

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:32:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223508224

Documents (100)

1. [The 59 Division's solo battle in the thick jungles of 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

2. [Children, females among surrendered rebels: Sri Lankan military](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

3. [Ex-Tiger awaits '13-cylinder trip' -- EXCLUSIVE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

4. [Tamil demonstrators protest continues outside Oz PM's house](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

5. [Navy, Sea Tigers in fierce battle](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

6. [US, UN concerned over situation in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

7. [The largest hostage rescue mission in the world launched](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

8. [Tamils' London protest continues](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

9. [Hospital shelled in Sri Lankan war zone Tamil Tiger-linked website claims 64 civilians die in attack; rebels accused of using human shields](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

10. [Tamils say hospital hit](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

11. [Navy destroys 02 Sea Tiger boats, captures 02; 14 Sea Tigers killed - off Mullaittivu seas](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

12. [Rebels' defeat imminent: Sri Lankan president](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

13. [Over 10,000 ex-terrorists under Govt care](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

14. [No time for ceasefire: time yet for surrender - President](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

15. [From the Daily News Archives chronology of LTTE terror](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

News

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

16. [*Military in new 'tactical manoeuvre' to free civilians*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

17. [*Sri Lanka crushes rebels; Tamil Tiger leader killed as Sri Lankan troops overtake final rebel stronghold*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

18. [*From Mavil Aru victory to the arrest of KP*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

19. [*The largest hostage rescue in the world's history*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

20. [*Features - Silent slaughter As the West ignores the plight of thousands of Tamils trapped in the Sri Lanka war zone, JOHN PILGER fills the void*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

21. [*Huge civilian influx*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

22. [*Tiger leader in move to flee country accepting his defeat*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

23. [*Once 'liberated,' now frustrated Sense of betrayal grows among Tamils detained in camps by Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

24. [*Agony of terror*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

25. [*'KP's arrest single biggest blow to Tiger network'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

26. [*A tribute to our Security Forces*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

27. [Sri Lanka to halt heavy attacks on Tigers to spare civilians](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

28. [More civilians flee to government areas 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

29. [3rd LD Sri Lankan troops capture rebels' last stronghold, kill more than 400 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

30. [Guardian Weekly: Reply: War in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

31. [Not giving in to world pressure: President](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

32. [*Exceptional steps needed to minimise bloodshed in Sri Lanka : ICRC*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

33. [*Sri Lankan president urges rebels to surrender*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

34. [*Over 30,000 civilians rescued by Sri Lankan troops*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

35. [*Rebellion crushed in the NFZ?*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

36. [*More fleeing civilians seek Forces protection*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

37. [Sri Lankan military say rebels' end is in sight](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

38. [How terrorism haunted the land of beauty](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

39. [Grim picture emerges from Tamil camps Aid workers, UN report sex abuse and starvation in teeming refugee 'jail'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

40. [War By Other Means](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

41. [Rejoinder to: " Sri Lanka Tamils: Give them the Ballot; Give Them Their Rights"](#)

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

42. [*Mental health care program*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

43. [*Two women sea Tiger leaders 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,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

44. [*Sri Lankan troops seize 130 mm artillery gun from 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

45. [*Way to end civilian suffering- 1*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

46. [*Karuna backtracks, says no one?s forgotten Rajiv killing*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

47. [Guardian Weekly: International news: UN condemns Sri Lankan 'war crime': Strikes on no-fire zone leave an estimated 1,400 civilians dead](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

48. ['Liberated'; Sri Lanka celebrates end to civil war, Tamil leader reported dead](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

49. [Tamils reap what they sowed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

50. [Major obstacle for lasting peace in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

51. [Refugee crisis as thousands flee](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

52. [Surrendering Tamils were massacred by Sri Lankan army, says rights group](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

53. [Robert O' Blake please awake!](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

54. [Tigers vow to fight on but ready for talks](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

55. [No More Traitors](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

56. [Indian Tamil party demands govt action over Sri Lanka war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

57. [YMMA calls for Presidential Commission](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

58. [*Fed: Tamils protest outside Kirribilli House*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

59. [*How the West lost Sri Lanka*](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

60. [*Sri Lanka rebels lose earth bund as troops advance*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Content Type
News

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

61. [*Sri Lanka 's Tamils vie for leadership role*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

62. [*West, INGOs adopted double standards on Lanka - Governor*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

63. [SRI LANKA : NEW U.S. GOVT REPORT DETAILS WAR ATROCITIES](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

64. [Fonseka vows to lead new Salvation Army](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

65. [Ending a three decade old path of blood](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

66. [End of the war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

67. [PEOPLE PRABHAKARAN OBIT THREE LAST CHENNAI](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

68. [*Why no action taken in Rajiv Gandhi's murder case: SC to ED*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

69. [*Crowds Flee Fighting as Sri Lanka Breaches Rebel Haven*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

70. [*A perilous journey for 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

71. [*Another 729 civilians rescued*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Content Type
News

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

72. [*Minister slams biased media*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

73. [*A spirited response*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

74. [Upholding democratic rights of Northern people the next challenge](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

75. [Special report: Traumatised Tamils live in fear of new crackdown: The Sri Lankan army is on the verge of wiping out the rebel Tamil Tiger forces. But, as Annie Kelly reports, there is concern that the displaced civilian population is suffering a fresh wave of human rights violations including arbitrary arrests and abductions](#)

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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

76. [Tigers reduced to kittens!](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

77. [A shamed West and its agenda of terror](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

78. [Jaffna Tamils flock to join Sri Lanka 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,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

79. [World: Sri Lankan army claims 'total victory' over Tamil Tigers: Fears are growing for the safety of up to 80,000 civilians still trapped with the remaining rebels in an isolated coastal strip](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

80. [Resettlement in former Tiger terrain](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

81. [FROM CHILD COMBATANTS TO SYMBOLS OF HOPE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

82. ["There's an international conspiracy to oust the President"- GOTABHAYA](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

83. [Navy destroys Six Tiger boats](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

84. [Western bloc wanted to save Prabhakaran](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

85. [A month since victory](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

86. [Fed: Govt searching for Aussies in Sri Lankan refugee camps](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

87. [STF - an elite force](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

88. [Pressure grows on Sri Lanka for ceasefire with 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

89. [*Tigers' harsh taming*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

90. [*Security in Western Province tightened*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

91. [*Popular Army officer turned politician killed with 26 others*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

92. [*Monumental rescue mission*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

93. [*The enemy within*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 200994. [Sri Lanka :TID locates 31 pistols at women suicide cadres' training facility](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 200995. [A battle of humanity Vs inhumanity](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 200996. [Australia should not cave into human smugglers](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 200997. [UN to offer Sri Lanka more assistance as casualty numbers released =](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 200998. [Highlights of the AAP world wire at 19:00 May 17](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

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

99. [1ST LEAD: 6,261 soldiers and police killed in Sri Lankan offensive](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press

Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

100. [Indian efforts helped in declaration of ceasefire in Lanka: Chidambaram](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press

Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

The 59 Division's solo battle in the thick jungles of Mullaitivu

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

November 29, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 1989 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Nov. 29 -- The strategy to defeat the LTTE in the Wanni battlefield was not a simple one, like the way it was done, in the 1980's and 1990's. The Tri Forces had learnt many lessons from the past and were determined not to repeat those mistakes in their latest endeavour to liberate Wanni from the clutches of the LTTE.

One obvious weakness in their earlier military plans was that those plans lacked a comprehensive military objective of liberating the entire Wanni. Those plans were basically focused on capturing major Tiger strongholds of much political value than strategic value.

The architects of the Wanni liberation operation, were aware of the fact that the LTTE could take the upper hand in the battlefield if they focused only on one location. Therefore, they focused on their military strategy, to liberate the entire Wanni instead of focusing on main Tiger bases.

That was why the SLA opened battlefronts one after the other from various locations in the Wanni. The first battlefront, the 57 offensive Division from West of A-9 road, the Mannar battlefront of the Task Force I or the 58 Division were opened as a part of this comprehensive objective of liberating entire Wanni.

Many of the major LTTE bases had fallen to the hands of the Security Forces as a part of their overall military strategy, but not as a result of focusing singularly on the particular stronghold. The overall objective of the military was to create a wider battlefront so that the LTTE could not face them in such an easy way.

If the political leadership wanted to gain political advantage out of the military victories against the LTTE they would have easily directed the troops to capture those Tiger strongholds with much political value rather than focusing on a jungle terrain in the Wanni and would have easily ended the war within a short span of time pushing the terror elements into the jungle patches of Wanni.

But that effort was not made with a narrow political objective. The Government of President Mahinda Rajapaksa backed the efforts of the Security Forces of achieving this comprehensive military objective rather than achieving their petty political objectives.

Their strategy was focused on completely eliminating terrorism from the Sri Lankan soil without leaving single room for terror elements to breed once again in the jungle terrains in Wanni.

It was with that objective and to support the overall military objective of creating a wider battlefront in the Wanni that the Sri Lanka Army opened up its new battlefront in Weli Oya on January 15 , 2008.

The 59 Division's solo battle in the thick jungles of Mullaitivu

Brigadier Nandana Udawatta, the Deputy General Officer Commanding of the 57 Division was selected to lead this battlefront appointing him as the GOC of the 59 Division. Brigadier Udawatta was from the Armoured Corps of the Sri Lanka Army.

Unlike the two other battlefronts, which were operating West of A-9 at the beginning of the year 2008, the battlefront opened up in Weli Oya, had to fight this battle in the thick jungle terrain without seeing any populated area ahead of them until they passed the Mullaitivu jungle to enter Nayaru, Alampil and Kumulamunai.

The 59 Division had its first headquarters in Helambavewa and started their operations from Nelunvewa. Many predicted that the fierce battles in the Wanni battle front were expected to erupt in the Weli Oya front once the 59 Division started its advance opening up a 12 Km long battlefront from Kokkuthuduvai to Kiriibbanvewa.

Since it was the peak of the recruitment drive of the Sri Lanka Army, with nearly 3,000 odd youth joining monthly it worked overtime to form new regular infantry battalions and induct them into the battlefront after providing them with comprehensive training.

Three Brigades, 591 under the command of Lt. Colonel Aruna Ariyasinghe, 592 Brigade under the Command of Lt. Colonel Maneesha Silva and 593 Brigade under the Command of Lt Colonel Palitha Fernando were formed under the 59 Division to go ahead with the task of penetrating the key LTTE hideouts in the Andankulam forest reserve or famously known Mullaitivu jungles south of Mullaitivu in the Martime Pattu Division in the Mullaitivu district.

Although, they were aware of the LTTE presence ahead of Kokkuthuduvai, they did not want to touch the area in head on confrontation but focused solely on isolating the Tiger cadres operating there.

Though many experts predicted that the Mullaitivu jungle would have been turned in to a killing field, the new concepts and strategies adopted by the troops in confronting the LTTE in this jungle terrain had made a vast difference in the operational methods of the Security Forces.

The Special Infantry Operation training given to all the troops inducted to this jungle terrain were adjusted to the jungle warfare taking the upper hand in the battles in the Mullaitivu jungles.

It was the LTTE which faced many hardships in defending their territory in this jungle terrain basically due to lack of manpower. Therefore, it used to create mine fields and trappings to prevent troops advancing into their territory. Within the first seven months of the year 2009 troops of the 59 Division advanced more than 7 kms into the Mullaitivu jungle from Kiriibbanvewa tank and three to four kilometers from Janakapura facing the edge of Kokkuthuduvai.

One of the strategic locations they had to defend inside this jungle terrain was the 1-4 base complex which had been used by the LTTE in the late 1980's and 1990's as their major hideouts. Although troops had conquered half of this jungle terrain on earlier occasions, some of those Tiger bases remained intact.

The 59 Division started off its operation with the capture of Alpha-I base a small base that ahead of the Tiger defences. Then they had to confront heavily with the LTTE once they moved closer to the supply route the LTTE had inside this jungle terrain to feed their cadres manning their defences. Troops took control of this supply route constructed by the LTTE North of Janakapura from Kokkuthuduvai to Thannimurippukulam tank which had been used by the LTTE to supply food for cadres dominating the Forward Defence Line following fierce battles with the LTTE. They had to neutralise number of counter attacks by the LTTE to keep it under their control. Later, the 59 Division troops renamed that road as 'Jaya Mawatha'.

Following the capture of this supply route, the LTTE had to change their tactics in defending their terrain. They created open terrains inside these thick jungles to prevent troops infiltrating their bases. Hundreds of civilians were used against their wish to clear the jungle patches to create these open terrains as they were unable to protect their bases as the thick jungle patches provided cover for the troops when conducting their operations.

The Munnagam Base, West of Janakapura was the first Tiger Base that fell to the hands of the Security Forces. It was in June, 2008, the troops attached to the 7 Gemunu Watch under the command of Lt. Colonel Priyantha Perera

The 59 Division's solo battle in the thick jungles of Mullaitivu

captured this strategic base after fierce fighting with the LTTE. The first major underground bunker of the LTTE inside the Mullaitivu jungles was found inside Munnagam Base. Munnagam Base was identified as the Sutheshan base by the military officials who engaged in Operation Thunder Strike in 1991.

Following the capture of Munnagam Base, LTTE withdrew further towards the North creating yet another massive open area removing the undergrowth of the thick jungle so that they could detect troops' movement through this open terrain.

The troops attached to the 59 Division engaged the entire LTTE defence line ahead of the open terrain on June 8, 2008 with the objective of crossing this open terrain with a huge number of trappings and mines. But the troops attached to the 7 Gemunu Watch battalion under the command of Lt. Colonel Priyantha Perera, and 14 Vijayaba Infantry Battalions under the command of Major Laksiri Perera crossed this open terrain amidst stiff resistance from the LTTE on June 08, but others failed to cross this terrain due to heavy LTTE resistance.

The 7 GW and 14 VIR troops captured Tiger points after crossing this open terrain. Intelligence reports indicated that more than 25 LTTE cadres had been killed during this offensive and 35 others injured. Twelve cadres including a female leader in the self-styled 'Lt. Colonel rank' had been killed in this attack.

Fierce fighting erupted in this open terrain even on June 10 as Tigers made desperate attempts to recapture the bunker line which was captured by the troops on June 08 after crossing the open terrain. A number of Tiger cadres were reportedly killed during this attack. One soldier was also killed and another seven injured during the fierce battle that continued for more than one hour.

The LTTE tried their best to make this jungle terrain a killing field to delay the speedy advance of the troops to vital Tiger bases in this stretch of jungle. But troops braved all those barricades created by the LTTE to capture the entire 1-4 base complex which was located in that jungle patch.

The LTTE, which used to deploy their female cadres to dominate these defences, at this point decided to induct well trained cadres to this front fearing they would get into trouble very soon. Therefore, they decided to deploy more than 500 well trained cadres along with reserve groups to defend this terrain fearing that troops would reach Nityakaikulam and Kumulamunai located just nine kilometres ahead of the areas where the troops were operating by that time.

Reaching Nityakaikulam and Kumulamunai was detrimental for them as it would see the end of their fighting in the jungle terrain. That was the most expected turning point in this battlefield that would push the Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran to his do or die battle.

Taking all those challenges into their hands the 59 Division, which engaged in a solo battle till the end of year 2008, reached its targets one by one capturing the 1-4 base complex. They captured the Michael Base on July 4, 2008 after three days of fighting after capturing the LTTE's key defence line ahead of the open terrain.

The offensive to destroy the strategic base began on July 2, 2008 and the Army faced heavy resistance from the LTTE combatants taking refuge in well-protected bunkers which the outfit had built over the years.

The well-fortified Michael Base, was constituted many outposts located seven km north of Janakapura. It was considered impregnable by the LTTE.

On August 16, LTTE lost one more major base north of Andankulam when the troops of the 59 Division forged ahead and captured "Jeevan Base" which had been used by the LTTE as a training centre. It was located 1.5 km southwest of the western edge of the Nayaru lagoon and, troops found a graveyard in which 67 tombs of dead terrorists at the Jeevan Base. Four buildings with an area of about 1250 square meters, one hundred underground bunkers, thirty-five lavatories, two concrete bunkers of 15 x 15 ft, two wheelbarrows, forty empty barrels, and a heap of slippers were found inside the base which was considered a part of their 14 - Base Complex. Four prison cells, probably used by LTTE as torture chambers to punish and detain those who disobeyed their senior cadres, were also found at the premises.

The 59 Division's solo battle in the thick jungles of Mullaitivu

When the troops of the 57 and 58 Division headed into the Tiger strongholds West of A-9 road, the 59 Division which continued its solo battle in this thick and dark jungles also passed many milestones in their march towards Mullaitivu amidst severe hardship and prepared their battle front to box the Tiger terrorists from South of Mullaitivu and were keenly braced to surround the **LTTE**'s major Sea Tiger base in the North Eastern coast by the last quarter of the year 2008. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: November 30, 2009

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Children, females among surrendered rebels: Sri Lankan military

Xinhua General News Service

May 29, 2009 Friday 1:17 AM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 246 words

Dateline: COLOMBO May 29

Body

At least 400 children and 1,200 females are among the near 10,000 Tamil Tiger rebels surrendered to the government recently, the Sri Lankan military said Friday.

Defense Officials who did not want to be named said the surrendered rebels are now being housed in different rehabilitation centers around the country.

The former members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were among around 270,000 civilians displaced by the battles between the government troops and the LTTE in the north.

The displaced Tamil civilians are now housed in welfare camps in the northern Jaffna and Vavuniya districts.

The government troops concluded its three-year military campaign against the LTTE by eliminating the rebels and recapturing all of the 15,000-sq-km territory formerly held by the LTTE.

The LTTE during the height of their separatist campaign received international condemnation for their continued recruitment of child combatants.

Several of the LTTE's hardcore members have been traced at IDP centers so far, the military said.

Meanwhile, the military said search operations conducted in the former rebel territory of Karaimullivaikkal in the northeastern Mullaittivu district have led to the discovery of missiles, other military hardware and ammunition belonging to the rebels.

More than 100,000 people died in the LTTE's campaign spanning about three decades for a separate Tamil homeland in the north and east.

Load-Date: May 31, 2009

Ex-Tiger awaits '13-cylinder trip' -- EXCLUSIVE

The Australian

October 29, 2009 Thursday

6 - NSW Country Edition

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Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 608 words

Byline: Amanda Hodge

Body

Batticaloa, Sri Lanka

KUNAM has been a civilian for the past five years but he will be branded a Tamil Tiger for the rest of his life by the bullet and shrapnel wounds that scar his body.

The 34-year-old former rebel soldier, who says he cannot stay in one place for more than a week at a time for fear of assassination by government security agents or rival Tamil paramilitary gangs, is waiting in an ever-growing queue to take a direct boat trip to Australia.

He knows nothing of Kevin Rudd's Indonesia solution. In any case for Kunam and many others like him biding their time around Sri Lanka's east coast fishing communities, it doesn't matter: they want to go directly to Australia. As long as they stay out of Indonesian waters, the Indonesian solution is powerless to stop them.

Those operating the boats stay on the high seas to avoid Indonesian territorial waters on the trip to Australia. Their aim is to get caught by Australian authorities, in our area of operation. Organisers in this part of the country refer to the direct Indian Ocean crossing between Batticaloa, on Sri Lanka's east coast, and Christmas Island as a 13-cylinder trip because one cooking cylinder is used up every day feeding the 30 or so asylum-seekers on board before they reach their ultimate destination.

Kunam -- using his Tamil Tiger name rather than his real name -- missed the last boat that left Batticaloa on October 18 because he was at least 90 minutes' drive from the departure port, and paid-up asylum-seekers were given only 60 minutes' notice to get to the boat before it sailed.

If the 13-cylinder yardstick is accurate, that boat should wash up in Australian waters on the last day of this month, giving Kevin Rudd an unpleasant Halloween surprise.

The first boat to leave this province in recent times arrived in Christmas Island last week carrying 32 mostly Tamil Sri Lankans claiming refugee status because of alleged political persecution under the Sinhalese-

Continued -- Page 2

rom Page 1

Ex-Tiger awaits '13-cylinder trip' -- EXCLUSIVE

dominated Sri Lankan government. But Kunam says another boat is leaving any day and he is determined to be on it. He is currently in training for the trip, by regularly accompanying a fisherman relative into the "mid-seas" to get his sea legs.

"I have proposed marriage to 20 different women and each one has turned me down because they say they are worried I won't live to see the next day," he tells The Australian in the coconut-strewn backyard of a safe house in Batticaloa province.

He shows me a large puckered bullet entry and exit wound on his right calf, the result of a Sri Lankan government ambush on his eastern province Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam platoon in 1997. He also has shrapnel scars on the front and back of his head, on his back and his hand.

The eastern province was a stronghold of the LTTE until August 2007 when the Sri Lankan military recaptured it.

It finally seized the Tamil Tigers' last northern territory in a bloody climax to the country's 26-year civil war in May.

While crippling security restrictions in the northeast have been lifted in recent months, Kunam says life is still difficult for all Tamils there and impossible for those who once fought with the enemy.

He says he is open to migration to either Britain, Italy or Australia. But the 13-day trip from Batticaloa to Australia's west -- which appears to be a new smuggling channel opened up in response to a security crackdown on the traditional Sri Lankan west coast route -- is both quicker and cheaper.

"My main intention is to go by boat but I need to go by December. I was told this is peak season now. This is a new channel so it's the right time," he says.

Load-Date: October 28, 2009

Tamil demonstrators protest continues outside Oz PM's house

Asian News International (ANI)

April 13, 2009 Monday

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Length: 314 words

Byline: ANI

Body

Sydney, Apr 13 (ANI): Hundreds of Tamil demonstrators protesting outside the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's Sydney residence say that they will stay there until the Australian Government urges the Sri Lankan Government to call for a ceasefire with the **Tamil Tigers**.

Protester Geetha Mano, 24, said the rally would continue until they got some response from Rudd or Foreign Affairs Minister Stephen Smith.

More than 1000 Tamils, including three hunger strikers, staged an all-night rally outside Kirribilli House as part of a global protest aimed at brokering a ceasefire between the Sri Lankan army and the **Tamil Tigers**. The Sydney Morning Herald reported.

The protest group, which began as a three-man hunger strike in Parramatta on Saturday, continued to grow even though Prime Minister Kevin Rudd was not inside.

The sombre protest turned noisy before 9 a.m. today with the group chanting "Australia, save the Tamils," "We want ceasefire" and "Stop genocide".

Men, **women** and young children waved red Tamil flags and banners saying: "Impose sanction on Sri Lanka." Many had been lying on mats and pillows on the road early in the morning.

The protesters, mostly families with small children, staged a sit-down protest blocking the junction of Kirribilli Avenue and Carabella Streets on Sunday.

Sri Lanka's Government says it is in the final stages of defeating the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, who launched a campaign in 1972 to create a separate Tamil homeland on the Indian Ocean island.

The remaining Tigers are trapped in the "no-fire" zone, in the island's north-east, along with thousands of civilians.

Tamil demonstrators protest continues outside Oz PM's house

The Government is under pressure to agree to a ceasefire, amid claims that 3500 civilians have been killed in the first three months of this year.

Sri Lanka has resisted calls for a fresh truce, saying it would only help the Tigers when they are near total defeat.
(ANI)

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

End of Document

Navy, Sea Tigers in fierce battle

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

April 30, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 266 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 29 -- At least six **LTTE** craft including four suicide boats were destroyed and more than 28 Sea Tigers on board were killed, during a fierce battle in the seas off Mullaitivu, early yesterday morning, the Navy said.

"We have prevented an **LTTE** attempt to attack our defence lines," Navy Spokesman Captain D.K.P. Dassanayake said adding "we have destroyed at least six **LTTE** boats." He also said that the Sea Tiger flotilla had entered the sea from Vellamullavaikkal in the 'Safe Zone' and launched the attack against Navy boats deployed in the seas off Mullaitivu. "We have found several bodies of the Sea Tigers while intercepted **LTTE** communications revealed that during the fighting senior Sea Tiger leaders Manparidi, Ariu and Manmadhi have been killed," the spokesman said. According to the spokesman a large number of **LTTE female** cadres had taken part in this pre-dawn attack. "During last few weeks, the **LTTE** had attempted to attack the defence lines maintained by the Navy but failed as the Navy successfully repulsed those attacks," the spokesman said. He said that there were no injuries to personnel or damage to the Navy boats whose crew was on full alert and took prompt action. The Navy is currently maintaining a tight security blanket in the seas off Mullaitivu to prevent any escape of **LTTE** cadres by sea. Captain Dassanayake said that the Navy's Special Boat Squadron, Rapid Action Boat Squadron, Dvora and Offshore Patrol Vessels are providing security around the clock in the seas off Mullaitivu. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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

Load-Date: April 30, 2009

US, UN concerned over situation in Sri Lanka

Qatar News Agency

April 25, 2009 Saturday 2:26 PM EST

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ARABIA 2000

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Length: 328 words

Body

Washington, April 25 (QNA) - The United States has called for an immediate ceasefire in the North-Eastern region of Sri Lanka, expressing deep concern over human rights violations and rising civilian casualties in the country.

The White House said it was "deeply concerned" by reports of human rights violations and civilian deaths.

The US State Department called for a cease-fire between the Sri Lankan government and **Tamil Tigers** to allow civilians to escape the fighting after a two-day humanitarian pause ended with renewed violence.

"We call upon the government and military of Sri Lanka, and the **Tamil Tigers** to immediately stop hostilities until the more than 140,000 civilians in the conflict area are safely out," US Acting Spokesman Robert Wood said in a statement.

"Both sides must immediately return to a humanitarian pause and both must respect the right of free movement of those civilian men, **women** and children trapped by the fighting," he added.

Meanwhile, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his humanitarian chief John Holmes called the brief halt in fighting "inadequate" and have pushed for a longer humanitarian pause in fighting.

