forcible recruitment of youth into the organization.

According to the calculations by the Security Forces the LTTE has the capacity to increase the number of cadres by another 5,000 recruiting youth from a nearly 200,000 population entrapped in Wanni at present.

However, it is doubtful how long this civilian population will live in Wanni under the harassment of the LTTE. There is a trend developing among the people to escape from Wanni towards Mannar and Trincomalee. In the coming months the number is expected to increase considerably.

But it is most unlikely the LTTE would allow these civilians to move freely into Government-held areas in Wanni. If so they will be safely taken to the cleared areas by the Security Forces.

To prevent this situation the LTTE continues to put pressure on the civilians to leave further interior into the Wanni once they feel Security Forces are advancing towards civilian populated area.

Gallant forces gallop on the last lap to liberation

Therefore, it is obvious that the LTTE can engage in this game only till the population in Wanni live with them. That is why the Tiger leader Prabhakaran had held the lives of Wanni population to ransom to continue with his terror plans.

There is no doubt that he will not hesitate to use these civilians to exert pressure on the Indian politics with the shifting of displaced civilians to Vellankulam area in the North Western coast since the easiest way of influencing the Indian authorities is through sending Tamil civilians as refugees to Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu.

However, things will not be so easy for them as the Security forces have already cut off the North Western coast from the centre of the Western flank of Wanni theatre.

The Task Force II operating under the command of Brigadier Rohana Bandara too made big success on Friday with the capture of the Navi, a settlement area located some 14 kilometres West of A-9 road. The Task Force II that began operations on June 7 is now advancing towards A-9 Road, in the North Western direction.

The capture of this area is vital as all supplies to Omanthai entry exit point and other LTTE defences along the A-9 Road are fed through this area.

The LTTE is taking the cover of the civilian population living in Mankulam to direct artillery fire at the troops operating in this front.

The LTTE knowing the destiny they have to face in the coming months is now in the process of constructing new defence line in Mankulam area if they are to retreat from Omanthai.

Meanwhile the entire Weli Oya front from Kiriibbanvewa North to Janakapura North engaged with the LTTE on Friday.

Ten Tiger cadres were reportedly killed during this battle.

The Weli Oya front too expected to make major moves within the next few weeks as many of the Tiger bases under the 1-4 base have already fallen into the hands of the Security Forces by this time.

According to the sources the other Tiger base coming under 1-4 base complex is located in the Nagacholai forest reserve further North of Andankulam forest reserve where troops are now confronting the LTTE.

Therefore, the people in the South will in near future be able to witness the success of the efforts made by the Security Forces in these thick jungles for the past one and half years in the Wanni theatre in their struggle to liberate the motherland from the LTTE terror.

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Load-Date: October 1, 2008

Air Force targets 'Charles Anthony' hqrs, training camps

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

October 2, 2008 Thursday 12:04 PM EST

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Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 2 -- The Sri Lanka Air Force yesterday carried out a series of air raids targeting **LTTE** military and logistic bases including the headquarters of the elite 'Charles Anthony' Brigade and **LTTE women** cadres base located south of the Kilinochchi hospital, Air Force Spokesman Wing Commander Janaka Nanayakkara said yesterday.

"The Air Force fighter jets carried out three missions taking five targets at different times within yesterday", the spokesman added.

The Air Force fighter jets carried out three missions taking five targets at different times within yesterday, the spokesman added.

The SLAF fighter jets raided the Charles Anthony Brigade headquarters and the **LTTE women**'s wing base located close to the headquarters of the Charles Anthony brigade simultaneously at 10.25 a.m..

According to sources, the Charles Anthony Brigade headquarters is located in a buildup area in the south of Kilinochchi and the cadres of this elite Brigade are playing a key role in the Kilinochchi battle in large numbers as the **LTTE** deployed them to face the advancing troops.

Prior to this air raid SLAF fighter jets also carried out an air raid targeting a **LTTE** leaders hideout three kilometres North East of Piramanthalkulam in Mullaitivu at 5.30 a.m.

In another air raid the Sri Lanka Air Force fighter jets shelled three **LTTE** logistic facilities located 3.5 km south of Kilinochchi around 2.40 p.m. Air Force Spokesman said that pilots have confirmed that the targets have been accurately taken. The targets were acquired on real-time ground and aerial reconnaissance information received, Air Force sources said.

Intelligence reports also indicated that the **LTTE** has been completely baffled following these air raids targeting their hideouts, military bases, training facilities and logistic bases yesterday as their movements have been highly restricted due to these air raids.

The intensified air raids carried out by the SLAF within the past few weeks had brought positive results as many of the senior level **LTTE** leaders have to confine into their underground bunkers to avoid becoming targets of the SLAF.

Apart from this the SLAF also contributed effectively to destroy their logistic supplies, training facilities.

Air Force targets 'Charles Anthony' hqrs, training camps

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

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Load-Date: October 2, 2008

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VIPs advised to strictly adhere to security measures

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

October 12, 2008 Sunday 3:40 PM EST

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Byline: Report from the Sri Lanka Sunday Observer brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 12 -- The ground realities in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu battlefronts have put the LTTE in total dilemma. In the main battlefront, the Tiger outfit is about to lose their de-facto capital Kilinochchi.

From the Pooneryn front, the 58 Division is now heading towards their final goal to capturing the huge earth bund whilst the 59 Division is now heading towards the LTTE military stronghold Mullaitivu, again capturing another huge earth bund in the West of Nayar lagoon.

For the LTTE all these three locations are top most priorities.

They were main strongholds of the LTTE from its inception, apart from Jaffna. Losing any of these strongholds would be a defeat to them.

The pride of the LTTE would go forever once they lose control of Kilinochchi. In the same way, they will lose their links with outsiders once they lose the stretch up to Pooneryn in the North Western coast and the stretch in Mullaitivu in the Eastern coastal line.

Therefore, the LTTE is now facing difficulty in choosing their top most priority as all their strongholds are under threat as they fear that the Muhamalai front will also come under threat from the troops operating there very soon.

It is inevitable that the LTTE will lose their de-facto capital Kilinochchi as troops are operating from a distance less than two kilometers to the outskirts of Kilinochchi facing stiff resistance from the well trained hardcore Tiger cadres.

Troops are now engaged in the exhausting task to reach Kilinochchi overcoming all sorts of mine fields, booby traps, frequent gas attacks to overrun their heavily fortified bunker lines constructed on huge earth bunds to defend Kilinochchi.

The onset North East monsoon rains are also expected to lash the battlefront as signs of monsoon rains have already been witnessed on several occasions within the past few days in the Kilinochchi battlefront, but easing the effect from the frequent gas attacks from the LTTE.

Tiger leadership continued to pour their cadres into these three major battles in Kilinochchi in the East and West of Akkarayankulam, in the Nachchikuda front and in the Mullaitivu front, taking maximum use of their reserve battalions as they are aware that no other battles will be left for them to defend their so-called Tamil Eelam after their defeat in Kilinochchi.

VIPs advised to strictly adhere to security measures

But the casualty rate on the LTTE, which is comparatively high these days, would decide whether they can continue to pour their cadres from other fronts to defend Kilinochchi as they have to thin out their presence in other fronts to reinforce the Kilinochchi front.

Theepan and Bhanu have already decided to stop drawing cadres from the Muhamalai front to Kilinochchi and Pooneryn fronts fearing that troops would advance from that direction too towards Kilinochchi.

It was with the fear that losing of any of these grounds would be a severe blow to them at this juncture. But time is not so far for them to give up two of these fronts to hang onto their already shattered Tamil Eelam dream.

Troops attached to the 572 Brigade, which was under the command of Colonel Senerath Bandara, is now operating just one and half kilometres in the South West of Kilinochchi.

The 572 Brigade has now been taken over by Lt. Colonel Dhammika Jayasundera as Colonel Senerath Bandara is due to visit India for a Senior Command course for a brief period after a hectic task undertaken by him in the 572 Brigade for the past one and half years.

The 8 Sri Lanka Light Infantry Battalion under the Command of Lt.Colonel Epsitha Dissanayaka was able to capture 300 meter stretch of huge earth bund that has been constructed by the LTTE from East to West from Iranamadu to North West of Kilinochchi side.

Troops detected this earth bund last week once they were advancing along Akkarayan-Murikkandi Road. This earth bund is separated from the earth bund that has been constructed from Nachchikuda to Akkarayankulam. This new earth bund has been constructed North of Akkarayankulam from East to West direction to cover the Kilinochchi front.

In Monday's fighting 17 LTTE cadres were confirmed killed and 9 others reportedly injured. There were three waves of Tiger cadres to push back the troops from the earth bund firing gas canisters but failed in all their attempts as troops are strongly holding this stretch of earth bund.

The LTTE continued to launch gas attacks targeting the troops operating in the forward defences. Amidst this resistance, troops are poised to further expand their areas along this newly captured earth bund which stretches for nearly 10 to 11 kilometers.

On Friday troops attached to 3 Gajaba Regiment under the command of Sanjeewa Fernando, launched an assault on this earth bund to further expand the stretch captured by the 8 Sri Lanka Light Infantry Regiment.

Troops from the 4 Sinha Regiment, under the command of Lt. Colonel Subashana Welikala is also ready to link up with the 8 SLII troops to further expand the control over this earth bund amidst heavy resistance from the LTTE.

Meanwhile, the 571 Brigade under the command of Colonel G.V. Ravipriya is also operating in the West of Akkarayankulam posing a major threat to the LTTE.

The newly formed 574 Brigade under the command of Lt. Colonel Senaka Wijesuriya and 573 Brigade under the command of Lt. Colonel Prathap Thillekeratne are holding the ground parallel to the Jaffna - Kandy A-9 Road from Mankulam to Murikandy in the South of Iranamadu.

The LTTE has not been given any room to operate on this stretch of A-9 road though troops have not taken control of the road. The 7 Sri Lanka Light Infantry battalion operating in Kokavil South area laid an ambush and attacked a Canter truck which was transporting troops from the direction of the West of A-9 Road.

Another truck issuing meals to the Tiger cadres operating close to the A-9 Road also came under attack of the 7 SLII troops on Friday too.

In the same way the LTTE has also laid heavy mine fields preventing troops from reaching the A-9 Road as they are aware that there will be deadly effects on them if they leave the A-9 Road for free movements of the troops.

VIPs advised to strictly adhere to security measures

With troops attached to the 57 Division heading towards Kilinochchi, troops attached to the 58 Division, under the command of Brigadier Shavendra Silva, has made progress in the North East of Nachchikuda with troops advancing further Northwards from the earth bund captured from the East and West of Vannerikulam.

The 58 Division has further expanded their control over this ditch cum earth bund in Kambivelliyavillu, Pandiveddiaru and Maniyankulam areas.

From the earth bund troops have advanced four kilometers Northwards and operating just 10 kilometers south of Pooneryn in their bid to open another gateway to Jaffna.

The advance of the troops along this stretch is a big blow to the LTTE as they are going to deprive the supplies from this stretch of coast line in the North Western coast. Intelligence reports indicate that the LTTE had unloaded arms and ammunition stocks from Valaipadu area in the North of Nachchikuda.

Therefore, the Sri Lanka Navy has a vital role to intensify their patrolling in the remaining coastal belt in the North Western coast to starve the LTTE of arms and ammunitions at this vital moment in which infantry troops are making headway to Kilinochchi sacrificing their lives and limbs to defeat the LTTE.

We should appreciate the vital role played by the Navy by destroying ten Tiger ships within short span of time depriving the LTTE of vital military hardware.

Their role is vital at this juncture too since they have the capacity to make bring the arms and supplies to the zero level as the land areas are restricted to the LTTE to land their boats carrying arms and ammunition.

Amidst this situation the 59 Division now operating in the South and West of Nayaru lagoon South of Mullaitivu captured two Kilometres stretch of ditch cum earth bund in the West of Nayaru lagoon created in a huge open terrain.

The 7 Gemunu Watch battalion under the command of Lt. Colonel Priyantha Perera captured 20 to 30 heavily fortified bunkers line along this stretch of earth bund after a fierce battle with the LTTE.

The LTTE has also constructed this earth bund similar to the earth bund that has been constructed by the LTTE from Nachchikuda to Akkarayankulam.

The only difference is that this earth bund has been created in an open space unlike in the Nachchikuda front.

With the capture of this stretch of earth bund troops are now poised to open their gateways into Kumulamunai area in the south of Mullaitivu and to completely take control of the Nayaru Lagoon depriving the LTTE of another vital section in the Eastern coast.

It was amidst military pressures from the three major battle fronts in the Wanni that the LTTE is now trying their desperate tactics in the South targeting the politicians and VVIPs. Major General (Rtd) Janaka Perera, who was the Opposition Leader of the North Central Provincial Council, his wife Vajira and few UNPers were among the 30 people who fell victims to the suicide blast that took place on Monday morning.

Major General Janaka Perera (Rtd) and the crowd were attending a function to open the new UNP office in Anuradhapura when this suicide cadre in his late twenties entered the premises and unbuttoned his shirt and blew himself up killing at least 22 people on the spot.

The death toll has now risen to 30 with few other critically injured people succumbing to their injuries by yesterday.

Nearly 85 people sustained injuries in this suicide blast.

The Sri Lanka Army was scheduled to accord a full military funeral for the departing General who had been a fearless officer in the Sri Lanka Army becoming one of the biggest challenges to the LTTE during his career in the Army.

VIPs advised to strictly adhere to security measures

His achievements in the battlefield still remain unmatched as he set the record killing more than 400 tiger cadres within an day when his Army camp came under **LTTE** attack in 1995.

He was also instrumental in turning the tide against the Security Forces in the year 2000 in which the Tigers pushed the military defences to Jaffna town limits putting the Sri Lankan Government in a embarrassing situation.

Whatever, political party he represented at the time of his death the nation is mourning the an death of one of the fearless Army officers who is departing the nation due to the ruthless act of a **LTTE** suicide cadre at a time the country is at the doorstep of defeating the **LTTE**.

The **LTTE** seems not satisfied with taking the life of Major General (Rtd) Janaka Perera.

They continued their efforts to take another life on Thursday too deploying one of their **female** suicide cadre targeting motorcade of Agriculture Development Minister Maitripala Sirisena who was returning from Vap Magul ceremony in Bandaragama.

Minister Maitripala Sirisena had a narrow escape as he followed the instructions of his security officials as he changed the vehicle on his return journey. The **female** suicide cadre had jumped onto the vehicle in which Minister Sirisena travelled towards Bandaragama to attend the Vap Magul ceremony.

Therefore, there is confirmed evidence to say that the suicide cadre had been tipped off about the vehicle used by the minister beforehand.

Apart from this, intelligence reports also indicate that there had been several other suicide cadres deployed in different locations expecting the motorcade to take alternative routes on its return journey.

Amidst this situation, the Security authorities have advised all politicians to refrain from attending unnecessary functions and to adhere to the instructions of the security personnel in charge of their security.

Further, they have taken steps to issue threat assessments gathered by intelligence authorities to the respective VVIPs so that they can effectively understand the threat to their lives.

These decisions have been taken as possibilities are very high for the **LTTE** deployment of many suicide cadres to destabilize the South at a time all their strongholds are under threat in the final battle now unfolding in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu.

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End of road for Tigers as troops close in on Pooneryn

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Body

Colombo, Nov. 14 -- As troops continue their forward march from all four major battlefronts the LTTE is hit with a problem regarding their priority to decide whether they should go defend their pride and prestige or to defend their strategic strongholds as they are fast losing their strength on all four fronts.

The LTTE is confronted with this dilemma as Kilinochchi, the 'capital' of the LTTE's imaginary Tamil Eelam which is considered the pride of the LTTE and its strategic strongholds Pooneryn and Mullaitivu are already under threat by the Security Forces. The troops of all four offensive Divisions now operating in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts are within striking distance to Pooneryn on the North Western coast, Kilinochchi in the centre and Mullaitivu on the North Eastern coast with troops reaching the strategically important Kumulamunai village by yesterday.

If there was any contingency plan for the LTTE to defend all these strongholds, which are vital for their future existence, the LTTE is fast receding from that capability, as they are not in a position to manage with the remaining strength with the troops launching a military thrust simultaneously on Pooneryn, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu.

It was after the news about the troops' attempts to open a land route to Jaffna via Mannar - Pooneryn - Sanguppiddy A-32 road hit the streets after the comments made by Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka at a function held at the Gajaba Regimental Headquarters in Saliyapura Anuradhapura, that the LTTE sent their hard core cadres to Pooneryn to block the possible routes to Pooneryn within the past few days.

But the LTTE has shown its incapability to deploy hardcore cadres all along the defenses to cover the Pooneryn sector to stop the advance of the troops, according to the revelation made by female LTTE cadres captured by the troops in Valayakudirippumoddai area in the South of Pooneryn and Paranthan road on Tuesday.

According to the revelation made by an English teacher turned Tiger cadre, an English teacher attached to Paranthan Maha Vidyalaya and drawing her salary from the Education Department, 100 such teachers and government servants have been forced to man the defenses in the Pooneryn sector.

If the LTTE is not lying about its capability, it is obvious that they are not in a position to keep its strength in the backyards of their strongholds. The Security Forces have already reached the turning point of the battle as by now as the Tiger outfit is not in a position to manage its cadres to man their frontlines.

If they cannot deploy the cream of their cadres at a time they are going to lose one of the key strongholds, Pooneryn, they are at an utter loss in defending their strongholds as losing Pooneryn is a bigger blow for them than losing Kilinochchi.

End of road for Tigers as troops close in on Pooneryn

It is because they are losing the entire Western coast on the Security Forces and losing their capability to keep sea lines of communication across the Western coast with the South Indian side. Moreover, the Security Forces will be able to open a land route to Jaffna through Mannar - Pooneryn A-32 road relieving a heavy burden on the defence expenditure of the country.

Further the Security Forces will be able to relieve more than a Division strength from the Jaffna peninsula to strengthen the presence in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu district to expedite their military operations. Therefore, the speedy march of the 58 Division commanded by

Brigadier Shavendra Silva has become a real headache for the LTTE leadership as a majority of its total strength has been deployed to hold the defence lines in the South and South West of Kilinochchi to stop the advance of the troops towards Pooneryn.

With the loss of Pooneryn, the LTTE is losing its capability to control the Jaffna peninsula through their long range artillery guns located at the edge of Pooneryn. At the verge of losing Pooneryn the LTTE has reportedly shift their 130 mm artillery guns from Pooneryn via Pooneryn Paranthan road. That was why their guns were kept silent when Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka visited Jaffna on Tuesday.

According to military sources the LTTE has shifted these guns to North East of Kilinochchi town to control the troops advance into Pooneryn and Kilinochchi from the Western flank.

By yesterday the troops attached to 58 Division cleared almost all the areas on the Western coast except for Pooneryn and few land areas south of Pooneryn.

It was on Wednesday night troops launched clearing operations to take Devil's Point and Vallaipadu the last LTTE smuggling points on Western coast before Pooneryn under Security Forces control.

Apart from this another column of troops of the 58 Division are also now operating closer to Pooneryn Paranthan road in certain areas and are ready to cut off the road at any moment in the coming few days. So a handful number of dates are left for the troops to take control of Pooneryn the last bastion on the Western coast.

As one section of the troops heads towards the North the 56 Division operating in the Omanthai area has cleared the LTTE defence line in Omanthai whilst troops attached to the newly formed Task Force III under the command of Brigadier Satayapriya Liyanage have also launched their operations from the North West of Mankulam and captured more than a three Kilometre stretch on the A-9 road in Panikkankulam area amidst stiff resistance from the LTTE.

However, the LTTE has not been able to stop the advance of troops with its depleting strength and firepower. The 57 Division operating in the south and west of Kilinochchi also have reached closer to Kilinochchi town and close to enter the build up area in the Kilinochchi town from two directions.

According to ground troops they can see some of the buildings in the Kilinochchi town from the distance they are operating at present. They are poised reach enter Kilinochchi town at any moment the Army Commander thinks is appropriate for them to do so.

The Mullaitivu battlefield also got a boost on Wednesday, as 59 troops crossed a massive open terrain in the West of Nayaru lagoon between Thannimurippukulam and Kumulamunai to take control of Kumulamunai village which is the first village after they passed the Andanakulam forest reserve in the South of Mullaitivu.

The 11 Gemunu Watch battalion under the command of Lt. Colonel Priyanka Fernando which was operating south of Nayaru lagoon entered Kumulamunai village after the troops attached to 7 Gemunu Watch battalion and 14 Vijayaba Infantry Regiment captured the 11 Km long Tiger bunker line from Thannimurippukulam to Kumulamunai. The 7 Gemunu Watch battalion is now under the command of Lt. Colonel Chaminda Lamahewa who assumed duties yesterday as the Commanding Officer of the battalion after Lt. Colonel Priyantha Perera took over as the Brigade Commander of the 631 Brigade of the Task Force III.

End of road for Tigers as troops close in on Pooneryn

The entry of troops into Kumulamunai village is a big blow to the LTTE as troops can now move into Mullaitivu through a built-up area. The 59 Division has marched more than 16 Kilometres to reach the Kumulamunai village passing a thick jungle area in the Andanakulam forest reserve.

This is the first time the Security Forces had reached Kumulamunai after commencing operations from the Weli Oya sector south of Mullaitivu.

With these developments, it is imminent that the Omanthai Entry Exit Point would be shifted northwards most probably to the south of Oddusudan once troops take the entire area in the south of Mankulam under their control very soon.

According to sources, the Sri Lanka Army has intimated to the International Committee of Red Cross to be prepared to function in the south of Oddusudan to facilitate the functions at the Entry Exit Point.

It was amidst this situation the LTTE has taken steps to deploy armed civilians to replace its depleting strength. According to ground troops, many of the Tiger cadres operating there lacked knowledge on what is going on in the battlefield and were not aware of the presence of the troops as almost all their major defence lines which gave some sort of idea about the areas under their control, have been captured by the troops by this time.

If the true picture is given about the situation, according to ground troops, the LTTE has once again switched to creating human shields in the Wanni pumping civilians who had undergone weapons training to the frontlines keeping them completely under darkness about what is going on in the battlefield.

So troops operating in some areas close to Mankulam have been confronting with a section of armed cadres manning bunker lines after being dumped by the LTTE apparently after giving them only basic weapons training. There is no distinction between these cadres and the civilians once their weapons are removed from them if they get killed in confrontations with the Security Forces.

The revelation by the English teacher turned Tiger cadre captured by the 58 Division troops is a classic example for this. Like her many innocent civilians forcibly kept by them inside the Wanni are facing same destiny at the hands of the LTTE.

What the LTTE is trying at this moment is to make use of the civilian population entrapped in the Wanni, to achieve multiple objectives. They can deploy these civilians to defend their forward defence lines in Mankulam and in the areas close to A-9 road and also in other areas whilst deploying their hardcore cadres to confront with the troops where there are no major defence lines.

On the other hand they can put the blame on the Security Forces after categorising these cadres as civilians once they get killed in confrontations. Therefore, the situation has prompted the relevant authorities to think twice about the civilian population now being fed by the Government after sending them food and other essential items in UN convoys as their destiny is not clear, deep inside the uncleared areas in Wanni.

The international community who is very much concerned about the plight of these civilians should seriously consider as to whether they should be kept under Tiger control. They should put pressure on the LTTE to let the civilians go out of this conflict affected areas for their own safety without becoming the part of the human shield created by the LTTE.

They should be aware of the fact that the LTTE as the most ruthless terror outfit in the world will not spare a single civilian life to defend themselves from the advancing troops, as history itself proves the fact that they have no regard for humanity when it comes to its survival.

This situation has to be taken very seriously, as the Wanni liberation is reaching one of the most decisive phases in the coming week in which the LTTE will be left with no other option but to accept their humiliating defeat at the hands of the Security Forces.

End of road for Tigers as troops close in on Pooneryn

So the time is ripe to take precautionary measures to make sure that the **LTTE** would not make use of the civilian population as a shield to defend themselves from the advancing troops.

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

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Prabhakaran's swansong

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

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Body

Colombo, Feb. 10 -- The megalomaniac nature of LTTE Leader Velupillai Prabhakaran was demonstrated in the most brutal manner on Monday when he sent a Tiger suicide cadre huddled among the civilians who sought refuge in the government controlled areas. The female suicide cadre brainwashed by the Tigers to carry out one of the most dastardly acts exploded herself among scores of innocent and destitute women and children who had come from the LTTE controlled areas braving the most difficult and dangerous circumstances.

