

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:30:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223508180

Documents (100)

1. [*The 1030 GMT News Advisory*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

2. [*UPI NewsTrack TopNews*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [*India talks tough*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [*The 0530 GMT News Advisory*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

5. [*Sri Lankan celebrates 60th anniversary amid intense security*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [*Final gift reaches tsunami victims*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

7. [*Final gift reaches tsunami victims*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

8. [*LTTE attacks passenger bus; 4 civilians killed, 25 wounded*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

9. [*SLAF Seva Vanitha helps displaced citizens*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [*Police probe suicide bomber's calls*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [13 killed in Ampara Town Cafe 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

12. [Sri Lankan delegation place bare facts at UNHRC](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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

13. [He spoke boldly and truly from his heart](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [High risks for athletes exposed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

15. [Canada asked to take Iranian group off terrorist list.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [The 0530 GMT News Advisory](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

18. [AFP Asia news agenda](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

19. [The 0100 GMT News Advisory](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

20. [Suicide bombing in Sri Lanka capital injures seven: police](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

21. [AFP Asia news agenda](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

22. [Paying the ultimate price for honour and principle](#)

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

23. [The 0530 GMT News Advisory](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

24. [The 0700 GMT News Advisory](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

25. [See Photo](#)

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

26. [POLITICS MUSLIM AKBAR TWO LAST PATNA](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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

27. [*Suicide bomber kills 12 at Sri Lanka police 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

28. [*Nine patients killed as shelling hits 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

29. [*Motorcycle suicide bomber kills 12 police in Sri Lanka : officials*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

30. [*Jeyaraj killing: JVP fears secret hand*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

31. [*BJP, AIADMK warm up with Amma's royal lunch for Modi*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [NEWSDIGEST2300 ET](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Fleeing civilians flock Mullaitivu](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [10 killed in Fort explosion](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [ROUNDUP: Suicide bomber kills 23 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,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 2009

36. [Food to be sent by ship](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [3RD LEAD: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill seven, injure 90](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Terai armed group chiefs at large after massive jailbreak](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Tamil rebel suicide bombing rocks Sri Lanka 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

40. [Priyanka confirms meeting with Rajiv assassin](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Canada asked to take Iranian group off terrorist list.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Red Cross says 16 patients killed in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

43. [*Seduced by chaos ANDREW FORGRAVE GOES IN SEARCH OF THE REAL SRI LANKA travel*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [*I SHALL BE AN AGENT OF CHANGE: FORMER COP AMOD KANTH*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [*The AFP Asia news agenda*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

46. [*The 0100 GMT News Advisory*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

47. [*METROWorld*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [How mayor won over the French with Yorkshire grit and grace](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Sri Lankan celebrates 60th anniversary amid intense security](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [As war rages Sri Lanka celebrates wins over rebels](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

51. [A Budget amidst the Winds of Change](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [DAMP DEEPAVALI FOR TAMIL CINEMA, AJITH STARRER LONE 'SPARKLER'](#)

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, 200953. [*Motorcycle suicide bomber kills 12 police in Sri Lanka : officials*](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2008 to Mar 30, 200954. [*Rahul follows father's footsteps in Orissa*](#)**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, 200955. [*TRIBUTES TO RAJIV GANDHI ON 17TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY*](#)**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, 200956. [*Bomb blast outside Sri Lanka capital injures 17: military*](#)**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, 200957. [*Sri Lankan hospital hit by shelling, officials say 9 killed*](#)**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

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

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

59. [*Bomb Kills Sri Lankan Minister*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

60. [*The savaging of humanitarian law Mobilizing the UN II*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

61. [*The savaging of humanitarian law Mobilizing the UN II*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

62. [*It's all George W. Bush 's fault, says the Lion of Lahore*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

63. [*The savaging of humanitarian law Mobilizing the UN II*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

64. [*The savaging of humanitarian law Mobilizing the UN II*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

65. [*Asia-Pacific news calendar*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

66. [*The savaging of humanitarian law Mobilizing the UN II*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

67. [*When prejudice makes you just another drug mule*](#)

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

68. [*UPI NewsTrack TopNews*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Sri Lankan government minister killed in bomb blast, military says; 1 other dead, 10 wounded](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

70. [HighLights of the AAP National Wire at 14:45, Jan 6](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Nation celebrate INDEPENDENCE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

72. [Concern expressed on HR not anti-Lanka: EC](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [New laws to ensure children's safety and well-being](#)

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

74. [Sri Lankan Tamils in Canada ravaged by war in homeland](#)

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

75. [Maithripala escapes assassination](#)

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

76. [ROUNDUP: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill 11, injure over 100](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Backgrounder: Terror attacks in South Asia](#)

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

78. [Nine die in attack on Sri Lankan hospital](#)

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

79. [Eleven die in attack on Sri Lankan hospital](#)

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

80. [NEW DELHI IMPACT REPORT FOR OCT 31, 2008](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

81. [2ND ROUNDUP: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill 13, injure over 100](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

82. [Sri Lankan rebel leader's fate a mystery](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [UPI NewsTrack TopNews](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Gunmen attack Sri Lankan cricket team in Pakistan , six police killed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

85. [*Sri Lankan rebel leader's fate a mystery*](#)

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. [*Tamil Tiger commander's fate a mystery as rebellion crumbles in Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

87. [*Sri Lankan rebel leader's fate a mystery*](#)

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. [*International briefs*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

89. [*The AFP Asia news agenda*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

90. [HighLights of the AAP National Wire at 14:45](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Government wants to control the people going into conflict areas in Sri Lanka SRI LANKA : Clamp Down on International NGOs](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Backgrounder: Terror attacks in South Asia in recent years](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Nepal Maoists anti-Hindu: Yogi](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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. [Sri Lanka troops allegedly kill 30 in 'safe 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

95. [Sri Lanka troops allegedly kill 30 in 'safe 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

96. [Canada's tolerance misplaced](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

97. [AFP Asia news agenda](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

98. [UPI NewsTrack TopNews](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

99. [Give it up, Hamza - you're too ugly](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

News

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

100. [India : In the name of 'Freedom'?](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil 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

The 1030 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

January 4, 2009 Sunday 10:35 AM GMT

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Length: 690 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, Jan 4 2009

Body

Duty Editor: Mike Patterson

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

-- WORLD HEADLINES --

GAZA CITY: Israeli ground troops push into Gaza

UNITED NATIONS: Security Council at odds on Gaza

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka says troops near rebels' jungle HQ

-- ASIA --

SriLanka-unrest,2ndlead-WRAP

KILINOCHCHI, Sri Lanka

The Sri Lankan army says it is moving in on the jungle stronghold of the Tamil Tiger rebels, in a final assault aimed at ending the longest-running ethnic war in Asia.

550 words 1200 GMT by Lakruwan Wanniarachchi. Picture

SriLanka-unrest-military,ANALYSIS

COLOMBO

Sri Lankans celebrated the fall of the **Tamil Tigers**' de facto capital with street parties, but military observers say bloodier battles may still lie ahead as the rebels take refuge in the jungle.

650 words moved by Amal Jayasinghe. Picture

Indonesia-quake,4thlead-WRAP

MANOKWARI, Indonesia

A string of powerful earthquakes rattle Indonesia, leaving at least one dead and dozens injured, and triggering panic in the nation hardest hit by the 2004 Asian tsunami.

650 words 1100 GMT by Sali Pelu

Japan-politics-vote,3rdlead-WRAP

TOKYO

Japan's unpopular Prime Minister Taro Aso signals he will not call elections at least for a few months, pledging instead to tackle the worsening economic crisis.

650 words moved by Shingo Ito. Picture

-- MIDDLE EAST --

Mideast-conflict-Gaza,5thlead-WRAP

GAZA CITY

Israeli troops push deep into Gaza with thousands of troops and scores of tanks battling Hamas fighters and moving towards Gaza City on a mission to end militant rocket attacks.

800 words 1045 GMT by Sakher Abu El Oun. Graphic + Picture + Video

We will also move: Mideast-conflict-Gaza-invasion,3rdlead-CHRONO

Mideast-conflict-Gaza-world,REAX

Mideast-conflict-Gaza-UN,4thlead

UNITED NATIONS

The UN Security Council fails to agree on a statement calling for an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip after the United States argues a return to the situation that existed before Israel's ground invasion is unacceptable.

750 words 1130 GMT by Herve Couturier

Mideast-conflict-Gaza-Palestinian,SCENE

GAZA CITY

Frantic families in Gaza flee advancing Israeli troops by car and on foot to the sound of booming explosions as infantry supported by tanks approach densely populated areas of the Hamas enclave.

500 words 1200 GMT by Sakher Abu El Oun. Picture

Mideast-conflict-Gaza-Israel,SCENE

SDEROT, Israel

To Israelis living along the Gaza border the sound of artillery pummeling the Palestinian enclave is a hopeful sign that rocket fire may stop at last... but then a rocket slams into a house.

500 words 1100 GMT by Patrick Moser. Picture

We will also move: Mideast-conflict-Gaza-Israel-history,FOCUS

Mideast-conflict-Gaza-tunnels

Iraq-unrest-Baghdad,6thlead

BAGHDAD

A woman suicide bomber kills 35 civilians, including women and children, and wounds 65 others on a religious march near the Kadhimiyah shrine in northern Baghdad.

550 words 1100 GMT by Ammar Karim

We will also move: Iraq-unrest-timeline,CHRONO

-- AMERICAS --

US-politics-Obama-transition,lead

WASHINGTON

Barack Obama and his family are spending their first full day in Washington Sunday after the US president-elect arrived here in time for him to work on an urgent economic recovery plan and for his daughters to start school.

600 words 1145 GMT by Alex Ogle

We have also moved: US-politics-Obama-hotel,FACTS

-- EUROPE --

Russia-Ukraine-EU-energy-gas,2ndlead-WRAP

MOSCOW

Russian energy giant Gazprom calls on Ukraine to return to negotiations on a gas row that has caused shortfalls in central Europe -- even as Kiev insists talks are in fact ongoing.

700 words 1300 GMT by Nick Coleman. Pictures. Graphic

Finance-economy-Germany-politics,newseries

BERLIN

A senior figure in Germany's fractious ruling coalition rules out tax cuts as a way of lifting Europe's economic powerhouse out of what is forecast to be its deepest postwar recession, a day ahead of a crunch meeting in Berlin.

500 words 1200 GMT

France-Tunisia-US-attacks-trial

PARIS

A mastermind behind the September 11, 2001 attacks and two other men go on trial in Paris on Monday, accused of plotting the 2002 suicide bombing of a historic synagogue in Tunisia that left 21 dead.

550 words 1100 GMT by Michel Moutot. File picture

afp

Load-Date: January 5, 2009

End of Document

UPI NewsTrack TopNews

UPI

January 22, 2008 Tuesday 10:22 PM EST

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Length: 708 words

Dateline: WASHINGTON, Jan. 22

Body

Pakistan claims 37 militants killed

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan, Jan. 22 (UPI) -- The Pakistani military Tuesday claimed its security forces killed 37 militants in clashes in the South Waziristan tribal area.

The military said five government soldiers were killed in the fighting, GeoTV reported.

The fighting started after the militants attacked a check post and a fort in Ladha in South Waziristan, Maj. Gen. Athar Abbas told Geo News.

The military spokesman said the security forces launched a counter attack, killing 37 insurgents.

In a separate incident in North Waziristan, Abbas was quoted as saying two security personnel died and six others were injured in a rocket attack on an army camp in Razmak.

Landmark abortion ruling 35 years old

WASHINGTON, Jan. 22 (UPI) -- Supporters and opponents noted the 35th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark Roe vs. Wade decision guaranteeing a woman's right to an abortion.

"As you give voice to the voiceless I ask you to take comfort from this: The hearts of the American people are good," President George Bush told participants in the March for Life rally in Washington Tuesday. "Their minds are open to persuasion."

The abortion ruling remains as polarizing today as when it was decided by the Supreme Court in 1973.

To commemorate 35 years since Roe, the Planned Parenthood Action Fund, Planned Parenthood's political arm, said it would initiate a One Million Strong Campaign to get 1 million people to the polls in 2008.

"Reproductive freedom is still a political target for extremists," the organization said on its Web site, "and the battle isn't just being waged over abortion, but over access to contraception and medically accurate sex education."

Bush, a staunch abortion foe, said the anti-abortion movement must "work for a culture of life where a woman with an unplanned pregnancy" has support, an opportunity to complete her education and the "dignity of both the mother and child is honored and cherished."

Sri Lankan leader opposes military solution

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Jan. 22 (UPI) -- Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa said Tuesday he is against a military solution to the decades-long Tamil ethnic conflict on the island nation.

"I have never been for a military solution," Rajapaksa told reporters in the capital, Colombo. "I have been and will always want a political solution."

Violence has escalated in recent years with the government currently involved in a campaign in the northern region to root out the **Tamil Tigers**, who have been fighting for a separate homeland for the Tamil speaking minority in the predominantly Buddhist nation.

The issue has been further complicated by the government's decision last week to withdraw from the 2002 cease-fire agreement with the Tiger rebels brokered by Norway.

The president said it is important for his nation to defeat "terrorism," adding, "There are no good terrorists and bad terrorists, all of them are terrorists," the official government Web site said.

Rajapaksa said he had always been opposed to the ceasefire agreement.

"I have consistently opposed it. The only difference was that I waited patiently for two years since the presidential election, hoping we would be able to have serious negotiations with the (rebels)," but the rebel group "showed it would continue to kill civilians to achieve its goal through terrorism, enjoying the advantages it had from the (cease-fire agreement)."

Kuwait's only **female** minister keeps job

KUWAIT CITY, Jan. 22 (UPI) -- Kuwait's only **female** Cabinet minister, Nouria Sbeih, has survived a no-confidence vote in Parliament.

The education minister was accused of turning a blind eye to a sex segregation law at universities and presiding over a drop in educational standards, the BBC reported Tuesday.

Sbeih, who has been criticized by conservative and Islamist lawmakers for refusing to wear a headscarf when she was sworn into the Cabinet, won the confidence vote by 27 to 19, the British network reported.

The vote split Islamists in Parliament, with the main Islamist voting bloc siding with Sbeih.

"We are all loyal to Kuwait and I will take all the observations into consideration in developing education," she said after the vote.

Women won the right to vote and run for office in Kuwait in 2005.

Load-Date: January 23, 2008

India talks tough

The Star (South Africa)

January 08, 2009 Thursday

e4 Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 657 words

Body

New Delhi - Indian Premier Manmohan Singh today said India would work with the international community to deny militants "launching pads" for attacks. "There are some who would not like to see India succeed but we have shown over and over that we will not allow the forces of terrorism and extremism to destabilise our economy and society," Singh told a gathering in Chennai.

Kabul - Nato today said a bomb attack killed one of its soldiers in southern Afghanistan. A spokesperson for Nato forces, Sergeant Brian Jones, said the attack occurred yesterday in southern Kandahar province. He declined to give the soldier's nationality or any further details on the incident. More than 280 foreign troops were killed last year in Afghanistan, up from 222 in 2007.

Los Angeles - Ellen DeGeneres posed backstage with her People's Choice Award for favourite talk show host. "I wish I could share this with you," DeGeneres told the audience while clutching her trophy on stage.

Caracas - Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez will keep donating heating oil for poor American families in spite of falling oil prices. Venezuela's Citgo Petroleum announced the aid programme would continue yesterday, just two days after its partner, non-profit group Boston-based Citizens Energy, said Citgo had halted the free fuel shipments due to the world economic crisis.

Tokyo - The family of a Japanese doctor freed after more than three months in captivity in lawless Somalia today voiced relief but said they would only really feel at ease once they had seen her for themselves. Keiko Akahane (32) and Wilhem Sools, a Dutch nurse, were working for French medical charity Medecins du Monde when they were kidnapped on September 22.

Colombo - Sri Lankan airforce jets launched a series of attacks against *Tamil Tigers*, keeping pressure on the beleaguered rebels a day after officially banning the group, the military said today. The quarter-century-old civil war between the two sides has come to a head in recent weeks with Sri Lankan forces making a deep push into rebel-held territory.

Beijing - A panda with a record of aggressive behaviour attacked a man who jumped into its enclosure at a Beijing zoo to pick up a toy, local media said today. The nine-year-old panda, Gugu, bit the man on his legs but was driven away by a zoo worker brandishing a broom, the Beijing Youth Daily said. Gugu has twice before attacked people who climbed in to his cage.

India talks tough

Boulder - Three windblown wildfires have destroyed at least two structures, jumped a major road and forced the evacuation of 11 000 homes outside Boulder, Colorado, fire authorities said yesterday. More than 75 firefighters from several agencies are battling the fast-moving flames and no injuries have been reported, said Patricia Demchak, spokesperson for Boulder County.

Nashville - Add, a 38-year-old mule, has saved the life of its owner. When fire broke out at Jolene Salomon's farmhouse near Morrison, Tennessee last week, her pet mule sounded the alarm by braying loudly and loping around its pasture, she told the Southern Standard newspaper in McMinnville. The 63-year-old Salomon was able to get to safety as the house burned to the ground.

Washington - Mississippi has claimed the distinction of having the highest teen birth rate in the US, a figure more than three times higher than the states with the lowest rates, health officials said yesterday. Mississippi, a comparatively poor state in the South, had a rate of 68,4 births per 1 000 women of ages 15 to 19 in 2006, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said in a report.

Sao Paulo - Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has told a magazine he does not like reading newspapers because it gives him "heartburn". Lula, who has proposed a controversial new media law that would make publishing or leaking secret information a crime, said nevertheless that, as a former union leader, he was "a direct product of freedom of the press".

Load-Date: January 8, 2009

End of Document

The 0530 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

May 11, 2008 Sunday 5:51 AM GMT

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Length: 707 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, May 11 2008

Body

Duty Editor: Peter Stebbings

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

-- WORLD HEADLINES --

YANGON: Myanmar generals hail referendum turnout

TRINCOMALEE, Sri Lanka: Govt claims local poll win

TRIPOLI, Lebanon: Fierce battles erupt in north

BELGRADE: Serbia votes in general elections

-- MYANMAR CYCLONE/REFERENDUM --

Myanmar-weather-cyclone,lead-WRAP

YANGON

Myanmar's ruling generals say there was "massive turnout" in their national referendum, held despite pleas to devote their resources to saving more than a million victims of a devastating cyclone.

650 words 0800 GMT by Hla Hla Htay. Picture.

Myanmar-weather-cyclone-economy-military

BANGKOK

A sprawling new capital, lavish weddings for family members, palatial villas -- Myanmar's generals seem to have few qualms about spending money, but appear to have devoted few resources in the response to a catastrophic cyclone.

The 0530 GMT News Advisory

600 words 0630 GMT by Charlie McDonald-Gibson

Myanmar-weather-cyclone-village

KYAUKTAN, Myanmar

"We depend on donations. Today no one has come. The children and **women** are hungry. The babies are crying all the time," said 32-year-old Mashwe in the ruins of his village, which has been left to fend for itself after the cyclone.

500 words 0700 GMT

Myanmar-weather-cyclone-junta

BANGKOK

Myanmar's stunning decision to refuse foreign aid workers after the cyclone tragedy is simply business-as-usual for a secretive regime obsessed with projecting total control, analysts say.

700 words moved by Griffin Shea

Myanmar-weather-cyclone-anger

YANGON

Aung Aung says he would not normally vent his anger openly in Myanmar, where the eyes and ears of the country's strict military rulers are believed to be almost everywhere.

500 words moved

China-Myanmar-weather-cyclone-aid-diplomacy,ANALYSIS

BEIJING

China's response to the suffering of cyclone survivors in Myanmar has exposed the limits of its ability -- and arguably its willingness -- to press even close allies to change set habits, analysts say.

625 words moved by Dan Martin

-- ASIA --

SriLanka-unrest-vote,lead-WRAP

TRINCOMALEE, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's government claims victory in key provincial elections in the ethnically-mixed east of the island, saying the win is a major boost for its intensifying war against the **Tamil Tigers**.

650 words 0700 GMT by Stefan Smith. Picture

Nepal-Everest-mountaineering-Japan

KATHMANDU

A Sherpa aiming to conquer Everest for the 18th time and septuagenarians battling for the title of oldest climber to reach the summit are lining up for their record bids as the main climbing season opens.

550 words moved by Sam Taylor. File picture

Australia-economy-budget,PREVIEW

SYDNEY

Australia's centre-left government must make some ugly choices this week as it hands down its first budget since winning office, economists say.

550 words moved by Neil Sands

-- MIDDLE EAST --

Lebanon-politics-unrest,lead-WRAP

TRIPOLI, Lebanon

Fierce battles erupt in northern Lebanon between government and opposition supporters a day after the Hezbollah-led opposition said it was ending its takeover of west Beirut.

800 words 0600 GMT by Omar Ibrahim.

Mideast-US-oil

WASHINGTON

US President George W. Bush heads back to the Middle East this week, where his efforts to forge Israeli-Palestinian peace face growing skepticism with barely nine months left in his term.

700 words 0600 GMT by Laurent Lozano

-- EUROPE --

Serbia-vote,newseries

BELGRADE

Serbia votes in general elections that give its people a stark choice between continuing towards or abandoning the European Union in a rebuff to the West after the trauma of losing Kosovo, their historic heartland.

650 words 0800 GMT. Picture + Graphic

We will also move: Serbia-vote-Kosovo

Serbia-vote-Belgrade,SCENE

-- AMERICAS --

US-vote,newseries

WASHINGTON

Democrat Barack Obama works to build up newly-gained momentum after he surpasses Hillary Clinton in the fight for superdelegates whose votes will be decisive in choosing the Democratic Party's presidential nominee.

750 words 0600 GMT

We have also moved: US-vote-Clinton

US-vote-McCain

US-vote-Obama-Republicans

US-vote-Democrats,FACTS

US-Bush-WHouse-marriage,3rdlead

CRAWFORD, Texas

In a welcome break from two wars, terrorism and soaring oil prices, US President George W. Bush celebrates his daughter Jenna's wedding on his Texas ranch.

700 words moved by Olivier Knox

afp

Load-Date: May 12, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lankan celebrates 60th anniversary amid intense security

The Associated Press

February 4, 2008 Monday 6:02 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 736 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka celebrated its 60th independence anniversary Monday with parades, speeches and an intense security clampdown aimed at halting a growing wave of attacks blamed on separatist rebels that have killed scores of civilians.

Many roads throughout the capital, Colombo, were sealed and one of Sri Lanka's main cellular phone providers shut off its text messaging service for six hours as top government officials and thousands of ordinary Sri Lankans gathered for the national ceremony.

Despite the precautions, suspected rebels set off a bomb underneath a power transformer just south of Colombo about 6 a.m., causing no injuries, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Though the civil war that has wracked the nation for more than two decades has intensified in recent months, the government held a major parade of thousands of troops, local dancers and religious leaders down Colombo's major coastal road.

In a nationally televised address, President Mahinda Rajapaksa railed against the Tamil Tiger rebels and said the current economic and security difficulties would be over soon. He reiterated the government's vow to crush the rebels after decades of warfare.

"Our defense forces have achieved victories that were never before seen. Terrorism is facing a defeat that it has never before faced," he said.

Hundreds of army, navy, air force and police officials paraded along with battle tanks, artillery guns and multi-barrel rocket launchers. Air force attack helicopters and fighter jets flew overhead.

The U.S. Embassy advised American citizens to avoid unnecessary travel in and around the capital during the holiday.

Since 1983, the government has been fighting the **Tamil Tigers**, who demand an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's ethnic minority Tamils after decades of being marginalized by Sinhalese-dominated governments. The fighting has killed more than 70,000 people.

Sri Lankan celebrates 60th anniversary amid intense security

A 2002 cease-fire ushered in several years of calm and fostered hopes that peace would prevail in the Indian Ocean island nation, but the truce broke down amid renewed attacks over the past two years that killed 5,000 people.

The government forced the guerrillas to abandon their strongholds in the eastern province last year, and daily fighting rages between government forces and Tamil Tiger fighters along the front lines in the jungles of the north, where the rebels still control a de facto state.

In recent months, militants have set off bombs on buses, in train stations and at other civilian targets deep inside government-held territory. The attacks continue despite a maze of checkpoints throughout the country.

On Sunday, a **female** suicide bomber blew herself up inside Colombo's main railway station, killing 11 people and wounding 92 others. A day earlier a bomb on a bus killed 18 people, mostly Buddhist pilgrims, in the central town of Dambulla, about 150 kilometers (90 miles) northeast of Colombo.

Many had high hopes for Sri Lanka, formerly known as Ceylon, when it achieved independence from Britain in 1948, months after South Asian neighbors India and Pakistan became independent.

But the civil war undermined the country's potential to be a major economic power on the level with Singapore or Hong Kong, said Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, executive director of a Colombo-based think tank, Center for Policy Alternatives.

"The development potential was huge, and it has been totally stymied by this war," he said.

Post-independence governments lacked the foresight to develop a national identity that would include all ethnic groups, Saravanamuttu said.

Tensions between the mainly Buddhist Sinhalese majority, who make up about 74 percent of the nation's 20 million people, and the mainly Hindu Tamil community, which makes up about 18 percent, quickly surfaced after independence.

Sinhalese-dominated governments, fearing local Tamils would work with Tamils in neighboring India to take over the nation, tried to marginalize the Tamil language and culture. At least two efforts to broker a compromise between the communities were retracted by the government amid protests by Sinhalese nationalists.

The tensions eventually erupted into violence, with Sinhalese mobs targeting Tamils and Tamil guerrilla groups launching attacks on government targets.

A cease-fire with rebels was reached in 2002, but the government officially pulled out of the accord last month, forcing independent Nordic monitors to leave the country.

Load-Date: February 5, 2008

Final gift reaches tsunami victims

Witney Gazette

April 8, 2008 Tuesday

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Section: HEADLINES

Length: 646 words

Byline: David Horne

Body

THE final gift of money from people in Witney has reached its destination to help rebuild the lives of communities shattered in the tsunami disaster of South East Asia.

After three-and-a-half years of persistence, e-mailing, letters, phone calls, and attempts to avoid obstructive expenses, the money is with a convent on the coast of Sri Lanka.

The Mother Superior of St Theresa's at Batticaola has managed to get her own bank account opened and receive a direct transfer of £1,000 raised during the mayor of Witney's tsunami and earthquake appeal.

It is the last donation out of the £21,585 raised in the aftermath of the disaster on Boxing Day 2004. Current mayor, Chrissie Curry, told the Gazette this week: "We always said we would eventually get the money through, and now, at last, it has happened. This is the final chapter.

"The people of Witney were absolutely brilliant when they responded to this disaster on the other side of the world. But then Witney people are like that."

The money will help the convent run an orphanage, school, and training centre for young women. They were selected as one of several projects to be supported by the mayor's appeal through Witney Rotary Club and relief agency contacts.

Ms Currie said the area was devastated, and the Mother Superior, Sister Salette, had no means of receiving the money.

"The bank disappeared during the tsunami, and there have been ongoing conflicts with the Tamil Tigers. We were not prepared to send the money by other means, because we did not want it sticking to sticky fingers," she said.

The appeal organisers are hoping in the future to hear back from the convent - with some photographs - to see how the project is progressing.

The appeal was set up in the name of then Witney mayor Peter Green, and much of the money came in through donations, but also through events like a series of gigs in the town's Langdale Hall and a CD and video produced by villagers in Cassington.

Mr Green said this week: "It did take some 40 e-mails, telephone calls, and even more letters to establish and re-establish contact. Now, some three years later, we have finally completed our task.

Final gift reaches tsunami victims

"Although I get thanked and blessed at the end of every e-mail, those thanks and blessings are really to all of those in Witney and the surrounding villages who made it all possible."

While the money has gone to a selected handful of projects, many individuals have also been given a helping hand on the back of Witney generosity.

They include a young woman widowed in the disaster, who has been bought a new sewing machine to replace one swept away in the tsunami and rebuild her dressmaking business.

Another is a student, who lost his bike to get to college, but has now received a replacement one to save on hours of walking and freeing time for his studies.

The following is a breakdown of how the money has been spent . . .

* Filadoo, Maldives: £8,000 for a desalination plant to provide fresh, clean water to a large island, where many survivors from the tsunami were relocated. Previously, the only water available was rainwater of supplies contaminated by seawater. Also, a toilet block for a 600-pupil school.

* Ari Atolls and Mandoo, Maldives: £3,000 to provide IT equipment, as well as books, educational DVDs and CDs for local schools.

* Dodanduwa, Sri Lanka: £2,000 to help selected worst affected individuals rebuild their livelihoods, as well as set up retraining for many people involved in the tourist industry.

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* Southern India: £1,500 on training many young women widowed in the tsunami and rejected by their families. They are also able to train other widows in villages, supporting their families by themselves.* Another £85 has been given to aid agencies towards their efforts.

Load-Date: April 8, 2008

Final gift reaches tsunami victims

UK Newsquest Regional Press - This is Oxfordshire

April 8, 2008 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS

Length: 652 words

Byline: David Horne

Dateline: Witney Gazette

Body

THE final gift of money from people in Witney has reached its destination to help rebuild the lives of communities shattered in the tsunami disaster of South East Asia.

After three-and-a-half years of persistence, e-mailing, letters, phone calls, and attempts to avoid obstructive expenses, the money is with a convent on the coast of Sri Lanka.

The Mother Superior of St Theresa's at Batticaola has managed to get her own bank account opened and receive a direct transfer of £1,000 raised during the mayor of Witney's tsunami and earthquake appeal.

It is the last donation out of the £21,585 raised in the aftermath of the disaster on Boxing Day 2004. Current mayor, Chrissie Curry, told the Gazette this week: "We always said we would eventually get the money through, and now, at last, it has happened. This is the final chapter.

"The people of Witney were absolutely brilliant when they responded to this disaster on the other side of the world. But then Witney people are like that."

The money will help the convent run an orphanage, school, and training centre for young women. They were selected as one of several projects to be supported by the mayor's appeal through Witney Rotary Club and relief agency contacts.

Ms Currie said the area was devastated, and the Mother Superior, Sister Salette, had no means of receiving the money.

"The bank disappeared during the tsunami, and there have been ongoing conflicts with the Tamil Tigers. We were not prepared to send the money by other means, because we did not want it sticking to sticky fingers," she said.

The appeal organisers are hoping in the future to hear back from the convent - with some photographs - to see how the project is progressing.

The appeal was set up in the name of then Witney mayor Peter Green, and much of the money came in through donations, but also through events like a series of gigs in the town's Langdale Hall and a CD and video produced by villagers in Cassington.

Final gift reaches tsunami victims

Mr Green said this week: "It did take some 40 e-mails, telephone calls, and even more letters to establish and re-establish contact. Now, some three years later, we have finally completed our task.

"Although I get thanked and blessed at the end of every e-mail, those thanks and blessings are really to all of those in Witney and the surrounding villages who made it all possible."

While the money has gone to a selected handful of projects, many individuals have also been given a helping hand on the back of Witney generosity.

They include a young woman widowed in the disaster, who has been bought a new sewing machine to replace one swept away in the tsunami and rebuild her dressmaking business.

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Graphic

Peter Green

Load-Date: April 8, 2008

LTTE attacks passenger bus; 4 civilians killed, 25 wounded

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

July 11, 2008 Friday 3:53 PM EST

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Length: 153 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 11 -- At least 4 civilians were killed and 25 others reported wounded when **LTTE** terrorists opened fire at a passenger bus plying from Monaragala towards Kataragama, at the 49th mile post along the Buttala-Kataragama main road, Friday (July 11), at around 10:15 a.m.

The injured civilians were initially rushed to the hospital at Kataragama and later 19 of them were transferred to the General hospital in Hambantota, the Kataragama hospital sources said. Two **females** and a 12-year old child (Madushanka) were also among the victims killed in this attack and their bodies have been laid at the hospital, sources further said.

A civilian has also succumbed to injuries while undergoing treatment at the Intensive Care Unit, Hambantota hospital sources said, adding that more civilian casualties are being received at the time of reporting

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

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Load-Date: September 16, 2008

SLAF Seva Vanitha helps displaced citizens

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

March 15, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 367 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, March 15 -- Displaced families in the Morawewa area have been provided with four tube wells for drinking water and a pre-school for their kids to enable them to lead normal lives.

To provide safe drinking water to displaced families resettled in Pankulama in the Morawewa village, four tube wells have been constructed by the Seva Vanitha Unit of the Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) to commemorate the International **Women's** Day. The tube well concept was initiated by Chairperson of the SLAF's Seva Vanitha Unit Nelum Goonetilleke to alleviate sufferings of Morawewa inhabitants who had undergone hardship when their villages were attacked by the **LTTE** terrorists in the past. The tube wells were commissioned by Chairperson Ms. Nelum Goonetilleke along with Group Commander Leonard Rodrigo at a ceremony held last Thursday at Pankulama. A large number of families in the Morawewa area was present on the occasion. The ceremony was concluded with the distribution of 10 kg of rice packs, dry rations, clothing items, Aluminium pots, rubber slippers etc among 75 families. Five wheel chairs were also distributed among five disabled persons in the area. Chairperson Nelum Goonetilleke, Morewewa Camp's Group Captain Leonard Rodrigo, the Divisional Secretary of Morawewa N. Wijeyatilleke and ASP M. Dissanayake distributed the goods among the villagers. Meanwhile, a Pre-School named Nippuna-Kekula was re-opened at Moragaswewa. Furniture such as chairs, tables, racks, black boards, sports goods, books and other equipment were provided by the Seva Vanitha unit. Young children were provided with a glass of milk before the proceedings began. They were also provided with flasks, shoes, socks, and school bags. Squadron Leader Sureka Dias who read out the Chairperson's message which said, "The aim of the Seva Vanitha unit was to develop welfare of the **women** folk and children in the Moragaswewa area following the liberation of Moragaswewa. She urged parents to send their little ones to the pre-school so that they would benefit immensely. She said the SLAF also have plans to provide medical treatment to inhabitants of the area. 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

Police probe suicide bomber's calls

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

October 11, 2008 Saturday 1:09 PM EST

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Length: 373 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 11 -- Detectives investigating Thursday's Borelasgamuwa suicide attack targeting senior Minister Maithripala Sirisena are checking on calls made on a mobile phone which was found at the site of the attack, police said.

Minister Sirisena escaped unhurt when the suicide cadre who flung herself at the VIP convoy, missed the Minister's vehicle and instead hit a backup vehicle. In the explosion the suicide bomber was killed and seven injured. One of the injured died in hospital.

Police said they recovered the **female** suicide bomber's mobile phone, SIM card and the National Identity Card (NIC).

The bomber is believed to have made a call just prior to exploding herself.

Police media spokesperson Ranjith Gunsekera said a bomb weighing at least 4 kg was used in the attack.

He said the police arrested six people and recorded statements from more than 15 others while the body parts of the suicide bomber were removed to the government analyst department for further investigations.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa was among those invited to attend the ceremony but he had withdrawn from the event at the eleventh hour.

Speaking just prior to the attack Minister Sirisena said despite intelligence services requesting that the national ceremony at Bandaragama to be cancelled due to security reasons, he decided to go ahead with the launching of the re-cultivation of the abandoned paddy lands.

He said the government was fighting two wars today, one against terrorism and the other against hunger.

"The **LTTE** strongholds are falling to the security forces one after the other bringing an end to terrorism. International organizations including the World Food Programme warned that a severe food scarcity will be experienced all over the world in the future. With this in view the Mahinda Rajapaksa government gave priority to agricultural development," the Minister said.

Meanwhile police have sought public assistance to identify the suicide bomber and published her photograph as it appears in her National Identity Card.

Police probe suicide bomber's calls

She is reported to have lived in Colombo and the suburbs.

The public are urged to call 119, 2662311, 2662323 or 2854931 if they possess any information.

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Load-Date: October 11, 2008

End of Document

13 killed in Ampara Town Cafe blast

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 10, 2008 Saturday 11:33 AM EST

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Length: 348 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 10 -- Eleven persons were killed and 29 others injured when a parcel bomb ripped through an eatery in Ampara yesterday evening.

The blast at the City Cafe Hotel near the Ampara Clock tower occurred at around 5.40 pm barely hours prior to the commencement of voting at today's Eastern Provincial Council Elections.

According to Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara the cowardly act was a clear intention by certain elements to sabotage the smooth conduct of the poll.

"This attack aimed at innocent civilians was a heinous act to derail the Eastern Provincial Council Election which will pave the way for the restoration of democracy in the Province," the Brigadier said.

He said the **LTTE** has degenerated to such a low level in carrying out isolated attacks to sow panic among the people.

According to Police spokesman senior DIG N.K. Illangakoon, the second floor of the hotel collapsed and the adjacent buildings were badly damaged due to the explosion. "Two **women** were among the dead," he added. The Government Analyst was present at the scene to collect samples of the debris to verify the type of the bomb.

It has been reported that the Cafe was frequented by senior politicians involved in electioneering from yesterday morning.

A Police official told the Daily News on condition of anonymity that the damage could have been worse and the loss of lives more had the bomb exploded in the night.

At the time this edition went to press, Security Forces personnel were yet to establish if the target of the bomb was in fact a VIP. The security in the area was beefed up in the wake of PC election and additional police and Security Forces personnel deployed in the City at the time of the explosion.

The Army and the Police immediately cordoned off the area and conducted a search operation.

Meanwhile, Housing and Common Amenities Minister Ferial Ashraff refuted a news item appearing on a website that the bomb was aimed at her motorcade.

"I was in Kalmunai and know nothing of the bomb blast," she said.

13 killed in Ampara Town Cafe blast

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 Lankan delegation place bare facts at UNHRC

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

June 15, 2008 Sunday 1:33 PM EST

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Length: 2611 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 15 -- Sri Lanka reiterated its commitment to strengthen human rights even as it deals with the world's most ruthless terrorist organization, the **LTTE**, in the Final Statement of the Sri Lankan delegation on the occasion of the adoption of the Universal Periodic Review of Sri Lanka by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on Friday (June 13).

The statement followed introductory comments by the Minister of Disaster Management and Human Rights, read by the Secretary, on the Report of the UPR Process.

This was followed by statements from nine countries, many of which commended Sri Lanka for its efforts to safeguard all human rights despite the difficulties posed by terrorist threats. Unfortunately there was no time for other countries, including those from the SAARC Region, which had put themselves down to speak.

Three countries, whilst appreciating progress, and Sri Lankan responses to the UPR process, suggested other areas in which further improvements could be made, while one country expressed disappointment about responses to recommendations, in particular the rejection about acceptance of a UN Monitoring Mission.

Seven statements by Non-Governmental Organizations followed, many of them expressing disappointment about the rejection of this particular recommendation, whilst raising other issues such as the rights of **women** and children which they felt had not been adequately addressed by member states during the UPR process.

Prof Rajiva Wijesinha, Secretary to the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, stated the following by way of Sri Lanka's response:

"Mr. President, as you noted, this is not supposed to be an interactive dialogue, so we will not respond to individual comments. We are grateful, as we said before during the review, to all the countries that raised issues, not only those that recognized progress made on various fronts but also those that made constructive criticisms to help improve matters.

We are pleased that all but one of the countries that spoke today were so positive, and we respect the queries raised by a couple of them and will do our best to address them.

However, we will use this time to raise some general issues in order to clarify matters whilst taking the general purpose of this process further. Let me then first ask my colleague Mr Mohan Pieris to address some of the topics raised"

Sri Lankan delegation place bare facts at UNHRC

Mr. Mohan Peiris, P.C (President's Counsel) Legal Advisor to the Ministry of Defence, in a lengthy clarification, said the following:

"I will deal first with some of the salient critiques made by distinguished delegates on the questions of torture and extrajudicial executions.

Whilst appreciating recommendations in this respect, the Government states categorically that it does not condone torture and extrajudicial executions under any circumstances, and refutes any implicit suggestions that it has been complicit in torture or extrajudicial executions.

I would ask the honourable delegates to appreciate that there is an absolute constitutional guarantee against torture in article 11 of the constitution of the Republic. It constitutes a criminal offense, with a seven year minimum term of imprisonment.

The Supreme Court is empowered to make determinations regarding allegations of torture and about compensation. All complaints of torture are impartially and comprehensively investigated and perpetrators prosecuted in our courts.

The civil legal system enables victims to obtain damages additionally.

"It also follows that disciplinary action may be taken against public officials if found guilty of those offenses of perpetrated torture.

"On the question of extrajudicial killing, I would want delegates to appreciate that extrajudicial killings are also criminalized without any exception. Comprehensive legal processes are available against those responsible for such criminal activity. Sri Lanka will continue, as it does at present, to implement and further develop safeguards against occurrence of such criminal activity.

"May I also take this opportunity of dealing with some other matters raised by honourable delegates, such as the question of impunity? Mr. President, let me assure them that every effort is being made to bring to book perpetrators of offenses or violators of human rights. It is not the case that the Government has no will, and I refute the allegation that there is no will to deal with these issues.

We have set up the structures necessary and, as we have persistently asked from the Council, we need technical assistance in capacity building to deal with matters being raised in this august assembly from time to time. It might be well to remember that we have a long history of a highly developed legal system.

We have a common law which is Roman-Dutch and we have also a very strong influence of the English law. And between these two legal systems we have developed, we have in place a very complex system of laws and I don't think we need any assistance in terms of any legal input to deal with the matters of human rights. In that respect it is our fervent plea that this assembly appreciates the difficulties that we have and why we seek assistance for capacity building.

"In our search for improving the situation, and bearing in mind the impact of terrorism on human rights, may I bring another point to your attention regarding funding? This deeply concerns us. I would respectfully and graciously plead with delegates here that every effort be made on your part to stop the funding of terrorism, particularly in Sri Lanka.

I am sad to say that we find large money flows from other jurisdictions to Sri Lanka in the funding of terrorism. And it is our fervent belief that if the funding is curtailed, this fight against terrorism could be far more successful and all conflicts could be brought to a peaceful end.

"May I also deal with some of the matters raised by some other organizations, when they raised the question of the sexual violence against women in Akkaraipattu, and the critique made with regard to threats to journalists by the Secretary of Defense?

Sri Lankan delegation place bare facts at UNHRC

We have mechanisms both in our criminal law and our civil law to deal with questions of sexual violence on women be it in Akkaraipattu or in any other part of Sri Lanka. It is not something that is new, it has been an issue that has been dealt with from time immemorial. The structures are in place and the perpetrators of such offenses are brought to book on a routine base.

Indictments are sent out by the Attorney General's office, whereby offenders are brought to book, convicted, dealt with and punished in due course.

"On the question of the threat to journalists, the Government is conscious of the constitutional guarantee with regard to the freedom of expression. We have written it down in our constitution and we respect that. Now we are only asking that we be understood when we critique the press openly with regard to some matters concerning national security.

We cannot compromise on national security whilst assuring the freedom of press which we cherish and would like to protect. All we say is that the press must be conscious of the requirements of national security in the context of the crisis that the country faces.

Let me assure you that the Government is committed to the protection of a free press, and this freedom will be assured to every journalist to get about their work because it is the position of the Government that a free press is of great assistance to the country in its process of governance.

"Now to deal with another aspect of the matter, with regard to the IIGEP. The IIGEP is still in existence in Sri Lanka, and the comment that the IIGEP does not exist any more was an overstatement.

The former members of the IIGEP decided not to function as the members of the IIGEP any more, but it is not the intention of Sri Lanka to derogate from that position but it would invite member states to assist, in whatever way possible, to enhancing the effectiveness of the Commission which is investigating incidents such as the ACF incident and the incident in Trincomalee. Thank you."

Prof Rajiva Wijesinha, Secretary to the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights in additional comments, said:

"Mr. President, in concluding I should point out that the comments made about Sri Lanka fall into different areas which have to be addressed in different ways. Several people raised questions about alleged impunity and disappearances and extra-judicial killings and torture.

Let me assure you that we are as concerned as everyone about these, and believe they have to be dealt with. That is why we are cooperating actively with the Special Rapporteur on torture, as we do with the excellent Special Rapporteur on IDPs, though there are fewer problems there as has clearly now been understood.

We would have liked to cooperate too with Philip Alston, Special Rapporteur on Extra-Judicial Killings, but he has failed to answer our letters. I wrote to him earlier this year telling him what we are trying to do and asking for his help in certain particulars but there was no response.

When we met, I asked why, and he said he didn't have the time. While we appreciate the job is unpaid, as he said, frankly I think you should not take on a job if you don't answer letters. Those of you who have read his initial report in 2006 would have realized what a very helpful report it was, because he drew attention to a lot of problems, and suggested mechanisms of improving them.

"I think both he, Sri Lanka, the Office of the High Commissioner, and its Senior Advisor in Colombo were lax in not pursuing those recommendations immediately. But we are determined to do so now at least.

For instance he had a lot of comments about the Police, and we did have a so-called international police support group, but I'm afraid it did nothing much except - and we are really extremely grateful to the Government of Sweden for this - for a Project on Scene of Crime Investigation.

Sri Lankan delegation place bare facts at UNHRC

We have written now to Sweden, and to the United Kingdom which also provided some assistance, and crucially to Japan, which had not participated but which I know is very willing to assist us through the Task Force on Police Training.

"We also had a lot of criticism with regard to the National Human Rights Commission. And I would like to place on record here our request that you and this Council investigate why the UNDP Stocktaking Report on our National Human Rights Commission, prepared in April 2007 was suppressed for so long.

It was not given to the Head of Capacity Building in Geneva, the new UNDP Head in Colombo had not seen it last year. Now he is working on its recommendations, as we have done in suggesting an MoU between our Ministry and the Commission, but the question is why this has taken so long.

We hope very much that assistance that was earlier pledged, and then it seems reneged on, is restored, and that we can ensure the development of Regional Centres, using UN Volunteers, for whom indeed at least one friendly country contributed funding that lay unused.

There are other issues that seem to us less serious. Thankfully we no longer hear allegations that our security forces, in their struggle against terror, indiscriminately target civilians. That is a canard that has been disposed of. Not so the allegations about child soldiers that seek also to incriminate the Sri Lankan forces, in a vain attempt to draw attention away from the continuing malpractices of the LTTE.

With regard to general allegations about others accused of child recruitment, I refer you to the report I presented to the Human Rights Committee of Liberal International, and which was distributed to all countries that raised the question during the UPR. I fear it has not been read, but this canard too will soon die down.

Meanwhile I should note that the last time I responded to the International Educational Development Inc., it was to condemn their pitiful attempt to justify the LTTE use of children over 15, on the to us utterly spurious grounds that international law permitted this.