The most pressing concern now, according to Holmes, is the fact that over 100,000 people are currently crowded in a "very small pocket of land" that is about five square miles, or about twice the size of New York's Central Park.

UN spokeswoman Marie Okabe said on Friday that John Holmes would travel to Sri Lanka tomorrow for a three-day mission.

Holmes is due to discuss issues of pressing importance with the Government of Sri Lanka, including the need for the Government to actively facilitate humanitarian missions to the conflict area, access to those displaced persons at screening centers, the release of UN staff members detained in camps, and the humanitarian response to the situation in the camps for Internally Displaced Persons, Okabe said.

US, UN concerned over situation in Sri Lanka

LY

QNA 1236 GMT 2009/04/25

Load-Date: April 26, 2009

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The largest hostage rescue mission in the world launched

Colombo Times

April 10, 2009 Friday

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Length: 456 words

Body

Colombo, April 10 -- Sri Lankan Armed forces have now undertaken the world's largest humanitarian operation in the world, as the **LTTE** terrorists have taken thousands of civilians in the No Fire Zone [NFZ] hostage. Sri Lanka Army has almost swept away terrorists strongholds in the northern anterior of the 12 kilometres long NFZ demarcated for the civilians and now limited their mop up operations to the southern anterior.

Sri Lanka Army 58 Division soldiers are spearheading the rescue operations as they have established their positions closest to the NFZ border, West of Ampalavanpkkana and South of Puthumathalam. Troops have identified the best accessible routes for the civilians to come out of the NFZ and established rescue points there. According to the defence sources, some of these rescue points are located just 150 metres short of the **LTTE** built earth bund on the NFZ border.

"Troops continuously keep the civilians informed about the safe routes to the cleared areas as they open up more escape routes to the civilians by removing terrorists blockades", said the sources.

"Public address systems have been positioned at several locations closest to the NFZ to convey these information to the civilians", the sources added.

Meanwhile, troops of 58 Division rescued 386 hostages including 157 children, 98 **women** and 137 men during the daytime yesterday (Apr 9). The civilians so rescued have told the defence.lk correspondent that the **LTTE** has been committing horrendous crimes to prevent civilians leaving their hold.

"There is no safety zone anymore, they (**LTTE** cadres) are putting bombs and traps on all possible escape routes available for us. They fire machine guns, throw hand grenades and even fire mortars at people when ever they feel that people are organizing to escape", a youth have told.

The rescue mission is also supported by limited offensives by troops conducted to make room for the hostages to come out of the **LTTE** hold.

Troops of 10 and 11 Sri Lanka Light Infantry [SLLI] last morning attacked terrorist positions located Puthumathalam South causing heavy damages to the enemy. Troops during the subsequent search, collected seven bodies of **LTTE** cadres, nine T-56 rifles, one radio communication set and a tractor. Intercepted **LTTE** radio transmissions confirmed 10 **LTTE** cadres killed in this confrontation. Also, a sniper deployed in the forward area confirmed shooting down of one **LTTE** cadre.

The largest hostage rescue mission in the world launched

Meanwhile, Army 53 Division engaged in mop up operations in the southern anterior of the NFZ, north of Nanthikadal lagoon, had daylong clashes with the terrorists. Troops found one body of slain **LTTE** cadre, 18 T-56 rifles, one micro pistol and one small machine gun (SMG).
Rescue operations is in progress.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

End of Document

Tamils' London protest continues

ITN

April 8, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 309 words

Body

Around 400 Tamils are continuing their protest at London's Parliament Square.

Seven people were arrested as the crowd protested against the Sri Lankan government's offensive against Tamil Tiger rebels and alleged human rights abuses.

Two men jumped into the Thames as police tried to persuade the crowd to disperse. They were not believed to have been seriously injured.

Up to 5,000 people - including women and babies - forced the closure of nearby Westminster Bridge by staging a sit-in on Monday night. The bridge is now open again.

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

The protesters say the lives of thousands of civilians are in danger and want the British Government to take action.

Leicester East MP Keith Vaz is expected to deliver a letter to Downing Street calling for the situation in Sri Lanka to be debated by the UN Security Council.

Scotland Yard said they had issued "repeated requests" that images representing the Tamil Tigers - a proscribed organisation in the UK - carried by members of the crowd be removed.

One arrest was made on suspicion of carrying a flag supporting a proscribed organisation, under the Terrorism Act 2000. The other six arrests were made for a range of public order offences.

The United Nations said up to 150,000 people are trapped in the war zone in the north of Sri Lanka.

Foreign Secretary David Miliband has insisted the Government is "very concerned" about civilians caught up in fighting in Sri Lanka.

Tamils' London protest continues

"Recent reports suggesting that the Sri Lankan military have now captured all the territory outside the so-called 'no-fire zone' and that fighting is now going on inside the zone, where the civilian population is concentrated, are deeply worrying," he said.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

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**Hospital shelled in Sri Lankan war zone; Tamil Tiger-linked website claims
64 civilians die in attack; rebels accused of using human shields**

The Toronto Star
May 3, 2009 Sunday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A12

Length: 311 words

Byline: Bharatha Mallawarachi, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

Sri Lankan forces shelled a makeshift hospital in the war zone yesterday, killing 64 civilians despite a pledge to stop using heavy weapons in its battle with the **Tamil Tigers**, a rebel-linked website said.

A health official in the war zone confirmed the hospital was hit twice by artillery throughout the day, though the official declined to say who was responsible. The military denied launching the attack.

Sri Lanka has come under increasing international pressure to halt its offensive against the rebels to safeguard the estimated 50,000 ethnic Tamil civilians trapped by the fighting. The government, which has cornered the **Tamil Tigers** in a five-kilometre-long coastal strip, has refused, but it did promise to stop launching artillery and airstrikes into the area.

Tamilnet.com said the government hit the makeshift hospital at Mullivaaykkaal twice yesterday morning. The attacks killed at least 64 patients and bystanders and wounded another 87, according to a government health official. The official, who said he was not certain of the source of the attack, declined to be identified because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

The attack killed a **female** volunteer doctor and wounded three medical workers, the website said.

Though the hospital is inside rebel-held territory, it is run by government doctors. The government denied the army had shelled the war zone, saying soldiers were only using small arms to fight the rebels.

"There is absolutely no truth in these reports," Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama said.

The government and rights groups, meanwhile, accused the rebels of holding the civilians as human shields. The government airdropped leaflets on the region Friday, appealing to trapped civilians to flee across the front lines and promising to ensure their safety.

The military reported 14 insurgents were killed in fighting Friday.

Load-Date: May 3, 2009

Hospital shelled in Sri Lankan war zone Tamil Tiger-linked website claims 64 civilians die in attack; rebels accused of using human shields

End of Document

Tamils say hospital hit

Sunshine Coast Daily (Queensland)

May 4, 2009 Monday

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Section: Pg. 12

Length: 311 words

Body

SRI Lankan forces shelled a makeshift hospital in the war zone on Saturday, killing 64 civilians, despite a pledge to stop using heavy weapons in their battle with the **Tamil Tigers**, a rebel-linked website said.

A health official in the war zone confirmed that the hospital was hit twice by artillery throughout Saturday, though the official declined to say who was responsible. The military denied launching the attack.

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Though the hospital is inside rebel-held territory, it is run by government doctors.

The government denied the army had shelled the war zone, saying soldiers are only using small arms in the fight to destroy the rebels.

"There is absolutely no truth in these reports," foreign minister Rohitha Bogollagama said.

Bogollagama spoke after meeting with Japanese peace envoy Yasushi Akashi, the latest high-profile diplomat to arrive in Sri Lanka. Akashi met with president Mahinda Rajapaksa during his visit and also travelled to displacement camps where more than 100,000 civilians who fled the war zone have been held.

Tamils say hospital hit

– AP

Load-Date: May 7, 2009

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Navy destroys 02 Sea Tiger boats, captures 02; 14 Sea Tigers killed - off Mullaittivu seas

Colombo Times

May 9, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 214 words

Body

Colombo, May 9 -- Continuing its heavy onslaught on LTTE's desperate attempts to attack the well fortified Naval cordon in the seas off Vellemullivaikkal today (9th May 2009) around 0300 hrs SLN destroyed 01 LTTE sea tiger suicide boat and 01 LTTE attack craft and captured another LTTE suicide boat with an attack craft, killing 14 sea tiger carders on board.

Two bodies of sea tiger carders (male and female) were also recovered and captured craft in the predawn Naval gun battle launched by the combined Naval forces of Fast Attack Crafts (FAC), Special Boat Squadron (SBS), and Rapid Action Boat Squadron (RABS) a cluster of LTTE sea tiger boats comprising two suicide craft laden with high explosive and two enemy attack crafts were intercepted and attacked. Naval troops optimizing their combined fire power completely destroyed one enemy suicide craft and captured one with two enemy dead bodies on board, while destroying one enemy attack craft and captured another which were attempting to flee being unable to withstand the Naval onslaught.

Monitoring of the LTTE communications has revealed that 14 sea tiger carders have been killed in the gun battle. Further search and clear operations are continuing.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from The Colombo Times.

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

Rebels' defeat imminent: Sri Lankan president

Xinhua General News Service

April 20, 2009 Monday 12:40 PM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 503 words

Dateline: COLOMBO April 20

Body

Sri Lankan President Mahendra Rajapakse said the complete defeat of Tamil Tiger rebels was imminent as more than 35,000 civilians fled the no fire zone (NFZ) controlled by the rebels on Monday in the north.

The president made these remarks when he made a sudden visit to the Air Force Headquarters in Colombo on Monday to watch an aerial video from a military spy plane over the less than 20-sq-km NFZ at Puttumatalan in the northern Mullaitivu district, said the Department of Government Information in a statement.

"The footage clearly shows that the people are defying the rebels and escaping. They are running to safety. The process of the complete defeat of the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) has just begun, it is now all over for the Tigers," the president was quoted as saying.

The government has accused the LTTE of using trapped civilians as a human shield, and the president suggested that their escape removed a final obstacle to an all-out military assault.

The military said over 35,000 civilians held hostage by the LTTE terrorists in the NFZ were liberated on Monday, while several thousands of others are waiting to be rescued by the troops.

The rescue operation came after the troops captured some of the defense lines built by the LTTE in the western and northern borders of the NFZ to prevent the civilians from escaping, said the military.

Defense officials also said three LTTE suicide cadres have exploded themselves in the NFZ killing dozens of refugees including women and children.

A pro-LTTE website said the Army began to deliver full fire-power against the NFZ at 2 a.m. (2030 GMT) and advanced into the zone at 11 a.m. (0530 GMT), causing heavy civilian casualties.

The claims can not be independently verified as most international aid agencies and media have no access to the NFZ.

Actual number of civilians trapped in the NFZ is being debated. The government argued that only 120,000 people lived there, out of which about 70,000 have fled to the government controlled area.

However, international agencies said more than 100,000 people are still being trapped in the NFZ.

Rebels' defeat imminent: Sri Lankan president

A concerned international community has pleaded with both the government and the LTTE to care for the safety of civilians amid allegations that a large number of them are receiving injuries or getting killed in the crossfire.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in Sri Lanka's long drawn-out civil war since the mid-1980s when the LTTE began to rebel against the government based on claims that the minority Tamils were being discriminated in this Sinhalese dominated island.

The LTTE lost most of their 15,000-sq-km territories in the government's latest military offensive started in 2006.

Rajapakse said recently that the remaining LTTE members "have only three alternatives. Either they have to surrender to our armed forces, eat the cyanide capsule and commit suicide, or plunge into the sea."

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

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Over 10,000 ex-terrorists under Govt care

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

May 25, 2009 Monday

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Length: 349 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 25 -- From the day the Wanni battle took a fierce turn over 10,000 **LTTE** terrorists surrendered to the military, according to top military officials.

The continuous defeats of the **LTTE** had made its cadres to abandon the outfit in large numbers. Over 7,237 terrorists who had surrendered to the military are now being rehabilitated at various rehabilitation centres. Among them are 1,601 **females**.

Another batch of 202 terrorists including 80 males are living in IDP camps. According to officials, they were identified by the military and separated from the refugees in the welfare camps. "They surrendered to the troops when the military offensives got tough. The 202 terrorists including **females** are well trained **LTTE** terrorists", they said. The officials said over 2,379 **LTTE** terrorists were identified by the military. Among them are terrorists who volunteered to surrender to the troops. Over 2,065 males said that they surrendered to the troops at the Forward Defence Lines as they were disillusioned with their leadership. They had sensed the historic defeat and realised that the **LTTE** cadres had to fight to protect the life of the **LTTE** leader and not for Eelam. The terrorists who surrendered are provided with facilities and most of them have been sent to rehabilitation camps. Over 271,967 refugees have sought protection under the Government. The majority of them who had been kept by the late **LTTE** leader as hostages fled the No Fire Zone in Puthumathalan despite the terrorists' tough warnings from April 20-22. Having successfully concluded the world's biggest hostage rescue operation, the military saved the lives of over 180,000 people without firing a single round of bullets. The IDPs are being facilitated in Government welfare centres in 29 locations, including Government schools. Meanwhile, a spokesman for the Sri Lanka Army said that over 6,000 soldiers had sacrificed their lives and over 30,000 were injured. According to sources, the **LTTE** suffered a loss of over 22,000 terrorists. 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: May 25, 2009

No time for ceasefire: time yet for surrender - President

Colombo Times

May 1, 2009 Friday

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Length: 1013 words

Body

Colombo, May 1 -- We have at no time gone for a ceasefire. We will not do so now. There is no time for that now. In the five or six days remaining we have given the opportunity for the **LTTE** to lay down their arms and surrender to the Armed Forces and, even in the name of God, free the civilians held by them. If they have no regard for their own lives they should even consider the lives of others.

So said President Mahinda Rajapaksa at the 50th Anniversary of the commissioning of the Chandrikawewa at Embilipitiya, today (30).

All television channels of the world are now directed towards Sri Lanka. With satellite technology the whole world can now see how the **LTTE** uses tanks to fire at the Tamil people fleeing from them. Of what need special observers to know of this? Why do we need special representatives to study this? This is known the world over, the President said.

However it is a great su'War won't stop until Prabhakaran is taken, dead or alive' says Secretary Defence

"My problem is not what the **LTTE** will do to you," the Defence Secretary said, "instead it is that should such a thing happen, we would not be able to take Prabhakaran as planned!". He said after thirty years, the time had come finally for Prabhakaran and other terrorist leaders to be captured dead or alive and the government would not stop until that end was achieved.

Defence Sectary Gotabaya Rajapaksa yesterday(Apr 29), rejected visiting British Foreign Secretary David Miliband's call for a ceasefire, and told him that the government would not stop its war on terror until the **LTTE** was crushed and its leader Prabhakaran captured, dead or alive.

Briefing a British delegation that included the British Foreign Secretary, British High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Dr. Peter Hayes and two other diplomats, at the Foreign Ministry, yesterday morning the Defence Secretary did not mince his words, when he said it was Sri Lankan troops and civilians who had perished in the conflict and therefore the government was determined to finish off the **LTTE**. He said humanitarian concerns were only a ploy employed by some people to extricate Prabhakaran and his top leaders from the mess they had got into. He said a truce would only help the **LTTE** to regroup.

"The only person who could stop this war," a plain-spoken Defence Secretary told the British dignitaries, "is only the President of Sri Lanka." The military had orders to either capture or destroy Prabhakaran and other top **LTTE** leaders, he added.

No time for ceasefire: time yet for surrender - President

Mr. Rajapaksa told the British delegation that since March 2009, over 200,000 persons had been rescued by the army. "On April 20 alone we secured the release of over 100,000 men, women and children from the clutches of the LTTE," he said promising to rescue the others shortly. He said the whole world had witnessed that rescue operation that the army had conducted without firing a single shot.

When Miliband interrupted him to say that Britain had information that civilians had been harmed due to the army's firing, the Defence Secretary said Britain should not be duped by the disinformation campaign the LTTE was carrying out. "Even BBC is dishing out LTTE propaganda material without verification," he told Miliband.

Miliband said his claim was not based on BBC reports but credible information elicited from sources in the LTTE-held no fire zone. Apparently annoyed, the Defence Secretary said anyone who knew the LTTE would not believe that any reliable information would emanate from that area under its jackboot. All the stories that were disseminated from the no fire zone, he told the British delegation, were all doctored by the LTTE for the consumption of the international community and the western media. "Do you think a terrorist group like the LTTE will allow anyone to express independent views detrimental to its cause?" he asked.

The Defence Secretary said it was up to the British delegation to decide whether it should believe what a terrorist group said or what a responsible officer of a legitimate government told them. "The choice is yours," he said.

French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner requested that the UN be given access to the civilian zone held by the LTTE. The Defence Secretary said no one was safe in that area and the government could not guarantee anyone's safety. Kouchner replied that he was prepared to visit the area himself. He said he would take the risk and go there.

A smiling Rajapaksa told the French Foreign Minister that the LTTE was so desperate that he, too, would be taken hostage. "I don't mind that risk," Kouchner said.

"My problem is not what the LTTE will do to you," the Defence Secretary said laughing, "instead it is that should such a thing happen, we would not be able to take Prabhakaran as planned!" He said after thirty years, the time had come finally for Prabhakaran and other terrorist leaders to be captured dead or alive and the government would not stop until that end was achieved.

Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama, Attorney General Mohan Peiris and Foreign Secretary Dr. Palitha Kohona were also present at both meetings.

prise that some members of the international community do not see this. I must warn the world that this lack of vision could leads to a international tragedy, he added.

You would have seen how our troops rescue mothers, carrying their little children at Puthumathalan. How they carry the aged, yet even seeing this, some international forces point accusing fingers at us. Daya Master says that he was carried to safety like a child carrying one's father. Some parents go on their knees to respect our troops for saving them from terror.

The world must see and know all this. That is why we call this a humanitarian operation. This is not how wars are fought in other countries. We have seen how Iraq was bombed. We have seen how Afghanistan is bombed. Those who come to preach to us seen how Afghanistan is bombed. It must be made clear that before accusing others, you must have the strength to know what you do yourself.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from The Colombo Times.

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

From the Daily News Archives chronology of LTTE terror

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

May 26, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 1726 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 26 -- Alfred Duraiappah murder

When the euphoria of victory dies down, and together with it the media hype ceases, when the guns do not rattle and boom anymore, and the sky, the land and the sea become calm and serene, when tranquillity reigns through it is natural to live in the present moment and forget the past. But one cannot live in the present without a past. No can one envision the future discarding the experience of the preceding events. Hence the Daily News wishes to introduce a new feature today, Chronicle of Terror taken from our own archives which would remind our readers how it all began. An awareness of the chronology of terror would help us prevent the recurrence of such terror and frustrate any attempts by misguided elements to repeat history to suit their evil designs.

It was not simple terror. Nor was terror sporadic. It was all pre-planned, pre-determined, well-calculated terror. The victims were innocent people. Though it is too many innumerate we would like to recall the major episodes in the Chronology of Terror. ***** The rise of political violence in the north in the early 1970s after the republican constitution of 1972 was enacted by the Parliament should be looked at not merely as a spontaneous reaction to legislative or administrative steps taken by successive governments from 1948 but as a calculated move to destabilize the country and instil fear into the Tamils of the north who were usually hardworking frugal and law abiding people who did not resort to violence to address their problems. The assassination of Mayor of Jaffna Alfred Duraiappah came after several incidents of violence and sabotage started by the Tamil United Liberation Front or Tamil United Front youth but the motivating force behind them was of course the extremist elements among the politicians of the north notably Appapillai Amirthalingam who was to succeed as the leader of the TULF on the demise of the first leader of the Illankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi mistranslated to English as the Federal Party. When the Republican Constitution of 1972 was enacted no less than five members of parliament from the north, all of them Tamils had voted for the constitution and it was recorded that Amirthalingam had said at a public meeting that these five members will not die natural deaths but would die in some other ways. The TULF youth had threatened these five members and posters went up on the walls of Jaffna naming them traitors to the Tamils. It was in this background that the rise of the **LTTE** had to be understood as there were about 50 Tamil youths who had started collecting small arms, mostly robbed from places like Excise Stations or Customs houses or from private parties. They had also robbed some dynamite sticks and were acting under cover. It was also recorded by the police officers on duty in Jaffna and elsewhere in the north that when these youths were arrested and detained acts of violence and threats against politicians who did not condone their activities stopped. And whenever they were released from detention these acts of sabotage or violence started again. Amirthalingam had told the youth that they should fight to create a separate state for the Tamils and they may get arrested, tortured or even suffer heroic deaths but once all these had passed they would be able to win the separate state Eelam. He had also said the help of foreign organizations should be sought for the struggle of the Tamil people. Yet the tragedy of the Tamil people of the north at the beginning and the end later was that gradually the youth began to get themselves

From the Daily News Archives chronology of LTTE terror

organized as terrorist groups. Alfred Duraiappah was a lawyer and was a very popular politician of Jaffna, by profession a lawyer. He believed that the people of the north and the south should unite and he worked very hard to bring prosperity to the people of the north. When he joined the SLFP the United Front government led by Madame Sirimavo Bandaranaike it was in the background of the national food production drive and farmers of Jaffna had become rich producing rice, vegetables and fruits that were mainly sent to Colombo for sale. In 1974 Premier Sirimavo Bandaranaike visited Jaffna to open the new Jaffna campus and on that occasion there was a rousing welcome for her. When she came to the Jaffna Town Hall the wives of the Jaffna farmers spread their long hair on the steps leading to the town hall bending down to form a carpet. But Madame Bandaranaike refused to step over that carpet remarking that she would not disgrace womanhood and asked the wives to get up from their kneeling positions. On that occasion when she asked Alfred Duraiappah why such a reception was accorded to her Duraiappah said that thanks to the policies of the United Front government the farmers of the north had become prosperous. Duraiappah used his influence with Sirimavo Bandaranaike to work for his people. He had several plans to develop the Jaffna town and especially to convert the beautiful beaches to tourist resorts. Alfred Duraiappah was loved by the rich or poor of the north especially by the fisher folk of Meesalai. None of their weddings would take place without him attending it most often as the attesting witness and the Mayor's residence was a familiar place for them. The day that he was gunned down by Prabhakaran the fisher folk of Meesalai, men, women and children rolled on the sand wailing when they heard about it. His funeral was also attended by these common people and also by the farmers of the north who had prospered during that time. Yet on the day he was killed he had returned after visiting Brunei where his wife was the Chief Medial Officer and usually went for worship at the Punnalai Sri Vishnu Temple. He never believed that anyone would ever harm him let alone kill him. Such was his popularity among the people and he worked hard to raise their living standards and used his influence with Premier Sirimavo Bandaranaike and the ministers to do something for the farmers, fisher folk or others of his hometown. He came from a wealthy family and was a lawyer by profession and had married into a family related to the late Tamil Congress leader G. G. Ponnambalam. At that time the SLFP presence in Jaffna was an embarrassment to the leaders of the TULF especially to Amirthalingam who had by that time become the godfather of armed Tamil youth who were fondly known as 'the boys' by their patrons who were the minority among the people of the north. When Madame Bandaranaike visited Jaffna in 1974 the Jaffna farmers put up pandals embellished with potato, beet, plantains, chilly and other fruits to welcome her. When Duraiappah came out of the Punnalai Kovil after worship the terrorist group was waiting for him. While he was coming to get into his car Velupillai Prabhakaran whipped up a pistol shot Duraiappah at point blank range killing him almost in seconds on the spot. A member of the Jaffna Municipal Council D. K. Rajaratnam and an employee of the Municipal Council Loganathan also were injured in the attack. Associated with Prabhakaran were other terrorists Kiubakaran, Sridaran, Santhiyar, Sothiratnam, Kailasapathy and Selvakumar. The group got into the Mayor's car and fled the scene of crime and on the way abandoned the vehicle and disappeared. Though Amirthalingam and Duraiappah were members of the Jaffna bar, colleagues, neither Amirthalingam nor any other member of the TULF attended the funeral. It was a very clear that the TULF had condoned the crime as they were hand in glove with the rising terrorist bands at the time. The contribution Duraiappah made to Jaffna and to the north in general could not be erased by his assassination and later - poetic justice - Amirthalingam his wife and a number of colleagues were killed by the very same terrorists that they had nurtured and brought up. And finally Alfred Duraiappah's killer and the entire cohort of the terrorists also met the same fate. ***** Masked gunmen kill Jaffna Mayor Shot dead outside temple Mr. Alfred Duraiappah, Mayor of Jaffna and President of the SLFP branch in Jaffna was shot dead yesterday afternoon at Punnelavy in the Vaddukodai electorate when he was about to enter a temple. Mr. D.K. Rajaratnam MMC, a member of the management committee of the temple who accompanied him was also shot at and injured in the arm. He is reported to be out of danger. According to first reports, three masked men shot at Mr. Duraiappah and Mr. Rajaratnam as they got off the Mayor's car. Immediately after the shooting the gunmen drove away in the Mayor's car which the police later found abandoned at Sendankulam. The Police have launched a massive search for the killers. A special police team headed by Mr. Ana Seneviratne DIG Range B is now in Jaffna conducting investigations. The team was sent on the orders of the Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike. The Jaffna Police cordoned off the entire peninsula minutes after the shooting. All vehicles are being searched by the police in an attempt to apprehend the assassins. The driver of the Mayor's car has given the police a brief identification of the assassins with regard to their clothes, police said. Mr. Duraiappah visits the temple every Sunday and Police believe the shooting was planned. The inquest into the death of Mr. Duraiappah will be held today by the Malakkam Magistrate, Mr. J.M.D. Jesurathnam. The Government Analyst and a ballistic expert

From the Daily News Archives chronology of LTTE terror

from Colombo are expected to testify at the inquest. Thousands gathered at the Jaffna hospital as the news of Mr. Duraiyappah's death spread. The Minister of Posts and Telecommunications Mr. Chellai Kumarasuriar visited the hospital later in the evening. Mr. Duraiyappah was 48. He entered politics in 1952 and became Mayor of Jaffna in 1958. In 1960 (March) he created a major upset in Jaffna politics when he beat the Tamil Congress leader Mr. G.G. Ponnambalam and a Federal Party candidate at the general election to win the Jaffna seat. In July of the same year he was reelected to the Jaffna seat defeating Mr. Ponnambalam and the Federal Party candidate. He lost at the 1965 and 1970 general elections. He was educated at St. John's College, Jaffna and later passed out as a Proctor from the Ceylon Law College. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 26, 2009

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Military in new 'tactical manoeuvre' to free civilians

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

April 7, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 459 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 7 -- The Military is to launch a decisive 'tactical manoeuvre' to free over hundreds of civilians held hostage by the **LTTE** in the thin 17sq. km. coastal land strip in Mullaitivu, the Defence Ministry said yesterday.