The intention of the LTTE by sending a suicide bomber among the civilians is clear. One; they want to stop the civilians from leaving the small area to which the LTTE has been cornered now. Two; to make the soldiers who have the most difficult task of providing a safe passage for the civilians and differentiating them from LTTE cadres to cast doubt and suspicion on all the civilians coming from the uncleared areas. This incident has clearly demonstrated to the world on how the LTTE is using the civilians as a human shield to protect itself. These destitute civilians had been coerced to move with the Tigers from the time military operations into Wanni commenced from the Mannar area. The explosion also in two ways show how desperate the LTTE leadership is at the moment. The objective of sending the suicide cadre among the civilians would not have been anything else but to explode herself among the civilians at the IDP centre and cause some sort of harm to the soldiers providing security at the centre. The target of this suicide cadre could definitely not have been a politician or a high ranking military officer as it had been the case in almost all suicide attacks so far. The Tigers know that all civilians coming from the uncleared areas would be admitted to the IDP centres after a thorough check followed by registration. Therefore, she would have been sent with specific instructions to explode herself at a point before or while being subjected to checks. Since these checks are conducted on each individual not completely isolated from the others, those who planned the attack knew very well that women and children waiting in the queue would get killed by the explosion. Therefore this single horrendous act of terrorism show that Prabhakaran is ready to kill the very people for whose liberation he is supposed to be fighting, to save his own skin. Also a suicide cadre on her suicide jacket can carry a limited amount of explosives that would not make a huge explosion to give any military advantage to the Tigers. A suicide explosion can only make an impact on those in the immediate vicinity. Therefore it is clear that this suicide attack was aimed at none other than the thousands of civilians who are waiting to cross over to the government controlled area. Prabhakaran has sent them a cruel message; stay with us and provide a human shield against the military advances or else be ready to face death. Another intention of this attack would have most probably been to change the mindset of the soldiers welcoming and providing assistance to the civilians at the IDP centres. The army and the government authorities have gone to great extent to welcome the civilians and provide them basic facilities and medical attention. This has been really commendable and is in complete contrast to the picture painted by the LTTE in the minds of the civilians that they would be abused and subjected to harassment by the Sri Lankan army. Therefore the military should strengthen itself from this dastardly act and continue its humanitarian efforts with renewed vigour to win over the Tamil civilians. Monday's suicide attack came amidst reports by the military quoting

some among the 28,000 or so civilians who had crossed over, that the Tigers had fired at them and even taken some of them into custody while attempting to escape. According to certain military reports, some of the civilians had fled after attacking and tying-up LTTE cadres who were preventing them from leaving. Keeping the veracity of the reports aside it is clear that the last remaining vestiges of the LTTE leadership are facing a major crisis with them beginning to lose grip on the civilians that were used as a cover to protect the hiding places of its leaders and as a cover for its artillery guns. It was only less than a week ago that troops approaching the last earth bund of the Chalai Sea Tiger base came across a teenage girl who was calling for help. When the soldiers moved closer the girl, believed to be aged 12 or 13 exploded herself. On that occasion the explosion had not caused any damage to the soldiers and troops believe that the suicide explosive device would have been triggered using a remote control mechanism. The sheer desperation of the LTTE has come out to the open with these suicide attacks. It is clear that the LTTE terrorist network in Colombo has been broken. The Tigers cornered in a small area in the Wanni is now compelled to use the last and most inhuman weapon in its arsenal; the human bomb. Although suicide bombing missions called Kamikaze attacks were carried out by a desperate Japanese army in the World War II, the invention of the female suicide bomber with a jacket of explosives strapped to her body used in modern terrorist attacks was an ingenious invention of the LTTE. It is ironic that the LTTE in its desperation has now started to use this deadly invention of theirs against the very same people of whom they claimed to be the sole representatives not so long ago. The LTTE and its propagandist lobby that some time ago boasted of thousands of Black Tiger cadres whom they said would not allow the army to advance into its heartland, has sadly been reduced to use the isolated suicide cadre now, that too amidst the civilians. Having lost any ideological or political purpose and abandoned by the world Prabhakaran and the LTTE is now propagating a culture of death to gain international attention. The LTTE mouthpiece Tamilnet website has been glorifying self immolation by two Tamil persons one in Tamilnadu and the other in Malaysia allegedly for the LTTE's cause. Other than in the Tamilnet and few pro-LTTE websites and media outlets the stunt has failed to gain any international attention. The LTTE propagandists must have thought that such a stunt would create an impact similar to that created by the South Vietnamese monk who immolated himself against the American backed dictatorial regime of Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963. In this backdrop it was shocking how the UN in Colombo played into the hands of the Tiger propaganda machinery last week. The UN spokesman in Colombo Gordon Weiss without issuing any official release had told the international media last Wednesday that cluster bombs had been fired at the Puthukuduiruppu hospital area. Mr. Weiss who was definitely not in the area at the time when he claimed cluster bombs had fallen was quoting as his source the UN local ground staff in the area. Although Mr. Weiss did not say that the army fired the alleged cluster bombs, the tone and the angle of his statement clearly pointed at the army. Also it should be noted that the Sri Lankan government is a signatory to the International Treaty against cluster bombs to which countries like the US and Israel are not signatories. What was surprising was that a few hours following this statement having international repercussions, the very Gordon Weiss says that he has accepted the government's stand that the Sri Lankan military does not possess cluster bombs. However he did not at any place withdraw his earlier statement. It was the Government's Peace Secretariat that later said that the UN resident co-ordinator would make an apology over the matter to the Sri Lankan government following a discussion they had. There are many questions arising from how the UN spokesman had acted in this instance. In the first place how he made the very serious allegation with grave international repercussions, of cluster bombs falling in Puthukuduiruppu, merely based on what was said by local UN ground staff casts doubt on the credibility of such organizations. He made the allegation without any evidence or without verifying the matter with authorities. The other question is as to how Mr. Weiss could depend on the "military expertise" of a few local UN ground staff to identify what are cluster bombs. But the pro-LTTE websites let the cat out of the bag. Immediately following Mr. Weiss's statement, the Tamilnet and the Puthinam websites carried lead news items based on it. They drew parallels to the Israeli aircraft firing cluster bombs over Gaza that drew international condemnation. The pro-LTTE Puthinam website even published an uncaptioned photograph of cluster bombs falling over Gaza illustrating its news item. The intention of the LTTE propaganda machinery was clear; to use the statement to incite Tamilnadu and the Tamil Diaspora and through international media against the Sri Lankan government. What is pertinent to raise is whether any UN or other international organization official would have dared to make such an irresponsible statement for instance in Afghanistan or Iraq against the US troops. In any other country such persons would have been made persona-no-grata. However, Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa at a meeting with the representatives of the UN and other international organizations has put the matter straight. In this hour when the LTTE has been cornered and is facing military defeat, it has resorted to desperate tactics not even sparing innocent

Prabhakaran's swansong

civilians. It seems like the human bomb sent by the **LTTE** amongst the Tamil civilians is the swansong of Prabhakaran. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Advancing troops brave lashing rains to reach Tiger hole

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Body

Colombo, Oct. 26 -- The monsoonal rains lashing the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts have completely changed the scenario in the battlefield. Heavy downpours were being experienced like in Colombo there, but in a completely different atmosphere. The newly cleared routes through the jungle patches to the front lines are getting flooded making it difficult to manoeuvre vehicles on the roads.

Only four-wheel vehicles can get through the muddy holes whilst others are getting bogged down in muddy terrains making the roads completely impassable. Then it is again the soldiers carrying out their task despite the heavy rains, having to clear these roads, once again toiling to get these bogged down vehicles out of these tracks to make the road passable.

The most pathetic situation arises once it comes to casualty evacuation. Troops have to bring them on their shoulders a long way and pass them to tractors to be taken to Advance Dressing Stations and then to hospitals by ambulances. The rain has made all their activities difficult.

If confronting the enemy in a normal battleground in which they have to cross mine fields and evade booby traps amidst stiff resistance of the enemy is routine, it is hundred times more difficult to fight the enemy in a flooded battlefield where administration has become a difficult task.

In other words, they have to eat, they have to sleep, they have to walk and they have to fight in the rain. No shelter over their heads to avoid getting their bodies wet from the rain or to dry their cloths. As such, the troops in the front lines live with their wet cloths for days. They don't get any chance to get their clothes dried. In brief, rain has become part of their life.

Even the field commanders who used to visit the front lines on daily basis are struggling with their vehicles as it is difficult to pass these muddy terrains in vehicles. Instead, they have to trek it to these lines, putting their lives in risk.

Yet, the field commanders say that things have not yet worsened to the level that prevailed during the rainy period last year in which the entire jungle flooded making each of their moves a difficult one. It was worse in the Mannar front as they had to cross massive open terrains in the Mannar Rice Bowl without any cover over their head and even without a single trench line to get cover from the enemy in their advance.

They can remember the successes they achieved after capturing the difficult open terrains under worst weather conditions. It was due to the confidence derived from that commitment and the determination they had in their mind set that put them on the victorious march towards Kilinochchi.

Advancing troops brave lashing rains to reach Tiger hole

They now see the end of the tunnel and can see that they are only a few kilometers away to gain the final victory against the LTTE. So, they are not willing to give up the efforts they made for the last two years as they are aware that there is no one to turn the tide against the LTTE though there is a big campaign in Tamil Nadu to stop the military thrust on the LTTE under the cover of defending the rights of the Tamil civilians entrapped in Wanni.

A significant feature is that the Sri Lankan issue has become a domestic issue in India as politicians in Tamil Nadu have taken this issue as their slogan to secure their political survival at the upcoming general elections, according to political and defence analysts commenting on this issue.

But many are of the view that the Sri Lanka Security Forces are in a much advantageous situation in their bid to defeat the LTTE and there is no room for any intervention into the Sri Lankan situation by the Central Government of India.

It was amidst these turbulent weather conditions and the stormy political conditions in India over the Sri Lankan situation that troops went ahead with their military thrust on the LTTE in Kilinochchi South, Kilinochchi district West and in the Mullaitivu battle fronts taking the enemy strongholds by surprise moves.

The most significant victory, the Security Forces achieved this week was the capture of the 15 Km long earth bund from Jayapuram in the North East of Nachchikuda to Akkarayankulam tank by the troops attached to the Task Force I troops and the 57 Division troops.

A major portion of this 15 Km earth bund came under the Task Force I troops and only five Kilometres were within the 57 Division area in the West of Akkarayankulam.

However, the Task Force I troops were left with only one kilometre stretch East of Vannerikulam tank to be captured as they were in full control of the other nine kilometres stretch by last week.

Therefore, the main task to capture five kilometres stretch of earth bund in the East of Vannerikulam and Akkarayankulam lay with the 57 Division and troops achieved that task within this week completely taking the earth bund under their control by Wednesday afternoon with 12 Sinha Regiment troops attached to the 571 Brigade under the command of Colonel G.V. Ravipriya capturing the last stretch of the earth bund.

It was amidst this situation, fierce battle erupted in the South and South West of Kilinochchi commencing from last Saturday, October 18 leaving heavy casualties on both sides, but taking the earth bund under the control of the troops. Troops also foiled so many counter attacks by the LTTE to capture the earth bund which was a vital defence line for them.

This time the LTTE failed in their attempts to recapture the earth bund as they had engaged the entire earth bund at once if they were to be successful in their effort as the entire line was simultaneously engaged by the troops leaving no room for them to single out one stretch and recapture it as it happened on earlier occasions.

Though there was no significant advance from the South West of Kilinochchi, towards the outskirts of Kilinochchi which is only one half kilometres away from the South West edge, the troops attached to the Task Force I made steady progress towards the North advancing ten kilometres from the Jayapuram village to Vannerikulam towards 5.5 kilometres North of the earth bund.

Troops attached to Task Force -I advanced towards these new territories amidst stiff resistance from the LTTE. On Friday they expanded their defences capturing Kunchikulam, Parayakulam and Anaiveluttan areas identified by the names of the tanks located in these areas capturing a total of 6.5 square kilometres under them.

In many of these areas the LTTE has controlled the areas having constructed strong points and deploying their cadres into these strong points. Troops stormed several of these Tiger strong points in their bid to capture these areas.

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On daily basis troops recovered Tiger bodies and got confirmation of the deaths of at least ten Tiger cadres a day. At this point Tiger outfit is facing severe difficulties in mobilizing cadres to reinforce the depleting cadres in the battlefronts.

The moves of the Task Force I troops towards the North taking control of the Mannar Pooneryn Road from the North of Nachchikuda is becoming vital as it is going to be a big blow to the LTTE, as these moves completely denied the LTTE of their links with South India to have their supplies.

One of the most vital moves by the Task Force -I troops under the command of Brigadier Shavendra Silva is the taking control of the Mannar Pooneryn A-32 road from the North of Nachchikuda giving a natural death to Nachchikuda, the last available fishing village in the Western coast which is being strongly hold by the LTTE upto now.

Once troops cut off the road that links Nachchikuda and Vallaipadu the LTTE will have to abandon Nachchikuda as there is no other troop move further northward from the interior towards Pooneryn.

Though LTTE is having strong desire to dominate this area too by deploying cadres of their depleting ranks with large numbers killed because they are left with no other option but to abandon these places which are with vital values to them.

Therefore, the battles in the coming week in the areas surrounded from the Nachchikuda-Kokavil Road from the Southern line, A-9 Road from Murikandi to Paranthan on the Eastern edge, A-32 road Nachchikuda to Pooneryn from the Western edge and from Pooneryn-Paranthan Road from the Northern edge will be crucial when deciding the future of the LTTE.

This stretch of area has already been abandoned by the people and the loss of this section of land to LTTE would leave the LTTE in one of its miserable positions as they are going to deprive the last life line available from the Western coast soon, set aside the loss of Kilinochchi which will herald the downfall of the LTTE.

Even from the Eastern side in the Mullaitivu South front troops are making steady progress, capturing Tiger strongholds from Thannimurippukulam area to South and South West of Nayar Lagoon.

It was amidst these developments troops operating in the Weli Oya front took control over the Gajabapura village located North of Ethavetunuvewa. According to sources LTTE is abandoning the areas they were holding in the jungle patches in Mullaitivu and Vavuniya districts as they cannot hold these areas due to the acute shortage of man power.

LTTE leadership is also engage in various experiments in the process of deploying their cadres in their bid to avoid the humiliating defeat awaiting for them. All these experiments are aimed at delaying the troops advance into de-facto capital Kilinochchi and military stronghold Mullaitivu.

The LTTE leadership, according to military intelligence has decided to deploy cadres from the Charles Anthony and Imran Pandyan brigades into the battlefront. At present they are having a mixture of cadres in the front lines since large number of Charles Anthony and Imran Pandyan cadres got killed in the battle front during the past few months.

Even female cadres were deployed in the front lines though they were withdrawn from the battlefront with large number of female cadres got killed in the battlefront.

What LTTE is trying to do through these new experiments is to delay the certain defeat they have to face and take time to change the international support towards taking the innocent civilians entrapped in Wanni into ransom.

The LTTE had deployed many of its cats paws to change the international community's attitude towards civilians entrapped there and thereby bring pressure on the Government to stop the military thrust.

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However, LTTE's true image once again exposed on Wednesday as they tried to blow off two merchant vessels , MV-"Nimalawa" and MV-"Ruhunu" which were carrying humanitarian assistance to the North, in the Northern seas around 5 a.m. on Wednesday.

Two LTTE suicide boats were completely destroyed and one was captured by the Navy patrol craft reacting immediately to the terrorist attempt on the two merchant ships on a humanitarian assistance mission. One of the ships received minor damages due to a close explosion.

Investigations have not confirmed from which direction the LTTE had launched these suicide craft into the sea, as they cannot be easily detected by the radar screen in rough seas.

One of Navy's Dvora's was destroyed in the sea off Mullaitivu few months ago with LTTE launching one of this type suicide boats into the sea.

If LTTE succeeded in their mission to destroy the ships which were carrying humanitarian assistance from Colombo to the civilians in the Northern peninsula, the LTTE could have deprived the essential supplies coming into the Jaffna peninsula too.

However, their short sighted act bounced back on them as the entire Jaffna peninsula protested against this move. Therefore, the international community would understand the true nature of the LTTE and the way they are fighting on behalf of the Tamil community.

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Back to democracy under Pilleyan

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Body

Colombo, June 1 -- The very last hope the **LTTE** had to cling on to sabotaging the process of establishing the true democracy in the Eastern province was diminished on Thursday with M.L.A.M. Hisbullah sworn in before President Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Eastern Province Minister of Health and Indigenous Medicine, Social Welfare, Probation and Child Care Services, **Women's** Affairs, Youth Affairs, Sports, Information Technology, Education, Co-op Development and Food Supply and Distribution.

The Muslim factions who expressed their dissatisfaction over the appointment of Sivanesanathurai Chandrakanthan as the Chief Minister of the Eastern Provincial Council finally could brush aside the differences and agree to join hands with other constituent parties of the UPFA to run the Eastern Provincial Council.

Hisbulla's decision to swear in as a Minister came at a time when the **LTTE** was trying to take advantage out of the uncertain situation in the Batticaloa district, arousing communalism in the Eastern province. At least five people were reportedly killed amidst this uncertain situation.

Two TMVP (Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal) members who had been identified as Shanthan, the party's chief organizer of Kaththankudi, and Parasuraman, a party member were gunned down by unidentified gunmen in Kaththankudi town on Thursday.

The victims were riding a motorbike when they were shot by the gunmen in front of the Kaththankudi bus stand around 11.55 a.m. on Thursday.

Two more civilians who received injuries in the shooting incident were also admitted to the Batticaloa hospital. Following the incident Police imposed a curfew in the area. Three more killings were later reported on Thursday.

However, the tense situation prevailed in Batticaloa has returned to normal with Hisbullah expressing his solidarity with the appointment of Pilleyan as the Chief Minister and with his decision to swear in as a Minister of the Provincial Council.

At last the Government has displayed its ability to bring warring parties together and form the Provincial Council that can set an example to the whole world on the ethnic co-existence in Sri Lanka, as against the dismal picture, the international community has painted. It is also proof of equal treatment of all communities irrespective of ethnic differences.

Despite, the repeated failures the **LTTE** has not given up its efforts of sabotaging the restoration of democracy in the East. According to the intelligence reports, Keerthi the former intelligence leader in the Batticaloa-Ampara

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sector had sent messages to the Tiger cadres clandestinely operating in Batticaloa to create a conducive environment in Batticaloa district for his operations.

It was after this that many killings were reported from the Batticaloa district, including the assassination of several Police officers. The authorities in charge of the Batticaloa district have been baffled by this situation, as they believe the incidents that taken place are due to the political uncertainty in the district.

But the intelligence sources had confirmed, that the current situation in the district has arisen due to the Tiger cadres clandestinely operating in the district, capitalizing on the political uncertainty.

Therefore, the Security Forces and the Police particularly the Special Task Force in charge of the security in the Batticaloa district will have to make an extra effort to get rid of these Tiger elements from the district without allowing them to increase their presence in and establish a proper network to counter their operations.

It is Pilleyan appointment that nullified all LTTE attempts to sabotage the establishment of full democracy in the East. It was a severe blow to the LTTE. It has been proved beyond any doubt by the number of telephone calls received by Pilleyan after he was sworn in as the Chief Minister of the Eastern Provincial Council.

Reliable sources told this correspondent that a large number of LTTE cadres, including Tiger leaders had phoned him up with two objectives in mind. Both love and hatred included in those calls were received from one time fellow members with whom Pilleyan had worked once, according to the sources.

A group of Tiger cadres had wished him after his appointment as the Chief Minister. At the same time he has also received threatening calls as well, warning that he would soon be assassinated. But many of the senior Tiger cadres had called him out of jealousy, as it was a sore in their eyes to see such a junior LTTE cadre becoming Chief Minister of the Eastern Provincial Council.

The brief sketch on Sivanesanathurai Chandrakanthan alias Pilleyan here in this column will give an idea how he reached to this position after joining the LTTE as a young Tiger cadre. It was true that these senior Tiger cadres were deeply upset to see Pilleyan, in his western attire taking oaths before President Mahinda Rajapaksa. But many of the Tiger cadres have expressed their willingness to join hands with the TMVP after Pilleyan being appointed Chief Minister of the Eastern Province.

But it has now become a very difficult task for the TMVP to identify those who join the TMVP out of conviction and the Wannu cadres who join them with the ulterior motive of assassinating Pilleyan.

Therefore, the TMVP leader will have to adopt strict security measures, like Social Services Minister Douglas Devananda. Extreme vigilance has to be exercised in providing personal security to the Eastern Province Chief Minister as he is the key figure who can throw a challenge to the LTTE in conveying a message to the Tamil population that they too can enjoy the same rights as their counterparts in the East once they are liberated from the Tiger grip.

The Security Forces are now turning their military strategies to further paralyze the LTTE outfit now entrapped in Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi districts.

The sudden death of Balraj, the Military Wing leader of the LTTE on Tuesday came as another severe blow on the LTTE which had suffered enough with the loss of their leaders due to the continuing attacks launched by the Security Forces.

Balraj who was born on 27 November, 1965 was a member of the 9th batch of the LTTE. He was a contemporary of Theepan the present LTTE Military leader in Jaffna. Balraj had a heart surgery in Singapore in 2003.

The present Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka and Balraj fought during the Yaldevi operation in early 1990s and both sustained injuries. The irony of life is that the Army Commander could even survive a deadly suicide attack but Balraj could not survive a heart attack even after having the best treatment in Singapore.

According to the LTTE the funeral of Balraj was held on Friday evening in Mullaitivu with the participation of several Tiger leaders.

It was amidst the funeral of one of their top leaders, the LTTE announced the killing of 16 civilians at Mullankavil in Kilinochchi. Though the Sri Lanka Army's, Deep Penetration Units were blamed for this claymore attack on the Hiace van the Army denied any involvement in the attack.

The LTTE media machine is in full swing in capitalizing this incident highlighting the deaths of civilians to tarnish the image of the Security Forces and also justifying their brutal attack on civilian targets in the South. With this background chances are very high for the LTTE to take another civilian target in the South in a tit for tat act.

The LTTE is engaged in this false propaganda highlighting the case of civilian victims. The LTTE's movements are highly restricted with effective targets taken by the Security Forces.

The Security Forces have been able to restrict the LTTE supplies to the Mannar and Vavuniya battlefronts cutting off many of the supply routes from Kilinochchi. Troops operating in the Vavuniya front had shifted their operations to the Mullaitivu district close to Mannar- Vavuniya border.

The troops attached to the 57 Division are now poised to capture Periyamadu as they have cut off all supply routes to Periyamadu.

However, troops are expecting a severe resistance from the LTTE due to the importance of this strategic location, which they used to locate their long-range heavy calibre guns to pose a major threat on the Security Forces operating in the Vavuniya and Mannar fronts.

With the expansion of the area coming under the 57 Division, the Sri Lanka Army is now in the process of forming the 61 Division to back up the 57 Division which is functioning as an offensive division in the West of A-9 road.

The basic idea of the formation of the 61 Division is to hold the ground captured by the 57 Division enabling them to further advance in to the Tiger territory.

So the 61 Division is expected to form as a defensive Division, most probably under the command of Major General Davulugala who acted as the Acting General Officer Commanding the 57 Division and 58 Division in the absence of the 57 GOC Major General Jagath Dias and 58 GOC Brigadier Shavendra Silva.

The formation of this new Division will be another step forward by the Sri Lanka Army to achieve its objective of bringing ongoing battle in the Wanni to a turning point.

So far the Security Forces have not faced any human resource problem as it got the highest number of army recruits to its Regiments during the last year and this year.

Therefore, the formation of new Divisions will not be a problem for the Army. According to the latest statistics 9,000 Tiger cadres so far have been killed after the outbreak of the fourth Eelam War with 1,700 Security Forces personnel sacrificing their lives.

The current progress of the war predicts that LTTE will soon have to face a decisive phase of the battle in the Weli Oya battlefront as troops have already advanced nearly seven kilometres into the Tiger territory from the Weli Oya front.

They are now reaching towards famous 1-4 Base of the LTTE located in the Mullaitivu jungle close to Nityakulam tank. Heavy fighting are expected in this region once the troops reach the strategic LTTE bases in the Mullaitivu district.

With the fall of the key LTTE locations after a long and arduous task by the Security Forces in the Mannar and Vavuniya front, the task of bringing the war into a turning point is becoming more and more realistic.

From terror outfit to Politics

Sivanesathurai Chandrakanthan alias Pilleyan had his own way to politics and to become the Chief Minister of the Eastern Provincial Council.

The very roots of Pilleyan lie in the Batticaloa district to which they wanted a separate leadership, distancing from the Northern domination.

Sivanesathurai Chandrakanthan was born on August 18, 1975 at a small village called Pethalai, in Kalkudah, Batticaloa. His father Sivanesathurai Arumugan is now 62 years old and his mother Sivanesan Kamala is 52 years old and are still living to see his son's achievement.

Chandrakanthan was the second among the seven children his parents had.

Suresh Kumar (35), Sugandhi (32), Chandrakanthi (29), Meena Lakshmi (27), Sugandan (30) and Kumar (28) were the other members of his family.

Chandrakanthan had his education at Pethalai Vipulanand Vidyalaya and Valachchenai Hindu College. At the age of 15, as a young boy enjoying his days in the beaches in Kalkudah, Chandrakanthan joined Karuna Amman, the then **LTTE** eastern leader.

Having undergone military training under the **LTTE**, he joined Karuna Amman for the Pooneryn Battle in 1993.

Since then he had participated in almost all the major battles along with Karuna Amman.

When Karuna Amman left the **LTTE** on April 03, 2004 Pilleyan was with them. As the cadres under Karuna Amman were entrapped in the Verugal Aru bordering Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts when the Tiger leader Prabhakaran declared war against Karuna cadres with the political backing from the South, Karuna Amman summoned all the Tiger cadres under his command to Meenam Base in Thoppigala and allowed them to leave the organization.

But Pilleyan did not leave the organization but continued to work along with Karuna Amman. He became the leader of the Karuna faction military wing after Regie was assassinated. In May 2007, Pilleyan distanced himself from Karuna Amman and shifted to Trincomalee district.