"The consequences of that type of indulgence can be seen in the tragic story of the 17 year old girl rescued in combat last week from the LTTE by Sri Lankan forces.

Note that perhaps even more culpable than partisan NGOs in perpetuating such horrors was the carelessness of particular UN officials in Sri Lanka who argued that the LTTE needed to amend legislation to stop using children between 17 and 18. I am thankful that the UN Special Rapporteur, a Sri Lankan herself, and the current head of UNICEF in Sri Lanka, have made it clear that this is intolerable.

"Finally we come to the question of a UN Monitoring Mission, which was raised in 12 of the recommendations we rejected, 11 of them from Europe.

Mr. President, last week we had very fruitful discussions with the European Commission, which reasserted its very friendly attitude to Sri Lanka. We believe this, but with insistent recommendations such as this, we are reminded rather of the affection of an elder sister.

I have an elder sister, Mr President, as I am sure many people here do, and one tends to get tired of relentless finger wagging, done with love doubtless but nevertheless irritating. We have explained why we will not accept a UN Monitoring Mission, which is why we found upsetting the claim of the Danish Ambassador that, because we did not accept this recommendation, the whole UPR process seemed nugatory.

"However, we believe our Human Rights situation can improve, and we welcome assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner for this purpose.

The website of the OHCHR talks about technical support, but this is not forthcoming, and in particular with building up our national institutions.

Sri Lankan delegation place bare facts at UNHRC

That, Mr President, is what we must do, and we will welcome criticism of current shortcomings, but not on the assumption that we need to be nannied for ever.

"But we make all these efforts, Mr President, in the midst of combating terrorism, and in that respect, as my colleague mentioned, we are disappointed at the reaction of some European countries to our pleas to stop terrorist funding. When I mentioned this to Commissioner Fratini last year, he noted that there were inconsistencies.

We do not think this is deliberate but, while we are most grateful to the efforts made by for instance France, we would hope others would be the same.

I was told by his office that funds were limited, and that funding tended to be used against what was seen as Islamic terrorism. But, just as no man is an island, terrorism is not an isolated phenomenon, and we must all work together to stop it.

"We understand there can be legal delays, we understand that tragedies such as the events of yesterday in Pakistan, can occur, but we expect understanding for our progress not being as fast as required, just as we extend understanding for deficiencies in others.

But, confident in the understanding and support of our friends and those unequivocally opposed to terrorism, we will continue with our struggle, Mr President, and not be daunted.

"Finally, may I take this opportunity, as you give up this august office, to present you with a book we have issued, entitled 'Pursuing Peace, Fighting Falsehood'. Strengthening Human Rights, Eliminating Terrorism, Pursuing Peace and Fighting Falsehoods that distract us are all essential in our determination to restore pluralistic democracy throughout our country.

"Just as all member states have shown their willingness during this Review to help us in the first of these, we hope we will have your support for the other three too."

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Load-Date: October 1, 2008

He spoke boldly and truly from his heart

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

October 8, 2008 Wednesday 4:27 PM EST

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Length: 2028 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 8 -- It was roughly around 7.30 on Monday morning when Retired Major General Janaka Perera, his wife and several other UNP provincial councillors arrived at the new UNP branch office in Anuradhapura.

Newly appointed as the opposition leader of the North Central Provincial Council, Mr. Perera had soon gained popularity - which was evident by the large number of people who were present just to see him declare the office open.

Mr. Perera gave his speech which made the crowd roar in appreciation - to see this one time military hero be present among them, sharing his thoughts and dreams about the war, the country's future and politics. The crowds were well aware that if anyone knew about war, it was this man who had served successfully in the army for several years.

His speech was soon followed by Mrs. Perera, who also was well known, having served as a former officer in the Sri Lanka Army Women's Corps, herself.

At roughly around 8.15 a.m. Mr. Perera along with his wife stepped onto the portico to light the traditional oil lamp along with several other UNP delegates. The ceremony was performed in style as with Mr. Perera also were Dr. Rajah Johnpulle, the UNP's district organiser and his wife.

Upon concluding the rituals, Mr. and Mrs. Perera made their way towards the crowd who had anxiously been waiting to meet the military hero. Mrs. Perera too soon got busy in thanking the crowd, not noticing that someone strange had joined them.

At around 8.40 a.m. while the UNP councillors were busy mingling with the public, a short, dark, bowlegged man entered through the main entrance and approached Mr. Perera.

Having mingled for a while with the UNP councillors himself, the man headed towards Mr. Perera and bent down to touch his feet.

Just inched away from the retired Major General, the man then ripped open his shirt and exploded himself killing Mr. and Mrs. Perera, Dr. Johnpulle and his wife and several other people who were present in the premises.

Minutes later the police arrived, only to find the charred bodies of the politicians and civilians lying on the ground amidst blood and broken chairs.

He spoke boldly and truly from his heart

Retired Major General Janaka Perera was no doubt one of the most distinguished generals in Sri Lanka and his loss would be long felt. During his tenure in the Sri Lanka Army, he earned a reputation among Sri Lankans as a military officer par excellence. He was the only officer whom the LTTE truly feared, and whom the rank and file of the army truly respected. Mr. Perera was the former Chief of Staff of the Sri Lanka Army and received his education at St. Joseph's College, Colombo and gained entry to the University of Ceylon to study geology at the Peradeniya campus before quitting to join the Sri Lanka Army in 1966 as an Officer Cadet.

He received his training at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst in England and after completing training he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Ceylon Engineers. He later transferred to the newly formed Commando Regiment. Gen. Perera was a graduate of the Royal College of Defence Studies.

As a Colonel, Janaka Perera took a significant role suppressing the JVP insurrection of 1987-89. He was the Provincial Commander of the North-Western Province as well as being in charge of the special operations of the Operation Combine in Colombo which led to the capture of the JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera. After he and his party apprehended JVP Leader Rohana Wijeweera, he was virtually hero worshipped by some.

In the following years he played a significant role in combating the LTTE in the Sri Lankan Civil War, especially in the Jaffna and Welioya areas. He also contributed greatly to the Sri Lankan military effort during the Eelam War III.

Brigadier Perera also played a major role during 'Operation Riviresa' which led to the liberation of the Jaffna peninsula, during which he commanded the 53 Division which consisted of the Independent Brigade, Air Mobile Brigade, Armoured Brigade and an Infantry Brigade. Later he was promoted to the post of Deputy Chief of Staff and also functioned as Commandant in the Sri Lanka Army Command and Staff College.

Following the fall of Elephant Pass in April 2000 which forced the SL Army units in Jaffna to fall back due to lack of fixed defence positions, Perera was appointed Overall Operations Commander (OOC) and tasked with countering the LTTE offensive, along with Major General (now Lt. General) Sarath Fonseka who was appointed Security Forces Commander, Jaffna.

During this time there were fears in Colombo as 40,000 troops in the Jaffna peninsula could be cut off, trapped and overrun, which led to the government of President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga to negotiate with the Indian government for ships to evacuate troops from the peninsula due to the lack of transport ships of the Navy.

However, the Indian government refused to provide ships. Major General Perera then launched several effective counter-offensives that halted the LTTE advance, removing the threat to the Jaffna peninsula and succeeded in establishing the current defense line in the Jaffna peninsula.

Retired Major General Perera was appointed as Chief of Staff of the army in 2000 but retired in 2001 when he was denied the prestigious position of Army Commander, in the same manner in which other deserving officers were overlooked in the past, when it came to this position.

Following his retirement he was made Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to Australia and later Sri Lanka's Ambassador to Indonesia, but was recalled before his term ended.

Since his retirement from his diplomatic career, General Perera has taken into active politics as a member and an organiser of the United National Party (UNP).

During the 2008 North Central Provincial Council election, which he claimed to be marred by violence, he was the UNP candidate for the post of Chief Minister for the North Central Province. Although he gained the most preferential votes, his party failed to gain a majority in the council and therefore he became the opposition leader of the North Central Provincial Council.

During this term Mr. Perera's greatest development was when he met President Mahinda Rajapaksa where both of them had a long and fruitful chat about the military affairs in the country.

He spoke boldly and truly from his heart

The President offered him a post as one of the President's defence advisors, which Mr. Perera very politely declined. Mr. Perera also declined an offer to be Sri Lanka's envoy to Pakistan, a country which was increasingly becoming a global hot spot.

He told the President that he was not in a position to meet up with officers who were junior to him in the Army, when the President asked whether Mr. Perera could give them some assistance.

During his term as the opposition leader of the North Central Province, the Major General also met with JVP Leader Somawansa Amerasinghe and his lieutenant, Vijitha Herath over dinner at the former's residence at Poorvarama Road, Kirulapone.

Perera hugged Amerasinghe when the two of them met for the first time, with a prominent businessman from Kandy acting as the go-between.

They discussed the current political affairs and the circumstances that led to the killing of JVP Leader Wijeweera in November 1989.

Mr. Perera explained his position and said he had no hand in the killing of Wijeweera, and his explanation was accepted by the JVP duo.

He said he had arrested Wijeweera and handed him over to the Army Headquarters and that he was not privy to the events that followed. Perera told Amerasinghe that he was closing in on him too, to which Amerasinghe replied that he knew about it.

Thereafter, Perera posed a question which was very close to his heart. He asked Amerasinghe why the JVP could not work together with the UNP which the JVP declined.

Though Perera sought a relatively minor post as chief minister, he swept into the national political firmament like a breath of fresh air. There was little doubt that he would go far, for he had everything a good politician needed: charisma, patriotism, a strongly supportive wife, respect for a secular polity, strong Buddhist credentials, a track record of honesty, and above all, no hint of racism.

During his term in politics, it was no doubt Mr. Perera wanted to make a difference. However his last words delivered on the portico from the Anuradhapura party office would be remembered always. He spoke boldly and truly from his heart.

His words were that he never wanted to enter politics too much as he knew it was a corrupt game. If only the people knew that his words were about to come true.

"Our parents are lost to us all..."

"Our parents are lost to us all," were the first words said by Mr. Perera's four children who were seated on the porch of the Retired Major General's house in Kirulapona.

Three of his children who arrived in the country from Australia yesterday morning are in a state of shock. The eldest who has been in the island cannot explain the grief he and his siblings are undergoing.

"They were more like our friends, than our parents. They loved us all equally. We cannot believe they are gone," Mr. Perera's elder daughter Janukshi said.

Janik, Janukshi, Shehara and Ashanka were not the only ones mourning the loss of their parents, as they are well aware that Mr. and Mrs. Perera's demise is a loss to the whole nation. Explaining the kindness of their parents, Mr. Perera's children said that their father truly was a great hero and politician who wanted to protect and help the people of the country.

He spoke boldly and truly from his heart

"Even after he retired from the military he wanted to enter a path which could make him help the people of this country. He wanted to protect them and offer them the best. The people of this island were all like his children and he loved this country," Janukshi said.

The Retired Major General's wife Vajira Perera, who was also killed in the Anuradhapura blast was the main strength behind his success. His children who are unable to stop talking or thinking about their mother, said she was a great wife and mother. Being a past military officer herself, Mrs. Perera's love for the nation was proved when she encouraged her husband to continue politics even after his defeat at the Provincial Council election.

According to the children, Mrs. Perera would never leave by the side of the General, as election campaigning, political conferences and meetings were all attended together "She encouraged him every step of the way. Even after our father lost the election, my mother encouraged him to go on and help the people. She was his strength. In addition she was also a great mother to us," Shehara said.

Mr. and Mrs. Perera met while both were serving in the army. They were married on January 19, 1983. Since then, Mrs. Perera took over the household responsibilities and tendered to her children while the General was away on battle. His major victories on the battlefield were narrated to his children by his wife who hoped and prayed each day that her husband would return home safely.

"When we were small, we hardly saw our father as he was away on the battlefield. Although our mother feared for his safety she always had a smiling face and would crack jokes and make us all laugh. She would tell us about our father's achievements and encouraged us to be honest like him," Shehara said.

Her brothers Janik and Ashanka added, "We remember when one of us had done something wrong, our mother would punish all of us. She would never take sides. She was always there for us. Because of the love and attention she gave us, we never missed our father. Afterall we knew he was fighting to protect this country."

Both the General and his wife were also commended for their fair and just nature, where religion and culture did not let them affect their views of other people. Both of them were known for their pleasing personalities and outgoing natures and their love towards this country.

While the General's children are preparing to perform the funeral rituals which will be held on Saturday, all we wish to state is that General Perera will never be forgotten and will continue to live in the hearts of all.

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Load-Date: October 8, 2008

High risks for athletes exposed

The Toronto Star

March 5, 2009 Thursday

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Section: SPORTS; Pg. S02

Length: 689 words

Byline: Rosie Dimanno, Toronto Star

Body

When you think about it, the leap of faith required is quite astonishing for vulnerable athletes competing around the world.

They are soft targets.

If terrorist spectacle is the objective, how easy for the mayhem-minded to attack an individual or team when flights, hotel lodgings and transportation routes are common knowledge, to say nothing of actual sports venues.

And it's hardly like we haven't been here before - 11 Israeli athletes and coaches were killed in a PLO hostage-taking at the 1972 Munich Olympics. Since then, Israel's sportsmen and women always travel with extra security, paid for by their own government.

The ghastly assault on Sri Lanka's cricket squad Tuesday in Lahore - masked gunmen with rifles, grenades and rocket launchers hitting the team's police-led convoy - could probably have been anticipated, given insurgent turmoil in Pakistan and pitched hostilities back home, government forces driving liberationist Tamil Tigers from their bases in the north.

What's unfathomable is why the cricketers were allowed to venture into Lahore for a Test match, when clearly Pakistan is unfit to provide security. The country, teetering on political collapse, is awash in militants and radicals, an underground and above-ground operating theatre for freewheeling combatants with deep links to Al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

It's unclear who was responsible for Tuesday's attack, which killed six police officers, seven civilians and a bus driver and wounded several players. Tellingly, it was no slapdash suicide bombing but, rather, efficiently and professionally executed. Already, authorities are pointing at the same groups suspected of last year's Mumbai horror - Lashkar-e-Tabya or Jama'at-ud Dawa. But it could be the Tigers or some other network. This test match had been moved to Lahore after India pulled out, following the Mumbai terrorist attacks, in which nearly 180 people were killed.

The cricket community is reeling, if defiant. "The world is a dangerous place but cricket must go on - it will go on," International Cricket Council President David Morgan vowed yesterday.

It will likely not go on in Pakistan, though, which was to have co-hosted the World Cup in 2011.

High risks for athletes exposed

There have been memorable disasters in the annals of sports since international competition entered the Jet Age: The entire U.S. figure skating team killed in a plane crash en route to the world championships in 1961; the Uruguayan rugby team that crashed in the Andes in 1972, survivors resorting to cannibalism; the Turin soccer squad that perished in a plane wreck in 1961.

But these were accidents, not the work of malevolent forces.

The sports universe has tried in its own way, if sometimes with grave omissions, to rise above the fray of politics and global conflict. Many of these storylines have been inspirational: A teenage Palestinian swimmer, whose training was paid for by the Olympics' charitable arm so he could participate in Beijing; a young and overachieving Iraqi soccer squad cheered on by the entire Muslim world in Athens; **female** Afghan sprinters running in long sleeves and hijab at the Games; an Arab-Israeli doubles team on the pro tennis tour.

Since 9/11, security has been hyper-ratcheted at the big events, with hundreds of millions spent on high-tech surveillance. But most competition hosts simply can't afford this kind of defence against random attack. Spectators receive cursory inspection of their bags. Roads around venues are rarely barricaded. Soccer authorities have their hands full just dealing with garden-variety hooligans.

Now, with this incident in Lahore, we see how easily athletes can be yanked into the terrorism matrix. It doesn't even require much cunning.

This time it was Sri Lankans in Pakistan and the target cricketers. Though the two countries have no particular animosity toward each other, that sport resonates deeply in the region, as passionately followed as hockey is in Canada. The attack was guaranteed to enrage, while making everyone feel a bit more exposed and fragile. Score another one for the league of atrocity.

The game - every game, anywhere - has just gone into sudden death.

Graphic

K.M. CHAUDARY AP A Pakistani police officer keeps careful watch yesterday over the site of Tuesday's attack at Lahore, Pakistan. KURT STRUMPF AP Tuesday's assault on the Sri Lankan cricket team evokes memories of the hostage situation at the 1972 Munich Olympics that left 11 Israelis dead. KURT STRUMPF AP Tuesday's assault on the Sri Lankan cricket team evokes memories of the hostage situation at the 1972 Munich Olympics that left 11 Israelis dead.

Load-Date: March 5, 2009

Canada asked to take Iranian group off terrorist list.

Canwest News Service

January 26, 2009 Monday 03:58 PM EST

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Length: 735 words

Byline: Peter O'Neil

Body

Canwest News Europe Correspondent

PARIS - The Canadian government was called on Monday to follow Europe's lead and remove an Iranian resistance group from its list of banned international terrorist organizations.

The European Union, saying it was forced to comply with a series of court decisions by the European Court of Justice, announced on Monday it would end the ban imposed on the People's Mujahedeen Organization of Iran (PMOI).

"What we are doing today is abiding by the resolution of the European court," Javier Solana, foreign policy chief for the 27-nation EU, told reporters in Brussels.

The group was banned by the U.S. in 1997, by the EU in 2002, and by Canada in 2005.

Iranian state radio has condemned the move as "irresponsible," while the group's affiliated political arm praised the decision, which will free millions of dollars in assets frozen in western bank accounts.

"Removing the terror tag is a crushing defeat to Europe's policy of appeasement" and a blow against the "mullahs' medieval regime" in Iran, according to a statement from Maryam Rajavi, who is described as the "president-elect" of the Paris-based resistance movement.

Fears have been expressed that the delisting could impair international efforts, now being led by President Barack Obama, to convince Iran to suspend its nuclear program.

David Kilgour, a human rights advocate and former junior foreign affairs minister in Jean Chretien's Liberal government, called on the Canadian government to lift its prohibition.

"Canada's long-term political and economic relations (with Iran) are best served by standing with its people, not the regime," Kilgour said in a statement.

"The time for appeasing the ayatollahs and suppressing the Iranian opposition must end."

Public Safety Canada, which is responsible for the terror list, didn't respond Monday to a request for comment on Kilgour's demand.

Canada asked to take Iranian group off terrorist list.

The Canadian government, which established its terror list in 2003, included the PMOI when it extended late last year the list of groups that have ``knowingly carried out, attempted to carry out, participated in or facilitated a terrorist activity or is knowingly acting on behalf of, at the direction of or in association with such an entity."

Among those on the list are al-Qaida, Hamas, Hezbollah, Peru's Shining Path, the Sikh terror organizations Babbar Khalsa and the International Sikh Youth Federation, and the **Tamil Tigers** of Sri Lanka.

The PMOI was formed as a leftist organization in the 1960s opposed to the U. S.-backed regime of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. It was allied with the Islamist forces of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in the Shah's 1979 overthrow, and engaged in assassinations of American targets before the revolution. It also took part in the hostage-taking incident at the U.S. embassy shortly after the Shah fled the country that year.

But the group broke with Khomeini and then allied with the late Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein during the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-88. It established bases in Iraq and took part in a number of bombings and assassination attempts against Iranian government targets as late as 2001, according to a 2008 analysis by the Council on Foreign Relations, a Washington-based think-tank.

``While the group says it does not intentionally target civilians, it has often risked civilian casualties. It routinely aims its attacks at government buildings in crowded cities," the analysis noted.

However, the group's terrorist activities declined after 2001, and it was disarmed by U.S. forces after the American invasion of Iraq in 2003. There are currently about 3,500 members at a camp there, including 60 Iranians with Canadian citizenship, according to Winnipeg human rights lawyer David Matas, who was in Brussels with Kilgour on Monday.

The U.S. State Department regularly refers to PMOI as a ``cult-like terrorist group" because of the control wielded by the two leaders, Massoud Rajavi and his wife Maryam, who have followers worldwide.

``In addition to its Paris-based members (PMOI) has a network of sympathizers in Europe, the United States, and Canada," according to the Council on Foreign Relations analysis.

The PMOI has won considerable political support in western countries, from politicians and activists like Kilgour, as it calls for a fully democratic Iran that endorses the free enterprise system with full rights for **women** and ethnic and religious minorities.

Load-Date: January 27, 2009

The 0530 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

February 23, 2009 Monday 5:35 AM GMT

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Body

Duty Editor: Talek Harris

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

-- WORLD HEADLINES --

COLOMBO: SLanka rejects Tigers' ceasefire call

MELBOURNE: Residents flee resurgent wildfires

HOLLYWOOD: Best Picture 'Slumdog' sweeps Oscars

-- OSCARS --

Entertainment-Oscars-film,2ndlead

HOLLYWOOD

Rags-to-riches drama "Slumdog Millionaire" sweeps the board at the 81st Academy Awards, winning eight Oscars including best picture on a night of high-voltage Hollywood glamour.

800 words 0600 GMT. Picture. Video

Entertainment-Oscars-film-India

HOLLYWOOD

India enjoys a golden night at the Oscars, with "Slumdog Millionaire" music maestro A.R. Rahman leading the way with two awards as the movie's child stars steal the show on the red carpet.

600 word 0700 GMT. Picture. Video

Entertainment-Oscars-India,REAX

MUMBAI

India basks in the reflected glory of "Slumdog Millionaire's" Oscar success, although there was no red-carpet glamour to be found in the Mumbai slums of the film's location.

600 words 0630 GMT by Shail Kumar Singh. Picture. Video

We have also moved: Entertainment-Oscars-film-picture-Slumdog

Entertainment-Oscars-director-Boyle,PROFILE

Entertainment-Oscars-film-India-Rahman,PROFILE

Entertainment-Oscars-film-foreign-Japan

HOLLYWOOD

Japan's "Departures" -- depicting the esoteric practices of a mortician who works to preserve the dignity of a person even after death -- adds an Oscar to its international awards haul.

500 words moved. Picture

Entertainment-Oscars-supactor-Ledger,PROFILE

HOLLYWOOD

Heath Ledger's posthumous Oscar underscores the tragedy of the actor's death, which in the words of director Christopher Nolan "ripped a hole in the future of cinema."

700 words moved by Rob Woollard. Picture

Please also see our separate Entertainment-Oscars-advisory

-- ASIA --

SriLanka-unrest,WRAP

COLOMBO

The ***Tamil Tigers*** appeal for international action to halt a major Sri Lankan government offensive against their shrinking fiefdom, but the island's military rejects any talk of a truce.

550 words 0645 GMT by Amal Jayasinghe

Australia-weather-fires,2ndlead

MELBOURNE

Residents flee their homes in Australia's fire-devastated Victoria state as blazes that killed more than 200 people earlier this month threaten to flare again.

600 words 0700 GMT by Neil Sands. Picture

NKorea-SKorea-military-missiles,2ndlead

SEOUL

Communist North Korea has completed deployment of medium-range missiles and expanded its military to 1.2 million members, South Korea says, describing the threat from its neighbour as "direct and serious."

The 0530 GMT News Advisory

650 words 0700 GMT by Jun Kwanwoo

US-diplomacy-Asia-China

BEIJING

Hillary Clinton's trip to Beijing has come as a relief to China after the US secretary of state steered clear of human rights to focus on cooperation between the two nations.

550 words 0630 GMT by Marianne Barriaux

China-mining-accident-industry,lead

BEIJING

Investigators probe how China's worst coal mining disaster in over a year could have occurred in what had been hailed as a showcase modern colliery, as the firm's top managers are sacked.

550 words 0700 GMT by Robert J. Saiget. Picture

Finance-economy-China-US-bonds-diplomacy

SHANGHAI

China has little choice but to follow Hillary Clinton's call and continue buying US treasuries, ensuring a steady flow of funding support for the massive US stimulus package, economists say.

500 words 0730 GMT by D'Arcy Doran

Japan-auto-company-Honda,3rdlead

TOKYO

Japan's second-largest automaker Honda Motor Co., struggling with falling sales in the global economic downturn, says it will replace its president and chief executive officer in June.

450 words 0700 GMT. Picture

We have also moved: HongKong-economy-budget,ADVANCER

Finance-economy-Asia-property,FOCUS

Indonesia-entertainment-religion-Islam-film-women,FOCUS

-- EUROPE --

Finance-economy-EU-G20,6thlead

BERLIN

The heads of Europe's largest economies agree on the need for greater regulation of financial markets and to double IMF funding to avoid a repeat of the global economic crisis.

750 words moved by William Ickes

-- AMERICAS --

US-Cuba-politics-sanctions-diplomacy,2ndlead

WASHINGTON

The US economic embargo on Cuba "has failed," top Republican lawmaker Richard Lugar has said in a report likely to fuel momentum for a shift in US' decades-old policy toward the island.

600 words 0700 GMT by Michael Langan

We have also moved: Cuba-Castro-politics

Lifestyle-Brazil-festival-Carnival,3rdlead

RIO DE JANEIRO

Brazil's five-day Carnival gets into high gear with its famous parades in Rio de Janeiro adding choreographed extravagance to lusty street parties and fancy-dress balls already underway.

750 words moved by Marc Burleigh. Picture, video

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Load-Date: February 24, 2009

End of Document

The AFP Asia news agenda

Agence France Presse -- English

November 26, 2008 Wednesday 2:40 AM GMT

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Body

Duty Editor: Huw Griffith

News Desk +852 2829 6211

ASIA NEWS HIGHLIGHTS ON WEDNESDAY

+ Thousands stranded as Thai protesters occupy airport

+ Asian stocks slip despite massive US bailout

BANGKOK: Anti-government protesters occupy Thailand's main airport, leaving thousands of travellers stranded in one of southeast Asia's busiest hubs, while grenades are thrown in other parts of the city (THAILAND-POLITICS-PROTEST)

-- Monitoring the arrival back from Peru of Thai Prime Minister Somchai Wongsawat, expected to land at an undisclosed location at about 1000 GMT (THAILAND-POLITICS-PROTEST-PM)

TOKYO: Asian stocks slip as investors take profits despite a plan by the US Federal Reserve to pump 800 billion dollars into the financial system (STOCKS-WORLD)

-- OTHER STORIES --

BEIJING: The daughter of a Chinese businessman convicted of spying for Taiwan appeals for him not be executed, amid reports he will be killed this week (CHINA-TAIWAN-AUSTRIA-RIGHTS-ESPIONAGE-EXECUTION)

-- Following developments in the case of Huang Guangyu, China's second richest man and head of the nation's largest home appliance chain, reportedly detained on suspicion of market manipulation (CHINA-CRIME-STOCKS-COMPANY-GOME)

-- Moving a story on how the world's luxury brands are pinning their hopes on the Chinese consumer amid the global financial crisis (FINANCE-ECONOMY-CHINA-LUXURY)

The AFP Asia news agenda

-- Moving a story looking at China and India's role at UN climate change talks next week in which they are expected to spearhead calls for rich nations to dig into their pockets to tackle global warming (UN-CLIMATE-WARMING-CHINA-INDIA,ADVANCER)

COLOMBO: Reporting on fighting as the reclusive Tamil Tigers leader Velupillai Prabhakaran prepares to deliver his annual policy address on Thursday from a besieged jungle hideout that could soon be overrun by government troops (SRILANKA-UNREST)

DHAKA: Monitoring political developments after Bangladesh's major parties started campaigning five weeks before the country holds landmark elections (BANGLADESH-POLITICS-ELECTIONS)

HANOI: Visit by Indian President Pratibha Patil (VIETNAM-INDIA-DIPLOMACY)

ISLAMABAD: Monitoring Taliban-linked unrest in Pakistan's rugged northwestern tribal belt bordering Afghanistan (PAKISTAN-UNREST)

JAKARTA: Moving a feature on Muslim preachers who back a new anti-pornography law as protection for young women while taking child brides (INDONESIA-CHILD-SEX-RELIGION)

KATHMANDU: Moving a story on the challenges facing Nepal's Maoists as they mark their 100th day in office this week (NEPAL-POLITICS-MAOISTS)

MANILA: September import data is published (PHILIPPINES-ECONOMY-TRADE)

MUMBAI: Moving a feature on belt-tightening in India's film industry as the global economic crisis sees investors looking for guaranteed returns after a couple of big-budget flops (FINANCE-ECONOMY-ENTERTAINMENT-INDIA-BOLLYWOOD)

NEW DELHI: Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mohammed Qureshi to visit India (INDIA-PAKISTAN-DIPLOMACY-PEACE)

SEOUL: North Korea believes a Seoul-funded industrial estate undermines its hardline communist system and is willing to shut it down as part of attempts to pressure the South Korean government, researchers and analysts say (NKOREA-SKOREA-POLITICS-KAESONG)

SINGAPORE: Reporting on world oil prices ahead of a meeting of the OPEC cartel (COMMODITIES-ENERGY-OIL-ASIA-PRICE)

-- Covering an address by Nobuo Tanaka, executive director of the International Energy Agency (IEA-COMMODITIES-ENERGY-OIL)

-- Government to release manufacturing data for October, with the economy in recession 0500 GMT (SINGAPORE-ECONOMY-OUTPUT)

SYDNEY: Covering reaction after mining giant BHP Billiton says it is dropping its hostile takeover bid for Rio Tinto (AUSTRALIA-BRITAIN-MINING-BHP-RIO-TAKEOVER)

TAIPEI: Reporting as the Formosa Plastics Group to lend 285 million US dollars to US DRAM maker Micron (TAIWAN-US-CHIP-FORMOSA-MICRON)

-- Monitoring the money laundering investigation that has seen former president Chen Shui-bian locked up (TAIWAN-POLITICS-CORRUPTION-CHEN)

TOKYO: Toshihide Maskawa, one of the winners of the 2008 Nobel Physics Prize, holds press conference at 0300 GMT (NOBEL-JAPAN-SCIENCE-PHYSICS)

The AFP Asia news agenda

- US Deputy Health and Human Services Secretary Tevi Troy holds media conference at 0700 GMT after meeting Japanese officials on food safety in China and other issues (JAPAN-US-CHINA-FOOD-SAFETY)
- Bank of Japan governor Masaaki Shirakawa delivers speech at 0800 GMT (FINANCE-ECONOMY-JAPAN-BANK)
- Reporting on foreign exchange trading in Asia as the dollar slips against the yen on jitters about fresh signs of trouble in the financial system (FOREX-ASIA)
- Monitoring Japanese share prices which slip 1.30 percent by lunch as investors take profits after the previous day's strong gains (STOCKS-JAPAN)

afp

Load-Date: November 26, 2008

End of Document

AFP Asia news agenda

Agence France Presse -- English

January 25, 2009 Sunday 2:53 AM GMT

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Body

Duty Editor: Claire Cozens

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

ASIA NEWS HIGHLIGHTS ON SUNDAY

+ Indian PM recovers after heart surgery

+ Tennis. Day seven at the Australian Open

NEW DELHI: Reporting on health of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh after he undergoes what doctors and party officials say was successful heart bypass surgery (INDIA-POLITICS-HEALTH-SINGH)

MELBOURNE: Tennis. Day seven at the Australian Open at Melbourne Park (TENNIS-AUS-OPEN)

-- OTHER STORIES --

BEIJING: Watching for more signs of tensions between China and the United States after Beijing angrily denied claims by the US Treasury Secretary-designate it was manipulating its currency (CHINA-US-TRADE-FOREX)

-- Moving analysis on whether a tougher stand by US President Barack Obama is likely to push China to revalue the yuan, a longstanding source of tension between the countries (FINANCE-ECONOMY-CHINA-US-OBAMA)

-- Monitoring China's bird flu situation after the death of four people in less than three weeks (HEALTH-CHINA-FLU)

-- Moving piece on fears shoppers' 'wait and see' mentality may bring deflation to China (FINANCE-ECONOMY-CHINA-RETAIL-INFLATION)

BANGKOK: Reporting as ousted and exiled Thai prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra makes a televised address at 0300 GMT (THAILAND-POLITICS)

-- Monitoring as Thailand's foreign minister makes his first official visit to Cambodia, amid an ongoing territorial dispute (THAILAND-CAMBODIA-DIPLOMACY)

AFP Asia news agenda

COLOMBO: Reporting on fighting in northeast Sri Lanka, where government troops say they are on the verge of total victory against the Tamil Tigers. (SRILANKA-UNREST)

-- Moving piece on the unprecedented risks faced by Sri Lanka's journalists after a string of violent attacks (SRILANKA-UNREST-MEDIA)

DHAKA: Moving piece on the army of cheap labour that has made Bangladesh a growth hotspot as the rest of Asia struggles through the global financial crisis (FINANCE-ECONOMY-BANGLADESH)

HONG KONG: Moving an interview with an Auschwitz survivor, and an accompanying story ex-SYDNEY on Australia's Holocaust museum (AUSTRALIA-CZECH-HISTORY-JEWS-HOLOCAUST, AUSTRALIA-JEWS-HOLOCAUST-SURVIVORS)

ISLAMABAD: Moving an analysis of how the US closure of Guantanamo Bay could deprive militants of a major propaganda tool and help Pakistan in the fight against extremism (US-POLITICS-OBAMA-GUANTANAMO-PAKISTAN, ANALYSIS)

-- Moving an interview ex-Lahore with a former Guantanamo Bay detainee (US-POLITICS-OBAMA-GUANTANAMO-PAKISTAN)

JAKARTA: Monitoring whether Indonesia's highest Muslim body will issue fatwas against smoking and yoga (INDONESIA-RELIGION-HEALTH)

-- Moving a feature on a quiet movement among Indonesian atheists to spread the anti-religion word in their staunchly Muslim homeland (INDONESIA-RELIGION-ATHEISM-INTERNET)

KABUL: Monitoring unrest in Afghanistan after US-led forces say they have killed 15 militants, while Afghans say many victims of operation were civilians (AFGHANISTAN-UNREST)

MANILA: Reporting on efforts to recover Swiss, Italian, and Filipino Red Cross workers kidnapped by Islamic militants in the southern Philippines (PHILIPPINES-ATTACKS-KIDNAP)

-- Moving a piece on how the powerful Roman Catholic church is beginning to feel the pinch in the Philippines as cash-strapped worshippers cut back on donations (FINANCE-ECONOMY-PHILIPPINES-CHURCH)

NEW DELHI: Monitoring after reports that Indian police have arrested two senior officials of global accounting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers over fraud-hit Satyam Computer Services (INDIA-IT-COMPANY-FRAUD-SATYAM)

-- Moving advance on India's national day celebrations, to be held amid tight security in the wake of the deadly Islamist militant attacks in Mumbai (INDIA-REPUBLICDAY-MILITARY-ATTACKS-SECURITY)

-- Moving piece on the Rajasthan palace hoping to attract visitors with a new high-wire ride, as India begins to embrace adventure tourism (LIFESTYLE-INDIA-TOURISM-ECONOMY)

-- Moving piece on the bleak outlook for India's software sector, already reeling from a huge accounting fraud in one of its flagship companies (INDIA-US-ECONOMY-IT-EARNINGS-GROWTH)

SEOUL: Monitoring reax after North Korea's leader Kim Jong-Il called for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula (NKOREA-NUCLEAR-WEAPONS-CHINA-DIPLOMACY)

-- Reporting on drop in foreign ownership of South Korean government bonds (SKOREA-ECONOMY-BONDS)

SYDNEY: Monitoring efforts to save sole survivor from a mass stranding of sperm whales off southern Australia (AUSTRALIA-ANIMALS-WHALES)

-- Cycling. Tour Down Under (CYCLING-AUS-TOUR)

AFP Asia news agenda

-- Field Hockey. Australia v Netherlands in Perth (FHOCKEY-AUS-NED)

TOKYO: Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov arrives in Japan. (JAPAN-BULGARIA-DIPLOMACY)

-- Athletics: Osaka International Women's Marathon from 0310 GMT. (ATHLETICS-JPN)

-- Sumo: The final day of the New Year Grand Sumo Tournament, with returning grandchampion Asashoryu standing close to clinching another tournament victory with a perfect score. (SUMO-JPN-MGL)

WELLINGTON: Moving advancer of special Pacific summit to decide whether Fiji's military regime should be suspended from the Pacific Islands Forum for breaking promises to hold elections to restore democracy (PACIFIC-FIJI-DIPLOMACY)

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Load-Date: January 25, 2009

End of Document

The 0100 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

February 8, 2009 Sunday 1:12 AM GMT

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Length: 739 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, Feb 8 2009

Body

Duty Editor: John Weaver

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

-- WORLD HEADLINES --

SYDNEY: Ferocious wildfires kill 26

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka PM warns Tigers to surrender

WASHINGTON: Senate wraps up debate on stimulus plan

-- ASIA --

Australia-weather-fire,5thlead-WRAP

SYDNEY

At least 26 people have been killed as ferocious wildfires rage through southeastern Australia, with police warning the death toll from the blazes, some of which were deliberately lit, is set to rise significantly.

600 words by 0130GMT by Neil Sands. Picture

SriLanka-unrest,3rdlead-WRAP

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapakse warns cornered Tamil Tiger rebels to surrender or face a complete rout as government forces claim more successes in what is regarded as their fight to the finish.

600 words moved by Amal Jayasinghe

SriLanka-unrest-Tamil-Prabhakaran,FOCUS

COLOMBO

Sri Lankan troops have smashed the **Tamil Tigers**' mini-state and cornered the remaining rebels, but officials say they must catch their elusive leader to declare final victory.

650 words 0200 GMT by Amal Jayasinghe. Picture

Afghanistan-unrest-crime-drugs-NATO,FOCUS

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan

NATO troops operating in Afghanistan should find drug traffickers and "eliminate" them as they would Taliban militants and other insurgents battling the government, the counternarcotics minister says.

650 words 0200 GMT by Bronwen Roberts

Afghanistan-unrest-crime-drugs-US-NATO,FOCUS

NAD ALI DISTRICT, Afghanistan

In the heart of Afghanistan's opium-farming area, police use red tractors to churn up young green opium plants as a battalion of soldiers watch out for Taliban-linked gunmen armed by the profits from the drugs trade.

750 words 0200 GMT by Bronwen Roberts. Picture

Pakistan-unrest-northwest-displaced

PESHAWAR, Pakistan

Sitting on a cold floor in a mud house on the outskirts of Peshawar, Akbar Ali fights back tears about getting his five children and pregnant wife out of "hell" in Pakistan's Swat valley.

700 words 0400 GMT by Saad Khan. Picture

China-Africa-Saudi-diplomacy,ADVANCER

BEIJING

Chinese President Hu Jintao launches a whistlestop tour of Saudi Arabia and Africa Tuesday in a trip expected to focus more on shoring up political ties and less on securing energy supplies.

650 words 0230 GMT by Marianne Barriaux. Graphic

Finance-economy-China-labour,FOCUS

ZHUGAO, China

When migrant worker Zhong Yan lost her job in southern China amid the implosion of the country's manufacturing sector, she wasted no time coming up with a Plan B.

700 words 0330 GMT by Dan Martin. Picture

-- AMERICAS --

US-economy-politics-Obama,5thlead

WASHINGTON

The 0100 GMT News Advisory

The Senate wraps up debate on a pared-down plan to pump at least 780 billion dollars into the troubled US economy, as President Barack Obama called for urgent action to stem rising unemployment.

700 words 0200 GMT by Olivier Knox

We will also move: US-politics-Obama

Finance-economy-US-public-aid-banking

Entertainment-US-music-Grammys

LOS ANGELES

New Orleans rapper Lil Wayne and hugely popular British rockband Coldplay are vying for top honors at the 51st Grammy Awards here Sunday, the music-industry's equivalent of the Oscars.

600 words 0130 GMT by Rob Woollard

-- EUROPE --

Munich-security-military-diplomacy-US

MUNICH, Germany

US Vice President Joe Biden holds talks with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov, a day after promising a "new tone" in foreign policy and calling for resetting frosty ties with Moscow.

650 words 0130 GMT

Science-history-evolution-Darwin-society,ADVANCER

PARIS

Charles Darwin, born 200 years ago on Thursday, upended our conception of humanity's place in Nature but also unleashed a pernicious justification of social and racial inequality.

650 words 0300 GMT by Boris Cambreleng. File picture.

We will also move: Science-history-evolution-Darwin-genetics,ADVANCER

-- MIDDLE EAST --

Israel-vote,ADVANCER

JERUSALEM

Israel votes in the wake of the war in Gaza, with the ballot expected to shift the country to the right and put it at odds with a new US leadership intent on pushing for Middle East peace.

900 words 0230 GMT by Yana Dlugy. Picture. Graphic. Video.

Please see our special Israel-vote advisory for full coverage.

Iran-revolution-anniversary,ADVANCER

TEHRAN

Iran on Tuesday celebrates the 30th anniversary of the Islamic revolution with pomp and pageantry, amid the state's continued loyalty to the ideals of social justice and independence.

The 0100 GMT News Advisory

600 words 0300 GMT by Pierre Celerier. Picture.

We will also move: Iran-revolution-anniversary-women, FOCUS

afp

Load-Date: February 8, 2009

End of Document

Suicide bombing in Sri Lanka capital injures seven: police

Agence France Presse -- English

February 29, 2008 Friday 4:02 AM GMT

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Length: 408 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 29 2008

Body

A Tamil Tiger suicide bomber blew himself up on Friday injuring seven people as police moved in to search his house in the Sri Lankan capital, police and military officials said.

The blast went off when police and soldiers approached the house in Colombo's commercial district of Kotahena, a police official said.

At least three of the injured were police officers, hospital staff said.

"We had information from a man we arrested the previous day about a possible arms storage location of the Tigers and we moved in this morning to check," a policeman at the scene said.

He said that they had found several hand grenades and three jackets filled with explosives to be worn by suicide bombers.

Following the blast, police and troops poured into the area to search for further explosives caches and other suspected Tiger rebels.

"The man came out of a house while the search operation was underway and detonated explosives he was carrying," military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said. "Police and security forces were there when the blast went off."

Police said the man who detonated explosives was believed to be a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) and may have planned to carry out the attack somewhere else.

"At least seven people were taken to hospital after the blast," a police official at the scene said. "We were carrying out a search operation when the bomb went off."

Hospital spokesman Anil Jasinha said two policemen and a **female** officer were among the seven people admitted to the Colombo National Hospital.

"Some of them have burn injuries," Jasinha said.

Suicide bombing in Sri Lanka capital injures seven: police

Authorities had stepped up security in Colombo after Tamil Tiger guerrillas accused the army of carrying out two roadside bomb attacks inside rebel-held territory on Wednesday, killing eight civilians.

The attack came as the defence ministry said 14 more Tiger rebels had been killed in fresh fighting in the north of the island on Thursday. The military had also stepped up air attacks against the rebels.

According to the defence ministry, 1,676 rebels have been killed so far this year. The military estimated the Tigers' strength at the beginning of the year at 3,000 and revised it to 5,000 combatants this month.

The ministry says 94 soldiers and police have also been killed in 2008.

Casualty figures provided by both sides differ vastly and cannot be independently verified. The government bars journalists and human rights workers from front line and rebel-held areas.

Load-Date: February 29, 2008

AFP Asia news agenda

Agence France Presse -- English

March 8, 2009 Sunday 2:55 AM GMT

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Length: 808 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, March 8 2009

Body

Duty Editor: Kevin McElderry

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

ASIA NEWS HIGHLIGHTS ON SUNDAY

- + North Korea votes to elect new parliament
- + Tensions high ahead of Tibet anniversary
- + International Women's Day marked around world

SEOUL: North Koreans vote in elections to a new parliament seen as a key indicator of an eventual transition of power (NKOREA-VOTE-POLITICS)

BEIJING: Reporting on events in and around Tibet as tensions rise ahead of Tuesday's 50th anniversary of a failed revolt against Chinese rule. Special advisory moving around 0300 GMT (CHINA-TIBET-50YEARS)

HONG KONG: Women around the world mark International Women's Day (WOMEN-RIGHTS)

-- OTHER STORIES --

BANGKOK: Reporting as anti-government protesters hold rallies around the country (THAILAND-POLITICS-PROTEST)

-- Tennis. Davis Cup. Asia-Oceania Group I. 2nd round. Australia v Thailand (TENNIS-DAVIS-AUS-THA)

BEIJING: Continuing coverage of China's March 5-13 parliament session, an event held under the shadow of the economic crisis and tensions in Tibet (CHINA-CONGRESS-NPC)

-- Reporting on events in and around Tibet as tensions rise ahead of the 50th anniversary on March 10 of a failed revolt against Chinese rule (CHINA-UNREST-TIBET-RIGHTS)

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand: Cricket. New Zealand v India third one-day international (CRICKET-NZL-IND)

COLOMBO: Reporting after at least 32 **Tamil Tigers** are killed in heavy fighting in Sri Lanka's embattled northeast where government troops have cornered the rebels (SRILANKA-UNREST)

DHAKA: Reporting developments after Bangladesh's law minister says more than 1,000 border guards wanted for massacring scores of their officers last week in a mutiny in the Bangladesh capital could be court martialled (BANGLADESH-UNREST)

-- Moving an article on Bangladeshi **women** and children who have been the victims of acid attacks by abusive fathers and husbands (**WOMEN**-RIGHTS-BANGLADESH-ABUSE,FOCUS)

HANOI: Moving a story on the effect of the global economic crisis on the millions of poor in Vietnam (FINANCE-ECONOMY-VIETNAM-POVERTY)

KUALA LUMPUR: Moving an economic story on Malaysia's new ambitious plan which will be announced next week to prevent job losses and spur growth amid the global recession (MALAYSIA-ECONOMY)

-- Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim to address supporters ahead of three key by-elections to be held on April 7 (MALAYSIA-POLITICS)

LAHORE, Pakistan: Reporting on probe into a deadly terrorist attack on Sri Lanka's cricket team (PAKISTAN-SRILANKA-ATTACKS-CRICKET)

NEW DELHI: Reporting developments in the campaigning for general elections next month in the world's biggest democracy. (INDIA-VOTE)

-- Moving a story ex-DHARAMSHALA on the Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama ahead of the 50th anniversary on March 10 of the uprising that led to his exile abroad (CHINA-TIBET-50YEARS-DALAI-POLITICS,FOCUS)

-- Moving a story on India's mobile market racing ahead, defying the gloom in the global economy (INDIA-ECONOMY-TELECOM,FOCUS)

-- Moving a piece ex-MUMBAI on a new battle against piracy which is costing the Bollywood film industry hundreds of millions of dollars a year (ENTERTAINMENT-INDIA-BOLLYWOOD-CRIME-COUNTERFEIT,FOCUS)

-- Moving a story ex-MUMBAI on the role the Internet is playing in the campaign run-up to India's general elections (INDIA-VOTE-INTERNET)

SEOUL: Following Pyongyang's preparations for launch of long-range missile (NKOREA-NUCLEAR-MISSILE-US-SKOREA)

SINGAPORE: Moving story on why Asian governments need to roll out fresh stimulus measures to stop their economies from sinking further amid a collapse in exports (ASIA-FINANCE-ECONOMY-STIMULUS)

SYDNEY: Following up on the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, the world's most famous gay pride event (LIFESTYLE-AUSTRALIA-GAY-FESTIVAL)

-- Monitoring severe tropical cyclone Hamish lashing the coast of northeast Australia and forcing evacuation of Fraser Island (AUSTRALIA-WEATHER-CYCLONE)

TAIPEI: Tennis. Davis Cup. Asia-Oceania Group I. 2nd round. Taiwan v India (TENNIS-DAVIS-TPE-IND)

TOKYO: Reporting developments amid reports prosecutors plan to investigate trade minister Toshihiro Nikai and other government members in an escalating scandal over political donations (JAPAN-POLITICS)

AFP Asia news agenda

- Moving a story on a new Japanese gadget designed to allow users to control everything from their iPods to their washing machines with nothing more than a wink or a smile (LIFESTYLE-JAPAN-SCIENCE-IT)
- Ski: Freestyle World Championships final day in Inawashiro (SKI-WORLD-FREESTYLE-JPN)
- Baseball: World Baseball Classic at Tokyo Dome (BASEBALL-WORLD-ASIA)
- Tennis: Davis Cup. Asia/Oceania Zone Group One, 2nd round. Japan vs China (TENNIS-DAVIS-JPN-CHN)
- Marathon: Nagoya marathon (ATHLETICS-JPN)

YANGON: Moving a feature ex-PHO KYAR on an elephant park in Myanmar that could help bring the animal back from endangerment -- if only tourists would show up (MYANMAR-TOURISM-WILDLIFE-ELEPHANT)

afp

Load-Date: March 8, 2009

End of Document

Paying the ultimate price for honour and principle

The Nation (Thailand)

January 21, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 704 words

Byline: The Nation

Body

No matter what they called him - "The Prince of Media Freedom" or "The Man Who Changed Sri Lankan Journalism" or "An Angel of Liberty" - we don't want to be him. No matter how powerful and brilliant his articles, we still don't want to be him. And that is unlikely to change despite all the praise he is receiving from around the world after his brutal death earlier this month.