The Defence Ministry said the operation would be the largest humanitarian intervention by a conventional military force in modern times. On Sunday, the army completed the capturing of entire Puthukkudiyiruppu after fierce battle that lasted for more than three days, killing more than 500 **LTTE** cadres, including second level leaders of the **LTTE**. Now the remaining **LTTE** leaders and cadres were confined to the No- fire zone, where some thousands of civilians were being trapped. Meanwhile, five more **LTTE** bodies were identified as top level leaders of the **LTTE**. Among them head of the Artillery Brigade - Manivannan, head of the Mortar Brigade Gopal, head of the Radha Brigade Seelambaran, head of the Jeyanthan Brigade and former Batticaloa intelligence head Keerthi and senior leader of the 'Sodiya' **Women** Brigade Mohana. The ministry said that search and clear operations were being conducted by the troops in Puthukkudiyiruppu area recovered 72 more **LTTE** dead bodies yesterday, brining the number of **LTTE** bodies to 525. In addition, troops uncovered a fresh haul of arms and ammunition from the same area yesterday during extended search and clear operations. (SJ) Army Chief briefs US envoy US Ambassador in Sri Lanka Robert Blake met Army Commander Sarath Fonseka at the Army Headquarters yesterday and received an update on the status quo, related to the near completion of military offensives in the deep north and east of Puthukkudiyiruppu in the Wanni. The chief, giving a brief outline of the latest military achievements, loss of so many **LTTE** cadres and leaders in offensives, brewing civil unrest inside the No Fire Zone (NFZ) and probable future scenarios told the visiting diplomat that the remaining exodus of trapped civilians could be expected at any moment from now onwards, in view of prevailing ground realities in the NFZ, the army headquarters said in a statement. "A considerable number of middle-rung Tiger leaders are dead and gone and their organization has virtually paralyzed, unable to sustain military onslaught any longer. Recovery of so many dead Tigers proves this situation," the statement said quoting the army chief. The army chief further opined that **LTTE** leader Prabhakaran, despite loss of so many of his chieftains, might still be hiding, either inside the NFZ or an underground hideout. He also told the visiting diplomat that the troops are well-prepared for receipt of more and more civilians into cleared areas. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 11, 2009

Sri Lanka crushes rebels; Tamil Tiger leader killed as Sri Lankan troops overtake final rebel stronghold

therecord.com

May 19, 2009 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: FRONT; Pg. A1

Length: 1017 words

Byline: Ravi Nessman, The Associated Press

Dateline: COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

Body

Sri Lanka declared yesterday it had crushed the Tamil Tiger rebels, killing their chief, Velupillai Prabhakaran, and ending his 25-year quest for an independent homeland for minority Tamils.

State television broke into its regular programming to announce Prabhakaran's death, and the Government Information Department sent a text message to cellphones across the country confirming he was killed along with top deputies Soosai and Pottu Amman.

The announcement sparked mass celebrations around the country, and people poured into the streets of Colombo, dancing and singing. Prabhakaran's death has been seen as crucial to bringing closure to this war-wracked Indian Ocean island country.

If he had escaped, he could have used his large international smuggling network and the support of Tamil expatriates to spark a new round of guerrilla warfare here. His death in battle could still turn him into a martyr for other Tamil separatists.

While Prabhakaran was a hero to some, his group was branded a terrorist organization by several countries, including Canada and India.

It has staged hundreds of suicide attacks, including the 1991 assassination of former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi by a **female** bomber. The rebels also forcibly recruited child soldiers.

Sri Lanka's army chief, Lt.-Gen. Sarath Fonseka, said on television that his troops routed the last rebels from the northern war zone yesterday morning.

"We can announce very responsibly that we have liberated the whole country from terrorism," he told state television.

Fonseka and the commanders of the other security forces formally informed President Mahinda Rajapaksa of the victory yesterday evening in a ceremony broadcast live on television.

The military officials said troops closed in on Prabhakaran and his final cadre early yesterday.

Sri Lanka crushes rebels; Tamil Tiger leader killed as Sri Lankan troops overtake final rebel stronghold

He and his top deputies then drove an armour-plated van accompanied by a bus filled with rebel fighters toward approaching Sri Lankan forces, sparking a two-hour firefight, the officials said.

Troops eventually fired a rocket at the van, ending the battle, they said. The attack also killed Soosai, the head of the rebels' naval wing, and Pottu Amman, the group's feared intelligence commander, the officials said. One of Prabhakaran's sons was also killed.

Suren Surendiran, a spokesperson for the British Tamils' Forum, the largest organization for expatriate Tamils in Britain, said the community was in despair.

"The people are very sombre and very saddened. But we are ever determined and resilient to continue our struggle for Eelam," he said, invoking the name of the Tamils' hoped-for independent state. "We have to win the freedom and liberation of our people."

The rebels demanded a separate state for minority Tamils after years of marginalization at the hands of the Sinhalese majority.

Full-fledged war broke out in 1983 after the rebels killed 13 soldiers in an ambush, sparking anti-Tamil riots that human rights groups say killed as many as 2,000 people. By the time the war ended, more than 70,000 had been killed.

Diplomats had appealed for a humanitarian ceasefire in recent weeks to safeguard the tens of thousands of civilians trapped in the war zone.

Diplomats in Brussels said yesterday the European Union will endorse a call for an independent war crimes investigation into the killing of civilians in Sri Lanka.

British Foreign Secretary David Miliband says there have been "very grave allegations" of war crimes on both sides of the conflict, adding "they should be properly investigated."

The Associated Press

The Associated Press

Civil war timeline

Developments in Sri Lanka's conflict:

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

1983: Civil war begins.

1991: Tamil Tiger suicide bomber assassinates former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, apparently in revenge for sending peacekeeping troops who ended up fighting the rebels.

1993: Tamil Tiger suicide bomber kills Sri Lanka's president Ranasinghe Premadasa after his government's failed peace efforts.

February 2002: Sri Lankan government signs a ceasefire agreement with **Tamil Tigers**.

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

August 2005: Tigers blamed when Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, an ethnic Tamil who opposed a separate state, is assassinated.

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

Feb. 22, 2006: Government and rebel officials meet in Switzerland for peace talks and agree to de-escalate violence. A second round of peace talks a few months later is postponed as the two sides argue over transport and security.

June 8, 2006: Talks in Norway aimed at restoring peace collapse.

July 20, 2006: **Tamil Tigers** close sluice gates of an eastern reservoir, cutting water to more than 60,000 people, prompting the government to launch its first major offensive on Tiger territory since the 2002 ceasefire.

July 11, 2007: Government announces ouster of rebels from eastern Sri Lanka

Nov. 2, 2007: The head of the **Tamil Tigers**' political wing, S.P. Thamilselvan, believed to be the second-in-command of the group, is killed in a government air raid.

Jan. 2, 2008: Government says **Tamil Tigers** must disarm before any future peace talks, a day after the authorities decide to withdraw from an internationally brokered ceasefire.

Jan. 16, 2008: Sri Lanka's ceasefire deal officially terminated.

Aug. 2, 2008: Sri Lankan military says troops enter the district housing the Tamil Tiger rebels' de facto capital for the first time in 11 years.

Jan. 2, 2009: Military captures the **Tamil Tigers**' de facto capital, Kilinochchi.

Jan. 25, 2009: Government captures rebels' last major stronghold of Mullaittivu.

May 17, 2009: Surrounded rebels offer to lay down arms, saying the war has reached the "bitter end."

May 18, 2009: Government says it has captured the last rebel-held land and killed rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, his top deputies and his son Charles Anthony.

Graphic

Photo: MARKUS SCHREIBER, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS , Demonstrators protest yesterday next to the U.S. Embassy in Berlin. Sri Lanka declared it had crushed the Tamil Tiger rebels, killed their chief, Velupillai Prabhakaran, and ended three decades of civil war.

Load-Date: May 19, 2009

From Mavil Aru victory to the arrest of KP

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

August 9, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 2186 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Aug. 9 -- The Government of Sri Lanka and its people now breathe an air of freedom without a semblance of fear of **LTTE** terrorism that devastated the country for three decades as the alerted intelligence sleuths lay their widest ever dragnet to hunt down the last remaining threat to the country's national security with the arrest of self appointed Tiger Chief Selvarasa Pathmanathan or famously known as KP in a South East Asian country this week.

His arrest, which surprised the entire world like the death of Prabhakaran, marked the end of the terror regime of the **LTTE** with the rounding up of Selvarasa Pathmanathan considered and confirmed to be the last terror leader of the gang groomed by its leader Velupillai Prabhakaran who died in the banks of Nanthikadal lagoon when Army troops surrounded his location on May 19, 2009.

All the other terror leaders, who had been groomed by its leader Velupillai Prabhakaran to become partners of his terror kingdom, were killed hours before his death at the hands of the Security Forces as they made their final desperate escape bid from the Mullaivaikkal area on May 18, 2009.

Final reports now indicate that all the top rung and middle rung terror leaders, who were behind Tiger leader Prabhakaran, were killed either on April 5, 2009 or on May 18, 19, 2009 during fierce battles in Mullaivaikkal area.

So, defence authorities did not want to keep room for even a shadow of the Tiger outfit to exist freely, to spoil its triumph over the most ruthless terrorist outfit of the world although this ghost Tiger leader was wandering all over the world hiding his terror identity.

As KP was finally caught in the worldwide security dragnet against **LTTE** terror, some elements are trying to expose it as the global hunt down on Tamil leaders fighting for a fair cause of justice for the Tamils.

But the underlying fact here is that as hours, days, weeks and months passed after the triumph over world's ruthless terror outfit, people tend to forget the cruel ruthlessness of the **LTTE**.

Many are not aware of the fact that the defence authorities, certainly with the assistance of friendly nations supported the cracking down on terrorism, roping in the last Tiger leader (there may be other surviving Tiger leaders, but KP was the most prominent Tiger leader to survive after the defeat of the **LTTE**) exactly three years after Security Forces achieved its first victory against the inhuman acts of the **LTTE** the opening of the sluice gates of Mavil Aru.

It was the blessings of the humble peasants in Trincomalee South, who made out their living through paddy cultivation, bestowed on the Security Forces who fought fearlessly to open the sluice gates of the Mavil Aru anicut

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to restore the water supply for the people. It would certainly have given the Security Forces a tower of strength to reach new heights in their fight against LTTE terrorism.

And today, all these victories against terrorism reflect the great efforts of our Forces who fought for a genuine cause as they first fired shots against the LTTE to regain the control of Mavil Aru sluiceways which were arbitrarily closed by the LTTE depriving water to more than 15,000 population of their lifeline, paddy cultivation.

Although, the closure of the Mavil Aru sluice gates back fired on Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, who repented his wrong calculations and decisions, it was a matter between life and death for 15,000 population, even for the Tamils living in Selvanagar and Thoppur and Muttur areas in Trincomalee South.

The humanitarian operation to secure Mavil Aru sluiceways by the Commando troops on July 26, 2006 was made after serious consideration of the ground realities as the Government was well aware of the fact that there was no other solution than a military solution to restore drinking water supply for 30,000 people.

The Government was aware that Tigers would make undue demands to achieve their terror goals taking one of the basic human rights for ransom, but painting a humanitarian picture for their demands which had been the hallmark of their terror operations.

This was evident after LTTE forwarded conditions to open the Mavil Aru anicut through Norwegian facilitators who hurriedly flew to Kilinochchi to have discussions with the LTTE on the issue. The conditions forwarded by the LTTE to the Government were flatly rejected with Government Defence Affairs Spokesman Minister Keheliya Rambukwella saying, "Water should not be a negotiating tool".

The Government was matured in its thinking and was holding its patience to the maximum by the time the LTTE came out with this most brutal act against humanity. Though the LTTE tried to justify the closure of Mavil Aru, the previous and follow up terror operations by the LTTE very precisely indicates that the closure of Mavil Aru was the first step in its master military plan to take full control of the North and East.

They were marking time to hunt down the top military brass and weaken the military, whilst engaging in peace negotiation with the Government to hoodwink the international community. Their first target was the Army Commander, Lt. General Fonseka. But he was fortunate enough to survive the devastating suicide attack by the a female suicide cadre inside the Army Headquarters in Colombo on April 25, 2006.

By the time the LTTE closed down Mavil Aru, Lt. General Fonseka was recovering from his wounds in Singapore and was about to return to Colombo to take up the full command of the Army. However, the Government could not wait till his return to carry out the mission to regain the control of Mavil Aru anicut since it had to be done as priority issue.

The Chief of Staff of the Army Major General Nanda Mallawarachchi, who was appointed as the Acting Commander of the Sri Lanka Army after Lt. General Fonseka took wings to Singapore for medical treatment, was instructed by President Mahinda Rajapaksa as the Commander-in-Chief to launch the limited operation to regain the control of Mavil Aru anicut.

At the initial stage, two squadrons from the 1 Commando Regiment under Major Handunapthirana were deployed for the task of regaining the full control of Mavil Aru anicut and then 22 Division Commander in Trincomalee Brigadier Mendaka Samarasinghe (now Major General) was entrusted to oversee the military operation.

The military operation was launched as thousands of civilians staged protests in Kallar along with Sinhala Urumaya bhikkhus led by Athuraliye Ratana thera.

Troops based in Kallar had to fight a two-way battle to advance into the Mavil Aru anicut, their main goal on one side and preventing the protesting civilians stepping into Mavil Aru through Kallar area.

The 222 Brigade Commander Lt. Colonel Sarath Wijesinghe took charge of the controlling of the protesting civilians whilst Commando troops engaged in the humanitarian operation while Parliamentary leader of the Jathika Hela

From Mavil Aru victory to the arrest of KP

Urumaya, Athuraliye Rathana Thera, was trying to lead hundreds of protesters to reach the Mavil Aru sluice gate which the **LTTE** had closed depriving farmers of water.

Accusing the government of being afraid of the terrorists, Rathana Thera, accompanied by three other monks, said they would take over the sluiceways and provide water for the people.

But the Commander of the 222 regiment Lt. Colonel Sarath Wijesinghe prevented the angry mob of farmers from reaching the sluice gate guarded by about 25 LTTEers.

Lt. Colonel Sarath Wijesinghe advised the restive mob that it was very dangerous to reach the spot without being well prepared and the Army personnel at Kallar camp were not enough to make adequate preparations to reach the sluice gate and open it.

With a promise to the villagers to open the water gates within 24 hours, Army moved forward towards the west gate of Mavil Aru covering the irrigation engineers. In the process, **LTTE** fired mortars towards the Army, and the Army counter attacked.

The complex nature of the operation was evident only after troops launched their operation on July 28, 2006 as the **LTTE** had commenced this operation keeping the major supply route from Sampur area whilst taking full cover of the Mavil Aru bund to fight against the advancing troops. Few Commando troops had to sacrifice their lives as **LTTE** had heavily booby trapped the area to prevent troops reaching the anicut.

However, the **LTTE** plans were evident on the third day of the Mavil Aru operation. On August 01 at 2.25 p.m the **LTTE** launched barrages of artillery rounds into the Trincomalee Naval base from their heavy calibre guns located in Sampur area.

They launched this attack in support of the sea attack on the troops carrier which was carrying more than 700 troops from Kankesanthurai to Trincomalee to reinforce the troops engaged in the Mavil Aru operation.

Now it is evident that the **LTTE** had attacked the ship which was carrying nearly 600 commando troops based in Jaffna peninsula in support of the Mavil Aru operation.

Fortune was always with the troops as the **LTTE** attempt to launch an attack on the troops carrier which was about to enter Trincomalee harbour was effectively foiled by Naval troops.

If the **LTTE** was successful in their mission the history of the Eelam war IV would have been a completely different one today. It was the courage of the Security Forces in their fearlessness in facing the enemy that always spurred them on to survive desperate Tiger attacks.

The launch of the attacks on Kaddaparichan, Muttur, Selvanagar and Mahindapura Army detachments forced thousands of civilians living in Trincomalee South to flee from their villages. If not for the officers of the calibre of Major Senaka Wijesuriya, (now Colonel) second in Command of the 6 Sri Lanka Light Infantry Battalion based in Muttur, the story today would have been a completely different one.

Along with the Mavil Aru operation, Army troops and Naval troops fought back fearlessly to defend their camps for days until reinforcement arrived to flush them out.

It was a major plan by the **LTTE** to completely take over the route connecting Batticaloa to Trincomalee and then link it to the North across Yan Oya to create a free corridor between the East and the Northern jungles and to isolate the Trincomalee Harbour which was the bridge connecting the troops in the Jaffna peninsula with the South.

The **LTTE** took the same approach to chase away the Sinhalese and Muslim population living in the South of Trincomalee to ensure that it was a Tamil dominated area. But, troops were able to foil all those master plans by the **LTTE** whilst engaging in the Mavil Aru humanitarian operation.

From Mavil Aru victory to the arrest of KP

The LTTE ran amok in Trincomalee and launched claymore attacks targeting the Security Forces plying on Kanatale-Kallar Road which became the main supply route for the troops engaged in the mission.

Troops engaged in the mission were changed from time to time from Infantry troops to Commando troops and Commando troops to Infantry troops as the resistance of the LTTE was so heavy.

Special Forces troops were deployed from the Southern edge of the Mavil Aru to directly target Tiger cadres taking cover of the tank bund and to isolate LTTE cadres dominating the tank bund.

It paved the way for a major breakthrough in the operation and for the troops to take control of the Mavil Aru sluice gates. However, all these operations were carried out without the knowledge of the public as thousands of civilians had abandoned their villages by this time and were unaware what was going on inside. But the true result of this humanitarian operation was evident around 8.30 p.m. on August 08, 2006.

People living in Kallar village, the first village to benefit from the waters flowing from the Mavil Aru, saw water first flowing in the canals. The news spread all over the country but with an ambiguity as LTTE too claimed that it had volunteered to open the sluice gates of Mavil Aru.

But it was following the press release issued by the Media Centre for National Security that cleared the doubts of the people about the achievements of the valiant troops.

The press release said, "The sluice gates of the Mavil Aru anicut were opened at 8 last night accomplishing the noble objectives of the humanitarian mission which lasted 19 days.

"The free flow of water from the Mavil Aru anicut was stopped on July 20 by the LTTE terrorists, depriving life sustaining water to over 15,000 families and damaging over 30,000 paddy lands. This inhuman act by the LTTE terrorists was a threat not only to their livelihood, but also to their very survival.

"Since no responsible government can turn a blind eye to such an inhuman atrocity, after resorting to all possible peaceful means, a limited military action was launched to open the sluice gates".

"Meanwhile, as diversionary tactics, terrorists tried to overrun the Muttur town killing civilians and destroying property, forcing them to flee for safety.

The Security Forces were able to drive away the terrorists and take full control of the town. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Surit Das at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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The largest hostage rescue in the world's history

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

April 26, 2009 Sunday

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Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 26 -- Hostage takings have been reported sporadically, throughout the world.

However, none was even closer to the recent captivity of approximate of 250,000 of civilians by the Tamil Tiger terrorists (**LTTE**) in the north eastern jungles. Over the past few days over 100,000 hostages were rescued by the Sri Lankan Forces - the largest number of hostages rescued in such a short period, anywhere in the world. **LTTE** is banned world-wide as a terror outfit for their work on suicide bombings, child soldiering, organized crime, and unlimited human rights violations. In addition to the billions of rupees in property damage, **LTTE** violence has consumed over 140,000 lives; the majority had been **women** and children. Three decades of government-initiated and third party mediated negotiations as well as peace discussions were failed.

Terrorists have constantly violated all ceasefire agreements. The final turning point towards defeating terrorism in Sri Lanka was attained in mid-2008, after three years of careful and strategic planning by the Government. **LTTE** terrorists never anticipated such a rapid advance of the military, which has now completely encircled them. It is important to note that in spite of the military disadvantages of it, to-date, the Sri Lankan government continues to supply food, water and medicine to the terrorist held areas. Up to now, about 180,000 civilians have been fled safely from the terrorist's captivity. To safe guard these civilians and to establish a safe route for them to escape **LTTE** prison, in concurrence with the UN, a no-fire zone (a safe haven) was established by the Government. Many who attempted to escape were shot or maimed. The UN and other agencies, and those civilians who survived from the captivity confirmed that terrorists used them as human shields, forced them to fight with them and to participate in suicidal missions. In addition to the strategic ground and navel blockade of weapons supply, destruction of its naval hardware, the fall of **LTTE** is also in part due to sheer exhaustion and the lack of confidence in its leadership. Nevertheless, some of these terrorists have managed to escape by intermingling with civilians, and are currently engaged in sporadic attacks on civilian targets in the rest of the country, to divert attention from the battle front in the North. Meanwhile, the government has initiated a massive USD 150 million humanitarian programme to care for the IDPs with the assistance from the UN and others. Battle hardened Under the direct supervision of the Army Commander and the Defence Secretary, three major army divisions surrounded **LTTE** terrorists in an area of about 200 sq km. Due to successful army advances, this area has now been reduced to less than 18 sq km - a relatively thin strip of land consisting of the no-fire zone. Battle hardened ground troops have been supported by Special Forces and the Air Mobile Brigade, as well as an increasingly sophisticated Navy who have developed the skills to carry out targeted, small group operations minimizing collateral damage. Meanwhile, terrorists keep on resorting to the inhuman practice of suicide bombing and use of civilian, human shields. The Government had repeatedly requested the terrorists to surrender, to end this siege. However, **LTTE** leadership has opted not to do so, and have ordered them to fight to death. This decision had already led to the demise of most of the **LTTE** terrorist's leaders. Those remaining few hundred fighters, half have been assigned to protect its leader; another example of the self-centered leadership style of the **LTTE**. It is only a matter of days, before the Tamil Tiger Terrorists are completely

The largest hostage rescue in the world's history

eliminated. Hence, there is no reason for the continual suffering inflicted upon these hostages by the Tamil Tiger terrorists. Many governments and leading agencies including the UN have repeatedly requested the Tigers to release their captives unharmed; but these terrorists have refused to do so. All key players including the four Co-chairs, India, the UN as well as independent groups like the Crisis Group, and envoys like Lakdar Brahimi and Lord Neseby, etc., have said that the quickest and most humane way to end conflict now is to release the hostage, for LTTE to disarm and surrender its cadres and for the Government to consider fair trial for cadres. Recent interviews by the Chair of the UK-all party MPs, Lord Neseby and the UN under-secretary, Sir John Holmes, also confirmed this. The UN Secretary General has refused to call for a ceasefire. He welcomed the Government's recent approach of two no-hostility periods, further facilitating the safe rescue of trapped civilians. Yet, LTTE has unequivocally stated that they will not release civilians from their hostage. Therefore, a ceasefire would make no difference to detained civilians. Ceasefire would only allow terrorist an opportunity to re-arm and re-group, which can lead to further hostage taking, and causing chaos, death, and misery. If anyone currently suggesting a ceasefire, they must be reacting to misguided information provided by the LTTE-related paid lobbyists. The majority of Tamils in Sri Lanka lives happily and successfully, outside North and the North-Eastern areas, and do not want a separate state (so-called Eelam). It is ironic that there is a recent worldwide sudden rush of destructive behaviour by small groups of Tamils who are pleading with their governments to impose a ceasefire in Sri Lanka. Who are these suddenly emerging protestors, and why are they protesting now? Accumulating evidence suggest that they have little interest towards the trapped hostages or their safety. Moreover, there does not seem to be any sincerity of these self-serving, sporadic protests by a handful of Tamils in various countries. The main interest appears to be to save the LTTE leadership. Many of expatriate Tamils protesting abroad seem to be the ones who have been donating significant amounts of money to this terrorist group. They suddenly realised that their long-term investment will soon disappear without any chance of return for their investments. Entities Currently, the Sri Lankan government is rightly proceeding with the help of its armed forces to free thousands of Tamils held in captivity by the LTTE. Sovereign Sri Lanka can handle its internal affairs, and it is unwarranted and unwise to interfere with its national security issues by outside entities. Recent liberation of over 30,000 captives in a single day, from the world's largest hostage taking, further demonstrates its capabilities to handle the situation. Terrorism and the violence will never succeed. The Government will soon effectively eradicate the LTTE terrorism. In spite of the carnage they created over a three decades, LTTE has miserably failed both domestically and internationally, wasting hundreds of lives and infrastructure worth billions of rupees. The LTTE has also disappointed its worldwide - thousands of financial donors who fueled this misery. Those who funded this war with selfish expectations for major favors in the future from the LTTE regime must now be deeply disappointed. This has now led to the recent sporadic protests by Tamil expatriates. The civilized world will never condone nor reward terrorism, child soldiering, or hostage taking. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Features - Silent slaughter; As the West ignores the plight of thousands of Tamils trapped in the Sri Lanka war zone, JOHN PILGER fills the void

Morning Star

May 16, 2009 Saturday

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Body

In the early 1960s, it was the Irish of Derry who would phone late at night, speaking in a single breath, spilling out stories of discrimination and injustice. Who listened to their truth, until the violence began?