On November 02, 2007 a group led by him captured Batticaloa office of the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal and he became its leader.

Since then he is following the foot prints of democracy with the backing of the present Government having contested the Eastern Provincial Council election held for the first time after 1987.

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Army's kindness perfect antidote to Tigers' inhumanity

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Body

Colombo, Nov. 14 -- Terrorists are terrorists only when holding weapons. They become civilians once they give up arms. It is incumbent on the Security Forces in accordance with the internationally accepted norms to treat them accordingly whether they are on the battlefield or somewhere else.

The 58 Division troops under the command of Brigadier Shavendra Silva exhibited their humane qualities once again even at a time they were fighting the enemy, even at the risk of their life to give the terrorists due treatment once they give up arms.

It was a heavily fortified defence line that the troops of the 582 Brigade under the command of Lt. Colonel Sanajay Wanigasinghe had to capture to clear their route towards Pooneryn. They had to cross a huge open terrain to reach this LTTE defence line in the form of a ditch. They opted to cross this open terrain during the night as it is difficult to get any cover from the enemy during day time.

Fierce fighting erupted in the Tiger defence line as they moved into the area. More than 30 Tiger cadres were reportedly killed in the fierce battle that erupted in the Valayakudiyurippumoddai area some six Kilometres East of A-32 road.

Pin drop silence ensued there soon after the leader of the LTTE killed himself to avoid being captured by the advancing troops. All guns went silent after the fierce battle. Troops were now ready to search the area and collecting bodies of the dead cadres and their weapons.

They found three female cadres still alive in the trench line. They were willing to surrender. Troops could easily have killed them and gone away. No one is there to question them about their deaths. But they took a chance, though it was risky to reach armed cadres soon after a fierce battle. They took the three female Tiger cadres under their custody.

One female cadre was having a gun shot injury in her hand and other two were in good form. The troops of the 12 Gemunu Watch under the command of Nandana Dunuwila took care of the female cadres. They were taken to the Advanced Dressing Station and given medical care to them.

The startling revelation came only when they were interrogated by the Security Forces. One female cadre spoke in English. The 58 division Commander himself questioned the female cadre as she spoke good English. She was an English teacher attached to Paranthan Maha Vidyalaya and forced to join the LTTE ranks to avoid her teenage

Army's kindness perfect antidote to Tigers' inhumanity

brother and sister being enlisted to the LTTE as the LTTE demand at least one member from each family to the outfit.

Upon interrogation the English teacher revealed that she was drawing her salary from the Education Department though she is serving the LTTE. "There are more than 100 of my batchmates serving the LTTE as they have been forced to do by the LTTE as they forcibly kept the civilians in Wanni against their wish," she said when she was interrogated.

She also admits that though they are being fed by the Government and drawing salaries from the Government they have been forced to fight the Security Forces of the same Government. Most Government servants are forced to do so in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts.

She was surprised when the 58 Division Commander Brigadier Shavendra Silva told her, "You were a terrorist. But you are not a terrorist now from the time you give up weapons. We consider you as a Sri Lankan and a sister". That was not the picture given to them by the LTTE.

She is now willing to tell the true picture of the LTTE and to say that LTTE is only engaged in a losing battle and they will not be able to win this battle.

This will be a good eye opener for the international community especially to the Human Rights activists to decide who is genuinely concerned about human rights and who is not.

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

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Load-Date: November 14, 2008

People ready for polls amidst confidence on Forces

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

May 4, 2008 Sunday 2:46 PM EST

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Length: 2148 words

Byline: Report from the Sri Lanka Sunday Observer brought to you by HT Syndication.

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 4 -- The Eastern Provincial Council election has become the main focus of the entire country with only six days to go for the May 10 election that will decide the future of the two and half decade long conflict in the country.

The Security Forces turned a new chapter in the Eastern province by fully liberating the province from the clutches of the Tiger terrorism during the last year and they are now awaiting their political liberation at the May 10 election preparing to elect their own representatives to run the administration in the Eastern province.

Conducting the Eastern Provincial Council election is definitely a challenge as this column highlighted in the previous weeks.

Conducting such election after a lapse of two decades is a much bigger challenge since it is a difficult task for the people to adjust themselves for a democratic process after experiencing a gun culture in the province for more than two decades.

However, the people in the Batticaloa district had their first democratic experience sans any guns behind them at the March 10 Local Government elections. Things have rapidly changed in the Batticaloa district since the conduct of the Local Polls on March 10. There is a new trend among the public to adjust for this new culture.

Any one visiting the Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts, which were the most affected districts from Tiger terrorism, can witness the way people are adjusting themselves for this new democratic culture openly supporting the political party according to their wish.

For outsiders who are trying to have a picture based on the facts given by the politically biased opinion on the situation prevailing in the Eastern province will not be able to get a correct picture about the current political situation in the East.

There is no opportunity to get the correct picture from the opinions expressed by the politically motivated people planted by vested interested parties in the district to gain narrow political objectives.

TMVP redressing problems

It was only through an independent study of the facts that one can get a correct picture of the Eastern province.

People ready for polls amidst confidence on Forces

Those who are complaining about the presence of the armed cadres of the TMVP can now witness the way the TMVP members got elected for the respective Local Authorities, how they are now mingling with the people addressing their problems.

Their main objective is to see that the people who had been displaced due to the conflict be resettled in their respective villages. According to statistics only 3419 internally displaced people (IDPs) are yet to be resettled in the Batticaloa district and they are from Poolakkadu, Vakaneri, Punani West and Milawadduwan.

The number of IDPs to be resettled in the Trincomalee district is only 3323. Out of this 1711 can be resettled soon with the completion of de-mining in those areas.

De-mining teams are busy in Punani West which is one of the borders to the Thoppigala jungles where the LTTE faced their final defeat in the eastern province. The thousands of acres of abandoned paddy lands are now being cultivated by the farmers without facing any harassment like in the past.

According to sources 60,000 acres of abandoned paddy lands are now being cultivated by the Tamils and Muslims in the Batticaloa district after a lapse of more than four years. They do not want to heed to the jungle law of the LTTE this time. Therefore, they can feel the difference though they cannot express their candid opinion as they were not used to free expression of views.

It is true that all these activities are taking place under the supervision of the Security Forces and the Police.

Their strong presence in the district was aimed at preventing the Tiger outfit to raise their heads in the Eastern province once again taking the cover of these innocent civilians who are now making a determined effort to adjust to this new life.

Their confidence towards the Security Forces and the Police has increased as they got the feeling that the forces will not leave them allowing the LTTE to raise its ugly head in the East.

It was due to this confidence in the Security Forces and the Police that the forces have been successful in their efforts of foiling all attempts by the LTTE to sabotage the election in the Eastern province.

Tigers desperate to sabotage polls

As mentioned in an earlier SITREP the Wanni leadership has already dispatched a team of Tiger cadres to the East with the objective of sabotaging the provincial council election. This has been confirmed by a female suicide LTTE cadre now in custody of the Security Forces in Batticaloa, who was arrested last week.

According to the information given by her, she had arrived from the South of Kuchchaveli with the intention of reaching Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts to engage in sabotage acts aiming the PC elections.

There are possibilities to target VVIPs attending the election campaign mainly in the Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts since those districts provide the LTTE the required atmosphere to clandestinely engage in their terror operations.

Since the Tiger outfit is facing difficulties to operate independently in the Eastern province with the fall of their jungle hideouts in the province and the recovery of large hauls of weapons and ammunition, they are trying to hire civilians to accomplish their terror objectives.

This was witnessed in Thambalagamuwa and Kinniya in Trincomalee with Security Forces detecting two Tiger supporters, one who helped the LTTE to detonate a claymore mine targeting the Security Forces and another civilian who had kept a suicide kit with him until the LTTE wanted it to accomplish its terror operation.

However, the LTTE is reportedly facing difficulties accomplishing their terror operations as they do not get proper logistic support. It has been evident that the Tiger cadres operating in the jungles in Trincomalee are facing

People ready for polls amidst confidence on Forces

difficulties even getting their meals. Under these circumstances they have compelled to rob isolated boutiques in search of food.

Earlier the LTTE enjoyed a greater deal of public support especially from the Tamil community but this support has reduced in a greater extent due to people's confidence towards the Security Forces and the Police.

With this background in mind the Security Forces have increased its search operations in the jungles in the North and South of Trincomalee since these jungle patches has been very frequently used by the Tiger outfit for their terror operations.

Mine explosions

The number of claymore mine explosions close to Kebithigollewa, Aluthhalmillewa and Dutuvewa areas can be part of the terror operations conducted by the Tiger cadres that landed in the North of Trincomalee recently as divulged by the female suicide cadre now under the custody of the Security Forces.

A claymore mine exploded in the Aluthhalmillewa in Trincomalee close to Pulmoddai Bogashandiya road in an area yesterday at 8.30 am. No one was hurt in the explosion except that a lamp post was damaged.

Earlier at 8 am yesterday a Civil Defence Force member and a soldier of the Special task Force (STF) sustained minor injuries due to a claymore mine explosion in the Kallepuliyankulam area on the Vavuniya Kebithigollewa road.

The Civil Defence Force member and STF trooper got caught in this claymore mine attack as they were traveling in a motorbike on the Kebithigollewa-Vavuniya road which is now closed for public except for the people living there.

There had been several such incidents in this area during the past few weeks. However, the intense search operations conducted by the Police Special Task Force and the Security Forces have foiled many Tiger attempts to target Security Forces and the civilians in the area.

But the team sent by the LTTE Wanni leadership to the East was only a part of this process of sabotaging the Eastern polls which would have a severe impact on the very foundation of the LTTE with people flatly rejecting the leadership of the LTTE and embracing the democratic process along with the political parties opposing the view of the LTTE.

Therefore at this decisive point the public in the Eastern province and also the politicians should strongly support the idea of establishing true democracy for the Eastern people and be extremely vigilant of Tiger plans to sabotage the elections without falling to the traps set by the LTTE.

Amidst the focus of the country drawn towards the Eastern elections, the Security Forces continue on the winning path this week despite the Tiger attempts to show off their military might by various means.

Following the liberation of the sacred Madhu church from the clutches of the LTTE, the Security Forces in the Vavuniya battlefield are now heading further towards the Tiger territory in Vavuniya.

While troops of the 572 Brigade taking full control of the Madhu area, the 571 Brigade has surrounded the Palampiddi junction which has a strategic importance for the LTTE to operate in the area.

Issue of sacred statue

However, the issue relating to the sacred statue of Madhu still remains unresolved with the statue still remaining in Tevampitti area in the North of Mannar.

The troops in the Mannar front operating under the 58 Division under the command of Brigadier Shavendra Silva also recorded a number of hits within this week with troops capturing vital Tiger bases and some townships in the Mannar sector this week.

People ready for polls amidst confidence on Forces

Troops gained total control over Karukkakulama town area, located North West of Parappakandal in Mannar on Thursday, following concentrated amour and artillery shell attacks at the LTTE.

Army infantrymen made swift incursions into the LTTE strong point and captured 1.6 km of land stretch in the area at around 6 a.m. According to military sources, a soldier has laid his life, while another was wounded during the advances made on Thursday.

Meanwhile, ground sources citing intercepted LTTE communications said that, the LTTE has suffered at least 15 fatalities during confrontations with troops.

As the troops of the 57 Division and the 58 Division continued their mission the troops in the Weli Oya front also faced stiff resistance from the LTTE this week. However, the troops in the Weli Oya front captured vital Tiger bases ahead of their defences amidst stiff resistance from the LTTE.

According to ground sources the LTTE has intensified artillery fire on the Security Forces defences in the Weli Oya this week. Many of these artillery rounds fell short of their targets in Weli Oya, Janakapura area and even into Padaviya area.

The aborted air raid by the LTTE on the Weli Oya sector last Sunday also came amidst intense artillery fire directed at the Weli Oya area.

The Security Forces are contemplating whether the Tiger outfit had received a new stocks of artillery rounds as intelligence reports indicated of an unloading of artillery round stock by the LTTE in the month of February which went unnoticed to the Security Forces.

Therefore, the Security Forces believe that the LTTE show off in Jaffna FDLs on April 23 was due to their increased firepower with the unloading of arms and ammunitions to Wanni battlefield.

LTTE suffers heavily

However, the LTTE too suffered heavily during this confrontation despite the firepower they had. The most unfortunate thing is that many local media tried to show off the Muhamalai incident as a debacle faced by the Army ignoring the ground realities and even forgetting the facts about the two and half decade long history of the North East conflict.

Certain media were ignorant of the fact about the LTTE casualties, the ground captured by the Security Forces and also about the facts about the debacles faced by the Security Forces. However one fact comes to the fore due to these criticisms by the media about the military operation.

The media now considering the death of 83 soldiers in a single battle as they do not observe such number of soldiers get killed in a single military operation within the past two years. That means the Security Forces have been able to achieve all these military victories with minimum number of deaths on the part of the Security Forces.

The media have forgotten the debacle in Pooneryn in 1991, the Mullaitivu debacle in 1996, the debacle in Kilinochchi in 1998 and the debacle in Elephant Pass in the year 2000 in which more than 1,300 troops were killed including very senior Army officers.

Therefore, Security Forces have to swim against the malicious criticism by certain media over operations.

These critics should realise the fact that all these sacrifices of the troops whether it is dozens of soldiers in a single day or one soldier per day, they are making their sacrifices in the battlefield in a bid to defeat Tiger terrorism completely. They have sacrificed their lives not in vain but for a worthy cause bravely facing the enemy.

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People ready for polls amidst confidence on Forces

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Load-Date: October 1, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lankan military says 17 Tamil rebels killed in latest clashes

Associated Press International

July 12, 2008 Saturday 5:33 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 321 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Scattered fighting across northern Sri Lanka killed 17 Tamil Tiger rebels, the military said Saturday.

The clashes Friday came as suspected rebels fired at a passenger bus in southern Sri Lanka, killing a 9-year-old boy and three women.

The fighting broke out in the Mannar, Vavuniya and Welioya regions surrounding the rebels' northern stronghold, the military said in a statement. It said no soldiers were killed but some were wounded.

Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan could not immediately be reached for comment and it was not possible to verify the military's claims because reporters are barred from the war zone.

Each side known to exaggerate casualties inflicted on the other and underreport their own.

On Friday a group of gunmen hiding by the side of the road near the southern village of Buttala shot at a passing civilian bus, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said. The bus driver sped through the ambush, only stopping when he reached safety, Nanayakkara said.

He blamed the rebels for the attack, which he said killed a boy and three women and wounded 25 others. The rebels did not comment on the attack.

The Tamil Tigers have been blamed for scores of suicide bombings and other attacks on civilians and are listed as a terror group by the United States, European Union and India.

The rebels were blamed for a strike in Buttala on Jan. 16 in which assailants bombed a bus, gunned down the fleeing passengers and attacked nearby farmers as they retreated into the forest, killing 32 people.

The Tamil Tigers have been fighting since 1983 to create an independent state for ethnic minority Tamils, who have been marginalized by successive governments controlled by ethnic Sinhalese. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

The government has stepped up fighting around the rebels' de facto state in the north in an effort to deliver on its promise to crush the group by the end of this year.

Load-Date: July 13, 2008

Sri Lankan military says 17 Tamil rebels killed in latest clashes

End of Document

Sri Lanka says 17 rebels killed in fighting

Associated Press

July 12, 2008 Saturday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 339 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Scattered fighting across Sri Lanka's embattled north and an attack on a passenger bus in the south killed 17 Tamil Tiger rebels and four civilians, the military said Saturday.

Suspected rebel gunmen fired at a passenger bus in southern Sri Lanka, killing a 9-year-old boy and three women, the military said in a statement. Meanwhile, clashes broke out in the Mannar, Vavuniya and Welioya regions surrounding the rebel stronghold killed 17 rebels, the statement said. It said no soldiers were killed but some were wounded.

Military spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan could not be immediately reached for comment and it was not possible to verify the military's claims because reporters are barred from the war zone. Each side is known to exaggerate the damages inflicted upon the other and underreport their own.

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Load-Date: July 13, 2008

Sri Lanka says 17 rebels killed in fighting

End of Document

A cowardly act

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

October 7, 2008 Tuesday 2:49 PM EST

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Length: 788 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 7 -- The country yesterday was robbed of a brave son of the soil through yet another cowardly attack of the LTTE now gasping in its death throes. While the nation was shocked into stunned disbelief by the enormity of the loss it should also come to terms with the fact that this type of attack will be the LTTE's staple in the coming days as it surrenders its strongholds one by one to the military juggernaut.

The tragic death of Major General Janaka Perera the recently elected opposition leader of the North Central Province in an LTTE suicide blast is a major blow. The Tigers who failed in their mission to get at the Army Commander and the Defence Secretary may well have been looking for another high profile target.

Major General Janaka Perera's new role as a politician which exposed him to risks may have provided an ideal opportunity for the LTTE. That the decorated officer who had proved the nemesis of the LTTE on countless missions was a major target of the outfit was only too obvious.

This killing is reminiscent of the suicide attack on Major General Lucky Algama - another stalwart in the anti-LTTE campaign, although in that case the biggest target was former minister Gamini Dissanayake.

Major General Janaka Perera not only proved the bete noire of the LTTE on the battlefield. He also worked tirelessly as a diplomat to dismantle international structures of the outfit. He was also a guiding force, along with the present Commander, that helped the Forces to wrest control of Jaffna and save the beleaguered troops trapped in the peninsula.

He was therefore a marked man of the outfit. That it picked on Major General Perera of course is no coincidence given his highly successful campaign against the LTTE. The decorated officer humbled the outfit in many a battle and he obviously was in the sights of the LTTE for a long time.

The killing follows a pattern of the LTTE's plans to eliminate military men who had led successful battles against the outfit. It similarly made unsuccessful attempts on the lives of Army chief Lt.General Sarath Fonseka and Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa and succeeded in assassinating Maj. Gen. Parami Kulatunga.

Through eliminating military top brass retired or otherwise the goal of the LTTE is to demoralise the troops on the one hand while getting even with the losses it suffered on the other. Eliminating potential leadership in the South is another of its aims.

A cowardly act

The masses will grieve with members of the Armed Forces who served under Major General Perera, at this tragic loss and hope this latest affront to the troops would be fittingly avenged in the coming days when the Forces march triumphantly into the Tiger citadel in Kilinochchi.

Hemmed in on all fronts and cornered in its lair the LTTE is today left with only one option and that is go berserk on a killing spree. Yesterday's incident was just a sample of the desperation of the outfit which is nearing its end.

That it took the lives of other innocents is only incidental. We ask those human rights activists who make a hue and cry about collateral damage as to what they have to say about the large number of deaths of innocents in yesterday's blast including the wife of Major General Perera.

That the LTTE is in its last gasp is all too evident and it is bound to carry out similar desperate strikes, if nothing else to but to demonstrate it still has some fight left in it. This is the only way it could shore up the morale of its depleted cadres and warm the cockles of elements of the diaspora sympathetic to its ignoble cause.

We can expect more such attacks in the coming days as the Security Forces tighten their grip on the outfit. With power and control slipping away from his grasp each day a demented Velupillai Prabhakaran is bound to use every trick up his sleeve as the last throw of the dice in a bid to stall the advance of the Security Forces.

And it will spare no one in its path be they women, children or pregnant mothers. That it would not be selective in its targets in the vile campaign to sow chaos and confusion will have to be factored by those in charge of mapping out security plans and appropriate action taken.

Fresh plans are called for to counter the looming threat that is very real as the Forces prepare for the final kill. Yesterday's attack also underscores the need to implement a viable security plan for the outstations as the Tigers are bound to shift strategy.

It is hoped that this killing of a battlefield warrior who led his men from the front would redouble the efforts of the Forces to attain their final goal. This would be a fitting tribute to a true officer and a gentleman.

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

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Load-Date: October 7, 2008

Forces repulse attack on Vavuniya security complex

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

September 10, 2008 Wednesday 3:26 PM EST

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Length: 443 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Sept. 10 -- Security Forces yesterday foiled a major attack targeting the radar system installed at the Air Force Base in Vavuniya bringing down one of the light aircraft of the **LTTE** on its way back to Mullaitivu and killing 10 Tiger cadres who tried to infiltrate the Air Force base from the ground, Military Spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said yesterday.

Addressing a special press briefing at the Media Centre for National Security, Brigadier Nanayakkara said the **LTTE** launched this attack whilst firing barrages of artillery into the Army, Air Force and Police Head quarters complex in Vavuniya at 2.50 a.m. As artillery rounds fell into the Military and Police complex from 2.50 a.m., the **LTTE** simultaneously attempted to infiltrate into the SLAF Air Base where sophisticated radar systems are located.

"The Special Forces and Air Force ground troops foiled the Tiger cadres' attempt to infiltrate into the Air Force base killing them outside the Air Force Base without allowing them to reach the Air Base. Ten Tiger bodies including five bodies of **female** cadres were recovered after the attempt was foiled," Brigadier Nanayakkara added. The troops also recovered weapons and communications equipment along with the bodies.

The SLAF and the Army also thwarted an attempt by the **LTTE** light aircraft which came towards Vavuniya to drop bombs onto the radar system at the Air Force Base, after detecting them before reaching their target. See pictures on page 4

"The **LTTE** light aircraft dropped two bombs into the Army camp area and flew back without hitting the target due to stiff resistance from the SLAF and the Army," the Brigadier added.

Brigadier Nanayakkara said Air Force interceptors airborne from the Katunayake Air Base successfully destroyed one of the lighter **LTTE** aircraft returning from Vavuniya towards Mullaitivu in the South of Mullaitivu at 3.55 a.m. According to Brigadier Nanayakkara, the **LTTE** continued to fire artillery rounds into the Military and Police complex till around 5.45 a.m. with 70 rounds of artillery rounds falling within the Wanni Security Forces headquarters area.

"The barrages of artillery rounds fell into the Wanni SFHQ area resulting in the deaths of ten soldiers, one Policeman and a civilian. Fifteen soldiers, seven Air Force personnel and nine Policemen also sustained injuries in the artillery fire," Brigadier Nanayakkara added.

The **LTTE** had directed artillery fire from North of Omanthai area, Brigadier Nanayakkara added.

"The radar system of the SLAF remains intact after this massive assault," Brigadier Nanayakkara added.

Forces repulse attack on Vavuniya security complex

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

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Load-Date: September 10, 2008

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19 fleeing civilians killed by Sri Lankan rebels: military

Xinhua General News Service

February 10, 2009 Tuesday 9:10 PM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Military

Length: 294 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Feb. 10

Body

At least 19 civilians were killed by Tamil Tiger rebels on Tuesday when they tried to flee the area controlled by the rebels in the island's north, defense officials said.

Military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said the civilians had arrived in the Puthukkuduyiruppu west in the Mullaittivu district when they came under small arms attack from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels.

Nanayakkara said among the dead are five women and two children, adding that some 75 others were also injured by the rebels.

The military accuse the LTTE of holding civilians against their wishes and using them as human shields in their fight against government troops.

The rebels have also been condemned for using an under aged female as a suicide bomber to attack the troops in Mullaittivu several days ago.

Meanwhile, pro-LTTE sources said thousands of civilians fled in all directions from a 35-square-kilometer "safety zone" in Mullaittivu declared by the government on Tuesday as mortar, artillery and Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher rockets hit the entire safety zone.

The sources said at least 36 civilians were killed and 76 wounded when they tried to flee further into LTTE controlled areas.

The claims of the two sides can not be independently verified as reporters and most aid agencies are not allowed to enter into the conflict area.

Mullaithivu is the last stronghold of the LTTE in the north after most of its territories were captured by the advancing troops in a military offensive started in July 2006.

The LTTE launched their separatist campaign in the mid-1980s to set up a separate homeland for the minority Tamils in the north and east, resulting in the killing of more than 70,000 people.

Load-Date: February 11, 2009

19 fleeing civilians killed by Sri Lankan rebels: military

End of Document

Suicide blast kills 12 police personnel amid Sri Lanka fighting

Indo-Asian News Service

June 16, 2008 Monday 2:59 PM EST

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Length: 419 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 16 -- At least 12 police personnel were killed and 23 wounded when a suspected Tamil Tiger suicide bomber riding a motorbike blew himself opposite the office of a senior police officer in the northern Sri Lankan town of Vavuniya, military sources said.

The bomber, from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), drove close to the police station and triggered a massive blast targeting police personnel leaving the senior superintendent's office for routine deployment around 7.10 a.m. Monday.

"Twelve police officers, including three **women** police constables, were killed and 23 others were injured in the explosion. Seventeen policemen, two **women** constables, three school children and another civilian were among the injured," the Media Centre for National Security of the defence ministry said in a statement.

The wounded police personnel and civilians have been admitted to the base hospital in Vavuniya town, 254 km north of Colombo.

Television channels showed visuals of the blast site where the motorbike used in the suicide attack was shattered to pieces. Ambulances evacuated the wounded police personnel and civilians to the Vavuniya hospital.

The latest suicide attack has taken place at a time when government troops have opened many fronts in Vavuniya and in the northwestern Mannar district in their bid to advance into the rebel-held Wanni area amid fierce resistance from the **LTTE**.