"No other profession calls on its practitioners to lay down their lives for their art save the armed forces and, in Sri Lanka, journalism. In the course of the past few years, the independent media have increasingly come under attack. Electronic and print-media institutions have been burnt, bombed, sealed and coerced. Countless journalists have been harassed, threatened and killed. It has been my honour to belong to all those categories and now especially the last."

He wrote that just before he was gunned down in cold blood in broad daylight. For those who knew him, however, the attack had never been a matter of "how", but only of "when". As journalists in most other parts of the world struggle to "survive" the digital wave, the man and his peers were busy dodging real bullets and kidnappers, or bracing for arsonists and bombers, never mind death threats - which any Sri Lankan reporter can get for giving a movie a bad review.

Lasantha Wickrematunge was an exceptional journalist, known for his constant and relentless exposure of government corruption and contentious stand against state suppression of the **Tamil Tigers**, whom he also condemned as being "among the most ruthless and bloodthirsty organisations ever to have infested the planet". Despite being the editor-in-chief of the English-language Sunday Leader and one of the best-connected journalists in the country, he was always a sitting duck as far as personal safety was concerned.

Critics portrayed him as a highly influential man with an ambitious agenda of being a political king-maker behind the scenes. Whatever they said, however, could not blur the fact that his written words were his only weapon, whereas his enemies set fire to his printing house, sprayed his home with anti-tank bullets, sent him countless death threats and shadowed him with gunmen.

Living a life so targeted and dangerously exposed in a country where at least 14 journalists and media workers have been killed over the past two years and another 20 have fled overseas after death threats, Lasantha was always asked why he did it.

"I often wonder that. After all, I too am a husband, and the father of three wonderful children. I too have responsibilities and obligations that transcend my profession, be it the law or journalism. Is it worth the risk? Many people tell me it is not. Friends tell me to revert to the bar, and goodness knows it offers a better and safer livelihood. Others, including political leaders on both sides, have at various times sought to induce me to take to

Paying the ultimate price for honour and principle

politics, going so far as to offer me ministries of my choice. Diplomats, recognising the risk journalists face in Sri Lanka, have offered me safe passage and the right of residence in their countries. Whatever else I may have been stuck for, I have not been stuck for choice. But there is a calling that is yet above high office, fame, lucre and security. It is the call of conscience."

The extraordinary obituary he prepared for himself carried what was generally seen as a bombshell accusation in the event that he was killed. It would definitely be the work of the Sri Lankan state, supervised by a president he still regarded as a friend, the message claimed.

On January 9, aware that he was being followed by suspicious-looking men on motorbikes, Lasantha reportedly tried to call President Rajapaska from his car but could not get through. The phone was still in his hand when the gunmen left his body with point-blank gunshot wounds.

Three days before that, an envelope was delivered to his office. It contained half a page of his newspaper with a message in red paint daubed across a critical story on a major Army victory over the Tigers. "If you continue to write this, you'll be killed," the message said. A female editor who was there would never forget his reaction.

"Throw it in the bin. Who cares?"

Load-Date: January 21, 2009

End of Document

The 0530 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

September 3, 2008 Wednesday 5:39 AM GMT

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Body

Duty Editor: Frankie Taggart

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

-- WORLD HEADLINES --

BANGKOK: Protesters reject talks with military

TOKYO: Ex-minister eyes run for Japan premier

MANILA: Arroyo scraps government peace panel

ST PAUL: Bush hails McCain as 'ready to lead'

-- ASIA --

Thailand-politics-protest,lead-WRAP

BANGKOK

Protesters besieging Thailand's seat of government reject talks with the military, insisting that they will only negotiate after Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej steps down.

650 words 0800 GMT by Anusak Konglang. Picture. Graphic. Video

Japan-politics,lead-WRAP

TOKYO

Yuriko Koike emerges as a possible contender to be Japan's first ***female*** prime minister, with heavyweights in the ailing ruling party urging her to challenge conservative favourite Taro Aso.

650 words 0730 GMT by Shingo Ito. Picture

The 0530 GMT News Advisory

Afghanistan-unrest-Australia,2ndlead

SYDNEY

Nine Australian special forces troops were wounded in a battle with Taliban militants in Afghanistan, the nation's worst combat casualty toll in a single incident since Vietnam, the military says.

550 words 0700 GMT by Madeleine Coorey

Philippines-Muslim-unrest-talks,2ndlead

MANILA

In a dramatic shift of policy, Philippine President Gloria Arroyo scraps a government panel negotiating an end to a deadly and drawn-out Muslim rebellion in the nation's south.

600 words 0630 GMT by Jason Gutierrez

India-floods,WRAP

SAHARSA, India

Aid workers say the emergency response to devastating floods in northern India that have left at least a million homeless is woefully inadequate, and warn that the humanitarian crisis will last for many months.

600 words 0700 GMT by Tripti Lahiri. Pictures

SriLanka-unrest,lead

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's **Tamil Tigers** are putting up stiff resistance to a government advance into their territory, a pro-rebel website says, a day after the island's military announced the capture of a key guerilla town in the north.

500 words 0700 GMT by Amal Jayasinghe. Picture

-- ASIA BUSINESS --

China-US-drink-company-CocaCola-merger,3rdlead

SHANGHAI

Coca Cola moves to further strengthen its global reach with plans to buy China's Huiyuan Juice Group for 2.4 billion dollars, the US soft drink maker's biggest acquisition in the country.

600 words 0700 GMT by Joan Feng. Picture

India-economy-auto-politics-unrest-Tata,lead

NEW DELHI

Tata Motors decides to suspend building its Nano small car factory due to violent land protests, a move seen as dealing a big blow to India's effort to attract big industrial investors.

600 words 0730 GMT by Penny MacRae. Picture

We will also move: India-economy-auto-politics-unrest-Tata-Nano

Australia-economy-growth,2ndlead

SYDNEY

Australia's economy grows at its slowest pace in almost four years in the three months to June, but the government says that performance is solid by international standards.

550 words 0630 GMT by Neil Sands

-- AMERICAS --

US-vote,lead

ST PAUL, Minnesota

Republicans thrust back into the White House campaign, as President George W. Bush throws his weight behind John McCain, pronouncing him "ready to lead this nation."

750 words 0630 GMT by Stephen Collinson. Picture. Video. Graphic

We have already moved: US-vote-Palin

US-vote-demos,2ndlead

ST PAUL, Minnesota

Police arrest scores of demonstrators marching against President George W. Bush's policies in a rally outside the Republican convention, bringing to nearly 300 the number of people held in two days of clashes.

600 words 0530 GMT by P. Parameswaran

We will also move: US-vote-convention,SCENE

US-vote-Republicans-Lieberman,lead

US-Haiti-Bahamas-storm,lead-WRAP

FREEPORT

Tropical storm Hanna turns its heavy winds and rains on the Bahamas and threatens to head toward the southeastern US coastline after leaving at least 19 dead in Haiti.

700 words 0600 GMT

We have also moved: US-weather-storm,2ndlead-WRAP

-- EUROPE --

Georgia-Russia-conflict-Azerbaijan-US-energy

BAKU

US Vice President Dick Cheney visits the Azerbaijani capital Baku for talks on energy, on the first stop of a tour of ex-Soviet nations that will also see him back pro-Western governments in Georgia and Ukraine.

550 words 0900 GMT by Kerry Sheridan

Ukraine-politics-government,lead

KIEV

The 0530 GMT News Advisory

President Viktor Yushchenko's party quits Ukraine's pro-Western ruling coalition following a dispute, plunging the country into another political crisis just as relations with Russia worsen.

500 words 0630 GMT by Anya Tsukanova

Georgia-Russia-conflict,WRAP

MOSCOW

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev says Moscow no longer considers Mikheil Saakashvili as Georgia's leader, calling him a "political corpse" and accusing his regime of "aggression that ended in many deaths."

900 words moved by Sebastian Smith. Picture

afp

Load-Date: September 4, 2008

End of Document

The 0700 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

May 11, 2008 Sunday 7:01 AM GMT

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Length: 748 words

Dateline: PARIS, May 11 2008

Body

Duty Editor: Sarah Shard

Tel: (33) 1 4041 4586

-- TOP STORIES --

+ Myanmar generals hail referendum turnout

+ Fierce battles erupt in northern Lebanon

+ Serbia holds most important vote since Milosevic

Myanmar-weather-cyclone,lead-WRAP

YANGON

Myanmar's ruling generals say there was "massive turnout" in their national referendum, held despite pleas to devote their resources to saving more than a million victims of a devastating cyclone.

650 words 0800 GMT by Hla Hla Htay. Picture

Lebanon-politics-unrest,2ndlead-WRAP

TRIPOLI, Lebanon

Fierce battles rage in northern Lebanon between rival clans leaving at least one person dead even as the Hezbollah-led opposition hands over control of the capital Beirut to the army.

800 words 0800 GMT by Omar Ibrahim. Picture. Graphic. Video

Serbia-vote,newseries

The 0700 GMT News Advisory

BELGRADE

Serbia votes in general elections that give its people a stark choice between continuing towards or abandoning the European Union in a rebuff to the West after the trauma of losing Kosovo, their historic heartland.

650 words 0800 GMT. Picture. Graphic

We will also move: Serbia-vote-Kosovo

Serbia-vote-Belgrade,SCENE

FILING PLANS BY REGION

-- EUROPE --

Turkey-unrest-Kurds-Iraq,3rdlead

ANKARA

The Turkish military says its warplanes bombed Kurdish rebel positions in neighbouring northern Iraq late Saturday, the latest in a series of air strikes in the region since December.

600 words 0715 GMT

-- AMERICAS --

Mideast-US-oil

WASHINGTON

US President George W. Bush heads back to the Middle East this week, where his efforts to forge Israeli-Palestinian peace face growing skepticism with barely nine months left in his term.

700 words 0730 GMT by Laurent Lozano

US-vote,newseries

WASHINGTON

Democrat Barack Obama works to build up newly-gained momentum after overtaking Hillary Clinton in the fight for superdelegates whose votes will be decisive in choosing the Democratic Party's presidential nominee.

750 words 0730 GMT

We have also moved: US-vote-Clinton

US-vote-McCain

US-vote-Obama-Republicans

US-vote-Democrats,FACTS

US-Bush-WHouse-marriage,3rdlead

The 0700 GMT News Advisory

CRAWFORD, Texas

In a welcome break from two wars, terrorism and soaring oil prices, US President George W. Bush celebrates his daughter Jenna's wedding on his Texas ranch.

700 words moved by Olivier Knox

US-energy-society

WASHINGTON

Faced with gasoline prices that seem to climb a notch every single day, Americans are beginning to change their driving habits.

650 words 0730 GMT by Viginie Montet

Canada-science-Internet

VANCOUVER, Canada

Wikipedia, the upstart Internet encyclopedia that most universities forbid students to use, has suddenly become a teaching tool for professors.

600 words 0730 GMT by Deborah Jones

-- AFRICA --

Sudan-Darfur-conflict-Chad,lead

KHARTOUM

Sudan severs diplomatic relations with Chad, accusing its eastern neighbour of supporting a first ever Darfur rebel attack on the outskirts of Khartoum as the government seeks to reassert control.

750 words 0730 GMT

Zimbabwe-vote,WRAP-lead

HARARE

Zimbabwe braces for the return home of the country's opposition leader who has vowed to face Robert Mugabe in a presidential runoff poll despite the risk of violence and confusion about the electoral process.

650 words 0830 GMT

-- ASIA --

Myanmar-weather-cyclone-economy-military

BANGKOK

A sprawling new capital, lavish weddings for family members, palatial villas -- Myanmar's generals seem to have few qualms about spending money, but appear to have devoted few resources in the response to a catastrophic cyclone.

The 0700 GMT News Advisory

600 words 0730 GMT by Charlie McDonald-Gibson

Myanmar-weather-cyclone-village

KYAUKTAN, Myanmar

"We depend on donations. Today no one has come. The children and **women** are hungry. The babies are crying all the time," said 32-year-old Mashwe in the ruins of his village, which has been left to fend for itself after the cyclone.

500 words 0730 GMT

Myanmar-weather-cyclone-junta

BANGKOK

Myanmar's stunning decision to refuse foreign aid workers after the cyclone tragedy is simply business-as-usual for a secretive regime obsessed with projecting total control, analysts say.

700 words moved by Griffin Shea

We have also moved: China-Myanmar-weather-cyclone-aid-diplomacy,ANALYSIS

SriLanka-unrest-vote,lead-WRAP

TRINCOMALEE, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's government claims victory in key provincial elections in the ethnically-mixed east of the island, saying the win is a major boost for its intensifying war against the **Tamil Tigers**.

650 words 0730 GMT by Stefan Smith. Picture

afp

Load-Date: May 12, 2008

[See Photo](#)

The Canadian Press(CP)

February 4, 2008 Monday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 816 words

Byline: AP

Body

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka _ Sri Lanka celebrated its 60th independence anniversary Monday with parades, speeches and an intense security clampdown aimed at halting a growing wave of attacks blamed on separatist rebels that have killed scores of civilians across the country.

Many roads throughout the capital, Colombo, were sealed and one of Sri Lanka's main cellular phone providers shut off its text messaging service for six hours as top government officials and thousands of ordinary Sri Lankans gathered for the national ceremony.

Despite the precautions, suspected rebels set off a bomb underneath a power transformer just south of Colombo about 6 a.m., causing no injuries, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Though the civil war that has wracked the nation for more than two decades has intensified in recent months, the government held a major parade of thousands of troops, local dancers and religious leaders along Colombo's major coastal road.

In a nationally televised address, President Mahinda Rajapaksa railed against the Tamil Tiger rebels and said the current economic and security difficulties would be over soon. He reiterated the government's vow to crush the rebels after decades of warfare.

"Our defence forces have achieved victories that were never before seen. Terrorism is facing a defeat that it has never before faced," he said.

Top government officials have said they hope to rout the rebels by the end of the year.

The celebration _ itself a display of military might _ began with a 21-gun salute and a parade by hundreds of army, navy, air force and police officials, along with battle 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.

Fearing attacks during the celebrations, the U.S. Embassy advised American citizens to avoid unnecessary travel in and around the capital during the holiday. The government also ordered Colombo schools closed for the week because of the security situation, Education Ministry official Nimal Bandara said.

See Photo

Since 1983, the government has been fighting the **Tamil Tigers**, who demand an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's ethnic minority Tamils after decades of being marginalized by Sinhalese-dominated governments. The fighting has killed more than 70,000 people.

A 2002 cease-fire ushered in several years of calm and fostered hopes that peace would prevail on this Indian Ocean island nation, but the truce broke down amid renewed attacks over the past two years that killed 5,000 people.

The government forced the guerrillas to abandon their strongholds in the eastern province last year, and daily fighting rages between government forces and Tamil Tiger fighters along the front lines in the jungles of the north, where the rebels still control a de facto state.

In recent months, militants have set off bombs on buses, in train stations and at other civilian targets deep inside government-held territory. The attacks continue despite a maze of checkpoints throughout the country.

On Sunday, a **female** suicide bomber blew herself up inside Colombo's main railway station, killing 11 people and wounding 92 others. A day earlier a bomb on a bus killed 18 people, mostly Buddhist pilgrims, in the central town of Dambulla, about 150 kilometres northeast of Colombo.

With the fighting raging, the government officially pulled out of the cease-fire with the rebels last month and forced independent Nordic monitors to leave the country.

Many had high hopes for this nation, formerly known as Ceylon, when it achieved independence from Britain in 1948, months after South Asian neighbours India and Pakistan became independent.

But the civil war has undermined the country's potential to become a major economic power on the level with Singapore or Hong Kong, said Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, executive director of a Colombo-based think tank, Center for Policy Alternatives.

"The development potential was huge, and it has been totally stymied by this war," he said.

The post-independence governments lacked the foresight to develop a national identity that would include all ethnic groups, Saravanamuttu said.

Tensions between the mainly Buddhist Sinhalese majority, who make up about 74 percent of the nation's 20 million people, and the mainly Hindu Tamil community, which makes up about 18 percent, quickly surfaced after independence.

Sinhalese-dominated governments, fearing local Tamils would work with Tamils in neighbouring India to take over the nation, tried to marginalize the Tamil language and culture. At least two efforts to broker a compromise between the communities were retracted by the government amid protests by Sinhalese nationalists.

The tensions eventually erupted into violence, with Sinhalese mobs targeting Tamils and Tamil guerrilla groups launching attacks on government targets.

Load-Date: February 5, 2008

POLITICS MUSLIM AKBAR TWO LAST PATNA

UNI (United News of India)

November 17, 2008 Monday 6:16 PM EST

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Length: 392 words

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

Body

Suggesting the Muslims to adopt multi-ethnic and equality based ideologies mentioned in the Islam, Mr Akbar said secularism is the basic thrust of this religion. Describing Indian secularism as unique he said every religion enjoys full space in India where Hindu and Muslims were living together for the past 1400 years. Outlining the condition of Muslims in India during Mughal dynasty he questioned how and when did the so powerful community was reduced to minorities.

For this he attributed lack of self confidence and scattering of the powerful society of the community as main reason behind reduction of Muslims into minorities. The community gradually lost its identity due to "self pity" he said, adding now the western countries were viewing Islam not as a religion but as a geographia, non developed and backward. He expressed his deep anguish over co-relating Islam with fascism saying, " It can never be fascist as Islam is 1400 years old while the word fascism got a place in the dictionary in early 20th century ". He, however, admitted that due to misdeeds of some Muslims, Islam was being defamed and appealed to the community to be honest towards themselves for revival of the image of Islam. Referring to the challenges being faced by the community he said poverty, illiteracy and gender bias were some of the major issues which should be addressed immediately. He spoke about the discriminations against the women in the community and advocated for giving equal status and opportunity to them for their upliftment and empowerment of the Muslims as a whole. Quran had given equal facilities to the women and men both, he added. Mr Akbar also expressed his concern over the leadership crisis in the community saying that they had been mislead and a fear psychosis had been created. When asked about the role of media in case of terrorism and other religion related issues, Mr Akbar said media was a mirror and admitted the mirror had been "distorted" and "cracked". He suggested the media for adopting self discipline. Several Muslims were involved in terrorist activities which cannot be denied but ULFA, LTTE and the recent violence in Maharashtra against North Indians should also be viewed as the same and must be dealt strongly as it disturbs peaceful co-existence.

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Load-Date: November 17, 2008

POLITICS MUSLIM AKBAR TWO LAST PATNA

End of Document

Suicide bomber kills 12 at Sri Lanka police complex

Agence France Presse -- English

June 16, 2008 Monday 8:21 AM GMT

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Length: 425 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, June 16 2008

Body

A Tamil Tiger suicide bomber on a motorcycle blew himself up outside a police station in northern Sri Lanka on Monday, killing at least 12 and wounding 40 others, officials said.

The powerful blast occurred during the morning rush hour directly in front of the police building in the tightly-guarded town of Vavuniya, 258 kilometres (160 miles) north of the capital Colombo, the defence ministry said.

The wounded, some of them schoolchildren, were rushed to the main hospital where 23 people including 19 police were admitted for further treatment, doctors said.

"It was a Tiger suicide bomber who rammed his (explosives-packed) motorcycle as policemen were leaving for duty," military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said.

"All those killed in the attack were police personnel," police spokesman Ranjith Gunasekara said, identifying the victims as nine policemen and three ***female*** constables.

The most senior police official was not in the building at the time of the blast, a policeman in Vavuniya said when contacted by telephone.

Vavuniya is a de facto frontier town bordering territory further north held by the rebels, who are fighting for a separate Tamil homeland in the majority Sinhalese island.

The drawn-out conflict has claimed tens of thousands of lives.

The latest attack came as the defence ministry reported that 47 rebels and eight security personnel were killed in weekend battles in the north.

The latest deaths raise the number of rebels killed by security forces to 4,269 since January, according to the defence ministry, which says 386 security personnel and police have died in combat during the same period.

The government insists it now has the upper hand in the 36-year-old conflict with the Tigers, and has poured a record 1.5 billion dollars into the war effort this year.

Suicide bomber kills 12 at Sri Lanka police complex

In other clashes, air force fighter jets pounded a "logistics base and combat vehicle conversion plant" in Mullaitivu district, further north of Vavuniya, on Sunday, the defence ministry said.

However, the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) said Sri Lankan jets had killed two civilians and wounded 11 more in the Sunday morning attack.

In the island's eastern district of Batticaloa, suspected Tiger gunmen shot dead two police constables while a trooper from the paramilitary home guard unit was shot dead elsewhere in the region on Sunday, the ministry said.

It said troops also killed four more Tiger rebels in a fresh confrontation in the north on Sunday.

There had been no reaction from the Tigers to the ground battles or the latest attack in Vavuniya.

Load-Date: June 17, 2008

End of Document

Nine patients killed as shelling hits hospital

The New Zealand Herald

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; World

Length: 398 words

Body

Three artillery barrages struck a hospital in Sri Lanka's chaotic war zone, slamming into its paediatrics ward and its women's wing and killing nine patients, the Red Cross said.

Dr Thurairajah Varatharajah, the top government health official in the area, said the shells in at least two of yesterday's attacks appeared to have been fired by the Sri Lankan Army.

They caused extensive damage to the overcrowded Puthukkudiyiruppu Hospital, one of the last functioning health institutions inside rebel-held territory, he said.

"We're at a loss to understand why people would shell a hospital," said United Nations spokesman Gordon Weiss.

The three attacks hit a kitchen, a chapel and the women and children's wing of the hospital, said Red Cross spokeswoman Sarasi Wijeratne.

The attacks killed nine people and wounded 20 others, she said.

The aid agency did not say which side fired the shells.

The UN confirmed the hospital was hit several times by artillery shells.

"It seems to have struck the paediatric ward, a 30-bed ward filled to overflowing. The last communication we had from our staff member on the ground was that they were still counting the dead," Weiss said.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said the Army was not responsible for the attacks and blamed the rebels, known formally as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

"Now the LTTE is firing very desperately everywhere artillery ... one of these shells may have fallen into that area," he said.

The military has repeatedly denied killing civilians in their offensive to wipe out the Tamil Tiger rebels and end the island nation's 25-year-old civil war with the ethnic separatist group.

Independent reports from the war zone are not available because journalists are barred from the area.

The attacks on the hospital came amid reports of growing casualties among ethnic Tamil civilians trapped with the rebels inside a tiny patch of jungle and small villages. The Red Cross estimates 250,000 are in the area; the Government says the number is smaller.

Nine patients killed as shelling hits hospital

Varatharajah estimated last week that more than 300 civilians had been killed in the recent fighting. The Government denied that.

Speaking by telephone from the hospital in Puthukkudiyiruppu after one of the attacks, Varatharajah said hospital workers were having trouble counting the injured because many staff members were too scared to leave their fortified bunkers.

- AP

Load-Date: February 2, 2009

End of Document

Motorcycle suicide bomber kills 12 police in Sri Lanka: officials

Agence France Presse -- English

June 16, 2008 Monday 3:27 AM GMT

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Length: 389 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, June 16 2008

Body

A suspected Tamil Tiger rebel detonated explosives on his motorcycle outside a police office in northern Sri Lanka on Monday, killing at least 12 police, officials said.

Forty people, including school children, were also wounded in the attack staged directly in front of the office in Vavuniya town, 258 kilometres (160 miles) north of Colombo, a police official said.

The most senior police official was not in the building at the time of the blast which occurred during the morning rush hour, a policeman in Vavuniya said when contacted by telephone.

He said nine policemen and three **female** constables were killed.

Officials at the Vavuniya hospital said they had received the bodies of 12 people killed in the blast, and a further 40 were rushed in for treatment, including school children.

Vavuniya borders Tamil rebel-held territory further north of the island.

The latest attack came as security forces stepped up pressure on the guerrillas inside their territory with air attacks and ground offensives.

The defence ministry reported that 19 rebels and five security personnel were killed in weekend battles in the north of the island.

The government insists it now has the upper hand in the 36-year-old conflict with the Tigers, who are fighting for a separate Tamil homeland in the majority Sinhalese island's north and east.

Sri Lanka has poured a record 1.5 billion dollars into the war effort this year, hoping for a quick end to the conflict that has left tens of thousands of people dead.

Air force fighter jets pounded a "logistics base and combat vehicle conversion plant" in Mullaitivu district, further north of Vavuniya, early on Sunday, the ministry said.

However, the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) said Sri Lankan jets had killed two civilians and wounded 11 more in the Sunday morning attack.

Motorcycle suicide bomber kills 12 police in Sri Lanka : officials

"Two civilians were killed by an aerial bombing of the Sri Lankan air force on Sunday in Puthukkuriruppu town centre (in Mullaitivu district)," the Tigers said in a statement on Saturday night.

In the island's eastern district of Batticaloa, Tiger gunmen shot dead two police constables while a trooper from the paramilitary homeguard unit was shot dead elsewhere in the region on Sunday, the ministry said.

It said troops also killed four more Tiger rebels in a fresh confrontation in the north of the island on Sunday.

Load-Date: June 16, 2008

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Jeyaraj killing: JVP fears secret hand

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

June 6, 2008 Friday 3:56 PM EST

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Length: 405 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 6 -- A heated argument erupted in parliament yesterday when Minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage warned JVP MP Vijitha Herath that he would tell President Mahinda Rajapaksa to order the CID to question him regarding a statement Mr. Herath made on the assassination of Minister Jeyaraj Fernandopulle.

Speaking during the emergency debate Mr. Herath had voiced suspicion regarding the circumstances under which the main suspect in the Fernandopulle assassination died. "The main **female** suspect in the killing of Minister Fernandopulle is said to have died after consuming cyanide while in CID custody. How could such a thing happen? What is the status of the investigations now?" Mr. Herath asked.

The JVP parliamentarian then called on the government to carryout a thorough investigation into the killing, as the late minister was an outspoken character who even challenged and criticized the government.

"The present regime is heading towards a dictatorship. In such a situation even government ministers are powerless as the country is governed by a handful of persons," Mr. Herath said.

Following this speech Minister Aluthgamage attacked the JVP saying it stooped to tarnish the name of the late Minister Fernandopulle for mere political gain.

"I will ask the President to order the CID to question MP Herath regarding what he said about Minister Fernandopulle's assassination. From this point onwards we will expose all JVP frauds, violence and corruption," the Minister said.

The Minister even went to the extent of comparing the JVP to the **LTTE** for carrying out attacks against its own members and stealing vehicles from the Parliament compound.

"During the tsunami the JVP collected public money to build houses for victims, but that money was used to construct four houses for JVP leaders," the Minister charged, as JVP MPs heckled and hooted him from across the well of the house.

After his speech, JVP frontliner Bimal Ratnayake raised a point of order regarding the Minister's statements.

"According to the standing orders of the House no one can question an MP regarding a statement he makes on the floor of this House. That is tantamount to a breach of the MP's privilege. The parliament is not under the President and the President has no right to question any MP", Mr. Ratnayake said asking the Speaker to make an announcement regarding this matter.

Jeyaraj killing: JVP fears secret hand

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Load-Date: August 11, 2008

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BJP, AIADMK warm up with Amma's royal lunch for Modi

UNI (United News of India)

January 14, 2008 Monday 1:29 PM EST

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Length: 385 words

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

Dateline: Chennai

Body

Chennai, Jan. 14 -- Preparing the ground for a possible revival of ties between the AIADMK and the BJP, Ms J Jayalalithaa today hosted a sumptuous lunch for BJP's posterboy and Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi, which the BJP described as a "very friendly meeting and extraordinary lunch."

Though a wide range of issues concerning the present political situation in the country were discussed during the two-hour-long luncheon meeting at the AIADMK General Secretary's Poes Garden residence, BJP Spokesperson and party Central Observer for Tamil Nadu Ravishankar Prasad refused to comment on whether the meeting took the BJP a step closer to reviving alliance with the Dravidian party.

Speculations were rife that the meeting was a precursor to the once allies in Tamil Nadu politics coming together again ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

The AIADMK was part of the BJP-led NDA before it withdrew support to the Vajpayee Government in 1998, leading to its fall. The BJP had buried the hatchet and joined hands with the AIADMK again in 2004, only to bite the dust in the general elections.

The two parties seeing eye to eye on issues such as the Ram Sethu, LTTE, Indo-US nuke deal, terrorism, besides Ms Jayalalithaa paying glowing tributes to Mr Modi's victory and welcoming Mr L K Advani's Prime Ministerial candidature, had fuelled reports of yet another reunion.

However, Mr Prasad refused to comment on the alliance when waiting newsmen besieged him outside Ms Jayalalithaa's residence.

Mr Prasad described Ms Jayalalithaa as a "generous host" and said the lunch spread of 45 delicacies was "extraordinary" and the meeting "friendly".

Earlier, Mr Modi dropped enough hints of the BJP's march towards Delhi beginning from Chennai, saying that "let uttarayan (northwards) begin from Chennai."

He made this remark when Mr Prasad, addressing the BJP workers at the party headquarters here, said "as the uttarayan begins tomorrow, BJP goes dakshinayan (southwards) with Mr Modi being here to motivate the party workers."

Interacting with party workers, Mr Modi, the 'poll mascot' of the BJP, said the secret of his victory in the Gujarat Assembly polls was the large turnout of women, three per cent more than the previous Assembly polls in Gujarat.

BJP, AIADMK warm up with Amma's royal lunch for Modi

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Load-Date: May 4, 2008

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NEWSDIGEST2300 ET

Canwest News Service

August 18, 2008 Monday

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Length: 2804 words

Byline: opposing the troop surge in Iraq when the war was at its most unpopular, and when U.S. casualty rates were at their highest, Obama showed he was more worried about his ``political self-interest" than winning the war, McCain said.

Body

****indicates new to digest

****McCain attacks Obama on defence positions - (CNS-UPDATE-FOREIGN-POLICY)

Republican John McCain today sharpened his attacks over Barack Obama's foreign policy judgment, accusing the Democratic candidate of putting his own ambition to be president ahead of America's national interests in Iraq.

In a speech to a convention of U.S. war veterans in Orlando, Florida, McCain said Obama has taken myriad ``shifting positions" on the U.S. troop surge and voted to ``legislate failure" by once voting against funding the war.

It was one of McCain's harshest attacks yet on Obama, who Republicans believe is increasingly vulnerable on hot-button national security issues - particularly at a time when the U.S. is contending with the prospect of deteriorating relations with Russia.

****Dozens of sick, dead cats taken from Montreal home - (CNS-UPDATE-ANIMAL- HOUSE)

Residents watched in disgust as nearly 30 sick cats and pigeons and several dead cats, pigeons and a squirrel were removed from a smelly, cluttered apartment today in Montreal's Notre Dame de Grace district.

A man in his 40s who lives in the second-floor apartment was taken away by ambulance for a medical evaluation, police said.

There was a very, very strong odour, said the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

It said the apartment was crammed with furniture and the floors and walls were spattered with feces.

The 20 living cats found roaming the apartment and nine living pigeons in cages were taken to the SPCA for treatment.

Six or seven cat carcasses were found in the fridge freezer.

A second, larger freezer in the basement contained about 30 more animal carcasses, including cats.

******Crown concludes case in B.C. kidnapping trial - (CNS-KIDNAPPING-TRIAL)**

The Crown concluded its case today and the defence elected to call no evidence in the trial of the five young men accused of kidnapping former University of B.C. student Graham McMynn.

Prosecutor Richard Cairns told B.C. Supreme Court Justice Arne Silverman he was calling no further witnesses.

Lawyers for the accused then told the judge they would be calling no witnesses.

Final submissions from the lawyers are expected to begin next Monday and run for about two weeks.

The trial opened in February and heard first from the kidnapping victim himself and his girlfriend as they described the ordeal of McMynn being abducted at gunpoint in April 2006 as he was driving to the university from his home in Vancouver.

A blindfolded and terrified McMynn was moved through three houses before being rescued by police eight days later in Surrey, B.C.

Anh The Nguyen, Van Van Vu, and his brother, Sam Taun Vu, Joshua Poncappo, and Jose Hernandez are all charged with kidnapping and unlawful confinement.

******Sick babies born at same hospital, one day apart - (CNS-INFANT-INFECTION)**

Health officials revealed today that two Alberta babies who contracted a severe - and in one case fatal - bacterial infection were born only a day apart at the same Lethbridge hospital, leading critics to call for an independent probe.

A local health region investigation found no evidence the newborns acquired the infection at the hospital.

But provincial opposition parties and patient advocates said there should be a further review of the births, which took place on July 28 and 29.

The two infants were transferred from Lethbridge to Calgary last week after developing an unidentified bacterial infection.

One of the babies, a boy, has since died, while the other newborn is still in hospital.

The baby girl who was infected - Annabell Forslund - remains in hospital and has undergone several surgeries.

Officials would not provide an update on her condition, citing privacy legislation.

The baby boy who passed away has not been identified.

Harper casts Conservatives as force for unity, multiculturalism - (CNS-CXN- HARPER)

Prime Minister Stephen Harper cast the Conservatives as a force of national unity and multiculturalism this evening in a speech seemingly designed to challenge the stereotypes facing the Conservatives as they head into a possible fall election.

Speaking to party supporters at a fundraising barbecue in the suburban Toronto riding of Mississauga-Erindale, the prime minister seemed to make a deliberate attempt to soften the Conservative image.

Harper noted that his party appointed the first **female** cabinet member and first aboriginal senator, along with electing the first MPs from a long list of ethnic groups.

He then accused the former Liberal government of exploiting regional and ethnic differences to remain in power.

Harper's government passed legislation setting a fixed election date of Oct. 19, 2009. However, the new law still allows the Governor General to dissolve Parliament at the advice of the prime minister. Harper seems increasingly prepared to take that step, telling reporters last week that the current minority Parliament has become "dysfunctional."

Harper's speech ignored the charges made earlier today by Jean Chretien, who said the prime minister made a political blunder by failing to attend the Olympic opening ceremonies in China, undoing decades of goodwill between the two countries.

Non-profit group raised millions for **Tamil Tigers** - (CNS-TAMIL-FUNDS)

An RCMP report released today says a Toronto non-profit group wired more than \$3 million to overseas bank accounts, some of them linked to the **Tamil Tigers**, before being shut down by the government in June for alleged terrorist financing.

The report provides the first detailed look at the banking activities of the World Tamil Movement, a Toronto-based group accused of bankrolling Sri Lanka's **Tamil Tigers** guerrillas.

Most of the money, \$1.9 million, went to an account at the Bumiputra Commerce Bank in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which the RCMP report says "is utilized as a vehicle to forward money to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam from Canada."

Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day announced on June 16 that his government had added the WTM to Ottawa's official list of terrorist groups, alongside the likes of al-Qaida, Hamas and Hezbollah. The WTM is the first Canadian community group to be listed.

The WTM has denied any involvement in terrorist fundraising.

Man charged in bus beheading held in psychiatric facility - (CNS-GREYHOUND- BEHEADING)

The man accused of beheading a fellow Greyhound bus passenger last month, and eating parts of the victim's body, has agreed to be represented by a lawyer, the Winnipeg Free Press is reporting.

Vincent Li was also recently moved from a Manitoba jail to a locked psychiatric facility.

The developments come as Li continues to meet with medical officials for a court-ordered mental-health evaluation that will determine if he will stand trial for the July 29 killing of Tim McLean on a Greyhound bus near Portage la Prairie, Man., about 80 kilometres west of Winnipeg.

Li's next court date is Sept. 8.

Defence lawyer Alan Libman confirmed Monday he expects to act on behalf of Li, Libman said he hasn't spoken with Li's wife, Anna, and doesn't know if she has returned to Winnipeg to meet with her husband.

Libman said he will not apply for bail for his client.

New Democrat says judge 'failed' 7-year-old Katelynn prior to her death - (CNS-CXN-UPDATE-KATELYNN-JUDGE)

An Ontario NDP member of provincial parliament says the Ontario judge who awarded custody of seven-year-old Katelynn Sampson to a woman now charged with her death should be investigated for misconduct.

NEWSDIGEST2300 ET

Peter Kormos says he has filed a complaint with the Ontario Judicial Council asking it to look into Justice Debra Paulseth's conduct.

Today Kormos released documents showing how he believes Paulseth ``failed miserably" in her responsibility to protect the girl's interests.

The documents include forms showing the judge failed to appoint a children's lawyer or to order an assessment, even when those options plainly were available to her. She also ignored laws compelling her to take the child's best interest into account.

Katelynn was found dead in a Toronto apartment building in early August. One officer described her injuries as the worst he had seen in 20 years on the job. Donna Irving and her live-in boyfriend, 46-year-old Warren Johnson, are charged with second-degree murder.

Illegal drugs flyer violated government rules, opposition says - (CNS-TORY- FLYER)

Opposition MPs say flyers sent out by the federal Conservative party last week violate rules forbidding members of Parliament from using their free postage privileges to send out campaign material.

People across the country were blitzed last week with pamphlets touting the Tories' tough-on-crime approach to illegal drugs.

According to rules distributed to every MP by the office of the Speaker of the House, such flyers may not contain ``provincial, municipal or local election campaign material." Nor can the flyers request ``re-election support. "

But the Conservative flyer includes a depiction of an election ballot with the names of four federal party leaders and an arrow pointing to Prime Minister Stephen Harper. The question above the ballot asks, ``Who do you think is on the right track on crime?"

The flyer asks the recipient to fill out the ballot and mail it back to the House of Commons free of charge.

NDP ethics critic Pat Martin has lodged a formal complaint with the Office of the Speaker, accusing the Tories of thumbing their nose at parliamentary rules.

New laws take toll on dangerous, drunken driving - (CNS-UPDATE-STREET-RACING)

For the first time in Canada, vehicles seized from a couple of repeat drunk drivers have been handed over to new owners under Ontario's drinking and driving vehicle forfeiture law.

Today Attorney General Chris Bentley handed the keys to the forfeited vehicles to members of the Ontario Community Council on Impaired Driving.

The council will use the two cars in its work raising awareness about the dangers of drinking and driving.

Police also said today that another relatively new piece of provincial legislation has netted a ``scary" number of violators charged with street racing, extreme driving and stunt driving.

In less than one year, police in Ontario say they have laid thousands of charges and seized thousands of vehicles under Bill 203, which came into effect on Sept. 30, 2007.

It gives police in Ontario the authority to seize vehicles and to suspend licences if drivers were caught street racing, stunt driving or taking part in what has been termed ``extreme" or dangerous driving.

Canada sends chemical, biological suits to Philippines - (CNS-CHEMICAL- EQUIPMENT)

The Canadian government has shipped chemical and biological defence equipment to the Philippines and will soon send personnel to train special forces and other units in its use.

NEWSDIGEST2300 ET

Canadian officials donated 300 protective suits to senior military representatives in Manila several weeks ago and an agreement signed by the two countries notes that Canadian personnel will train Filipino troops in the use of the equipment which will be used to respond to a chemical, biological or nuclear attack, chemical spills or gas explosions.

Neither Foreign Affairs nor the Defence Department is commenting on the donation.

The shipment of gear is worth \$209,000 and will be given to the Special Operations Group of the Filipino military, the government's Bureau of Fire Protection, the Department of Health and the Environmental Management Bureau.

Lawyers tear into federal justice minister - (CNS-JUSTICE)

Justice Minister Rob Nicholson appeared to be on a collision course with members of the legal establishment today as he tried to promote the Conservative government's aggressive law-and-order agenda.

At a meeting of the Canadian Bar Association, Nicholson was challenged for failing to focus on dwindling legal aid, refusing to protest death sentences imposed on Canadians abroad and axing legal programs - including one that helped fund groups fighting for equality rights.

Montreal lawyer Simon Potter, former president of the 37,000-member association, chastised Nicholson for the Conservative government's policy of not pleading for clemency for Canadians who face the death penalty when they have been tried in countries deemed to be democratic.

Nicholson calmly fielded questions for about 45 minutes. He faced the strongest attacks from lawyers who appealed for federal intervention to help Canadians who cannot afford legal fees.

Canadians warming to federal election, poll says - (CNS-POLITICS-POLL)

A new Ipsos-Reid poll says Canadians are warming to the idea of a federal election ``to clear the air."

The poll, conducted exclusively for Canwest News Service and Global National, also says that if an election were held today, the ruling Conservatives would only be able to score another minority government. It put the Conservatives' popularity at 36 per cent, the Liberals at 30 per cent, the NDP at 14 per cent and the Green party at 10 per cent. Six per cent were undecided.

The poll says the proportion of Canadians who favour an election has risen to 40 per cent from 27 per cent in March. Moreover, the proportion of Canadians who said ``there's no need for an election at the moment" dropped dramatically to 38 per cent from 66 per cent.

Pollster Darrell Bricker says the findings suggest signals from Harper and the Liberal leader that they are itching for an election fight are starting to have an impact on what Canadians are thinking.

Prentice plays oil card to lubricate gummed-up border trade - (CNS-PRENTICE)

Industry Minister Jim Prentice played the Canadian oil card to an American audience today in a bid to lubricate the flow of cross-border trade, which he warned is being gummed up by post-9/11 security measures.

And he trumped his message at the Americas Competitive Forum in Atlanta with a promise of tougher environmental regulations on Canadian oilsands development, addressing concerns that have been expressed in the U.S. about the environmental damage of such development.

Despite the environmental challenges in developing the Canadian oilsands, he said Prime Minister Stephen Harper ``insists that Canada be the most responsible environmental producer of oil and gas in the world."

Prentice, meanwhile, also noted that concerns have been raised by business groups on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border that the ``thickening" of the border since the terrorist attacks on the U.S. are standing in the way of realizing the full economic potential of the trade deal.

Clement slams CMA's support for injection sites - (CNS-UPDATE2-CMA-MEETS)

Federal Health Minister Tony Clement assailed the Canadian Medical Association today for supporting Vancouver's supervised drug-injection site, arguing that allowing heroin addicts to shoot up is against a health professional's code of ethics.

Clement's speech to the CMA's annual meeting in Montreal drew an angry reaction from doctors.

Dr. Bonnie Cham, chairwoman of the CMA's ethics committee, accused the minister of manipulating medical ethics to advance the Conservative government's political agenda.

In a news conference after the speech, Brian Day, the CMA's outgoing president, said Clement was ``off base" in criticizing physicians' medical judgment on the issue.

Clement said the supervised injection site undercuts the ethics of medical practice and sets a debilitating example for all physicians and nurses who might begin to question whether it's all right to allow someone to overdose under their care.

Clement did not go so far as to call for the closing of Insite, Canada's sole supervised drug-injection site, which was established in 2003 as a pilot project.

However, he recommended that the centre's \$3-million annual budget be redirected toward drug treatment and providing housing for sex workers in Vancouver's East Side.

Arctic pipeline could threaten wildlife reserves: report - (CNS-ARCTIC-BIRDS)

Newly released documents reveal the Harper government has been warned that the ecological ``footprint" of the proposed Mackenzie Valley pipeline on an Arctic bird sanctuary could exceed the threshold deemed acceptable by Environment Canada.

The pipeline would carry natural gas from the Mackenzie River delta in the Northwest Territories to markets in the rest of Canada and the United States.

Conservationists fear it could threaten the Kendall Island Bird Sanctuary, a 623 square-kilometre patch on the coast of the Beaufort Sea.

The Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada's conservation branch, recommends that the physical impact of development be limited to one per cent of the sanctuary's area.

Documents obtained by Canwest News Service suggest government officials had concerns much earlier that the footprint of the pipeline could exceed the one- per-cent limit.

Other documents suggest Environment Canada officials have since estimated the threshold may have already been surpassed.

Load-Date: August 19, 2008

Fleeing civilians flock Mullaitivu

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

November 13, 2008 Thursday 1:33 PM EST

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Length: 404 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Nov. 13 -- A severe shortage of shelter is brewing in Mullaitivu as more than 300 families cross into the district each day to flee the fighting in Kilinochchi, a government official in the area said yesterday.

Currently, schools in Mullaitivu have been transformed into temporary shelters to accommodate those fleeing the areas while many displaced people also continue to sleep under trees and strawboard.

Due to schools being occupied by the IDPs, children are forced to study in sheds and bunkers which have been transformed as temporary schools to prepare the students to sit for the upcoming GCE O/Level and A/Level examinations.