Bengalis from what was then East Pakistan did much the same. Their urgent whispers described terrible state crimes that the news ignored and they implored us reporters to "let the world know."

Palestinians speaking above the din of crowded rooms in Bethlehem and Beirut asked no more.

For me, the most tenacious distant voices have been the Tamils of Sri Lanka, to whom we ought to have listened a very long time ago.

It is only now, as they take to the streets of Western cities and the persecution of their compatriots reaches a crescendo, that we listen, though not intently enough to understand and act.

The Sri Lankan government has learned an old lesson from, I suspect, a modern master - Israel. In order to conduct a slaughter, you ensure the pornography is unseen, illicit at best.

You ban foreigners and their cameras from Tamil towns such as Mullivaikal, which was bombarded recently by the Sri Lankan army, and you lie that the 75 people killed in the hospital were blown up quite wilfully by a Tamil suicide bomber.

You then give reporters a ride into the jungle, providing what in the news business is called a dateline, which suggests an eyewitness account, and you encourage the gullible to disseminate only your version and its lies. Gaza is the model.

From the same masterclass you learn to manipulate the definition of terrorism as a universal menace, thus ingratiating yourself with the "international community" (Washington) as a noble sovereign state blighted by an "insurgency" of mindless fanaticism. The truth and lessons of the past are irrelevant.

And, having succeeded in persuading the United States and Britain to proscribe your insurgents as terrorists, you affirm you are on the right side of history, regardless of the fact that your government has one of the world's worst human rights records and practises terrorism by another name. Such is Sri Lanka.

This is not to suggest that those who resist attempts to obliterate them culturally if not actually are innocent in their methods. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) have spilled their share of blood and perpetrated their own atrocities. But they are the product, not the cause, of an injustice and a war that long pre-date them. Neither is Sri

Features - Silent slaughter As the West ignores the plight of thousands of Tamils trapped in the Sri Lanka war zone, JOHN PILGER fills the void

Lanka's civil strife as unfathomable as it is often presented - an ancient religious-ethnic rivalry between the Hindu Tamils and the Buddhist Sinhalese government.

Sri Lanka, as British-ruled Ceylon, was subjected to classic divide and rule. The British brought Tamils from India as virtual slave labour while building an educated Tamil middle class to run the colony. At independence in 1948, the new political elite, in its rush for power, cultivated ethnic support in a society whose imperative should have been the eradication of poverty. Language became the spark.

The election of a government pledging to replace English, the lingua franca, with Sinhalese was a declaration of war on the Tamils. Under the new law, Tamils almost disappeared from the civil service by 1970 and, as "nationalism" seduced both left and right, discrimination and anti-Tamil riots followed.

The formation of a Tamil resistance, notably the LTTE, the Tamil Tigers, included a demand for a state in the north of the country. The response of the government was judicial killing, torture, disappearances and, more recently, the reported use of cluster bombs and chemical weapons. The Tigers responded with their own crimes, including suicide bombing and kidnapping.

In 2002, a ceasefire was agreed. It held until last year, when the government decided to finish off the Tigers. Tamil civilians were urged to flee to military-run "welfare camps," which have become the symbol of an entire people under vicious detention - and worse - with nowhere to escape the army's fury.

This is Gaza again, although the historical parallel is the British treatment of Boer women and children more than a century ago, who "died like flies," as a witness wrote.

Foreign aid workers have been banned from Sri Lanka's camps, except the International Committee of the Red Cross, which has described a catastrophe in the making. The United Nations says that 60 Tamils a day are being killed in the shelling of a government-declared "no-fire zone."

In 2003, the Tigers proposed a devolved interim self-governing authority that included possibilities for negotiation. Today, the government gives the impression it will use its imminent "victory" to "permanently solve" the "Tamil minority problem," as many of its more rabid supporters threaten. The army commander says all of Sri Lanka "belongs" to the Sinhalese majority. The word "genocide" is used by Tamil expatriates, perhaps loosely, but the fear is true.

India could play a critical part. The south Indian state of Tamil Nadu has a Tamil-speaking population with centuries-long ties to the Tamils of Sri Lanka. In the current Indian election campaign, anger over the siege of Tamils in Sri Lanka has brought hundreds of thousands to rallies.

Having initially helped to arm the Tigers, Indian governments sent "peacekeeping" troops to disarm them. Delhi now appears to be allowing the Sinhalese supremacists in Colombo to "stabilise" its troubled neighbour. In a responsible regional role, India could stop the killing and begin to broker a solution.

The great moral citadels in London and Washington offer merely silent approval of the violence and tragedy.

No appeals are heard in the United Nations from them.

David Miliband has called for a "ceasefire," as he tends to do in places where British "interests" are served, such as the 14 impoverished countries racked by armed conflict where the British government licenses arms shipments. In 2005, British arms exports to Sri Lanka rose by 60 per cent.

The distant voices from there should be heard, urgently.

This article appeared in the New Statesman.

Features - Silent slaughter As the West ignores the plight of thousands of Tamils trapped in the Sri Lanka war zone, JOHN PILGER fills the void

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

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Huge civilian influx

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

April 19, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 499 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 19 -- The agitation brewing among the hostages against the **LTTE** terrorists in the No Fire Zone (NFZ) have eventually broken the iron gates of the **LTTE**'s human prison as nearly 2,857 civilians have escaped the **LTTE**, yesterday. They have arrived to the 58 Division which is in close vicinity of the NFZ.

The **LTTE**, hoping for a last minute sympathetic response from the international community to call for a ceasefire to strengthen their fighting power, is holding thousands of civilians as a human shield despite repeated requests from the international community including the UN to let the civilians have freedom of movement. The sudden influx of civilians was recorded after the 48-hour 'humanitarian pause' ended last Tuesday. According to sources, the group included 832 **women**, 772 men and children (Boys 680 and girls 645). A group of over 5,000 hostages were planning to escape and have had heated arguments with the terrorists who were trying to prevent them crossing the FDLs. According to civilians, the **LTTE** had ordered the terrorists to open fire at the massive crowd. Thereafter half of them had run back while others managed to escape. "The **LTTE** could not control the massive crowd. Civilians say that people were waiting for the military to rescue them", G-O-C of the 58 Division, Brigadier Shavendra Silva said. He said that the civilians were able to motivate some terrorists who were guarding the FDLs to facilitate them to escape. "Some civilians had threatened the terrorists and some had fights with them to make the move", he said. Among the civilians, there were casualties due to anti personnel mine blasts and gun shot injuries. They were immediately given medical treatment by the medical personnel of the Division. The Brigadier Silva said that he was expecting more civilians to come in the next few days and his troops were capable to handle any number from the NFZ. "Civilians who have fled to Army controlled areas are confident of the military", he said adding that his troops had managed to provide facilities for over 8,000 civilians who reached the Division in one single day two months ago. He said that the misconception created by the **LTTE** among the civilians that the soldiers were ruthless and barbaric was fading away since the soldiers welcome them as soon as they reach the government controlled areas. "The main problem is that the **LTTE** is still holding civilians. They have mined and heavily guarded all the possible gaps leading to our areas near the lagoon", he said. After initial screening and necessary medical treatment and refreshments, the civilians are transported to the nearest welfare centres. According to intelligence sources, civilians in large numbers are getting organised against the **LTTE** in order to escape from their hold. **LTTE** communications monitored have revealed that some terrorists have facilitated their kith and kin to flee secretly. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Huge civilian influx

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Tiger leader in move to flee country accepting his defeat

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

April 12, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 1981 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 12 -- The LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran along with his Deputy Pottu Amman, who had a narrow escape from being caught by the Security Forces, might be conducting a post mortem to the incident that ended last Sunday. More than 75 per cent of its leadership and the LTTE lost their last stronghold Puthukudiyiruppu to the Security Forces.

The LTTE leader, who groomed these so-called terror leaders for more than three decades, would not have thought that they would have to face such a destiny. All his second and third level leaders got killed in battle. What LTTE leader never imagined even in his dreams unfolded in reality last Sunday as the 58 Division commanded by Brigadier Shavendra Silva and 53 Division commanded by Major General Kamal Gunaratne finished off the long siege on the last one square km in Puthukudiyiruppu stronghold clearing the entire area after fierce battle with the Tiger leaders and cadres trapped inside. Biggest defeat Though LTTE had faced defeat after defeat for the past two and half years, according to senior military officials, they did not face a defeat of this magnitude ever in its history. They lost their all strongholds but never lost their top level leaders in such large numbers at any of the battles they had ever fought. Therefore, the military manoeuvre by the 58 Division and the 53 Division under the directives of Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka, will go down not in the military history of Sri Lanka but also into the world history on fight against terrorism as the most effective and efficient military manoeuvre that caused the death of more than 75 per cent leadership of a terror outfit, more especially of the most ruthless terror outfit in the world. If LTTE had a strength to sustain as a terror outfit, all that strength perished once they lost their last stronghold, Puthukudiyiruppu as they have lost all the leaders who could steer the organisation. Therefore, the LTTE which still maintains a considerable number of cadres lacks, the capability to direct them into a battle at its last stages of existence in the No Fire Zone. Therefore, the siege on their last territory has become a very decisive turning point in the existence of the LTTE as a terror organisation as its strong structure has been shattered after this massive military blow on its leadership. Now LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran has been left only with his Intelligence Wing leader Pottu Amman and Sea Tiger leader Soosai. But it is still a question as to why LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran who was aware of the military siege even a day ahead the military operation had put the lives of such a massive number of Tiger leaders at peril. In one hand the Tiger leader displayed his selfishness or he failed to give leadership to remaining Tiger cadres to rescue the trapped cadres inside Puthukudiyiruppu. According to the military there had been a long silence inside Puthukudiyiruppu once troops lay siege on it on April 1. It very clearly indicated that the move by the 58 and 53 Divisions had surprisingly encircled the Tiger cadres inside the last terrain they held inside Puthukudiyiruppu and Iranapalai. As described in this column last week the 58 Division troops made a North to South move from Ampalavanpokkanai to Pachchapulmudai junction whilst 53 Division troops made South to North move to completely surround more than one sq km terrain held by the LTTE. The move was basically planned as the troops operating in Puthukudiyiruppu North and Iranapalai area faced heavy resistance from the LTTE. The nature of the resistance very clearly indicated that the top rung Tiger leaders were operating

Tiger leader in move to flee country accepting his defeat

inside that terrain as troops could not advance even 100 meters per day at the last days of the operations they conducted in Iranapalai. At the initial stage troops never expected such a large number of Tiger cadres inside that terrain but it was Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka who consistently maintained that more than 400 cadres are trapped inside Iranapalai area. Defences Strengthened The 58 Division and the 53 Division expecting a massive counter attack strengthened their defences surrounding the Iranapalai area as the number of Tiger cadres trapped inside the terrain were large in numbers. The 11 Sri Lanka Light Infantry battalion, 9 Gemunu Watch battalion, 8, 12 and 20 Gajaba Regiment battalions were engaged in this operation from the 58 Division whilst 5 Vijayaba Infantry Regiment and 6 Gajaba Regiment attached to the 53 Division took part in surrounding this terrain. Therefore, it was impossible for the LTTE to break the Security Forces Defences either to flee from the area or for the Tigers break the defences behind to rescue the Tiger cadres trapped inside. But, Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran or Intelligence Wing leader Pottu Amman could not launch an effective counter attack to rescue Tiger cadres although they promised to send reinforcements to the area in support of the Tiger cadres trapped inside. It was under these circumstances the Tiger leaders had to face their death at the hands of the Security Forces. Theepan, the LTTE overall operation commander was the most senior military leader to be killed in this battle. LTTE Women's Wing leaders Vithusha from the Malathi Brigade and Thurga from the Sothya Brigade were also among the 12 Tiger leaders killed in this battle. LTTE artillery leader Manivannan, former Eastern Intelligence Wing leader Keerthi, Batticaloa leader Nagulan, Ratha Brigade leader Seelamabaran, Mortar leader Gopal, Gadafi former bodyguard of Prabhakaran, Charles Anthony Brigade leader Amithab were also killed in the battle. The next senior most military leader Bhanu has also sustained critical injuries but managed to escape from the area before troops surrounded the area. However, there were speculations that he also succumbed to his injuries later but there was no confirmation from the LTTE side about his death. The death of Theepan created a large vacuum into the military wing of the LTTE as he was the man who managed to keep the Security Forces in Muhamalai and Kilali constructing massive defences along that terrain. His body was collected by the 6 Gajaba Regiment troops attached to the 53 Division. According to the Army more than 520 Tiger cadres have been killed in this battle and it has been confirmed through the bodies collected by the troops inside Iranapalai and North East of Puthukudiyiruppu area. The LTTE radio transmissions itself has confirmed that 570 Tiger cadres were killed during this battle. Unlike in the past the LTTE this time cannot cover up their humiliating defeat in their last stronghold as all their leaders got killed without leaving any room for them to escape from the area. Most significant The most significant fact here is that the LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, at last put all the Tiger leaders in danger and continued to survive mingling with the Tamil civilians living inside the No Fire Zone. At last, the leader who made false promises to the Tamil Diaspora across the globe through the pro-LTTE media network, has to accept the fact that their organisation has been totally defeated by the Sri Lankan Security Forces following the fall of Puthukudiyiruppu which had been developed by the LTTE for the past 25 years as their clandestine operational centre. But the Security Forces who completed the mission in Puthukudiyiruppu are now getting ready to have a giant leap forward to rescue the civilians trapped inside the No-Fire-Zone crossing the massive terrain between Puthukudiyiruppu and the lagoon separating the No-Fire-Zone and the mainland. The 58 Division under the command of Brigadier Shavendra Silva has already reached the edges of the No-Fire-Zone from the Western direction and are operating just outside the No-Fire-Zone. Although there were media reports to indicate that the 58 Division has already entered the No-Fire-Zone there was no truth behind that story as they were operating outside the No-Fire-Zone as of yesterday. As 58 Division troops reached the boundaries of the No-Fire-Zone from the Western direction, the 53 Division too is poised to reach the Western edge of the No-Fire-Zone along the A-35 road and was above to reach their goal soon. The 55 Division operating in the North of Puthumattalan is also yet to reach the Northern edge of the No Fire Zone. Therefore, the Security Forces are now heading towards the biggest hostage rescue mission in the world, as described by Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka. Final goal As troops reach towards their final goal it has been reported that Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran who had taken refuge in Vellamullaivaikkal in the No-Fire-Zone is in the process of constructing a massive earth bund to prevent Security Forces entering into the No Fire Zone. The fleeing civilians have revealed that the LTTE is increasing the pressure on the civilians living there and trying their best to keep the civilians under their arrest without allowing them to flee from the area. The heavy rains pouring into Puthukudiyiruppu and towards the No-Fire-Zone for the past few days have made the life of these civilians more miserable. It has put both Security Forces and civilian life difficult in that terrain. However, the Security Forces are monitoring the activities inside the No-Fire-Zone that has more than 23,000 tents put up for the civilians. But there is no confirmation that all those tents were occupied by the civilians. The motive of the LTTE is to exaggerate the number of civilians trapped inside. The international

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community that is keenly observing the plight of the civilians trapped inside could be easily misled by the large number of tents inside the No Fire Zone. As the troops are poised to enter the No-Fire-Zone it has been reported that the Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran is making an effort to flee the country apparently with the assistance of Norwegian Government. Although there had been no official intimation about the discussions the **LTTE** had with the Norwegian Government it has been reported that the **LTTE** Political leader Nadesan had lengthy discussion with the Norwegians about the situation there in the No Fire Zone. Diplomatic sources indicate that Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran has apparently agreed to a rescue mission by a Western country. He has agreed to this offer after he lost all his top level leaders in the Puthukudiyiruppu battle as there is no point for him to operate there in the No-Fire-Zone without the ability to give leadership to the remaining cadres. Amidst this situation the US Ambassador Robert Blake who met Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka this week had apparently made a request for him to agree to a seven days ceasefire to rescue the civilians trapped inside the No Fire Zone. But the Army Commander has reportedly said that any decision to enter into ceasefire should be taken by the Government but has agreed to have a 48-hour pause in firing if there is a guarantee that civilians are allowed to move out of the No-Fire-Zone freely. Therefore, diplomatic moves are now on to get the **LTTE** agreed to allow the civilians to move out of the No Fire Zone. However, the Government also maintains the position that it will not agree to any ceasefire with the **LTTE** at this juncture as possibilities are very high that the **LTTE** may use such an opportunity to strengthen itself or to flee the country with the support of outsiders. The Government and the Security Forces are determined to rescue the civilians safely and also to see an end to **LTTE** terror once and for all. So the coming days will be very critical as troops are poised to go ahead with their strategy to free the trapped civilians and bring relief to the entire nation. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Once 'liberated,' now frustrated; Sense of betrayal grows among Tamils detained in camps by Sri Lanka

The International Herald Tribune

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Byline: Lydia Polgreen - The New York Times Media Group

Dateline: CHEDIKKULUM, Sri Lanka

Body

When the piercing whistle and sharp thuds of artillery shells grew faint, S. Theventhran ran. After days of cowering in a narrow, open trench on a strip of beach in the northeastern corner of Sri Lanka, the fighting had suddenly shifted.

He grabbed his wife and dashed to safety across a wide, shallow lagoon, cheered by the sight of Sri Lankan Army soldiers helping to safety the wounded and terrified survivors of the last stand of the **Tamil Tigers**, who had held nearly 300,000 Tamil civilians hostage.

More than two months later Mr. Theventhran, a 56-year-old Tamil civil servant, finds himself once again a prisoner, this time of the people who freed him from the Tigers' grip.

"We were liberated," he said in an interview at one of the sprawling, closed camps set up here to house those displaced in the war against the rebel group, known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. "Now we are prisoners again. I lost everything in this war. The Tigers killed my son. I lost my property. Now I have lost my freedom, too."

The Sri Lankan government has portrayed its final battle against the 26-year insurgency by the **Tamil Tigers**, which ended in late May with the killing of the group's leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, as a rescue mission to liberate civilians held hostage by one of the world's richest and most ruthless armed groups, branded as terrorists by governments across the globe.

"We can't say this was a war, it was a humanitarian operation to safeguard the people of the area," Sri Lanka's president, Mahinda Rajapaksa, said in a rare interview this week. "They knew we were not against the Tamil people, against the civilians. This was only against the terrorists."

Many of the residents of these camps are grateful to the government for freeing them from the Tigers, who claimed to be fighting for the rights of Sri Lanka's Tamil minority but used civilians as cannon fodder and forcibly conscripted men, boys and even girls to fight.

But as hundreds of thousands of Tamils remain locked behind razor wire in camps almost entirely off limits to journalists, human rights investigators and political leaders, gratitude is quickly giving way to frustration and anger as it becomes clear that reconciliation and finding a political solution to the grievances of the Tamils and other minority groups in Sri Lanka will have to wait.

Once 'liberated,' now frustrated Sense of betrayal grows among Tamils detained in camps by Sri Lanka

The government claims that these people are a security risk because Tamil Tiger fighters are hiding among them. So far about 10,000 fighters have been identified, mostly by turning themselves in, according to government officials.

Conditions in the camps have improved considerably since the early days in April and May, when the sudden influx of hundreds of thousands of people caught the government and aid groups flatfooted. Sturdy shelters are being built in the hundreds to replace hot, flimsy tents.

Children are attending schools, and health centers and hospitals are helping check the spread of infectious disease. New water pumps and toilets have made life a little more bearable for the displaced.

But that has done little to tamp down the impatience of those living here. The screening process has lasted far longer than most people had imagined it would.

Mr. Rajapaksa said he had ordered that 80 percent be resettled by the end of the year. But government officials say that this goal may be tough to meet because of extensive land mines across much of north.

Many of the displaced people here said they would happily leave the crowded camps to stay with relatives elsewhere in the country until they could return to their villages. Some elderly people have been allowed to leave, but government officials refused to say when others who have been screened would be released.

Diplomats, analysts, aid workers and ordinary Sri Lankans worry that the historic chance to finally bring to a close one of the world's most enduring and vicious ethnic conflicts is slipping away as the government curtails the rights of Tamil civilians in its efforts to stamp out the last remnants of the Tigers.

"The government told these people it would look after them," said V. Anandasangaree, a prominent Tamil politician who has been a staunch supporter of the government's fight against the **Tamil Tigers**. "But instead, they have locked them up like animals with no date certain of when they will be released. This is simply asking for another conflict later on down the road."

Mr. Rajapaksa said that the residents of the camps, which the government refers to as "welfare villages," must be confined for security reasons because anyone could be a hidden rebel fighter.

Indeed, the murky status of the people held here in what many describe as internment camps is emblematic of the conundrum at the heart of Sri Lanka's long and deadly civil war. The **Tamil Tigers** so thoroughly insinuated themselves into the Tamil community, particularly here in the **Tamil Tigers'** former stronghold in the north, that in the government's eyes, the two have become virtually synonymous.

"They recruited everybody," Mr. Rajapaksa said, from old men to teenage girls. "Everyone was ready to take the gun."

Mr. Rajapaksa, who was elected in 2005 after promising to end the war, has cast the struggle against the **Tamil Tigers** as part of the war against terror, adopting the stark moral language of the Bush administration. He is fond of saying that there are no minorities in Sri Lanka, "only people who love their country and people who don't love their country," an echo of the us-against-them rhetoric of former President George W. Bush.

Sri Lanka's government has very publicly celebrated its triumph over the Tigers as the world's first purely military defeat of an insurgent terrorist group. Using ingenious guerrilla tactics, child and **female** suicide bombers and even a small navy and air force, the Tigers waged a pitiless battle to sever a homeland for the minority Tamil ethnic group. That battle spanned nearly three decades and left tens of thousands of people dead and uprooted hundreds of thousands more.

But that victory has come at a heavy cost, according to human rights organizations here and abroad. The government has clamped down hard on dissent. Journalists have been mysteriously killed, arrested and chased from the country. Thousands of Tamils have disappeared, presumably arrested by the state on suspicion of being

Once 'liberated,' now frustrated Sense of betrayal grows among Tamils detained in camps by Sri Lanka

Tamil Tiger fighters, according to Mano Ganesan, a Tamil member of Parliament who has been tracking disappearances for years.

And questions linger about how many civilians were killed in the last bloody weeks of the war, when the Tigers were pushed onto a narrow stretch of beach along with hundreds of thousands of civilians. After insisting for months that no civilians had died, Mr. Rajapaksa acknowledged that some must have been killed and said the government was investigating the last days of the war.

"My instruction was there cannot be any single civilian casualties," he said. "The army was very careful."

But the United Nations has said that at least 7,000 people died up to the end of April, when the last push began. No one is sure how many were killed in the last few weeks of fighting, but witnesses said the battlefield was covered with corpses. Satellite images of the zone that reveal large, scorched craters seem to belie government claims that no heavy weapons were used there.

"We had to walk over dead bodies," said Priyadharshai Jeeveraj, whose husband, a salaried police officer who had worked for the Tigers, was arrested after he fled on the last day of the fighting and has not been seen since. "There were hundreds of bodies everywhere."

The Sri Lankan government has managed to brush off outside efforts to investigate what happened in the final days of the fighting, quashing a move at the Human Rights Council in Geneva in May.

But the longer the camps for displaced Tamils remain closed and hidden from view, the harder it will be for the Sri Lankan government to keep the support of the foreign countries helping to pay the millions of dollars required to feed, shelter and clothe the displaced.

"Perversely, if we keep helping, we become the jailer of these people," said one diplomat from a country that is helping pay for the relief effort. Aid organizations that had initially been barred from working in the camps have largely stayed silent to maintain their ability to help the displaced. But many have reservations about their role.

"The longer it goes on, the more it looks like internment," said one aid official, who asked not to be identified to protect the charity's work.

But Mr. Rajapaksa said that preventing the Tamil Tigers from regrouping was his first priority.

"The citizens' security is No.1. You must remember that we have just defeated the most ruthless terrorist group," he said. "We are very careful. I can't let this become like Baghdad."

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CAPTION:

Clockwise from top: Hundreds of thousands of Tamils are being held in camps like this one near Vavuniya, in northern Sri Lanka. The government says new water pumps have made life a little more bearable for the displaced. "The citizens' security is No.1," President Mahinda Rajapaksa said this week. "We are very careful. I can't let this become like Baghdad."

Photo Credit: [3]Photographs by Keith Bedford for The New York Times

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Agony of terror

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

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Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 26 -- The very sight of it was sickening; very moving to a point of wanting to get lost from it all. I closed my eyes trying to repress tears. The baby girl was holding her mother's hand and crying in pain.

The very sight of it was sickening; very moving to a point of wanting to get lost from it all. I closed my eyes trying to repress tears. The baby girl was holding her mother's hand and crying in pain. The body was bathed in blood, but the little girl oblivious to the fact still held her mother's cold hand trying to wake her up. But the pregnant woman was dead, the bullet ripping through her womb killing the baby inside.