Meanwhile, at least 30 **LTTE** cadres and four government soldiers were killed and over 45 wounded on both sides during separate gun battles elsewhere in Mannar, Vavuniya, Jaffna and Weli Oya areas Sunday.

According to official figures, at least 14 **LTTE** cadres and two soldiers were killed in Weli Oya region while another 11 rebels and a soldier were killed near the forward defences in Vavuniya.

It said that the troops recovered three bodies of **LTTE** fighters during clearing operations in Vavuniya.

The Sri Lankan military claimed Sunday that air force jets bombed and destroyed "a key combat-logistic facility" of the **LTTE** in rebel-held Mullaitivu district. The facility was used to convert, maintain and service **LTTE** combat vehicles.

Suicide blast kills 12 police personnel amid Sri Lanka fighting

Without commenting about the government's claim on the bombing, the rebels said in a statement that two civilians were killed and 11 wounded in the air raid.

Military sources rejected the **LTTE** claim and said "the target was acquired after constant air surveillances and continuously gathered information".

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

Load-Date: June 16, 2008

End of Document

Recent Developments in Sri Lanka

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

February 28, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 577 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 28 -- I am a Sri Lankan American residing in Naples, Florida. I am married with three children and two grandchildren. I came to this country in 1964 on a Fulbright Scholarship. I am writing this memorandum as the Chairman of a small group of Sri Lankan Americans who are ardent supporters of our new president Barack Obama.

These are the facts: Sri Lanka is a vibrant democracy. In spite of an ongoing terrorist problem for the last 30 years. Its achievements in the domestic front are remarkable. In the SAARC Region comprising of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Maldives, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, the record of Sri Lanka's achievements in the areas of education, health, children's and women's health programs and even per capita income, and life expectancy the number for Sri Lanka is highest in the region. This is not an accident but purely a matter of good governance. For the last 30 years, Sri Lanka has been waging a war with a terrorist group (the LTTE) and nearly 70,000 of its citizens have died. It took nearly 22 years for the Western Governments to understand this fact and then they too designated the LTTE as a terrorist organisation, along with its other front organisations like the World Tamil Association, the Tamil Rehabilitation organisation and the Tamil Foundation. USA, UK, EU, Canada, Australia, India, Norway and many other Western democracies have agreed with the FBI who has labelled this group the LTTE and its allied organisation as the most dangerous and deadly extremist organisation s in the world. In additions, the LTTE has also perfected the other weapon of propaganda, where by they systematically disseminate disinformation. The monies the LTTE have been collecting from the Tamil Diaspora has been severely dealt with since these organisation have been proscribed in the Western countries and there by dealing a severe blow to the acquiring of arms and ammunities for waging this war against Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka now at last is on the verge of eliminating the LTTE and we ask your committee to go along with the regional super power India who understands the cultural, political and social ramifications of Sri Lanka. We also ask you to accept a simple fact why should a small country be asked to negotiate with an accepted terrorist group when we in the USA and the rest of the large democracies like India, UK, EU and Australia refuse to negotiate with the terrorist groups they are fighting with. India has nearly 70,000,00 Tamils living there while we in Sri Lanka have a little more 2,000,000 Tamils living happily in Sri Lanka. The defacto acting Prime Minister of India Pranab Mukerjee, stated on the 21st of this month on the floor India's Parliament 'with the return of clarity to congress led government in its policy toward LTTE to the level it was during Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's tenure, there is now a very wide bi-partisan consensus on how to deal with the menace of LTTE's terrorism. LTTE is part of the problem in Sri Lanka and can never be part of any solution, accepted to India." Dr. Swamy Subramaniam, leader of the Janatha Party, and a former Law minister went on to state: "hence, India must assist the Sri Lankan Government in every way to put an end to the LTTE and bring the supremo Prabhakaran to book decisively and with finality for Rajiv Gandhi's assassination." We thank you for holding this hearing. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

Recent Developments in Sri Lanka

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Countdown to final battle begins

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

February 13, 2009 Friday

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Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 13 -- The **LTTE** used to explain each and every defeat they were facing as tactical withdrawals and continued to do so until they faced their humiliating defeat in their so-called capital Kilinochchi and their strongholds Pooneryn, Elephant Pass and Mullaitivu.

At the initial stage the **LTTE** warned that they would bring the war to Colombo if Security Forces try to fight them in the North and East. But they failed to bring war to Colombo as they predicted though they could explode few bombs targeting innocent civilians in some places in Colombo and suburbs. It was due to strengthened security measures and the screening of each and every citizen entering Colombo, the Defence authorities and the Security Forces could avert many of the Tiger plans to create mayhem in Colombo. Allegations The Security Forces and the Police had to face a series of allegations from the so-called Non Government Organizations appearing on behalf of the **LTTE** when detecting those Tiger cadres who reached Colombo disguised as civilians. Those organizations and political parties appeared on behalf of the **LTTE** in support of their terror plans, should at least now understand the gravity of the problem the Security Forces had to tackle in Colombo.

The **LTTE** always made statements, boasting about their capability to hit back at any time with a terror plan in their hand. That was why the **LTTE** said that their setbacks in Kilinochchi were only temporary. They had terror plans to in their hands to reverse the military victories but failed in all those efforts due to the increased vigilance of the Security Forces. Their terror plans would have gone undetected if not for the vigilance of the Security Forces. The troops attached to the 571 Brigade under the command of Lt. Colonel Harendra Ranasinghe could avert a massive disaster on January 28, 2009 as they could detect two Black Tiger cadres who were roaming around massive Iranamadu tank just few days after the **LTTE** exploded Kalmadukulam tank. Suicide mission Initially they claimed that they had arrived there to surrender to the Security Forces but later accepted that they had arrived there for a suicide mission to explode the Iranamadu tank bund. These two Black Tiger cadres identified as Kanakasuthasan Suthas alias Shanker and Thillainathan Thivakaran alias Tamil Alai have made surprising revelations to the Security Forces. These shocking revelations by these two Black Tiger cadres 'Shanker' and 'Tamil Alai' confirm the fact that the **LTTE** had more terror plans in their hand to reverse the Security Forces victories even at the last moment. According to latest revelations by these two Black Tiger cadres the **LTTE** had planned to explode Iranamadu tank bund in mid January to reverse the victories of the Security Forces in Kilinochchi as they have been totally frustrated following their defeat in Kilinochchi. According to these two Black Tiger cadres attached to the Gangai Amarn squadron of the Sea Tiger wing which trains Sea Tigers for underwater missions, they have been briefed about their mission by Charles Anthony the elder son of Prabhakaran who is handling the IT unit of the **LTTE** in Visuamadu on January 23. Sea Tiger Special leader Soosai and Dinesh Master from Gangai Amaran Squadron has also been there when Charles Anthony briefed them about his plans to blast the Iranamadu tank bund. They have been taken to Visuamadu in an intercooler pajero from Mullaitivu where they had their basic training prior to their mission. They have been trained to swim more than 10 kilo metres at a stretch. Training Before

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they were taken to Visuamadu and prior to their training 'Shanker' and 'Thamil Alai' had a dinner with Tiger leader Prabhakaran in December in an unknown destination along with another set of Black Tiger cadres assigned for various other missions. According to the revelations of these Black Tiger cadres they have been served with mutton and string hoppers for their dinner at an unknown destination. They have been selected for this mission as they have participated at the mission to hijack Farah II ship in the Mullaitivu seas. Charles Anthony had explained his plan to the Black Tiger cadres through a computer presentation. They have studied each and every part of the Iranamadu tank before preparing this master plan. They have studied the sluice gates, depth and the capacity of the Iranamadu tank and the extent of area that may submerge following the explosion of the tank bund. High grounds They have also identified the high grounds that may not be submerged in the floods and pointed out those places as the places to which troops would gather to escape from floods. They have been asked to explode the tank bund at a depth of 20 feet to cause maximum damage. The two Black Tiger cadres who arrived there through the jungle patches in Mullaitivu have been provided with claymore mines, diving kits, chargers and satellite phones to carry out their mission. They have been asked to inform the Sea Tiger leader about the time they were going to explode the Iranamadu tank bund to carry out the second phase of it. Charles Anthony and Soosai had estimated that 5,000 soldiers would die in the floods that would result following the blast of Iranamadu tank bund and the flood waters would remain for more than five days after the explosion. It could submerge entire Kilinochchi district up to Pooneryn and some parts of the Jaffna peninsula. Sea Tiger special leader Soosai had explained how he is going to deploy more than 300 Sea Tigers in floods in search of the marooned soldiers. The Sea Tiger leader Soosai had planned to launch some 50 boats soon after the explosion of the Iranamadu tank to attack the marooned soldiers. The **LTTE** made use of this tactic when **LTTE** exploded the Kalmadukulam Tank bund two weeks back but failed in their endeavor as troops reacted to that situation without any confusion. But one thing went wrong with the **LTTE** though the **LTTE** had carried out reconnaissance missions they have not come across Security Forces presence at the Iranamadu tank bund. Iranamadu tank The two cadres who had arrived there at the Iranamadu tank have faced a difficult situation due to the presence of the Security Forces. The Tiger leaders never expected the troops to be on high alert as they have been instructed to increase the security in Iranamadu tank after Kalmadukulam incident. Apart from this incident the Tiger cadres have also made startling revelations about the Sea Tiger wing. According to these two black Tiger cadres the Sea Tigers have experimented one of their small submarines in Nanthikadal lagoon few months back and increased their underwater capabilities. They have also divulged that ten more Black Tiger cadres have been trained with them for underwater missions. But all their terror plans to reverse the military victories of the Security Forces, went in drains due to the vigilance of the Security Forces. This terror plan divulged by the captured Black Tiger cadres very clearly indicates the desperation of the **LTTE** at this stage. What they want at this moment is only to reverse the Security Forces victories at any cost. They have no iota of respect for human lives at this moment. Their only concern is to achieve their objective. The **LTTE** has planned many such operations to stop the advance of the troops advancing into last remaining areas under their control. It was after the troops attached to the 571 Terror plan Brigade foiled their terror plan the Tiger leadership had focused their attention towards the Mullaitivu area to capture the areas under Security Forces control. Sea Tiger leader Soosai had commanded the entire terror operation to push back the Security Forces from the Puthukuduyiruppu South and Mullaitivu West front. The operation started by the **LTTE** on February 01, has also been foiled by the ground troops after deploying the troops attached to 59 Division closer to the Puthukuduyiruppu South. The Forward Defences of the Security Forces in Puthukuduyiruppu South were readjusted following **LTTE** sending four explosive laden trucks into the defence line on February 03 evening. Task Force VII Once again troops foiled another attempt by the **LTTE** to send Tiger cadres into Security Forces controlled areas in Oddusudan in an armoured plated bus on February 07 around 2 p.m. An armoured tank which was heading towards the FDL had detected this and attacked it killing 14 Tiger cadres on board the bus. Following this attack Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka has made arrangement to form Task Force VII and deployed it in the Mullaitivu West front. Colonel G.V. Ravipriya who was appointed as the Mannar Area Commander was airlifted to Oddusudan after he was appointed as the Task Force VII Commander. The 633 Brigade under the command of Lt. Colonel Subashana Welikala operated under the Task Force III and 593 Brigade under the Command of Lt. Colonel Lalantha Gamage has been attached to Task Force VII Brigade Commanders. With this new deployment Army has strengthened its defences in the Mullaitivu, Mullaitivu West and Puthukuduyiruppu South. It was in this backdrop and fervent appeals made by the Government and the Security Forces thousands of civilians commenced arriving in Government controlled area in Visuamadu. Outskirts The highest number of civilians arrived in the 58 Division area last Friday night. More than 5,000 civilians arrived through Suthanthirampuram village as 58 Division troops reached the outskirts of Suthanthirampuram. By

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yesterday afternoon more than 32,000 civilians have arrived in Government controlled areas. More than 96 per cent of these civilians have arrived at the 58 Division areas as the 58 Division is operating closer to the areas where civilians are living. The **LTTE** having failed in their bid to stop the civilians after killing and firing at them indiscriminately sent a **female** suicide cadre among the civilians. The **women** suicide cadre exploded herself inside a transit welfare centre where the 58 Division troops are searching those civilians. Innocent civilians More than 10 innocent civilians were killed and 64 other injured in the suicide blast that may be the first occasion a **LTTE** suicide cadre blew herself up where such a large number of Tamil civilians are present. Nineteen Security Forces personnel including two officers were also killed in this blast. The entire world realized the true nature of the **LTTE** through this bomb blast as they targeted their own community. Those who talked about the human rights record of the Government should realize the difficulties faced by the Security Forces protecting those human rights in a conflict of this nature as **LTTE** is making use of each and every available opportunity to hit back at the Security Forces. The Security Forces had to change the way of searching these civilians who were arriving in Government controlled areas in large numbers after this incident. The Security Forces had to take this measure considering the safety of the civilians and also the safety of the Security Forces engaged in these humanitarian missions. The troops also detected some of the Black Tiger cadres arriving in the Government controlled area mingling with thousands of civilians. One such Black Tiger cadre was captured by the 58 Division troops on the eve of the bomb blast in Visuamadu. The Security Forces detected this suspicious person as they recovered a satellite phone in his possession. Satellite phone Later he divulged that he has been asked to move into Vavuniya along with this satellite phone so that the **LTTE** could provide him a suicide kit to accomplice his task. Like this Black Tiger cadre the **LTTE** would have send hundreds of their cadres mingling with the civilians. So it would be massive task for the Security Forces and law enforcement authorities prevent Tiger cadres infiltrating into cleared areas. As these new developments are taking place in the battle front with a huge influx of civilians arriving in the Government controlled areas the troops attached to the 58 Division under the command of Brigadier Shavendra Silva whilst handling thousands of Tamil civilians escaping the Tiger grip also had advanced further into the Tiger territory within the past few days. They have come across many of the Tiger facilities like printing press and vehicles used by the Tiger leaders. Apart from them the 58 Division have also killed large number of Tiger cadres in their front in the North and West of Puthukuduyiruppu. They have also found a claymore mine factory and mortar manufacturing Factory of the **LTTE** yesterday. The recovery of these assets very clearly indicates that the **LTTE** was manufacturing all what they need for the warfare and were not much affected from the detection of their arms smuggling vessels. The 57 Division which was operating South of A-35 road had completed their task with the capture of Karuvilkulam West area on Tuesday. With the completion of this task 57 Division will remain as a reserve Division holding Visuamadu South and Kilinochchi. 57 Division With the 57 Division halting their offensive operations the 58 Division has been given the task of moving into Puthukuduyiruppu in a North to South direction and West to East direction and will link with the Task Force II under the command of Brigadier Rohana Bandara. The Task Force II, Task Force IV and 59 Division will operate South of A-35 road whilst 58 Division troops are advancing towards Puthukuduyiruppu for the final battle with the **LTTE**. The 55 Division under the command of Brigadier Prasanna Silva is also heading towards Mullaitivu from Chalai area to cover the beach front. With these moves the **LTTE** had pushed the civilians further towards Mullaitivu beach front from the safety zone. With that move the Army headquarters took measures to declare a new no fire zone in the North East of Puthukuduyiruppu for the civilians to take refuge in that area. However, the **LTTE** will try their best to hang on with the civilians until they face their certain defeat. But now the background has already been set to count down the days for their final defeat which is looming around them at present with their most precious asset, civilians fast isolating the **LTTE**. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Tamil Nadu and the Sri Lankan ethnic issue

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Body

Colombo, Nov. 17 -- The resolutions unanimously passed at the Tamil Naad Assembly demanding the Central Government to pressurise the Sri Lankan Government to stop the war immediately and to start talks with the LTTE is shocking and totally unacceptable even to the Tamils of Sri Lanka.

This will certainly cause a lot of embarrassment to the Government of India itself. It is a pity that the supporters of the motion had failed to realise that it won't take much time for the Sri Lankan Parliament to pass a vote of censure against the un-warranted interference of the Tamil Naad Assembly.

It is very unfortunate that the Tamil Naad Government had taken such a decision merely to please some hardliners who have their own agenda, which will soon prove detrimental to India's own Sovereignty and integrity.

Very soon those who supported these resolutions will deeply regret for being misled by a handful of extremists who know nothing about the Sri Lankan ethnic problem and merely acting on hearsay.

I hope, based on the latest developments the Assembly will soon meet to reverse the decision. I insist on an all party delegation to visit Sri Lanka on a fact finding mission, since so far except P.Chithamparam who played the key role in negotiations more than 20 years back, only two others came from Tamil Naad, one of whom a Film Director who met Prabhakaran and left.

The other who is the Leader of a small party in Tamil Naad also left after having lunch with some TNA members of the Sri Lankan Parliament who were fraudulently elected by the LTTE as their proxies.

Assistance

We Sri Lankan Tamils very much welcome friendly advice and all other assistance from Tamil Naad to solve the ethnic problem. But if it is going to be misled by a handful of pro-LTTE leaders who have their own agenda and act without foresight or proper under-standing and without adequate information, it will be a great boon to the Tamils of Sri Lanka, if only Tamil Naad will keep silent.

With several thousands who managed to escape from the clutches of the LTTE, much more than 50 per cent of the Tamils live in peace and harmony in predominant Sinhala areas with the Sinhalese and Muslims. They live and work together, play and eat together and even own houses and buy new mansions.

Although some of the inciting speeches made at various places in Tamil Naad recently caused a lot of embarrassment to the Tamils who live among the Sinhalese and Muslims and caused irritation to the Sinhalese, yet

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people are living in peace and tranquility, in spite of the atrocious activities of the LTTE in these areas, that cause the deaths of many innocent people and destruction of property.

Any action taken in Tamil Nadu without being counterproductive should only help to solve the problem. The said resolutions passed at the Assembly contrary to helping to solve the problem will only help to aggravate it.

It is very unfortunate that the recent agitations, that included demonstrations, formation of human chain, hunger strikes, hartals by various organisations and trades, held at various Districts all over Tamil Nadu demanding the Central Government of India to intervene, contrary to the expectations, have become counter productive.

By over doing things, the people of Tamil Nadu, misled by the inciting speeches of pro-LTTE Leaders from both Sri Lanka and India, have only made it impossible for the Government of India to act freely.

Left alone, the Government can tackle it without offending any-body. Without realising the adverse effects their action will have, two gentlemen who represent the LTTE and claim the LTTE as the Sole Representatives of the Tamil People of Sri Lanka, had thanked the participants when the hunger strike organised by the film stars in Chennai ended.

India as a mighty big nation and the world's largest democracy cannot just jump in to action, merely because pressure is coming from a powerful section of the population to intervene in the Sri Lankan issue. India must first of all, satisfy itself whether the demand coming from a section of the population is reasonable and justifies its intervention.

Advisory role

Even if its intervention is justifiable, India can intervene only in an advisory capacity without being accused of interfering with the sovereignty of the Sri Lankan Nation. India with its large intelligence net-work need not be told what and what is happening in Sri Lanka. Therefore one should understand that response of the Indian Government for the various representations made to it will be subjected to the Government's own observations.

The Sri Lankan ethnic problem is now over fifty years old and still with no hopes of an early settlement. The adoption of Sinhala as the only Official Language of Sri Lanka, in violation of Section 29 of the Soulbury Constitution, which was the main or rather the only provision for the safeguard of the minorities, can be taken as a landmark.

I am one of those who had lived in Sri Lanka through out this period and very well know, as to who and who had erred and how a Paradise on Earth is lost. Recalling the bitter memories of the past will not help us to solve the problem. Let us face it as it is today. I am not acting as anybody's agent nor as a stooge of anyone.

What I say is truth and nothing but the truth and can be challenged by anyone who doubts my credibility.

The Leader of the Tamil National Alliance is also the Leader of the Parliamentary Group of the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchchi and its President as well. He laments that he is disappointed with the manner in which India had handled the problem by merely sending food to the displaced Tamil people.

He should try to win the confidence of the Indian Authorities without misleading them with fabricated stories. There is no doubt that a lot of human rights violations are taking place both in the Government controlled areas and areas under the control of the LTTE. Many people are involved in the violations in areas under the control of the Government.

Violations

The TNA Leaders should tell the world as to what extent the LTTE is involved in such areas without putting the entire blame on the Government or on any Para-military group. They do not utter one word about the violations in the LTTE held areas.

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One of the very serious charges levelled against the Government by the LTTE and endorsed by the TNA Parliamentarians, which had roused the feelings of the People of Tamil Naad, is that the Government is trying to annihilate the Tamil People.

This is a fabrication of the LTTE which the TNA is selling all over the world, and very successfully in Tamil Naad.

The TNA must prove it with facts and figures, without making wild allegations. It is also a duty of the TNA to tell the world that most of the people trapped in Vanni had been driven into Kilinochchi from three other neighbouring Districts, and are held under compulsion to be used as a human shield for the protection of the LTTE.

I am not trying to find fault with the leader of the TNA. Being a senior politician he should have acted with great caution in handling this sensitive issue. He had come into the scene very late and by the time he came in to the scene, the damage is already done.

All sorts of accusations had been made, very irresponsibly, in Tamil Nadu against the Sri Lankan Government, incited by pro-LTTE elements, without realising that ultimately it is with the Sri Lankan Government that matters will have to be sorted out, not by compulsion and only by persuasion.

The enthusiasm generated had become so uncontrollable that it ended up with the most un-pleasant and unexpected threat of demanding a separate state of Tamil Nadu, which demand remained buried for over 50 years, now revived.

This would have caused a lot of embarrassment to the Government of India which is now in a dilemma. This renewed demand will have to be nipped in the bud on one hand and the Sri Lankan problem dealt with extreme caution on the other.

The Leader of the TNA who should take the blame for this new development cannot find fault with the Indian Government. He can't expect the Indian authorities to swallow whatever advice given by the TNA members.

From the time the 22 TNA Members got elected to Parliament fraudulently with the help of the LTTE's fire power, as the whole world knows, their credibility became questionable.

They weakened themselves by accepting the LTTE as the sole representatives of the Tamils and started functioning as proxies of the LTTE. In such a situation, they have lost their right to represent the Tamil people.

Failed

The TNA Members of Parliament had failed in their duty to tell the Government of Tamil Naad that all these years, for more than a quarter of a century, it is the Sri Lankan Government that had been feeding the LTTE leader, his family his cadre, and the people in the LTTE held areas.

They must be honest enough to tell Tamil Naad that whenever a fresh stock arrived in the Wannu, the LTTE took all what they wanted and also replaced their old stock with the new arrivals and passed on to the people, the balance. Let any TNA member challenge this statement.

I have to come out with these facts since I feel ashamed of the demand of Tamil Naad. The tsunami of 2004 left several thousands dead. People were starving and there had been instances in which old Sinhalese women had walked eight to 10 miles with food parcels on their heads for the Tamil and Muslim victims whom they had never met. There is enough evidence to prove that the LTTE did not fail to claim more than what they were entitled to, out of the Tsunami Aid.

Once before, following an attack by the LTTE on the ships taking food to Jaffna, two years back the ICRC refused to give escort. Some Sinhalese sailors took the risk and navigated the food ships to Jaffna.

It is very unfortunate that no one from Tamil Naad ever bothered to come on a fact finding mission, to see what is really happening in Sri Lanka. The two gentlemen mentioned in this letter were here on a pleasure trip.

Misled

Misled by the TNA Members, Tamil Naad is exposing to grave risk its own people in particular and the whole of India in general. My repeated requests to Tamil Naad, not to allow the LTTE to create a "Jaffna" in Tamil Naad, had been totally ignored. If Tamil Naad fails to stop this trend, very soon it will have a training centre for suicide bombers. I am sure history will record this, for Tamil Naad to regret deeply one day.

Apart from those who are directly involved in the war, I am perhaps the only one who could have given a proper briefing of the real situation in Sri Lanka. The fact that I was the Member of Parliament for Kilinochchi, is known to the Chief Minister of Tamil Naad.

The war-clouds had now shifted there, with people of four districts trapped or driven into it by force and detained by the LTTE under compulsion, with no effort taken by the six million people across the sea, to liberate them. They are only applying pressure on the Sri Lankan Government virtually to protect the atrocious LTTE terrorists.

The Central Government of India and the State Government of Tamil Naad should now get together and free the people who are now trapped in areas under the control of the LTTE and allow them to get into areas where more than 80 per cent of the Tamils live.

They should also agree jointly to persuade the Sri Lankan Government to devolve power on Provincial Councils akin to those devolved on various States in India. This is the only way peace can be brought to Sri Lanka.

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Reward for woman CDF member who detected rail bomber

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Body

Colombo, June 10 -- A member of the women's Civil Defence Force who arrested the LTTE cadre who set off the bomb on the Dehiwela railway track was promoted and rewarded yesterday.

Addressing the media, the CDF Director General Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekara said following a prompt combined operation conducted under instructions of Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa and intelligence services, they were able to arrest the LTTE bomber within a short duration at the Irattaperiyakulam checkpoint in Vavuniya on Wednesday.

An LTTE cadre detonated a claymore mine on the railway track targeting an office train at Wasala Mawatha between Dehiwela and Wellawatte on Wednesday around 7.20 a.m. injuring 18. ?Subsequently after the incident, the Defence Secretary instructed Intelligence to provide information to all police checkpoints pertaining to information of the LTTE suspect with a photograph and orders to be vigilant,? Weerasekara said.

It was a courageous act to detect and arrest the LTTE suspect by a woman CDF member who had manned one of the important checkpoints in Medawachchiya.