"These children need to be prepared for the exams which is why they are forced to study in sheds. We urgently need shelter so that the schools can be vacated for the children once again," Mullaitivu Government Agent, Emilda Sukumar said.

Due to influx of refugees, sanitation facilities in the district also need to be urgently improved in order to avoid any outbreak of diseases, Sukumar added.

While there is no interruption in the district's health facilities or no outbreaks reported to date, Sukumar said sanitation was a cause for great concern as many schools and temporary camps did not have toilets for the women and children.

"We have sent a list of what we need and what needs to be improved for the refugees to the government this week. They will look into this and send us the necessary facilities," Sukumar added. Meanwhile, medicines and food have arrived in ample stock in Mullaitivu as WFP convoys continue to transport food with the assistance of the government.

Last week alone, 18 lorries of emergency food arrived in the Mullaitivu district which would be sufficient for distribution to the refugees during the first two weeks of November, M/s. Sukumar said.

She added that the government's Essential Services Commission also continued to supply the district with the necessary food and aid which was distributed to the refugees on time.

Meanwhile, fewer refugees were leaving the uncleared areas to flee into Vavuniya due to permission required from the LTTE, government sources said.

Fleeing civilians flock Mullaitivu

While refugees were not being facilitated to leave the uncleared areas by the respective government agents, sources said many preferred to remain in areas they have fled to in order to avoid approaching the Tigers.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror.

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Load-Date: November 13, 2008

End of Document

10 killed in Fort explosion

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 17, 2008 Saturday 2:52 PM EST

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Length: 424 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 17 -- Ten people including seven police personnel were killed and over 95 others injured as a **LTTE** suicide bomber on a motorcycle laden with explosives rammed into a bus carrying Police officers around 12.05 p.m, in front of Sambodhi Viharaya at Colombo Fort yesterday.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said around 50 police personnel in three buses deployed on Riot Duty were targeted by a suicide bomber at the junction between Hilton Hotel and Sambodhi Viharaya.

Police spokesman Senior DIG N.K. Ilangakoon said following information on a demonstration organised by the United National Party (UNP), a police team was deployed to prevent the entry of demonstrators to the High Security Zone and ensure normality in the area.

The Director of the Colombo National hospital Hector Weerasinghe said 95 injured persons had been admitted to the hospital following the blast.

According to Dr.Weerasinghe among the dead were three **female** police officers. In addition 30 other Police personnel had been admitted with severe injuries.

He added that around 15 from the total admitted were in a critical condition including three soldiers manning the checkpoint there. In addition to the ill fated bus which was carrying Police personnel belonging to the riot squad, 10 other vehicles too were badly damaged during the incident including another police vehicle, a few trishaws and a truck.

The driver of Sports and Recreation Minister Gamini Lokuge was among the dead. "Minister Lokuge's driver who was returning after dropping the Minister at the Galadari Hotel was killed in the blast," sources said. Soon after the incident nearby roads were closed and police cordoned off the area.

"Police jointly with the Army beefed up security and roads were closed for security reasons," DIG Ilangakoon said. A few eye witnesses who were standing 30 metres from the scene of the blast told the Daily News that following the explosion they felt the strong shock waves which threw them back a few yards.

"Then there was a cloud of smoke, we were just numb with the shock and then debris started falling all over including leaves and birds from the nearby trees," they said.

10 killed in Fort explosion

According to them there were many people on the road and heavy traffic was seen at the time of the blast. Analysts said the Tigers may have aimed to sabotage the swearing-in of Eastern Provincial Councillors at the nearby Presidential Secretariat through this attack. But the event was held as scheduled.

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

-660593

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

Load-Date: September 16, 2008

End of Document

ROUNDUP: Suicide bomber kills 23 in northern Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

February 9, 2009 Monday 12:15 PM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 436 words

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts ROUNDUP: Suicide bomber kills 23 in northern Sri Lanka
Eds: updates toll, rebels claim 180 civilians killed since Friday =

Colombo (dpa) - A female suicide bomber posing as a civilian entered a government-controlled area from the zone held by Tamil rebels in northern Sri Lanka Monday morning and blew herself up at a welfare centre, killing at least 23 people and injuring 64, the Defence Ministry said.

The explosion happened in the Visuamadu area, 360 kilometres north-east of Colombo, where the military is receiving hundreds of civilians before they are sent to transit camps.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said that 15 soldiers and eight civilians were killed and 64 including 45 civilians were wounded.

Among the victims were women and children, said the authorities, who blamed the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam for the attack.

The area was cordoned off and the injured were being evacuated to a hospital about 70 kilometres from the blast site.

Some of the more serious patients have been airlifted to a hospital located outside the northern province in Anuradhapura where injured soldiers too are being treated.

On February 4, Tamil rebels used a 13-year-old child suicide bomber against the advancing securing forces in the Chalai coastal area, it emerged Monday.

As troops were advancing the girl had come running towards the security forces and closer to the soldiers the explosion had been set off. The military believes that a remote control would have been used to set the explosion off.

The military has not disclosed whether the explosion caused any casualties among the security forces.

ROUNDUP: Suicide bomber kills 23 in northern Sri Lanka

The incident came as fighting continued between government troops and Tamil rebels, in what the military described as the last phase of its long drive to defeat the Tamil rebels.

The army said it had surrounded the LTTE in a 150-square-kilometre stretch of land on the north-eastern coast.

International aid organizations estimate that more than 200,000 civilians remain trapped in the area.

According to the government about 11,000 civilians crossed over into government-controlled areas since January 1, but many more are believed to be trapped in the fighting zone.

Meanwhile the pro-rebel Tamilnet website said that 180 civilians had been killed since Friday as a result of shelling by the army and air strikes by the air force - a claim denied by the military.

Fighting was expected to intensify as the military reaches the last few areas held by the military as the areas are expected to have the remaining rebels as well in the area.

Feb 0909 1215 GMT

Load-Date: February 10, 2009

End of Document

Food to be sent by ship

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

February 18, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 441 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 18 -- The government has decided to send food by ship to civilians trapped in Mullaitivu, according to a press release from the Ministry of Resettlement and Disaster Relief Services.

Resettlement and Disaster Relief Services Minister Rishad Bathiudeen indicated that 40 tons of urgently required food items were to be shipped last night to the civilians in Mullaitivu. Basil Rajapaksa MP, senior advisor to the President, chaired the meeting to find a way to transport urgently required food supplies to civilians affected by the fighting between the **LTTE** and the security forces in the Mullaitivu district. The meeting was attended by Mr. Rishad Bathiudeen, the Sri Lanka representative of the ICRC, Mr. Mahipala Herath (Chief Minister of Sabaragamuwa Province) and Mr. S. B. Divaratne (Commissioner General of Essential Services). "On the directive of President Mahinda Rajapakse urgently required food items such as dry rations will be transported to the civilians affected by the conflict in Mullaitivu District. Since the roads to Mullaitivu were still uncleared of mines, it was decided to transport the supplies by ship," the Ministry said. Meanwhile, the Government Medical Officers' Association (GMOA) had sent a team of volunteer medical officers to attend to the medical needs of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the North. They had treated over 7500 displaced persons upto yesterday, said GMOA assistant secretary Dr. Upul Gunasekara. He told the media that a majority of the IDPs were suffering from some kind of ailment at the time they crossed over to the liberated areas. Children and **women**, in particular, were suffering from malnutrition and anaemia. Others had chickenpox, diarrhoea, scabies and various other skin diseases as they had been living under un-hygienic conditions for a long time, said Dr. Gunasekara. "We appreciate the assistance given us by the Vavuniya district secretary, the Army, the Police and the provincial director of health. It was because of their assistance that we were able to contain a possible outbreak of communicable diseases at the IDP camps and prevent deaths," said Dr. Gunasekara. Dr. Gunasekara said the GMOA had set up a medical coordinating centre in Vavuniya for the use of the volunteers. Volunteer doctors regularly visit the ten IDP camps maintained by the security forces in the North, he said. Dr. Gunasekara said the volunteer services would continue until the regular health services were able to take over and attend to the health needs of the people in the area -- including the IDPs. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 1, 2009

3RD LEAD: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill seven, injure 90

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
February 3, 2008 Sunday 10:21 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 437 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts 3RD LEAD: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill seven, injure 90 Adds details, quotes, updates victim tolls Colombo

A female suicide bomber killed six people and injured at least 90 in Colombo's main railway station Sunday afternoon, a military spokesman said.

The woman suicide bomber, who arrived in one of the trains at the Fort railway station in the heart of the capital, got off the train and detonated the explosives, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

He blamed the rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

(LTTE) who are known to carry out suicide attacks.

The woman is believed to have boarded the train at one of the smaller stations where security is not as tight.

At least 10 of the injured people were in a serious condition, Deputy Director of the National hospital, Dr Anil Jaysinghe said.

The attack came just hours after a grenade explosion in the national zoo in the Colombo suburb of Dehiwala that injured eight people.

On Saturday 20 passengers were killed when a bomb exploded on a bus in Dambulla, 148 kilometres north of the capital. The government blamed Tamil rebels for that blast.

Security in the capital has been stepped up as the country is marking the 60th anniversary of independence from Britain on February 4 with a military parade presided over by President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Civilians living in and around the capital have expressed fears of more attacks amidst reports that at least seven suicide bombers have entered the city. Suicide jackets were discovered in two different locations in the capital during the past week.

3RD LEAD: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill seven, injure 90

Government forces have stepped up military operations against the rebels in the north during the past month and in turn rebels have stepped up attacks in the southern part of the country. In three related incidents, including a roadside bomb attack in the south-eastern Monaragala district, rebels killed 43 civilians last month.

The government and military commanders have vowed to crush the rebels by the end of the year, but the opposition are sceptical that the rebels who have been fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils for the past 25 years can be eliminated within a year.

The government on January 16 pulled out from a Norwegian-backed truce with the rebels.

Despite the truce, rebels in December 2005 renewed attacks on the security forces, prompting the government to step up military operations. Since then more than 5,800 people have been killed.

The government argued that the truce was not required as the rebels had renewed attacks and in turned security forces had stepped up operations.

Feb 0308 1021 GMT

Notes

Adds details, quotes, updates victim tolls

Load-Date: February 4, 2008

End of Document

Terai armed group chiefs at large after massive jailbreak

Indo-Asian News Service

August 14, 2008 Thursday 12:26 PM EST

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Length: 406 words

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

Dateline: Kathmandu

Body

Kathmandu, Aug. 14 -- At least four top leaders of underground armed groups were at large Thursday along with nearly 50 other prisoners after a massive jailbreak in southern Nepal the day before.

In a style reminiscent of the Maoists' audacious prison escapes during their 10-year insurgency, three leaders of a former Maoist organisation, which is on the US government's terror list, spearheaded the escape Wednesday night from Siraha Jail near the India-Nepal border.

Though police are yet to determine the identities of all the 51 prisoners who are still at large, some of the kingpins have been identified.

Tufan Singh Bidrohi, a senior leader of a breakaway faction of the Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha (JTMM), an underground organisation of former Maoist guerrillas; Bisphot Singh, chief of another faction of the group; Bibranta, a third JTMM leader; Ram Lochan Yadav, leader of a shadowy group called **LTTE** and Jaso Yadav, leader of Samyukta Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha as well as their associates are still at large.

Police, however, arrested two of the fugitives while a third died in police firing. Sonelal Yadav, the fleeing prisoner who died, has been identified as a drug trafficker from Parsa district in the Terai plains.

In the biggest jailbreak of its kind since the Maoist guerrillas signed a peace pact two years ago, 54 prisoners, armed with daggers and other weapons, overpowered the nearly 15 guards stationed in the jail and fled, giving rise to fears that some could have fled to India across the border.

The prison had held 150 inmates, six of whom were **women**.

The fugitives, wanted for crimes ranging from robbery to murder, are armed with khukris - local daggers - and other weapons they made inside the prison.

It appeared to have been a planned escape.

Government employees had been on strike in Siraha for the past 10 days, demanding security from the over two dozen armed gangs who have been spreading terror in the plains with extortion, abduction and murder.

The agitating staff and local administration and police chiefs had gathered for talks.

Taking advantage of the lacuna, the prisoners overpowered the night guards and escaped.

Terai armed group chiefs at large after massive jailbreak

Since most of the fugitives are people of Indian origin who could have relatives or friends across the border, it is feared that they would try to cross the porous border and lie low in Indian border towns.

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Load-Date: August 21, 2008

End of Document

Tamil rebel suicide bombing rocks Sri Lanka capital

Agence France Presse -- English

February 29, 2008 Friday 11:36 AM GMT

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Length: 430 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 29 2008

Body

A suspected Tamil Tiger suicide bomber blew himself up on Friday injuring seven people as police tried to search his house in the heavily-guarded Sri Lankan capital, officials said.

The blast went off when police approached the house in Colombo's commercial district of Kotahena, adjoining the port of Colombo, a police official said, adding that the blast was heard across the city of 650,000 people.

In a massive search carried out shortly afterwards, police recovered six powerful Claymore mines, the type commonly used by Tamil Tiger rebels, from a house in the same area of the capital, the defence ministry said.

Two policemen and a **female** officer were among the seven admitted to the Colombo National Hospital after the Friday morning blast, spokesman Anil Jasinha said. "Some of them have burn injuries," he said.

Police said the bomber was blown to pieces making identification difficult.

"We had information from a man we arrested the previous day about a possible arms storage location of the Tigers and we moved in this morning to check," a policeman at the scene said.

Police and troops poured into the area to search for further explosives caches and other suspected Tiger rebels, military officials said.

"The man we were looking for came out of a house while the search operation was underway and detonated explosives he was carrying," military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Police said the bomber was believed to be a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) and may have planned to carry out the attack somewhere else.

Police had also found bombs and ammunition buried in a coastal area outside the capital on Thursday following the arrest of another suspected Tiger rebel, the ministry said.

Authorities had stepped up security in Colombo after Tamil guerrillas accused the army of carrying out two roadside bomb attacks inside rebel-held territory on Wednesday, killing eight civilians.

Tamil rebel suicide bombing rocks Sri Lanka capital

The attack came as the defence ministry said 26 more Tiger rebels had been killed in fresh fighting in the north of the island on Thursday. The military had also stepped up air attacks against the rebels.

According to the defence ministry, 1,688 rebels have been killed so far this year which has seen the end of a truce and escalating violence. The military estimates the Tigers' strength at 5,000 combatants.

The ministry says 94 soldiers and police have also been killed in 2008.

Casualty figures provided by both sides differ vastly and cannot be independently verified since the government bars journalists and human rights workers from front line and rebel-held areas.

Load-Date: March 1, 2008

End of Document

Priyanka confirms meeting with Rajiv assassin

UNI (United News of India)

April 15, 2008 Tuesday 4:08 PM EST

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Length: 388 words

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

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, April 15 -- Priyanka Vadra today confirmed the news report that she had met her father Rajiv Gandhi's assassin Nalini Sriharan in Vellore prison in Tamil Nadu about a month ago, and said the meeting was her way of coming to peace with violence and loss that she had experienced.

"It was purely a personal visit that I undertook completely on my own initiative," she said, adding that "I would be grateful if this could be respected."

Though the meeting between Nalini and Priyanka, the daughter of Congress President Sonia Gandhi, took place on March 19 this year, it was kept as a secret till a Tamil Nadu lawyer filed an application under the Right to Information Act seeking to know the details of the purported meeting at the special prison for women in Vellore.

There were already reports that Priyanka had visited Vellore on March 19 to pay obeisance at the Sripuram temple there.

"I do not believe in anger, hatred and violence and I refuse to allow it any power over my life," she said, while stressing that "the meeting with Nalini was my way of coming to peace with the violence and loss that I have experienced."

Priyanka said she wanted to know why her father was made the target of the fatal suicide bombing that killed him at Sriperumbudur on May 21, 1991.

Nalini Sriharan was the only surviving member of the five-member LTTE assassination squad that killed former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. She was awarded death sentence in 1998 by a special court for her involvement in the assassination case. However, the sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment after Ms Gandhi pleaded for clemency for the sake of Nalini's five-year-old daughter.

A leading newspaper said today that Priyanka became emotional during the hour-long one-to-one meeting and made Nalini sit next to her.

Quoting two lawyers of Nalini, now 43 years old, the newspaper said Priyanka took genuine interest in knowing why her father, a 'good person' was killed.

Nalini reportedly told her that she knew nothing till the last moment, even though she was present at the assassination spot.

Priyanka confirms meeting with Rajiv assassin

Nalini believes that the visit may have been prompted by the frequent letters that she sends to the Gandhi family.

Nalini's lawyers said her client found Priyanka to be "very simple and loveable".

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Load-Date: July 7, 2008

End of Document

Canada asked to take Iranian group off terrorist list.

Canwest News Service

January 26, 2009 Monday 06:58 PM EST

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Length: 840 words

Byline: Peter O'Neil

Body

Canwest News Europe Correspondent

PARIS - The Canadian government rejected Monday a call to follow Europe's lead and remove an Iranian resistance group from its list of banned international terrorist organizations.

The European Union, saying it was forced to comply with a series of court decisions by the European Court of Justice, announced on Monday it would end the ban imposed on the People's Mujahedeen Organization of Iran (PMOI).

But a spokeswoman for Public Safety Canada said there will be no change considered until the next two-year statutory review of banned groups such as PMOI, also known as Mujahedeen-e Khalq (MEK).

"The Government of Canada is determined to take decisive steps to ensure the safety of Canadians against terrorism," Jacinthe Perras said in an e-mailed statement.

"The MEK is a listed entity pursuant to the Criminal Code. It is a criminal offence to knowingly deal with the assets of a listed entity or knowingly participate in any activity that would enhance its ability to carry out a terrorist act."

The latest December court ruling by the European court said the EU had breached the PMOI's right to self-defence by failing to inform the group of new information used to keep blacklisting it.

"What we are doing today is abiding by the resolution of the European court," Javier Solana, foreign policy chief for the 27-nation EU, told reporters in Brussels.

The group was banned by the U.S. in 1997, by the EU in 2002, and by Canada in 2005.

Iranian state radio has condemned the EU's move as "irresponsible," while the group's affiliated political arm praised the decision that it said will free millions of dollars in assets frozen in western bank accounts.

"Removing the terror tag is a crushing defeat to Europe's policy of appeasement" and a blow against the "mullahs' medieval regime" in Iran, according to a statement from Maryam Rajavi, who is described as the "president-elect" of the Paris-based resistance movement.

Fears have been expressed that the delisting could impair international efforts, now being led by U.S. President Barack Obama, to convince Iran to suspend its nuclear program.

Canada asked to take Iranian group off terrorist list.

David Kilgour, a human rights advocate and former junior foreign affairs minister in Jean Chretien's Liberal government, said Canada should follow Europe's lead.

"Canada's long-term political and economic relations (with Iran) are best- served by standing with its people, not the regime," Kilgour said in a statement.

"The time for appeasing the ayatollahs and suppressing the Iranian opposition must end."

The Canadian government included the PMOI when it extended late last year the list of banned groups that have "knowingly carried out, attempted to carry out, participated in or facilitated a terrorist activity or is knowingly acting on behalf of, at the direction of or in association with such an entity."

Among those on the list are al-Qaida, Hamas, Hezbollah, Peru's Shining Path, the Sikh terror organizations Babbar Khalsa and the International Sikh Youth Federation, and the **Tamil Tigers** of Sri Lanka.

The PMOI was formed as a leftist organization in the 1960s opposed to the U. S.-backed regime of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. It was allied with the Islamist forces of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in the Shah's 1979 overthrow, and engaged in assassinations of American targets before the revolution.

It also took part in the hostage-taking incident at the U.S. embassy shortly after the Shah fled the country that year.

But the group broke with Khomeini and then allied with the late Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein during the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-88. They established bases in Iraq and took part in a number of bombings and assassination attempts against Iranian government targets as late as 2001, according to a 2008 analysis by the Council on Foreign Relations, a Washington-based think-tank.

"While the group says it does not intentionally target civilians, it has often risked civilian casualties. It routinely aims its attacks at government buildings in crowded cities," the analysis noted.

However, the group's terrorist activities declined after 2001, and its fighters were disarmed by U.S. forces after the American invasion of Iraq in 2003. There are currently about 3,500 members at a camp there, including 60 Iranians with Canadian citizenship, according to Winnipeg human rights lawyer David Matas, who was in Brussels with Kilgour Monday.

The U.S. State Department regularly refers to PMOI as a "cultlike terrorist group" because of the control wielded by the two leaders, Massoud Rajavi and his wife Maryam, who have followers worldwide.

"In addition to its Paris-based members (PMOI) has a network of sympathizers in Europe, the United States, and Canada," according to the Council on Foreign Relations analysis.

The PMOI has won considerable political support in western countries, from politicians and activists like Kilgour, as it calls for a fully democratic Iran that endorses the free enterprise system with full rights for **women** and ethnic and religious minorities.

Load-Date: January 27, 2009

Red Cross says 16 patients killed in Sri Lanka

Associated Press Online

February 10, 2009 Tuesday 5:39 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 822 words

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

The Red Cross says at least 16 patients were killed in the shelling of a makeshift hospital in the war zone in northeastern Sri Lanka.

The Red Cross said in a statement Tuesday that the area near the village of Putumattalan was hit by shelling Monday.

It called on both the government and the rebels to refrain from attacks on the wounded and medical personnel.

The Red Cross evacuated 240 patients from the area by sea on Tuesday and hopes to evacuate the remaining 160 soon.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. Check back soon for further information. AP's earlier story is below.

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) The Red Cross loaded some 240 sick and wounded onto a boat to evacuate them from Sri Lanka's northeast war zone Tuesday as the military accused rebel fighters of killing 19 civilians fleeing the area.

The United Nations, meanwhile, said it was outraged by the "unnecessary" deaths of hundreds of people inside rebel territory and urged both sides to avoid fighting in civilian areas.

The government accuses the Tamil Tiger rebels of holding civilians in the war zone hostage to use as human shields against the military's offensive. The rebels deny the accusation.

International human rights groups say more than 200,000 civilians are believed trapped in the patch of territory still under rebel control.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said the insurgents fired early Tuesday on a group of more than 1,000 trying to escape the war zone in Udayarkattu, inside what remains of rebel-held territory. The attack killed 19 and wounded another 75, the military said.

Confirmation of the reported shooting was not possible because independent journalists and nearly all aid workers are barred from the war zone. The rebels could not be reached for comment because communications to the north have largely been severed.

Red Cross says 16 patients killed in Sri Lanka

Meanwhile, local fishermen helped Red Cross workers ferry about 240 patients to a specially chartered boat anchored offshore from the village of Putumattalan in the war zone, said Sarasi Wijesinghe, a spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The patients' injuries were making the operation difficult, she said.

"Most of them can't sit upright. They have to be lying down. A lot of care has to be exercised," she said.

The aid group chartered the ferry, which was flying the Red Cross flag, from the government-controlled town of Jaffna in the north, and was in contact with both sides to ensure no fighting interfered with the evacuation, Wijesinghe said.

The boat was headed south to a port in Trincomalee, she said.

The patients had fled the last functioning hospital in the war zone in Puthukkudiyiruppu last week after it came under repeated artillery barrages that killed several patients.

The intense fighting between the government and the Tamil Tiger rebels made fleeing south across the front lines too risky, so the group instead headed deeper into rebel-held territory.

The Red Cross and government doctors set up a makeshift medical facility in an abandoned community center and a school, Wijesinghe said. However, the area was shelled Monday, she said.

In addition, the overcrowded center does not have a reliable supply of drinking water, and "the lack of sanitation and hygiene is a problem," she said. "Some patients are lying on the ground, the floor."

In recent days, the military has reported an increasing flow of civilians out of the war zone.

More than 1,000 civilians fled Tuesday, and 6,599 reportedly crossed Monday, even as a **female** bomber killed 19 soldiers and 10 civilians at an army checkpoint. The government earlier said the blast had killed 20 soldiers and eight civilians.

Amnesty International condemned the attack as a clear violation of international law.

"Blurring the distinction between civilians and combatants means that thousands of ordinary people, desperate to flee the conflict area, are at greater risk of reprisals and getting caught in crossfire," said Yolanda Foster, the London-based group's Sri Lankan researcher.

Rights groups have also accused the government of killing and wounding civilians by firing artillery into the increasingly cramped war zone in a small pocket of the northeast.

The Tamil Tiger rebels have been fighting since 1983 for an independent state for minority Tamils. Government troops have forced the rebels into a broad retreat in recent months and officials say they are on the verge of crushing the insurgency and ending a war that has killed more than 70,000 people.

In Geneva, the U.N. refugee agency said it was "outraged by the unnecessary loss of hundreds of lives and the continued suffering of innocent civilians" inside rebel territory. It urged the government and **Tamil Tigers** to avoid fighting inside a government-designated "safe zone" where many civilians were reportedly killed.

"Without respect for international humanitarian law by both parties, the bloodshed will continue," the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees said.

Load-Date: February 11, 2009

**Seduced by chaos; ANDREW FORGRAVE GOES IN SEARCH OF THE REAL
SRI LANKA travel**

Daily Post (North Wales)

February 28, 2009 Saturday

North Wales Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 8

Length: 768 words

Byline: ANDREW FORGRAVE

Body

ON the dog-eatdog roads of Sri Lanka, public buses are the big beasts of the jungle. With belching smoke and grinding gears their drivers compete for ascendancy, ensuring all other motorists adhere to a strict traffic hierarchy - and thus a vague sense of order - amid the chaos.

Multi-liveried tut-tuts, umbrellaholding cyclists and bare-footed pedestrians fall at the bottom end of the country's traffic food chain, some way below the wildlife that regularly advances on to sunwarmed Tarmac.

Everyone swerves to avoid cows and elephants, while bored-looking dogs lounge nonchalantly on the verges as the melee somehow bypasses them. Journeys along the country's dishevelled road system are compulsive: they remain the best way to see the distinctive sights and sounds of this tropical paradise.

All life lines its pot-holed, crumbling arteries: colourful street vendors, noisy hawkers, sari-clad women, orange-robed monks and white-uniformed schoolchildren.

Every few yards are glassy-eyed fruit sellers, their little rickety stalls parading freshly-picked bananas, mangos and papayas.

Everywhere you go, people shake their heads sadly at the state of the island's tourism economy. Visitor numbers are dropping, courtesy of the 30-year Tamil Tiger conflict, the 2004 tsunami and, more latterly, the global economic downturn. Once tourism was on the coat-tails of the country's two big earners - textile exports (to Marks & Spencer, among others) and, of course, tea. Now it languishes a distant fourth behind labour exports.

During my stay, the Sri Lankan government was at the heel-end of a major military offensive against the Tamil Tigers. Soldiers had surrounded the Tigers' stronghold in the north - way beyond tourism areas - and was confidently predicting an end to the war within weeks. Such claims have been made before, but this time there is a steeliness to the government's resolve. If it succeeds, peace will bring enormous tourism dividends.

Not only will visitors have new areas to explore - some of the finest beaches are in the north - they will have new seasons to visit thanks to the unique dual-monsoon system: when it's dry in the south, it's rainy in the north, and vice versa.

Seduced by chaos ANDREW FORGRAVE GOES IN SEARCH OF THE REAL SRI LANKA travel

And it's cheap too, despite the pound's recent decline. Eat local and you can get a decent meal for pounds 1-pounds 2; travel by bus and cross the island for pounds 15-pounds 20. Clothing is cheap, and many stalls sell branded goods, often at a fraction of UK costs. Some are genuine, others fake.

Entrance fees to archeology sites and national parks, where two-tier price systems operate (tourists pay much more) can stretch budgets.

The biggest drain on wallets is the country's obsession with tipping.

Everyone's on the make, from the chap who grabs your bag at the airport to the toilet attendant who switches on the lights. Have loose change ready!

Being pestered is a fact of life in so many country's, and Sri Lanka is far from being the worst culprit. On the whole its people are warm, welcoming and hospitable. For many, the country remains as seductive as ever, its rare spices, precious stones and palm-fringed beaches still bearing testimony to Marco Polo's claim that it is "the finest island in the world".

Sri Lanka Airlines offers one of the most direct routes to the island, pausing only at the Maldives for an hour. Flight time is 12 hours from Heathrow.

Travel on the island, with guide, was provided by Jetwing Travels (www.jetwingtravels.com), which offers nationwide tours as well as a selection of wildlife, cultural and adventure activities.

If visiting the cultural triangle, an ideal base is Sigiriya. A good, sensibly priced hotel, with pioneering eco initiatives, is Hotel Sigiriya (www.serendibleisure.com).

To escape the bustle of Kandy, try the 3/4-star Chaaya Citadel hotel (www.chaayahotels.com), a few minutes drive from the city centre alongside the Mahaweli River.

For a dash of the old country, in the heart of the country's tea plantations, try St Andrew's Hotel, Nuwara Eliya (www.jetwingeco.com) - complete with roaring fires and snooker table.

And for an upmarket beach stay, not too far from the airport, check out the Royal Palms Hotel at Kalutara (www.tangerinehotels.com).

TRAVEL INFORMATION

For two people spending 14 nights in Sri Lanka in June, package prices start at pounds 750pp plus taxes.

Flights ex-Heathrow with Sri Lankan Airlines (www.srilankan.aero) from pounds 350pp plus taxes. Room charges vary widely: for the cheapest, expect to pay pounds 20 for a double

See www.srilankatourism.org for general information on Sri Lanka

Graphic

Monks at Sigiriya Rock (main), Tamils picking tea leaves (left) and a typical Sri Lankan beach scene (right)

Load-Date: February 28, 2009

Seduced by chaos ANDREW FORGRAVE GOES IN SEARCH OF THE REAL SRI LANKA travel

End of Document

I SHALL BE AN AGENT OF CHANGE: FORMER COP AMOD KANTH

Indo-Asian News Service

November 16, 2008 Sunday 6:00 PM EST

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Length: 717 words

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

Dateline: Nov. 16 -- By Prashant K. Nanda New Delhi

Body

Nov. 16 -- By Prashant K. Nanda

New Delhi, Nov 16 (IANS) A year after he shed his police uniform, Amod Kumar Kanth is all set to don the role of a politician. And after years of fighting criminals, he is ready for a new role to be an "agent of change" for the poorer people of the capital.

"From a police officer to activist and now a politician is a logical and gradual growth for me," said Amod Kanth, a student of history and law who served the Indian Police Service (IPS) for 33 years after joining it way back in 1974.

"There will be no change in my attitude towards problems, people and my role as an agent of change," Amod Kanth told IANS in an interview at the office of his NGO Prayas, as he prepares for the Nov 29 Delhi assembly elections in which the ruling Congress party has fielded him as a candidate.

Taking to politics, says the man whose face and name are familiar to millions in the Indian capital, will broaden his vision in his mission to build a better society.

"As an activist I have been working for abused women, children and migrants living in tough conditions. My joining politics will broaden my canvas to uplift this section of our society that is still a majority in Delhi," he said.

The 61-year-old is contesting from Sangam Vihar, the biggest slum cluster in the capital that is home to many thousands of poor people who do a wide variety of petty jobs for a living.

It is a locality where water and electricity are always in short supply, where drains are perennially choked and where crime is rampant, in part due to the intense poverty.

Wearing a white stripe shirt, cream colour pant, neck scarves with a very visible Congress symbol and black sports shoes, Amod Kanth said that providing basic amenities to the people in Sangam Vihar would be his greatest priority.

"The area lacks roads, water, sewage, education and health facilities. Migrants residing there are a hard working lot but do not get their share of respect and minimum facilities."

Amod Kanth should know what he is talking about. For years, he has run Prayas which works among the underprivileged, particularly abused, abandoned and exploited children whom he has literally picked from the

I SHALL BE AN AGENT OF CHANGE: FORMER COP AMOD KANTH

streets and slums and brought them to the cared for confines of a children's home and juvenile justice centre that Prayas runs.

"My NGO and I have been working in this area for over eight years. Prayas has 47 centres in Sangam Vihar. I understand the people, they connect with me and I think there cannot have been a better candidate than me."

The former police officer tells you proudly that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) also offered to field him from Sangam Vihar but that he turned down the offer.

Why? And why is he not contesting as an independent candidate?

"In political life, you can achieve your vision only through the backing of a political party," said Kanth, adding that it was Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit who helped him overcome his earlier aversion to politics.

"The Congress ideology suits me. I associate myself with that ideology. The party is like an India... most secular. The Congress is a way of life. I believe my dreams and visions can be fulfilled through my association with this party," he explained.

A winner of the President's Police Medal, Amod Kanth has handled many high-profile cases -- from former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi's assassination by Sri Lanka's **Tamil Tigers** to the stock market scandal blamed on broker Harshad Mehta. For years, he served Delhi Police in various capacities earning in the process the reputation of an efficient and upright officer.

But he has critics too.

Fingers were pointed at him over his role as an investigative officer in the 1999 murder of former model Jessica Lal. He was also accused of giving permission for Uphaar cinema although it lacked the fire fighting mechanism, leading to a massive tragedy in 1997 killing 59 people.

He has brushed aside these charges as motivated and not borne by facts and said he is determined to serve the underprivileged, particularly deprived children, by being empowered as a member of the 70-member Delhi legislative assembly.

Kanth's main rival is S.C.L. Gupta, a doctor who is contesting on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ticket.

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Load-Date: November 16, 2008

The AFP Asia news agenda

Agence France Presse -- English

October 23, 2008 Thursday 2:39 AM GMT

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Length: 912 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, Oct 23 2008

Body

Duty Editor: Huw Griffith

News Desk +852 2829 6211

ASIA NEWS HIGHLIGHTS ON THURSDAY

- + Asian markets down again
- + Eve of Asia-Europe summit
- + Thai-Cambodian border talks

TOKYO: Asian markets drop sharply for the second straight day on fears of a global recession and Wall Street's weakness. Tokyo's Nikkei index falls 5.22 percent in morning session (FINANCE-BANKING, STOCKS-WORLD)

BEIJING: Reporting on build-up to Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit. European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso to hold press conference at 0530 GMT. Chinese foreign ministry to brief on summit at 1200 GMT (ASIA-EUROPE-SUMMIT)

-- We will move an advancer on Asian leaders discussing the economic crisis during the ASEM summit, as their countries increasingly feel the strain of the turmoil (FINANCE-ECONOMY-ASIA-EUROPE-SUMMIT,ADVANCER)

SIEM REAP, Cambodia: Thai and Cambodian military officials meet for talks on their border standoff which last week erupted into brief shooting, killing four soldiers (CAMBODIA-THAILAND-CONFLICT)

OTHER STORIES:

BANGKOK: Moving a story about the craze among Thailand's anti-government protesters for colourful, noisy plastic hand clappers (THAILAND-POLITICS-PROTEST-OFFBEAT)

-- Thai markets closed for a national holiday

BEIJING: Following up China's latest moves to boost its slumping property sector (CHINA-ECONOMY-PROPERTY)

The AFP Asia news agenda

COLOMBO: Following developments as Sri Lankan government forces continue their efforts to quash rebellion by **Tamil Tigers** in the island's north (SRILANKA-UNREST)

DHAKA: Moving an item on the impact of the global financial crisis on Bangladesh's garment industry (FINANCE-ECONOMY-BANGLADESH-TRADE-TEXTILE, FOCUS)

DILI: Moving a story on the move to soften tough abortion laws in Catholic-majority East Timor (TIMOR-HEALTH-**WOMEN**-ABORTION-RELIGION-CATHOLIC, FOCUS)

ISLAMABAD: Reporting on operations against Taliban and Al-Qaeda-linked militants in northwestern Pakistan (PAKISTAN-UNREST)

JAKARTA: Moving a story on how Asia's poor and working class people are coping with the global economic downturn (FINANCE-ECONOMY-POVERTY-ASIA)

LONDON: Pakistani opposition politician Imran Khan addressing the International Institute for Strategic Studies think-tank on "The Future Of Democracy In Pakistan". From 1130 GMT (PAKISTAN-POLITICS)

MANILA: Red Cross briefing on civilians displaced by a Muslim separatist rebellion in the southern Philippines (PHILIPPINES-UNREST-MUSLIM)

-- Reporting on an Asia conference on the impact of climate change on coral reefs (ASIA-ENVIRONMENT-CLIMATE-CORALS)

NEW DELHI: Reporting on implications for India after it successfully launches its first lunar mission, in a major boost for its space programme (INDIA-SPACE-MOON)

-- Moving a story on Disney releasing its first Indian-made animation feature (ENTERTAINMENT-INDIA-BOLLYWOOD-ANIMATION-US-COMPANY, FOCUS)

SEOUL: Central bank says it will increase lending to commercial banks in an attempt to help smaller businesses survive the cash crunch (FINANCE-ECONOMY-SKOREA)

-- Checking reports that a historic railway freight service between South and North Korea is running virtually empty (SKOREA-NKOREA-RAILWAY-RELATIONS)

SINGAPORE: Reporting on world oil prices in Asian trade (COMMODITIES-ENERGY-OIL-ASIA-PRICE)

SYDNEY: Australia's ANZ Bank announces a 21 percent fall in annual profits as bad debts grow amid the global financial crisis (AUSTRALIA-BANKING-ANZ-EARNINGS)

-- World economic crisis and climate change on the agenda as officials from some of the world's biggest cities meet in Sydney at 9th World Metropolis Congress (ENVIRONMENT-CITIES-ECONOMY-AUSTRALIA)

TAIPEI: Moving a story on pro-independence groups' scheduled mass rally against a visit by China's top envoy (TAIWAN-CHINA-POLITICS-PROTEST)

-- Verdict expected around 0800 GMT on alleged embezzlement of 30 million US dollars in diplomatic funds by a Singaporean man (TAIWAN-PNG-DIPLOMACY-JUSTICE-SINGAPORE)

-- The government to release September export orders at 0800 GMT (TAIWAN-ECONOMY-TRADE)

-- AU Optronics, Taiwan's leading flat panel maker, to release third quarter results at 0600 GMT (TAIWAN-IT-COMPANY-AUOPTRONICS-EARNINGS)

TOKYO: Following reaction as Japan's trade surplus plunges 94 percent in September from a year earlier due to weak exports and soaring energy import costs (JAPAN-ECONOMY-TRADE)

The AFP Asia news agenda

-- Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso heads to Beijing around 1100 GMT for an Asia-Europe summit, aiming to show his prowess at foreign policy to assuage doubts about his leadership at home (FINANCE-ECONOMY-ASIA-EUROPE-SUMMIT-JAPAN)

-- Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh meeting in morning with Japan's main opposition party before heading to Beijing for Asia-Europe meeting (JAPAN-INDIA-DIPLOMACY)

-- The euro suffers further losses in Asian trade on concerns about that European economies will be hit hard by the global slowdown (FOREX-ASIA)

-- Second and final day of meeting of leaders from nearly 40 cities in Tokyo on climate change. Joint news conference at 0900 GMT (JAPAN-CLIMATE-WARMING)

-- Football. Following reaction after Japan's Gamba Osaka storms into the AFC Champions League final (FBL-ASIA-C1-JPN)

-- Moving a feature on efforts by Japanese parents to marry off their children as more stay at home well into their 40s (LIFESTYLE-JAPAN-MARRIAGE)

WELLINGTON: New Zealand's central bank cuts interest rates by an unprecedented full percentage point on fears about the economic impact of the global financial crisis (FINANCE-ECONOMY-NZEALAND-RATE)

afp

Load-Date: October 23, 2008

End of Document

The 0100 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

September 7, 2008 Sunday 1:19 AM GMT

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Length: 836 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, Sept 7 2008

Body

Duty Editor: Trudy Harris

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

-- WORLD HEADLINES --

ISLAMABAD: Zardari sweeps to victory

BEIJING: 'Blade Runner' bids for Paralympic gold

HONG KONG: Residents vote in key elections

MIAMI: Hurricane on collision course with Bahamas, Cuba

-- ASIA --

Pakistan-politics,WRAP

ISLAMABAD

Asif Ali Zardari is expected to be sworn in as Pakistan president on Monday, capping a remarkable rise from jail, exile and his wife Benazir Bhutto's assassination just nine months ago, an official says.

600 words 0230 GMT by Sami Zubeiri

Pakistan-politics-military,ANALYSIS

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's president-elect Asif Ali Zardari is unlikely to have the country's powerful military breathing down his neck as did his slain wife during two stormy stints in power, analysts say.

750 words 0230 GMT by Rana Jawad

The 0100 GMT News Advisory

Paralympics-2008-Pistorius

BEIJING

South African track star Oscar Pistorius, dubbed "Blade Runner" because of the carbon fibre blades on his legs, prepares to launch his bid for triple sprint gold at the Paralympics with an eye on future Olympic dreams.

600 words 0400 GMT by John Weaver.

We will also move: Paralympics-2008-CHN-HKG-fencing,FEATURE

India-US-nuclear-politics

NEW DELHI

The Indian government celebrates a decision by nuclear supplier nations to lift a 34-year-old embargo on nuclear trade with the country, and open up a market worth billions of dollars.

600 words 0230 GMT by Penny MacRae. Picture

HongKong-politics-vote

HONG KONG

Hong Kong voters head to the polls to elect all 60 legislature seats, with the city's pro-democracy parties desperate to avoid heavy losses and several high-profile politicians staring at defeat.

450 words 0400 GMT by Guy Newey. Picture

India-flood

PATNA

India is racing to rescue hold-outs reluctant to leave their marooned villages while grappling with the huge task of feeding and clothing close to a million villagers displaced by massive flooding.

700 words 0300 GMT by Tripti Lahiri. Picture

Japan-politics-women

TOKYO

Japan for the first time has a chance of a female prime minister in Yuriko Koike, but feminists are sceptical on whether she would do the country's women any good.

650 words 0200 GMT by Harumi Ozawa

We will also move: Japan-politics-economy,ANALYSIS

Malaysia-politics-Anwar

KUALA LUMPUR

Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim faces one of the sternest tests of his tumultuous political career in coming days, as the deadline he has set to seize power approaches.

700 words 0300 GMT by Sarah Stewart

SriLanka-unrest,ANALYSIS

COLOMBO

Sri Lankan troops have moved closer to dismantling the Tamil Tigers' de facto state after months of heavy clashes with the rebels, but the battles ahead could be even bloodier, officials and analysts say.

700 words 0300 GMT by Amal Jayasinghe. Picture

Bangladesh-Britain-aid-climate-environment-warming,ADVANCER

DHAKA

Bangladesh wants rich nations to pay the billions of dollars it says it needs to help fight the effects of climate change because they are the biggest environmental culprits.

550 words 0200 GMT by Shafiq Alam. Picture

We will also move: Bangladesh-Britain-aid-environment-climate-warming,SCENE

Health-Indonesia-flu

JAKARTA

With nearly half the world's human bird flu deaths, alarm is building over Indonesia's refusal to share virus samples with the world and its health minister's increasingly strident denunciations of global "conspiracies".

700 words 0300 GMT by Aubrey Belford

Cambodia-genocide-tribunal-UN-court

PHNOMH PENH

When they ruled Cambodia, overseeing one of the worst chapters of the 20th century, locked up in a bungalow awaiting trial probably wasn't how the leaders of the Khmer Rouge envisioned their senior years.

700 words 0300 GMT by Suy Se. Picture

-- AMERICAS --

US-Caribbean-weather-storm,6thlead-WRAP

MIAMI

The latest devastating storm to lash the Americas strengthens into a massive hurricane threatening to inflict more misery on Haiti, Cuba and the US Gulf Coast, as Tropical Storm Hanna batters the US east coast.

800 words 0130 GMT. Graphic. Picture

We will also move: Haiti-weather-storm,3rdlead

US-vote-Palin,ANALYSIS

WASHINGTON

Sarah Palin exploded into national US politics as an instant celebrity, reignited a depressed Republican Party and sent shivers down the spines of Democrats. But can the Republican vice presidential pick swing the election to John McCain?

650 words 0130 GMT by Stephen Collinson

The 0100 GMT News Advisory

We will also move: US-vote,newseries

US-attacks-7years-sanctuaries

WASHINGTON

Seven years after the deadliest attack on the United States, Al-Qaeda's masterminds remain beyond US reach, stirring violence and plotting new attacks on the West, officials and analysts say.

600 words 0130 GMT by Jim Mannion

We will also move: US-attacks-7years-GroundZero

US-attacks-7years-Bush

-- EUROPE --

Armenia-Turkey-diplomacy,newseries

YEREVAN

Armenia and Turkey pledge to overcome decades of enmity over the massacre of Armenians by Ottoman forces after Turkish President Abdullah Gul's pathbreaking visit to Yerevan to attend a World Cup qualifier football match.

650 words 0130 GMT by Nicolas Cheviron. Graphic. Picture. Video

afp

Load-Date: September 7, 2008

[METROWorld](#)

Metro (UK)

October 7, 2008 Tuesday

Dublin Edition

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Section: Pg. 13

Length: 764 words

Body

SOUTH AFRICA: Health authorities are on high alert after three people died in hospital from an unknown, infectious disease similar to haemorrhagic fever. A fourth person, a cleaner, had also died but it was not clear whether that death was related to the others who had all died at the Morningside Clinic in Johannesburg.

Several strains of haemorrhagic fever exist, including ebola and Marburg, which have killed hundreds of people in outbreaks in Africa. These diseases cause bleeding from multiple areas of the body and have high death rates. The Health Department issued an alert, but tests for existing strains of haemorrhagic fever were negative.

ENGLAND: A man who tried to emulate infamous killer Jack the Ripper was yesterday jailed for life for the murder of two mothers in East London at the start of what may have become a killing spree. Derek Brown will serve at least 30 years for killing Xiao Mei Guo and Bonnie Barrett. Brown (pictured), butchered the women in his flat before disposing of the bodies, which were never found. An Old Bailey jury found him guilty after deliberating for less than three hours. Police believe he may have killed before and are combing other files across the country.

AMERICA: A bus carrying passengers en route to a casino overturned in California, killing ten people and injuring several others. The crash happened on a rural road near Williams, about 100km north of Sacramento, as the bus headed to Colusa Casino Resort. No other vehicle appeared to be involved. Firefighters used flashlights to search the tall grass near the overturned bus, which lay in a ditch, for more possible bodies. Emergency crews were said to be having trouble communicating with some passengers because they were from Laos. The driver has been arrested on suspicion of driving while under the influence of drugs.

CHINA: An American woman lost an appeal yesterday of her conviction in a Hong Kong court for the beating to death of her husband in a case widely known as the milkshake murder trial. Nancy Kissel, from Minnesota, was convicted in 2005 of giving her husband a milkshake laced with sedatives in 2003 and then bashing him with a metal object. Kissel (pictured) said she was the victim of abuse. The trial had made headlines because of its allegations of drug abuse, kinky sex and adultery in the wealthy world of expatriates in the Asian financial centre.