Flesh was strewn all around, and the head of the baby had come out when the bullet pierced through the woman's belly. A travelling bag with tiny baby shirts and a milk bottle lay near the body. The small girl, covered with mud, was screaming 'amma ... amma... elumbunga...'; (Mother get up... get up). Felled The young woman, whose husband was killed by the LTTE when he was trying to flee with the family, had escaped with thousands of others when the troops of 58 Division broke through the LTTE's last earth bund at Ampalavanpukkane in the No Fire Zone. 'Carrying her little daughter, she too had crossed the lagoon. But few minutes before her 'journey to freedom', she was felled by the LTTE's Eelam police that started shooting indiscriminately at the fleeing civilians. They were running for life and did not have time to bother about the little girl who was lying near her mother. Later, the soldier rescued the girl, who is now with her aunt. She still calls out for her 'amma'. A soft drink by a kind soldier revived the child. It was soon after the mass exodus of civilians who broke the iron gate of the LTTE's hell hole. Walking through a 'human river' was not that easy. Interviewed one ... two... ten and more. The stories are the same. They have not enjoyed the luxury of eating a plate of rice or drinking a glass of water or a milk tea or wearing clean clothes for months and months. Overcoming the first barricade - the communication- thanks to Tamil speaking soldiers, I managed to jot down their agony with my hand shivering and tears steaming down my face. How could a human being hide tears in front of a tiny tot screaming in hunger ... an old man screaming in pain with a shot gun injury... a mother screaming in front of her son's dead body... It is a saga which any human being should not dream of experiencing. I was speechless when these people, who once lived like you and me and have lived somewhat of a good life, pleading for just a few drops of water or a tiny piece of biscuit. The soldiers, efforts to keep these people alive and happy is commendable. The Iranapalei-Puthumathalan gravel bumpy road leading through the Ampalavanpukkane earth bund to North of the No Fire Zone (NFZ) had fallen to the hands of the troops after heavy fighting at Puthumathalan Hospital last Tuesday. The mortars and artilleries were flying towards the South of NFZ targeting the last bases of the LTTE. The Army defence lines and bunkers were building in the newly captured terrain. Construction of a new road was planned to connect the terrain to move the remaining civilians - the old and the sick soon. The young soldier, Corporal Ratnayake of 8 Gajaba Regiment, was cycling on this bumpy road transporting a woman with head and leg injuries. She was shot by the Eelam Police when she was trying to flee. 'Thanni' (water), requested 30-year-old Chandrakumari Balasingham whose eyes told her agony. Being a nurse of the Puthumathalan Hospital she said that she was compelled to work at the hospital and could not flee

Agony of terror

earlier due to threats. "When I tried to come with others the LTTE cadres guarding the hospital shot at us", related Chandrakumari to the soldiers pleading of them to bring her mother to her. Corporal Ratnayake, ending his rescue mission, paddled the cycle fast to bring another hostage. We proceeded further, sometimes running along the trenches and taking cover to hide ourselves from the still active LTTE snipers. Personal documents, IDs issued by the LTTE, slippers and clothes were strewn along the road. We crossed the huge earth bund which the LTTE had thought would help prevent troops coming in. Feeding Purugei Sellathi, the 80-year-old mother was feeding her son a plate of rice with sambol, dhal curry and chicken given by the soldiers of the Alpha Group of the 8GR. Her son was differently abled. "I had two sons. The LTTE killed their families. The LTTE left us to starve and die". She threw some sand and cursed the LTTE. The old and the sick were left in the Puthumathalan Hospital. Thangamani Jesudasan was pleading of Capt. Susantha Rajapaksa to take them to a hospital. She was shot by the LTTE while she was fleeing. The bullet wound in her stomach had made her breathing difficult. "We are completing the road and I'll take you there in the evening", promised Capt. Rajapaksa who witnessed how the hostages crossed the lagoon, thanking the troops for rescuing them. Hope you know the place called hell. The Northern part of the NFZ, where the LTTE kept over 104,275 civilians is really hell. Tents were erected in every tiny space and these civilians were compelled to live virtually like slaves. Civilians were made to live in small huts along the Puthumathalan beach. Recent rain water had made small pools around the huts and people were forced to live in these huts filled with water. Some had converted vehicles into makeshift adobes. The awful smell emanating from strewn dead bodies as well as carcasses of animals polluted the air. A large number of cyanide vials too were strewn in the NFZ indicating that the LTTE cadres too had fled with the civilians. While the LTTE was still forcefully keeping innocent civilians in the South of the NFZ, the young soldiers kept crawling into the huts to rescue people North of the NFZ. Fifty-two-year-old Chandrakanthi from Dharmapuram cursed the LTTE for making their lives miserable. "Our lives are worse than beggars who have a cup and a plate of their own. We do not have anything", she broke out with tears. The mother of three children - two nurses and a graduate teacher- she recalled the happy days of a by-gone era. She resided in Dharmapuram. They all had enjoyed life's comforts and had a good income from vehicle hiring. The LTTE had destroyed their lives totally. "When the fighting was going on, the LTTE asked us to move to Puthumathalan", she said. When asked why they did not think of fleeing, she replied that the LTTE shot at those who tried to and when caught they were taken to build bunkers or thrown into FDLs. "We have only the clothes we are wearing", wept Chandrakanthi. She said her family waited until the soldiers rescued them. The troops of the 58 Division together with the Commandos and Special Forces opened the gates of this hell hole initiating the world's biggest hostage rescue operation. Some of them had paid with their lives, and some with their limbs in this operation. "We are ready to sacrifice our lives and rescue others and destroy the LTTE", soldier Dharmabandu Ediriweera, who was on duty to control the refugees, said. From the little Tamil he knew he interpreted that according to civilians, there were instances that the LTTE had thrown little children into fire when families trying to flee by night get caught. Passupathi Rasaratnem (48) was chased to Puthumathalan from Puthukuduriyuppu. Being a labourer, he said the families survived with one meal - kanji (porridge). The LTTE had stolen the food sent by the government and distributed a kilo of rice per family. "No increase of ration to large families. We had to manage with the ration. No spices or vegetables. We only had kanji. They tried to take me to fight, but my wife, who was bed ridden, pleaded with the cadres and they dropped me and took the elder son of my neighbour", Rasaratnem who appreciated the military move to rescue them added that though people were not aware of the exact day of rescue, they had prayed to see the soldiers. He said that two days prior to the Army's arrival, the LTTE, using loudspeakers announced to the civilians not to escape and they also pronounced the penalties for those trying to escape. "So, we did not try to because we saw how people were punished and shot at when they got caught. But we had hopes that soldiers would come and rescue us", he said. There were lots of dead bodies due to LTTE's shooting. Most of the young females were pregnant or having infants. "We had early marriages and when the LTTE was forcibly trying to enlist girls they got themselves pregnant in order to avoid the LTTE. The young men lived in bunkers to escape the LTTE. Sixty-year-old Aiyadorei had hidden his three sons in a bunker throughout the past few months. "It was not be an easy task for Aiyadorei who had guarded them with his wife. It was not a day and a week, but months and months as three young souls lived like prisoners to save their lives. They had their meals inside the small bunker with less fresh air and came out at night only to go to the toilet. Not having a bath for months they had developed a skin rash and the youngest was suffering from high fever while the eldest found the sun unbearable. Born and bred in Nawalapitiya, Aiyadorei was the cleaner of the lorry belonging to Banda Mudalali of Kirinugawatte estate. Married to Rajalechchimee of Udayanagar the family lived in Mullaithivu, but the LTTE had chased them further and further

Agony of terror

away until they were rescued by the troops at Ampalavanpokkane. Lives changed Those interviewed had only one story in common to relate. It is the saga of people living under the dictatorship of the megalomaniac **LTTE** leader V. Prabhakaran. These people are not beggars. They lived decent lives. They had enough wealth. From school principals to doctors to nurses to teachers all have now become beggars. Some were misled about a separate land for Tamils but majority were detained forcibly. But the end game of this saga created by Prabhakaran, who played with human lives, would show the world that those who live by the sword, die by the sword. `The ruse about a segment of people who wanted to break this tiny country into two is no more. The terrorist group who posed as their sole representatives have shown the world by their actions that they are only murderers. The world's biggest hostage rescue operation would come to an end soon with the liberation of the rest of the civilians South of NFZ. Then there would be a segment of people who will tell the world about the true liberators drawing the line between the democracy and terrorism. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Load-Date: April 27, 2009

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'KP's arrest single biggest blow to Tiger network'

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

August 9, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 651 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Aug. 9 -- The arrest of Kumaran Pathmanathan alias KP, one of the most ruthless terrorists and the self appointed leader of LTTE (after Prabhakaran's death), is the single biggest blow to the international network of the Tigers, international terrorism expert Prof. Rohan Gunaratna told the 'Sunday Observer'. "He has the worst human rights violations record in the entire sub-continent," Prof. Gunaratna said.

KP was captured in a very successful covert operation by Sri Lanka defence officials, on Thursday. He is now being interrogated by intelligence sleuths at an undisclosed location here.

At the time of his arrest he was the leader of the LTTE as well as its Chief Procurement Officer. KP is also wanted by Interpol on gun running charges. Following the death of Prabhakaran, KP vowed to revive LTTE through its international network and a few weeks ago announced a 'transitional government in exile'.

In the aftermath of his arrest Sunday Observer interviewed Prof. Gunaratna, Professor of Security Studies and Head of International Centre for Political Violence, Singapore. He is an expert on LTTE's international affairs.

Q: How do you think this arrest will impact on the Government's fight against LTTE terror?

A: There were three leaders that enabled the LTTE to become the most ruthless and violent outfits in the world. One was Velupillai Prabhakaran, second was Pottu Amman and the third was KP.

Q: Will this be the end of LTTE?

A: KP's arrest is the single biggest blow to the international network of the Tigers. It was KP who enabled Prabhakaran to do what he wanted in Sri Lanka. KP was the fundraising, procurement and shipping head of LTTE.

Q: Will there be a new leader?

A: There will be many successors but neither of them will have the understanding and the knowledge and the experience of KP. He was in a class by himself. As the chief procurement officer of armaments and equipment that included 50 tonnes of TNT and 10 tonnes of RDX (plastic explosives) he was instrumental in killing tens of thousands of innocent civilians, men , women and children. He has the worst human rights violations record in the entire sub-continent.

Q: Who masterminded the operation to capture KP?

A: The operation to capture KP was masterminded by Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa. It began even before the death of Prabhakaran and the appointment of KP as his successor.

'KP's arrest single biggest blow to Tiger network'

The capture of KP clearly demonstrates that the key to fighting terrorism is innovative leadership and not classical bureaucracy. The second most important ingredient in the fight against terrorism, as shown in the arrest of KP, is the ability to collect real time intelligence of terrorists and their movements (travel patterns).

In a brilliant operation masterminded by the Defence Secretary, he managed to accomplish both these aspects. It demonstrated that Gotabhaya Rajapaksa is not only the master strategist in defeating the LTTE in Sri Lanka but also was the single most important individual in planning the capture of KP.

Q: Where was he captured?

A: KP lived both in Thailand and Malaysia. He enjoyed access to very high profile political and military figures in both the countries. The cooperation both of Malaysia and Thailand was instrumental in getting his location and final arrest.

Q: What was he at the time of the arrest?

A: He was the Chairman of the LTTE and the Chief procurement officer.

LTTE sympathizers try to describe KP as one who represents the humane side of LTTE who could have transformed the outfit into a political entity?

KP is one of the most ruthless terrorists in the world. How can a man who was instrumental in killing thousands of innocent civilians be called humane? If someone calls him humane that person must be insane. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Surit Das at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: August 10, 2009

A tribute to our Security Forces

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

April 26, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 951 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 26 -- Sri Lanka's valiant Security Forces deserve the nation's highest tribute for conducting the world's largest humanitarian operation last week, rescuing over 100,000 innocent civilians trapped in the No Fire Zone (NFZ) in the North, the small area held by the LTTE terrorists.

The hapless civilians were subjected to untold hardships as the leaders of the LTTE terror outfit, forcibly held them as a human shield in the NFZ in a desperate bid to survive in the 14 sq km area. The so-called liberators of the Tamils had thereby violated all accepted international norms and principles by forcibly holding these innocent civilians in the NFZ. The civilians were not given any chance to move into an area of their choice as the LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran had been using his own community as a cover against the advancing troops of the Sri Lanka Army, backed by the Air Force and the Sri Lanka Navy. Prabhakaran not only forced the children in the NFZ into the battlefield but also ordered his ruthless LTTE cadres to fire at his own people who attempted to escape from the NFZ. The LTTE showed no mercy whatsoever even to the pregnant women, mothers carrying infants and even the elders who were injured. All civilians trapped in the NFZ under Prabhakaran's barbaric rule were desperately biding their time for the arrival of the Security Forces to rescue them. It is under such circumstances that the Security Forces decided to embark on the world's largest hostage rescue mission. However, the Security Forces had to face more risks to ensure the safety of civilians as they were obliged to use only small arms to confront pockets of LTTE terrorists using heavy weapons targeting the advancing troops. The gigantic humanitarian operation to rescue the civilians trapped inside the NFZ reached a climax after the Security Forces reached the Eastern beachfront dividing the safe zone into two. This enabled more civilians to arrive into the military controlled areas, resulting in a huge influx of civilians. The Security Forces engaged in the mercy mission facilitated the arrival of tens of thousands of civilians by providing them with water and food no sooner they reached the cleared areas crossing the lagoon in Puthumattalan and the Ampalavanpokkanai area. As one of the most disciplined armies in the world, the operation to rescue the civilians trapped inside the safe zone was planned in a manner that the civilians could reach the cleared areas by land and sea as ground troops manned the beach fronts preventing the Tigers fleeing by sea. The Security Forces have done Sri Lanka proud as an exemplary and highly disciplined military in undertaking the hostage rescue operation. The civilian casualties were caused by the LTTE cadres shooting and killing civilians in a bid to prevent them from fleeing, and by the three LTTE suicide bombers who exploded themselves among the people, who had dared to defy LTTE orders and cross over to the cleared areas. This was a milestone achievement in the world's military history and full credit goes to our dedicated soldiers for the exemplary manner in which they conducted the operation. No one has been more concerned than the Government about the safety of the country's civilians. The Government shares the concern of the international community over the plight of the civilians who are being held captive by the LTTE in the NFZ. Some countries, INGOs and the International Community who shed crocodile tears should clearly bear this in mind. To safeguard innocent civilians, President Mahinda Rajapaksa issued a directive to the Security Forces to restrict their operations to take defensive

A tribute to our Security Forces

action only during the Sinhala and Tamil New Year period. The recent two-day pause in military action did not result in any significant movement of civilians from the NFZ as the Tigers cared less to liberate their own people. Instead of allowing the civilians trapped in the NFZ to move to an area of their choice for survival, the LTTE used the Government's humanitarian pause to compel civilians to fortify the earth bunds and trenches. This prevented people to move out of the NFZ, negating the very purpose of the pause. The LTTE, having completely ignored the repeated calls by several countries and the UN to permit the civilians' freedom of movement, strengthened its military positions by firing at the Security Forces from the NFZ. The inhuman acts of the LTTE clearly demonstrated the fact that the terrorists had craftily exploited the humanitarian pause. It is an irony that these same countries and institutions are still calling upon the Government to extend the humanitarian pause. This was precisely why President Rajapaksa had to call upon those calling for a ceasefire to demand at least a one-hour pause from Prabhakaran to enable the free movement of civilians. With the complete liberation of the people in the North from the clutches of LTTE terrorism, the next huge responsibility and challenge would be to resettle them. The Government has already made elaborate plans to look after the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The Government has a proven track record of the resettlement of the IDPs which has been commended by the UN, INGOs and the International Community. Having rescued the Eastern Province last year, the Government not only successfully implemented a program to resettle nearly 300,000 IDPs in the East but also implemented infrastructure development projects rapidly. A similar program would be implemented soon in the North as well and people in the area could also exercise their democratic rights before long. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Load-Date: April 27, 2009

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Sri Lanka to halt heavy attacks on Tigers to spare civilians

The Irish Times

April 28, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 10

Length: 666 words

Byline: RAHUL BEDI in New Delhi

Body

THE SRI Lankan government has announced it will no longer use heavy weapons and aerial strikes against the retreating Tamil Tiger rebels in the northeast of the island to spare civilian lives.

However it said yesterday it would continue its offensive to conclusively obliterate the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) and capture or eliminate its leadership, particularly its head, Vellupillai Prabhakaran.

Defence ministry spokesman Lakshman Hullugalle in Colombo said this only heralded a change in tactics.

He said it was neither a truce nor a cessation of hostilities against the **LTTE**, which has been waging war for a separate Tamil state since 1983, a war in which more than 70,000 people have died. .

A statement from President Mahinda Rajapakse earlier said combat operations have reached their conclusion and the use of heavy-calibre guns, combat aircraft and aerial weapons which could cause civilian casualties would cease. Our security forces will confine their attempts to rescuing civilians who are held hostage and give foremost priority to saving them, it added.

The pro-rebel TamilNet website, however, reported that aerial strikes were continuing, but no confirmation was possible as neither independent observers nor journalists are permitted in the conflict zone.

The government ignored international appeals to halt the military offensive in order to provide badly needed humanitarian aid to trapped civilians.

The UN estimates that more than 50,000 non-combatants, mostly Tamils, are still trapped in the conflict area, many used by the besieged **LTTE** as human shields against the advancing army. About 6,500 civilians have died in this crossfire and another 14,000 injured, the UN have estimated.

The Sri Lankan government estimates the number trapped in the fighting at 20,000.

Over the past week an additional 110,000 civilians managed to escape from the sliver of rebel-held territory in the northeast, following the massive military push to wipe out the **LTTE**, which defence analysts and Sri Lankan specialists say is imminent.

The Sri Lankan military operations have dealt a debilitating blow to the **LTTE** from which it will find it near-impossible to recover. It is no more the conventional force it has been the past 10 or 15 years, said MR Narayan Swamy, author of Inside an Elusive Mind Prabhakaran, an authoritative biography of the rebel leader.

Sri Lanka to halt heavy attacks on Tigers to spare civilians

It was highly unlikely that the LTTE would ever regain the pre-eminence it had when it controlled vast territories in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, running its own administration, judicial, police and revenue systems, he added.

Established by Prabhakaran, the 55-year-old portly Tamilian from Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka in 1976, the LTTE emerged as one of the world's most efficient, ruthless, committed and innovative guerrilla groups.

It successfully battled the Sri Lankan and Indian armies, and fought one of the world's longest-running, albeit relatively isolated, civil wars.

Until the daily surge of suicide attacks in Iraq overtook them, the Black Tigers or specialised suicide squads, largely comprising women and children, held the record in their grim specialty with 390 hits and an 80 per cent success rate.

Its targets included a Sri Lankan president, prime minister, defence minister and the country's chief of army staff. The LTTE, in fact, patented the human explosive belt.

The LTTE is also the only terrorist group to operate a fleet of aircraft and a navy – the Sea Tigers – that included crude submarines, all of which Prabhakaran used to achieve his goal of Eelam or Tamil homeland.

He developed the LTTE's distinctive operational art and tactical doctrine drawn largely from Che Guevara, Giáp, Mao and Debray and flexible enough to cynically and violently exploit any opportunity that presented itself.

The elusive and enigmatic Prabhakarna, whose goals were dictated only by military considerations, considered anyone not committed to his goal of a Tamil homeland a traitor deserving instant death.

Load-Date: April 28, 2009

More civilians flee to government areas in northern Sri Lanka

Xinhua General News Service

April 20, 2009 Monday 11:56 PM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 405 words

Dateline: COLOMBO April 20

Body

The military in Sri Lanka said over 1,000 civilians fled to government controlled areas from the northern side of the no fire zone (NFZ) at Puttumatalan Monday afternoon, in addition to more than 30,000 civilians who escaped from the western side of the NFZ controlled by Tamil Tiger rebels in the morning.

Officials from the Ministry of Defense said over 1,000 civilians sought refuge with the Army 55 Division manning the northern boundary of the NFZ at Puttumatalan in the afternoon after the troops captured one of the defence lines built by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The officials said earlier that over 30,000 civilians fled to government controlled areas in the morning after the troops captured the 3 km long defense line built by the LTTE on the western border of the NFZ, opening a safe route for the civilians to flee the NFZ less than 20-sq-km at Puttumatalan.

Defense officials also said three LTTE suicide cadres have exploded themselves in the NFZ killing dozens of refugees including women and children.

A pro-LTTE website said the Army began to deliver full fire- power against the NFZ at 2 a.m. (2030 GMT) and advanced into the zone at 11 a.m. (0530 GMT), causing heavy civilian casualties.

The claims can not be independently verified as most international aid agencies and media have no access to the NFZ.

Actual number of civilians trapped in the NFZ is being debated. The government argued that only 120,000 people lived there, out of which about 70,000 have fled to the government controlled area.

However, international agencies said more than 100,000 people are still being trapped in the NFZ.

A concerned international community has pleaded with both the government and the LTTE to care for the safety of civilians amid allegations that a large number of them are receiving injuries or getting killed in the crossfire.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in Sri Lanka's long drawn-out civil war since the mid-1980s when the LTTE began to rebel against the government based on claims that the minority Tamils were being discriminated in this Sinhalese dominated island.

More civilians flee to government areas in northern Sri Lanka

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse said recently that the remaining **LTTE** members "have only three alternatives. Either they have to surrender to our armed forces, eat the cyanide capsule and commit suicide, or plunge into the sea."

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

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3rd LD Sri Lankan troops capture rebels' last stronghold, kill more than 400 rebels

Xinhua General News Service

April 5, 2009 Sunday 1:17 AM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 501 words

Dateline: COLOMBO April 5

Body

The military in Sri Lanka said Sunday that the government troops operating in the northern battle field have taken control of Puthukkudiyiruppu, the last stronghold of Tamil Tiger rebels and killed more than 400 rebels in fierce fighting.

The last one-sq-km area of Puthukkudiyiruppu formerly held by the **LTTE** (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) rebels was captured by the Army's 53, 58 divisions and Task Force 8, evicting the rebels from their last stronghold in the island's north.

Military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said the **LTTE** have been driven out of Puthukkudiyiruppu east and they are now mixing up with civilians in the 20-sq-km no fire zone at Puttumatalan area.

"The troops have taken complete control of Puthukkudiyiruppu. The only uncleared area remaining is the no fire zone," Nanayakkara said.

The military also said some 420 dead bodies of the rebels have been found in the area in the last three days, including 250 bodies found on Sunday.

Among the dead rebels were their senior leaders Theepan, Nagesh, Durga and the **LTTE's women** wing leader Vedusha, military officials said.

Gadaafi, the personal security officer for the reclusive **LTTE** leader Velupillai Prabakaran was also killed in the fighting, said the officials.

Defense officials said the troops had asked the trapped **LTTE** cadres to surrender before launching the military onslaught against them, but the cadres were ordered to fight to their death by the **LTTE** leadership.

The military say the **LTTE's** armed struggle to set up a separate homeland for the minority Tamil community is coming to an end as the organization has lost all its 15,000 sq km territory except a 20-sq-km "safe zone" in the current military offensive started in 2006.

The government accuses the rebels of holding a large number of civilians as human shields in the "safe zone" at Puttumatalan area.

3rd LD Sri Lankan troops capture rebels' last stronghold, kill more than 400 rebels

Actual number of civilians trapped in the area is being debated. The government argued that only 120,000 people lived there out of which a total of 66,000 had already left. But international agencies said some 230,000 people had been originally trapped.

A concerned international community has pleaded with both the government and the rebels to care for the safety of civilians amid allegations that a large number of them are receiving injuries or getting killed in the crossfire.

The government troops have surrounded the "safe zone" in the northeastern coast with five divisions deployed to free the civilians, military sources said.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Friday urged the LTTE leadership to allow civilians to leave the conflict area of their own free will. He also reminded the Sri Lankan government of its responsibility to protect civilians, and to avoid the use of heavy weapons in areas where there are civilians.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in the conflict since the mid-1980s in one of the world's longest civil wars.

Load-Date: April 7, 2009

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Guardian Weekly: Reply: War in Sri Lanka

Guardian Weekly

April 24, 2009 Friday

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TheGuardianWeekly

Section: Pg. 23

Length: 329 words

Byline: Ivor Tittawella

Body

Writing about Sri Lanka, Arundhati Roy seems to take her talent for flamboyant fiction to new heights (Sri Lanka's genocide warfare, 10 April). The war in Sri Lanka is not directed against the Tamil people in that country; indeed more Tamils work and live outside the affected areas than in them, mixing peacefully with the Sinhalese and the Muslims.

The war is directed towards a small faction of Tamil militants (**LTTE**) that for 30 years has attempted to fracture a multi-ethnic sovereign state. In doing this they have pioneered the art of suicide bombing - **LTTE** being responsible for more than half the recorded number of such bombings in the world, and forcibly recruited vast numbers of **women** and children for their mission.

The leaders of the **LTTE** movement are in the Interpol "wanted" list for the assassination of two heads of state: the former Indian prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi; and the former Sri Lankan president, Ranasinghe Premadasa, not to mention scores of other politicians, both Tamil and Sinhalese, and thousands of innocent villagers. It is not for nothing that the EU and the US, among other countries, have declared the **LTTE** a "terrorist organisation".

Roy, sadly, gets her facts garbled again and again. The **LTTE** activities did not "start as a peaceful protest". They started in violence, in an ambush that killed dozens in 1983.

The holding centres for civilians fleeing the fighting are just that, not "concentration camps", and are maintained under strict UN supervision. It is unbelievably naive for Roy to expect the Sri Lankan army, having taken the brunt of this brutal war for 30 years, to allow civilians escaping the small area still held by the **LTTE** to go unquestioned; it is standard military practice to do such questioning. But above all, Roy referring to "unconfirmed" reports that India is lending support to Sri Lanka "in crimes against humanity" is scurrilous in the extreme and grossly insulting to both nations.

Ivor Tittawella

Umea, Sweden

Load-Date: May 12, 2009

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Not giving in to world pressure: President

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 1, 2009 Friday

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Length: 812 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 1 -- President Mahinda Rajapaksa said yesterday the government instructed the security forces to stop using heavy weapons in the no fire zone (NFZ) not due to pressure from some foreign leaders but out of a genuine concern for the safety of civilians held captive by the terrorists.