It is important to highlight that a woman CDF was able to act courageously to recognise the LTTE cadre who detonated a claymore mine in Dehiwela around 7.20 a.m. and arrest him at the Irattaperiyakulam checkpoint at around 7.30 p.m. The LTTEer was fleeing surreptitiously from the Medawachchiya checkpoint, when he was arrested,? Weerasekera said.

He pointed out that generally the Civil Security Forces man checkpoints together with the Security Forces and police. If any detection or arrest takes place at the checkpoints, the name of the CDF member is never disclosed. The courageous act of the woman CDF had been widely recognised by the Defence Ministry.

The CDF are performing a courageous task to maintain security, law and order in the country. Their services and acts should be appreciated and rewarded,? he added. Deputy Director of the CDF SSP Nandana Wijeratne said if the LTTE bomber was not detected and arrested at Irattaperiyakulam, he might have entered Mullaitivu from Vavuniya.

The woman CDF who arrested the Dehiwela railway track bomber was promoted as a Woman Warden and rewarded with Rs.50,000 at the CDF Headquarters yesterday.

Meanwhile, two other women CDF members were promoted as Sub Warden and rewarded with Rs.10,000 each for seizing 100 GN sticks and arresting two LTTE suspects at the Puliyanakulam checkpoint on February 2.

Reward for woman CDF member who detected rail bomber

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A vote for UNP, a vote for Tigers - TMVP

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Body

Colombo, May 6 -- The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) has put out leaflets in many parts of the Eastern Province urging people to vote for Rauff Hakeem and United National Party (UNP) candidates. The leaflet with the official Tiger emblem has urged to vote for UNP and not for UPFA, Azad Mowlana, spokesman for Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal said.

It has also now become a daily feature of TNA parliamentarians telephoning Tamils in the Eastern province and requesting them to vote for the UNP, he said.

Mowlana said **LTTE** leaflets urging people to vote for the UNP, and Rauff Hakeem clearly shows that a vote for the UNP would amount to a vote for the **LTTE**.

He said it took lot of sacrifices of the TMVP cadres to liberate the East from **LTTE** clutches.

He said the Armed Forces lost hundreds of troops to liberate the East. The TMVP under the leadership of Pilliayan fought pitched battle with Tigers to chase the Tigers out to liberate the East, he said. The UNP is now trying to bring back the Tigers back to the East, Mowlana said.

Mowlana said people in the three districts of the East are breathing the fresh air of freedom. He reminded that it is the duty of every citizen in the East, to be vigilant and on the look out and take action to prevent the Tigers re-entering the East to make the people subservient to Vanni hegemony.

He appealed to the voters not to cast their vote to the UNP and invite Tigers back to the East.

He said Vote for the UNP means one more step by the Vanni Tigers to enter back to the East. Mowlana said the people have not forgotten the April 10, 2004 'Good Friay massacre' of the Eastern province Tamils by the Vanni **LTTE** cadres.

He said hundreds of Eastern Province Tamils were slaughtered and dozens of **women** were raped by them. UNP parliamentarian Lakshman Kiriella has denied of UNP involvement in the leaflet being circulated in certain areas in the East with the **LTTE** emblem calling for the people to vote for the UNP at the Eastern Provincial Council polls. But he has not denied that such leaflets with **LTTE** symbol appealing the voters to vote is circulated in the East, Mowlana said.

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A vote for UNP, a vote for Tigers - TMVP

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Load-Date: September 16, 2008

End of Document

Bus explosion injures 18 in Sri Lankan capital

Xinhua General News Service

February 23, 2008 Saturday 1:15 AM EST

Copyright 2008 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 318 words

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

At least 18 civilians were injured in the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo Saturday morning when a bus was exploded by suspected Tamil Tiger rebels, said the military.

Military Spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said the explosion, occurred at about 11:00 a.m. (0530 GMT) in the southern Colombo suburb of Mount Lavina, was caused by a suspicious parcel inside the Colombo bound bus.

Nanayakkara said 10 males, seven **females** and an eight-month infant were injured in the explosion carried out by the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

Marvin Fernando, a passenger of the ill-fated bus told Xinhua on the spot that a traveler found an unattended parcel underneath a seat in the bus and alerted the driver and the conductor.

"They reported it to the police, stopped the bus and asked the passengers to leave the bus immediately," said Fernando.

The explosion took place after the passengers have got off the bus and the driver was taking it to a safe place, said Fernando, adding that about 20 passengers were on the bus before the incident.

The bus was completely destroyed by the explosion and the subsequent fire, Xinhua correspondent saw.

The bus explosion took place a day after the Sri Lanka Air Force bombed an **LTTE** target in the northern Kilinochchi district.

The **LTTE** said the target was a civilian settlement with eight people being killed and 14 injured in the explosion.

Government troops and the **LTTE** are currently engaged in intensive military conflicts in the north, with the government determining to defeat the **LTTE** before the end of this year.

The military said more than 700 people have been killed in the escalating conflict since the beginning of this year.

The **LTTE** has been fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east for more than two decades, resulting in the death of more than 70,000 people.

Bus explosion injures 18 in Sri Lankan capital

Load-Date: February 25, 2008

End of Document

32 killed in Sri Lanka clashes: military

Indo-Asian News Service

July 13, 2008 Sunday 11:39 AM EST

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Length: 236 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 13 -- At least 30 Tamil Tiger guerrillas and two soldiers have been killed and 33 wounded on both sides during clashes in the northern theatre of battle in Sri Lanka, the military said here Sunday.

According to the military, fierce clashes erupted between the advancing government troops and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) cadres in the north-western Mannar district, leaving 18 rebels and a soldier dead Saturday.

At least 12 **LTTE** militants and a trooper were killed in sporadic clashes at Vavuniya and Welioya fronts in north Sri Lanka, said the military.

Supersonic fighter jets of the Sri Lankan Air Force continued to carry out air raids against suspected **LTTE** targets in the rebel-held Wanni region almost on a daily-basis.

The defence ministry said that a bulldozer was destroyed and few other heavy machinery were damaged when the air force jets carried out "precision air sorties on an identified **LTTE** bunker line, located 3.5 km of Thunukkai" in the rebel-held Mullaitivu district.

Meanwhile, **LTTE** peace secretariat in a statement e-mailed to the media Sunday claimed that "a 20-year-old **female** student, Murugesu Indravathana, was injured in the aerial attack carried out by the Sri Lanka Air Force yesterday (Saturday) over Mallavi and was admitted to the hospital. Livestock were killed in this aerial attack".

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Load-Date: July 14, 2008

Democracy the loser if terror wins -President

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 15, 2008 Thursday 2:55 PM EST

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Length: 477 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 15 -- If Sri Lanka failed in the war against the LTTE, the world will fail in its fight against terrorism and democracy will be the victim, President Mahinda Rajapaksa said on Tuesday.

"The LTTE is the most brutal terror outfit the world has ever seen and defeating them requires global support. What Sri Lanka is doing is fighting the terror outfit single handed to ensure that democracy and respect for human life prevail in the world," President Rajapaksa told the Oxford University Student Union on Tuesday, he said.

Calling the LTTE the main obstacle to development in Sri Lanka, the President said it was time the world raised its united voice to express its utter revulsion of the barbaric practice of suicide bombings and that form of political expression, if it could be described as such is utterly unacceptable in the civilised world.

President Rajapaksa said, unfortunately we are being challenged by 'the most brutal terrorist group in the world' as the LTTE has been described by the FBI. Suicide killings using even women and children have become their hallmark. It is this terror group that invented the deadly suicide vest for the suicide killer. Having pioneered the suicide vest they have freely given this technology to other terror groups in the world. This has now become a global menace.

"They killed Rajiv Gandhi, the former Prime Minister of India and Ranasinghe Premadasa, the former President of Sri Lanka.

Most recently a senior Minister of my Government, a Tamil speaking Catholic was brutally murdered by a suicide killer along with a former Olympic athlete among many others participating in a sporting event."

"It has become incumbent upon us to confront this group to the extent of our ability deploying all the resources of the State to protect the people of Sri Lanka and their democratic way of life.

However I must state that the LTTE is the most brutal terror outfit the world has ever seen and defeating them requires global support. "Although many have said that the LTTE is invincible we have freed our Eastern Province of their terror. Within one year we have restored democracy there after nearly two decades. Only last week we conducted free and fair elections to the first ever Eastern Provincial Council contested by several political parties.

"As our forces seek to defeat and disarm the LTTE we are firm in our resolve to have a negotiated solution to the crisis in Sri Lanka. I do not believe in a military solution. We have attempted talks with the LTTE on several occasions - thrice since my election as the President - but they have not reciprocated.

Democracy the loser if terror wins -President

They have always left the talks with lame excuses. We are still ready to talk once we are certain of their genuine intent for a political solution and their readiness to give up arms."

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

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Load-Date: September 16, 2008

End of Document

More patients evacuated from rebels' area in Sri Lanka

Xinhua General News Service

March 3, 2009 Tuesday 10:41 AM EST

Copyright 2009 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Military

Length: 294 words

Dateline: COLOMBO March 3

Body

The military in Sri Lanka said Tuesday that 157 patients and civilians trapped in the north conflict zone were evacuated to government-controlled areas.

The Media Center for National Security said in a statement that the evacuation of patients and civilians from Mullaittivu to the eastern Trincomalee town was carried out on Monday by sea route under the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) flag.

"The Navy assisted the evacuation of the 7th batch consisting of 157 patients and civilians on board 'Seruvila 2'," said the statement.

The Navy has provided safe passage to the patients for urgent medical treatment in Trincomalee government hospital on humanitarian grounds, said the statement.

The evacuees consisted of 50 adult males, 81 adult **females** and 26 children.

More than 2,000 patients have been evacuated to government-controlled areas from the combat zone in northern Sri Lanka since February.

The government said about 70,000 civilians are still trapped in the Puthukudiyiruppu area of Mullaittivu, where the government troops and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) are engaged in fierce fighting.

The military said the military offensive against the **LTTE** is at final stage as they have been limited to just 40 sq km of territory in Mullaittivu.

The reclusive **LTTE** leader Velupillai Prabhakaran is believed to be conducting operations from the area.

The **LTTE** sought to set up a separate homeland for the minority Tamil community in the north and east claiming discrimination at the hands of the Sinhalese majority ruling community.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in Asia's longest civil war since the **LTTE** launched their armed campaign in the mid- 1980s.

Load-Date: March 4, 2009

More patients evacuated from rebels' area in Sri Lankan

End of Document

Tigers kill 19 more civilians, injure 75

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

February 10, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 271 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 10 -- Tigers opened fire at a group of civilians killing 19 and injuring at least 69 when over 1,057 civilians escaped and arrived at Udayarkattu seeking protection with the Security Forces in Puthukudiyiruppu yesterday morning.

Around 15 critically injured civilians were airlifted to nearby hospitals. Among the dead were a boy and a girl and five **females**. Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanay-akkara said over 1,057 civilians under **LTTE** captivity making their way from the Mullaitivu jungle to reach Government controlled areas, had been shot by the Tigers in Udayarkattu. "Among the injured were 11 children and 26 **women**. Fifteen critically wounded civilians were airlifted to Anuradhapura and Vavuniya hospitals," Brigadier Nanayakkara told the Daily News. Over 1,057 fleeing civilians had reached west of Puthukudiyiruppu between 6.00am and 7.00am at Task Force-II amidst raging small arms fire by the **LTTE**. "This was the third inhuman attack carried out by the Tigers to prevent civilians from fleeing **LTTE** captivity in the Mullaitivu jungles," he added. Over 6,500 civilians who had crossed Visuamadu, Dharmapuram and Sugandirapuram reached cleared areas on Monday. The number of civilians crossing over is increasing amidst **LTTE** attempts to prevent them. The Tigers facing a humiliating defeat are using civilians as a human shield. At least 30 people were killed, including 10 civilians and 20 soldiers, while 64 others were injured when an **LTTE** woman suicide bomber mingling with IDPs arriving in Visuamadu blew herself up on Monday. 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

As Sri Lanka Fighting Seems Near an End, Fears Rise Over What Comes Next

The New York Times
February 7, 2009 Saturday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 5

Length: 1204 words

Byline: By MARK MCDONALD; Thomas Fuller contributed reporting.

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

The frustrated shopkeeper, a middle-aged, ethnic Tamil man, surreptitiously dug into a stack of cricket shirts and pulled out a plastic bag. Inside was yet another bag that held a folded-up Tamil-language newspaper -- not forbidden, he said, but certain to raise suspicions among his Sinhalese neighbors and the authorities.

"This government, no one can speak against them," said the shopkeeper, who was too fearful to give his name. "If I talk, maybe you will not see me here tomorrow. I can disappear."

After more than 25 years of bloodletting, the government's war with ethnic Tamil separatists may be in its final stages in the north of the country. This week, President Mahinda Rajapaksa predicted that the war was just days from ending, and one of his senior ministers said that the military campaign was in its "mopping up" stages.

But even with the end of conventional warfare, anger and resentment are likely to linger for many Tamils in the north -- anger at what they call decades of official marginalization, and resentment over what they say are discriminatory education policies and the suppression of the Tamil language by administrations dominated by the Sinhalese Buddhist majority.

Until those issues are addressed, and unless the war ends on equitable terms, many people here -- Tamils and Sinhalese alike -- say they fear that the war will not so much end as change form, as a new generation of Tamils comes of age discontented.

"The government newspapers are just telling lies, but our young Tamil boys are knowing about all the people being killed by the army in the north," the shopkeeper said. "These boys are becoming young lions. They will grow up to be lions. You will see."

The Sri Lankan military added another victory on Friday to its startling string of battlefield successes, but there was little sign of relief for the tens of thousands of civilians trapped in rebel-held territory.

The military said it captured the base that housed the security detail of Velupillai Prabhakaran, the founder and leader of the separatist rebel movement, who was believed to be leading the last stand against the government forces.

As Sri Lanka Fighting Seems Near an End, Fears Rise Over What Comes Next

Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara, a spokesman for the Sri Lankan military, said rebels had fled the base during the attack, and none had been captured.

Brigadier Nanayakkara said he could not put a time frame on the capture of the remaining rebel-held territory, which the Defense Ministry says has been whittled down to about 60 square miles.

"If there were no civilians, it would be a matter of days," he said. "We want to finish it off as soon as possible, hopefully within a couple of weeks."

The government's claims about the state of the fighting are difficult to assess because of restrictions on the access of independent journalists to the war zone. But with the battle clearly going in its favor, the government is now apparently determined to vanquish the insurgents of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, also known as the **Tamil Tigers**, once and for all.

The rebels are backed into a small wedge of jungle along Sri Lanka's northeastern coast, having seen their strongholds steadily toppled. The defense secretary rejected calls from the United States, Britain, Japan and the European Union for a negotiated truce; he said the military would continue to press the fight until the **Tamil Tigers** unconditionally surrendered.

What happens after that is on the minds of many Tamils and others, who fear the insurgents will simply shift from conventional warfare to guerrilla and terrorist tactics, like urban suicide bombings, something they have used before, even in Colombo, the capital.

Today, grim-faced soldiers stand at posts on nearly every block in the center of Colombo, checking faces, IDs and anything that seems at all out of the ordinary. And that often means checking anyone who looks to be an ethnic Tamil.

Even if the rebels are defeated, the security lockdown, and the fear and resentment it engenders, is almost certain to continue, people here say.

"These problems won't be sorted unless there's a fair resolution after the war," said S. Thiayaraja, a Tamil businessman in the mountain resort town of Nuwara Eliya.

He said such a resolution would have to include government-financed development of schools, infrastructure, housing in the Tamil areas of the north, as well as some political autonomy with more Tamils being accepted into the military, the police and the civil service.

"It also won't be sorted until Prabhakaran is found," Mr. Thiayaraja said.

One report from the Defense Ministry also said security forces had found a training camp for suicide bombers that included the room where the bombers would have their going-away "final dinner of death" with Mr. Prabhakaran.

Some say Mr. Prabhakaran is still at the head of the rebel forces, ready to fight to the end. But there are many other theories on his whereabouts, from seeking sanctuary on a relative's ship to hiding in Malaysia. Mr. Prabhakaran and the **Tamil Tigers** began fighting for a separate Tamil homeland in 1983, with the group's first assault coming in an ambush of government troops. When subsequent anti-Tamil riots left hundreds dead, the battle was fully joined.

From the beginning of the group's struggle, the **Tamil Tigers** used suicide bombers to crippling effect, essentially perfecting the tactic in a ruthless campaign against police, military and civilian targets.

Central to those attacks was the use of **female** bombers. A **female** bomber assassinated Rajiv Gandhi, the Indian prime minister, in 1991. Two years later, another Tamil Tiger suicide bomber killed the Sri Lankan president, Ranasinghe Premadasa.

As Sri Lanka Fighting Seems Near an End, Fears Rise Over What Comes Next

A **female** bomber also struck the motorcade of Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka in April 2006. The general, the head of the Sri Lankan Army, was wounded in the attack, and he is now being hailed in Sri Lanka for having led the military to the brink of success against the **Tamil Tigers**.

But it has come at a huge cost. Numerous reports of civilian casualties have trickled out from the war zone in recent days. The government says about 100,000 civilians remain in the pocket of rebel-held territory, but aid agencies offer estimates that are twice as high. The government says it made safe passage available for 2,600 civilians on Thursday and Friday.

The International Committee of the Red Cross says hundreds of civilians have been killed in shelling, and human rights groups accuse the government and the rebels of abuses. The United Nations World Food Program warned on Friday of worsening food shortages in rebel-held areas. The war and its accompanying draconian security measures have frightened most foreign tourists away from Colombo. And in the Buddhist resort town of Kandy, in central Sri Lanka, the hotels, guest houses and health and beauty retreats are nearly empty, even during what should be the height of the tourist season.

"Three weeks, maximum," said a 54-year-old Tamil laborer in Nuwara Eliya when asked how long he thought the rebels, who are also known by the initials L.T.T.E., could hold out. He gave his name only as Ramalingam, "The L.T.T.E. is already showing white flags."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

PHOTO: An ethnic Tamil child at a hospital. The International Committee of the Red Cross says shelling killed hundreds of civilians. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ASSOCIATED PRESS) MAP: In the past, rebels carried out suicide bombings in Colombo. Map details area of Sri Lanka.

Load-Date: February 7, 2009

Sri Lankan Air Force bombs rebels' administrative center

Xinhua General News Service

December 14, 2008 Sunday 1:15 AM EST

Copyright 2008 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Military

Length: 251 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Dec. 13

Body

Sri Lanka's Air Force carried out nine air strikes in and around Tamil Tiger rebels' administrative center of Kilinochchi in the north on Saturday, defense officials said.

Air Force spokesman Janaka Nanayakkara said nine air strikes were launched at the strongholds of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) in the Kilinochchi and Paranthan area from 6:30 a.m. (0100 GMT) to 3 p.m. (0930 GMT).

Nanayakkara claimed that a senior **female LTTE** leader was killed in the air strikes and heavy damages were caused to the rebels' defense line around Kilinochchi, which has been under siege for several weeks.

Meanwhile, officials from the Ministry of Defense said the troops are now entering into the suburbs of Mullaitivu, the other main town currently held by the **LTTE** in the north.

Escalation of clashes in the island's separatist armed conflict since 2006 has seen the rebels being evicted from most of their strongholds.

The **LTTE** lost the entire Eastern Province to the military last year and the troops have maintained their momentum by winning more territory in the north.

The **LTTE** has been fighting for a separate state in the north and east for minority Tamils since July 1983, when organized mobs from the majority Sinhala community killed a large number of minority Tamils living in the south and also destroyed their homes and economic interests.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in the island's civil war -- one of the longest in Asia.

Load-Date: December 16, 2008

FILM: SRI LANKA DECRIES DOCUMENTARY ON TAMIL SUICIDE BOMBERS

IPS - Inter Press Service

May 6, 2008 Tuesday

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Length: 1208 words

Byline: Tarjei Kidd Olsen

Dateline: OSLO, Norway, May 6 2008

Body

A Norwegian filmmaker has outraged the Sri Lankan government by releasing a documentary about two 24-year-old Tamil women training to end their lives as suicide bombers.

The Sri Lankan government has accused the documentary of "glorifying suicide bombers" on its Web site, and the government unsuccessfully tried to prevent the film from being shown at a festival in the United States on April 4 by pressuring the U.S. State Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The women featured in the documentary are from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, often called the Tamil Tigers, a rebel group that has been fighting for an independent homeland for the Tamil ethnic minority since the 1970s. The demand has arisen, they say, in reaction to abuses and discrimination by the Sri Lankan government.

A third of the Tigers are women.

The documentary "My Daughter the Terrorist" follows Darshika and Puhachudar, two elite female soldiers in the Tamil Tigers, as they train for missions that may include suicide bombings against perceived enemy targets. It also includes an interview with the mother of one of the young women, painting a tragic picture of loss and sacrifice in war.

According to the film, about 300 hundred suicide bombings are alleged to have been committed by the Black Tigers, Darshika and Puhachudar's elite Tamil Tiger squad founded in 1987. Although the women insist that only military targets are attacked, Human Rights Watch accuses both the rebels and the military of serious human rights abuses, including attacks against civilians and the forced recruitment of child soldiers.

Hostilities have increased dramatically following the gradual collapse of peace talks and a ceasefire brokered by Norway in 2001. A large-scale government offensive against the rebels is currently raging in the northern parts of the country, with heavy casualties reported on both sides.

Active Black Tiger soldiers have never been interviewed before, according to the 2007 documentary by Snitt Film Production. Norwegian director Beate Arnestad had to spend one-and-a-half years in sensitive negotiations with the Tamil Tigers before gaining access during the ceasefire period.

"I wanted to show the human costs of war," Arnestad said. "Very often you only get official statements from politicians, but I wanted to see what the real costs are -- what happens to a population that has experienced more than a generation of warfare. Is this how terrorism is born? I wondered how people become suicide bombers, a choice that seems completely incomprehensible to most of us," she said.

FILM: SRI LANKA DECRIES DOCUMENTARY ON TAMIL SUICIDE BOMBERS

Arnestad added: "Most families live very traditional lives, and particularly women. For a woman to first become a soldier and then a suicide bomber candidate is a huge and radical step."

In the documentary, Darshika explains how she joined the rebels as a 12-year-old after losing her father and suffering abuse and humiliation at the hands of the military. The young Puhallchudar and her family were rescued by Tamil Tiger rebels defending a bridge that they had to cross to escape a military attack.

"Thanks to them [the Tamil Tigers], our family was saved. When we were running through the shelling the army attacked us. ... But the movement fought back. That's how we survived. After that I felt that I had to save these [Tamil] people. I thought that if I don't join the movement, our people will be forced into slavery," Puhallchudar sobbed in an emotional scene in the documentary.

Even though both girls are Christian, they are not driven by religious fanaticism. The Tamil Tigers do not adhere to any particular religion, according to the pair. In the documentary Darshika asks: "If there is a God, why does he keep us in this endless misery? Even those who came to church for protection ended up in pools of blood."

Producer and co-director Morten Daae said that while the suicide bombers are not religious martyrs, they are revered as heroes.

"In the West there is a preconception that all suicide bombers are fanatical Muslims expecting virgins in the afterlife, but that is not the case here," Daae said. "They don't believe they will be rewarded in the afterlife or anything like that, but they will be remembered every year on Heroes' Day, when all the villages ceremoniously honor their individual martyrs with pictures and candles."

"They are willing to go that extra mile to protect their country and their families and their people, and they are proud of it. And because they live in a very male-dominated society, the female Black Tigers have an extremely high status compared to ordinary women. They are both respected and feared. When they are out among civilians, you can to a certain degree see that they radiate much more self-confidence and authority than the civilian women next to them."

It took some time for director Arnestad to gain the girls' trust. Daae believes that the fact that Arnestad is a woman helped. "In the beginning the girls were very careful and mostly stuck to the official line. I do think that Beate's position as a woman meant that her long period of trying to convince them to open up actually paid off, because it is easier to talk to a woman. Of course, she is also a very skilled interviewer."

Things became easier still when the girls were taken to places they could relate to, such as childhood sites. Daae gives the example of a scene in the documentary where Darshika arrives at a church that was rebuilt after being destroyed in the war, before being destroyed again by the 2004 tsunami. "She broke down completely because this was the church that she used to attend as a child. After that she began to pour her heart out."

"My Daughter the Terrorist" has won prizes and has been well received by most international audiences, but Sri Lanka's government has continued to criticize it.

Arnestad does not understand the government's reaction. "The documentary does not justify terrorism or glorify suicide bombers -- rather the opposite," she said. "I also find it strange that this criticism is being levied a whole year after we first released the documentary. I suspect this is because it is being shown in so many places, while the Sri Lankan government does its best to impose a complete news blackout."

Following a suicide bombing on April 6 that killed the transport minister and a national Olympic hero, Daae received anonymous death threats via e-mail. The producer does not believe that they will be carried out but said he understands why some people have reacted so strongly.

"For some in Sri Lanka, it no doubt appears that a Norwegian man and a Norwegian woman are being so impudent as to support people that they consider as mere butchers, which is quite something. We do not support them -- if we support anyone it must be the victims. But it is not so surprising that they feel this way as they have most probably never actually seen the documentary and have only heard the government's version of events."