KYRGYZSTAN: A powerful earthquake struck the mountains of Central Asia, destroying a village and killing at least 60 people. The 6.6-magnitude quake near the border with Tajikistan hit the remote village of Nura hard, bringing down dozens of buildings and injuring more than 100 people, in addition to the confirmed deaths.

Emergency Situations Minister Kamchybek Tashiyev said: What we've seen is terrible, the village of Nura is completely destroyed 100 per cent. There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties elsewhere. A helicopter was ferrying the most seriously injured to hospitals in the city of Osh, more than 100km away.

ENGLAND: Jean Charles de Menezes was the victim of terrible and extraordinary circumstances, the officer in charge of the operation that led to his death told an inquest. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Cressida Dick (pictured) listed some unfortunate coincidences in the shooting of the innocent Brazilian in London. Mr de Menezes, 27, was shot seven times in the head at Stockwell Tube station on July 22, 2005 by police after being mistaken for a terrorist. His mother, Maria Otone de Menezes, attended the hearing for the first time yesterday.

SRI LANKA: A suicide bomber killed 26 people at an ancient tourist town yesterday, including a popular retired army general who was the main opposition party's provincial leader. The blast, immediately blamed by the government on the rebel **Tamil Tigers**, also injured at least 80 people. The bomber struck at the opening of a new office for the opposition United National Party (UNP) in the north central town of Anuradhapura, 200km from the capital, Colombo. On the death of Major-General Janaka Perera, UNP general secretary Tissa Attanayake said: The government had opened up the opportunities to kill him by not providing security despite repeated requests.

AUSTRIA: Authorities were astounded when a 108-year-old cyclist was hit by a car while pedalling across a busy street in Vienna, and suffered only a few bruises. Police say the woman was struck when a car broke a red light and struck her. Officials say the lucky woman was taken to a hospital for examination, but received only minor bruises in the accident.

Graphic

Workers inspect the wreckage of two passenger trains that crashed into each other 45km east of Budapest, Hungary. The transport minister and the head of the state railway company resigned after the crash, which killed four people and injured 30

Load-Date: October 7, 2008

How mayor won over the French with Yorkshire grit and grace

The Times (London)

March 1, 2008, Saturday

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 54

Length: 724 words

Byline: Adam Sage in Saint-Ceneri-Le-Gerei

Body

In a cluttered and draughty office by the village hall, Monsieur le Maire is trying to appease an irate local yelling down the phone about unfinished building work.

It is a typical French scene in all respects except one: the Mayor of Saint Ceneri-le-Gerei in lower Normandy is Anglais.

Ken Tatham is among dozens of Britons standing in local council elections on March 9 in the rural French communities that are now their home.

He is the only one seeking a third term as council leader, having overcome Gallic distrust of "perfidious Albion" to emerge as a village figurehead. The bearded, avuncular Yorkshireman has been at the head of Saint-Ceneri-le-Gerei's 140 residents for more than a decade and wanted to enjoy his retirement.

Fellow councillors begged him to stay on as mayor and promoted him as the centre-right candidate for le Conseil General - the equivalent of the county council - in the Orne departement. With the campaign under way, he has been putting up posters and knocking on doors in villages throughout the ward.

"People know me as the English mayor and some are startled to see I can speak French," said Mr Tatham, 62, who has lived in France for 40 years. "I heard one man say to his friend: 'Actually, he's quite a nice guy'."

His rise in local politics is testimony to the way that he has got around two enduring French traits - conservatism and red tape - to modernise Saint Ceneri-le-Gerei, which dates from the 7th century. He has redone the sewers and the lighting, installed a second car park, secured funding of Euro 400,000 (£ 300,000) to turn the crossroads into a square and persuaded le Conseil General to finance the church.

It has not been easy. When Mr Tatham set about changing the face of the village, feelings ran high - understandably, perhaps, given that the last Briton to mark its history was the 14th Earl of Arundel, who laid siege to the castle in 1434 during the Hundred Years' War. At one point, as roadworks dragged on through the summer, a metal barrier was hurled at the mayor in anger. Recently, a woman telephoned him at 11pm to complain about the new street lighting.

But showing Yorkshire spirit, Mr Tatham plugged on unperturbed. The result has turned Saint-Ceneri-le-Gerei into a bright, pleasant village that attracts 2,000 visitors every weekend during the tourist season.

Mr Tatham got into local politics at the behest of his wife, who is French.

How mayor won over the French with Yorkshire grit and grace

"She was a councillor, and like in a lot of married couples, when one does something, the other tends to criticise and make suggestions. That was what I did. In the end, she got fed up and told me that I should go and do something for the village myself."

Since then, he has discovered the pivotal role played in French society by the 36,000 mayors standing for office in the council elections. Their official duties include raising taxes, managing local roads, looking after public buildings and registering births, marriages and deaths.

There is also an endless list of unofficial services that they are expected to provide. "Basically, people think they can ring you up at any hour of the day or night about anything," Mr Tatham said.

On Christmas Eve, for instance, a local called to say that rocks were blocking a road. Mr Tatham tried to find maintenance staff to clear them away but no one was available. So he had to do it himself with the help of his wife, children and grandchildren.

More recently, a woman contacted him to say that she wanted to be buried in the family vault but needed the approval of her brother, to whom she had not spoken for 65 years after a quarrel. "I had to go and see the brother myself. It took three days of coming and going between them to sort it out," Mr Tatham said.

Outside influence

Richard Leakey, the son of renowned British-Kenyan archaeologists Louis and Mary Leakey, founded an opposition party in Kenya in the 1990s to combat President Moi

Donald Maclean fled to Moscow after being exposed as a Soviet agent in 1951. He assimilated well into Russian society and served in the Soviet Foreign Ministry, for which he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labour

Adele Ann Wilby, an Australian citizen, migrated to Britain in the late 1970s, where she met her future husband, Tamil Anton Balasingham. They moved to Sri Lanka and she became leader of the **Tamil Tigers' women**'s wing

Sources: Times archives

Load-Date: March 1, 2008

Sri Lankan celebrates 60th anniversary amid intense security

Associated Press International

February 4, 2008 Monday 8:54 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 825 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka celebrated its 60th independence anniversary Monday with parades, speeches and an intense security clampdown aimed at halting a growing wave of attacks blamed on separatist rebels that have killed scores of civilians across the country.

Many roads throughout the capital, Colombo, were sealed and one of Sri Lanka's main cellular phone providers shut off its text messaging service for six hours as top government officials and thousands of ordinary Sri Lankans gathered for the national ceremony.

Despite the precautions, suspected rebels set off a bomb underneath a power transformer just south of Colombo about 6 a.m., causing no injuries, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Though the civil war that has wracked the nation for more than two decades has intensified in recent months, the government held a major parade of thousands of troops, local dancers and religious leaders along Colombo's major coastal road.

In a nationally televised address, President Mahinda Rajapaksa railed against the Tamil Tiger rebels and said the current economic and security difficulties would be over soon. He reiterated the government's vow to crush the rebels after decades of warfare.

"Our defense forces have achieved victories that were never before seen. Terrorism is facing a defeat that it has never before faced," he said.

Top government officials have said they hope to rout the rebels by the end of the year.

The celebration itself a display of military might began with a 21-gun salute and a parade by hundreds of army, navy, air force and police officials, along with battle 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.

Fearing attacks during the celebrations, the U.S. Embassy advised American citizens to avoid unnecessary travel in and around the capital during the holiday. The government also ordered Colombo schools closed for the week because of the security situation, Education Ministry official Nimal Bandara said.

Sri Lankan celebrates 60th anniversary amid intense security

Since 1983, the government has been fighting the **Tamil Tigers**, who demand an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's ethnic minority Tamils after decades of being marginalized by Sinhalese-dominated governments. The fighting has killed more than 70,000 people.

A 2002 cease-fire ushered in several years of calm and fostered hopes that peace would prevail on this Indian Ocean island nation, but the truce broke down amid renewed attacks over the past two years that killed 5,000 people.

The government forced the guerrillas to abandon their strongholds in the eastern province last year, and daily fighting rages between government forces and Tamil Tiger fighters along the front lines in the jungles of the north, where the rebels still control a de facto state.

In recent months, militants have set off bombs on buses, in train stations and at other civilian targets deep inside government-held territory. The attacks continue despite a maze of checkpoints throughout the country.

On Sunday, a **female** suicide bomber blew herself up inside Colombo's main railway station, killing 11 people and wounding 92 others. A day earlier a bomb on a bus killed 18 people, mostly Buddhist pilgrims, in the central town of Dambulla, about 150 kilometers (90 miles) northeast of Colombo.

With the fighting raging, the government officially pulled out of the cease-fire with the rebels last month and forced independent Nordic monitors to leave the country.

Many had high hopes for this nation, formerly known as Ceylon, when it achieved independence from Britain in 1948, months after South Asian neighbors India and Pakistan became independent.

But the civil war has undermined the country's potential to become a major economic power on the level with Singapore or Hong Kong, said Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, executive director of a Colombo-based think tank, Center for Policy Alternatives.

"The development potential was huge, and it has been totally stymied by this war," he said.

The post-independence governments lacked the foresight to develop a national identity that would include all ethnic groups, Saravanamuttu said.

Tensions between the mainly Buddhist Sinhalese majority, who make up about 74 percent of the nation's 20 million people, and the mainly Hindu Tamil community, which makes up about 18 percent, quickly surfaced after independence.

Sinhalese-dominated governments, fearing local Tamils would work with Tamils in neighboring India to take over the nation, tried to marginalize the Tamil language and culture. At least two efforts to broker a compromise between the communities were retracted by the government amid protests by Sinhalese nationalists.

The tensions eventually erupted into violence, with Sinhalese mobs targeting Tamils and Tamil guerrilla groups launching attacks on government targets.

Associated Press writer Bharatha Mallawarachi contributed to this report.

Load-Date: February 5, 2008

As war rages Sri Lanka celebrates wins over rebels

Associated Press International

February 9, 2009 Monday 1:11 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 459 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

With the Tamil Tiger rebels on the brink of defeat in the north, hundreds of thousands of Sri Lankans jammed a patriotic exhibition extolling the military's efforts to bring an end to the 25-year-old civil war.

The exhibit displaying weapons, boats and even submarines captured from the rebels in recent years underscored the growing optimism that the seemingly interminable war is nearly over.

"So this is it: The capturing of these huge vessels and weapons confirms that the end of the Tiger terrorists is very close," Susantha Kumara, 35, said as he ran his hand over the side of a captured submarine.

The government has pushed the rebels out of much of their de facto state in recent months and cornered them, along with an estimated 250,000 ethnic Tamil civilians, in a tiny sliver of land along the northeast coast.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa said last week he expected the war to end within days, and many analysts agree the military is as close as its ever been to ending the 25-year civil war.

In Colombo, more than 170 miles (275 kilometers) south, hundreds of thousands waited in lines as long as two hours to get into the convention center compound holding the government-sponsored "Crown of the Nation" exhibition.

But in a sign of the threat still posed by the rebels and their squad of suicide bombers, everyone entering the exhibition was thoroughly frisked at three separate checkpoints. A **female** suicide bomber killed dozens on Monday when she detonated her explosive near troops who were searching civilians trying to flee the war zone.

Exhibits on the war were packed with parents carrying children on their shoulders and onlookers snapping cell phone photos of weaponry captured from a rebel group that had transformed itself in recent years from a guerrilla insurgency into a conventional fighting force complete with a uniformed army, a naval wing and even a tiny air force.

On display were heavy artillery pieces, assault rifles, mortar systems and suicide vests. A nearby screen showed footage of airstrikes on rebel positions.

As war rages Sri Lanka celebrates wins over rebels

The centerpiece was a 47-foot-long (14-meter-long) submarine designed to hold two to three people that the military said it captured two weeks ago. A smaller sub sat nearby. Naval officials said both were still in the experimental stage and had never been used against Sri Lankan forces.

"We are certain the end of the LTTE is very near. Look at the weapons captured from the Tigers," said Sumith Samarasinghe, 37, a small business owner. The rebels' formal name is the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The rebels have been fighting since 1983 for a separate state for minority Tamils in the north and east after decades of friction with the majority Sinhalese community. More than 70,000 people have been killed.

Load-Date: February 10, 2009

End of Document

A Budget amidst the Winds of Change

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

November 8, 2008 Saturday 12:18 PM EST

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Length: 2344 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Nov. 8 -- The Fourth Budget of the UPFA Government and President Rajapaksa which was presented on Thursday confounded the skeptics and brought confidence to the doubtful of the Government's commitment to its policy of development while proceeding with its determination to defeat terrorism and restore democracy to the entire country.

No doubt there will be criticism on several aspects of the budget depending on one's political belief or ideology, or what one believes should be the best economic policy. Such criticism is part of democracy, and can only help to fine tune the Budget at the Committee Stage of debate and in its ultimate implementation. But, as we can already see it, there will be criticism that is based on the narrow aims of political parties in their constant jockeying for power.

There are already signs that such criticism will not carry much weight with the public, who are able to assess the limited aims of politicians, and can also see in the budget proposals a genuine attempt to come to terms with the problems faced by the people in the immediate context, and be ready for the problems that we will have to face in the not too distant future if the world economy continues its spiralling movement downwards.

It is a movement that Sri Lanka and smaller countries such as ours can have little control over, with the causes for the crisis in the financial sector, which have moved to the economic sector, being largely caused by the profligate spending and credit driven economies of the west, particularly the United States of America.

The budget proposals make further headway in the Government's principle aim of building a largely Sri Lankan economy that can have the least pressures from external developments, while being aware that we can never be insulated from the economic forces of globalisation. Towards that end the proposals presented by President Rajapaksa seek to further strengthen the rural economy, especially to make Sri Lanka self-sufficient in food and all that we can produce for ourselves, hopefully with an exportable surplus. Clear action has also been taken to encourage local manufacture from the restrictions through taxation of imported goods, both food and other consumer items. A good example was the increased cess duty on imported fruits and vegetables, which was an important turn away from the dangerous turn we took in 1977, when the UNP's steamroller-majority Government of JR Jayewardene sought to please those who were hankering after imported apples, grapes and cheese, and made that great invitation to the Robber Barons to come over here.

In his preamble to the Budget proposals the President, who is also Finance Minister, laid out very clearly the exact situation that prevailed at the time he assumed office in November 2005. He reminded the House that at the time the North and East of the country was controlled by terrorists, with certain areas being clearly declared and

A Budget amidst the Winds of Change

designated as LTTE controlled areas, and the government of the day turned a blind eye to the illegal banking and Court operations that were going on there, as well as to the use of children as child soldiers and the training and use of women as suicide killers. As he stated it: "Terrorism was permitted to operate on a wide scale not only allowing damage to human lives and property, but also to our economy and the democratic image of the country.

Inhuman acts

There was no stable policy towards defeating terrorism. Innocent civilians in the North and East were subject to inhuman acts of terror and harassment for over 25 years. The LTTE carried out brutal terrorist attacks on the Central Bank, the Oil Refinery, the Katunayake Airport and our own World Trade Centre in Colombo, and also attacked globally acclaimed places of worship such as the Sri Maha Bodhi and the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic. He reminded the House that virtually all our Tamil leaders, who were widely respected in our society, were brutally murdered, and that the LTTE had killed more Tamil leaders than Sinhala leaders, and virtually eliminated the democratic representatives of the Tamil people. Not only had the LTTE murdered those leaders who were dedicated to peace and development in Sri Lanka, but also assassinated a Prime Minister of India who was a close friend of this country.

The Economy

Moving from the bloody sweep of terror to the reality of the economic regime that prevailed at the time he took office, President Rajapaksa made the most scathing indictment of the whole thrust of economic policy that was in play. He said the neo-liberal globalisation process that was followed by our country for over 30 years, paid economic dividends only to a very small segment of our society. "We were fast realising that this process was unsuccessful. More than half of the GDP was Colombo based. Agricultural development was forgotten. Paddy fields were neglected. They were filled and used for commercial activities. Rubber and tea cultivation was destroyed by permitting such land to be blocked out and sold. The need to develop irrigation, highways, electricity, water supplies and rural development was also forgotten. In short, rural villages were so neglected and made so distant from Colombo as though they were no longer a part of Sri Lanka.

He said the country had suffered a severe mental setback, realising that the Government was not only unable to fulfill its obligation to combat terrorism and bring about peace, but it was also not willing to even construct a rural road. "Pushing aside the professionals and intellectuals of our country, and using foreign consultants instead, had become a habit. The public sector was pruned to a destructive level. Picketing campaigns by unemployed graduates became a common sight. Workers engaged in industrial action due to the closure of large factories such as those at Embilipitiya and Thulhiriya. State institutions such as the Food Department, CWE, Paddy Marketing Board, CTB, State Engineering Corporation and the Government Factory were being wound up. Alternate institutions were being set in place at the Sri Lanka Customs, Inland Revenue Department, Department of Railways and the People's Bank. Tax Amnesties that were introduced made a detrimental impact on the tax system. Large scale frauds took place. Banks such as Pramukha Bank crashed. State revenue was low. Debt burden of the country increased, having raised debt without building up corresponding national assets.

It showed the pressing necessity for change in Sri Lanka, both in combating terrorism and the direction of the economic policies, if the country was to make any progress. It was a challenge that called for change in our own country, as Barack Obama saw as necessary in the United States of America.

It was also necessary to place all this on record, so clearly even when presenting the Fourth Budget of the Mahinda Rajapaksa administration, especially with the charges being made that there has been no progress, made in the country since the people defeated the UNP in April 2004, and went ahead shortly after one year to elect Rajapaksa as the President, with a new vision for the country, and the key issues facing it, namely terrorism and development through rural empowerment. Both these challenges are now being met in large measure, and the latest Budget proposals indicate that the country will continue to move in the direction of triumph both in the elimination of terror and the establishing of a strong national economy.

The Plumber

A Budget amidst the Winds of Change

The sheer lack of political direction and absence of coherent policy in facing up to the challenges before the country was seen in the week before the Budget was presented, when the UNP presented what it described as an Alternate Budget. It was a total misnomer as all it had was "proposals" rather demands on the expenditure side of budgeting with no indication of the revenue side.

It could not escape comparison with the hasty and half-baked proposals that were being presented by the John McCain - Sarah Palin campaign to meet the serious challenges faced by the American people on the economy, with the great crashes of Wall Street that have so harshly impacted on Main Street, USA. If Joe the Plumber, seen as the economic guru to John McCain in his pursuit of Thatcher-Reaganomics, as the American people were feeling the pains of the failure of those policies, it appeared that the UNP's Alternate Budget was also a poor bit of economic plumbing that had been very hastily done.

It showed the lack of both engineering and plumbing skills in delivering the goods that the people needed - mainly the defeat of terrorism and the determined push towards economic progress. There was a very clear touch of Ravi the Plumber from Kotte in the very concept of these demands and their presentation, under the misleading title of an Alternate Budget.

The political plumber from the Kotte may have much muscle on his body to turn the toughest wrench, but these proposals are proof of a grave lack of muscle in the brain to present something that is even worthy of cursory study.

Agent of Change

The resounding victory of Barack Obama and the Democratic Party in the US election, fooling many a "pundit" who failed to see the demand for change among the people, and also the planning and organisational skills of Barack Obama, who is admittedly short on experience but has proved he can make up for it in intellect. In January he will become the occupant of the White House, built by the labour of black slaves, too. By any measure the victory of Obama is one which can and must give hope for all who believe in democracy anywhere.

As for the impact of this victory of Sri Lanka, not much can be seen just now, but his campaign has shown he is a man of great wisdom and pragmatism, which if allowed to have full reign in his administration cannot be too harmful or dangerous to Sri Lanka. Yet, being aware that the United States is not likely to undergo sea changes in foreign policy, with President Obama having to look at the best interests of the United States first; there is every sign that his will not be knee-jerk reactions of a politician who only believes in the use of might and muscle, but will make much more use of brain and persuasion in the conduct of affairs with other nations, and the building of better and more lasting relations, which could help make the world a somewhat safer place for all human beings.

The leap for us

Most Sri Lankans are overjoyed at Obama's victory, often for the colour of his skin from which some affinity is drawn, and for the fact that he has come so far as a member of a minority that obtained its voting and other rights barely 40 years ago. This tempts one to ask the question as to when we, who have had universal franchise from 1931, and have a history that can be traced back to over 2000 years with a common heritage, will take the mental and political leap required to elect a national leader from say, the Tamil people in our midst.

I will end this by quoting from the final paragraphs of the endorsement of Barack Obama for the US Presidency made by the Editors of the "New Yorker" of October 13, '08, Writing under the heading "The Choice". A more compelling endorsement is not easy to find.

"The exhaustingly, sometimes infuriatingly long campaign of 2008 (and 2007) has had at least one virtue: it has demonstrated that Obama's intelligence and steady temperament are not just figments of the writer's craft. He has made mistakes, to be sure..... But, on the whole, his campaign has been marked by patience, planning, discipline, organisation, technological proficiency, and strategic astuteness. Obama has often looked two or three moves ahead, relatively impervious to the permanent hysteria of the hourly news cycle and the cable-news shouters. And when crisis has struck, as it did when the divisive antics of his ex-pastor threatened to bring down his campaign, he

A Budget amidst the Winds of Change

has proved equal to the moment, rescuing himself with a speech that not only drew the poison but also demonstrated a profound respect for the electorate.

Although his opponents have tried to attack him as a man of "mere" words, Obama has returned eloquence to its essential place in American politics. The choice between experience and eloquence is a false one something that Lincoln, out of office after a single term in Congress, proved in his own campaign of political and national renewal. Obama's "mere" speeches on everything from the economy and foreign affairs to race have been at the centre of his campaign and its success; if he wins, his eloquence will be central to his ability to govern.

"We cannot expect one man to heal every wound, to solve every major crisis of policy. So much of the Presidency, as they say, is a matter of waking up in the morning and trying to drink from a fire hydrant. In the quiet of the Oval Office, the noise of immediate demands can be deafening. And yet Obama has precisely the temperament to shut out the noise if necessary and concentrate on the essential. The election of Obama-a man of mixed ethnicity, at once comfortable in the world and utterly representative of twenty-first-century America-would, at a stroke, reverse our country's image abroad and refresh its spirit at home. His ascendance to the Presidency would be a symbolic culmination of the civil- and voting-rights acts of the nineteen-sixties and the century-long struggles for equality that preceded them. It could not help but say something encouraging, even exhilarating, about the country, about its dedication to tolerance and inclusiveness, about its fidelity, after all, to the values it proclaims in its textbooks. At a moment of economic calamity, international perplexity, political failure, and battered morale, America needs both uplift and realism, both change and steadiness. It needs a leader temperamentally, intellectually, and emotionally attuned to the complexities of our troubled globe. That leader's name is Barack Obama."

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

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Load-Date: November 8, 2008

DAMP DEEPAVALI FOR TAMIL CINEMA, AJITH STARRER LONE 'SPARKLER'

UNI (United News of India)

October 27, 2008 Monday 6:18 PM EST

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Length: 426 words

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

Dateline: Chennai

Body

Chennai, Oct. 27 -- The two big super stars of Tamil cinema- Rajnikant-having drawn blank with his last release and Kamal Haasan, recovering from mixed response to his ten role venture, have moved on to their next ventures and are out of the way. But the younger superstars have failed to come up with any prospective block buster this Deepavali.

Kollywood is, as a result, experiencing perhaps its dampest Deepavali ever since Tamil cinema has been celebrating the festival of lights with new releases on this auspicious day since October 31, 1931. 'Kalidas', about one of the legendary, ancient poets of India was the first film to have been released on Deepavali day, it may be recalled.

What's more, the fourth popular hero of this generation along with 'Ilaya Dalapathi' Vijay, Surya and Vikram, Ajith's lone flick this Deepavali "Aegan", going by the initial industry reports, may not turn out to be a block buster as anticipated. However, Ajith has hogged the limelight with 'Aegan' being the 49th film of his career, with a comedy cum action saga, based on a Hindi hit. Ajith is hoping that his huge sense of comedy would carry the film through to success and make it a hat-trick of hits for him. The film, however, is directed by a debutant Director Raju Sundaram, hitherto a choreographer.

The release of talented Surya's 'Varanam Aiyram' directed by Gautham Vasudev Menon, tapping the former's acting talent again and produced by Aascar Ravichandran who produced Kamal's ambitious 'Dasaavataram', has been postponed to November due to lack of theatres, according to industry sources.

By way of star value there is only one another release 'Seval' which stars Bharath and one of the many Hindi **women** in Kollywood Poonam Bajwa. It is directed by Hari as a love story set in a village with many twists and turns as the brochures say. Both Ajith's 'Aegan' and Bharath's 'Seval' are banking on their music directors Harris Jayaraj already a big name and the prodigy G V Prakash Kumar, who has been making waves with his melodic notes in a couple of films.

But what has really dampened the Deepavali in Kollywood this year is the fact that the industry is not celebrating the occasion in solidarity with the alleged sufferings of Tamil people in the strife torn Sri Lanka. They are demanding the release of two of its Directors Ameer and Seeman arrested on charge of sedition for speaking in favour of the banned militant outfit **LTTE** at a rally organised by the industry at Rameswaram on October 18.

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DAMP DEEPAVALI FOR TAMIL CINEMA, AJITH STARRER LONE 'SPARKLER'

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Load-Date: October 29, 2008

End of Document

Motorcycle suicide bomber kills 12 police in Sri Lanka: officials

Agence France Presse -- English

June 16, 2008 Monday 4:12 AM GMT

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Length: 484 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, June 16 2008

Body

A suspected Tamil Tiger rebel detonated explosives on his motorcycle outside a police station in northern Sri Lanka Monday, killing at least 12 officers and wounding 40 others, officials said.

The blast occurred during morning rush hour directly in front of the police building in Vavuniya town, 258 kilometres (160 miles) north of Colombo, military and police officials said.

The wounded, who included school children, were rushed to the main hospital.

"It was a Tiger suicide bomber who rammed his (explosives-packed) motorcycle as policemen were leaving for duty," military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said. Nine policemen and three **female** constables were killed while another 17 policemen were wounded, police spokesman Ranjith Gunasekara said.

"All those killed in the attack were police personnel," Gunasekara said adding, however, that civilians were among the wounded.

The most senior police official was not in the building at the time of the blast, a policeman in Vavuniya said when contacted by telephone.

Officials at the Vavuniya hospital said they had received the bodies of 12 people killed in the blast, and a further 40 were rushed in for treatment.

Vavuniya borders territory further north of the country held by the rebels, who are fighting for a separate Tamil homeland in the majority Sinhalese island. The drawnout conflict has claimed tens of thousands of lives.

The latest attack came as security forces stepped up pressure on the guerrillas inside their territory with air attacks and ground offensives.

The defence ministry reported that 19 rebels and five security personnel were killed in weekend battles in the north.

The government insists it now has the upper hand in the 36-year-old conflict with the Tigers, who are seeking a homeland in the north and east.

Motorcycle suicide bomber kills 12 police in Sri Lanka : officials

However, the guerrillas have been accused of stepping up bomb attacks against civilians and security authorities across the island in recent months.

Sri Lanka has poured a record 1.5 billion dollars into the war effort this year, hoping for a quick end to the conflict which started in 1972.

Air force fighter jets pounded a "logistics base and combat vehicle conversion plant" in Mullaitivu district, further north of Vavuniya, on Sunday, the defence ministry said.

However, the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) said Sri Lankan jets had killed two civilians and wounded 11 more in the Sunday morning attack.

"Two civilians were killed by an aerial bombing of the Sri Lankan air force on Sunday in Puthukkurippu town centre (in Mullaitivu district)," the Tigers said in a statement on Saturday night.

In the island's eastern district of Batticaloa, Tiger gunmen shot dead two police constables while a trooper from the paramilitary homeguard unit was shot dead elsewhere in the region on Sunday, the ministry said.

It said troops also killed four more Tiger rebels in a fresh confrontation in the north on Sunday.

Load-Date: June 17, 2008

Rahul follows father's footsteps in Orissa

Hindustan Times

March 8, 2008 Saturday 3:21 PM EST

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Length: 463 words

Byline: Soumyajit Pattnaik Hindustan Times

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

NEW DELHI, India, March 8 -- ON THE second day of his 'Discover India' trip to Orissa, Amethi MP Rahul Gandhi visited Gunupur in Rayagada district where his father Rajiv Gandhi addressed his last public meeting.

On May 21, 1991, Rajiv Gandhi visited Gunupur, accompanied by the then Orissa Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Giridhar Gamang and addressed an election rally. He then stopped over at Visakhapatnam on his way to Sriperumbudur, where he was assassinated by an LTTE suicide bomber.

Addressing the gathering, Rahul said: "You are lucky to have seen my father speak at his last public meeting. Even I could not get that opportunity."

Emotions ran high at the meeting as Gamang recalled Rajiv's last public address.

"It was tough to control my emotions as I was present when Rajivji spoke here on May 21, 1991. After seventeen years, I'm accompanying his son Rahul Gandhi. Words failed me when I rose to speak," Gamang told Hindustan Times.

But politics was not the only item on Rahul's agenda. The Gandhi also visited Panposh Sports Hostel at Rourkela, which has produced 34 outstanding hockey players who have represented India such as Dilip Tirkey, Ignace Tirkey, Prabodh Tirkey, Subhadra Pradhan, Binita Toppo etc. At present, five national players in women's hockey team and four in the men's team live in the Sports Hostel. The AICC leader lunched with the hockey players.

S. Toppo, a coach of the Sports Hostel told Hindustan Times: "The players requested Rahul to give them public sectors jobs in and around Rourkela so that they can concentrate on sport, without worrying about money.

While Rahul's speeches on Friday emphasised how the Gandhis had always worked for the tribals of Orissa, he stressed on the neglect of youth power and the Congress blueprint to harness it on Saturday. Rahul said he had never seen the kind of poverty that exists in this state. Addressing the public at Bamra later, Gandhi said: "For the past two days, I have been visiting areas inhabited by tribals and Dalits. As the MP of Amethi I focus on Uttar Pradesh and thought my state was backward. But I have never seen this kind of poverty."

However, feathers were ruffled within the state party unit as some Congress workers felt slighted for not being allowed to go near Rahul. At Gunupur, some local Congress leaders boycotted the meeting after being denied permission by the Special Protection Group (SPG) to meet the AICC leader. On Friday too, some local leaders at Ijrupa in Kalahandi left the meeting venue after they were denied permission to meet their leader. A senior police official looking after security at the meeting venues explained: "Security concerns cannot be overlooked..."

Rahul follows father's footsteps in Orissa

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Load-Date: March 8, 2008

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TRIBUTES TO RAJIV GANDHI ON 17TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY

UNI (United News of India)

May 21, 2008 Wednesday 6:02 PM EST

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Length: 428 words

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

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, May 21 (UNI) The nation today paid rich tributes to the late former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on his 17th death anniversary. In the capital, President Pratibha Patil, Vice President Mohd Hamid Ansari, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Congress President Sonia Gandhi paid homage to the late former Prime Minister at his samadhi Vir Bhoomi. Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Vadra also paid their respects to their father at Vir Bhoomi.

Several Union Ministers including Shivraj Patil and A K Antony were present on the occasion. The day is being observed as 'Anti-Terrorism Day'. On this occasion, the Mahila Congress organised a blood donation camp at the AICC headquarters here. Undeterred by incessant rains, a large number of party workers and people from all walks of life came out to pay tributes at the samadhi. To mark the 17th death anniversary of the former Prime Minister, the architect of the IT revolution and modern development in India, the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) organised a function at Rajiv Bhawan here where thousands of Congress workers and senior leaders of the Congress party paid homage to the late leader. Speaking on the occasion, DPCC president Jai Prakash Agarwal, MP, said Rajiv Gandhi, with his foresight and imagination, took India to the heights of a modern world power, and gave a new direction and hope to the youth and women of the country, for which the country would be eternally grateful to him. Besides Mr Agarwal, others who paid homage to Mr Rajiv Gandhi were MP Sajjan Kumar, Delhi Government Minister Yoganand Shastri, DPCC office-bearers AICC secretary Alka Lamba, MLAs Kunwar Karan Singh, Mr Bhisham Sharma, Mr Ramakant Goswami, Mr Amrish Gautam and Dr Bijender Singh, former MP Ch. Tarif Singh, J P Goel, Mr Purshottam Goel, Municipal Councillors Panna Lal Kherwal, Ms Beena Dhakholia and Mr Surender Prakash, all the district and block presidents, and a large number of workers of the Youth Congress, NSUI, Mahila Congress and Seva Dal. On the occasion, a 30-minute documentary on the life of Mr Rajiv Gandhi was screened at the Rajiv Bhawan hall. Mr Jai Prakash Agarwal said Rajiv Gandhi will always be remembered for bringing computer revolution in the country, giving voting rights to those of 18 years from the earlier age limite of 21 and 33 per cent reservation for women through the Panchayati Raj. It was on this day in 1991, that Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a woman LTE suicide bomber while campaigning for the general elections.

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TRIBUTES TO RAJIV GANDHI ON 17TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Load-Date: May 21, 2008

End of Document

Bomb blast outside Sri Lanka capital injures 17: military

Agence France Presse -- English

February 23, 2008 Saturday 7:27 AM GMT

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Length: 456 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 23 2008

Body

A parcel bomb exploded on a bus in a Colombo suburb on Saturday, wounding at least 17 people in the latest in a string of violent attacks, the defence ministry said.

But casualties would have been far greater if an alert passenger had not spotted the boobytrapped package and shouted at people to get out of the vehicle, military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

The blast occurred outside a court house in Mount Lavinia town.

"I noticed a parcel left behind on a vacant seat. When no-one claimed it, I alerted the bus crew and shouted at people to get off," passenger Mervyn Silva told AFP.

The driver then moved the bus towards an isolated spot and the crew went to inform a nearby police station when the explosion took place, injuring passersby, the ministry said.

Nine men, seven women and a child suffered minor injuries in the blast and were admitted to a nearby hospital, the ministry said.

"The private bus was completely destroyed by fire from the explosion," the defence ministry said.

No one claimed responsibility for the attack, but in the past the government has blamed rebels fighting for independence for Sri Lanka's minority ethnic Tamils, concentrated in the north and east of the island.

Earlier this month, suspected Tamil Tiger rebels used a parcel bomb to blow up a crowded bus in northern Sri Lanka, killing at least 20 people.

The new violence came as the defence ministry said war planes bombed a rebel military base inside Tamil Tiger-controlled territory in the northern town of Oddusan early on Saturday.

Air force pilots said they had "accurately hit" and "completely destroyed" the base.

Bomb blast outside Sri Lanka capital injures 17: military

There was no immediate comment from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), though the rebels said a similar air strike on guerrilla targets on Friday killed eight civilians.

On Friday, troops fired at a group of rebels who tried to infiltrate the government-held Weli Oya region, killing six guerrillas, the defence ministry said.

According to the defence ministry, some 1,456 rebels have been killed so far this year. The military estimates the rebel strength at 5,000 combatants.

The military said 83 soldiers and police have been killed in 2008.

Casualty figures provided by both sides differ vastly and cannot be independently verified since the government bars journalists and human rights workers from frontline and rebel-held areas.

The Sri Lankan government last month officially pulled out of a truce with the guerrillas, who have fought for more than three decades for a homeland in the Sinhalese-majority island.

The army says that it is winning the ethnic war and President Mahinda Rajapakse has promised to wipe out the "terrorists," the word used by the government to refer to the guerrillas.

lw-mg/pmc/cc

Load-Date: February 24, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lankan hospital hit by shelling, officials say 9 killed

The Canadian Press(CP)

February 1, 2009 Sunday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 495 words

Byline: AP

Body

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka _ Three artillery barrages struck a hospital in Sri Lanka's chaotic war zone, slamming into its pediatrics ward and a women's wing and killing nine patients, the Red Cross said Monday.

Dr. Thurairajah Varatharajah, the top government health official in the area, said the shells in at least two of the attacks Sunday appeared to have been fired by the Sri Lankan army.

They caused extensive damage to the overcrowded Puthukkudiyiruppu hospital, one of the last functioning health institutions inside rebel-held territory, he said.

The three attacks hit a kitchen, a chapel and the women and children's wing of the hospital, Red Cross spokeswoman Sarasi Wijeratne said Monday.

The attacks killed nine people and wounded 20 others, she said. The aid agency, which has offices in the hospital, did not say which side fired the shells.

The U.N. confirmed the hospital was hit several times Sunday by artillery shells throughout the day.

"It seems to have struck the pediatric ward, a 30-bed ward filled to overflowing. The last communication that we had from our staff member on the ground was that they were still counting the dead," U.N. spokesman Gordon Weiss said Monday.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said the army was not responsible for the attacks and blamed the rebels, known formally as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

"Now the LTTE is firing very desperately everywhere artillery . . . one of these shells may have fallen into that area," he said.

The military has repeatedly denied killing civilians in their offensive to wipe out the Tamil Tiger rebels and end the island nation's 25-year-old civil war with the ethnic separatist group.

Independent reports from the war zone are not available because journalists are barred from the area.

The attacks on the hospital came amid reports of growing casualties among ethnic Tamil civilians trapped with the rebels inside a tiny patch of jungle and small villages. The Red Cross estimates 250,000 are in the area, while the government says the number is smaller.

Sri Lankan hospital hit by shelling, officials say 9 killed

Varatharajah, the top health official in the northern Mullaittivu district, estimated last week that more than 300 civilians had been killed in the recent fighting. The government denied that. Varatharajah has not updated his estimate.

Speaking by telephone from the hospital in Puthukkudiyiruppu shortly after one of the attacks Sunday night, Varatharajah said hospital workers were having trouble counting the injured because many staff members were too scared to leave their fortified bunkers and the hospital was suffering power cuts, he said.

"We're shocked that the hospital was hit, and this for the second time in recent weeks," Paul Castella, head of the Colombo delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross, said in a statement. "Wounded and sick people, medical personnel and medical facilities are all protected by international humanitarian law. Under no circumstance may they be directly attacked."

Load-Date: February 2, 2009

End of Document

Female suicide bomber kills 28 in Sri Lanka

The Telegraph-Journal (New Brunswick)

February 10, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS;NEWS; Pg. A9

Length: 476 words

Byline: Jean Lee THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Body

A suspected Tamil Tiger rebel who pretended to be a war refugee blew herself up Monday as Sri Lankan soldiers frisked her at a checkpoint. Twenty troops and eight civilians died.

State TV showed the carnage after the suicide bombing in Vishwamadu, a northeastern town where hundreds of civilians had been waiting to be sent to refugee camps: a woman in a blue dress curled up in the fetal position, her face and neck spattered with blood; plastic lawn chairs upended and piled in a jumble from the force of the blast.

A soldier briskly picked up a dead child who was sprawled face down in the dirt, yellow shorts peeping out from beneath her bloodstained pink-and-purple dress. He dropped her rag-doll body on top of another corpse in a truck, leaving their bloodied, bare feet jutting out the back.

The footage, released by the government, did not show the bodies of any soldiers. The military has accused the rebels of using the civilians as human shields and called for noncombatants to flee to government-controlled areas. The rebels have accused the government of indiscriminate shelling, including in a government-designated "safe zone," leading to increasing civilian casualties.

On Monday morning, more than 800 civilians had crossed the front-lines and were being searched by soldiers when the bomber attacked, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

The accused bomber was being frisked when she set off the explosives, killing 28 people and wounding 24 troops and 40 civilians, he said.

The attack targeted a military weak point: the processing of the masses of civilians fleeing the area.

Military officials say the flow of civilians out of the war zone has increased in recent days, with 4,700 fleeing Sunday, bringing the total number of noncombatants to escape the war zone to 20,000 this year, Nanayakkara said.

The attack also highlighted concerns that the rebels were trying to blend in with the civilian population so they can fight on using insurgent tactics.

"The **LTTE** is now desperate because they don't have any control over the civilians," Nanayakkara said, calling the rebels by the acronym of their formal title, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. "They wanted to stop these people coming in."

With most communication to the north severed, the rebels could not be reached for comment.

Female suicide bomber kills 28 in Sri Lanka

The U.S. Embassy in Colombo called on the rebels "to allow all civilians freedom of movement" and urged the Sri Lankan government to ensure that all civilians who flee the fighting are transferred to the camps "in accordance with international standards."

The United Nations also condemned the bombing.

"We deplore the loss of civilian life in this targeted killing. It's a blow for people who have suffered so much," said UN resident co-ordinator Neil Buhne.

The rebels have been accused of more than 200 suicide attacks in 25 years of civil war.

Load-Date: February 10, 2009

End of Document

Bomb Kills Sri Lankan Minister

Associated Press Online

January 8, 2008 Tuesday 9:54 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 501 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A Sri Lankan government minister was killed Tuesday in a roadside bombing near the capital being blamed on Tamil Tiger rebels, the military said. The blast killed another person and wounded 10.

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

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

Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan did not answer calls for comment.

The killing, which came days after the government officially pulled out of a cease-fire with the rebels, appeared certain to intensify an already raging civil war along front lines between the government-controlled south and the insurgents' de facto state in the north.

"The minister was critically injured and was in a very serious condition even when he was brought here so the doctors immediately took him for an operation but unfortunately he died," said Dr. Dharmawardena Guruge, a physician at the hospital where Dassanayake was taken.

"He had injuries all over the body and there were head injuries," he said.

One other man was also killed, Guruge told an AP photographer, and the blast wounded another 10.

Tamil Tiger rebels often target top political or military officials.

In April 2006, a **female** suicide bomber failed to kill Army Commander Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka, who was critically wounded but resumed work after treatment. The following December, Defense Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa escaped a bomb attack without injuries.

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

Bomb Kills Sri Lankan Minister

The rebels have been blamed for an increase in the number of attacks in the Colombo area in recent months. Last Wednesday, rebels were accused of planting a bomb that exploded near a bus transporting wounded soldiers through the heart of the capital. The blast killed four people a soldier and three civilian bystanders.

Soon after, Sri Lanka's Cabinet officially withdrew from a 2002 truce that had all but collapsed over the past two years as escalating violence killed some 5,000 people.

In the days since, a new wave of violence across the main battle zone in the north killed 85 people 81 rebels and four soldiers according to the military.

It was not possible to independently verify the military's claims because the fighting took place deep in the jungles of the north, where access is restricted. Both sides often inflate casualty figures for their opponent, while underestimating their own.

More than 70,000 people have been killed since the rebels began fighting in 1983 for an independent state for the ethnic Tamil minority, claiming discrimination by the Sinhalese majority.

Load-Date: January 9, 2008

End of Document

The savaging of humanitarian law; Mobilizing the UN II

The International Herald Tribune

January 29, 2009 Thursday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 8

Length: 908 words

Byline: Bernard Kouchner - The New York Times Media Group

Body

'Modern' war disgusts us in the tragic consequences it has for civilians.

How could we not be horrified at the sight of bodies, atrociously maimed or burned; the bodies of women, men and children lying in the smoking ruins of their homes, in hospitals unable to cope that have become simply places to die, absent sufficient drugs and equipment?

Unfortunately, such atrocities are to be seen in many places around the world, usually with relative indifference - the paradoxical outcome of the way in which the media have made violence an everyday event.

Somalia, Congo, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Darfur, Gaza: this depressing litany of conflicts with their multitude of innocent civilian victims swept away by the storms of war must not however leave us indifferent.

The international community - and in particular France and the European Union, for which human rights are a core value, the very foundation of their sense of identity - cannot stand silently by in the face of such a situation.

In a period of armed conflict there is in fact a body of rules and principles that all parties to the conflict must obey: international humanitarian law.

That body of law, which has been largely built up since World War II, derives mainly from the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols.

While the International Committee of the Red Cross is the statutory guardian of those standards, all states parties to the conventions must not only obey them but also ensure that they are obeyed by the parties in an armed conflict.

What that means is that the international community has a special responsibility in ensuring compliance with international humanitarian law.

Indeed, one of the essential principles of international humanitarian law is that a distinction must be made at all times and in all circumstances between combatants and non-combatants, along with its corollary: a distinction between military targets and civilian targets, the latter to be protected. There are few conflicts in which that principle is fully respected.

In northeastern Sri Lanka, 230,000 civilians have been caught up in the fighting. The Tamil Tigers are accused by all NGOs of refusing to allow civilians to flee the war zone.

The savaging of humanitarian law Mobilizing the UN II

During the Israeli offensive in Gaza, there were several strikes in areas apparently devoid of any identifiable military target, and in particular that of Dec. 27, which hit the Gaza Training College, and the series of bombardments on Jan. 6 aimed at schools run by UNRWA (the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees).

Hamis also is responsible for violations of international humanitarian law, in part by firing rockets which were not aimed at military targets, but clearly intended to terrorize civilians in southern Israel.

Moreover, both Israel and Hamas have used weapons that have indiscriminate effects, since aerial bombing and mortar fire were not used in such a manner as to spare civilians. Yet the prohibition of the use of weapons with indiscriminate effects is another key principle of international humanitarian law.

The tragedy to which we have been witness in recent weeks is unfortunately not an isolated instance. Far too many armed conflicts ravage other parts of the world, from Sri Lanka to Darfur, from Somalia to Iraq, each with its funeral procession of massacred innocents. In each case the parties commit grave breaches of international humanitarian law, and in some cases mass atrocities punishable by international criminal justice.

Access is impeded to humanitarian aid and aid workers, plunging civilians into total destitution and depriving them of the most basic medical treatment. Children, some less than 10 years old, are enlisted as soldiers as well as sex slaves.

In various conflicts, rape is increasingly being used in a systematic, planned and large-scale manner; in short, it is used as a genuine weapon of war, whether in the Kivus or in Sudan, with almost total impunity. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, a woman is raped every 30 minutes; 30,000 were raped in the Kivus in the first half of 2007.

In the face of situations in which civilians are deliberately targeted, the maintenance and the restoration of peace are constant challenges.

France is engaged in numerous peacekeeping operations under UN mandates. The purpose of several of them - first and foremost the European Union operation in eastern Chad and north-eastern Central African Republic - is to provide protection to innocent civilians.

Such protection must involve first and foremost a guarantee of adherence to the principles of international humanitarian law in armed conflict and the inclusion of the issues surrounding the protection of civilians in mandates for peacekeeping operations.

I am convinced that compliance with international humanitarian law must be made the subject of depoliticized discussions at the United Nations, since such compliance is the duty of all, irrespective of the legitimacy of the military action undertaken by a specific state or armed group.