At a public rally held at the Mahaweli Intelligence Circle Hall in Embilipitiya after launching the Walawe Ganga left bank restoration project, President Rajapaksa asked why some foreigners were so concerned about the civilians in the NFZ. He said that even yesterday they had said the security forces were using heavy weapons. "Why are some western leaders so concerned about the citizens of this country. The government is doing its utmost to provide them with all facilities - health, food, drinking water, shelter and is also rehabilitating LTTE cadres who have surrendered. What else is the world asking from the government," he asked. "Why they don't believe what we say. Why can't they take our word when we say the security forces have stopped using heavy weapons to ensure the safety of civilians? If we say we don't do something we don't do it. If we say that we do something we do it. I do not want to see a single Tamil civilian killed by a bullet. I can't stand it. "The entire world is watching Sri Lanka round-the-clock via satellite TV, websites, newspapers and journals. They must realize that the security forces are engaged in a humanitarian mission. They must appreciate the way the security forces treat the civilians fleeing Puthuumattalam where the last few Tiger cadres are hiding. The world can see how mothers and children are rescued by the servicemen and women of the armed forces. These are children the LTTE took away for its military campaign. The children have laid down their guns and fled from LTTE atrocities. It is sad that a section of the international community blames the government despite its humanitarian approach towards the conflict in the North. "At times the security forces personnel have given their meal packet to hungry civilians. Daya Master who surrendered to the security forces has reportedly said the soldiers treated him like a father. No armed force in any country has ever acted in such a benevolent, kind hearted manner towards anybody. "The foreigners and observers look at the humanitarian operations in a prejudiced and biased manner. They see the LTTE firing at civilians and blame the security forces. If we gave an opportunity to terrorism to re-group and fight another day it will be a disaster not only for Sri Lanka but to the entire world, the President said. He asked what happened to the Sri Lankan leaders who supported and interacted with the LTTE and cited the late President R. Premadasa as one who gave the terrorists vehicles, money, weapons and life saving jackets but he was assassinated by the LTTE in broad daylight while he was on his way for a May Day rally. The President said that the former Indian Prime Minister who helped the LTTE was brutally murdered by LTTE cadres and former President Chandrika Kumaratunga who offered the LTTE an interim administration had a narrow shave in a LTTE suicide attack. "We have no time for ceasefires or any more humanitarian pauses and we urge the LTTE to be mindful of the plight facing the civilians and release them and surrender. There was heavy international pressure since the start of the humanitarian operations which began after the from Mavil-Aru blockage. The security forces have now restricted the LTTE to a five square kilometer stretch of land. The people of this country have realized this and are behind the government. "In its agricultural drive the

Not giving in to world pressure: President

government has been able to save the country from the global economic melt down and the fuel and food crisis. It is because of the pragmatic and timely economic policies adopted by the government that people in this country have the opportunity to take three meals a day when people in other countries have only two meals. "Today is a historic day as the government fulfills a dream of late Lands Development Deputy Minister D.P. Rajapaksa on his 104th birth anniversary by launching the restoration project of Chandrika Wewa. The first sod of soil to construct Chandrika Wewa was cut by late Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Banadaranaike in 1956 together with Mr. Rajapaksa. The dream of the late Mr. Rajapaksa was to provide water to Giruwapattuwa by making Chandrika Wewa. Today it has been realized with many other development projects such as International Air port in Wirawila, An International Port in Hambantota and the reconstruction of 69 irrigation tanks. Ven Omalpe Sobhitha Thera and Ministers Maithripala Sirisena, Chamal Rajapaksa, Jayatissa Ranaweera and student Nayanee Budhika Vidanapathirana also spoke. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 1, 2009

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Exceptional steps needed to minimise bloodshed in Sri Lanka: ICRC

Hindustan Times

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 405 words

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, April. 21 -- Ringing an alarm bell over intense fighting in Sri Lanka's north, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Tuesday called for "exceptional precautionary measures to minimise further bloodshed in the no-fire-zone".

The ICRC said that it is extremely worried about tens of thousands of civilians, including women, children and elderly people "who are trapped in the rapidly shrinking area along the coast that had been declared a no-fire-zone by the government".

"What we are seeing is intense fighting in a very small area overcrowded with civilians who have fled there," the ICRC's director of operations, Pierre Kr?henb?hl, said in a statement issued from its Geneva headquarters Tuesday.

"The situation is nothing short of catastrophic. Ongoing fighting has killed or wounded hundreds of civilians who have only minimal access to medical care," he said.

Warning that the final offensive in the area by government forces against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) "could lead to a dramatic increase in the number of civilian casualties", he reminded the warring parties of their obligation to comply with international humanitarian laws.

The Tamil Tiger rebels in a statement Tuesday drew the attention of the UN and international community to the situation unfolding in northern Sri Lanka.

While the government is saying that the LTTE has been holding thousands of civilians hostage to delay their inevitable military defeat, the LTTE statement charged that the Sri Lankan armed forces "are using Tamil civilians as human shields to move into this territory through two fronts, Puthumathalan and Valiyarnadam".

"The Sri Lankan armed forces are trying to weaken the resistance of the LTTE by using the Tamil civilians as human shields... Yesterday (Monday) over 1,000 civilians were killed and near 2,300 civilians were injured, and today (Tuesday) a situation of bloodbath is prevailing," the LTTE statement said.

"The LTTE urges the international community, including the UN, to act faster to rescue those trapped Tamil civilians. The LTTE consider these war crimes as very serious and needs urgent international action to stop it," it said.

Exceptional steps needed to minimise bloodshed in Sri Lanka : ICRC

A Sri Lankan government spokesman in Colombo, however, rejected the allegations saying that the Tigers were "desperately fabricating reports in the face of an imminent defeat". Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

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Load-Date: August 3, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lankan president urges rebels to surrender

Xinhua General News Service

April 5, 2009 Sunday 1:16 AM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 464 words

Dateline: COLOMBO April 5

Body

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse on Sunday urged the Tamil Tiger rebel leader and his remaining followers to give up arms and surrender to the government after losing their last stronghold in the north.

"I reiterate my earlier call for (Velupillai) Prabakaran and his misguided followers to surrender. This will make it possible for us to free the civilians," Rajapakse told a gathering at his official residence in Colombo.

Rajapakse's call came as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) lost the last stronghold at Puthukkudiyiruppu on Sunday after fierce fighting.

The military said Prabakaran was still living among civilians in the no-fire zone at Puttumatalan area despite the deaths of more than 400 rebels and several of his second string leadership over three days of fighting.

Puthukkudiyiruppu in the north-eastern Mullaithivu district was where the **LTTE** maintained several military and naval bases and armory over the past two decades.

Several front line **LTTE** leaders such as Vedusha who headed the rebels' *women's* wing, as well as Nagesh, Durga, Theepan and Gadaafi were among those killed during this operation, the military spokesman said.

There was no immediate reaction from the **LTTE** after the major fighting.

The defeat in the north began in late 2006 and early 2007 when the **LTTE** lost the entirety of the Eastern Province.

However, how to rescue the large number of civilians trapped in the government-declared no-fire zone will be a major challenge for the government in the coming days.

The actual number of civilians trapped in the area is being debated. The government argued that only 120,000 people lived there, out of which a total of 66,000 had already left. But international agencies said some 230,000 people had been originally trapped.

A concerned international community has pleaded with both the government and the rebels to care for the safety of civilians amid allegations that a large number of them are receiving injuries or getting killed in the crossfire.

The government troops have surrounded the "safe zone" in the northeastern coast with five divisions deployed to free the civilians, military sources said.

Sri Lankan president urges rebels to surrender

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Friday urged the **LTTE** leadership to allow civilians to leave the conflict area of their own free will. He also reminded the Sri Lankan government of its responsibility to protect civilians, and to avoid the use of heavy weapons in areas where there are civilians.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in the conflict since the mid-1980s when the **LTTE** began to rebel against the government militarily based on claims that the minority Tamils had been discriminated in the Indian Ocean island.

Load-Date: April 7, 2009

End of Document

Over 30,000 civilians rescued by Sri Lankan troops

Xinhua General News Service

April 20, 2009 Monday 9:41 PM EST

Copyright 2009 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 319 words

Dateline: COLOMBO April 20

Body

The military in Sri Lanka said over 30,000 civilians held hostage by Tamil Tiger rebels in the northern no-fire zone (NFZ) were rescued by the troops on Monday after the Army broke more rebel positions in the NFZ.

The Ministry of Defense said in a statement that the troops captured the 3 km long defense line built by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) on the western border of the NFZ in the morning, opening a safe route for the civilians to flee the NFZ less than 20-sq-km at Puttumatalan area.

The statement claimed three **LTTE** suicide cadres have exploded themselves in the NFZ killing dozens of refugees including women and children.

A pro-**LTTE** website said the Army began to deliver full fire- power against the NFZ at 2 a.m. (2030 GMT) and advanced into the zone at 11 a.m. (0530 GMT), causing heavy civilian casualties.

Actual number of civilians trapped in the NFZ is being debated. The Sri Lankan government argued that only 120,000 people lived there, out of which about 70,000 have fled to government controlled area.

However, international agencies said more than 100,000 people are still being trapped in the NFZ.

A concerned international community has pleaded with both the government and the **LTTE** to care for the safety of civilians amid allegations that a large number of them are receiving injuries or getting killed in the crossfire.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in Sri Lanka's long drawn-out civil war since the mid-1980s when the **LTTE** began to rebel against the government based on claims that the minority Tamils were being discriminated in this Sinhamese dominated island.

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse said recently that the remaining **LTTE** members "have only three alternatives. Either they have to surrender to our armed forces, eat the cyanide capsule and commit suicide, or plunge into the sea."

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

Rebellion crushed in the NFZ?

Colombo Times

April 9, 2009 Thursday

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The Colombo Times
SRI LANKA'S UNBIASED ONLINE DAILY

Length: 334 words

Body

Colombo, April 9 -- Serious disturbances have been observed in the NFZ since last afternoon (Apr 8) with loud explosions and machine gun fire have been heard in the Ampalavanpokkanai area, defence.lk special correspondent on the field reveal.

Sri Lanka Army units deployed just 500- 400 m short of the LTTE built earth bund on the border of the NFZ in Ampalavanpokkanai West, reported sighting of a large group of people gathering in the NFZ during the afternoon hours before the explosions and shooting began. The sources suspect a serious clash between the LTTE terrorists and their civilian hostages held in the zone.

"Troops have observed something similar to organized gathering of people in the area in front of them following an announcement made to the LTTE terrorists to release the civilian hostages and to lay down their arms", said our correspondent . "Then, they have heard gunshots and explosions in the NFZ, following which they too have been kept on full alert", he added.

Ampalavanpokkanai is the closest area to the Army forward boundary to which the civilians can access via the causeway, if allowed by the terrorists. Troops have been manning their defences few hundred meters short of NFZ border there, in order to provide the maximum protection to the civilians escaping the terror clutches.

Meanwhile, troops deployed in the area rescued a group 118 civilians from the LTTE clutches during the morning hours yesterday. The group included 51 children, 36 women and 31 men.

According to our correspondent, LTTE has been busy with building command bunkers and other fortifications on the NFZ border close to the causeway, knowing the possibility that civilians may escape their rule in large numbers from this area.

"It is likely that LTTE is going to concentrate all its remaining field leaders and best fighting cadre in this area", he said.

Meanwhile, intelligence sources revealed that Pottu Amman has ordered his so-called police chief Ilango send all his cadre to the frontline.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

Rebellion crushed in the NFZ?

End of Document

More fleeing civilians seek Forces protection

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 7, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 251 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 7 -- As the humanitarian operation reached to the final phase in the Vanni, over 2,127 civilians including 919 children fleeing from the **LTTE** have sought protection with Security Forces in Ampalavanpokkanai, Mullaittivu on Sunday. Sixty nine others reached yesterday.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said troops have surrounded the No Fire Zone and are making strategic moves to liberate the trapped civilians, though the **LTTE** cadres are taking cover in the NFZ mingling with displaced people. Over 2,127 civilians crossing the NFZ have reached troops of the 58 Division throughout Sunday. "They belonged to 503 families including 919 children, 429 men, 779 **women**. The number of exodus accelerated on Sunday hours after troops crushed the last **LTTE** resistance in Puthukudiyirippu", he added. Meanwhile, 69 civilians escaping from **LTTE** captivity have reached with troops in Puthukudiyiruppu yesterday. The Navy evacuated 497 sick and wounded civilians accompanied by their close relatives on the ICRC chartered vessel Green Ocean on Saturday. Navy spokesman Captain D.P.K. Dassanayake said the 18th batch of 497 sick and wounded civilians trapped in the **LTTE** held area had been evacuated from Puthumathalan to Pulmodai by the naval troops on an ICRC chartered vessel. The naval troops are providing safe passage for evacuees. The sick and wounded civilians were treated at the Pulmodai and Padaviya hospitals. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 10, 2009

Sri Lankan military say rebels' end is in sight

Xinhua General News Service

April 5, 2009 Sunday 6:40 PM EST

Copyright 2009 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Military

Length: 489 words

Dateline: COLOMBO April 5

Body

With the fall of Tamil Tiger rebels' last stronghold at Puthukkudiyiruppu the rebels have lost the entire Northern Province and their end is in sight, Sri Lanka's military officials and analysts noted on Sunday.

Sri Lankan troops registered the major success in the history of the island's separatist armed conflict on Sunday by capturing the entire Puthukkudiyiruppu area after killing over 420 LTTE cadres during the past three days, military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Nanayakkara said that according to information received, the rebel leader Velupillai Prabakaran was still living among civilians in the no-fire zone at Puttumatalan area.

"Four days ago the Army's 53rd and 58th divisions along with the Task Force 8 surrounded an area of 2x1 sq km (in Puthukkudiyiruppu), " Nanayakkara said.

The troops have also captured three 130 mm long-range artillery guns from the rebels in the fighting.

Puthukkudiyiruppu in the north-eastern Mullaithivu district was where the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) maintained several military and naval bases and armory over the past two decades.

Several front line LTTE leaders such as Vedusha who headed the rebels' women's wing, as well as Nagesh, Durga, Theepan and Gadaafi were among those killed during this operation, the military spokesman said.

There was no immediate reaction from the LTTE after the major fighting.

The defeat in the north began in late 2006 and early 2007 when the LTTE lost the entirety of the Eastern Province.

However, how to rescue the large number of civilians trapped in the government-declared no-fire zone will be a major challenge for the government in the coming days.

The actual number of civilians trapped in the area is being debated. The government argued that only 120,000 people lived there, out of which a total of 66,000 had already left. But international agencies said some 230,000 people had been originally trapped.

A concerned international community has pleaded with both the government and the rebels to care for the safety of civilians amid allegations that a large number of them are receiving injuries or getting killed in the crossfire.

Sri Lankan military say rebels' end is in sight

The government troops have surrounded the "safe zone" in the northeastern coast with five divisions deployed to free the civilians, military sources said.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Friday urged the LTTE leadership to allow civilians to leave the conflict area of their own free will. He also reminded the Sri Lankan government of its responsibility to protect civilians, and to avoid the use of heavy weapons in areas where there are civilians.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in the conflict since the mid-1980s when the LTTE began to rebel against the government militarily based on claims that the minority Tamils had been discriminated in the Indian Ocean island.

Load-Date: April 6, 2009

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How terrorism haunted the land of beauty

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

May 25, 2009 Monday

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Length: 1665 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 25 -- The death of Pirabhakaran will not only mark the end of terrorism in Sri Lanka, but will also herald a new era of peace and prosperity. However, harrowing memory of cold blooded murders, suicide bomb blasts and killing of farmers in threatened villages will haunt in the minds of thousands of Sri Lankans who unfortunately had to witness these carnages for over three decades.

It is also pertinent here to look into the ideology and the life and time of Pirabhakaran - the megalomaniac who stood for an illusive separate state of Eelam. Although the ideology of Eelam goes back to the pre-independence days as far back as 1960s - 70s, the riots of 1983 July was a catalyst in the struggle for a separate state of Eelam. As subsequently we came to know, the black July of 1983 was triggered by LTTE's ambush on a convoy of soldiers in Tinnevely in Jaffna peninsula, killing 13 soldiers. The backlash was one of the darkest hours in the contemporary history of Sri Lanka in which large number of Tamils were killed and attacked by armed groups. The goons were not only armed with iron clubs but also carried electoral lists with them. The fact that the goons carried electoral lists was subsequently attributed to Government's hand in the attacks on the Tamils. The backlash of 1983 was counterproductive on many accounts. It was the main contributory factor in the birth of a strong Tamil Diaspora that fuelled the inferno at home with its generous financial and logistical aid. Pirabhakaran has also been greatly influenced by the 1958 racial riots and atrocities committed on Tamils. However, Pirabhakaran's subsequent killing spree could not be justified in the name of liberation or his much aired aim of establishing a separate state for Tamils in Sri Lanka. The excerpts of the Indian Journalist Anita Pratap's interview with Pirabhakaran at the early stage of his struggle will shed light on his ideology and the character. Anita states in her book "Island of Blood" that Pirabhakaran has always been very secretive about his personal details, about his family, his childhood, his upbringing. Once I asked him to tell me what in his personal life had convinced him that an armed struggle alone would deliver the Tamils from Sinhala domination. He recounted images from the 1958 anti-Tamil riots that had left a deep impression on him. He was only four years old then. The shocking events of the 1958 racial riots had a profound impact on me. I heard of horrifying incidents of how our people had been mercilessly and brutally put to death by Sinhala racists. Once I met a widowed mother, a friend of my family, who related to me her agonizing personal experience of this racial holocaust. A Sinhala mob attacked her house in Colombo. The rioters set fire to the house and murdered her husband. She and her children escaped with severe burn injuries. I was deeply shocked when I saw the scars on her body. I also heard stories of how young babies were roasted alive in boiling tar. When I heard such stories of cruelty, I felt a deep sense of sympathy and love for my people. A great passion overwhelmed me to redeem my people from this racist system. I strongly felt that an armed struggle was the only way to confront a system which employs armed might against unarmed and innocent people. " Pirabhakaran was only seventeen years old when he along with a small band of Tamil youths, started the TNT (Tamil New Tigers) in 1972 on the sandy shores of his home town, Velvettithurai. He was known to be a radical socialist and a committed nationalist. Indian and Sri Lankan intelligence agencies believe that he received training and assistance from the

How terrorism haunted the land of beauty

Palestine Liberation Organization. He also had the reputation of an excellent marksman. In 1975, from a distance of 200 feet, he shot a police inspector named Bastianpillai as he ran, right between the eyes. The legend Pirabhakaran was born. Everybody called him Thambi, which in Tamil means brother. He earned the nickname because he became a revolutionary when still in his teens. Soon, Thambi became part of common Tamil parlance. All through the 1980s, his colleagues, associates, supporters and even ordinary civilians who had never met him called him Thambi. People used the nickname with affection as well as admiration." Asked why he had chosen the Tiger as his a symbol, Pirabhakaran has said: "I named the movement Liberation Tigers since the Tiger emblem has deep roots in the political history of the Tamils, symbolizing Tamil patriotic resurgence. The Tiger symbol also depicts the mode of our guerrilla warfare.' The symbol is borrowed from the imperial crest of the 'Chola' dynasty, a line of aggressive Tamil conquerors from India, who in the eleventh century sought to extend their influence to the territories that now form northern India, Sri Lanka, Java and Sumatra." It was clear from the very commencement of the movement that Pirabhakaran did not believe in democracy or in people's power. Instead he firmly believed that physical assassination of his opponents would clear his way for a separate state. First it was a fight among the Tamil military groups for dominance. In the bloody struggle, **LTTE** was able to annihilate several other Tamil militant groups including EPRLF, EROS while weakening others. Although Mayor of Jaffna and SLFP Chief Organiser of Jaffna, Alfred Duraiyappah's assassination on July 27 in 1975 was the political killing by Pirabhakaran himself, thousands of attacks on Sri Lankan civilians and on economic targets with the aim of de-establishing the country are still afresh in the people's memory as the body of Pirabhakaran was flashed on televisions' screens. Although it is not possible to revisit numerous attacks ordered by Piraphakaran and executed by his frenzied human bombs, it is pertinent here to recall, at least, the major attacks which formed the local and international perception of the terror outfit as the most dangerous and ruthless terrorist organization in the world. Massacre in Anuradhapura The **LTTE** launched its first major attack on civilians in the sacred city of Anuradhapura. It took place on May 14, 1985 when **LTTE** killed 146 Sinhalese men, **women** and children in Anuradhapura. The **LTTE** entered the city by a hijacked bus and as they entered the bus station, they opened fire indiscriminately on people waiting for buses. Thereafter, **LTTE** cadres stormed Sri Maha Bodhi and killed Nuns, Monks and civilians inside the shrine. The attack was aimed at triggering a backlash against the Tamils in order to prove that Sinhalese are racists. Before withdrawing, the attackers entered the Wilpattu National Park and killed 18 Sinhalese in the forest reserve. On June 2, 1987, **LTTE** massacred 33 young Monks and the Chief Priest Ven. Hegoda Indrasara Thera at Aranthalawa in Ampara. The group of Buddhist priests were on a pilgrimage to Kelaniya. As the bus reached Arantalawa, the bus driver sensed danger when he saw wooden logs blocking the road. Twenty **LTTE** terrorists emerged from the jungle wielding swords, knives and machine guns. They climbed into the bus and butchered the priests. Massacre in Kattankudi mosque One of the brutal massacres that **LTTE** committed was the massacre in Kattankudi mosque on August 4, 1990. Around 30 Tamil terrorists raided four mosques in the predominantly Muslim town of Kattankudi while over 300 Muslims were at Isha prayers. Prior to the attacks a warning was issued to the citizens of Kattankudi, demanding that Muslims should immediately vacate the town or face death. It was a part of the master plan of ethnic cleansing. The Kent and Dollar Farm massacres According to Eelamists' theory of the traditional homeland for Tamils, it was imperative for **LTTE** to clear those areas of Sinhalese and Muslims. **LTTE** argued that government-sponsored settlements of Sinhalese were aimed at changing the demographic composition of the area. The Kent and Dollar Farm massacres were examples of this policy. The **LTTE** carried out the massacre on November 30, 1984 in two farming villages known as the Kent and Dollar Farms in the district of Mullaitivu. At Dollar Farm, 33 Sinhalese farmers were killed injuring several others. On the same day, at Kent Farm 29 Sinhalese civilians were shot dead. **LTTE** cadres used submachine guns, automatic rifles and hand grenades to kill the farmers. Survivors reported gruesome tale of **LTTE** killing the children by knocking them against walls. Maradana bomb blast **LTTE** killed 50 civilians and injured 200 when a bomb was exploded in Maradana on March 12, 1998. By series of bombing **LTTE** was able to terrorise the country, creating a volatile political and economic environment in the county. Temple of the Tooth In desperation for a communal backlash, **LTTE** carried out a suicide attack on temple of the tooth killing 12 and injuring 25 on January 25, 1998. A considerable damage was caused to the Temple though restored later. Central Bank bombing One of the high profile **LTTE** attacks in the city of Colombo. It was a prime economic target like the attack on Katunayake Airport. The **LTTE** carried out the attack on January 31, 1996. An explosives - laden lorry carrying about 440 was driven into the central Bank. The blast killed 91 people and injured 1,400. Attack on BIA This is one of the bloodiest attacks in the history of terrorism in Sri Lanka. The attack took place on July 24, 2001. Its adverse impact was felt hard on country's economy. It was planned to coincide with the riots of the Black July of 1983. Around 3.30 am on July 24, a 14 member black tiger suicide squad

How terrorism haunted the land of beauty

stalled into the airport cutting the barbed wire fence and plunged the airport into darkness by exploding the transformers. Rocket propelled grenades and heavy arms were used for the attack. Twenty six aircrafts were either partially or completely damaged. Eight **LTTE** cadres and three Air force officers killed in the attack. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Grim picture emerges from Tamil camps; Aid workers, UN report sex abuse and starvation in teeming refugee 'jail'

The Toronto Star
May 8, 2009 Friday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A04

Length: 301 words

Byline: Daniel Dale, Toronto Star

Body

Tamil refugees have been sexually assaulted by soldiers and dead bodies ignored at a Sri Lankan displaced persons camp that lacks food and water, camp aid workers told Britain's Channel 4.

Sri Lanka's consul general in Toronto, Bandula Jayasekara, rejected the assault allegations as Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam propaganda and British television sensationalism.

Though the United Nations and several aid groups say thousands of Tamil refugees at government-controlled camps are malnourished, Jayasekara also denied that any are hungry or thirsty.

Aid groups claiming as such, he said, were merely trying to boost their fundraising.

"I don't acknowledge hunger and thirst," he said. "No, I don't."

Since April 20, more than 100,000 Tamils have arrived at camps in northern Sri Lanka after fleeing heavy fighting in territory formerly held by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The influx has brought the population in the crowded camps to more than 170,000, causing conditions to reach a "breaking point" and "placing severe strains on the humanitarian services available," a UN report said.

Journalists are not permitted in the camps. Channel 4 snuck a camera past military authorities in Vavuniya to get what it calls the first independent footage of life there.

The footage is undramatic. But one aid worker, speaking anonymously, said he saw four dead bodies lying on the ground, one of which had worms crawling from its mouth.

Another aid worker said women have been abducted by Sri Lankan soldiers and assaulted.

"Nobody dares to talk," she said. "They know they're being watched."

The UN said it has received "persistent reports" of assaults on Tamil refugees in government territory. It did not specify whether some of those were sexual in nature.

One refugee quoted by Channel 4 called the camp a "jail."