FILM: SRI LANKA DECRIES DOCUMENTARY ON TAMIL SUICIDE BOMBERS

Filming for the documentary wrapped up just as the ceasefire began to collapse, and Darshika and Puhachudar were posted to a new mission, according to the Tamil Tiger leadership. Arnestad and Daae have not been able to trace their whereabouts since then and do not know if they are still alive.

Load-Date: May 6, 2008

End of Document

Troops regain Palampiddy

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 19, 2008 Monday 1:58 PM EST

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Length: 351 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 19 -- Mannar: Troops on Saturday afternoon regained Palampiddy, a major **LTTE** stronghold in Mannar.

The Army faced severe resistance by the terrorists as they reached Palampiddy, about 8 km north of Madhu, which the Forces captured recently.

Palampiddy is strategically important as it connects Vidattaltivu in northwest, Madhu in south, Mullikumam in southeast and Nedunkal in northeast.

"This will cripple administrative work and supplies to the terrorists," military sources said.

Troops have so far recovered 13 **LTTE** dead bodies, 11 T-56 weapons, one MPMG (Multi Purpose Machine Gun) and four communication sets from the area.

Troops after consolidating their positions in and around Palampiddy are now conducting search and clear operations.

Sri Lanka Air Force MI-24 helicopter gunships launched a close air support mission for advancing troops on the Mannar front yesterday morning targeting a gathering of **LTTE** cadres in the Andankulama area. Air Force spokesperson Wing Commander Andrew Wjesooriya told that the targeted location was the same one targeted in Saturday's mission.

He said that the air sorties were carried out around 11.50 am as the Army reported a fresh enemy gathering at the tactical operation centre located 3km northwards from the Army's present defence line.

The exact damage to the terrorists has to be ascertained, he added. Meanwhile, troops engaged in multi-pronged offensive operation in Wannu theatre inflicted considerable damages to the enemy in clashes occurred in Vavuniya and Welioya fronts yesterday, May 16. On Vavuniya front, troops attacked a group of **LTTE** terrorists after observing their movements. Four **LTTE** cadres were killed in Navathkulam.

Meanwhile, troops engaged in a clearing operation in general area Periyamadu uncovered seven bodies of slain **LTTE** cadres who were killed in fighting erupted on Thursday.

Six **female** bodies and one male body were among them. In addition, five T-56 weapons, one Multi Purpose Machine Gun (MPMG) and one T-81 weapon were also among the items found.

Troops regain Palampiddy

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

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Load-Date: September 16, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lanka celebrates 60th anniversary as bus attack blamed on rebels kills 12 civilians

Associated Press International

February 5, 2008 Tuesday 12:33 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 392 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka celebrated its 60th independence anniversary with a display of military might, but suspected rebels marred the holiday with their own show of power, killing 13 passengers in a bus bombing.

Tanks, jets, attack boats and thousands of troops paraded through the capital, Colombo, to mark the holiday Monday as the country's quarter-century-old civil war raged on.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa railed against the separatist **Tamil Tigers** rebels in a speech, reiterating his vow to force the rebels out of their northern stronghold and destroy them.

"Our defense forces have achieved victories that were never before seen. Terrorism is facing a defeat that it has never before faced," he said.

Fighting between government forces and the Tigers has exploded across the northern jungles in recent months, with suspected rebels launching a wave of attacks against civilian and military targets deep inside government-controlled territory.

The independence day festivities along Colombo's coastal road began with a 21-gun salute and a parade by hundreds of army, navy, air force and police officials, along with tanks, artillery guns and multi-barrel rocket launchers. Twelve naval gunships and fast-attack craft sailed off the coast, while 26 fighter jets and attack helicopters flew overhead.

Hours later a roadside bomb tore through a bus about 240 kilometers (150 miles) northeast of Colombo, killing 13 people and wounded 16 others, said military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara. He blamed the Tigers.

Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan did not answer calls seeking comment. The Tigers routinely deny responsibility for such attacks.

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

Over the weekend a **female** suicide bomber killed 11 people at Colombo's main railway station and a bus bombing killed 18 people, mostly Buddhist pilgrims, in a central town.

Sri Lanka celebrates 60th anniversary as bus attack blamed on rebels kills 12 civilians

The **Tamil Tigers** have been fighting since 1983 for an independent homeland for ethnic minority Tamils after decades of being marginalized by Sinhalese-dominated governments. More than 70,000 people have died in the fighting.

A 2002 cease-fire fostered hopes for a lasting peace, but the truce broke down as new fighting over the past two years killed 5,000 people. The government officially pulled out of the agreement last month.

Load-Date: February 5, 2008

End of Document

More civilians enter cleared areas

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

March 28, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 269 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, March 28 -- Over 371 civilians kept under **LTTE** captivity in uncleared areas reached the cleared areas in Puthukudiyiruppu yeasterday after escaping from the **LTTE**, bringing the total number of civilians who escaped from the **LTTE** to 58,000 as of yesterday.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said groups of civilians including 940 children, 571 males and 597 **females** reached troops of the 58 Division in general area Pudukuduirippu during day hours on Thursday. Meanwhile, over 371 fleeing civilians crossing the **LTTE** held area reported to the 58 division throughout yesterday. "The IDPs were later directed to the welfare centres after proving them with essential needs and medical treatment", he added. The Navy evacuated the 14 batch of patients consisting of 488 patients and their close relatives on the ICRC chartered vessel "MV Green Ocean" on Thursday. Navy spokesman Captain D.K.P. Dassanayake said the evacuation of patients and their close relatives trapped under the **LTTE** in the uncleared areas in Mullaithivu is being carried out under the ICRC flag. "The Navy is providing safe passage for evacuees on humanitarian grounds", he added. The sick among the evacuees after disembarkation at Pulmuadai had been provided with emergency medical treatment by Naval doctors and rushed to the Field hospital in Pulmudai and the General hospital in Padaviya. "They consisted 115 children, 157 males and 216 **females**. Among them were 100 male and 63 **female** patients needed for immediate medical treatment", Captain Dassanayake said. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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WANNI WAR AND THE TRAGIC PLIGHT OF TRAPPED CIVILIANS

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

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Body

Colombo, Feb. 3 -- Wise King Solomon when faced with the task of determining maternity of an infant had an innovative solution. He announced that the baby would be cut in half and given to both women claiming it. While the false claimant agreed, the actual mother was not ready to let her child die. She asked Solomon to hand over the infant to the other woman rather than let the child die.

In short, the real concern and love for her child made the mother ready to give up the child rather than see the infant killed by sticking to her rightful claim. She was ready to sacrifice her ownership of the infant rather than see it perish. By that act of willingness to let go of what was her's to preserve the child's life the mother not only established true maternity in the eyes of Solomon but also got the baby back. Even King Solomon with all his wisdom would find it very, very difficult to deliver a sound verdict on the unfolding tragedy in the northern mainland of Sri Lanka known as the Wanni where two conflicting claims are warring within the same space. Conflicting Claims On the one hand there are the armed forces of the Government of Sri Lanka. They are fighting to liberate the land and people of the Wanni from the Tigers and reunify the Country. On the other , there is the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) resisting the army and holding on to the land and people stubbornly . They claim to be fighting for the liberation of the Tamils from Sri Lankan hegemony. Both sides say that the welfare and safety of the people or innocent civilians is of paramount importance. Ostensibly the war itself is being waged to "liberate" them. But in actual practice the so - called liberation war is affecting the helpless people drastically. Both sides deny, ignore or gloss over the harm committed by them and point the finger only at the other side. The blame for the tragic civilian predicament is laid at the door of the other side alone. Thus the Government accuses the LTTE of restricting civilian movement and holding them captive against their will as human shields. The LTTE pinpoints the death and destruction caused by artillery shelling and aerial bombardment and charges Colombo of conducting a "genocidal" war. While charges and counter - charges fly the reality on ground is that the trapped civilian plight is worsening increasingly. The territory controlled by the LTTE shrinks as the armed forces advance rapidly. When large numbers of displaced civilians and LTTE cadres share limited space civilian vulnerability escalates as war intensifies. This is what is happening now. Militaristic Narrative Both state and tiger propaganda based on their respective perspectives would have us believe that there is only a single , dominant "militaristic" narrative about what is going on in the Wanni now. The humanitarian predicament is relegated to the background. The primary focus of the state is the successful military campaign. During earlier phases when tiger resistance was stiff and the army seemed to be bogged down at various fronts , the government propagandists would say that this was not a war for real estate. But when the army began wresting back tiger controlled territory the entire propaganda thrust changed with the emphasis on the territory regained. In this scenario where only military gains are spotlighted the predicament of the ordinary civilians is omitted. Only tiger losses are highlighted. If and when a village is taken by the army there is no mention of what happened to the civilian inhabitants there It is as if civilians are non - existent or invisible. The tigers were also focusing more on military developments for propaganda earlier. But as the LTTE

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began suffering military setbacks there was a shift. The tiger and pro - tiger propagandists began playing up civilian deaths, displacement and destruction. They began accusing the "Sinhala" government of "Genocide". The charge of deliberate genocide was an extreme one that could not be substantiated. While several people have been killed or injured these numbers are much less when compared to what could have been the casualty toll if large - scale havoc had been unleashed with genocidal intent. There is also the phenomenon of large numbers of Tamils living in other "non" tiger" areas without undergoing "genocide".

State Propaganda The propaganda machinery of the state messed up things by blatantly denying civilian casualties. The policy "zero tolerance of civilian casualties" is a good one if adhered to. But even a simpleton knows that it cannot be implemented in a war situation of the type existing in the Wanni. In the West such losses are grudgingly accepted but glibly rationalised as "collateral damage". Though state propaganda refuses to acknowledge it or attempts to deflect it , the reality is that civilians are getting killed and injured. This does not mean that the armed forces are engaging in such actions deliberately with genocidal intent as tigers propagandists allege. More by accident rather than design , the civilian casualty toll is on the rise. According to a Reuters report filed by C. Bryson Hull from Colombo on Jan22nd the Mullaitheevu district Government Agent , Ms. Emelda Sukumar, was quoted as saying "Around 30 people died in the morning today. Personally I saw that nearly 100 people have died from Saturday up to Today. More than 300 have been injured". It may be recalled that Ms. Sukumar was injured slightly when artillery shells exploded near her official residence some time ago. When news reports appeared the Official reaction was to deny that it had happened and blame tiger propaganda. Later there were pictures in the media of Ms. Sukumar with a bandaged hand at a meeting chaired by the overall Wanni Army commander. Even now attempts are likely to be on to cast doubts on Ms. Sukumar's statement saying she is living in tiger controlled areas and could be forced to say certain things by them. Earlier when health officials at Puthukkudiyiruppu told the BBC about deaths at the hospital puerile efforts were on to cast doubts on those statements too. It is indeed pathetic to see some cabinet ministers, bureaucrats and official spokespersons trying to assert that civilians have not been affected at all in the recent military offensives. The people of this country are not fools and it is an insult to their collective intelligence when sections of the government and their minions try to cover up a whole pumpkin in a single plate of rice.

Tiger Propaganda Tiger propaganda is full of news and pictures about the deaths and injuries caused to civilians by aerial and artillery attacks. But then these are not the only causes for civilian deaths and injuries in the Wanni. The self - imposed sole representatives of the Tamil people have killed and injured many civilians for trying to flee danger and destruction to safer places. Though the tigers claim to be protectors of the Tamil people the ironic situation today is that the people are "protecting" the tigers . Mao Ze Dong's famous dictum is about guerrilla fish swimming in an ocean of people. If the Wanni is bereft of Civilians the LTTE would flip about like fish out of water. The tigers need the civilians. This was the rationale behind the LTTE's "engineered exodus" of 1995 where hundreds of thousands of civilians were compelled to relocate to the Wanni from Jaffna. This is the rationale now for holding on to the bulk of civilians by force and terror in the Wanni. Many years ago LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran boasted that people were their fortresses. (Makkale Em Arangal) Today the Wanni civilians are the last hope of beleaguered tigers. They are virtual "human shields". Just as state propaganda ignores civilian suffering caused by bombing and shelling , LTTE propaganda blacks out the repressive violence perpetrated on civilians trying to flee the Wanni for safety.

Frantic Attempts The LTTE and pro - tiger elements are engaging in frantic attempts to capture international attention and sympathy over the tragic plight of civilians in the Wanni. There has been practically no response from the International community (IC) so far. This is not because the IC is oblivious to the civilian predicament but more due to the universal contempt for the LTTE and its methods. The tigers and their acolytes have not realised that world opinion is aghast at the tigers debarring civilians to move out of the War - infested Wanni to safer areas while engaging in propaganda about civilian safety . If the LTTE is truly concerned about harm befalling innocent Tamil civilians in their midst then all it has to do is to negotiate "safe corridors" via the ICRC and allow those who want to go to move out. There may be some sections of the population who may not want to leave despite the dangers. But those who want to go must be allowed to do so. Instead of allowing such free choice the tigers are restraining the people en masse. The demand is for an immediate ceasefire and not safe passage out for civilians. These actions reinforce suspicion that the LTTE focus on the civilian plight is a tactic to pressurise Colombo into declaring a ceasefire. Such a ceasefire would benefit not only the people but also the tigers. Unfortunately for the LTTE neither the Government nor influential sections of the IC are for a ceasefire.

Swift Strides Even if the tigers are insincere about the civilian predicament and have ulterior motives in drawing attention to the people's plight, there is no escaping the fact that the wretched of the Wanni earth are in a desperate situation. The unexpectedly swift strides by the armed forces and the unanticipated crumbling of tiger defences have created a crisis of safe space. The tigers are being assailed

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from multiple directions. The 55 division is gearing up for an assault on strategic Challai from Chundikulam in the north. The 58 division proceeding along the A - 35 highway axis has taken Tharmapuram and is confronting the LTTE in Puliampokkanai and also in the western and north - western areas of Viswamadhu. The 57 division that took Ramanathapuram has moved through Kalmadhukulam to reach the Viswamadhukulam tank. The 57 is engaging the LTTE in the South and South - west of Viswamadhu. The 59 division is encircling Mullaitheevu town from three directions. In the south the 59 is at Silawathai, in the west at Neeravipitty and in the north at Mullivaaikkal and areas adjacent to the Nandhikkadal lagoon. In a move that took the LTTE by surprise Task Force Three moving along the Old Kandy road axis from Ambakaamam towards Iranaimadhu changed direction and struck out in a north - eastern direction and reached Udayarkattu. Task Force Four has moved along along the Oddusuddan - Puthukudiyiruppu road axis and gone beyond Korudamadhu. In another unexpected move Task Force - Two moved along the Kanagarayankulam - Karippattimurippu road to the A - 34 and from there reached Mulliyawalai - Thaniootru. Then it also started moving north along the Thaniootru - Puthukudiyiruppu road axis towards Puthukudiyiruppu. All these military manoeuvres have resulted in the LTTE being boxed into a swathe of territory amounting to about 600 - 650 sq km in area. This includes about a 22 km stretch of beach front. This rough quadri - lateral zone has extensive forests, jungles, grass plains and lakes, rivers and tanks. Thus the living space could only be about 200 - 250 km in area. Shrinking Space If these military moves continue in these directions and if tiger resistance gradually declines then this "space" will shrink more and more. In fact all positional warfare by the LTTE is bound to cease once the army takes the key areas of Challai, Puthukudiyiruppu, Viswamadhu and Mullaitheevu town. There is also the Paranthan - Mullaitheevu road known as the A - 35 highway which is 52 km in length with 37 km coming under Mullaitheevu district. But this decreasing space for the LTTE also means diminishing "lebenstraum" for the civilians. What is their fate? The helpless civilians have been moving from place to place in an elusive search for safety and security. They have managed to keep ahead of the rolling military juggernaut. But there are limits of space. The pathetic civilians are reaching those limits. As stated in these columns the unfolding tale in the Wanni is not that of clashing militaristic elements alone. It is also the tragic drama of a suffering people who for no fault of their own have been reduced to a desperate struggle for the fundamental right of life. Do not the people deserve some consideration as a war is being fought by both sides claiming to "liberate" them? Defence Calculations There is an expectation among dominant sections of the defence establishment that the people under intense pressure could rise up against the LTTE. Also some feel that the LTTE at breaking point would allow the people to leave tiger territory as before in Vaaharai, Kudumbimalai/Thoppigala and Paduvaankarai areas of Batticaloa district. This calculation is cold - bloodedly inhuman and ruthless. One cannot deliberately use force to aggravate pressure on a people and make them act in a particular way. More importantly such hopes could turn into dupes because the LTTE would not show civilians any mercy in this respect. In Batticaloa the LTTE had decided to withdraw from areas held by it and relocate to the Wanni. So it allowed the people to leave at the eleventh hour. But it's different in the Wanni which is regarded by it as a rear base. Here it would fight, resist and retreat with the people forced to tag along. It needs the people and will not let them go. Even the UN has been unable to get local Tamil employees and families out of the Wanni. Furthermore the tigers have demonstrated this determined mindset by putting guards at key points to prevent civilians from leaving. Those caught were publicly executed as examples. In the case of a father and son who were caught the father was spared but the son shot dead. In Murasumoddai a group of people running towards army lines in defiance of the tigers were mowed down in cold blood. Earlier the LTTE would detain offenders under terrible conditions as punishment. But now the tigers are under terrific military pressure and resort to summary execution. In a brutal illustration of how the LTTE is acting now the tigers ordered critically injured cadres to bite the cyanide capsule. Those who did not do so were shot dead. Being in a beleaguered situation the critically wounded cadres were a burden to the LTTE hierarchy. If that is how the LTTE is treating those cadres (many of whom were conscripts) who were injured in the fighting one can only shudder at the fate of civilians seen as obstructions or traitors escaping to enemy territory. Hence the expectation that the civilians could break free of tiger clutches is callously unrealistic unless an "accidental miracle " occurs where tiger sentries are killed suddenly and an escape route opens up. Humanitarian Catastrophe This then necessitates some constructive initiatives by the Government to ensure civilian safety and security . Unlike the LTTE the Government is democratically elected and cannot let militaristic calculations alone regulate its conduct. If the Government is genuine about wanting to liberate Wanni civilians fromn LTTE tyranny it must then show adequate concern for their safety and security. At a time when the armed forces are perceived as being on the threshold of a conclusive victory in conventional war against the LTTE there would be a natural tendency to suspect the motives of those raising concerns about civilian safety and security. Not all those who refer to the civilian predicament are trying to prevent

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the LTTE from being defeated in positional warfare. While tiger elements may be expressing concern for civilians as a ruse to bring about a ceasefire, such attempts have to be differentiated from other, humanitarian expressions. What cannot be ruled out is that a real humanitarian catastrophe may occur if suitable arrangements are not made. While objecting to all requests or demands for a ceasefire the Government and the defence establishment have been realistic enough to make at least token concessions to the need to prevent a potential humanitarian catastrophe. Safety Zone Earlier there was a media announcement that a fire free zone would be set up in Viswamadhu and Oddusuddan. Nothing came of it and now Oddusuddan is in army hands while Viswamadhu is turning into a battleground. In another move the army announced the setting up of a safety zone in an area of about 40 sq km. This was an "irregular hexagon" shaped area between a 4 km stretch from Udayarkattu junction to the "Mangal Paalam" (Yellow bridge) and a 8 km from The junction to Iruttumdhru and Thevipuram. The ICRC was informed and leaflets were dropped from the air. But this ill-planned move was doomed from the start. The main drawback in the demarcated area was that it was in the various lines of advance by the armed forces. The tigers were already in entrenched positions within some points of the zone. Besides it was a sudden imposition without any attempt to obtain LTTE concurrence through ICRC efforts. Even before people were aware of the safety zone and could move in there fighting escalated. Tragically civilian structures were damaged and civilian casualty toll mounted within the demarcated safety zone. It was a humanitarian tragedy with both sides accusing each other. The Army accused the LTTE of moving into the safety zone and commencing firing. The LTTE charged the armed forces of attacking civilians in an area declared as a safety zone. Temporary Truce What is necessary now is not to engage in mutual recrimination but to pursue with the idea of declaring a safety zone for civilians. For this a temporary humanitarian truce is needed. Within this short time span a mutually agreed safety zone should be demarcated. Civilians must move in with international supervision. But then will both sides agree? Would the Government anticipating quick victory consent to a "delay" by enacting a temporary truce to set up a safety zone for civilians? Likewise will the LTTE clinging on to the civilians for its own benefit agree to let them slip out of its clutches by enabling them to move into the safety zone? These questions take me once again to the beginning of this article where I referred to the Wise king Solomon and the two women fighting over one child. In that instance the real mother who genuinely loved her child opted to give it up to the other woman rather than see it die. In this instance both the clashing forces claim to be concerned about the people they are fighting to "liberate" from each other. Can these contending forces at the very least adopt measures ensuring civilian safety? Will there be a positive move by one side here as in Solomon's story or will both "mother claimants" remain unyielding and let the "disputed child" die rather than let the other person win or gain? Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Tigers exert maximum pressure on civilians

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Body

Colombo, June 27 -- As the South is preparing for yet another election, with the dissolution of the Sabaragamuwa and the North Central Provincial Councils, troops engaged in the Wanni battle front have shifted towards more and more a decisive phase amidst efforts of the LTTE to put the brakes on the ongoing military operations.

The LTTE leadership is getting more and more frustrated as many of their military installations are now falling to the hands of the Security Forces who are advancing towards their Wanni strongholds from three fronts. The Army is increasing pressure on them with the deployment of another offensive Division from last week. It has given them bigger headache.

Wanni sources now reveal that the pressure on the civilian population by the LTTE is now at its maximum level as the Tiger leadership is aware of the fact that ultimately it is the civilian population which can be used as a shield against the advancing troops into the Tiger territory.

This situation is clear as the number of civilians arriving in the Government controlled area from the uncleared areas in Wanni has increased this month. The boat owners taking civilians out of the uncleared areas have made it a lucrative business as families are willing to offer their life long wealth to them in their bid to seek refuge in cleared areas to flee Tiger harassment.

According to the Military officials in Mannar more than 150 civilians have arrived in Mannar through the Pallimunai, Navy Marshalling Point within this month alone. The total number of civilians who crossed into cleared areas now stands at 426.

Two families with little babies sought refuge of the Sri Lankan Navy at Erukkulampiddy beach in Mannar a week ago offering a nearly Rs.250,000 necklace to the man who had taken them to this area of Mannar. They have come along way from Puthukuduiruppu in Mullaitivu to Nachchikuda in the Northwestern coast to cross into the cleared areas in Mannar.

According to these civilians they have to pay a minimum Rs.10,000 per person for the boat owners if they are to flee towards cleared areas. Apart from this area the civilians also tend to reach cleared areas through Pulmuddai crossing the sea south of Mullaitivu.

Though the majority of civilians are willing to flee from the Tiger grip, many have to end up their journey in Tiger prisons. After being imprisoned, these civilians are being forcibly used to construct bunkers in the Forward Defences.

Tigers exert maximum pressure on civilians

Many civilians who are fleeing from these areas have revealed that civilians forcibly deployed for the construction of bunkers, have been killed once the advancing troops confront the LTTE.

Many skirmishes have been reported between the civilians and the Tiger cadres once they hand over the bodies of these civilians to their families. The civilians angered over the manner the Tiger cadres are acting have assaulted many of the Tiger cadres who had arrived in their villages to hand over the bodies of the Tiger cadres forcibly recruited to the LTTE and dumped on duties on bunker lines.

The counter action of the LTTE to these skirmishes is to arrest those civilians who had assaulted the Tiger cadres and put them in prisons and punish them. Therefore, the saga of the civilians entrapped in the Wanni is becoming more and more pathetic due to the Tiger pressure to keep them in the Wanni risking their lives in the battle fronts.

However, the date is not so far for the civilians to defy all the Tiger pressures and dare to cross the lines seeking safer havens in the Government controlled areas as the pressure on the Tiger strongholds is becoming strong during the past few weeks.

Despite the military thrust on the LTTE in the Wanni, the Security Forces have not touched the A-9 road for the reason. It was the only road which linked the uncleared areas and the cleared areas. However, civilians entrapped in Wanni cannot depend on this road as they have to adhere to the conditions of the LTTE when crossing into the cleared areas.

The LTTE is making all these frustrated efforts as the troops are making headway into the Tiger territory with the 57 Division under the Command of Major General Jagath Dias marked yet another milestone in its offensive operations against the LTTE in the Vavuniya front by fully securing the Periyamadu village by yesterday morning except for a few locations.

The fall of Periyamadu will become a severe blow to the LTTE as they used this as a major defence line against the advancing troops making use of the natural barriers created out of waterways linking the Periyamadhu tank and its environs.

The troops attached to the 573 Brigade made headway into the Periyamadu village on Tuesday from three directions from the North, from the South and South East directions.

The 11 Sri Lanka Light Infantry Battalion under the command of Lt. Colonel Senaka Wijesinghe, 7 Sri Lanka Light Infantry Battalion under the Command of Eesritha Dissanayake and 9 Gajaba Regiment Battalion under the command of Lt. Col. Chandrasoma moved in to the Periyamdu village by Wednesday evening as hundreds of Tiger cadres operating there had fled the village as they felt that all supply routes connected to the village have been cut off by the troops.