That is why I have asked France's permanent representative to the United Nations in New York to mobilize our partners on this matter. An initial meeting will be held in the coming days with a view to organizing a debate in the weeks to come.

What is at stake here is the credibility of the United Nations, and of the Security Council in particular, as the guardian of international peace and security.

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Bernard Kouchner is the foreign minister of France.

Load-Date: February 4, 2009

The savaging of humanitarian law; Mobilizing the UN II

The International Herald Tribune

January 29, 2009 Thursday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 8

Length: 908 words

Byline: Bernard Kouchner - The New York Times Media Group

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Load-Date: March 2, 2009

It's all George W. Bush's fault, says the Lion of Lahore

The Australian

March 6, 2009 Friday

1 - All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 13

Length: 791 words

Byline: Imran Khan, Piers Akerman, Steve Keen, Crikey

Body

Imran Khan, in Britain's The Independent, blames the previous US president for the attack on Sri Lankan cricketers

THIS was not an ideological attack, unless a link to the ***Tamil Tigers*** is uncovered. Sri Lanka is not part of any alliance that is involved in fighting in Afghanistan. The attackers wanted to destabilise Pakistan. It was an attack on the state. They wanted to specifically hit the economy. This ... is a consequence of our involvement in the Bush administration's war on terror. We were taken into this war against the public will. There were no Pakistanis involved in 9/11. We were sucked in deliberately by a dictator, Pervez Musharraf, who wanted to strengthen his position and receive American money. The Government today is completely incapable of lifting us out of this misery. The present coalition was brought about by the charade of an election last year, the aim of which was to create a government that continued to support US policies in Afghanistan and the Pakistani tribal areas. So we now have a pliant government. The result has been disastrous.

Piers Akerman in Sydney newspaper TheDaily Telegraph:

THE attack on the Sri Lankan cricketers destroyed the surprisingly widely held notion an attack on cricket was unthinkable. How this myth started is beyond comprehension as it ascribes a code of conduct to people who've vowed to observe only one code: the code of death. Yet there were the usual well-meaning people in the West and the East who clung to some delusion that cricket, a game of rules established across the old British Empire, was out of bounds to terrorists. Projecting sporting values on terrorists is as silly as suggesting the allies of the terrorists, the Taliban, were exercising their right to artistic freedom when they used anti-aircraft guns to destroy ancient statues of Buddha dating from the 3rd and 11th centuries at Bamiyan in Afghanistan. The attacks will also undermine those who bray that all terrorism is to do with Israel and the Palestinians. No one has yet been silly enough to make this claim but someone undoubtedly will. Was there a Jew among the Sri Lankan cricketers? Go to one of the anti-Semitic websites that flourish now and someone will make that claim. There are only two realities that can emerge from this tragedy: that innocents unconnected with any conflict have again died and that, apart from the immediate victims, those who will suffer most will, again, be Muslim.

F

ederal Opposition Leader Malcolm Turnbull suffers an embarrassing ambush on Radio 5AA yesterday:

CALLER: Hi, Malcolm. It's Amanda Blair.

It's all George W. Bush 's fault, says the Lion of Lahore

Presenter: Our afternoon presenter.

Caller: You're coming into my program this afternoon.

Turnbull: That's right, Amanda.

Caller: I bet you think this voice is just a parody of my voice, don't you. Boy, are you in for a shock. Malcolm, my producer Monique Bowley and me both think you're really attractive and hot. We do. We think you're really sexy. And you've got to say, Malcolm, my love, that that takes women from being shallow and being attracted to wealth and power to a whole new f..ked-up level, don't you reckon?

Presenter: Get out of here.

Caller: Malcolm?

Turnbull: Yes, yes, I'm here, Amanda. I'm listening very intently.

Caller: You don't talk much either and that's quite attractive, too. When you come in...

Turnbull: That's right, you like the strong, silent type with the emphasis on the silent.

Caller: Oh, you want to have a bit of what for now, do you? Listen, wear black leather when you come in. Bye, Malcolm! Love you.

Yesterday's Crikey sermon on the dangers of talking down the recession:

NEWSPAPERS, especially newspapers that one would imagine might take a sober and prudent eye to the reporting of vulnerable economies, should draw the line in attempting to milk difficult economic circumstances for the tawdry end of lively headlines. This is not an issue isolated to the AFR (a tabloid after all, and thus excitable by nature) but one that the media as a whole needs to think on long and hard as the Australian economy stumbles and confidence becomes a fragile -- but no less self-fulfilling -- commodity.

Steve Keen, in yesterday's Crikey, goes on to demonstrate how to talk up the economy:

WHAT are the odds of encouraging businesses or households to start borrowing again, from their now record levels of debt? Not good, I would think. Instead, they will be deleveraging, not just for the duration of a standard recession but perhaps for a decade or more, to bring debt levels back to something like 1960-70 levels of 25-50 per cent of gross domestic product. Deleveraging has only just begun, and it has a long, long way to go. So all we can do is brace ourselves for a massive increase in unemployment, and do what we can to ameliorate the pain.

Load-Date: March 5, 2009

The savaging of humanitarian law; Mobilizing the UN II

The International Herald Tribune

January 29, 2009 Thursday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 8

Length: 908 words

Byline: Bernard Kouchner - The New York Times Media Group

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The tragedy to which we have been witness in recent weeks is unfortunately not an isolated instance. Far too many armed conflicts ravage other parts of the world, from Sri Lanka to Darfur, from Somalia to Iraq, each with its funeral procession of massacred innocents. In each case the parties commit grave breaches of international humanitarian law, and in some cases mass atrocities punishable by international criminal justice.

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*

Bernard Kouchner is the foreign minister of France.

Load-Date: February 27, 2009

Asia-Pacific news calendar

Agence France Presse -- English

November 6, 2008 Thursday 1:48 AM GMT

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Length: 974 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, Nov 6 2008

Body

Asia-Pacific news calendar from Saturday, November 8 to Friday, December 5:

Saturday, November 8

WELLINGTON: New Zealand general election

HONG KONG: Cricket. Annual Hong Kong sixes tournament (until Nov 9)

NEWCASTLE, Australia: Rugby League. World Cup. England v New Zealand

TOKYO: Football. J-League matches

Sunday, November 9

BANGKOK: Seven leaders of the anti-government People's Alliance for Democracy due to deliver their defence statements to police on charges of inciting unrest and illegal assembly

PHNOM PENH: Cambodia marks Independence Day

TOKYO: Spanish King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia visit Japan (until Nov 14)

ISLAMABAD: Cricket. Pakistan team leaves for Abu Dhabi to play three ODIs against West Indies

SHANGHAI: Tennis. ATP season-ending Masters Cup (until Nov 16)

TOWNSVILLE, Australia: Rugby League. World Cup. PNG v Australia

Monday, November 10

BANGKOK: Thai premier heads to Philippines for official visit (until Nov 11)

HONG KONG: Government to release external trade statistics

MANILA: Government releases August FDI data

Asia-Pacific news calendar

SIEM REAP, Cambodia: Cambodia hosts border negotiations with Thailand

TOKYO: Japan publishes September machinery orders

Tuesday, November 11

PHNOM PENH: Cambodia celebrates water festival (until Nov 13)

Wednesday, November 12

MANILA: Government releases September export data

Thursday, November 13

TOKYO: Japan releases September balance of payments data and revised September industrial production data

GOTEMBA, Japan: Golf. Taiheiyo Masters (until Nov 16)

MACAU: Motor Sport. Macau Grand Prix (until Nov 16)

Friday, November 14

BANGKOK: Six-day funeral begins for Thailand's late Princess Galyani

RAIPUR, India: State elections in the Maoist insurgency-hit eastern Indian state of Chhattisgarh (second phase of polls to be held on Thursday, Nov 20)

Saturday, November 15

BANGKOK: Main cremation ceremony for Thailand's late Princess Galyani

SINGAPORE: Activists in Singapore may stage the community's first outdoor gay rights protest

BRISBANE, Australia: Rugby League. World Cup. First semi-final

Sunday, November 16

NAGOYA, Japan: Rugby Union. Test match. Japan v United States

SYDNEY: Rugby League. World Cup. Second semi-final

TOKYO: Athletics. Tokyo women's marathon

Monday, November 17

MANILA: Government releases September overseas workers remittance data

MANILA: Government releases October balance of payments data

SINGAPORE: Government releases monthly trade figures for October

SRINAGAR, India: First phase of polling in Indian Kashmir. (Last phase on Nov 30)

Tuesday, November 18

BANGKOK: The fourth hearing for alleged Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout

HONG KONG: Government releases unemployment statistics

Asia-Pacific news calendar

Wednesday, November 19

FIJI: Football. World Cup qualifier. New Zealand v Fiji

Thursday, November 20

HONG KONG: Government releases consumer price index

MANILA: Central bank policy rate-setting meeting

TOKYO: Bank of Japan opens two-day policy meeting

TOKYO: Japan releases October trade statistics

BRISBANE, Australia: Cricket. First Test. Australia v New Zealand (until Nov 24)

HONG KONG: Golf. Hong Kong UBS Open (until Nov 23)

MACAU: Tennis. Venetian Macau Showdown involving John McEnroe, Bjorn Borg, Roger Federer and James Blake

Friday, November 21

TOKYO: Bank of Japan governor Masaaki Shirakawa holds a press conference at the end of policy meeting

MANILA: Release of central bank business confidence survey

Saturday, November 22

SINGAPORE: Exhibition showcasing popular Japanese comics and toys, Anime Festival Asia, begins (until Nov 23)

BANGKOK: Tennis. Exhibition match between legends Bjorn Borg and John McEnroe

BRISBANE, Australia: Rugby League. World Cup Final

Sunday, November 23

TOKYO: Thanksgiving Day

TOKYO: Football. J-League matches

Monday, November 24

BANGKOK: Second ruling expected for Canadian paedophile Christopher Neil

NAGASAKI, Japan: Roman Catholic Church to beatify 188 Japanese killed for their faith in the 17th century

TOKYO: Financial markets closed

CHIBA, Japan: Athletics. Chiba Ekiden

Tuesday, November 25

BHOPAL, India: State elections in Madhya Pradesh

Wednesday, November 26

COLOMBO: The leader of Sri Lanka's **Tamil Tigers**, Velupillai Prabhakaran, to deliver his annual policy address marking the rebels' 'Heroes' Day'

Asia-Pacific news calendar

MANILA: Philippines releases September import data

SINGAPORE: Government releases monthly manufacturing figures for October

Thursday, November 27

HONG KONG: Government releases external trade statistics

WELLINGTON: New Zealand trade data for October released

MELBOURNE. Golf. Australian Masters (until Nov 30)

Friday, November 28

BANGKOK: Bank of Thailand's monthly economic report

PHNOM PENH: Opening of "Where Elephants Weep," Cambodia's first rock opera

TOKYO: Japan releases preliminary industrial production index for October, unemployment rate for October, Tokyo's consumer price index for November and nation's consumer price index for October

ADELAIDE, Australia: Cricket. Second Test. Australia v New Zealand (until Dec 2)

TOKYO: Figure skating. NHK Trophy (until Nov 30)

Saturday, November 29

BANGKOK: Thailand International Motor Expo, Asia's second-largest car show (until Dec 10)

MALACCA: Bollywood heartthrob Shah Rukh Khan to receive his Malaysian 'knighthood' amid controversy that the state award should be given to more deserving locals

NEW DELHI: State elections in the Indian capital region New Delhi, and the northeastern Indian state of Mizoram

SHENZHEN, China: Golf: World Cup (until Nov 30)

TOKYO: Football. J-League matches

Sunday, November 30

TOKYO: Football. J-League matches

Monday, December 1

BANGKOK: Thai inflation report

HONG KONG: Government releases retail sales statistics

Wednesday, December 3

BANGKOK: Bank of Thailand interest rate meeting

Thursday, December 4

JAIPUR, India: State elections in Rajasthan

YANGON: Myanmar marks National Day

COOLUM, Australia: Golf. Australian PGA Championship (until Dec 7)

Friday, December 5

MANILA: Philippines releases November inflation data

afp

Load-Date: November 6, 2008

End of Document

The savaging of humanitarian law; Mobilizing the UN II

The International Herald Tribune

January 29, 2009 Thursday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 8

Length: 908 words

Byline: Bernard Kouchner - The New York Times Media Group

Body

'Modern' war disgusts us in the tragic consequences it has for civilians.

How could we not be horrified at the sight of bodies, atrociously maimed or burned; the bodies of women, men and children lying in the smoking ruins of their homes, in hospitals unable to cope that have become simply places to die, absent sufficient drugs and equipment?

Unfortunately, such atrocities are to be seen in many places around the world, usually with relative indifference - the paradoxical outcome of the way in which the media have made violence an everyday event.

Somalia, Congo, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Darfur, Gaza: this depressing litany of conflicts with their multitude of innocent civilian victims swept away by the storms of war must not however leave us indifferent.

The international community - and in particular France and the European Union, for which human rights are a core value, the very foundation of their sense of identity - cannot stand silently by in the face of such a situation.

In a period of armed conflict there is in fact a body of rules and principles that all parties to the conflict must obey: international humanitarian law.

That body of law, which has been largely built up since World War II, derives mainly from the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols.

While the International Committee of the Red Cross is the statutory guardian of those standards, all states parties to the conventions must not only obey them but also ensure that they are obeyed by the parties in an armed conflict.

What that means is that the international community has a special responsibility in ensuring compliance with international humanitarian law.

Indeed, one of the essential principles of international humanitarian law is that a distinction must be made at all times and in all circumstances between combatants and non-combatants, along with its corollary: a distinction between military targets and civilian targets, the latter to be protected. There are few conflicts in which that principle is fully respected.

In northeastern Sri Lanka, 230,000 civilians have been caught up in the fighting. The Tamil Tigers are accused by all NGOs of refusing to allow civilians to flee the war zone.

The savaging of humanitarian law Mobilizing the UN II

During the Israeli offensive in Gaza, there were several strikes in areas apparently devoid of any identifiable military target, and in particular that of Dec. 27, which hit the Gaza Training College, and the series of bombardments on Jan. 6 aimed at schools run by UNRWA (the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees).

Hamas also is responsible for violations of international humanitarian law, in part by firing rockets which were not aimed at military targets, but clearly intended to terrorize civilians in southern Israel.

Moreover, both Israel and Hamas have used weapons that have indiscriminate effects, since aerial bombing and mortar fire were not used in such a manner as to spare civilians. Yet the prohibition of the use of weapons with indiscriminate effects is another key principle of international humanitarian law.

The tragedy to which we have been witness in recent weeks is unfortunately not an isolated instance. Far too many armed conflicts ravage other parts of the world, from Sri Lanka to Darfur, from Somalia to Iraq, each with its funeral procession of massacred innocents. In each case the parties commit grave breaches of international humanitarian law, and in some cases mass atrocities punishable by international criminal justice.

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Load-Date: January 29, 2009

When prejudice makes you just another drug mule

New Straits Times (Malaysia)

August 18, 2008 Monday

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Section: Pg. 10; LOCAL

Length: 766 words

Byline: Nisha Sabanayagam

Body

TRICKED by their lovers into smuggling drugs, Malaysian **women** are languishing in foreign jails. And with too many Malaysians overstaying in the UK, the British government is mulling introducing visas for visiting Malaysians. NISHA SABANAYAGAM (picture) discovers that it is certainly no breeze going through immigration if you are a young Malaysian woman travelling alone.

LINING up to get into the boarding area for my flight to London from Colombo last month I watched, with a slight sense of pity, the Immigration personnel question some Sri Lankan passengers.

How awful it was to be from a country where you are viewed with suspicion based merely on your citizenship, I thought.

I walked confidently to the Immigration officer and handed him my passport.

The glances back and forth from me to the passport photo continued a little longer than usual. But hey, I'm a Malaysian girl. I've travelled before and Immigration checks were always a breeze.

It was when they asked for my Malaysian identity card that it became clear that this was no mere routine check.

The man, who looked like the Indian uncle who sells you your newspaper, actually knew the term MyKad.

It wasn't, "Do you have any other photo identification?", it was, "Can I see your MyKad?"

"Is there a problem?" I asked pleasantly. No response.

I gave him my tattered MyKad, which bore a picture of a younger me with really short hair.

"It doesn't look like you," came the verdict.

"It is me, just much younger and thinner," I said in a joking manner, hoping to ease the tension a bit.

The man's expression remained solemn. Other passengers walked past me to the boarding area.

By now, my officer was placing the MyKad under an ultraviolet scanner, the kind they used to have in shopping centres in the good old days to check the authenticity of your RM50 note.

When prejudice makes you just another drug mule

I watched him, growing more edgy by the minute, but also noting that nothing untoward appeared on the MyKad under the purple light. But he didn't give it back to me. Instead he asked for a driver's licence.

"I don't have one," I said.

"Any other picture ID?" he asked as he screwed on a monocle (of all things!) and started inspecting the passport in absolute detail.

He peered at my picture, he peered at the logo, then he ran his thumb over it.

"Have you been to London before?" he asked.

"No. It's my first time."

Not the best answer, but the absolute truth. A slight pause on my part before I said, or rather squeaked nervously, "But I've been to Europe before."

I was more scared than I realised. They were intimidating.

I was going to London on a holiday to meet up with old friends. I wanted to tell the officer that I was not desperate enough to illegally immigrate and despite having grandparents from Jaffna, my heart did not beat for the **Tamil Tigers**.

I tried very hard not to appear like a terrorist-disguised-as-a-tourist in my jeans, sweater, backpack and handbag.

I refused to look at anybody else except the officer. I could feel the curious glances in my direction.

Then I noticed the Immigration officer checking the thickness of the front cover of my passport.

And for some reason, that got me mad. I had filled out too many forms with too many little boxes, dug up my parents' IC numbers from dusty files and paid RM300 of my hard earned money for that valid passport!

Finding nothing wrong but still so unwilling to let me by, the officer glanced over at his colleague and handed over my documents to him. By this time, all of the passengers were in the boarding area except me.

This was so unfair! I wanted to tell him that for every one of those stupid Malaysian drug mules, there were countless others who wouldn't even think about doing drugs, let alone smuggle them.

The anger probably cleared my mind because it occurred to me that I did have another picture ID with my MyKad number on it. I fished it out of my bag.

The officer took one look at the word "Media" on the tag and suddenly his tense posture disappeared and the resemblance to the newspaper uncle intensified.

"Oh! Media!" he said.

The other officer immediately handed me back my documents.

"So, you're a journalist," he said in an almost kindly tone.

I was completely flabbergasted. It was just a basic media pass, a lot more easier to forge than any passport.

I went through the gate and headed for the nearest seat, totally embarrassed but trying to look unfazed.

It did not help that almost everyone in the boarding area was staring at me.

Some of the looks were slightly pitying.

When prejudice makes you just another drug mule

They were probably thinking how awful it was to be from a country where you are viewed with suspicion merely based on your citizenship.

Load-Date: August 18, 2008

End of Document

UPI NewsTrack TopNews

UPI

June 7, 2008 Saturday 8:22 AM EST

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Length: 859 words

Body

Poll shows continued Democratic split

WASHINGTON, June 7 (UPI) -- As Hillary Clinton prepared to concede the Democratic presidential nomination to Barack Obama, a poll showed a continued split among Democratic voters.

Analysts expected Sen. Clinton, D-N.Y., to concede the race to Sen. Obama, D-Ill., at a 12 noon EDT event in Washington. In the meantime, a poll released by CNN showed Obama will have a lot of work to do to convince Clinton's supporters to back party unity and transfer their allegiance to him.

The network's poll showed that while 60 percent of Clinton's supporters would indeed vote for Obama, 17 percent said they would instead for the presumptive Republican presidential nominee John McCain while 22 percent said they wouldn't vote at all.

CNN did not say how many respondents engaged in the poll, but reported its margin of error at 7.5 percentage points and said it was conducted after Obama clinched the Democratic nomination Tuesday.

Clinton's Saturday concession speech could go a long way toward convincing her supporters, especially women, to back Obama in the name of party unity, CNN analysts said.

Quake lake sluice channel opened

MIANYANG, China, June 7 (UPI) -- Chinese authorities said Saturday they have begun to drain the unstable "quake lake" in Sichuan province, succeeding in attempts to establish a sluice channel.

The state-run Xinhua news service said a temporary dam holding back the waters of the lake was now safe thanks to engineering efforts to establish a stronger water flow through a man-made sluice channel. Water flow through the channel jumped from 70 to 247 cubic feet per second when a boulder was blasted out of the way.

The lake, formed by a massive landslide in the wake of the May 12 Sichuan earthquake, threatened 1.3 million people living downstream, and Chinese authorities have sent in soldiers manning 30 bulldozers to build two sluice channels to keep the lake from overflowing, Xinhua said.

The lake's water levels were still rising Friday, "but the dam is safe now," Rao Xiping, head of the Beichuan hydrometeorological station, told Xinhua, adding authorities have not found any more overflow danger spots and were fairly confident the dam would neither collapse nor cave in.

Mugabe said unlikely to give up power

HARARE, Zimbabwe, June 7 (UPI) -- Even if he loses the upcoming run-off election, Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe seems unlikely to give up his 28-year grip on power, opposition leaders say.

The government's actions this week, including instituting a ban on campaign rallies by the opposition Movement for Democratic Change and its presidential candidate Morgan Tsvangirai, signal Mugabe's determination to keep his autocratic hold on the country intact, the Los Angeles Times reported Saturday.

"As long as there is a ban on one candidate's rallies it will affect his ability to get to the people, in a big way," opposition party spokesman George Sibotshiwe told the Times, saying the move would especially hurt Tsvangirai in Matabeleland, his political stronghold in the country's south. "There can be no predictions when you're dealing with a rogue regime."

Sibotshiwe said the MDC Saturday was waiting to find out if Mugabe would even allow it to put up campaign posters or to run ads on state-run television.

The newspaper said another opposition politician, Arthur Mutambara, had also been arrested recently for publishing an article critical of Mugabe.

Missing divers found drifting near Bali

BALI, Indonesia, June 7 (UPI) -- Five European divers rescued after drifting for days in Indonesian waters were recovering Saturday after being found by fisherman, local police said.

The divers, including three Britons, a Frenchman and a Swede, were pulled from the sea near a remote island chain east of Bali Saturday and were on their way to Labuanbajo for treatment, the Antara news agency reported, adding the men's conditions were not immediately known.

Indonesian authorities said at least one the divers was dehydrated.

Antara said the government was forced to enlist the aid of local fishermen in the search for the divers when it encountered difficulty finding enough fuel to keep search aircraft aloft. It reported the divers were exploring reefs in the Komodo National Park area when they went missing late Thursday afternoon.

Police arrest 50 in Sri Lanka bus bombings

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, June 7 (UPI) -- At least 50 people were arrested Saturday, suspected in a pair of bus bombings in Sri Lanka that killed 22 people and injured 53 others, authorities say.

Sri Lankan police cast immediate blame on the Tamil Tigers rebel group in the Friday blasts, one of which killed 21 commuters aboard a bus in suburban Colombo.

The other bus bombing happened about an hour later in the city of Kandy, killing one person, authorities told the network.

CNN said soldiers went house-to-house in suburban Moratuwa looking for suspects in the first explosion, eventually rounding up at least 50 people for questioning.

Friday's bombings continue a recent upsurge in Sri Lankan violence, which has also seen two attacks on a commuter train line since May 26 that have killed nine people and injured 107.

Load-Date: June 8, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lankan government minister killed in bomb blast, military says; 1 other dead, 10 wounded

The Associated Press

January 8, 2008 Tuesday 9:54 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 501 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A Sri Lankan government minister was killed Tuesday in a roadside bombing near the capital being blamed on Tamil Tiger rebels, the military said. The blast killed another person and wounded 10.

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

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

Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan did not answer calls for comment.

The killing, which came days after the government officially pulled out of a cease-fire with the rebels, appeared certain to intensify an already raging civil war along front lines between the government-controlled south and the insurgents' de facto state in the north.

"The minister was critically injured and was in a very serious condition even when he was brought here so the doctors immediately took him for an operation but unfortunately he died," said Dr. Dharmawardena Guruge, a physician at the hospital where Dassanayake was taken.

"He had injuries all over the body and there were head injuries," he said.

One other man was also killed, Guruge told an AP photographer, and the blast wounded another 10.

Tamil Tiger rebels often target top political or military officials.

In April 2006, a **female** suicide bomber failed to kill Army Commander Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka, who was critically wounded but resumed work after treatment. The following December, Defense Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa escaped a bomb attack without injuries.

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

Sri Lankan government minister killed in bomb blast, military says; 1 other dead, 10 wounded

The rebels have been blamed for an increase in the number of attacks in the Colombo area in recent months. Last Wednesday, rebels were accused of planting a bomb that exploded near a bus transporting wounded soldiers through the heart of the capital. The blast killed four people a soldier and three civilian bystanders.

Soon after, Sri Lanka's Cabinet officially withdrew from a 2002 truce that had all but collapsed over the past two years as escalating violence killed some 5,000 people.

In the days since, a new wave of violence across the main battle zone in the north killed 85 people 81 rebels and four soldiers according to the military.

It was not possible to independently verify the military's claims because the fighting took place deep in the jungles of the north, where access is restricted. Both sides often inflate casualty figures for their opponent, while underestimating their own.

More than 70,000 people have been killed since the rebels began fighting in 1983 for an independent state for the ethnic Tamil minority, claiming discrimination by the Sinhalese majority.

Load-Date: January 9, 2008

End of Document

HighLights of the AAP National Wire at 14:45, Jan 6

AAP Newsfeed

January 6, 2008 Sunday 2:43 PM AEST

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Section: DOMESTIC NEWS

Length: 911 words

Body

HIGHLIGHTS NATIONAL

BRISBANE - Coastal and island communities in Queensland's far north were battenning down for a possible cyclone today as residents in other areas of the state began a major clean-up after days of rain and flooding. (Weather Qld)

SYDNEY - Several hundred people attending a music festival in northern NSW are expected to be trapped for days by rising floodwaters. (Weather NSW Second Daylead)

DARWIN - Residents on the outskirts of the Northern Territory town of Katherine are being warned of likely flooding as the territory mops up after a weekend of wild weather. (Weather NT)

TO COME: Weather National Nightlead, Weather Qld N/L and Weather NSW N/L

BRISBANE - Police remain at the scene of a horror road smash in South Queensland where four people were killed after a collision between a car and semitrailer. (Toll Qld 2nd Lead)

Toll Qld Nightlead to come

BRISBANE - Former terrorism suspect Mohamed Haneef is still waiting for the date of an inquiry into his case before deciding on his next move, his lawyer Peter Russo says. (Haneef. Seeking more)

SYDNEY - Public health experts are calling for smokeless tobacco to be stocked in pharmacies so smokers have access to an arguably safer nicotine alternative. (SNUS)

SYDNEY - Deadly superbug bacteria is being carried on doctors' name tags and straps slung around their necks, potentially infecting sick and vulnerable patients, a study has found. (Superbug)

SYDNEY - Two people have been found dead in suspicious circumstances at a NSW central coast home, NSW Ambulance says. (Caves. More to come)

MELBOURNE - The Australian stock market is expected to open significantly lower tomorrow after Wall Street suffered dramatic falls on the back of weaker than expected employment data. (Markets Preview)

SYDNEY - Australia is pushing hard for a record-equalling 16th straight Test victory on the final day against India. (Cricket Aust Nightlead to come with snapshot and sidebars. View and Fronter also to come)

SYDNEY - Indian spinner Harbhajan Singh will front a hearing with match referee Mike Procter tonight following an altercation with Australian allrounder Andrew Symonds. (Cricket Aust Race Lead. N/L to come)

SYDNEY - Day one action from the Sydney International. (Tennis Inter Nightlead to come)

SYDNEY - Media conference with women's world No.1 Justine Henin. (Tennis Inter Henin to come)

HOBART - Australian Jelena Dokic has advanced to the main draw of the Hobart International tennis tournament. (Tennis WTA Lead. N/L to come)

ADELAIDE - Finland's Jarkko Nieminen plays Frenchman Michael Llodra in final of Adelaide International. (Tennis Men N/L to come)

CANBERRA - No arrests have been made following a claim an Australian man raped a New Zealand woman aboard a cruise ship in the Pacific, foreign affairs officials said today. (NZ Rape Aust. Seeking more)

HighLights of the AAP National Wire at 14:45, Jan 6

CANBERRA - Australia has warned Sri Lanka it was taking a backwards step by withdrawing from its ceasefire with the **Tamil Tigers**. (Sri Lanka Aust)

CANBERRA - Organisers of Canberra's Summernats car festival have likened a mob of about 200 intoxicated men, who marched through the festival grounds for more than an hour last night, to a parade. (Summernats)

SYDNEY - The Sydney Festival could start with a free party in the heart of the city every year following the success of last night's gig, organisers say. (Festival, to come)

SYDNEY - NSW Health Minister Reba Meagher has defended the government's policy of recruiting former nurses back into the health system, labelling opposition criticism of the program as empty rhetoric. (Health NSW Lead)

SYDNEY - A wild brawl inside a central Sydney nightclub has set back attempts to curb a disturbing spate of extreme violence at inner-city pubs and clubs. (Glass)

SYDNEY - Four men in a stolen Mercedes are believed to be responsible for two armed hold-ups in Sydney, police say. (Armed)

MELBOURNE - Authorities are battling a new bushfire sparked by lightning strikes in Victoria's north-east. (Bushfires Vic)

MELBOURNE - Federal Health Minister Nicola Roxon today will launch a new campaign to raise awareness and reduce the incidence of skin cancer. (Skin, to come)

MELBOURNE - WorkSafe officials are investigating the cause of an accident after an elderly woman was crushed to death by a tractor. (Tractor Lead)

MELBOURNE - One man has suffered serious burns after a fire aboard a boat on the Murray River on the Victoria-NSW border this morning. (Boat)

BRISBANE - The Queensland government will put mobile desalination plants on the Brisbane River to ensure water supplies if the record drought continues, Acting Premier Paul Lucas says. (Water Qld)

BRISBANE - A 49-year-old man has been found dead in his cell in a central Queensland prison. (Prison)

BRISBANE - A man has been bashed unconscious and robbed in inner Brisbane overnight. (Bashed)

PERTH - A bushfire in Western Australia's Goldfields region which killed three men a week ago is still too dangerous to allow the region's main highway to reopen, fire authorities say. (Bushfires WA. N/L to come)

PERTH - Nationwide chicken store chain Lenard's has expressed its condolences to the family of its West Australian master franchisee who was found dead in suspicious circumstances at his East Perth home. (Heijne)

PERTH - Three people including two children were injured when their car rolled several times on Perth's Tonkin Highway. (Rollover)

Load-Date: January 6, 2008

Nation celebrate INDEPENDENCE

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

February 4, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 493 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Feb. 4 -- Over 4,200 Security Forces personnel from the Tri Services, Police and Civil Security Force will display their military might as all arrangements have been finalised to celebrate the 61st Independence Day in a dignified and colourful manner under the patronage of President Mahinda Rajapaksa at the Galle Face Green today at 8 am, organizers said yesterday.

All arrangements have been made to celebrate this event giving top priority for the achievements of the Security Forces at a time they are engaged in the final phase of the battle against the **LTTE** in the North. "One hundred eighty three officers and 4,252 other rankers from the three Forces, Police and the Civil Security Force are due to participate in the Independence Day parade whilst six officers and 105 men are due to accord the Tri -Service Guard of Honour at the celebrations," Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said. Officers and other rankers representing 25 Regiments, Regimental bands and the Colour Squad of the Army will participate in the Independence Day parade, he added. "The President Guard will be the latest addition to the parade this year," the Brigadier added. In addition, 12 armoured vehicles, nine artillery guns, two Multi- Barrel Rocket Launchers, microwave radars, combat radar station, ground and coastal surveillance radars, direction finder and jammers mounted on vehicles will also be displayed in the parade. A 21 one gun salute to the President and another 21 gun salute to the Nation will also be accorded during the celebrations. The Tri Forces and Police personnel parading in the Galle Face Green the Air Force and Navy will display their latest air and sea capabilities in the air and sea in the surroundings of the Galle Face green today. A Navy spokesman said 500 Navy personnel seamen, mid seamen, special boat squadron **women** sailors and patrolmen will participate in the parade. The Navy's Offshore Patrol Craft Sayura, Samudura and Sagara, Fast Missile Craft Suranimala, two fast gun boats Edithara and Udara representing Fast Gun Boat Squadron -III, six Fast Attack Craft representing IV th Fast Attack Flotilla, two Wave Rider Craft, four Inshore Patrol Craft and 24 Arrow Boats or Navy's latest innovation Arrow boats Edithara and 500 Navy personnel will participate at a display of Naval might at sea by the side of the Galle Face Green. Air Force Spokesman Wing Commander Janaka Nanayakkara told the Daily News that aircraft and helicopters Bell 412 of the No.4 VIP Squadron, MI 17 of the No 6 Squadron, Y-12 aircraft of the No.8 Squadron, two C-30 aircraft and one AN-32 aircraft of the No.2 Squadron, three MI-24 Attack Helicopters of the No.9 Squadron, three F-7 jets representing No. 5 Squadron, three Kfirs from the No. 10 Squadron and three MiG 27 from the No.12 Squadron will participate at the air show during the Independence Day celebrations. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Nation celebrate INDEPENDENCE

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

End of Document

Concern expressed on HR not anti-Lanka: EC

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

June 5, 2008 Thursday 4:32 PM EST

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Length: 500 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 5 -- The European Commission (EC) has told Sri Lanka not to misunderstand the expression of concerns with regard to human rights, as it was not peculiar to Sri Lanka, but was one done in good faith with all of the EU partners.

EC President Jose Manuel Barroso, at a meeting with Sri Lanka's new Ambassador to the European Union Ravinatha Aryasinha, agreed on the need for providing a fair and balanced reaction on the part of the EU and encouraged the Government of Sri Lanka to debate issues that Sri Lanka feels are under-represented or misrepresented.

While appreciating the difficult situation Sri Lanka was placed in due to terrorism, he also emphasized that the EU had listed the **LTTE** as a terrorist group. President Barroso also said elections to the Eastern Provincial Council was a development in the right direction. He expressed hope that the forthcoming Sri Lanka- EC Joint Commission scheduled to be held in Colombo from 9-11 June 2008 would provide a forum for a meaningful dialogue.

Ambassador Aryasinha said the Sri Lanka-EU relationship was being further strengthened following the process which commenced with the Sri Lanka- EU Troika meeting held in March 2008 and that it was important to maintain this momentum, through sustained contact as partners, who showed mutual respect for each other.

Responding to concerns raised by President Barroso on developments in Sri Lanka, Ambassador Aryasinha said, while Sri Lanka valued constructive suggestions made by friends on what could be improved, the positive developments taking place in Sri Lanka despite trying circumstances, also needed to be acknowledged. He added that unbalanced statements that disregard the context and tended to exaggerate the problems were not helpful.

Taking the current debate on the extension of GSP+ facility to Sri Lanka as an example, Ambassador Aryasinha said this facility kept over 350,000 in direct employment, had significantly contributed to poverty reduction, empowered **women** and uplifted the rural economy.

He regretted the tendency seen in recent statements and actions by the EU to disregard the significant achievements of Sri Lanka in relation to the environment, labour and good governance and to singularly focus on human rights, in the context of the GSP+ review.

Ambassador Aryasinha said many positive aspects on human rights were glossed over, including the recent Supreme Court advisory opinion affirming the justifiability of the ICCPR in Sri Lanka, the marked decline of violations over the past year, the prosecution of those including security forces personnel responsible for violations,

Concern expressed on HR not anti-Lanka: EC

the effort through the Presidential Commission of Inquiry to identify the perpetrators of alleged human rights abuses and the vast strides made in restoring the rights of the people of the Eastern Province through the revival of the economy and the holding of Provincial Council elections after a lapse of 20 years.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror.

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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: August 11, 2008

End of Document

New laws to ensure children's safety and well-being

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

October 1, 2008 Wednesday 3:21 PM EST

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Length: 1204 words

Byline: Daily News Sri Lanka

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 1 -- The Daily News interviewed Child Development and Women's Empowerment Minister Sumedha G. Jayasena on the Universal Children's Day which falls today.

Q - As the Minister who is responsible for Sri Lankan children how are you going to celebrate the Universal Children's Day ?

A - This year we are going to celebrate the Universal Children's Day on a grand scale under the theme of 'Let us make children's world beautiful by listening to them'. The National ceremony will take place at Mahanama Vidyalaya, Monaragala under the patronage of Education Minister Susil Premajayantha. Last year it was held in Anuradhapura. A flag day has also been organised and the first flag will be pinned on President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

A three day children's camp will be held with the participation of about 800 children from Ampara, Monaragala, Hambantota and Badulla districts. Ministers, professionals and scholars will stay in the camp with the children. A Day Against Torturing Children will be declared on October 4.

This is a significant landmark in the Ministry's work to ensure the safety and well-being of children. Cabinet approval has already been given to declare this day and the main objective of declaring a specific day against torturing children is preventing all types of torture against children.

Q - What is the progress achieved by your Ministry in connection with ensuring safety and well-being of Sri Lankan children ?

A - There is a National Child Development Fund. Children's welfare is being ensured through this. Malnourished school children are being provided with a glass of milk. Monthly a payment of Rs.360 is granted to all malnourished children. If there are two malnourished children in one family, they are entitled to Rs.720/-.

Every year the Government allocates Rs.500 million for this. The National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) and the centres run by it look after street children. Children's societies are now being set up at National level.

Arrangements have also been made to ensure the safety and well-being of children through upgrading the living standards of their families. For example toilet facilities will be provided for 50 families with children.

New laws to ensure children's safety and well-being

There is a village in the Monaragala district without a single toilet. Giving a glass of milk for malnourished children also helps to upgrade the living standards of farmers. The ministry buys one litre of fresh milk for Rs.60/-. Steps have been taken to develop villages at electorate level.

At present there are a lot of vacancies in both State owned and private children's homes. There are several children's homes run by the State and Non Governmental Organisations.

There are a large number of vacancies in these homes. There is a very long waiting list of parents who are waiting to adopt a child from a Sri Lankan children's home. This shows the rapid development, especially the social development that has taken place in Sri Lanka during the past few years.

Q - What are the steps taken to look after the children who are affected by **LTTE** attacks?

A - Children affected by **LTTE** terrorism will be taken care of by the ministry. About 50 scholarships will be given to them. Among them there are children who suffered when a bus bomb went off at Monaragala killing many passengers. There is a special unit set up at Vavuniya to attend the welfare of children and **women** coming from uncleared areas. There are officials from this Ministry, NCPA, health and education ministries there to attend to their needs.

A survey on war affected children has been done in the Eastern Province and it will be done in the Northern Province soon after the Armed Forces clear the province. This has been done through the Probation and Child Care Services Department with the assistance of UNICEF and some other NGOs. This data will immensely help the ministry to carry out its welfare work.

Q - Why do children face problems today more than they did in the past ?

A - Today the parents do not have adequate time to listen to their children. They leave for work leaving their children with servants. The children seek love from outsiders because they never get a chance to be with their parents and spend time with them. The parents are ignorant and do not see the importance of spending time with their children or listening to them.

Due to this situation children fall into various troubles and they are being subjected to exploitation. The children who do not receive protection and care from their parents watch porn at home or are being forced to do various illegal and anti social activities by others.

The rat race of parents have put children into a deep trouble. Parents should allocate adequate time to listen to their children. The Ministry or the Government alone cannot look after the country's children.

Q - What is the progress of the investigation conducted in connection with 30 school girls in Badulla becoming pregnant ?

A - This is not an isolated incident that took place only in the Badulla district. This is a plague that has spread all over Sri Lanka affecting almost all **female** school children. Children are being raped by their own fathers, grandfathers, brothers and relations. This happens often when the mothers go abroad as housemaids.

They are being raped by organised gangs with the support of three wheeler drivers. About 12 per cent of Sri Lankan **female** school children become pregnant due to this situation.

They do not receive sex education. Some of these raped children become prostitutes when they grow up. When I tried to bring death penalty only for the convicts who kill/rape children and **women**, it was sabotaged by various persons and groups especially so called human rights activists and human rights organisations.

We need to legalise abortion when it comes to pregnancies which occur due to rape. This can save innocent lives of child mothers. A child cannot be a mother and a child at the same time. We have to let a mother undergo a legal abortion when doctors discover that she is carrying an abnormal baby.

New laws to ensure children's safety and well-being

The permanently disabled child has to suffer because he/she has to depend on another person until his/her death. This saves the mother's life who is going to suffer until death. This will save innocent lives of women who seek the service of 'clinics' which perform illegal abortions.

Abortions should not be legalised as a whole. What we require here is to save the lives of children who are being raped and mothers who are going to suffer a lifetime taking care of permanently disabled children.

This is not something isolated or something that we can ignore. Only the sufferers and their loved ones know the pain. I am very happy to say that several gynaecologists have extended their support towards the Ministry to provide sex education for children in vulnerable districts.

We have to look after the children and women in Sri Lanka. To do this we need laws. But the Sri Lankan public will be consulted and asked to submit their opinions before making any amendments to the existing law or bringing in new laws. The most important thing is public opinion.

Child Development and Women's Empowerment Minister Mrs. Sumedha G. Jayasena.

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

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Load-Date: October 1, 2008

Sri Lankan Tamils in Canada ravaged by war in homeland

Agence France Presse -- English

November 18, 2008 Tuesday 2:55 AM GMT

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Length: 550 words

Byline: P. Parameswaran

Dateline: TORONTO, Nov 17 2008

Body

The picture of a fallen top commander of Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels is neatly plastered on the wall of a shopping center.

Not far away, a food outlet peddles a crispy savory pancake, "dosa," named after Tamil Eelam, the independent state aspired by the Tigers.

No, you are not in the stronghold of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) in northern Sri Lanka but in Scarborough, the eastern part of Toronto.

This largest Canadian city is home to about 250,000 ethnic Tamils who left Sri Lanka for Canada to escape the country's 25-year civil war.

They make up the largest diaspora from the South Asian country, with Toronto itself reportedly home to the biggest number of Sri Lankan Tamils in the world.

Though actively involved in the business, academic, political and social fields in their new home, many are still sympathetic to the Tigers' cause for an independent Tamil state in Sri Lanka.

Some display their support openly despite the group being labeled terrorists by the Canadian government, which earlier this year for the first time charged a man with terrorism financing for soliciting cash for the Tigers.

Many of the Tamils in Canada have families and relatives in the north and east of Sri Lanka, where the Tigers were experiencing one of their worst setbacks since waging an armed struggle in 1972 to carve out a homeland for minority Tamils in the majority-Sinhalese nation.

"We are psychologically devastated and traumatized by the war because it is in our homeland and there is genocide going on there," charged Canadian Tamil Usha Sri-Skanda-Rajah, the owner of a real estate firm in Scarborough.

Sri Lankan Tamils in Canada ravaged by war in homeland

"We want the international community to help bring about a settlement to the conflict so that our statehood is recognized," said Usha, 57, who is among an informal group of "concerned" women attempting to highlight to the Canadian authorities what she called "humanitarian catastrophe" in northern Sri Lanka.

Several members in her group have parents and other family members displaced by the fighting and their whereabouts remain uncertain, she said.

Usha's husband, a retired senior banking executive, went on a six-day fast recently to draw attention to the plight of tens of thousands of civilians displaced by the fighting in Sri Lanka.

The Canadian Tamils grasp at any opportunity to highlight the bloody ethnic strife in Sri Lanka.

Recently, when Sri Lanka played Pakistan in a cricket match in Toronto, Tamil groups hired a plane carrying a banner "Stop the genocides in Sri Lanka" to circle the cricket grounds in an aerial propaganda blitz.

Sri Lankan Tamils are "one of the largest growing visible minorities" in Canada, said David Poopalapillai, spokesman for the Canadian Tamil Congress, touted as the largest Tamil group in Canada.

Catering to the bustling community, which has a municipal councillor as its first elected representative, are three 24-hour Tamil cable television networks and about half a dozen radio stations, he said.

The Tamils are aspiring for higher elected offices.

"We consider ourselves as part and parcel of the Canadian fabric and always encourage our people to actively perform their civic duty," Poopalapillai said.

For some however their assimilation in Canada will not be at the expense of foregoing the elusive dream of a Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka.

Load-Date: November 18, 2008

Maithripala escapes assassination

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

October 10, 2008 Friday 12:59 PM EST

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Length: 496 words

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 10 -- Agriculture Minister and SLFP General Secretary Maithripala Sirisena escaped an assassination bid yesterday when a suspected **LTTE female** suicide bomber pounced on his convoy at Pirivena junction in Boralesgamuwa and blew herself up, killing one and injuring six others, including Deputy Minister Siripala Gamlath.

The bomber, who was waiting for her target at the 7th milepost at Katuwawala, Pirivena junction jumped on the minister's convoy as it was returning after the launch of a paddy cultivation event in Bandaragama, but missed his car and instead struck two backup vehicles.

"The **female** bomber was standing under a tree by a roadside king coconut stall and jumped on the convoy when it was passing by," police quoted a witness as saying, adding that the king coconut seller was not in the stall at the time.

Two "Defender" jeeps and the minister's vehicle escaped with little or no damage, while a Montero jeep and a double cab following his vehicle took the brunt of the explosion. Deputy Minister Gamlath who was travelling in the Montero jeep, and six others who suffered injuries, were rushed to the Kalubowila Hospital and the National Hospital, Colombo.

An employee of the Survey department, who was in the double cab, had subsequently succumbed to his injuries in hospital.

Eyewitnesses said that, seconds after the explosion, the driver of the minister's vehicle who had initially lost control had managed to drive the vehicle to a nearby police station with the minister in it.

The Montero jeep following the minister's vehicle had come to a halt a few metres away, after being heavily damaged by pellets from the bomb, and the double cab had rammed into the railing of the horticulture stall.

The injured were rushed to hospital, immediately after the blast, in vehicles that were passing by. Eight other vehicles, besides the two convoy vehicles, were also damaged in the blast.

The owner of the horticulture stall, Kumuduni Priyadarshani told Daily Mirror that she was out at lunch when she she heard a loud sound - one which could be heard several kilometers away.

"When I came out I saw the damaged vehicles and people taking the injured to hospital," she said.

Maithripala escapes assassination

Police believe that the suicide bomber had lain hidden in the thick bushes nearby, and emerged when the convoy approached. Some of the bomber's body parts had been blown into the horticulture stall.