Grim picture emerges from Tamil camps Aid workers, UN report sex abuse and starvation in teeming refugee 'jail'

Graphic

The UN says tens of thousands of refugees in Sri Lankan camps are children, including these seen in a video image from Britain's Channel 4.
photo A Tamil woman holds her malnourished child at a makeshift hospital in a no-fire zone controlled by **Tamil Tigers**.
photo A Tamil woman holds her malnourished child at a makeshift hospital in a no-fire zone controlled by **Tamil Tigers**.

Load-Date: May 8, 2009

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War By Other Means

Financial Times (London, England)

October 17, 2009 Saturday

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Section: FT MAGAZINE; Pg. 30

Length: 3291 words

Byline: Shyamantha Asokan

Highlight: Cover Story - Inquiry

As the **Tamil Tigers** face up to the failure of their armed struggle, a new PR-friendly separatist campaign is getting under way - led by the young Sri Lankan diaspora

Body

Bala Muhunthan has that high-class hip-hop look: Dolce & Gabbana jeans, tight polo shirt, chunky silver ID tags worn as pendants and an ever-present, ever-beeping BlackBerry. Privately educated in Denmark and the UK, the 22-year-old lives in London and attends a leading business school. Muhunthan spends his weekend nights at members' bars or parties in Mayfair. Saturday afternoons, he plays golf or football with his friends. "I love London. I love the fast life," he says.

But at the start of April, Muhunthan took a step outside the fast life: alongside thousands of fellow Sri Lankan Tamils, he stood in front of the Houses of Parliament, demanding a ceasefire in Buddhist Sri Lanka's bloody offensive against Hindu Tamil separatists, which was reaching a violent climax after 25 years of on-off fighting. To Londoners accepting pamphlets from the protesters - whose actions were replicated over the following weeks in Paris and New York - it may have seemed a clear-cut case of might versus right. But the Tamil struggle for an independent state in Sri Lanka has been spearheaded by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) - deemed by the west to be one of the world's most sophisticated terrorist groups.

In the end, the protests were in vain. In May, Mahinda Rajapaksa, Sri Lanka's president, declared the final defeat of the Tigers and the conclusion of one of Asia's longest-running civil wars. The armed struggle for independence had been crushed: in the course of a five-month-long military surge, the Tamil separatists who once controlled swathes of the island's north and east had lost all their territory. Their infamous leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, was dead.

But that ending was also a beginning. Muhunthan, who devoted so much time to the protests that he had to retake the final year of his degree, has, along with many other young Tamils overseas, experienced a political awakening. As one generation of the Tamil diaspora sees its struggle for Eelam, an independent homeland, end in failure, their sons and daughters - who have spent their formative years in the west - are taking up the struggle. But they will fight it on their terms, using their strengths, fomenting a BlackBerry revolution.

"Literally every spare minute I have, I spend on this," Muhunthan said when we met for a cappuccino a month after the downfall of the **Tamil Tigers**. We first shook hands at the chaotic Westminster protest, where matronly **women** in saris had guided me to the front of the melee to meet him. Two of his fellow protesters were on hunger strike, wrapped in blankets in Parliament Square. The demonstrators returned to the square every day for almost three months, their numbers peaking at 20,000.

War By Other Means

We sat down to talk at Cass Business School, where Muhunthan is studying for a master's degree in banking and international finance. He said that the recent reversal in the Tigers' fortunes had taken the diaspora by surprise, leaving them bereft. "A lot of Tamils felt that the **LTTE** was their voice in the war. A lot of people are asking: 'What are we going to do now?' People looked to Prabhakaran like he was a god."

But Muhunthan, the son of an accountant and a doctor, had responded to the Tigers' apparent defeat with optimism - seeing it as a second chance. While disappointed to have lost a powerful ally, he now felt free to pursue the non-violent means he had always preferred. He also saw an opportunity to present his ethnic group as something other than terrorists, a label he found frustrating when dealing with fellow students. "You always have to explain: 'Look, Tamil people are suffering,'" he said.

Muhunthan is one of a group of young people who now want to move the separatist struggle into a more diplomatic, PR-friendly - and, they hope, successful - phase. He has recently set up the Tamil Solidarity Movement, a campaigning group that rejects violence. The movement hopes to rely on "networking" with MPs and discouraging western companies from investing in Sri Lanka, rather than on chanting in Parliament Square.

As the young man laid out his pragmatic thinking and negotiable aims, it seemed unlikely that they could have co-existed with the Tigers' suicide bombers and child soldiers. When militants spearhead a cause, they do not countenance shades of grey. But when they fail, hardliners fall away and negotiators can emerge. Analysts point to the Middle East's Gaza Strip, controlled by the armed movement Hamas, as a territory where such would-be negotiators still lack room to breathe.

Muhunthan is certainly upbeat. "At every step, I'm looking at it like a business. It's about getting any small Tamil groups together to have more power - like merging to form a big company," he explained. "Then it's about networking with as many MPs as possible. When I go to see David Miliband, I want to have a huge folder of the names of the people behind me - and I want some big names in there."

He says he has so far convinced more than 140 British MPs to support his campaign. In April, Simon Hughes, a London MP, took him to meet officials at the US State department. Muhunthan hopes his parliamentary backers will persuade the British government to put economic pressure on Sri Lanka until it releases the estimated 280,000 Tamil civilians still held in displacement camps and, ultimately, allows them their own state. Such pressure would include cancelling Sri Lanka's status as a "GSP+" state, a designation bestowed after the 2004 Asian tsunami and intended to assist recovery by waiving certain taxes on exports to the European Union.

The European Union is certainly aware of these calls for a change in policy, and has already launched a probe into Sri Lanka's human rights record. And, with a preliminary EU report last month condemning the displacement camps as a "novel form of unacknowledged detention", even Sri Lankan officials now doubt that GSP+ status will be renewed.

Muhunthan may be on to something: the tax waiver was one issue he had raised when he met Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the EU foreign affairs commissioner, in Strasbourg this year.

In a church hall behind Euston station, near the curry house strip of Drummond Street, the Tamil Solidarity Movement is holding one of its first meetings. It's a simple affair, with plastic chairs and slices of homemade cake wrapped in clingfilm. But Muhunthan's fellow TSM members are young, focused, well-qualified and business-minded.

Raadhu, an accountant with KPMG, is keen to think of ways to put pressure on the western companies active in Sri Lanka. HSBC has a Sri Lanka division with total assets of \$1.4bn - about twice the total foreign direct investment in the country last year. And Sri Lanka's main export, textiles, has created links with many western fashion retailers. Colombo officials cite Marks and Spencer as a particularly prominent client; M&S says it sources textiles from two retailers in Sri Lanka but refuses to disclose figures.

War By Other Means

The last thing Colombo needs is an economic cold shoulder. Having pushed up military spending in recent years to defeat the Tigers, Rajapaksa's government is heavily in the red and hoping foreign largesse will speed its recovery. Sri Lanka's public debt is now more than 80 per cent of gross domestic product.

The TSM is still in its early stages, with just under 110 young people on board, and Muhunthan often sounds naively optimistic. He says that if he can get the UK to take a tough stance on Sri Lanka, "the US will follow. Everyone knows they're friends." Still, the movement shows a shift in thinking on how to bring attention to the cause. In a similar vein, a second-generation Tamil activist, Jan Jananayagam, ran as an independent candidate for London in last June's European parliamentary elections. She campaigned on not only a two-state solution in Sri Lanka but also on more transparency in derivatives markets.

"I am very positive about the second generation," Jananayagam says of the Tamil diaspora's chances of securing more western intervention. "They are so sure of their status in their country - they were born as citizens there - and they will just ring their MPs or senators to ask for these things."

Articulate and driven, Jananayagam confirms the stereotype of the Tamil diaspora: she used to work as a bond trader at the investment bank Credit Suisse and ran her own hedge fund. She is now busy planning for next year's British general election; she hopes to persuade MPs to show a commitment to the Tamil issue, and the Tamil community to use their voting power accordingly.

The Tamil diaspora's often middle-class profile, typified by both Jananayagam and Muhunthan, is a legacy of Sri Lanka's colonial era. Although historical accounts vary slightly, both the north Indian Sinhalese and the south Indian Tamils are thought to have migrated to Sri Lanka more than 2,000 years ago. In 1815, Britain gained control of the whole island (previously split into one Tamil and two Sinhalese kingdoms) and chose to favour the Tamil minority. It was a classic "divide and rule" strategy that pitted ethnic groups against each other to prevent a united fight for independence.

Sri Lanka's Tamils enjoyed education and status superior to that of their Sinhalese peers, and were seen as "career-oriented, intellectual and passive", according to Neil DeVotta, a US-based professor of political science and author of *Blowback: Linguistic Nationalism, Institutional Decay, and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka*. DeVotta writes in a separate academic paper that, in 1946, Sri Lankan Tamils made up 11 per cent of the island's population but accounted for more than 30 per cent of the judiciary, top civil servants and university students. Today, Tamils account for 9-13 per cent of the island's 20 million inhabitants; exact numbers are difficult to confirm as census researchers have not been able to access Tiger territories since 1981.

When Sri Lanka gained independence in 1948, the Sinhalese majority sought to regain dominance. A new government passed bills that enshrined Sinhalese as the official language, and in the 1970s, universities introduced positive discrimination quotas for Sinhalese candidates.

Many well-to-do Tamils headed west, and the diaspora soon became an important crutch for the Eelam campaign. They were able to assist the Tigers in times of financial difficulty - for example, after the tsunami, which severely damaged their territories. Today, up to 250,000 Tamils live in Canada, 200,000 in the UK and 130,000 in the US, although estimates vary widely and these numbers include Indian Tamils. There are also smaller pockets in Australia and continental Europe.

"The Tamil diaspora in the US and the UK are not riffraff. You have doctors, you have engineers," says Peter Lehr, a lecturer in terrorism studies and south-east Asia specialist at the University of St Andrews. "When the Tigers are desperate for money, they have a wealthy group to tap."

However, donations have not always been voluntary - Tamil communities are rife with stories of "when the Tigers come knocking". Representatives of the group were known for turning up on migrants' doorsteps and threatening to harm relatives back in Sri Lanka unless money was forthcoming. This created a complex relationship between many Tamils and the Tigers, who became both a guardian against Colombo and a predator on their own community.

War By Other Means

Despite such reports of intimidation, many first-generation Tamil migrants openly supported the tamil Tigers at this year's protests. "The Tigers will crush them [the Sri Lankan government]," V.K. Vavanathan, who moved to the UK in the 1970s, told me confidently at the Westminster protest, pounding his palm with his fist as he spoke. Over in New York, S.K. Dhayaparan, a wiry and bright-eyed doctor, stood under the streetlights of 7th Avenue and gave passers-by his pamphlet on the Tigers' "good intentions".

So, following the group's defeat, how do the older members of the diaspora feel? Do they, like some of their children and grandchildren, see recent events as a release from a violent strategy that often made them its victims and that arguably was not working anyway?

The London Tamil Sangam, one of Britain's longest-established Tamil community centres, is entered through a nondescript doorway in Manor Park in the east of the capital. A Tamil enclave, its streets are lined with greengrocers selling jackfruit and branches of India's ICICI Bank. Saravana Bhavan, a Tamil restaurant chain known for its dosa pancakes, proves a popular draw. Malathy Muthu, the centre's manager, paints a sombre picture of the older generation, who seem to believe that their cause has been lost. "We have seen a lot of mental health problems - like depression - among the elders," she says. "This was their dream." Muthu says several elders are refusing even to leave their houses. "They will not engage with anything. They just stay in watching TV programmes about the 'at-home problem'. I think they are depressed, although they have not registered it with the GP as they will not talk to anyone."

For those in the diaspora wedded to the armed struggle for independence - sometimes called "the old way" - prospects do indeed seem gloomy. Colombo's military surge against the Tigers this year coincided with a western crackdown on the overseas activities of the group, which has been banned in ever more countries as the post-9/11 "war on terror" mentality has taken hold. The man alleged to be the Tigers' UK head, Arunachalam Chrishanthakumar, was jailed for two years in June for supplying the group with electronic materials and military manuals. Karuna Kandasamy, the alleged US leader, is due to be sentenced in New York next month after pleading guilty to charges of making funds available to a terrorist group.

Some terrorism experts refer to the Tigers' proven ability to come back from the brink, and say they could soon resume sporadic guerrilla attacks. But few think they can recreate their former, sophisticated operation. Early attempts seem to be foundering: in August, Colombo said Selvarasa Pathmanathan, the new head of the Tigers, had been arrested. For many first-generation migrants, the task of reinventing a 25-year struggle in their declining years is too great.

"The older people think there is no more hope - they are coming to the end of their lives and they think the fight is over," explained one migrant to the UK, a 57-year-old engineer who did not wish to be named (he was worried about retribution against relatives in displacement camps, which are rife with reports of human rights abuses). "Whether their means were right or wrong, [the Tigers] were the only people who fought for us. They were the voice for Eelam, and look what they did - they built their own air force, navy, everything. We had those things when no one else would help us."

However, the first generation also recognise that their children's "new way" presents a ray of hope. "The young ones are passionate about the struggle in a way that has surprised their parents," the engineer said. "And their approach is very different - they want to use democratic and diplomatic means. It's good. They should not make the mistakes that we did."

In recent months, Sri Lankan officials have been on promotional trips to the US, Britain, Malaysia and Singapore to lure foreign capital to what they say is now a peaceful island. Trips to the Middle East are planned for early next year. "This is an ideal time to look at the investment opportunities in Sri Lanka," Gamini Lakshman Peiris, international trade minister, told investors at a London briefing this year. "Terrorism is the only thing that has held us back."

The government now hopes to profit from land wrested back from the Tigers by offering long leases on plots in the north and east. These areas contain a region known as "the rice bowl of the country". Meanwhile, a 350-acre economic zone is planned in the area of Kilinochchi, a Tiger town that fell in January - once the landmines have

War By Other Means

been cleared. Sri Lanka's strategic location, at the crux of vital shipping routes to south-east Asia, is undeniable and China has snapped up the rights to develop the island's once sleepy Hambantota harbour. Beijing is spending \$1bn on the construction of a major port, according to Sri Lankan officials, as well as building a 900-megawatt coal power plant in the north-west. The country's central bank, showing its faith in the investment drive, has upgraded its 2009 economic growth forecast from 2.5 to 4.5 per cent.

But amid the bullish statements at the London and New York briefings, Colombo's ministers have also been reminding the west of its role in securing the fragile peace. Peiris told his London audience that the international community had a "continuing duty" to prevent the diaspora from funding the Tigers' recovery. This posed the only threat to the island's "new investment opportunities", he said.

Other Colombo officials insist that economic growth is for the "benefit of all citizens", and that it is not in the interest of Tamils "at home or overseas" to thwart such progress. But while Sri Lanka refuses to release Tamil civilians from camps, or allow journalists into these sites, there is much to stoke the separatist cause. President Rajapaksa had promised a postwar political settlement with the Tamils, but he has so far made barely any moves on this front.

Whether it is through continuing to fund the Tigers in some form, or through the next generation's "new way", it seems that the struggle for Eelam is far from over. "Yes, of course, I am disheartened, but we have to reinvent and reorganise ourselves now," says one campaigner, back in the church hall in Euston, where everyone is packing away the plastic chairs and heading out for a curry on Drummond Street. "And this time we have to do it from outside. From another country."

How the Tigers turned to suicide

Modern suicide bombing came to international attention in 1983 when Hizbollah activists rammed a truck laden with explosives into a US Army barracks in Beirut. Four years later, a Tamil Tiger named Vallipuram Vasanthan emulated this attack, driving an explosives-filled truck into a school used by the Sri Lankan Army and causing huge casualties.

Vasanthan became known as the first "Black Tiger", a deadly division of the Tiger armed forces whose remit was to perform high-risk missions including suicide bomb attacks. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) pioneered suicide attacks as a means of assassinating politicians and wreaking destruction on the battlefield. The Tigers developed techniques which are today synonymous with terrorism. Before the Iraq war, they were responsible for more suicide bomb attacks than any other group worldwide.

And while Hizbollah was the first group to popularise the use of the suicide bomb, the Tigers invented the "suicide belt", which is packed with explosives and hidden beneath clothing. According to Peter Lehr, an expert on terrorism at St Andrews University, the belt "was then copied by all terrorist organisations, notably al-Qaeda and other Islamist organisations".

Women made perfect candidates to wear the belt. "**Women** [in Sri Lanka] are basically untouchable," says Lehr, meaning "that they can pass through most security gates without being patted down". In 1991, former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was killed by an **LTTE female** suicide bomber wearing a loaded belt.

But while such tactics had military value, they subsequently helped brand the **Tamil Tigers** as terrorists in the eyes of foreign governments following 9/11. Second-generation Tamil activists will almost certainly aim to distance themselves from the taint of suicide bombing as they look to engage with the west.

Alex Cardno

Load-Date: October 16, 2009

Rejoinder to: "Sri Lanka Tamils: Give them the Ballot; Give Them Their Rights"

Colombo Times

April 15, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 969 words

Body

Colombo, April 15 -- The article titled "Sri Lanka Tamils: Give them the Ballot; Give Them Their Rights" by Jay Surier (Democratic Voice, Feb. 2009) is nothing less than the propaganda of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a banned terrorist group notorious for using suicide bombings and child soldiers in its mad quest for a separate Tamil state. This is not surprising, considering Surier's close affiliation with the Tigers: he provided computers to the terrorist group by setting up an outfit called Vanni Tech' in the territory held by the Tigers. Vanni Tech was the front used by Suresh Sriskandarajah, a Canadian arrested by the FBI and now facing trial for money laundering and smuggling goods - such as military software - into Sri Lanka.

Surier's article presents a fictional 'Tamil homeland' and a fictional 'Tamil kingdom' indicating that the minority Tamils live in this 'homeland' in the north and east while the Sinhalese occupy the rest of the country. The fact is that 56% of Tamils live outside the north and east, mostly in the south among the Sinhalese.

His reference to 'successive Sinhalese dominated governments,' taken straight out of LTTE propaganda leaflets, is an indictment which makes as much sense as accusing the US of having 'successive Anglo-dominated governments.'

The allegation of indiscriminate attacks on Tamil civilians by the Sri Lankan armed forces is totally false. In 1983, after years of terrorist acts by the Tamils, inflammatory, racist propaganda by Tamil politicians, and the killing of 13 soldiers by Tamil militants, a race riot, led by political elements, erupted in Colombo. An estimated 400 Tamil persons were killed, not 'thousands' as Surier states. A contrite Sri Lankan government paid restitution to the families of these victims and rebuilt all the homes that were destroyed. Since then, despite Tamil provocation by way of hundreds of suicide bombings, the assassination of the Sri Lankan president and countless political leaders, there has never been an organized riot or attack on Tamils. And, yes, thousands of Tamils have sought asylum abroad, most for economic gain, many trafficked by the LTTE.

Surier's version of the 1977 election where he says 82% of the Tamil people endorsed a separate state is as fictionalized. In that election, only 69% of the Tamils in the Northern province voted for the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) which at the time did seek separatism. In the Eastern province the TULF got a pathetic 32.9%. The LTTE, has been using that election as its crutch to justify resorting to terror to fight for a separate state. What Surier does not mention is that after 1977 the TULF moved away from separatism towards mainstream politics. The LTTE then murdered the TULF leader Appapillai Amirthalingam and several other TULF members and forced the people

Rejoinder to: " Sri Lanka Tamils: Give them the Ballot; Give Them Their Rights"

in areas under its control in the north, under gunpoint, into voting for its own proxies, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA). That is the bloody genealogy of the TNA, the party that Surier speaks of with pride.

As for the title of the article and the suggestion that the Tamil people have been deprived of voting rights, again, nothing but a downright lie! All Sri Lankan citizens, including women, have enjoyed universal suffrage and the right to stand for election since 1931, without restriction. This is a major contrast to many other countries, including the US, where property ownership, race, and other impositions have prevented one or another group from voting.

In calling for foreign intervention in Sri Lanka, Surier reveals his true objective: saving the LTTE from ultimate defeat and humiliation. Giving the lie to international punditry about this war being 'unwinnable,' the Sri Lankan military has successfully defeated the LTTE, cornering it into a 20-square kilometer of land. Concern for the safety of civilians being held hostage by the LTTE is the only factor stopping the military from reclaiming this last patch of territory. LTTE operatives and front groups in the Tamil diaspora are now frenziedly lobbying for international intervention conjuring up charges of 'genocide' in the desperate hope that the remaining LTTE cadres, including its leader Vellupillain Prabhakaran, can be rescued from certain defeat.

Considering the extent of Surier's fabrications, the Democratic Voice has displayed an utter disregard for the truth, disrespect for the many Sri Lankans who live in the US, and, as bad, let itself be co-opted into the LTTE's desperate endgame.

Gamini Edirisinghe, Co-Secretary, Sri Lankan Patriots says the 'Democratic Voice,' the official organ of Santa Clara County Democratic Club in North California, has published, in its April issue, Hassina Leelarathna's rejoinder to the very damaging article against Sri Lanka written by Jay Surier .

However, citing legal considerations, the editor has left out some of the information Hassina provided about Surier's contacts with the LTTE. The entire rejoinder is published below and attached are the February issue (which contains Surier's article) as well as the April issue.

Together with his article, which contained outrageous accusations against Sri Lanka, Surier introduced a resolution calling for an "UN-monitored referendum UN monitored referendum in the Tamil region of Sri Lanka to determine if the people wish the autonomy or the complete independence."

Had that resolution made its way up to the county level, it would have ended up at the Democratic Party's state-level convention, which is to be held later this month. The overwhelming opposition by the Sri Lankan expatriate community has put a stop to that!

We thank all those who participated in this effort and appeal you to be extra vigilant on false information carried out by mischief makers such as Jay Surier.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

Mental health care program

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 27, 2009 Monday

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Length: 251 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 27 -- The Healthcare and Nutrition Ministry will launch a large scale mental healthcare program covering people who were rescued and those who escaped **LTTE** clutches, Healthcare and Nutrition Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva said.

Minister De Silva said the program will be launched under the direction of President Mahinda Rajapaksa and a special discussion was scheduled in this regard. "Mental healthcare is one of the most important requirements for the rescued and escaped people because they have been suffering from enormous mental strain, the Minister said. According to Minister De Silva all the people who had been kept as hostages by the **LTTE** are suffering from severe mental agony after witnessing how the **LTTE** brutally murdered their own family members, especially children, **women** and elders. They have been undergoing too much violence, shooting and torture. They have seen their children dying and lived without basic requirements." "The other fact is a majority of those people do not have any idea about the outside world or society because they had been isolated from the rest of the world by the **LTTE**. The **LTTE** had also filled them with inaccurate and fearful ideas. They were brainwashed. The Ministry will train the required health staff to carry out this program. The Ministry has been conducting counselling and mental healthcare programs in all welfare camps through nurses, the Minister added. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 27, 2009

Two women sea Tiger leaders killed

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

May 3, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 328 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 3 -- "Two Sea Tiger leaders were killed during their aborted suicide attack on the Naval defence line in the seas off Mullaitivu on Friday, the Sri Lanka Navy said quoting the intercepted Tiger communications.

"The two leaders, 'Eshan' and 'Yaso' women Sea Tiger leaders, have been killed," Acting Navy Spokesman, Commander, Mahesh Karunaratne said. During the attack in the wee hours of last Friday morning, Special Boat Squadron (SBS), Fast Attack Craft (FAC) and Rapid Action Boat Squadron (RABS) of the Sri Lanka Navy thwarted the entire LTTE attack destroying two Sea Tiger suicide craft and an attack craft and killed 23 LTTE cadres. The Navy suffered no casualties and none of its craft received any damages in the incident, Sri Lanka Navy said. According to the intercepted Tiger communications LTTE have suffered severe casualties. During the last week alone the LTTE attempted to breach the Naval defence lines in the seas off Mullaitivu and Vellamullaivaikkal. The Navy's patrol craft have been able to inflict heavy losses to the enemy on these consecutive occasions. A well-fortified Naval blockade has been put in place to cut off all sea Tiger movements in the seas off Nayaru, Mullaitivu, Chalai and Chundikulam. This has forced LTTE sea Tigers to make desperate attempts at breaking through the Naval defences even at the expense of heavy losses. Naval fortifications have been tightened with four defence barriers consisting of Fast Attack Craft (FACs), Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs), Fast Gun Boats (FGBs), the Rapid Action Boat Squadron (RABS) and the Special Boat Squadron (SBS). Continuous shore-based radar surveillance is also being carried out in order to assist the Naval units to prevent remaining LTTE cadres from launching desperate attacks on advancing Security Forces personnel and to monitor any sort of movement in and out of the 'No Fire Zone'. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Load-Date: May 4, 2009

Sri Lankan troops seize 130 mm artillery gun from rebels

Xinhua General News Service

April 4, 2009 Saturday 11:40 PM EST

Copyright 2009 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Military

Length: 294 words

Dateline: COLOMBO April 4

Body

The Sri Lankan military said the government troops operating in the northern battle field captured a 130 mm artillery gun from Tamil Tiger rebels Saturday morning.

The Ministry of Defense said in a statement that the troops engaged in mopping up operations in the Anandapuram area of the Mullaitivu district seized the weapon that was being fired by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) on direct mode at the advancing soldiers.

"This is set be the first occasion where the troops have seized a **LTTE** artillery gun in direct combat," said the statement.

The ministry said earlier that 40 bodies of **LTTE** rebels were found on Friday in Anandapuram as the troops continued their mopping up operations in the area where a group of rebels, most of them **females**, had been encircled.

Fighting between the two sides is still going on even as the military said the **LTTE** have been confined to an area of just 21 sq km in Mullaitivu down from over 15,000 sq km they held when the current military offensive began in 2006.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in the conflict since the mid-1980s in one of the world's longest civil wars.

Aid agencies said a large number of civilians are still being trapped in the conflict area and called on both the warring parties to refrain from attacking civilians.