During the confrontations that erupted in Periyamadu on Tuesday nearly ten Tiger cadres have been killed and troops were able to capture three bodies of female Tiger cadres.

On Wednesday a young Lieutenant was killed after being caught in a trap inside Periyamadu village. By yesterday troops were in full control of the Periyamadhu village marking one of the major milestone in the Vavuniya front. With the capture of Periyamadu village they have crossed the Mullaitivu and Mannar district border at the edge of the Periyamadhu tank.

The Tigers have now been deprived of one of their tactical locations which had been used to control both Mannar and Vavuniya fronts to direct artillery fire towards both fronts. According to intelligence reports the Tiger outfit has shifted those long range artillery guns towards Vidathalthivu area and further north of Vidathalthivu.

As troops are taking full control of Periyamadhu village another section of troops are now heading towards the Thunukkai the only civilian populated area in the West of the A-9 road coming under the Mullaitivu district.

Troops have now reached upto the edge of Thunukkai area operating some ten to 12 Kilometres South of Thunukkai at present.

Tigers exert maximum pressure on civilians

This move has affected the LTTE in a bigger way as they cannot keep the civilian population under their command once confrontations take place in such populated areas.

Therefore, the LTTE are keeping the civilians there exerting huge pressure ordering them not to move from the area even if artillery rounds fall on their roofs.

That means the LTTE wants to keep the civilians at any cost as their presence would definitely delay the advance of troops into their stronghold in Kilinochchi via Thunukkai and Mallavi where the LTTE leaders are having major operations rooms.

The presence of the civilians also helps the LTTE to detect deep penetration units now operating inside Tiger held areas in Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi districts.

As troops attached to the 57 Division heading towards the Thunukkai direction the newly formed Task Force II has also begun operations from Mundumurippu area acting as a shield for the troops of the 57 Division and cutting off supplies for the Tiger cadres operating in the Front Lines.

Once this Division is fully formed they will also be able to launch major operations against the Tiger cadres operating west of A-9.

The Task Force -I or the 58 Division now operational in the Mannar 'Rice Bowl' area is also now reaching the final phase of their task of capturing 'Rice Bowl' area which is located bordering to Mannar Pooneryn Sanguppiddi road from the West, Mannar Vavuniya road from the South and Adampan - Andankulam road from the North.

The 58 Division troops operating under the command of Brigadier Shavendra Silva also captured key Tiger locations within the past few days.

On Wednesday troops captured Tenvdaiyan village the last prominent village on the on the road connecting Adampan into Pooneryn -Sangupiddy A-32 road. With the capture of this village on Wednesday only 500 metres to 700 metres are left on the Adampan North to complete the 'Rice Bowl' area which is an open terrain with fallow paddy lands.

From the Eastern Edge of the 'Rice Bowl' area troops have captured Oheddiyarmakankaddakadu a village located some three kilometres northwards from Andankulam. Earlier troops captured the Marattikannaddi, a village located some one and a half kilometres north of Andankulam.

With the capture of this Oheddiyarmakankaddakadu only one kilometre is left on the Mannar rice bowl area on the eastern flank north of Andankulam. The troops have observed that the LTTE had used this village as a launching pad to direct 120 mm mortar towards Mannar.

Troops are poised to capture all the terrain come under the 'Rice Bowl' including massive 11 kilometres long massive defence within the next few days pushing the LTTE further into the interior of the Mannar district towards Vidathalthivu.

With these moves the Tiger leader has shifted their commanding posts out from the 'Rice Bowl' area. Apart from him Vidusha the Women Tiger Wing leaders has also shifted the location further towards Vedithalthivu according to military intelligence.

Under these circumstances Tiger are now more concerned about the Vidathalthivu area now functioning as the key hub of their logistics operations to smuggle essential items coming from the South Indian coastal area after the fall of Silavathura Sea Tiger base.

Meanwhile, troops operating in the Weli Oya front too are now heading towards one of the most sensitive areas of Tiger strongholds in Mullaitivu.

Tigers exert maximum pressure on civilians

The troops attached to the 59 Division under the command of Brigadier Nandana Udawatta are now in the process of crossing the open area created by the LTTE to enter one of the most decisive battles in the Mullaitivu jungles close to Nityakaikulam tank.

According to intelligence sources many Tiger cadres entrapped between Puliyankulam-Mullaitivu road and the Weli Oya battle front are shifting further towards Mullaitivu as their supply routes have been cut off by the advancing troops.

These are indications that the LTTE is strengthening the Mullaitivu front to face a crucial battle to defend their key military assets.

On the heels of the progress achieved by the Security Forces in the battle fronts the battle in the Wanni is expected to enter a speedy drive in the coming months fulfilling the expectations of the people to see an early end to the conflict.

The Security Forces are also aware of the efforts by the LTTE to put brakes on the military thrust by adopting various mechanisms. Troops are now on alert as intelligence reports indicated about Tiger attempts to launch a massive attack on Jaffna after the attack on the Cheerativu island.

The troops have been kept on alert on this situation after strengthening the possible places which can be used by the Tiger cadres to launch their attack. Primarily the Security Forces believe that the LTTE would make an attempt to launch an assault on Jaffna from islands by launching a flotilla of boats to induct their cadres.

In the wake of this alarm the Security Forces have kept the troops on red alert strengthening Security in Jaffna islands, Kilali, Ariyalai, Thanankilappu and Manalkadu.

Possibilities are also there to launch a massive assault on the 57 Division heading towards the centre of the Wanni posing a major threat to the LTTE operations. Therefore, the Security Forces are now armed with their plans to counter those possible attacks by the LTTE in a bid to foil the ongoing military operations.

Apart from this situation the Tiger outfit is expected to take a bigger advantage out of the forthcoming general elections in India by influencing the Tamil Nadu politicians to exert pressure through the Central Government to stop the military operation in the Wanni.

Though many media speculated that the recent visit of the high powered Indian delegation was to pressurise the Government to stop the military operations the Government has very categorically said there was no such pressure from India.

Instead, they were very keen to observe the progress of the military operations and also about the way the Government is progressing with regard to finding a political solution to the North East conflict.

So the country is now heading towards entering a more decisive period in the coming weeks.

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Sri Lanka risks becoming next Zimbabwe, widow warns

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Highlight: Murdered editor's wife says government at war against *Tamil Tigers* now sees dissent and minorities as enemies

Body

Sri Lanka is on the road to a "Zimbabwe-style dictatorship or rule by a military junta like that of Burma" committed to snuffing out dissent, according to the widow of Lasantha Wickrematunga, the crusading Sri Lankan editor who was shot dead last month.

Speaking from an undisclosed location, Sonali Samarasinghe told the Guardian she had had to flee the country after the government "did nothing" to catch her husband's killers.

A month after he was murdered on his way to work by a gang on motorbikes, the police have still not published a description of the murder weapon or asked for help in tracking down the assassins, she claimed.

"I was increasingly under threat. His murderers knew me. They saw my face. They knew I was working with Lasantha on investigations. I went into hiding and then decided to leave Sri Lanka. It was too poisonous and dangerous to stay," she said.

Almost 30 journalists have left Sri Lanka after being "threatened". Reporters have been detained without charge and last month the biggest private television station was ransacked for not beaming enough "patriotic broadcasts".

Samarasinghe said the government was determined to wipe out Tamil Tiger guerrillas and bring an end to the 26-year-old civil war but had also embarked on a campaign to silence criticism.

"We are being labelled traitors and terrorists by state media for expressing concern for civilians killed in a warzone. Sri Lanka is sliding towards some kind of mono-ethnic dictatorship where minorities and dissent is not welcome. It could soon be Zimbabwe or Burma," said Samarasinghe.

Her husband edited the Sunday Leader, a newspaper that had been a fierce critic of the president, Mahinda Rajapaksa, and questioned the cost of the military campaign against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) separatists. Yesterday, a *female* Tamil Tiger suicide bomber killed 20 soldiers and eight civilians as fighting flared in the north of the country.

Wickrematunga had known the president for decades but it was only last summer that the two became close - brought together by a "soothsayer" called Eliyantha White who claimed to have mystical healing powers.

Sri Lanka risks becoming next Zimbabwe , widow warns

Samarasinghe said: "It was mumbo-jumbo but Lasantha trusted him, said he had helped with high blood pressure. Before that Lasantha had refused to meet the president but this quack convinced him to go and see Mahinda."

Despite the burgeoning friendship, Wickrematunga continue to expose corruption and human rights abuses - especially by the defence ministry run by the president's younger brother, Gotabaya . It was after Wickrematunga's last dinner in December with the president that he became "worried and anxious".

Samarasinghe said her husband had told the president he had proof of who had killed a decorated war hero turned politician, Major General Janaka Perera. The former soldier and one-time diplomat had entered politics and become a determined foe of the government's "total war" strategy. He and his wife died in a bomb explosion in October.

"Lasantha was being taken to court by the defence ministry. He told the president he had evidence against the defence ministry about who killed the general and he would use it in open court and then be able to report on it as it would be part of trial proceedings. He told the president that taking him to court was a mistake," said his wife.

However, Wickremetunga had become agitated in the weeks that followed and believed his life was under threat. He attempted to shield himself by inviting the president to his wedding reception in late December but the president never attended.

"He had serious threats from the government, which he had communicated to me. He was upset about the court case. More than ever, I had never seen him so upset. He was angry and deeply worried but he knew who killed the general. We invited Rajapaksa so that people would know we had friends. But he never came."

The evidence about the general's killing, said Samarasinghe, was with a lawyer in Colombo. She said her husband wrote the "finger from the grave" editorial in which he said if he were murdered the government would be behind it.

"Lasantha was killed on Thursday and on Friday a colleague found it on his computer in the office," said Samarsinghe. "I decided to put it on the front page. It was a fitting reply."

Load-Date: February 9, 2009

Sri Lanka suicide blast kills 28

ITN

February 9, 2009 Monday

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Length: 261 words

Body

At least 28 people have been killed by a Tamil Tiger fighter who blew herself up among a group of refugees fleeing Sri Lanka's war zone.

At least 28 people have been killed and 90 wounded by a Tamil Tiger fighter who blew herself up among a group of refugees fleeing Sri Lanka's war zone.

The blast happened at Vishvamadu, a northern town recently captured by the military as it battles to crush the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) separatists and end a 25-year-old war.

"Two officers and 18 others were killed from the army, two officers injured and 48 others injured. Eight civilians were killed and 40 others injured. Many of them are **women** and children," military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

The rate of civilians fleeing fighting between the military and the cornered **LTTE** has picked up sharply over the past week, with at least 14,000 fleeing since Thursday - out of at least 17,900 so far this year.

"We are trying to save Tamil people, but **LTTE** is not allowing us to do that and they have exploded a suicide bomb among civilians," media minister Anura Priyadarshana Yapa said.

The **LTTE** has a squadron of elite fighters known as the Black Tigers who are used for suicide missions and other difficult assaults.

The Tigers are on US, EU, Canadian and Indian terrorism lists, largely for their widespread use of the suicide blast as a weapon of war. The **LTTE** is credited with inventing the suicide jacket.

The Tigers mix with the civilian population to give themselves the ability to infiltrate and launch surprise attacks on the military and others.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

Sri Lanka suicide blast kills 28

End of Document

Displaced killed in suicide blast

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

February 9, 2009 Monday

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Length: 684 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 9 -- At least 30 people including 20 soldiers and ten civilians were killed and 64 including 40 civilians injured when a woman, who had arrived with a group of displaced people, blew herself up at a receiving centre for displaced at Sugandarapuram in Vishvamadu yesterday, the military said.

"The **female** suicide bomber was among the civilians seeking protection with the security forces," military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said adding that the bomber had blown herself just before she was to be screened. Brigadier Nanayakkara claimed the **LTTE** had carried out the attack to prevent civilians crossing into cleared areas. Among the dead were three **female** soldiers, several children and **women**. Ground sources confirmed that the suicide cadre was among the civilians who had come to the Sugandarapuram Maha Vidyalaya, where the military maintains a receiving centre for civilians' crossing over from un-cleared areas in Puthukuduirippu. Initial reports said **female** soldiers serving food to the displaced people were about to check the woman when she blasted herself. The injured were rushed to nearby hospitals while those in a critical condition were airlifted to Anuradhapura and Colombo. The army said the Air Force had moved at least 35 of the injured to the Anuradhapura Hospital by last afternoon. Security forces immediately cordoned off the area, while medical units were rushed to the site, the Military sources said. The blast came at a time thousands of civilians were escaping from **LTTE**-held areas and during the past weeks more than 11,000 people had escaped from the **LTTE**. The suicide blast had not deterred more than 1,000 civilians to escape from un-cleared areas yesterday, the Military said. After the blast, the army put in operation a new method of screening people, coming from the un-cleared areas. Recently the government had warned that **LTTE** cadres were mingling with civilians. The scene of horror. Sources said some 800 to 900 civilians were at the location at the time of the incident. There were two rows for **female** and male IDPs for checking before boarding buses to be sent to Vavuniya IDP centres. The incident had taken place when **female** soldiers approached a suspicious woman, who was acting as if she had lost her jewellery from her bag, apparently to evade being checked and thereby to remain at the location for some time. The military said they believed the suicide cadre had waited to target a senior military official. They also said only the face of the suicide cadre was intact. Meanwhile, both the United States and the United Nations in Sri Lanka condemned yesterday's suicide attack. "This apparent effort by the **LTTE** to discourage Tamils from leaving the conflict area killed and wounded many Tamil civilians," the US Embassy in Colombo said in a statement. "The United States calls on the **LTTE** to allow all civilians freedom of movement. The United States also urges the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that all IDPs who leave the conflict area are registered and transferred in a transparent manner to temporary camps in accordance with international standards.," it said. The United Nations in Sri Lanka also condemned suicide attack and called on the **LTTE** to separate its forces from civilians under its control. "The attack killed and wounded many civilians, including children. Those killed had already been forced from their homes by fighting, and had endured terrible hardships. The UN reiterates that civilians must be distinguished from combatants, and protected from the fighting," it said. Meanwhile, Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe

Displaced killed in suicide blast

said this attack clearly showed that the LTTE had carried out this attack against their own people to prevent fleeing civilians. "This is to prevent fleeing innocent civilians from their control areas," he told the media. He also said nearly 20,000 people had come to Vavuniya in the recent past from uncleared areas. "We believe that more people will come from today onwards despite LTTE protests," the minister said. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 5, 2009

End of Document

With UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

March 27, 2009 Friday

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Length: 1059 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, March 27 -- The Sri Lankan Government wishes to remain fully engaged with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navanethem Pillay and her office in addressing any particular issues of concern relating to human rights.

This desire has been conveyed in a letter from Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama in response to a statement issued by the Human Rights Commissioner's Office on March 13, 2009. It may be recalled that during the telephone conversation between UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and President Mahinda Rajapaksa on March 17, 2009, it was agreed that the Foreign Minister would make a formal response on behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka to the above statement. In his letter to the UN Human Rights High Commissioner, Minister Bogollagama has appreciated her recognition of the brutal and inhuman treatment of civilians by the LTTE, who are being held hostage as human shields, and resorting to shooting at them as they try to flee to the safety of Government controlled areas, as well as the forcible recruitment of civilians, including children, as soldiers. The Minister has in particular noted the High Commissioner's observation that "the brutal and inhuman treatment of civilians by the LTTE is utterly reprehensible, and should be examined to see if it constitutes war crimes." Referring to the recent incidents of forcible recruitment of two UN national staff members and their family members by the LTTE, he vehemently condemned such actions as constituting grave violations of International Humanitarian Law, which should make it clear to the UN and the international community at large that the LTTE is a ruthless terrorist organisation, which is well-established.

Expressing his concern over the reference in the UN statement that "more than 2,000 civilians may have been killed and more than 7,000 injured since January 20 many of them inside the no-fire zones" that has been attributed to 'credible sources', which have not been divulged, the Minister questioned the credibility and authenticity of the information, presumably gleaned from local UN staff and some NGO local staff, given the fact that such staff are compelled to subscribe to the LTTE agenda for their own survival. Minister Bogollagama attributed the overwhelming success of the current humanitarian mission of the Sri Lankan Security Forces in liberating the people from the brutal reign of terror of the LTTE to the strict adherence by the Security Forces to the Government's zero tolerance policy on civilian casualties. Troops deployed in the operational areas are reminded of the Executive Order (Presidential directive) to avoid causing civilian casualties, before they embark on any given mission. It is well-known that the LTTE's present combat strategy entails the deliberate blurring of the distinction between civilians and its cadres, including the forcible induction of civilians, not only able bodied men, but also women, young girls and boys and even the elderly, into their combat ranks and sending them to the frontlines to fight the Government troops. Civilians who have fled the conflict zone have disclosed that in recent days, the LTTE has in utter desperation, stepped up its recruitment drive at the rate of over 100 civilians daily into its fighting ranks and putting them in harm's way on the frontlines. Also as part of this strategy, the LTTE had deliberately positioned its artillery guns and heavy weapons amidst the civilian population in the Government declared No-Fire Zone (NFZ)

With UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

along the Mullaitivu coast, and directing fire at the Security Forces. Despite these provocative attacks using civilians as a cover, the Security Forces have maintained maximum restraint by not resorting to retaliatory fire, precisely to protect the lives of the innocent civilians. The Foreign Minister noting that such restraint has come at a very heavy price in terms of Sri Lankan soldiers getting killed and maimed, categorically rejected the assertion in the UN High Commissioner's statement that many of the civilians killed have been inside the no-fire zones. In this context, he recalled the statement of March 05, 2009 of the UN Secretary-General in which he had drawn attention to this matter and had called on the "LTTE to remove its weapons and fighters from areas of civilian concentration, to co-operate in all humanitarian efforts calculated to relieve the suffering of civilians, and to immediately cease recruitment of children." In these circumstances, Minister Bogollagama highlighted the most urgent need of the hour was for the UN and the international community to exert greater pressure on the LTTE to allow the civilians, freedom of movement, in order to enable them to move to the safety and protection afforded in the Government controlled areas. The Minister, pointing out that the LTTE has never admitted suffering battlefield casualties, especially in this final and decisive phase of military operations, stated that it is quite obvious that several hundred LTTE combatants have been killed in confrontations in the operational areas with the Security Forces, since January 2009. Therefore, it is highly likely that the LTTE cadres killed in action could be shown off as civilian casualties. The Foreign Minister also questioned the veracity of the figure of "more than 7,000 injured" and asserted that up to March 18, 2009, only 4,120 civilians including 2,635 sick and injured persons, as well as 1,485 accompanying carers have been evacuated by sea with the assistance of the ICRC. It is therefore self-evident that the persons accompanying the sick and wounded would have been accommodated only after ensuring that all sick and wounded persons in the conflict zone had been taken on board. Thus, the figure of 7,000 injured is a gross exaggeration. Minister Bogollagama underscored the overwhelming support of the people of Sri Lanka for the Government's present military engagement to wipe out terrorism from the country, manifested by the popular mandate of over 70 per cent support for the ruling party at the recent Provincial Council election. He reiterated the Government's commitment to maintain an open and constructive engagement with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in a spirit of co-operation and goodwill. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: March 28, 2009

North-South bridges

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

November 21, 2008 Friday 2:22 PM EST

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Length: 792 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Nov. 21 -- Scenes of rejoicing in the Jaffna Peninsula in the wake of the capture of Pooneryn it is hoped would serve to change the attitude of some members of the majority community who still treat all Tamils as LTTE sympathizers.

The spontaneous celebrations and the pictures in the newspapers of the people of Jaffna carrying national flags would no doubt help erase all suspicion and misgivings in this regard and hopefully charter a new course for national unity.

It is clear that Tamils no longer consider the LTTE as their saviours. The tales of those who have escaped the clutches of the Tiger testify to this.

The catalogue of suffering, brutality and torture inflicted by the LTTE on the Tamil people is now emerging giving the lie to its claim of being the sole representatives of the Tamils.

Hence the rejoicing in Jaffna following the fall of Pooneryn is but a reflection of this collective hate and hostility nurtured towards the LTTE by a populace who has been living under the jackboot of terrorism for three long decades.

It is apparent that these people are only waiting for an opportunity to express their feelings and what better outlet for this than a victory against their oppressors ? Front page photos in all newspapers showing people in the North demonstrating these feelings carrying the national flag amply manifests the sea change that has undergone in the Tamil people vis-a-vis the LTTE.

The national flag was once symbol of hate for the Tamils of the North where the Eelam flag held sway. Today indeed it is a matter of national pride to all that the Lion emblem is once again being enthroned in the North symbolic of the national reconciliation striven for by President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Yesterday's capture of Muhamalai another LTTE bastion is bound trigger more such celebrations among the Tamil population in the North and is bound to be a regular feature as LTTE strongholds fall one after the other to the advancing troops.

How many of those who took part in the celebrations in Jaffna may have lost a family member or loved one to the LTTE ? How many among them would have lost a bread winner or an offspring to be turned into killing machines for a futile cause ?

North-South bridges

Is what we are witnessing today a collective eruption of emotions that were suppressed all these years ? The scenes depicted in the newspapers spoke volumes of the desire of the people of the North to live in unity and brotherhood with their Southern brethren.

The Government should lose no time making use of these anti-**LTTE** emotions to take the message of unity and brotherhood across the divide. What is needed is more people to people contact which could be facilitated through social and cultural interaction programmes.

The recent cricket match organised in Colombo for a team from the North is one such example.

All measures should be taken to mend fences and renew contact with a generation of Tamil youth from the North who has had no inkling of the life beyond the iron curtain which shielded them from the outside world all these years.

They may also be yearning for the day when they will be able conduct their affairs on their own in the case of the newly liberated East. The sooner this is done the better the chances of democracy once again taking root in these once killing fields.

The Government on its part should make use of the goodwill generated by the people of the North in the wake of the military victories to build bridges and foster amity and brotherhood paving the way for integration.

All barriers that separated the two communities during the last three decades should be pulled down allowing our Northern brethren to be partners in national polity.

Speedy measures should be devised to coopt this segment into the national veal. The Government also has a duty cast on it to rehabilitate all **LTTE** surrendeeds in a more productive and tangible form.

The recent confession made by a **female LTTE** cadre who had doubled as a Government English teacher provides an insight into the extent of the task at hand. These are our own citizens who had been cut off from a normal life and turned into zombies by a megalomaniac to carry out his evil designs.

There is an urgent need to rehabilitate and integrate these unfortunates into the general mainstream of life.

We owe this much to our brethren who had undergone so much suffering and privation due to force of circumstances.

With the war drawing to an end and the return to normality a programme should be devised to gradually induct this segment into a society which hopefully would be one free of rancour and bitterness, bigotry and hatred paving the way for a nation of unity and fraternity among all its children.

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

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Load-Date: November 23, 2008

Sri Lanka celebrates the 60th anniversary of its independence; RIGHTS-SRI LANKA: Civilian Lives Going Cheap

IPS (Latin America)

February 8, 2008 Friday

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Length: 1134 words

Byline: Amantha Perera

Body

This week, as Sri Lanka celebrated the 60th anniversary of its independence from British colonial rule, over 60 civilians were reported killed in the raging ethnic conflict on the island.

The violence has led observers to comment that a culture of impunity has taken hold of the country and that the belligerents, the Sri Lankan army and the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), have given up any pretence of being responsible for the lives and safety of ordinary citizens.

'What we are seeing is a situation dipping even further with more violence on the cards,' executive director of the National Peace Council (NPC) Jehan Perera told IPS.

'Unless there is a will on both sides to end the violence, the trend is likely to continue,' he added.

Among those who have expressed concern for the plight of civilians is British Foreign Secretary David Miliband who, in a statement released in the Sri Lankan capital on Thursday, said that the government's withdrawal from a 2002 ceasefire agreement with the **LTTE** rebels did not absolve the warring sides of a duty to protect ordinary people.

'I call for an immediate end to practices which target civilians or put them in peril,' Miliband said in the statement. 'A sustainable solution to Sri Lanka's conflict can only emerge through a just political process involving all communities.'

The targeting of civilians increased after the collapse on Jan. 16 of the 2002 ceasefire between the government and the **LTTE**, Colombo pulling out of the agreement unilaterally. In the ensuing weeks, over 100 civilians were killed with 'Independence Week' proving to be the worst.

The latest killing spree started on Feb. 2, two days before the independence anniversary, when a powerful parcel bomb ripped apart a bus in central Dambulla, about 160 km from the capital Colombo. The attack left 20 dead, 16 of them **women**. A majority of the passengers were pilgrims heading to the sacred Buddhist town of Anuradhapura.

The next day a suicide bomber blew herself up inside the main railway station in the capital. The blast killed 14 people, including seven school boys, and left at least 100 others injured.

Within three hours of the suicide attack, a claymore mine went off on the roadside in north eastern Kapethigollawa, about 200 km from Colombo. The explosion took place as a bus passed by, leaving 13 dead and 17 injured.

Sri Lanka celebrates the 60th anniversary of its independence RIGHTS- SRI LANKA : Civilian Lives Going Cheap

The attacks were the latest in the month that has seen any gains from the truce evaporate fast. In a series of attacks in the south east of the country, starting Jan. 16, 48 civilians were killed. And on Jan. 29, some 20 people died in a claymore mine attack that targeted a school bus near the Madhu shrine, sacred to Christians, in Tiger-held north-western Mannar district.