Police Spokesperson, Ranjith Gunasekara said a police team was immediately dispatched to search the bushes for clues relating to the bomber.

"We believe that the **female** suicide bomber blew herself up just as the minister's convoy was passing. We also believe that Minister Sirisena was the target," SSP Gunasekara told Daily Mirror.

Six workers from a repair shop close to the site of the blast were taken in immediately, for questioning, by the police. The government analyst also visited the scene soon after the blast.

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Load-Date: October 11, 2008

ROUNDUP: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill 11, injure over 100

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
February 3, 2008 Sunday 11:27 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 517 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts ROUNDUP: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill 11, injure over 100 Death toll includes suicide bomber and suspected accomplice Colombo

A **female** suicide bomber killed 11 people and injured at least 100 in Colombo's main railway station Sunday afternoon, a military spokesman said.

The woman suicide bomber, who arrived in one of the trains at the Fort railway station in the heart of the capital, got off the train and detonated the explosives, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

He blamed the rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

(**LTTE**) who are known to carry out suicide attacks.

Police were investigating whether an accomplice of the suicide bomber was also caught in the blast. Witnesses said that one of the people killed was seen talking to the bomber minutes before the explosion and was moving away when the blast took place.

The woman is believed to have boarded the train at one of the smaller stations where security is not as tight.

At least 14 of the injured people were in a serious condition, Deputy Director of the National hospital, Dr Anil Jaysinghe said.

All train services were temporarily suspended, but resumed two hours later.

The attack came just hours after a grenade explosion in the national zoo in the Colombo suburb of Dehiwala that injured eight people.

On Saturday 20 passengers were killed when a bomb exploded on a bus in Dambulla, 148 kilometres north of the capital. The government blamed Tamil rebels for that blast.

Security in the capital has been stepped up as the country is marking the 60th anniversary of independence from Britain on February

ROUNDUP: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill 11, injure over 100

4 with a military parade presided over by President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

As a security precaution train services operating from the Tamil populated northern Vavuniya town to the capital were suspended.

Civilians living in and around the capital have expressed fears of more attacks amidst reports that at least seven suicide bombers have entered the city. Suicide jackets were discovered in two different locations in the capital during the past week.

Government forces have stepped up military operations against the rebels in the north during the past month and in turn rebels have stepped up attacks in the southern part of the country. In three related incidents, including a roadside bomb attack in the south-eastern Monaragala district, rebels killed 43 civilians last month.

The government and military commanders have vowed to crush the rebels by the end of the year, but the opposition are sceptical that the rebels who have been fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils for the past 25 years can be eliminated within a year.

The government on January 16 pulled out from a Norwegian-backed truce with the rebels.

Despite the truce, rebels in December 2005 renewed attacks on the security forces, prompting the government to step up military operations. Since then more than 5,800 people have been killed.

The government argued that the truce was not required as the rebels had renewed attacks and in turned security forces had stepped up operations.

Feb 0308 1127 GMT

Notes

Death toll includes suicide bomber and suspected accomplice

Load-Date: February 4, 2008

End of Document

Backgrounder: Terror attacks in South Asia

Xinhua General News Service

March 3, 2009 Tuesday 7:10 PM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Science & Technology

Length: 570 words

Dateline: HONG KONG March 3

Body

A bus carrying Sri Lankan cricket team was attacked by gunmen Tuesday on its way to Lahore, Pakistan for a match. At least seven persons including five policemen were killed and eight persons including six players were wounded.

The following are major terrorist attacks in the South Asian countries in recent years:

Feb. 9, 2009 (Sri Lanka):

A **female** suicide bomber from the **LTTE** detonated explosives in a crowd of soldiers and refugees in northern Sri Lanka. Twenty-eight people including eight civilians were reportedly killed and at least 90 others were wounded.

Nov. 26 - 29, 2008 (India):

Armed terrorists opened fire at eight different sites in a coordinated attack in Mumbai. They wielded automatic weapons and attacked locations including a train station, hotels, restaurants, a police station, and a hospital. 173 were confirmed dead and more than 300 were wounded.

Oct. 30, 2008 (India):

A series of 13 blasts occurred in and around Guwahati in the northeastern state of Assam, killing at least 70 and wounding more than 300.

Sept. 20, 2008 (Pakistan):

A dump truck filled with explosives detonated in front of the Marriott Hotel in the Pakistani capital of Islamabad, killing at least 54 including five foreigners, injuring at least 266.

Aug. 21, 2008 (Pakistan):

Two suicide bombers blew themselves up at the gates of the Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF) in the high security cantonment town of Wah, around 30 km from capital Islamabad, killing at least 70 persons in what was described as the deadliest attack on a military installation in the history of Pakistan. The Tehrik-i- Taliban Pakistan claimed responsibility for the attack.

Background: Terror attacks in South Asia

July 7, 2008 (Afghanistan):

A suicide bomber drove a car full of explosives into the gates of the Indian embassy in Kabul, killing 41 people and injuring 141. Five embassy personnel were killed - India's defense attache, a senior diplomat and two security guards - as well as an Afghan man.

Dec. 27, 2007 (Pakistan) :

Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto was shot at after a political rally at a park in the eastern Pakistani city of Rawalpindi and a suicide bomb was detonated immediately following the shooting. She was declared dead at the Rawalpindi General Hospital. At least 23 other people were killed by the bombing.

Nov. 7, 2007 (Afghanistan):

A suicide bomb blast killed more than 100 people, including six parliamentarians in northern Afghan province of Baglan. Many school children were among the dead as they were welcoming parliamentarians at gate of a sugar factory.

Oct. 18, 2007 (Pakistan):

At least 139 people were killed and more than 387 wounded in the southern Pakistani port city of Karachi in a suicide bombing near a motorcade carrying former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who returned to Pakistan earlier in the day after eight years of self-imposed exile.

Aug. 25, 2007 (India):

At least 42 people were killed and some 50 others injured in three explosions in the southern city of Hyderabad, India.

Aug. 21, 2004 (Bangladesh):

In Dhaka, more than 20 people were killed and hundreds of others injured in grenade attacks on a rally of the then opposition party Awami League led by Sheikh Hasina. Hasina, now the prime minister, narrowly survived in the attacks but her eyes and ear were injured.

Load-Date: March 4, 2009

Nine die in attack on Sri Lankan hospital

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 8

Length: 504 words

Byline: MATT WADE SOUTH ASIA CORRESPONDENT

Body

A BARRAGE of rockets has hit a packed ward for women and children at a hospital in northern Sri Lanka, killing at least nine people, aid agencies say.

The hospital at Puthukkudiyiruppu, or PTK, is near the front line of intense fighting between the army and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

A United Nations spokesman, Gordon Weiss, told the Herald the hospital was hit about midnight on Sunday and that shelling had resumed in the morning within 100 metres of the hospital.

"We're at a loss to understand why people would shell a hospital," he said.

Mr Weiss received a text message from a UN worker at the hospital immediately after the attack saying: "Woman and kids wards shelled. God no words. Still counting the dead bodies."

The Red Cross announced that nine people had been killed and 20 injured, but Mr Weiss feared the toll would rise.

The UN had not been able to determine where the shelling had come from, he said. Each side accused the other of being responsible for the atrocity.

Paul Castella, head of the Colombo delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross, called on both sides to "respect their obligation" to spare medical facilities and activities.

"Wounded and sick people, medical personnel and medical facilities are all protected by international humanitarian law," he said. "Under no circumstance may they be directly attacked."

More than 500 patients are in the hospital waiting to be transferred to the government-controlled area for better treatment. Despite the attack, people injured in the fighting had been continuing to arrive at the hospital, the Red Cross said.

Mr Weiss said the attack proved civilians were being killed and wounded in the fighting. "We know there are a considerable number of children who are turning up with severe wounds, some of them as young as a few months old," he said.

The army has had a series of victories over the Tigers in the past two months and claims the war will soon be over.

Nine die in attack on Sri Lankan hospital

The rebels have been surrounded in a 300-square kilometre corner of jungle in the north-east of the island. Aid agencies say 250,000 people, mostly Tamils, are trapped in the area, while the Government says the number is smaller.

The Government has accused the Tigers of using civilians trapped in the conflict zone as human shields.

Earlier, the Defence Secretary, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, told a newspaper that diplomats and media organisations would be banished from Sri Lanka if they appeared to side with the Tigers.

"They will be chased away [if they try] to give a second wind to the LTTE terrorists at a time the security forces, at heavy cost, are dealing them the final death blow," he said.

The conflict is creating tension among millions of Indian Tamils sympathetic to the plight of Sri Lanka's Tamil minority.

More than 10,000 people have attended the funeral of a 26-year-old Indian, Muthu Kumar, who set himself on fire in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu last Thursday demanding a ceasefire in Sri Lanka. There were reports of rioting in the state capital Chennai.

Load-Date: February 2, 2009

Eleven die in attack on Sri Lankan hospital

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

Fourth Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 8

Length: 504 words

Byline: MATT WADE SOUTH ASIA CORRESPONDENT

Body

ARTILLERY shells have slammed into a packed ward for women and children at a hospital in northern Sri Lanka killing at least eleven people, aid agencies say.

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The Red Cross announced that nine people had been killed and 20 injured on Sunday and Associated Press reported that at least another two were killed yesterday morning.

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Load-Date: February 2, 2009

NEW DELHI IMPACT REPORT FOR OCT 31, 2008

UNI (United News of India)

October 31, 2008 Friday 6:24 PM EST

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Length: 536 words

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

Body

LEADS ===== TRIBUNE : 64 KILLED, 364 HURT IN ASSAM BLASTS (TRI) STATESMAN : 'HUJI-ULFA NEXUS BEHIND BLASTS' (STAFFER) FRONTIERS ===== UNI --- GUWAHATI : TERROR STRIKES ASSAM, 66 KILLED (STAT/SHARED) PTI --- NEW DELHI : RS 1 FOR DOG (STAT) INSIDERS ===== UNI --- MUMBAI : POWER DEMAND-SUPPLY GAP ALARMING: KAKODKAR (TRI) CHANDIGARH : STATE TO GET 20-22 HR POWER SUPPLY WITHIN 2 YEARS (TRI) PTI --- NEW DELHI : 380 CASES FOR DEFACING PROPERTY (STAT) : MAYA TO ADDRESS FIVE RALLIES (STAT) : HC STAYS ORDER, MCD GETS RELIEF (STAT) : 4 HELD IN DUPE CASES (STAT) : EYEWITNESS (STAT) : DONG FANG ELECTRIC TO SET UP FACILITY IN INDIA (STAT, TRI) : GOVT DOES NOT TO LISTEN TO US: AMAR (STAT) GUWAHATI : DOCS STRUGGLE WITH BLOOD SHORTAGE (STAT) MUMBAI : COLLISION (STAT) CHENNAI : NO DIFFERENCE OF OPINION WITH CENTRE OVER LANKA: CM (STAT) RAMANATHAPURAM: JAYA MOTORCADE ATTACKED (STAT) KOLKATA : 'VILLAGE ON WHEELS' (TRI) IMPHAL : MEDICAL STORES UNDER THREAT (TRI) COIMBATORE : INSURANCE COVER FOR STUDENTS (TRI) JAMMU : 70 CENTRAL PARAMILITARY COMAPNIES REACH STATE (TRI) SRINAGAR : PSO COMMITS SUICIDE (TRI) SONEPAT : TWO BSP LEADERS QUIT (TRI) FOREIGN ===== UNI --- NIL PTI --- WASHINGTON : OBAMA NOT UN-AMERICAN: PALIN (STAT) : WOOING VOTERS WITH HISTORIC AD (STAT) BEIJING : 57 TRAPPED (STAT) : SNOWSTORM (STAT) UNITED NATIONS: UN VOTES IN FAVOUR OF LIFTING UN SANCTIONS ON CUBA (STAT, TRI) : SECURITY COUNCIL FOR MORE WOMEN IN UN (TRI) ISLAMABAD : OVER 250 AFTERSHOCKS HIT PAK POST QUAKE (STAT) COLOMBO : LANKA BREACHES LTTE DEFENCE LINE (STAT) KATHMANDU : GYANENDERA'S SON-IN-LAW DEAD (TRI) LONDON : 'LIQUID SMOKING' (TRI) BUSINESS ===== UNI --- NIL PTI --- NEW DELHI : DABUR BOARD (STAT, TRI) : EXPORT TARGET TO BE MET: NATH (STAT) : NO IMMEDIATE THREAT OF LAYOFFS, SAYS FICCI (STAT) : DEORA SEEKS MORE OIL BONDS (STAT) : EGOM DEFERS DECISION ON TAX SOPS TO IT SEZS (TRI) : RIL OPEN TO PRICE KG GAS HIGHER: GOVT (TRI) : STERLITE STILL KEEN ON ASARCO (TRI) : DLF SEEKS SOFTER INTEREST RATES (TRI) : NEED TO CUT CRR, REPO RATE FURTHER: IEG (TRI) : V-MART TO INVEST RS 40 CR (TRI) MUMBAI : AIR INDIA PACT (STAT) : MARTKETS CLOSED (TRI) : RELIGARE FIXES RIGHT ISSUE PRICE (TRI) KOLKATA/MUMBAI/NEW DELHI: ONGC Q2 NET PROFIT DOWN 6 PER CENT (STAT, TRI) NEW YORK : IMF OFFERS \$100-B LOAN TO NATIONS FACING CRISIS (TRI) LONDON : VODAFONE, RUSSIA'S MTS IN PACT (TRI) SPORTS ===== UNI --- PARIS : PAES-DLOUHY, BHUPATI-KNOWLES LOSE (TRI) PTI --- NEW DELHI : GREAT RESULT FOR CHESS (STAT) : I AM MORE RELIEVED THAN HAPPY: ANAND (STAT, TRI) : DOUBLE FINE TOO: WATSON TO 10 PER CENT, DECISION ON GAMBHIR TODAY (STAT, TRI) : NANO LONE INDIAN LEFT IN CONTENTION (TRI) : PRAKASH LOSES IN LOUISVILLE CHALLENGER (TRI) : BOND PLANS TO TRAIN YOUNG INDIAN PACERS (TRI) : LAXMAN HITS BACK AT 'DOUBTING THOMASES' (TRI) COLOMBO : SACHIN AMONG NICEST CRICKETERS: RANATUNGA (TRI) CHENNAI : CHESS FEDERATION CHIEF HAILS ANAND (TRI) MELBOURNE : AUSTRALIAN MEDIA FLAYS GAUTAM GAMBHIR (TRI) KARACHI : KNEE INJURY REASON FOR LEAVING ICL: MUSHTAQ (TRI) : COACH ALONE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR

NEW DELHI IMPACT REPORT FOR OCT 31, 2008

DEFEATS: SALMAN (TRI) LONDON : CAIRNS NOT INVOLVED IN MATCH-FIXING: LAWYER (TRI) CENTRAL
DESK SW

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htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

Load-Date: October 31, 2008

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2ND ROUNDUP: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill 13, injure over 100

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

February 3, 2008 Sunday 2:22 PM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 570 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts 2ND ROUNDUP: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill 13, injure over 100 adds quote, revises toll, epa photo 0401243280 available Colombo

A **female** suicide bomber killed 13 people and injured at least 100 in Colombo's main railway station Sunday afternoon, a military spokesman said.

The suicide bomber, who arrived in one of the trains at the Fort railway station in the heart of the capital, got off the train and detonated the explosives, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

He blamed the rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

(**LTTE**) who are known to carry out suicide attacks.

Police were investigating whether an accomplice of the suicide bomber was also caught in the blast. Witnesses said that one of the people killed was seen talking to the bomber minutes before the explosion and was moving away when the blast took place.

The woman is believed to have boarded the train at one of the smaller stations where security is not as tight.

At least 14 of the injured people were in a serious condition, Deputy Director of the National hospital, Dr Anil Jaysinghe said.

All train services were temporarily suspended, but resumed two hours later.

Transport Minister Dallas Alahaperuma told journalists that the public would have to maintain more vigil as the rebels appeared to be carrying out more desperate attacks in view of the military stepping up operations against them in the north.

"We have decided to set up vigilant teams. A member each will travel in long station buses and the trains," the minister said.

The attack came just hours after a grenade explosion in the national zoo in the Colombo suburb of Dehiwala that injured eight

2ND ROUNDUP: Bombings in Sri Lankan capital kill 13, injure over 100

people.

On Saturday 20 passengers were killed when a bomb exploded on a bus in Dambulla, 148 kilometres north of the capital. The government blamed Tamil rebels for that blast.

Security in the capital has been stepped up as the country is marking the 60th anniversary of independence from Britain on February 4 with a military parade presided over by President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

As a security precaution train services operating from the Tamil populated northern Vavuniya town to the capital were suspended.

Civilians living in and around the capital have expressed fears of more attacks amidst reports that at least seven suicide bombers have entered the city. Suicide jackets were discovered in two different locations in the capital during the past week.

Government forces have stepped up military operations against the rebels in the north during the past month and in turn rebels have stepped up attacks in the southern part of the country. In three related incidents, including a roadside bomb attack in the south-eastern Monaragala district, rebels killed 43 civilians last month.

Government and military commanders have vowed to crush the rebels by the end of the year, but the opposition are sceptical. The rebels have been fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils for the past 25 years.

The government on January 16 pulled out from a Norwegian-brokered truce with the rebels.

Despite the truce, rebels in December 2005 renewed attacks on the security forces, prompting the government to step up military operations. Since then more than 5,800 people have been killed.

The government argued that the truce was not required as the rebels had renewed attacks and in turned security forces had stepped up operations.

Feb 0308 1422 GMT

Notes

adds quote, revises toll, epa photo 0401243280 available

Load-Date: February 4, 2008

End of Document

Sri Lankan rebel leader's fate a mystery

Associated Press International

February 4, 2009 Wednesday 1:17 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 958 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

At the height of his power, the Tamil commander ran a shadow state. His guerrilla force, backed by artillery, a navy and a tiny air force, reportedly took in hundreds of millions from donations and smuggling.

Now he is hiding in a jungle. Or he has fled to Malaysia. Or maybe he is dead.

With his rebel separatist group on the brink of defeat at the hands of the Sri Lankan military, Velupillai Prabhakaran's fate remains a mystery. But then, he has lived most of his life in the shadows.

What happens to Prabhakaran could be crucial to the future of the ethnic Tamil rebel group he founded. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam is so centralized that without a leader it would almost certainly spin into disarray and the war would come to a swift close.

One Western diplomat said that if Prabhakaran were to flee, it would be viewed as cowardice by his followers, ending Tamil militancy for a generation. But the diplomat, who declined to be named because he is not authorized by his government to speak on record, said the rebel leader's death in battle or by suicide would make him a martyr to inspire future generations.

Over the past three decades, Prabhakaran has turned a small band of barely armed separatists from the Tamil minority into one of the world's most feared guerrilla groups.

The United States and India have branded the chubby 54-year-old guerrilla leader a ruthless terrorist and accuse him of running a death cult. The **Tamil Tigers** have been blamed in scores of suicide bombings and the assassinations of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa.

Prabhakaran once commanded a de facto state across much of northern Sri Lanka and parts of the east, complete with its own tax system, police force and courts. His guerrilla force reportedly earned up to \$300 million a year from expatriates and its extensive arms and drug smuggling operations.

But in recent months, the government overran his administrative capital at Kilinochchi, captured much of the rebel-held territory and trapped his fighters and an estimated 250,000 civilians in a small area in the northern jungles.

On Monday, the army announced it had captured Prabhakaran's main hideout a two-story, air-conditioned bunker 50 feet (15 meters) underground.

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Photos posted on a government Web site showed a dark, spartan enclosure with narrow, whitewashed hallways, white tiled floors, and furnished with a refrigerator, cabinet, portable cooking stove, single bed and cane chairs. A painting of three tigers decorated one wall.

It was equipped with surveillance cameras, generators, satellite dishes and insulin apparently for use by the diabetic rebel leader, the military said.

Defense Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa said Prabhakaran was almost certainly in the jungle area still under rebel control probably in a bunker near the small town of Puthukkudiyiruppu.

But last month army chief Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka said Prabhakaran may have fled to South Africa. And police were reportedly on the lookout for him in Malaysia.

There has also been media speculation that Prabhakaran might have been injured or even killed.

In an interview with Australia's Special Broadcasting Service radio, a rebel leader who identified himself as Thileepan denied Prabhakaran had fled.

"That is ridiculous. No, he is with us ... He is with the people," he said, with the sound of artillery fire booming in the background.

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He rose to prominence after killing the mayor of Jaffna in 1975 and used his new militant credentials to create the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

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"I am like a spider at the center of the web," he told Indian journalist Anita Pratap in 1990.

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Though the rebels joined in several rounds of peace talks, the government was never willing to accede to Prabhakaran's demand for a separate nation.

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"Thousands of my boys have laid down their lives for Eelam," he told Pratap. "Their death cannot be in vain."

On the Net:

The Ministry of Defense, Public Security, Law and Order: <http://www.nationalsecurity.lk>

Load-Date: February 4, 2009

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[UPI NewsTrack TopNews](#)

UPI

October 6, 2008 Monday 8:18 AM EST

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Length: 993 words

Body

Nobel Prize in medicine awarded to three

STOCKHOLM, Sweden, Oct. 6 (UPI) -- The 2008 Nobel Prize in Medicine was shared by three people for discoveries of viruses causing HIV and cervical cancer, the Swedish organization said.

Harald zur Hausen of Germany was recognized for his discovery of human papilloma viruses that cause cervical cancer in women, the Nobel Foundation in Stockholm said Monday in a news release. He is to receive half of this year's award.

Francoise Barre-Sinoussi and Luc Montagnier were honored for their discovery of human immunodeficiency virus, the virus that causes AIDS. They will split the other half.

Zur Hauzen's work on human papilloma viruses led to the description of the natural history of HPV infection, an understanding of how HPV-induced cancerous cells are produced and the development of vaccines, the organization said.

Barre-Sinoussi and Montagnier characterized the retrovirus as the first known human lentivirus based on its morphological, biochemical and immunological properties, the foundation said. The discovery was one prerequisite for the current understanding of the biology of the disease and its antiretroviral treatment.

The Nobel laureates will receive their awards in Stockholm in December. They will share a \$1.4 million prize.

Bus flips killing 10 in California

WILLIAMS, Calif., Oct. 6 (UPI) -- Investigators are searching for what caused a bus to crash on a rural road in California, killing at least 10 people, the California Highway Patrol said.

The bus was traveling from Sacramento to a casino when it overturned and rolled into a ditch Sunday outside the city of Williams in the Colusa County, Sacramento television station KCRA reported Monday.

Between 30 and 38 people were listed as critically injured, CHP reported. About a dozen victims were thrown from the bus into a field.

California patrol Sgt. Brian Donnelly said the bus apparently drifted off the roadway and flipped over before coming to a rest, the television station said.

Officers said the road where the crash occurred wasn't heavily traveled.

A Greyhound spokeswoman said the bus involved in the crash was sold by the bus company more than two years ago. The spokeswoman said the bus dated back to the 1980s and didn't have seat belts.

Investigators are working to determine the cause of the crash. In addition to local law enforcement agencies, the National Transportation Safety Board is investigating the incident.

Suicide bomb attack kills 27 in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Oct. 6 (UPI) -- A suicide bomb attack Monday in central Sri Lanka killed 27 people, including the country's former army chief and his wife, the military said.

Among those killed in the attack Monday morning in Anuradhapura, which was blamed on a Tamil Tiger rebel, was Maj. Gen. Janaka Perera and his wife, the Sri Lankan Defense Ministry said.

The report said the attacker targeted a meeting of the United National Party. Several other politicians also were killed or were among the more than 90 injured. Of those injured, 15 were reported to be in serious condition.

The Press Trust of India, quoting military sources, said Perera was the apparent target of the suicide bomber as he had been involved in several campaigns against the rebels.

The **Tamil Tigers** have been fighting for a separate homeland for the Tamil-speaking minority on the Indian Ocean island nation.

Quakes hit Afghanistan, China, Kyrgyzstan

KABUL, Afghanistan, Oct. 6 (UPI) -- At least 60 people died in southern Kyrgyzstan when an earthquake rattled the central Asian country, local emergency officials said Monday.

The earthquake, measuring 6.6 on the Richter scale, struck Sunday near Kyrgyzstan border with China and destroyed the city of Nura, the quake's epicenter RIA Novosti, the Russian news agency, reported.

Meanwhile, an earthquake with epicenter in the Hindu Kush shook central Afghanistan Monday, CNN reported. There were no reports of casualties or damage from the stricken region.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the early morning quake in Afghanistan, centered about 40 miles south of Kabul, was of 6.0-magnitude. The Hindu Kush mountainous region is along the border with Pakistan.

In China, the National Seismological Network reported a 6.8 magnitude earthquake shook northwest China Sunday night but no casualties had been reported, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported. The epicenter was in a mountainous area about 60 miles from Wuqia County in the Kizilsu Kirgiz region.

In the Kyrgyzstan quake, Health Ministry official Dinara Sagynbayeva said 25 bodies have been recovered.

Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiyev is expected to visit the affected areas, RIA Novosti reported.

Next president can reshape high court

WASHINGTON, Oct. 6 (UPI) -- The next U.S. president will have a nearly unprecedented opportunity to reshape the United States Supreme Court, analysts say.

With the possible retirements of three high court justices in the next four years, Democratic U.S. presidential nominee Barack Obama, especially, would be in a position to name liberals to the bench because he would be supported by a Democratic Party-controlled U.S. Congress, The Washington Post reported Monday.

Walter Dellinger, a prolific Supreme Court practitioner and former acting U.S. Solicitor General, told the Post it was likely that Justices John Paul Stevens, 88, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, 75, and David Souter, 69, would step down in the next four years if Obama were elected.

&"President Obama is going to be able, I think, to name whomever he wishes to the court and have that person confirmed,&" he said.

But other observers said it's unclear if replacing the three retiring liberals with other liberals would alter the overall dynamics of the court, which is roughly balanced with four consistent conservatives, four liberals and, in the middle, Justice Anthony Kennedy. Though it might infuse the court's liberal wing with new energy, it may not change its current directions, they told the Post.

Load-Date: October 7, 2008

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Gunmen attack Sri Lankan cricket team in Pakistan, six police killed

The Canadian Press(CP)

March 3, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: GENERAL SPORTS

Length: 968 words

Byline: RIZWAN ALI, AP

Body

LAHORE, Pakistan _ A dozen men attacked Sri Lanka's cricket team with rifles, grenades and rocket launchers Tuesday ahead of a match in Pakistan, wounding seven players and a coach from Britain in a brazen assault on South Asia's most beloved sport. Six policemen and a civilian were killed.

An assistant coach was also wounded, but the players' and coach's injuries were not believed to be life-threatening.

The assailants ambushed the convoy carrying the squad and match officials at a traffic circle close to the main sports stadium in the eastern city of Lahore, triggering a 15-minute gunbattle with police guarding the vehicles.

None of the attackers were killed or captured at the scene, city police chief Haji Habibur Rehman said. Authorities did not speculate on the identities of the attackers or their motives.

The attack reinforced perceptions that nuclear-armed Pakistan is veering out of control and will end any hopes of international cricket teams _ or any sports teams _ playing in the country for months, if not years. Even before the incident, most cricket teams chose not to tour the country because of security concerns.

Tuesday's attack came three months after the Mumbai terror attacks, which were allegedly carried out by Pakistan militants.

Two Sri Lankan players _ Thilan Samaraweera and Tharanga Paranavitana _ were being treated for injuries in hospital but were stable, said Chamara Ranavira, a spokesman for the Sri Lankan High Commission.

Team captain Mahela Jayawardene, Kumar Sangakkara, Ajantha Mendis, Suranka Lakmal and Chaminda Vaas had minor injuries, the Sri Lankan Cricket Board said. Ranavira said British assistant coach Paul Farbrace also sustained minor injuries.

Australian head coach Trevor Bayliss was not wounded, Sri Lanka's Foreign Ministry said, refuting earlier reports he had minor wounds.

Veteran batsman Sangakkara told Sri Lankan radio station Yes-FM that "all the players are completely out of danger."

Authorities canceled the test match and the Lahore governor said the team was flying home. Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa condemned the attack and ordered his foreign minister to immediately travel to Pakistan to help assist in the team's evacuation and ensure they are safe.

Gunmen attack Sri Lankan cricket team in Pakistan , six police killed

TV footage of the attack showed gunmen with backpacks _ apparently the attackers _ firing at the convoy as they retreated from the scene, with several damaged vehicles and a lone, unexploded grenade lying on the ground. Other video showed the bodies of three people crumpled on the ground.

"It is a terrible incident and I am lost for words," said Steve Davis, an Australian who was umpiring the match.

Nadeem Ghauri, a Pakistani umpire who witnessed the attack, said the umpires were behind a bus of Sri Lankan players when suddenly they heard gunshots.

"The firing started at about 8:40 and it continued for 15 minutes," he said, adding "our driver was hit, and he was injured."

Lahore police chief Rehman said officers were hunting down the attackers who managed to flee. "Our police sacrificed their lives to protect the Sri Lankan team."

Three hours after the attack, at least Sri Lankan eight players and team officials left the Gaddafi stadium in Lahore on a Pakistani army helicopter that took off from the pitch. It was not immediately clear where the chopper was heading.

Haider Ashraf, a senior police official, said six policemen and a civilian died in the attack. It was unclear whether the civilian was a passer-by or someone traveling in the convoy.

Sri Lanka had agreed to this tour _ allowing Pakistan to host its first test matches in 14 months _ only after India and Australia postponed scheduled trips.

Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary Palitha Kohona said little could be done to stop such an attack.

"I think the Pakistani authorities have provided adequate security but as we know from experience ... there is never enough security to counter a well organized and determined terrorist group."

The International Cricket Board quickly moved to condemn the attack.

"We note with dismay and regret the events of this morning in Lahore and we condemn this attack without reservation," ICC chief executive Haroon Lorgat said in a statement. "It is a source of great sadness that there have been a number of fatalities in this attack and it is also very upsetting for the wider cricket family that some of the Sri Lanka players and one match official have been injured in this attack."

Pakistan is battling a ferocious insurgency by Islamist militants with links to al-Qaida who have staged high-profile attacks on civilian targets before.

One militant group likely to fall under particular suspicion is Lashkar-e-Taiba, the network blamed for the Mumbai terror attacks. The group has been targeted by Pakistani authorities since then and its stronghold is in eastern Pakistan.

The nature of Tuesday's attack _ coordinated, using multiple gunmen armed with explosives _ is reminiscent of the Mumbai strikes in November that raised tensions between Pakistan and India.

Authorities will also consider possible links to Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger separatist rebels who are being badly hit in a military offensive at home, though Sri Lankan military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara says authorities there did not believe the group was responsible.

Sri Lanka appeared on the brink of crushing the Tamil Tiger rebels after more than a quarter century of civil war. In recent months, government forces have pushed the guerrillas out of much of the de facto state.

The **Tamil Tigers**, who are fighting for an independent state for Sri Lanka's Tamil minority, rarely launch attacks outside Sri Lanka, though their most prominent attack _ the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by a **female** suicide bomber _ took place at an election rally in India in 1991.

Gunmen attack Sri Lankan cricket team in Pakistan , six police killed

Load-Date: March 4, 2009

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Sri Lankan rebel leader's fate a mystery

Associated Press Online

February 3, 2009 Tuesday 6:52 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 958 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

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But in recent months, the government overran his administrative capital at Kilinochchi, captured much of the rebel-held territory and trapped his fighters and an estimated 250,000 civilians in a small area in the northern jungles.

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On the Net:

The Ministry of Defense, Public Security, Law and Order: <http://www.nationalsecurity.lk>

Load-Date: February 4, 2009

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The Canadian Press(CP)

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 940 words

Byline: RAVI NESSMAN, AP

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With his rebel separatist group on the brink of defeat at the hands of the Sri Lankan military, Velupillai Prabhakaran's fate remains a mystery. But then, he has lived most of his life in the shadows.

What happens to Prabhakaran could be crucial to the future of the ethnic Tamil rebel group he founded. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam is so centralized that without a leader it would almost certainly spin into disarray and the war would come to a swift close.

One western diplomat said that if Prabhakaran were to flee, it would be viewed as cowardice by his followers. But the diplomat, who declined to be named because he is not authorized by his government to speak on record, said the rebel leader's death in battle or by suicide would make him a martyr to inspire future generations.

Over the past three decades, Prabhakaran has turned a small band of barely armed separatists from the Tamil minority into one of the world's most feared guerrilla groups.

The United States and India have branded the chubby 54-year-old guerrilla leader a ruthless terrorist and accuse him of running a death cult. The **Tamil Tigers** have been blamed in scores of suicide bombings and the assassinations of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa.

Prabhakaran once commanded a de facto state across much of northern Sri Lanka and parts of the east, complete with its own tax system, police force and courts. His guerrilla force reportedly earned up to \$300US million a year from expatriates and its extensive arms and drug smuggling operations.

But in recent months, the government overran his administrative capital at Kilinochchi, captured much of the rebel-held territory and trapped his fighters _ and an estimated 250,000 civilians _ in a small area in the northern jungles.

On Monday, the army announced it had captured Prabhakaran's main hideout _ a two-storey, air-conditioned bunker 15 metres underground.

Tamil Tiger commander's fate a mystery as rebellion crumbles in Sri Lanka

Photos posted on a government website showed a dark, spartan enclosure with narrow, whitewashed hallways, white tiled floors, and furnished with a refrigerator, cabinet, portable cooking stove, single bed and cane chairs. A painting of three tigers decorated one wall.

It was equipped with surveillance cameras, generators, satellite dishes and insulin apparently for use by the diabetic rebel leader, the military said.

Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa said Prabhakaran was almost certainly in the jungle area still under rebel control _ probably in a bunker near the small town of Puthukkudiyiruppu.

But last month, army chief Lt.-Gen. Sarath Fonseka said Prabhakaran may have fled to South Africa. And police were reportedly on the lookout for him in Malaysia.

There has also been media speculation that Prabhakaran might have been injured or even killed.

In an interview with Australia's Special Broadcasting Service radio, a rebel leader who identified himself as Thileepan denied Prabhakaran had fled.

"That is ridiculous. No, he is with us ... He is with the people," he said, with the sound of artillery fire booming in the background.

For years Prabhakaran was a shadowy presence. He reportedly destroyed all photos of himself, leaving police referring to an outdated school picture in their hunt for him.

Pictures have recently surfaced on the Internet of the mustachioed leader meeting with commandos before suicide missions or laying wreaths at the funerals of fighters. He held a rare news conference in 2002, but went underground when a ceasefire officially broke down three years ago.

Prabhakaran grew up on the Jaffna peninsula, the Tamil minority's cultural heartland, amid seething discontent with the government. Many Tamils felt their culture and rights had been marginalized by a succession of governments dominated by the Sinhalese majority.

He rose to prominence after killing the mayor of Jaffna in 1975 and used his new militant credentials to create the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The militants waged increasingly brazen attacks against the government in the north, capped by a 1983 ambush that killed 13 soldiers and sparked anti-Tamil riots in Colombo that left an estimated 2,000 people dead.

That violence attracted many Tamils to his call for a separate state, and rebel recruitment shot up.

His top fighters were given cyanide to swallow in case of capture, ordered to abstain from sex and cut all personal ties so they can dedicate themselves to the fight.

Prabhakaran, who is married with three children, has largely orchestrated the violence from fortified underground bunkers rather than the front lines. He consolidated power by killing rivals and tolerating no dissent.

"I am like a spider at the centre of the web," he told Indian journalist Anita Pratap in 1990.

He reportedly agreed to a peace accord signed by India and Sri Lanka in the late 1980s, but when Indian peacekeepers arrived, the rebels attacked and drove them out. In 1991, a **female** suicide bomber reportedly sent by Prabhakaran killed Gandhi at an election rally in India.

Though the rebels joined in several rounds of peace talks, the government was never willing to accede to Prabhakaran's demand for a separate nation.

Prabhakaran said he could not accept anything less.

Tamil Tiger commander's fate a mystery as rebellion crumbles in Sri Lanka

"Thousands of my boys have laid down their lives for Eelam," he told Pratap. "Their death cannot be in vain."

Load-Date: February 4, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lankan rebel leader's fate a mystery

The Associated Press

February 3, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 958 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

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One Western diplomat said that if Prabhakaran were to flee, it would be viewed as cowardice by his followers, ending Tamil militancy for a generation. But the diplomat, who declined to be named because he is not authorized by his government to speak on record, said the rebel leader's death in battle or by suicide would make him a martyr to inspire future generations.

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Sri Lankan rebel leader's fate a mystery

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Sri Lankan rebel leader's fate a mystery

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On the Net:

The Ministry of Defense, Public Security, Law and Order: <http://www.nationalsecurity.lk>

Load-Date: February 4, 2009

End of Document

International briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

February 9, 2009 Monday

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Section: A; Pg. 6

Length: 996 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Body

Bangladesh ferries collide, killing 10 DHAKA, Bangladesh - A ferry boat sank Sunday after colliding with a larger ferry on a river in eastern Bangladesh, killing 10 women and children, police said. Most of the 50 passengers aboard the smaller ferry were able to swim to shore after the accident in Brahmanbaria district's Titas River, local police Chief Lehajuddin said. Three people were rescued from the river and were being treated at a local hospital. But 10 others - all women and children - died, he said.

Lehajuddin, who uses only one name, said the cause of the accident was still being investigated. He said the larger ferry, which was not damaged, fled after the collision. Former Iranian president to run again TEHRAN, Iran - Former Iranian President Mohammed Khatami declared Sunday he would run again for president, setting the stage for a major political showdown in coming months between the popular reformist leader - who made dialogue with the West a centerpiece of his eight years in office - and the country's ruling hard-liners. Khatami's candidacy poses a serious challenge to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, whose mixture of anti-Western rhetoric and fiery nationalism sharply contrasts with Khatami's tempered tones and appeals for global dialogue. "I seriously announce my candidacy in the next (presidential) election," Khatami announced Sunday after a meeting with his supporters. Yemen releases 170 al-Qaida suspects SAN'A, Yemen - Yemen released 170 men it had arrested on suspicion of having ties to al-Qaida, security officials said Sunday, two weeks after the terror group announced that Yemen had become the base of its activities for the whole Arabian peninsula. The announcement also comes as government forces say they are poised to sweep through the northern city of Marib to combat an entrenched al-Qaida presence that includes both Yemenis and Saudis. The officials who announced the release spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not allowed to speak to the press. Sri Lanka military: 15,000 flee war zone COLOMBO, Sri Lanka - More than 15,000 civilians have fled Sri Lanka's northern war zone over the past three days, an official said Sunday, as government forces appeared poised to crush the separatist Tamil Tigers. Meanwhile, attacks in the north killed at least 21 rebels over the weekend, according to the military. The military's relentless offensive in recent months has almost routed the rebels, virtually ending their 25-year war for a separate Tamil nation in the Sinhalese-majority country. Swiss canton ends foreign tax breaks ZURICH - Zurich voters broke with long-standing Swiss policy Sunday by ending tax breaks for wealthy foreigners like the American singer Tina Turner and the Russian billionaire Viktor Vekselberg. The canton, which includes the exclusive "Gold Coast" along Lake Zurich, voted 52.9 percent to do away with the privileges. The rules will apply only to cantonal (state) and community taxes, not to federal taxes. German leader calls pope about bishop BERLIN - The German chancellor called the pope Sunday, days after she demanded he clarify the Vatican's stance on the Holocaust after it lifted the excommunication of a bishop who denies that 6 million Jews were killed. Chancellor Angela Merkel initiated the "good and constructive conversation" and it was characterized by "common deep concern about the perpetual warning of the Shoah for humanity," said a joint statement with German-born Pope Benedict XVI. Shoah is a

International briefs

Hebrew word for the Holocaust. On Tuesday, Merkel made a rare public demand for clarification after the Vatican lifted the excommunication of traditionalist British Bishop Richard Williamson, who has said he does not believe any Jews were gassed during the Holocaust. U.N. official tours Congo GOMA, Congo - The top U.N. diplomat for humanitarian affairs toured a hospital and a refugee camp Sunday in northeastern Congo, where aid groups say 900 civilians have been slaughtered since Christmas by marauding Ugandan rebels. After visiting camps for displaced people around the provincial capital of Goma, U.N. humanitarian chief John Holmes flew to the northern town of Bunia, said Sylvie van den Wildenberg, a spokeswoman for the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Congo. Pirates release boat TOKYO - Somali pirates released a Chinese fishing vessel and its multinational crew Sunday from nearly three months of captivity, as Japan announced plans to dispatch two destroyers to the African coast to protect its commercial vessels from piracy, reports said. Chinese naval ships were escorting the fishing boat, the Tianyu No. 8, to safe waters after its release, China's official Xinhua News Agency reported. Its 24-member crew - 15 mainland Chinese, one Taiwanese, one Japanese, three Filipinos and four Vietnamese - were safe but would receive medical examinations, it said. Video shows killing DERA ISMAIL KHAN, Pakistan - A graphic video delivered to The Associated Press on Sunday appeared to show the execution of a Polish engineer by Pakistani militants who had held him captive for more than four months. The seven-minute execution video appears to show the Polish hostage, Piotr Stanczak, sitting on the floor flanked by two masked men. Off camera, a militant briefly engages him in conversation before three others behead him. One of the hooded men then addresses the camera, blaming Pakistan for the execution for not agreeing to their demands to release Taliban prisoners. Arrest warrants issued ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar - Authorities in Madagascar issued arrest warrants for those held responsible for political violence, a Cabinet minister said Sunday, a day after security forces killed at least 25 people during anti-government protests. In a radio address, Minister for Internal Security Desire Rasolofomanana said the warrants were for "those responsible for the unrest and looting." He did not say who was named in the warrants or how many had been issued.

Load-Date: February 9, 2009

End of Document

The AFP Asia news agenda

Agence France Presse -- English

June 6, 2008 Friday 2:33 AM GMT

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Length: 997 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, June 6 2008

Body

Duty Editor: Kevin McElderry

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

ASIA NEWS HIGHLIGHTS ON FRIDAY:

- + SKorea's Lee vows reform to overcome crisis
- + Aid experts work in Myanmar cyclone zone
- + Warning over China's dangerous 'quake lake'

SEOUL: President Lee Myung-Bak vows to push ahead with reform as he faces a leadership crisis amid growing protests over plans to resume US beef imports (SKOREA-POLITICS-TRADE-BEEF)

YANGON: Covering as Southeast Asian aid experts get to work in Myanmar's devastated Irrawaddy Delta after flying in on a mission to assess cyclone damage one month on (MYANMAR-CYCLONE)

-- Reporting as seven helicopters for the World Food Programme leave Bangkok for Myanmar at 0400 GMT, beginning a mission to ferry relief supplies into the delta, after days of delays (MYANMAR-CYCLONE-HELICOPTERS)

JUYUAN, China: Coverage of the aftermath of China's deadly earthquake, with authorities warning a dangerously swollen quake-induced lake could burst and flood downstream (CHINA-QUAKE)

-- Moving a piece on the struggle for justice by parents in the quake zone who lost their children (CHINA-QUAKE-SCHOOLS-CORRUPTION)

OTHER STORIES:

BANGKOK: Bollywood hits Bangkok for Indian cinema's annual awards this weekend, kicking off with superstars Amitabh Bachchan, Abhishek Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai premiering their new film "Sakar Raj" here at 1230 GMT (ENTERTAINMENT-INDIA-FILM-AWARDS)

The AFP Asia news agenda

-- Golf. The Bangkok Airways Open at Koh Samui (GOLF-ASIA-THA)

COLOMBO: Reporting on latest unrest in Sri Lanka where security forces are fighting Tamil Tigers (SRILANKA-UNREST)

DHAKA: Covering after police arrest more than 10,000 people over the past week in an anti-crime swoop they say is aimed at improving security ahead of planned elections (BANGLADESH-POLITICS-ARRESTS)

HANOI: Monitoring Global Summit of Women, an international forum connecting business women, government leaders and experts (VIETNAM-ECONOMY)

-- HUE, Vietnam: Hue Arts Festival in former royal capital (VIETNAM-ARTS-FESTIVAL-HUE)

ISLAMABAD: Following developments after Al-Qaeda claimed to be behind a deadly suicide bombing of the Danish embassy (PAKISTAN-ATTACKS-DENMARK)

JAKARTA: Monitoring police crackdown on a hardline Islamic group following its attack on a religious tolerance rally (INDONESIA-POLITICS-RELIGION-ISLAM)

KABUL: Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi due to visit Kabul amid concerns peace talks with militants will see more attacks in Afghanistan. Qureshi to brief media around 0630 GMT (AFGHANISTAN-UNREST-PAKISTAN)

-- Moving a story about the attraction for farmers of illegally growing opium rather than switching to wheat, despite soaring prices for the commodity (AFGHANISTAN-DRUGS-FOOD-ECONOMY)

KATHMANDU: Reporting on political wrangling over power-sharing in a new government after parties agreed to abolish the monarchy and set up a republic (NEPAL-POLITICS-MAOISTS)

-- Reporting moves of king Gyanendra after the government agrees to let him move into a former royal hunting lodge (NEPAL-POLITICS-ROYALS)

KUALA LUMPUR: Reporting on the fallout from an overnight 41 percent fuel price hike, with opposition groups planning to hold further protest rallies (MALAYSIA-ENERGY-OIL-INFLATION)

NEW DELHI: Reporting as the Indian government faces angry protests over a move to hike fuel prices, after general strikes orchestrated by its communist allies paralysed three states (INDIA-ECONOMY-ENERGY-OIL)

-- Reporting on latest weekly inflation figures which are heading close to double-digit level, triggering expectations of more monetary tightening that could slow economic growth (INDIA-ECONOMY-INFLATION)

-- Monitoring India's annual monsoon, crucial to millions of farmers and the health of the economy, on the southwest coast INDIA-ECONOMY-WEATHER-MONSOON)

-- Moving a feature about the growing taste for wine in India where prohibitive taxes ensure Indian wines dominate the market (LIFESTYLE-INDIA-ECONOMY-WINE)

SINGAPORE: Reporting on world oil trading near 128 dollars in Asia (COMMODITIES-ENERGY-OIL-ASIA-PRICE)

SYDNEY: Moving advancer on visit by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to Japan amidst concerns he is shifting focus from long-standing ally to China (AUSTRALIA-JAPAN-DIPLOMACY-RUDD)

-- Covering developments after 70 arrested in Internet child porn crackdown (AUSTRALIA-INTERNET-CRIME-CHILD-PORNOGRAPHY)

TAIPEI: Reporting on Asia's biggest computer fair (LIFESTYLE-TAIWAN-IT-SHOW)

The AFP Asia news agenda

TOKYO: Following reaction as Japan announces a resumption of bilateral talks with North Korea looking to establish bilateral relations (NKOREA-NUCLEAR-WEAPONS-JAPAN)

-- Following as Japan's parliament passes a landmark resolution recognising the Ainu as an indigenous people. Lower house session to open at 0400 GMT (JAPAN-NATIVE-RIGHTS)

-- Turkish President Abdullah Gul holds summit with Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda starting at 0900 GMT (JAPAN-TURKEY-DIPLOMACY)

-- International Energy Agency executive director Nobuo Tanaka meets the press at 0200 GMT in Tokyo ahead of weekend talks of the Group of Seven energy ministers in northern Japan (G8-ENERGY-IEA-JAPAN)

-- Japanese adventurer Yuichiro Miura, who scaled Mount Everest at age 75, holds a news conference at 0500 GMT on his return home (JAPAN-EVEREST-CLIMBING-SENIOR)

-- The dollar holds steady in sluggish Asian trade as market participants stay on the sidelines ahead of a key monthly US payroll report (FOREX-ASIA)

-- Japanese share prices rise 1.55 percent in morning trade after a rally on Wall Street on corporate news and a weaker yen, which benefits exporters (STOCKS-JAPAN)

-- Football. Japanese and foreign stars including former Bolton midfielder Hidetoshi Nakata, who is rumoured to be considering coming out of retirement, hold news conference at 0530 GMT ahead of charity match (FBL-JPN-ASIA-NAKATA)

-- Volleyball: The men's final volleyball Olympic qualifying round resumes after a rest day. Action starts at 0235 GMT (VOLLEY-OLY-2008-MEN)

WELLINGTON: Rugby Union: Previewing Saturday's Test match between the All Blacks and Ireland (RUGBYU-NZL-IRL)

afp

Load-Date: June 6, 2008

Highlights of the AAP National Wire at 14:45

AAP Newsfeed

March 5, 2009 Thursday 2:47 PM AEST

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Section: DOMESTIC NEWS

Length: 984 words

Body

CANBERRA - An alcohol harm-reduction fund should be established to manage money raised from the government's controversial alcopops tax hike, the Australian Greens say. (Alcopops)

CANBERRA - Health groups want the government to ban alcohol companies from advertising through products like potato chips and pizzas. (Alcohol)

ALCOPOPS WRAP to come

CANBERRA - Defence Minister Joel Fitzgibbon sets off to East Timor on Thursday for a two-day visit featuring top level talks with East Timorese officials. (Timor Aust)

CANBERRA - Quarantine officials won't be bought off by Filipino banana growers that could send disease-ridden bananas into Australia, Agriculture Minister Tony Burke says. (Bananas Burke)

CANBERRA - Rudd meeting with S Korea Pres this afternoon and expected to do brief doorstep. (SKOREA AUST to come, with pics)

CANBERRA - In concrete jungles around the world, it usually seems to be women who are caught complaining about the shortage of male suitors. (Moth)

CANBERRA - Independent Senator Nick Xenophon says he will work to change competition law to give small petrol retailers a better deal in their competition with big business. (Petrol Xenophon)

SYDNEY - The owner of an independent Sydney petrol station discounting fuel to less than 50 cents a litre says losing income is the only way to get the government's attention. (Petrol NSW Update)

SYDNEY - Employers of fashion models under the age of 16 must first gain permission from the NSW Children's Guardian or face hefty fines under legislation introduced to state parliament this week. (Models)

SYDNEY - A teenager has been charged with assaulting a teacher and causing damage at a school in Sydney's west, police say. (School)

SYDNEY - A pedestrian bridge has collapsed onto the New England Highway north of Newcastle, leaving four people with minor injuries, police say. (Collapse)

SYDNEY - Undercover officers intercepted 2,000 ecstasy pills bound for Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras this weekend, police say. (MardiGras Ecstasy)

SYDNEY - Broadcaster Alan Jones is still the undisputed king of radio, easily taking top spot in the first Sydney radio ratings survey of the year. (Ratings NSW, with Factbox)

SYDNEY - A pedestrian bridge has collapsed onto the New England Highway north of Newcastle, leaving four people with minor injuries, police say. (Collapse) Update to come

SYDNEY - Eric Bana more than matched it with Hollywood comedians Seth Rogan and Adam Sandler on their new movie Funny People, even teaching them a bit about Aussie Rules. (Rogan Bana)

SYDNEY - Country music star Troy Cassar-Daley says he's hoping to host a new TV show profiling unique Australian characters living in remote regions. (Daley, with pix, to come)

HighLights of the AAP National Wire at 14:45

MELBOURNE - The head of Victoria's Bushfire Reconstruction Authority has defended the length of time it is taking for residents to return to the bushfire-devastated town of Marysville. (Bushfires Vic Marysville) Wrap to come

MELBOURNE - Two in three Victorian workers screened for preventable diseases have been referred to doctors, in a world-first program to save lives through workplace intervention. (Health Vic)

MELBOURNE - A Supreme Court judge hearing the case against three men charged with supporting the Tamil Tigers has "bad vibes" about the influence the terrorist attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team in Pakistan could have on a jury (Tamil Vic) to come.

MELBOURNE - A Melbourne high school teacher who had a relationship with a 15-year-old student has been spared jail. (Rafei) Wrap to come

MELBOURNE - A motorist who hit and killed a Melbourne chef as he crossed a busy restaurant strip has been sentenced to a maximum of three years and nine months' jail. (Paranort) Wrap to come

MELBOURNE - An anonymous tip-off led police to an unusual reptilian discovery southeast of Melbourne on Thursday - two boa constrictors. (Boas)

MELBOURNE - Victoria's alpine region has recorded snowfall in the early hours of Thursday, just days after the state was on extreme fire alert. (Snow Vic)

BRISBANE - Queensland Health will step up its bid on Thursday to contain a mini epidemic of measles on the Sunshine Coast. (Measles)

BRISBANE - A woman is recovering in hospital after being bitten by a death adder near Cairns in north Queensland. (Snake)

ADELAIDE - A man has been charged with the stabbing murder of a woman and her two-year-old son in Adelaide. (Bodies 2nd Update, Wrap to come)

ADELAIDE - South Australians will go to the polls on March 20 next year, Premier Mike Rann says. (PollSA)

ADELAIDE - A Snowtown killer whose victims included his stepbrother and half-brother will get married in jail later this year. (Snowtown)

ADELAIDE - Serious and repeat drink drivers will have to fit alcohol interlocks to their vehicles under laws passed by South Australian parliament. (Drunk)

ADELAIDE - Story on International Women's Day, to be held Sunday.

PERTH - Bev Gallop, the wife of former West Australian premier Geoff Gallop, has been remembered as a warm and generous woman who had an exceptional talent for art. (Gallop)

PERTH - A drug disposal bin will be trialled at a West Australian music festival in what police believe is an Australian first. (Drugs)

PERTH - A film documentary of brave indigenous women fighting the scourge of liquor in a West Australian community has had its premiere at the United Nations in New York. (Yajilarra)

PERTH - A man has been charged with the murder of an itinerant worker, despite his body never being found. (Wilful Update (pix available)) WRAP to come

AUCKLAND - Fiji's military ruler Frank Bainimarama has thumbed his nose at the Commonwealth and told it to kick his country out of its ministerial group. (Fiji Commonwealth Update)

LOS ANGELES - Hollywood stars often speak fondly of Australia after visiting on promotional trips or vacations. (US Zellweger)

Load-Date: March 5, 2009

Government wants to control the people going into conflict areas in Sri Lanka; SRI LANKA: Clamp Down on International NGOs

NoticiasFinancieras

August 11, 2008 Monday

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Length: 1388 words

Byline: Feizal Samath

Body

The government wants to control the number of people going into sensitive (conflict) areas due to negative stories appearing in the media overseas," said a foreign humanitarian worker who declined to be named. "We are careful not to criticise the government. There is a kind of subtle censorship. We are careful what we say or visas could get cancelled," she said.

President Mahinda Rajapakse's nationalist government has always frowned on the activities of INGOs, particularly those promoting peace or involved in humanitarian work in war-torn areas where rebels control territory.

Since the December 2004 tsunami, which laid waste to a large part of this island country's coastline, there has been a proliferation of INGOs promising to bring relief to the survivors. Efforts to bring order to these humanitarian agencies have been complicated by intensified fighting between government troops and Tamil rebels over the last two years.

Both United Nations agencies and NGOs have raised the issue of civilian casualties from the war coming on top of tsunami resettlement issues, especially in the Tamil-dominated north and east, annoying the government.

In a report released in June, the United Nations Economic and Social Council said that the war was seriously hampering tsunami reconstruction work. "The most significant challenge to the recovery process in Sri Lanka is ongoing civil conflict. Escalating violence over the past few years has set back reconstruction efforts in the north and east of the country, though it continues largely apace in the south," stated the report.

The ministry of internal administration, responsible for registration and control of NGOs, justifies the 'streamlining' of procedures relating to the grant of visas to expatriates working with NGOs, saying that a large influx of expatriates for 'reconstruction and rehabilitation work' has made the issue of visas complicated.

Gomin Dayasiri, a prominent lawyer, told IPS in an interview that the restrictions on foreign workers are essentially because of a few NGOs. "The new rules on NGO personnel are the consequence of a cause-and-effect syndrome created by a stupid few in the NGO mainstream which has unfortunately discredited the silent and substantial contribution made by many in the NGO community in our society."

Dayasiri, who insists he is not anti-NGO or a nationalist as perceived to be, says a 'visible and vocal' few tend to equate the terrorists with freedom fighters and those who fight terrorism as vultures of human rights.

"With the war going against the terrorists now, they (some NGOs) are even worse than terrorists. At least the terrorists fought for a cause they believed in for which they were prepared to sacrifice their lives. The NGO vocalists

Government wants to control the people going into conflict areas in Sri Lanka SRI LANKA : Clamp Down on International NGOs

sang for their supper for which they were rewarded and now the entire NGO community has to suffer being regulated. The bottom line is that the nationalists have now set rules for the internationalists for being unbalanced and getting their equation bizarre," he said.

Recently, Dayasiri appeared for the Sri Lanka army in a court case to defend it against accusations that it was responsible for the massacre of 17 local aid workers attached to an INGO. On Aug. 6, 2007, 17 workers, including four women, were found shot dead in the office of Paris-based humanitarian group, Action Contre la Faim (ACF), in the eastern town of Muttur, soon after the army had captured the town from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

While the government said the LTTE was responsible for the massacre, the rebels and human rights activists have been pointing fingers at the army.

The issue came into the international spotlight with several western governments backing the ACF's call for an independent investigation. In June this year, ACF pulled out of a presidential probe into the killings, saying it was disappointed with the way legal proceedings were going and "the blatant lack of will of the Sri Lankan government to establish the truth";

"ACF sees the launching of an international inquiry as the only reliable means for identifying the perpetrators," ACF executive director Francois Danel said.

Earlier to that on Mar. 31 the International Independent Group of Eminent Persons (IIGEP), headed by former Indian chief justice P. N. Bhagwati, withdrew from its watchdog role. It charged the presidential probe with failing to investigate 16 high-profile incidents of rights violations in 2006 and 2007 and falling short of international norms and standards. The IIGEP had experts from 11 countries: India, France, Indonesia, the U.S., the Netherlands, Bangladesh, Canada, Cyprus, Britain, Australia and Japan.

The new rules governing NGOs will not apply to U.N. agencies and accredited foreign organisations that work with the government. Sri Lankan authorities, in addition to tightening rules for expatriate workers, also want to reduce the number of expatriates hired by NGOs.

The maximum period of visa for an expatriate worker is three years as against earlier when the period could be extended. The rules permit the head and deputy to be expatriate appointments, but organisations have been told they must advertise all other positions locally and only if unavailable, would an expatriate be permitted to fill these positions. "The concept here is that NGOs should recruit locally as far as possible and should only find expertise for the posts which cannot be filled locally due to unavailability of suitable candidates," the regulation says.

Expatriate workers must be cleared by the defence ministry; their dependants or family members cannot work; and their visa is invalid once they quit the job before the work contract ends. There have been many cases, in the past, of expatriate workers changing jobs and remaining in the country for periods of up to eight to 10 years.

The head of a peace-promoting INGO says many of these restrictions have been in place over the past year but on an ad hoc basis. "In that sense this is welcome because it brings these together and streamlines them into a formal process," he said, adding that the situation during the tsunami was 'very unruly' and complex for local authorities.

"There were many problems caused by foreign NGO workers and I believe the concern of government over the large number of expatriate workers, to some extent, is justified," he said. In some cases the number of foreign workers per INGO jumped to 50 from just four after the tsunami. However, he said, the challenge for NGOs is not in the rules but whether officials would make it more difficult for expatriates to operate with all this bureaucracy and procedures. The process of appeals of rejection of visa applications has also not been clearly laid out, he said

Government wants to control the people going into conflict areas in Sri Lanka SRI LANKA : Clamp Down on International NGOs

U.N. workers are permitted to stay on four-year visas which may be extended in exceptional cases. But a senior U.N. worker said the rules would affect dozens of foreign volunteers who work for U.N. Volunteers (UNV). She said the government was also making it difficult for expatriates to work in war-devastated areas, particularly sections of the northern Wanni region which are controlled by the rebels. "There is too much paper-work, time and energy involved in bringing down expatriates and then more rules to get them into conflict areas," she added.

The proposed new law governing NGOs is the culmination of an exercise last year by a parliamentary committee that has been probing NGOs and their activities. Included in its probe were details from NGOs of journalists, politicians, government and private sector officers who have directly or indirectly benefited through NGOs.

Last year NGOs operating in conflict areas were accused in the media of funding Tamil rebels. Among these groups were Save the Children, Britain, World Food Programme (WFP) and the Swiss-based ZOA. They have all vigorously denied the allegations and said humanitarian aid was meant for affected people.

In some cases, the parliamentary committee cancelled or did not extend the visas of 40 foreign workers for security reasons -- implying suspicion of links with the Tigers.

There are more than 1,000 registered NGOs in Sri Lanka, with at least one percent of that number being INGOs. © 2008 NoticiasFinancieras - IPS - All rights reserved

Load-Date: August 11, 2008

End of Document

Backgrounder: Terror attacks in South Asia in recent years

Xinhua General News Service

March 30, 2009 Monday 10:55 PM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 637 words

Dateline: HONG KONG March 30

Body

At least 25 people were killed and 90 others injured when unidentified gunmen attacked a police training school in eastern Pakistan city of Lahore on Monday.

The following are major terrorist attacks in the South Asian countries in recent years:

March 27, 2009 (Pakistan):

A suicide bomb attack on a mosque northwestern Pakistan's Khyber tribal agency where hundreds of people gathered for prayers killed at least 50 people and injured more than 100.

March 3, 2009 (Pakistan):

A bus carrying Sri Lankan cricket team was attacked by gunmen on its way to Lahore, Pakistan for a match. At least seven persons including five policemen were killed and eight persons including six players were wounded.

Feb. 9, 2009 (Sri Lanka):

A **female** suicide bomber from the **LTTE** detonated explosives in a crowd of soldiers and refugees in northern Sri Lanka. Twenty-eight people including eight civilians were reportedly killed and at least 90 others were wounded.

Nov. 26 - 29, 2008 (India):

Armed terrorists opened fire at eight different sites in a coordinated attack in Mumbai. They wielded automatic weapons and attacked locations including a train station, hotels, restaurants, a police station, and a hospital. 173 were confirmed dead and more than 300 were wounded.

Oct. 30, 2008 (India):

A series of 13 blasts occurred in and around Guwahati in the northeastern state of Assam, killing at least 70 and wounding more than 300.

Sept. 20, 2008 (Pakistan):

A dump truck filled with explosives detonated in front of the Marriott Hotel in the Pakistani capital of Islamabad, killing at least 54 including five foreigners, injuring at least 266.

Background: Terror attacks in South Asia in recent years

Aug. 21, 2008 (Pakistan):

Two suicide bombers blew themselves up at the gates of the Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF) in the high security cantonment town of Wah, around 30 km from capital Islamabad, killing at least 70 persons in what was described as the deadliest attack on a military installation in the history of Pakistan. The Tehrik-i- Taliban Pakistan claimed responsibility for the attack.

July 7, 2008 (Afghanistan):

A suicide bomber drove a car full of explosives into the gates of the Indian embassy in Kabul, killing 41 people and injuring 141. Five embassy personnel were killed - India's defense attache, a senior diplomat and two security guards - as well as an Afghan man.

Dec. 27, 2007 (Pakistan) :

Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto was shot at after a political rally at a park in the eastern Pakistani city of Rawalpindi and a suicide bomb was detonated immediately following the shooting. She was declared dead at the Rawalpindi General Hospital. At least 23 other people were killed by the bombing.

Nov. 7, 2007 (Afghanistan):

A suicide bomb blast killed more than 100 people, including six parliamentarians in northern Afghan province of Baglan. Many school children were among the dead as they were welcoming parliamentarians at gate of a sugar factory.

Oct. 18, 2007 (Pakistan):

At least 139 people were killed and more than 387 wounded in the southern Pakistani port city of Karachi in a suicide bombing near a motorcade carrying former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who returned to Pakistan earlier in the day after eight years of self-imposed exile.

Aug. 25, 2007 (India):

At least 42 people were killed and some 50 others injured in three explosions in the southern city of Hyderabad, India.

Aug. 21, 2004 (Bangladesh):

In Dhaka, more than 20 people were killed and hundreds of others injured in grenade attacks on a rally of the then opposition party Awami League led by Sheikh Hasina. Hasina, now the prime minister, narrowly survived in the attacks but her eyes and ear were injured.

Load-Date: March 31, 2009

Nepal Maoists anti-Hindu: Yogi

Hindustan Times

April 27, 2008 Sunday 4:22 PM EST

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Length: 626 words

Byline: Rajesh Kumar Singh Hindustan Times

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

NEW DELHI, India, April 27 -- LEADERS OF the World Hindu Federation International (WHFI) on Saturday gave a call for restoration of monarchy in Nepal. The leaders said the Hindu organisations active in India and Nepal would join hands to launch a movement under the leadership of King Gyanendra to safeguard the rights of the king in the emerging political scenario in Nepal.

Inaugurating the general council meeting of the World Hindu Federation International (WHFI), BJP MP from Gorakhpur Yogi Adityanath said Maoists managed to capture power on the barrel of the gun.

Terming the Maoists as anti-Hindu and anti-monarchy, Yogi said the new government in Nepal under the leadership of the Maoists would be a major threat to the security of India.

"China will now try to make inroads into Nepal and strengthen its base. Maoists have a close relationship with the Naxal organisations and will provoke them to capture political power in India," he said.

India and Nepal shared a close cultural affinity since ages but Maoist leaders were hell bent on breaking the relationship to serve their political interests, he added.

He said the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government had committed a blunder on Nepal and likened it to "one by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru with regard to Tibet".

He said anti-India and anti-Hindu rule in Nepal should be overthrown immediately. Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) international president Ashok Singhal said the interim government had declared Nepal a secular country.

"It was a conspiracy to destroy Hinduism in Nepal. Maoists plan to repeat what China has done in Tibet. For the greater interest of India as well as the Hindu community, Nepal should continue as a Hindu kingdom," he said.

"We will have to take to the streets and even lay down our lives to safeguard the rights of the king. The Hindu leaders should form a Hindu Morcha to continue the agitation. If the king remains in power, the rights of the Hindus would be automatically safeguarded," he said.

Former Union Minister Subramaniam Swamy said, "We are concerned as the Hindu community is the target and the Maoists have decided to end monarchy. Maoists have a close relationship with Naxalites, Ulfa, LTTE and PWG. Jagat Guru Ramananad Haricharyaji, Mahant Surendranath and other Hindu religious leaders tooo condemned the Maoists and called for restoration of monarchy in Nepal.

Nepal Maoists anti-Hindu: Yogi

This sleepy town located 70 km from the Indo-Nepal border was virtually abuzz with activities since early morning on Saturday. Hundred of Nepalese crossed the border to take part in the general council meeting of World Hindu Federation (WHF) and to urge the Indian citizens to help them in the restoration of the monarchy. Large number of **women** accompanied by men dressed in the traditional Nepalese attire thronged the meeting place calling for the support of the King.

Former Chief of Royal Nepal Army General Bharat Kesar Singh who is also the international president of WHF led the Nepalese delegation. At the start of the session he read out the message of King Gyanendra to the people participating in the meet.

In his message, King said the people would work for strengthening of the Hinduism. The conference would work toward resolving the problem being faced by the people of Nepal and India. Singh said King Gyanendra was working for the strengthening of the democratic system in Nepal. King revived the Parliament and appointed the Prime Minister, he said, adding that the Maoists wanted to banish the king.

Singh charged it was due to the indifference of the UPA Government toward the political developments in Nepal that the influence of China was increasing in the Himalayan kingdom.

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Load-Date: April 27, 2008

Sri Lanka troops allegedly kill 30 in 'safe zone'

Associated Press Online

January 22, 2009 Thursday 6:56 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 643 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

The Sri Lankan military shelled a hospital and a village inside a government-declared "safe zone" for displaced families Thursday, killing at least 30 civilians, health officials said.

The assault was the deadliest attack on civilians in two years and underscored the rising concern for the hundreds of thousands of war refugees reportedly trapped in the conflict zone as the military closes in on the ethnic Tamil rebels' last stronghold in the northeast.

Health officials said at least 67 civilians were killed in shelling since Tuesday.

The military denied launching the attack on the "safe zone" and accused the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels of carrying out the assault themselves.

"If it has been hit and people have been injured, then definitely it is the LTTE. They are capable of this kind of thing," military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Independent accounts of the fighting are not available because journalists are barred from the war zone.

Meanwhile, the military captured a building the rebels had used as the main operations center in their fight against the advancing army, complete with detailed maps of troop deployments throughout the region, Nanayakkara said.

The rebels appeared to have set up a new center elsewhere before the army moved in, he said.

With the civil war escalating in recent months and the government pushing the insurgents into a shrinking slice of territory in the northeast, aid groups and diplomats have expressed fears over the safety of the civilians trapped in rebel-held territory.

In an effort to coax civilians to leave, the government dropped leaflets throughout the region Wednesday announcing the establishment of a "safe zone" on the edge of rebel-held territory that it would not attack. Civilians who gathered there would then be transferred across the front lines to safety, the military said.

But an hour after the leaflet drop, two shells hit a makeshift hospital located in a school in Vallipunam, a village inside the "safe zone," said Kandasamy Tharmakulasingham, a local health official. No one was injured in that attack, he told The Associated Press.

Sri Lanka troops allegedly kill 30 in 'safe zone'

The hospital and village were hit again Thursday morning in an attack so devastating that health officials had difficulty counting the mangled bodies, he said.

Moses Piratheepan, a 17-year-old boy who had been admitted to the hospital with a chest ailment, said he was having breakfast when the shelling started.

Three shells fell into his ward during the hourlong barrage, and he was hit by shrapnel in the back, he said.

"The hospital staff gave me first aid but could not transfer me to safety because the shells were falling," he told AP by telephone.

Dr. Thurairaja Varatharaja, the district's top health official, said the bodies of at least 30 people killed in the attack five of them hospital patients were brought to the morgue. Another 117 people 66 of them women and children were injured, he told the AP.

The shells came from the government-controlled area near the town of Oddusuddan, Varatharaja said.

At least 37 other civilians were killed in shelling on Tuesday and Wednesday, bringing the three day death toll to 67, he said. That figure only included bodies brought to the morgue; many others were so badly torn apart relatives buried them immediately, he said.

The barrage Thursday would mark the deadliest attack on civilians since the military shelled a school in the east in November 2006, killing more than 40 displaced people taking refuge in the building, human rights groups said.

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

Associated Press reporter Krishan Francis contributed to this report.

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Associated Press reporter Krishan Francis contributed to this report.

Load-Date: January 23, 2009

Canada's tolerance misplaced

The Calgary Herald (Alberta)

March 30, 2009 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: Q: QUERIES - QUIBBLES - QUIRKS; Pg. A11

Length: 985 words

Byline: Mahfooz Kanwar, For The Calgary Herald

Body

Canada's Immigration Minister Jason Kenney is getting flak from the usual suspects, but he deserves praise instead.

Recently, Kenney pointed out that while at a meeting in Toronto, members of Canada's Pakistani community called on him to make Punjabi one of Canada's official languages. It makes me angry that such an idea would enter the minds of my fellow and former countrymen, let alone express them to a Minister of the Crown.

A few months ago, I was dismayed to learn that Erik Millett, the principal of Belleisle School in Springfield, N. B., limited playing our national anthem because the families of a couple of his students objected to it.

As a social scientist, I oppose this kind of political correctness, lack of assimilation of new immigrants to mainstream Canada, hyphenated-Canadian identity, and the lack of patriotism in our great nation.

Increasingly, Canadians feel restricted in doing things the Canadian way lest we offend minorities. We cannot even say Merry Christmas without fear of causing offence. It is amazing that 77 per cent of the Canadian majority are scared of offending 23 per cent of minorities. We have become so timid that the majority cannot assert its own freedom of expression. We cannot publicly question certain foreign social customs, traditions and values that do not fit into the Canadian ethos of equality. Rather than encouraging new immigrants to adjust to Canada, we tolerate peculiar ways of doing things. We do not remind them that they are in Canada, not in their original homelands.

In a multicultural society, it is the responsibility of minorities to adjust to the majority. It does not mean that minorities have to to-tally amalgamate with the majority. They can practise some of their cultural traditions within their homes --their backstage behaviour. However, when outside of their homes, their front stage behaviour should resemble mainstream Canadian behaviour. Whoever comes to Canada must learn the limits of our system. We do not kill our daughters or other **female** members of our families who refuse to wear hijab, niqab or burka which are not mandated by the Qur'an anyway. We do not kill our daughters if they date the "wrong" men. A 17-year-old Sikh girl should not have been killed in British Columbia by her father because she was caught dating a Caucasian man.

We do not practise the dowry system in Canada, and do not kill our brides because they did not bring enough dowry. Millions of **female** fetuses are aborted every year in India, and millions of **female** infants have been killed by their parents in India and China. Thousands of brides in India are burned to death in their kitchens because they did not bring enough dowry into a marriage. Some 30,000 Sikhs living abroad took the dowries but abandoned their brides in India in 2005. This is not accepted in Canada.

Canada's tolerance misplaced

In some countries, thousands of women are murdered every year for family or religious honour. We should not hide behind political correctness and we should expose the cultural and religious background of these heinous crimes, especially if it happens in Canada. We should also expose those who bring their cultural baggage containing the social custom of female circumcision. I was shocked when I learned about two cases of this barbaric custom practised in St. Catharines, Ont. a few years ago.

I have said it on radio and television, have written in my columns in the Calgary Herald, and I have written in my latest book, Journey to Success, that I do not agree with the hyphenated identity in Canada because it divides our loyalties. My argument is that people are not forced to come to Canada and they are not forced to stay here. Those who come here of their own volition and stay here must be truly patriotic Canadians or go back.

I am a first-generation Canadian from Pakistan. I left Pakistan 45 years ago. I cannot ignore Pakistan, because it is the homeland of my folks, but my loyalty should be and is to Canada. I am, therefore, a proud Canadian, no longer a Pakistani-Canadian. I am a Canadian Muslim, not a Muslim Canadian.

I do not agree with those Canadians who engage in their fight against the system in their original countries on Canadian soil. They should go back and fight from within. For example, some of the Sikhs, Tamil Tigers, Armenians and others have disturbed the peace in Canada because of their problems back home. Recently, a low-level leader of MQM, the Mafia of Pakistan, came to Canada as a refugee and started to organize public rallies to collect funds for their cause in Pakistan. On July 18, 2007, the Federal Court of Canada ruled that MQM is a terrorist group led by London-based Altaf Hussain, their godfather. As a member in the coalition government of Pakistan, this terrorist group is currently collaborating with the Taliban in Pakistan. That refugee was deported back to Pakistan. Similarly, I dis-agree with newcomers who bring their religious baggage here. For example, Muslims are less than two per cent of the Canadian population, yet in 2004 and 2005, a fraction of them, the fundamentalists, wanted to bring sharia law to Canada. If they really want to live under sharia, they should go to the prison-like countries where sharia is practised.

I once supported multiculturalism in Canada because I believed it gave us a sense of pluralism and diversity. However, I have observed and experienced that official multiculturalism has encouraged convolution of the values that make Canada the kind of place people want to immigrate to in the first place.

Here, we stand on guard for Canada, not for countries we came from. Like it or not, take it or leave it, standing on guard only for Canada is our national maxim. Remember, O Canada is our national anthem which must not be disregarded by anybody, including the teacher in Springfield, N. B.

Mahfooz Kanwar, PHD, Is A Sociologist And An Instructor Emeritus At Mount Royal College.

Graphic

Photo: Mahfooz Kanwar ;

Load-Date: March 30, 2009

AFP Asia news agenda

Agence France Presse -- English

March 26, 2009 Thursday 2:34 AM GMT

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Length: 1095 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, March 26 2009

Body

Duty Editor: Claire Cozens

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

ASIA NEWS HIGHLIGHTS ON THURSDAY

- + NKorea 'places long-range missile on launch pad'
- + Taiwan ex-president Chen on trial for corruption
- + Thaksin supporters protest ouster of government

SEOUL/WASHINGTON/TOKYO: Following up reports that North Korea has placed its rocket on a launch pad in preparation for blast-off. Moving factbox on its missile arsenal (NKOREA-SKOREA-MILITARY-MISSILE)

TAIPEI: Full coverage as former president Chen Shui-bian goes on trial for corruption, the first of several charges that could see him jailed for life (TAIWAN-POLITICS-CORRUPTION-CHEN)

BANGKOK: Supporters of exiled former Thai premier Thaksin Shinawatra gather in front of Bangkok's government offices to protest the ouster of their allies from power (THAILAND-POLITICS)

-- OTHER STORIES --

BANGKOK: Release of United Nations pan-Asia Pacific survey on the economic, political, social and environmental threats posed for the region by the global financial crisis. To be released at 11:30am (0430GMT) Bangkok presser (FINANCE-ECONOMY-ASIA-UN-SURVEY)

-- Launch of populist economic stimulus scheme, giving cash handouts of 2,000 baht (47 US dollars) each to 5.5 million of the poorest Thais in a bid to boost domestic spending (THAILAND-ECONOMY)

BEIJING: Monitoring for reax after the Pentagon says China is developing "disruptive" technologies for nuclear, space and cyber warfare that are altering Asia's military balance (US-CHINA-MILITARY,REAX)

AFP Asia news agenda

- Reporting on developments after nearly 100 monks are detained in northwest China following a riot, in the first reported sign of major unrest in Tibetan-populated areas this year (CHINA-TIBET-50YEARS-UNREST)
- Monitoring situation on the China-North Korea border after two American journalists were detained for illegally entering the reclusive state from China earlier this week (NKOREA-US-MILITARY-MEDIA-CHINA)
- Monitoring situation on Hainan island, where three days of violence stemming from a feud between villages has left one dead and several injured (CHINA-UNREST)
- Australian foreign minister Stephen Smith on visit to China (CHINA-AUSTRALIA-DIPLOMACY)
- Following up on blocking of video-sharing website Youtube in China (US-CHINA-IT-INTERNET-CENSOR-YOUTUBE)
- Attending regular foreign ministry press briefing at 0645 GMT (CHINA-DIPLOMACY)

COLOMBO: Reporting on latest clashes between security forces and the Tamil Tigers as the government says its troops overran a hideout of the rebels' feared intelligence chief (SRILANKA-UNREST)

DILI: Moving a piece looking at media laws drafted for East Timor which have been criticised by local journalists, who say the proposed legislation could undermine the free press (TIMOR-MEDIA-LAW)

HANOI: European Chamber of Commerce at 0500 GMT holds discussion on the opening of Vietnam's retail sector to wholly foreign investments under the World Trade Organisation (VIETNAM-ECONOMY-WTO-BUSINESS)

HONG KONG: Results of port-to-telecoms conglomerate Hutchison Whampoa. Presser at 0700 GMT (HONGKONG-TELECOM-PROPERTY-COMPANY-EARNINGS-HUTCHISON)

-- Covering a talk by former chairman and CEO of American Insurance Group, Maurice Greenberg, at 0500 GMT (US-BANKING-FINANCE-AIG-GREENBERG-HONGKONG)

-- Government to release external trade statistics at 0830 GMT (HONGKONG-ECONOMY-TRADE)

JAKARTA: Markets closed for Nyepi public holiday (STOCKS-INDONESIA)

KABUL/ISLAMABAD: Following after the United States offers up to 11 million dollars in rewards to find and capture three Al-Qaeda militants operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan (US-AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN-QAEDA-REWARDS)

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's President Abdullah Ahmad Badawi delivers his last address to members of his ruling UMNO party at its annual meeting, before delegates vote for new leaders beginning 0400 GMT (MALAYSIA-POLITICS-UMNO)

MANILA: Philippine beer and food giant San Miguel Corp. announces its latest profits at about 0700 GMT (PHILIPPINES-EARNINGS-COMPANY-SANMIGUEL)

MUMBAI: Moving a feature on rural tourism that aims to connect stressed Indian city-dwellers with a slower and simpler rural lifestyle (LIFESTYLE-INDIA-TOURISM)

NEW DELHI: Following after Pakistan-based Islamist group Lashkar-e-Taiba warns of fresh attacks against troops amid warnings that a "large number" of guerrillas are poised to infiltrate Kashmir (INDIA-UNREST-KASHMIR)

-- Monitoring after a report says computer giant IBM plans to cut a "large number" of US employees in its business services unit and transfer their duties to India (US-INDIA-IT-COMPUTER-COMPANY-ECONOMY-CUTS-IBM)

-- Moving a piece ex-PIMPRI looking at what it is like to drive the Tata Nano, the world's cheapest car (INDIA-COMPANY-AUTO-TATA-NANO)

SEOUL: Watching efforts to secure the release of two female US journalists detained for an alleged illegal border crossing into North Korea (NKOREA-US-MILITARY-MEDIA)

SINGAPORE: Government releases manufacturing data for February at 0500 GMT (SINGAPORE-ECONOMY-OUTPUT)

-- Former British prime minister Tony Blair delivers a speech at a Singapore university at around 0400 GMT (SINGAPORE-BRITAIN-BLAIR)

-- Reporting on world oil prices in Asian trade (COMMODITIES-ENERGY-OIL-ASIA-PRICE)

SYDNEY: Australia's military launches an investigation into whether officers spied on the defence minister and tried to undermine him by leaking details of his ties to a China-born businesswoman (AUSTRALIA-POLITICS-MILITARY-ESPIONAGE)

-- Monitoring beaching of whales on Australia's west coast (AUSTRALIA-ANIMAL-WHALES)

-- Previewing global Earth Hour (CLIMATE-WARMING-AUSTRALIA-EARTHHOUR)

TOKYO: Outgoing Toyota president Katsuaki Watanabe announces sales of a new Crown sedan at 0430 GMT (JAPAN-ECONOMY-AUTO-TOYOTA)

-- Court ruling on a lawsuit filed by teachers who were disciplined for refusing to honour national anthem at school ceremonies (JAPAN-COURT-SCHOOL-ANTHEM)

-- Japanese share prices rose 0.51 percent in morning trade, tracking gains on Wall Street where upbeat housing and manufacturing data fuelled hopes of an economic recovery (STOCKS-JAPAN)

-- The dollar remained weaker against the euro in Asian trade as investors turned to riskier bets after a surprise improvement in US data hinted a possible easing in the recession (FOREX-ASIA)

-- Moving an article looking at how lovers of Japan's celebrated cherry blossoms say climate change is disturbing the balance of the delicate trees (JAPAN-CLIMATE-WEATHER-CULTURE)

WELLINGTON: New Zealand balance of payments deficit widens in year to December (NZEALAND-ECONOMY-CURRENT)

-- Cricket. First day of New Zealand v India second Test in Napier (CRICKET-NZL-IND)

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UPI NewsTrack TopNews

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Dateline: WASHINGTON, Feb. 3

Body

Suicide bomber hits Sri Lankan capital

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Feb. 3 (UPI) -- A **female** suicide bomber at a central rail terminal in Sri Lanka Sunday killed at least seven people and wounded nearly 100 others, officials said.

A military spokesperson said the woman blew herself up at the Colombo Fort rail terminal during the early afternoon, the Press Trust of India reported.

A grenade attack earlier Sunday killed several at a Colombo zoo.

Officials suspect the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, **LTTE**, are behind the attacks, despite no claim of responsibility from the group.

Rebels descend on Chadian capital

N'DJAMENA, Chad, Feb. 3 (UPI) -- Rebel fighters supported by neighboring Sudan seized parts of the Chadian capital N'Djamena as French troops tried to maintain control Sunday, officials said.

Thousands of rebel fighters descended on N'Djamena on the second day of fighting throughout the city.

The fighting prompted officials to evacuate nearly 400 foreigners to nearby Gabon, The Sunday Times of London reported.

Fighting overnight had subsided but officials said heavy weapons fire broke out near the presidential palace early Sunday morning, officials said.

Witnesses reported seeing French combat patrols flying overhead.

France remains officially neutral in the situation, though it expressed solidarity with the government of President Idriss Deby. Chad is a former French colony.

Sudan blames Chad for backing rebels in Darfur and the conflict prompted a delay in the deployment of EU-backed peacekeeping troops to the region.

Pet bombers had signs of Down syndrome

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3 (UPI) -- The bodies of two female suicide bombers who detonated themselves in a Baghdad pet market showed signs of Down syndrome, a top U.S. military official said.

Army Maj. Gen. Jeffery Hammond released photographs of the bodies of the two women to members of the media Saturday. Their facial characteristics were consistent with those afflicted with Down syndrome, The Los Angeles Times said Sunday.

"From what I see, it appears that the suicide bombers were not willing martyrs," Hammond added.

Official reports on the number of casualties vary and witness accounts of the Friday attack said a blond woman with no apparent signs of disability led at least one of the attacks.

The U.S. military said a mentally disabled suicide bomber detonated explosives January 2005 near a polling station in northwest Baghdad.

Clinton, McCain lead in New Jersey

TRENTON, N.J., Feb. 3 (UPI) -- Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican John McCain hold commanding leads in the New Jersey race for their parties' presidential nominations, a poll indicates.

Just two days ahead of the Garden State's primary, Clinton has a 14 point lead over Barack Obama in the Democrats' race, while McCain has a 32-point advantage over Mitt Romney on the Republican side, a Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey poll indicates.

The poll, released Sunday, indicates Clinton, the junior senator from New York, is the choice of half of likely Democratic primary voters, while 36 percent say they will vote for Obama, the junior senator from Illinois, Gannett reported.

"The Democratic electorate is volatile, with one-in-seven still undecided," said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

On the GOP ticket, Romney, the former Massachusetts governor, was the choice of 23 percent while 7 percent said they would vote for former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and 3 percent said they were planning to support Texas Rep. Ron Paul.

Murray said former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani's exit from the GOP race has been a boon for McCain.

"As expected, Giuliani supporters in New Jersey flocked to McCain, reflecting similar moderate views which are in line with most Republican voters here," he said.

Load-Date: February 4, 2008

Give it up, Hamza - you're too ugly

Sunday Tribune (South Africa)

March 02, 2008

e1 Edition

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Section: THE SUNDAY MAGAZINE; Pg. 13

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Body

Soweto was my generation's Baghdad. Every night, we saw pictures of it on the news, scenes of burly policemen cruising the streets in Chevrolets, shooting children for fun. Of mobs setting fire to buses and blocking the roads with burning tyres.

Now, though, just 20 years later, it's a bit like Surrey. There are well-kept lawns and lots of four-wheel-drive cars. There's a shopping centre and a forest of cranes building a stadium for the upcoming World Cup. Sure, there's Winnie Mandela's mansion, which sits like a bulletproofed blister in the middle of it all, and the "Education is good for you" graffiti doesn't quite ring true.

But I spent a day there last week and at no point did anyone put a tyre round my neck and set fire to it. I even had a jolly nice lunch under a jolly nice bougainvillea bush.

So what was it that brought about this transformation? Was it the legion of pop stars who sang about the iniquities of apartheid? Or was it the sanctions? Or could it be that pressure groups back then concentrated on real problems rather than the environment?

You do wonder, don't you? If the firebrands and the beardies would stop worrying about polar bears, could a similar transformation be achieved in Darfur and Zimbabwe and the mayoral office of London?

I'm afraid not. The main reason the war against apartheid was won is that Nelson Mandela looks good on a T-shirt.

I mean it. Look at all the successful freedom fighters and you'll note they all had one thing in common: a chiselled, romantic figurehead. Che Guevara, for instance, worked well as a screen print, and as a result the rebels still hold power in Cuba. And because Yasser Arafat looked like he'd just stepped out of that bar in Star Wars, Palestine is still a prison rather than a country.

Why do you suppose Northern Ireland is still part of the United Kingdom? Simple. The IRA was never going to win, because with Martin McGuinness and Gerry Adams they were represented on the world stage by a ginger and a minger.

The Basques have a similar problem. I met ETA's political leader a few years ago and he was about as charismatic as a root vegetable.

Give it up, Hamza - you're too ugly

Potty Pol had a great name but because his face didn't work on a badge his efforts in Cambodia were always going to come to naught. And it's the same story with Shining Path, the Tamil Tigers and Nazi Germany, for that matter. If Hitler had looked like Jim Morrison, who knows what shape the world might be in today?

This of course brings me neatly to the question of Muslim extremists. They are waging a preposterous campaign, trying to make all women in the world wear their headscarves back to front. And there's no doubt that if their international leader was Abu Hamza they wouldn't get anywhere.

One eye is good. Admiral Nelson pulled that off well and so does Gordon Brown. It makes you look sinister and interesting. Then there's the hook for a hand. That's inspirational. The stuff of Bond baddie legend. But I'm sorry, the rest is hopeless - especially that patchy and spartan face fungus, as threadbare as an aristocrat's carpet.

Unfortunately, however, Hamza is not the global figurehead. That role belongs to Osama Bin Laden, and let's cut to the chase on this, shall we? The man's a looker. Teaming those gentle and kind eyes with an ever-present AK47 keeps us guessing. He even manages to look good in a dress and that beard. Wow. It could so easily have come across as pantomime stupid, and yet you just want to run your hands through it. You imagine it's as soft as silk.

In short the man is cool. Cold, actually, because he's almost certainly dead, buried under tons of daisy-cut Afghan rock. And yet, despite this small drawback, the Americans will never be able to beat him unless they wake up, smell the coffee and elect Johnny Depp.

Mrs Clinton really won't do. Quite apart from the fact that she seems to be a strange mix of naked ambition and lunacy, she cannot hope for victory against the forces of evil and savagery with a name like Hillary.

Think of all the songs that have been written about girls. Gloria, Emily, Clair, Peggy Sue, Laura, Mary, Nikita. It's hard to think of any name that isn't in a song. Except one. And don't you think that says something? That in all of human history, no one has ever been moved enough by someone called Hillary to write a song about them.

Names matter as

much as looks. Boadicea was not called Joan, and as a result was able to whip up a sufficient frenzy among her followers that she defeated the Roman army and laid waste to Colchester. Joan of Arc, on the other hand, was called Joan and got burnt at the stake. It's not for nothing that God chose to call his only son Jesus rather than Roy or Nigel.

I'm being sensible here. Che Guevara realised that he needed the whole package to succeed - not just a beret and a wistful look - so he dropped the name his parents had given him: Ernesto. And Temujin only really got going after he rebranded himself as Genghis Khan.

There is some good news from all of this, though. One day Robert Mugabe will be sunk by his silly moustache, Kim Jong-il will be defeated by his own wardrobe and Jonathon Porritt will fail because even if he were called Clint Thrust, he sports the one thing that is guaranteed to end anyone's quest for global domination: a comb-over. - The Times, London

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India: In the name of 'Freedom'?

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

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

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 22 -- Cities in the north, south, east and west of India have been targeted in recent times, and bomb blasts have claimed several civilian lives. Except for the bogus claims of responsibility by obscure email addresses and terror groups, these attacks have not been conclusively investigated and their perpetrators have made a mockery of our state institutions and investigating and law enforcement agencies.

The first lesson we learn about terrorism is that it is a form of political violence, a strategy in support of a particular brand of nationalism. Clearly, terrorists in India have in the last few years established that their terrorism is different from the Palestinians, the LTTE, the Chechens, Afghanis or even the Iraqis. Their terrorism stands out not as a means to an end but an end in itself. There is something nihilistic about bombing men, women and children in mosques, temples and market places, without any clear sense of who is fighting whom or how the warring sides are constructed

Terrorism of the kinds we have witnessed in recent times cannot be attributed solely to groups operating from outside the country. The immediate response of governments that neighbouring states sponsor terrorism in India is a rhetoric we are not ready to believe anymore. Let's face it - they live amongst us, plan against us, and then surprise, maim and kill us with the lethality that gets worse with each attack.

And exactly what incentives do the Muslims have to speak out against those that are maligning their faith? None whatsoever! Communal divides have been deepening over the years, sometimes social forces responsible, but at most times the vote bank politics and devious political ideologies at play. The British initiated 'divide and rule' and today's politicians cutting across party lines brilliantly execute that policy

The influential American writer, H. L. Mencken had once said that "the average man (also woman) does not want to be free. He (and she) simply wants to be safe." That might be the overriding concern of most Indians at this point. The deeply entrenched communal divide will not be bridged in a day, least of all by hollow appeals to peace and communal harmony by politicians.

I believe that there is little option but to enact stringent anti-terror laws and enforce them in a just and efficient manner. Terrorists attack both Hindus in temples and Muslims in mosques. Terrorism, therefore, has no religion but electoral politics in India does, votes do. This government has always been worried about minority votes, over the lives of both minorities and the majority

Those negatively affected by the abuse of terrorism laws such as the POTA surely do not outnumber those that have to die in the absence of such laws? And what speak of a 'politically correct' government that repealed POTA

India : In the name of 'Freedom'?

(we know why), instead of working on its strengths and making it more efficient and responsive! It is like doing away with a car because one does not know how to drive it. After all there are no limits to what can and has been abused and misused - freedom, 'victimhood', religion, and most of all human life

To conclude, freedom entails responsibilities just as rights entail duties. Terrorists exercise freedom without responsibility and the state gives us neither freedom nor acts responsibly.

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