'The multiple bombings in different parts of the country have brought anguish and uncertainty to the lives of people, be they in Weli Oya, Mannar, Colombo, Dambulla, Buttala or the Wanni. All these attacks have targeted civilians in which dozens have died and hundreds have been injured. It appears that some of the attacks were timed to coincide with the 60th anniversary celebrations of the country's independence. But there is fear that the attacks will continue unabated in the future as well,' the NPC said in a statement soon after the attacks.

'What we have seen is yet again innocent civilians have been killed like in so many other instances in the past,' Rev Rajappu Joseph, the Catholic bishop of Mannar, told IPS following the claymore attack at the Madhu shrine. "We have requested on so many occasions that both sides treat the Madhu Church compound as a 'peace zone'? yet this happened.'

The rights group Amnesty International said this week its fears that intensification of government operations could trigger retaliatory attacks by the LTTE have proved true.

'Both the Sri Lanka government and the LTTE are failing to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and are killing civilians on an increasingly regular basis. With no perpetrators brought to justice, a climate of impunity is becoming entrenched: unless these patterns are reversed the future appears bleak," Tim Parritt, deputy programme director for Asia-Pacific, said following the latest series of bombings.

Fighting between the two sides has also raged along the northern lines of control that separate government-held areas and the Wanni, a swath of land in the north under LTTE control. Dozens of combatants from both sides are reported killed on a daily basis. Independent verification of the casualty figures is almost impossible due to access restrictions.

The government and the LTTE have been blaming each other for the recent wave of attacks targeting civilians. Colombo says the LTTE is responsible for all the recent attacks carried out in the south, but has vowed not to waver in pursuing on-going operations in the north, aimed at dislodging the LTTE from its stronghold in Jaffna.

'Our security forces are today achieving victories against terrorism, unprecedented in history. Terrorism is receiving an unprecedented defeat,' President Mahinda Rajapakse said during his speech at the main Independence Day event. 'In less than two years we have liberated the large Eastern Province that was under the clutches of the terrorists and confined them to two districts only. It will not be wrong to say they are confined to one-and-a-half districts,' he added.

On Jan. 30, B. Nadesan, the LTTE political head, wrote to United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon saying: 'The pace of civilian killings by the Sri Lankan state, after unilaterally abrogating the ceasefire agreement of February 2002, after evicting the ceasefire monitoring mission, the SLMM, and after adamantly refusing to allow U.N. human rights monitoring body continues to increase."

The LTTE is blaming security forces for bombings in the Wanni area. 'In effect the Sri Lankan state is repulsing all efforts by the international community to rectify the appalling rights situation in this island,' Nadesan said.

Rajapakse, however, enjoys the support of powerful pro-Sinhala political partners in the south who are unequivocal that the operations against the LTTE should not be stopped.

'In intensifying attacks against civilians, Tiger terrorists display impotency in their military prowess,' the parliamentary group leader of the People Liberation Front (PLF) Wimal Weeravansa said on Feb. 5.

'The LTTE now desperately needs international intervention. There is much false propaganda to bring the armed forces to disrepute and one recent attempt was the allegation that the army in Mannar killed school children in a

Sri Lanka celebrates the 60th anniversary of its independence RIGHTS- SRI LANKA : Civilian Lives Going Cheap

claymore attack,' he said. "The LTTE is about to be militarily defeated and their desperation needs to be understood.' © 2008 NoticiasFinancieras - IPS - All rights reserved

Load-Date: February 8, 2008

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India endorsed our road map for democracy

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

January 14, 2009 Wednesday 2:16 PM EST

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Length: 1283 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Jan. 14 -- Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama in an interview with the Daily News says Sri Lanka's direct approach in dealing with the international community served well in its successful fight against terrorism.

Q: So far the international community has shown great support for humanitarian operations in the North as well as the East earlier. This change of attitude served as a major catalyst to our success story. How did the Government manage to achieve this?

A: During the last two years, there had been a very carefully structured prudent engagement with the international community. These successes did not come out of the blues they came only because we worked hard to get them.

The first item in our agenda in countering terrorism was to speak to the world at large and bring out the characteristic of the LTTE in not wanting to become a responsible party giving up terrorism.

We were able to explain to the world the continued abuse of every opportunity we extended to them to become responsible in the engagement for sustainable peace in Sri Lanka.

While we were talking in Geneva they blocked the Mavil Aru Anicut and virtually encouraged the Government to take on the offensive for humanitarian reasons. We were able to show the world that the starting point of our military engagement was to free the waters of Mavil Aru for the farmers, who were deprived of it by the LTTE.

Similarly every step we took was not for us to go and subjugate the people but to free the people from LTTE clutches and bring about democracy. We demonstrated that last year with the clearing of the Eastern province and holding elections.

We did not want to rest on our successes without delivering to the people the results of our military victory - that is restoration of normalcy and democracy. We were able to bring India into our confidence by being extremely candid about our objective and the need for us to counter terrorism. She endorsed our road map for democracy.

Some question what we have done with the APRC but the question that should be asked is what haven't we done. We have brought the entire polity of diverse view points to one location to bring about a political solution.

We have been able to separate the LTTE from the Tamil Community and show to the world the Tamil community is not the LTTE but the LTTE is trying to take advantage of being part of the Tamil community. We have also been able to show the world that there is no ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka but only terrorism against democracy.

India endorsed our road map for democracy

Q: In a recent statement issued to media an Indian Congress spokesman has requested Sri Lanka to hand over Prabhakaran to India if caught. Is this a possibility?

A: Prabhakaran is wanted in India in connection with the Rajiv Gandhi killing.

He is also wanted in Sri Lanka in connection with certain high profile cases. It is important for us to follow legal procedures. He has to be tried here first.

There is no official communication by the Indian Government to hand over Prabhakaran. It will be considered if and when the call is forwarded.

Q: Do we have a formal extradition treaty between Sri Lanka and India?

A: There are other treaties under which an extradition can be considered.

Q: What prospects are there for proscription of the LTTE in Australia?.

A: The matter is before the Australian Attorney General now. The countdown process is on. We expect a favourable outcome. We are very grateful that the matter is before the AG.

Q: With the LTTE's depleting strength and fighting capabilities, it is reported that the LTTE has intensified its international procurements. How are you going to counter this?

A: We are very much aware of their actions that are being taken by the LTTE international network. We are virtually following all those efforts in foreign locations.

We want to see that the LTTE will not be able to raise their head in whatever form or manifestations globally and we will be always seeking the support of the international community in preventing the LTTE from laying their hands on arms and other sources of destruction.

The LTTE's traditional sources of procurement have dried up. They have to look for fresh ground now and we are currently observing their movements.

Q:What are these new grounds?

A: It wouldn't be fair by the countries if I mention them by name and it will also jeopardise our intelligence. But we have come to know that the LTTE has been looking at East Asia for some of their procurements.

Q: There are many media reports on political appointments made in the Foreign Service and there are allegations that outsiders have been appointed to SL missions abroad disregarding the 40 per cent quota?

A: There are no quotas as such. All career officers currently in the system have been accommodated. We have only 156 offices to serve 56 locations and the entire UN system. Out of that, one third of the offices have to be retained in Colombo, due to service and quota requirements.

We need at least five to nine officers in any given location to carry out operations. But according to our present cadre strength we cannot post even two officers in one location sometimes. There are 1.4 million Sri Lankans living outside Sri Lanka. The Consular services keep expanding.

Obviously we need to increase the cadre. Only about 15 have been approved to be recruited for 2009. This will be done under an intense procedure. Apart from that we need to send defence attaches, media personnel to cover the propaganda and counter propaganda activities of the LTTE and other interested groups.

In certain locations where there is hype of LTTE activities we have adopted specialised counter measures. So, we need to bring in qualified people from outside to carry out these responsibilities.

India endorsed our road map for democracy

Thus we need people from the media, military establishment, Sri Lanka Administrative Service. This is all done without denying a single appointment or a posting of a career diplomat. We cannot run our foreign service with just 100 officers.

Q: What is the Progress of EU's HR probe?

A: I will term it as an investigation coming from the EU. We have said that we are not ready for an investigation but a dialogue is always possible as we are part of the international community. We are a responsible sovereign state. Our record on human rights, compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and economic connectivity is very much positive. We have virtually ratified most of these covenants.

I will lead a high profile delegation to meet the European Commission hierarchy in Brussels in the latter part of this month and I am confident this issue will be resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Q: Sri Lankan housemaid Rizana's case was postponed indefinitely last week. Her trial has taken many years. And it seems everyone has lost interest in her? She was a minor when she was sent to Saudi Arabia. Are you hopeful that she could be released?

A: This trial has developed this far because of the Foreign Ministry's direct involvement. We want to ensure a fair trial for this child victim. The Foreign Ministry is closely monitoring the developments.

The postponement of the case is due to legal issues. There are positive signs of a fair trial.

I am hopeful the result would be favorable. We will not give up on a subject that concerns a Sri Lankan, no matter how long it takes.

I have informed the Cabinet the need to increase the age of recruitment. I have strongly advocated that the minimum age for a **female**, to be sent out of Sri Lanka for employment, should be 24 years. That would give them the maturity to handle chores and duties as a domestic help in a foreign country.

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

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Load-Date: January 14, 2009

Sri Lanka's most wanted Tiger running out of options

Agence France Presse -- English

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Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Jan 19 2009

Body

Sri Lanka's top Tamil Tiger, who inspired hundreds of followers to stage suicide bombings in the fight for a separate state, is facing his biggest challenge yet and is fast running out of options.

To his followers, Velupillai Prabhakaran is seen as a "Sun God" who formed a formidable and feared guerrilla organisation out of a ragtag group of separatist rebels in the 1970s.

But to his enemies, he is considered a ruthless killer, outlawed around the world as a terrorist kingpin and wanted on charges of mass murder.

At the height of his military success, Prabhakaran's Tigers inflicted heavy losses on the government forces of Sri Lanka and neighbouring India.

But since Sri Lankan forces mounted their biggest ground, sea and air campaign so far to dismantle the de facto Tiger state in the north of the island, Prabhakaran has seen his territory crumble rapidly.

"Prabhakaran is facing the biggest military setback in his career and it is unlikely he can recover," said former rebel-turned-politician Dharmalingam Sithadthan.

The chubby Prabhakaran, usually pictured wearing combat fatigues and sporting a bushy moustache, inspired hundreds of young men, women and even children to stage suicide bombings in the battle for a separate state called Eelam for the island's minority Tamils.

Sri Lanka's army chief, Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka, who survived a Tiger suicide assassination attempt in April 2006, has said Prabhakaran is running out of hiding places amid the ongoing military operation.

Fonseka has said he wants to crush the Tigers by April, when the country marks the traditional Sinhala and Tamil New Year. Despite promises in November to strike back, Prabhakaran's Tamil Tigers have failed to impress.

The Tigers are now surrounded and restricted to their jungle hideouts in the northeastern corner of Sri Lanka, from where Fonseka has threatened to drive the rebels into the sea.

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Born on November 26, 1954 in the Tamil heartland of Jaffna, Prabhakaran has been a guerrilla fighter for most of his life, building up the dreaded Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) from a motley band of rebels.

Prabhakaran went on to shape one of the world's deadliest killing machines, building an organisation with its own army, navy and air force.

He inspired his cadres to wear a cyanide capsule around their necks to commit suicide in case they were cornered by security forces.

Neighbouring India, which once nurtured and provided a safe haven to Prabhakaran, treating him as a freedom fighter battling oppression of minority Tamils by a majority Sinhalese government, now treats him as a wanted man.

Prabhakaran is suspected in the 1991 assassination of former Indian premier Rajiv Gandhi, who in 1987 ordered Indian troops to disarm the Tigers and ended up fighting them for 32 months.

India withdrew its troops in May 1990 after 1,200 soldiers were killed fighting the Tigers.

Since visiting New Delhi in 1987, Prabhakaran is not known to have left Sri Lanka, although his outfit took part in Norwegian-brokered peace talks between 2002 and 2006.

Former rebel Sithadthan said he did not believe Prabhakaran had mellowed with age and said the guerrilla leader was unlikely to allow himself to be captured alive.

"He may have already left the island by boat," Sithadthan said, echoing a belief held by Sri Lankan security forces.

However, Prabhakaran is unlikely to have many friends overseas. The Tigers are banned across Europe, Australia and the United States.

There is an international arrest warrant against him for, among other incidents, the 1996 bombing of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka building, which killed 91 people.

Prabhakaran, the youngest of four children from a middle-class family and nicknamed "Thamby," or younger brother, went underground in 1972 after dropping out of school and forming the Tiger outfit.

At the time he longed to own a revolver, even a rusty one, according to an official biography.

His strength has been his band of suicide bombers, who have claimed a long list of high-profile victims including Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan president Ranasinghe Premadasa, assassinated in May 1993.

He has put down dissent within the group and has not encouraged any successor in an organisation that has had no clear number two leader.

Chinks began to appear in 2004 when his top field commander known as Colonel Karuna defected and weakened his once mighty militia.

Load-Date: January 20, 2009

14 killed in northern Sri Lanka

Xinhua General News Service

February 8, 2008 Friday 1:15 AM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 220 words

Body

COLOMBO, Feb. 8 (Xinhua)-- The Sri Lankan military said on Friday that 12 Tamil Tiger rebels and two government soldiers were killed when the Army captured a one-square km area in the north of the country.

The Army said government troops captured the south of Adampan Tank in the Mannar district from Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels at around 10:00 a.m. local time (0430 GMT).

Twelve rebels and two soldiers were killed in the battle, the Army said, adding that another five soldiers were wounded.

Meanwhile, two civilians and a female home guard were wounded when a hospital came under LTTE mortar attack at Sampathnuwara in the northeastern Welioya area at around 12:50 a.m. (0720 GMT).

The military also said that 36 rebel and one soldier were killed in separate clashes between the rebels and the troops in the north and east on Thursday.

Intensive military conflicts are underway in the north, with the government determining to defeat the LTTE before the end of this year.

The military said more than 700 people have been killed in the escalating conflict since the beginning of this year.

The LTTE has been fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east for more than two decades, resulting in the death of more than 70,000 people.

Load-Date: February 10, 2008

Terrorism: Lanka's greatest post colonial challenge - Kohona

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

June 2, 2008 Monday 3:12 PM EST

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Length: 565 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 2 -- One of the gravest challenges to Sri Lanka in her post-colonial history is the challenge of brutal terrorism - **LTTE** terrorism. It is a challenge to Sri Lanka's very existence as a country, its democratic way of life and its social fabric, Foreign Secretary Dr. Palitha Kohona, said in a speech at the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, Nanyang Technological University in Singapore.

"In the last 30 years our people have paid a heavy price. Suicide bombers have mercilessly unleashed their lethal cargo on innocent civilians irrespective of their ethnicity or creed.

Trains, buses and shopping centres have been drenched with the blood of **women**, children and other non-combatants. Our country's political leadership has been targeted and moderates eliminated. Vast sums of money which could have been invested on development work for the benefit of all our people have had to be spent on defending our sovereignty, territorial integrity and our people. Our most important task today is convincing the international community to stay engaged as we strive to eradicate this scourge from our soil," he said. Dr. Kohona added the government is been confronted by a very sophisticated propaganda machine which has succeeded many times in distracting attention from the terrorist nature of the **LTTE**, its fascist structure, its uncompromising goals and its absolute control over the Tamil people of the Vanni.

"Respected NGOs have made it their cause to tar and spike Sri Lanka in public and eminent international personalities have grabbed the headlines with their rasping criticisms. Our economy is threatened with sanctions, trade concessions are placed on the line and political support is withdrawn - to the utter disbelief of a population regularly subjected to the thunder of suicide bombers and death and injury by showers of steel pellets. Our challenge is to address the causes of these attitudes, correct misconceptions, provide accurate information and rectify our shortcomings while continuously confronting the sophisticated propaganda machine of the **LTTE** and its sympathisers."

While the Sri Lankan State's ability to act abroad is constrained for obvious reasons, it must deploy its diplomacy to contain the efforts of the **LTTE**.

The lack of effective comprehensive action by other governments has, in many instances, strengthened the support base of the **LTTE** abroad and inspired them," he said.

He however added "We are reassured however that sections of the international community's perception of the **LTTE** has changed in spite of the **LTTE**'s duplicitous diplomacy abroad. Ladies and Gentlemen, the challenge for

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us as a government, for the many Sri Lankan diaspora organisations abroad, is to engage with the international community with patience and to reason with them on the many misconceptions they harbour about Sri Lanka.

Our diaspora communities have an enormously responsible role to play in this regard and they should not leave this task solely to the government.

The many misconceptions cannot be corrected through megaphone diplomacy or outbursts of aggressive venom. After all Sri Lanka is a fully transparent and functioning democracy. Our diplomacy should be based on honesty, moderation and openness while being fully cognizant of national imperatives."

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Load-Date: August 11, 2008

FBI sought arrest of Tamil suspect

The Australian

July 16, 2008 Wednesday

1 - All-round Country Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 3

Length: 411 words

Byline: Natalie O'Brien, Stuart Rintoul

Body

AUSTRALIAN Federal Police have arrested, at the request of the FBI, a director of a Melbourne business college believed to be linked to the **Tamil Tigers** over alleged terrorism offences in the US.

Thulasitharan Santhirarajah, 34, is expected to face extradition proceedings after his arrest on Monday when AFP agents raided homes and businesses around Melbourne, including the office of his Melbourne International College.

The raids were conducted at the request of the FBI, which has been cracking down on the fundraising activities in the US of members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

A spokesman for federal Attorney-General Robert McClelland yesterday confirmed the US had requested that Mr Santhirarajah be detained.

"The man is wanted to face prosecution for alleged terrorism offences in the United States of America," the spokesman said. "As this is an ongoing law enforcement matter, it would be inappropriate to comment on the specifics of the case."

Mr Santhirarajah appeared briefly in Melbourne Magistrates court on Monday and was remanded in custody until next month.

As well as the city office of the college, AFP agents raided five properties and businesses in Narre Warren, Dandenong and Lysterfield.

It is understood police questioned some colleagues and business partners of Mr Santhirarajah, but later released them.

Staff at the college yesterday refused to comment on the raids or Mr Santhirarajah's arrest.

Neighbours of Mr Santhirarajah in Narre Warren said they had noticed unusual activity in their street for some time. Diana Taylor said that in recent weeks she had seen people setting up what she thought was undercover surveillance.

For more than 20 years, the Tigers have waged a bloody civil war in northern Sri Lanka. The group has pioneered guerilla techniques such as suicide bombings and using **women** as suicide bombers -- tactics that have since been copied by al-Qa'ida. Last year in unrelated proceedings, the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force in New York arrested

FBI sought arrest of Tamil suspect

the alleged US director of the Tigers. At the time, the FBI accused Australia's Tamil community of helping fund terrorist attacks by the **Tamil Tigers** in Sri Lanka.

Two Melbourne men, allegedly linked to the Tigers, are awaiting trial over unrelated alleged terrorism-related offences. They were charged in 2006 with being members of a terrorist organisation, making funds available to a terrorist organisation and making an asset available to a proscribed entity.

Load-Date: July 15, 2008

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Lanka's most intractable problem

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

March 5, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 1081 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, March 5 -- Extract from the Statement by Mahinda Samarasinghe, Minister of Disaster Management and Human Rights at the High-Level Segment of the 10th Session of the UN Human Rights Council Geneva, 2nd March, 2009

The challenges we face are many. As we overcome some of the stiffest hurdles, new adversities rise up to meet us. This is a common phenomenon in a fast-evolving conflict situation. But we are confident that we will win the day, strengthened by our belief in democratic values and human rights and, above all, by our dedication to a search for a stable peace with honour and dignity for everyone. For years, the most intractable problem we had to deal with in Sri Lanka was terrorism. The conflict which erupted from time to time caused much suffering to men, women and children of every ethnicity and religion and linguistic group which go together to make up the richly diverse Sri Lankan polity. Our Government is conscious that efforts should have been made earlier to resolve what was a political conflict by political means. This we are committed to doing. However, when there was a serious attempt at such a solution in 1987, the intransigence of just one group out of many led to terrorism taking on a central role. Consensus Since then, despite many attempts by many Governments to reach a negotiated consensus towards a durable peace, such negotiations were abandoned continuously by the forces of terrorism. That scourge returned redoubled in intensity after every attempt at negotiation by Government, and it is only now that we are close to eradicating it from our island nation's shores. But, just as no man is an island, even islands do not exist in splendid isolation. Soon enough Sri Lanka's terrorists came to be globally acknowledged as a menace not only to Sri Lanka but to people in many countries across several continents, through assassination, narco-terrorism and gun-running. Fundraising But we are grateful that at least some of the countries affected have, by banning the terrorist organisation and striving to limit their fundraising and other criminal activities, enabled Sri Lanka to finally eliminate threats to her sovereignty and territorial integrity. But we need your continuing cooperation and support to aid us to eliminate terrorism and foster peace in our land, and a more peaceful polity too for all or you. This intense effort on our part, occurred as I have noted after manifold efforts to seek a settlement through discussion. We tried direct discussions in 1985 in Bhutan with all armed militant groups, only to find that one of them took advantage of these discussions to destroy the leadership of others. When those talks then failed, after however the LTTE, the most intransigent group, had immensely strengthened its own position, we thought we had achieved a settlement with Indian support in 1987. When that was subverted by the LTTE, admittedly helped in this by political changes in both Sri Lanka and India, two of our Presidents personally reached out to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in 1990 and in 1994 and talks were held in Colombo and in the Northern Peninsula. Finally, with international facilitation we talked in several cities in Thailand and Japan and Norway and even here in snowbound Switzerland, in the period from 2002 to 2006. Our efforts were all unsuccessful. On each of these occasions the LTTE abandoned attempts to bring peace and ultimately returned to the tactics they know best - the tactics of terrorism. In two instances they used suicide bombers in attempts to kill the leaders they had negotiated with, just as they had killed Prime Minister

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Rajiv Gandhi of India for his pains in having negotiated a system of devolution acceptable to all parties except the LTTE. Negotiations In 2006, the LTTE returned to negotiations from which they had unilaterally withdrawn in 2003. Whilst appearing sporadically at talks they tried to assassinate the Army Commander by using a pregnant suicide bomber, and then launched two massive attacks on our forces in the North and East of the country. It was only after that that His Excellency President Mahinda Rajapaksa resolved that the right of self defence which was contained in the Ceasefire Agreement of 2002, an Agreement violated nearly 4000 times by the LTTE according to the Scandinavian Monitors, meant preventing such sudden attacks by destroying the strongholds, the airstrips, the arsenals, that had been built up during the Ceasefire period. The people of Sri Lanka have, in successive elections, demonstrated their support for his resolve to stay the course. Thus today we are able to finally see the light at the end of the long and dangerous tunnel through which we groped our way for more than two decades. Our march to military mastery over the forces of terror has not been easy. While our advances over the past two and a half years have outstripped all expectations, we have had to rethink and refine our strategies because of the intransigence of the LTTE in its refusal to allow civilians to leave the theatre of conflict. Thus the progress of our forces is slower now, in view of the even greater care that has to be exercised with regard to civilians. Earlier, when we declared a safe zone, the LTTE moved guns into the area and used them without regard for civilians, as was indicated to us by the Bishop of Jaffna, in asking our Government to extend the safe zone. We have now declared a safe zone on the coast, which makes it less easy for the LTTE to continue with its dastardly tactics, especially since their last murderous cadres are restricted to an area of less than forty square kilometres. But, as Sir John Holmes, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, stressed at the conclusion of his recent visit to Sri Lanka, our primary concern must be the people now in the safe area but not allowed to escape from there by the LTTE. Civilians For this reason the United Nations and other international friends and partners of Sri Lanka have joined us in the last few weeks in urging the LTTE to let go of the civilians they are now holding by force. We are glad about this, though we could have wished such calls had been made categorically much earlier, when the tactics of the LTTE in corralling these civilians as they withdrew were manifest. Our calls for innocent Sri Lankans to be let free go back to September last year. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 1, 2009

Troops in Welioya capture Gajabapura

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

October 24, 2008 Friday 2:17 PM EST

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 24 -- The troops engaged in operations against the **LTTE** in the Welioya sector captured Gajabapura last evening, whilst troops of the 57 Division, engaged in operations in Killinochchi, captured several rebel trenches.

The troops engaged in the Welioya sector captured Gajabapura, located North of Janakapura, which was under terrorist control, the Media Centre for National Security said.

It was reported that heavy damage was inflicted on the terrorists withdrawing from the area.

Meanwhile, in Akkarayankulam, troops of 57 Division clashed with **LTTE** cadres guarding the outskirts of Killinochchi Town and captured six trenches which were blocking the advancing troops.

The decomposed bodies of two **LTTE** cadres and three T-56 assault rifles were recovered by troops in a search operation conducted in the Akkarayankulam area on Wednesday.

Desperate attempts by the **LTTE** to attack the forward defence line in Kariyalmodeli on the same day, were repelled by the troops of 58 division with heavy damage being inflicted on the terrorists, MCNS reported.

Meanwhile, 13 civilians from five families in Kattakadu were transferred to Pulmude in Trincomalee last morning. The group comprised four **females** (including a 15-year-old girl) and nine males. The group had arrived in Pulmude in fishing boats, the MCNS said.

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