Pro-**LTTE** sources said 90 civilians were killed and 195 were injured in the government-declared safety zone in Mullaitivu from Wednesday to Friday as the Army continued artillery and mortar shelling into the area.

The government said about 60,000 civilians have fled to the government controlled areas and the government is providing food to the civilians still trapped behind the rebels' defense line.

Load-Date: April 5, 2009

Way to end civilian suffering- 1

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 12, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 626 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 13 -- The way to end the suffering of the civilians trapped in the no-fire zone is for the LTTE, which trapped them, to let them go, says Prof. Rajiva Wijesinha in a letter to the Editor The Guardian, London in response to its editorial of April 11, 2009.

In his capacity as the Secretary-General of the Secretariat for Coordinating the Peace Process (SCOPP), Wijesinha further says that the "international community, which kept silent for so long, owes it to the poor suffering Tamil civilians, whom it allowed to be driven from pillar to post over the last nine months, to at least now say categorically to the LTTE that these people must be freed. "No amount of mealy-mouthed 'balanced' criticism of both sides will help them, what is needed now is moral courage to address the LTTE forcefully." Excerpts of the letter: "Your editorial of April 11 was right in spirit but wrong as to several facts. The way to end the suffering of the civilians trapped in the no-fire zone is for the LTTE, which trapped them, to let them go. "They refuse to do this. Obviously it is because they can use them there, or rather use their suffering. On the few occasions on which the UN was able to establish who was responsible for firing into the no-fire zone, they said it was the LTTE, a fact borne out also by the Bishop of Jaffna, as in his press release of January 26, when the Government first declared a no-fire zone. "Your answer, and that of media outlets, is that journalists should be allowed in to check. Surprisingly, we are concerned about the safety of journalists, given that even last month a British MP blamed the Sri Lankan forces for injuries suffered by a British correspondent way back at the beginning of this decade, when she had slipped in to sup with the Tigers before there was any ceasefire. "A simpler answer is to put all your energies into insisting that the LTTE let the civilians go. However, you too have fallen into the trap of suggesting that the facilities offered to these civilians are dreadful. Why then have over 60,000 made their way to us, despite the bullets and bombs and propaganda of the LTTE and those who have fallen for this last? Why did we host a visit last week by the UN Secretary General's Special Representative on the Rights of IDPs, except that we wanted his more adult response, in the context of vicious denigration by unaccountable critics? Why did he grant that security considerations were important, and therefore detention of those seeking refuge was acceptable (this is not internment of people taken from their homes, as the Germans did to the Jews or the British to the Boers), but that there should be limits? "We believe we should work towards the goals he suggests, and had indeed begun allowing old people to rejoin relatives or go to special Elders' Homes that religious communities, Hindu and Catholic, have kindly started. But we know that there is a continuing danger that at least a few of those who have sought refuge are waiting to kill, as one person did in the queue of women and children waiting to cross over to us."The danger of such plans will only pass when the leadership that instructs them is no longer in a position to issue its brutal orders. That is why we must deal now with the LTTE leaders who have sought refuge in the safe zone we earmarked for civilians, who are using those civilians now for military purposes as it did for years while the so-called international community who functioned amongst them said nothing and did nothing to help. "No amount of mealy-mouthed 'balanced' criticism of

Way to end civilian suffering- 1

both sides will help them, what is needed now is moral courage to address the **LTTE** forcefully."Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 14, 2009

End of Document

Karuna backtracks, says no one's forgotten Rajiv killing

Hindustan Times

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 427 words

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, Apr. 21 -- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi insisted on Monday that his statements on a television channel claiming that V. Prabhakaran was his good friend and the **LTTE** was not a terrorist outfit, had been quoted out of context.

"No one can forget the gruesome killing of Rajiv Gandhi," the 84-year-old DMK chief added. Rajiv was assassinated by an **LTTE**-primed **female** suicide bomber, Dhanu, during an election rally at Sriperumbudur, 40 km from Chennai on May 21, 1991. "My views were not broadcast in their totality by the television channel," said Karunanidhi. "That may have caused misunderstanding in some quarters." He asserted he still felt very strongly about Rajiv's killing. "Nobody has forgotten Sriperumbudur," he said. "When additional land was sought for the Rajiv Gandhi memorial, our government readily gave it. We've named a premier road in Chennai after Rajiv Gandhi." "All I said was that when the **LTTE** began, it was not a terrorist organisation," he went on. "It started as a liberation struggle on behalf of Sri Lanka's Tamils. I had added that later some people in the **LTTE** had indeed become terrorists." Karunanidhi's remarks had raised a furore, since the **LTTE** is a banned organisation in India and Prabhakaran still wanted for Rajiv's killing. While welcoming Karunanidhi's clarification, Congress spokesman Abhishek Singhvi said: "We have not wavered. Our stand is that Prabhakaran is a terrorist and the **LTTE** a proscribed organisation." The Congress and DMK are in alliance in Tamilnadu. The Opposition BJP pointed to the Congress's inconsistency. "The same Congress that withdrew support to the United Front government in 1998 after it refused to drop the DMK from its ruling alliance is now unable to object seriously to Karunanidhi's remarks," said BJP general secretary Arun Jaitley. Karunanidhi, however, clarified that his concern for the Sri Lankan Tamils facing the brunt of the advancing Sri Lankan army remained. "I deeply regret every single death during the on going conflict," he said. "That is mere humanitarianism." Karunanidhi also used the occasion to take a dig at his former allies like the PMK and the MDMK, fervent supporters of the **LTTE**, for having teamed up with his arch rival, J. Jayalalithaa. He noted that it was while Jayalalithaa was chief minister that the state assembly had passed a resolution saying Prabhakaran should be arrested and extradited to India to stand trial. "But they have gone and teamed up with her," he noted. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Hindustan Times.

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Load-Date: April 22, 2009

**Guardian Weekly: International news: UN condemns Sri Lankan 'war crime':
Strikes on no-fire zone leave an estimated 1,400 civilians dead**

Guardian Weekly

May 15, 2009 Friday

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***The*GuardianWeekly**

Section: Pg. 5

Length: 725 words

Byline: Geithin Chamberlain, Colombo

Body

The UN this week condemned attacks in Sri Lanka as a "bloodbath" as a doctor inside the no-fire zone estimated that up to 1,400 people may have been killed in two days of air and artillery attacks. A further attack on a hospital on Tuesday was described by a UN official as a "war crime".

Dr V Shanmugarajah said 381 bodies had been brought to the temporary hospital inside the government safe zone last Sunday and another 55 the next day.

He said shells were continuing to fall on the area in which civilians were sheltering. "Still the shelling continues and the fighting is going on," he said, adding that reports from survivors led him to believe a further 1,000 people could have died.

His report came as the UN said the bloodbath it had feared since the government launched its all-out campaign to destroy the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) had occurred.

"We have been consistently warning against a bloodbath, and the large-scale killing of civilians, including more than 100 children this weekend, appears to show the bloodbath has become a reality," said Gordon Weiss, a UN spokesman.

Colombo has denied using artillery or aircraft and accused the ***Tamil Tigers*** of using mortars to fire on civilians for propaganda purposes.

UN officials estimate that between 50,000 and 100,000 civilians could still be packed into a tiny pocket of land, although the Sri Lankan

government has claimed that no more than 20,000 are left.

After the attacks, volunteers dug mass graves in the marshland, putting 50 to 60 bodies in each pit, said Shanmugarajah, who works at the hospital. He said a nurse was killed with his family in a trench, which was then turned into a grave.

Guardian Weekly: International news: UN condemns Sri Lankan 'war crime': Strikes on no-fire zone leave an estimated 1,400 civilians dead

Further attacks on Tuesday left scores dead and injured when a shell struck the same makeshift hospital. A doctor working in the hospital said the shell appeared to have been fired from government positions.

The attack was confirmed by two members of the medical staff at the hospital, set up in Mullaivaikal East primary school.

Medical staff said that in the

Tuesday attack a single shell landed on the admissions ward. Shanmugarajah told the Guardian 47 people were killed and 56 were injured. The dead included a member of the medical staff and two volunteers.

A second doctor, Dr Thurairaja Varatharajah, put the death toll at 49, and said that figure was expected to rise.

A UN official in Colombo said the fighting was clearly continuing despite concerns expressed by the UN secretary general, Ban-Ki Moon, on Monday. The official said of the attack: "It is clearly a war crime."

Ban said he was appalled by the killings and called for an immediate halt to the fighting. Diplomats from the UK, France and Austria said the

security council should address the crisis, while the US said it was "deeply concerned" by the crisis.

The Sri Lankan military said on Tuesday that its infantry had crossed an earth barrier constructed by the Tigers, and that after the initial thrust, special forces moved in and wiped out the remaining rebel fighters in the area. The military said its troops had advanced a further 300 metres.

It is impossible to verify any of the claims or casualty figures, because independent journalists are denied access to the conflict zone.

A three-member British Channel 4 news team was expelled from the country last week for its reporting.

Nick Paton Walsh, the channel's Asia correspondent, said that when Sri Lanka's defence secretary, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, contacted him he got quickly to the point.

He quoted Rajapaksa as saying: "Is this Channel 4? You have been accusing my soldiers of raping civilians? Your visa is cancelled, you will be deported. You can report what you like about this country, but from your own country."

Walsh said: "Our 'crime' had been to broadcast a report from internment camps at the northern town of Vavuniya, which can only be reached with the permission of the Sri Lankan army. Someone working for us had managed independently to get a camera into the camps and record a series of interviews.

"The allegations were startling: bodies left for days, children crushed in the rush for food, the sexual abuse of women, disappearances. We went out of our way to get a government response: the army spokesman, Brigadier Nanayakkara, eventually agreed to appear on camera saying any wrongdoing would be punished."

Caught in the crossfire, page 25

Load-Date: May 15, 2009

'Liberated'; Sri Lanka celebrates end to civil war, Tamil leader reported dead

Kamloops Daily News (British Columbia)

May 19, 2009 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A5

Length: 728 words

Byline: Ravi Nessman, The Associated Press

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka declared Monday it had crushed the Tamil Tiger rebels, killing their chief, Velupillai Prabhakaran, and ending his 30-year quest for an independent homeland for minority Tamils.

State television broke into its regular programming to announce Prabhakaran's death, and the government information department sent a text message to cellphones across the country confirming he was killed along with top deputies, Soosai and Pottu Amman.

The announcement sparked mass celebrations around the country, and people poured into the streets of Colombo dancing and singing.

Prabhakaran's death has been seen as crucial to bringing closure to this war-racked Indian Ocean island country. If he had escaped, he could have used his large international smuggling network and the support of Tamil expatriates to spark a new round of guerrilla warfare here. His death in battle could still turn him into a martyr for other Tamil separatists.

While Velupillai Prabhakaran was a hero to some, his group was branded a terrorist organization by several countries, including Canada and India. It has staged hundreds of suicide attacks, including the 1991 assassination of former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi by a **female** bomber. The rebels also forcibly recruited child soldiers.

Sri Lanka's army chief, Lt.-Gen. Sarath Fonseka, said on television that his troops routed the last rebels from the northern war zone Monday morning. "We can announce very responsibly that we have liberated the whole country from terrorism," he told state television. It was widely presumed Fonseka was waiting for President Mahinda Rajapaksa to publicly announce Prabhakaran's death.

Rajapaksa confirmed Prabhakaran's death in a phone call to India's External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee, Indian foreign affairs spokesman Vishnu Prakash said in a statement.

Fonseka and the commanders of the other security forces formally informed Rajapaksa of the victory Monday evening in a ceremony broadcast live on television.

The military officials said troops closed in on Prabhakaran and his final cadre early Monday.

'Liberated'; Sri Lanka celebrates end to civil war, Tamil leader reported dead

There was a two-hour firefight.

Troops eventually fired a rocket at the van, ending the battle, officials said.

In addition to Prabhakaran, the attack also killed Soosai, the head of the rebels' naval wing, and Pottu Amman, the group's feared intelligence commander, the officials said. One of Prabhakaran's sons was also killed, the military said.

TIMELINE

Major developments in Sri Lanka's conflict:

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

1983: Civil war begins.

1991: Tamil Tiger suicide bomber assassinates former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, apparently in revenge for sending peacekeeping troops who ended up fighting the rebels.

1993: Tamil Tiger suicide bomber kills Sri Lanka's president Ranasinghe Premadasa after his government's failed peace efforts.

Feb. 2002: Sri Lankan government signs a ceasefire agreement with **Tamil Tigers**.

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

Aug. 2005: Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, an ethnic Tamil who opposed a separate state for the minority, is assassinated. Tigers are blamed.

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

Feb. 22, 2006: Government and rebel officials meet in Switzerland for peace talks and agree to de-escalate violence. A second round of talks a few months later is postponed.

June 8, 2006: Talks in Norway aimed at restoring peace collapse.

July 20, 2006: **Tamil Tigers** close sluice gates of an eastern reservoir, cutting water to over 60,000 people, prompting the government to launch its first major offensive on Tiger territory since 2002.

July 11, 2007: Government announces ouster of rebels from eastern Sri Lanka

Nov. 2, 2007: **Tamil Tigers**' second-in-command is killed in a government air raid.

Jan. 16, 2008: Sri Lanka's ceasefire deal terminated.

Jan. 2, 2009: Military captures the Tigers' de facto capital.

Jan. 25, 2009: Government captures rebels' last major stronghold of Mullaittivu.

May 17, 2009: Surrounded rebels offer to lay down arms, saying the war has reached the "bitter end."

May 18, 2009: Government captures last rebel-held land and kills rebel leader.

Load-Date: May 19, 2009

'Liberated'; Sri Lanka celebrates end to civil war, Tamil leader reported dead

End of Document

Tamils reap what they sowed

Canwest News Service

May 5, 2009 Tuesday 06:00 PM EST

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Length: 673 words

Byline: national post

Body

Jonathan Kay on the legacy of Neelan Tiruchelvam: The **Tamil Tigers** have reaped what they've sown

Posted: May 05, 2009, 12:16 PM by Jonathan Kay [Edit Post]

Select Tags...SaveCancel

Jonathan Kay, Full Comment [Edit Tags]

The conflict between the Sri Lankan government and the **Tamil Tigers** has deep, tangled roots. But to a rough order of magnitude, the moral stakes can be reduced to a single act of terrorist savagery that took place on July 29, 1999 - the day Neelan Tiruchelvam was blown out the side of his Nissan sedan by a **female** suicide bomber riding a moped.

Tiruchelvam was a Sri Lankan Tamil, but not the kind that makes excuses for terrorism, or for the nihilistic death cult led by Tigers chief Velupillai Pirapaharan. Instead, he sought to bring justice and self-determination for Sri Lanka's Tamil minority through negotiation and constitutional reform. In Sri Lanka, he was an elected parliamentarian and the founder of two major think tanks. In the United States, he taught at Harvard University, enlightening Western students about human-rights abuses committed in Sri Lanka - by the nation's military and the Tigers alike.

He was a moderate, in other words - the Tamils' answer to Yitzhak Rabin or Nelson Mandela. And that's why he was assassinated: The Tigers despise any Tamil who does not share their commitment to war and terrorism. Tiger propaganda - including the terrorist group's own "poet laureate" - spent years vilifying Tiruchelvam as a traitor prior to his assassination. Muzhakkam, a Tiger-controlled newspaper here in Canada joined in the campaign.

The act serves as a grim metaphor for the war itself. Much as many Tamil- Canadians claim that the Sri Lankan government is engineering a "genocide," the greatest threat to the country's Tamils has been their professed protectors. The Tigers are the ones who have assassinated moderate Tamils, erected a murderous mini-dictatorship in the northern part of the island, abducted Tamil children to serve as terrorists and soldiers, and stolen tsunami-relief money to fund military operations. Now that the Tigers are cornered in northeastern Sri Lanka, the Tigers are holding tens of thousands of Tamil civilians as human shields - shooting them in the back as they seek to flee.

Tiruchelvam's sacrifice is remembered in the highest places - including right here in Canada. In fact, it helps explain why Michael Ignatieff has decisively reversed the Liberal party's traditionally soft stand on Tiger terror.

Tamils reap what they sowed

In the late 1980s, Tiruchelvam and Ignatieff were Harvard colleagues, preaching human rights from the same hymn book. When Tiruchelvam was blown up, Ignatieff traveled to Sri Lanka to deliver a lecture in the man's honour. A year later, he described the experience in a speech at the Canadian Journalists for Free Expression awards dinner in Toronto.

Neelan Tiruchelvam, Ignatieff declared, was "a man whose memory I revere." But that wasn't the prevailing view among many of the noisiest members of the Canadian Tamil community: "When the word got out that I was going to give a lecture in Colombo in his honour, I began to get very extraordinary bits of Tamil literature, mailed to me with a Canadian postmark. And the sum and substance of these newsletters was basically to say that Neelan, my good friend, got what he deserved. This was a man who'd spent his entire life seeking peace and reconciliation on that bloody and tragic island. And it shocked me deeply to discover that the people who wished and rejoiced in his death were fellow citizens of [Canada] ... Don't think it doesn't put a chill down your spine when you get mysterious little missives like that."

A decade later, with Ignatieff leading the Liberal Party, those hatemongers are now reaping what they've sown. And so are the ***Tamil Tigers*** themselves, whose last-ditch positions are now set to be overrun by Sri Lanka's military. Ten years after the group killed Neelan Tiruchelvam, an opportunity to implement his vision of peaceful reconciliation may finally be at hand.

jkay@nationalpost.com

Load-Date: May 6, 2009

End of Document

Major obstacle for lasting peace in Sri Lanka

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

May 13, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 1009 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 13 -- The LTTE uprising in the North of Sri Lanka in the 1970s surfaced as a protest against the discrimination of Tamils and consisted of a small group numbering a few hundreds.

However, from the mid 80s onwards the organisation grew rapidly with the exodus of Sri Lankan Tamils seeking refugee status in various developed countries such as Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, France, Italy as well as other Scandinavian countries since mid 1980s the growth of Tamil population in those countries amassed to very large numbers. LTTE coffers The LTTE fund raising mechanism which followed soon thereafter with tracking down of each and every Tamil family living overseas in countries mentioned above, to contribute through extortions and other crooked means, multiplied their revenue by hundred and thousand times bringing in millions of Dollars to LTTE coffers each day. With time when the civilized world realised that LTTE is a ruthless terrorist organisation many countries took prompt action to ban this movement. However the loads of funds being generated by this terrorist organisation continues to flourish even to date.

However, with the banning strictly imposed by various developed countries on LTTE, their activities on direct fund management for extortions, money laundering for arms purchases etc. could not be carried out by them. Due to the fact that the LTTE activists themselves being aliens in those countries and these activists were compelled to turn for the services in fund management to the 'Natives' of those countries. The job is carried out even more effectively and efficiently, even the using of high ups in the respective governments for their propaganda work. But the job is now carried out for the LTTE by these 'Natives' at a hugely demanded 'Service Charge' and it obviously an illegal operation helping a terrorist organisation. In the fund raising mechanism overseas the key theme or the claim in propaganda work is branded as the 'Sri Lankan Tamil Problem'. Fund Managers In practice there is no genuine sympathy by these 'Native Fund Managers' towards the innocent Tamils undergoing misery and hardship in the Northern areas of Sri Lanka due to LTTE activities, but would do their utmost to keep the disturbance prolonged for as long as possible, so that they can keep happily filling their own coffers at a time when world recession is hitting hard on the others. If the war is over and if the movement is crushed with no more extortions possible from the Tamil refugees living in those countries, then the business is over for these 'Fund Managers'. Asylum seekers The situation has now turned upside down from early aspirations of the Tamils in 1970s to a big time money swindling project today, enjoyed by these fund managers with collections received from asylum seekers, who are living in a dream of their own on a future 'separate state concept'. It is clearly evident today that these men with government links in those countries, are not only freely allowing the Tamils as their pawns to protest in the streets in large numbers but also to cause much damage to embassy properties, and to carry on regardless at the great inconvenience of their own public. Such misbehaviour is cunningly tolerated with the intention to prolong the LTTE fund management activities since these natives are the final beneficiaries. A recent article in the press gave details of a how a 'Top LTTE Tigress' who surrendered to the Army disclosed how she was helped by these 'Fund Managers' living in Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, Germany, France, Italy and Ireland, to purchase arms

Major obstacle for lasting peace in Sri Lanka

and for money laundering and also that her tour was funded by the Burghoff Foundation. When the Government of Sri Lanka is doing her every effort to rescue the innocent Tamils living in the affected areas of the country and support them with decent living, these men through political pressure and other means orchestrate themselves as an obstacle to the efforts in crushing terrorism and bring in normalcy to the country. When people living in the South are doing their best to assist the IDPs, sincerely and bring harmony, there is not even a good word, from these people who visit our country to investigate. They know that bringing harmony and normalcy to the North and East, would mean immediate loss of their lucrative business. Homeland concept There is no doubt that when the LTTE is crushed and every effort is made by the Government to settle the civilians these people from foreign countries will stoop to other tactics such as, to provoke Tamils civilians on issues such as demanding to put pressure on the government on phrases such as, 'demanding for a lasting Political solutions under the Tamil Homelands concept', or accusing the Sri Lankan Army with adverse publicity in the world media with statements such as 'indiscriminate attacks on the civilians and mass scale killings and rape of women in IDP centres run by the military'. The Government within this short period of time proved how well all communities can very well live in harmony in the East. Such efforts of the Government will be extended in same level for development work and improvement in Administration and Politics in the North of Sri Lanka too. Natives Sri Lankan Government maintains democracy to the word and therefore there is no need in anyway to play to the tune of some foreigners with vested interests, who are doing their utmost to destabilise country and bring more misery especially to the Tamils in the North. End of the day the Tamils domiciled in those countries would realise that the 'natives' who acted as sympathisers have actually taken them for a ride by siphoning out their hard earned money systematically. It is better to save their hard earned money, and contribute directly for peace and well-being of their own kith and kin living in Sri Lanka, than depending on a third party, 'natives in those countries' who are having the last laugh. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 13, 2009

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Refugee crisis as thousands flee

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

April 23, 2009 Thursday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 9

Length: 610 words

Byline: Matt Wade South Asia Correspondent with agencies

Body

NORTHERN Sri Lanka has been engulfed by a refugee crisis as tens of thousands of civilians flee fighting between Tamil Tiger rebels and Sri Lankan troops.

In a sign Tamil Tiger resistance may be unravelling, a senior Tamil leader reportedly surrendered to the military last night.

The military says that more than 81,000 refugees have crossed from the small area controlled by the Tamil Tiger rebels to Government-controlled territory over the last three days.

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

Thousands had to wade through waist-deep water carrying their possessions to escape the combat zone. Some carried babies and elderly relatives.

The refugees are being screened by the military to ensure Tamil Tiger cadres are not among them and will then be transported to temporary camps in northern Sri Lanka.

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

A satellite image (on the right) released by the US Government yesterday showed how, before the mass exodus of the past three days, about 120,000 people were packed into "safe zone" in the small coastal area held by the Tamil Tigers.

The Tamil Tigers ignored a government ultimatum to surrender made earlier this week and have vowed to continue their struggle for a separate Tamil homeland inside Sri Lanka. However, the rebels are surrounded by more than 50,000 troops and the Government has signalled it is determined to finish the war.

However, last night Velayudam Dayanidi, better known as Daya Master, who was the main spokesman for the Tamil Tigers, surrendered to government forces, the army said. A second Tamil leader also reportedly surrendered.

As many as 50,000 people remain in the rebel-controlled area where heavy fighting was reported yesterday.

Refugee crisis as thousands flee

"This is a catastrophe for those who remain trapped amid fierce fighting," said James Elder, the spokesman for UNICEF in Sri Lanka. "There are still tens of thousands of children who have been living through unimaginable hell, and are now caught in the final, intense stages of a war. With this latest surge in fighting, UNICEF's greatest fear is that many more will be killed."

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

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

"Rescue operations are continuing and more refugees will be received," he said.

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

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

"These camps were already overcrowded," he said.

"The Government needs to be doing more to show some sort of a peace dividend to people who have lived a nightmare these past months."

The Government claims that the Tigers have been using civilians as human shields and has called the operation that allowed refugees to leave the rebel-held area as the "biggest hostage rescue in history".

But the rebels have accused the Sri Lankan Government of killing more than 1000 innocent people, and injuring more than 2000 more, in the latest operations.

It is impossible to get independent accounts from the war zone because most independent observers and journalists are barred from entry.

Graphic

TWO PHOTOS: Before and after . . . the first picture, taken in February, shows the "safe zone" in the north before about 120,000 civilians were herded onto the beach, as pictured in the second photo, taken this month. Photos: Reuters

Load-Date: April 22, 2009

Surrendering Tamils were massacred by Sri Lankan army, says rights group

Guardian.com

June 11, 2009 Thursday

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theguardian

Length: 730 words

Body

ABSTRACT

Report says government authorised political killings as war ended, while Tiger rebels responsible for most civilian casualties

FULL TEXT

A devastating report into the final months of Sri Lanka's brutal civil war claims government forces carried out a politically-motivated massacre of surrendering Tamil Tiger fighters.

The investigation by a leading Sri Lankan human rights group accuses elements of the Sri Lankan army of touching "the most depraved depths of humanity".

But it also accuses the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [**LTTE**] of torture, murder, and the forced conscription of children, and says the rebel group was probably responsible for most of the thousands of civilian casualties in the final days of the war.

The report was issued last night by the University Teachers for Human Rights (Jaffna) group, which has spent 21 years exposing abuses by both sides in the civil war.

Its investigators uncovered evidence that **LTTE** fighters gunned down civilians who they believed were trying to escape and that government troops threw grenades into bunkers where they knew civilians were sheltering and used a vehicle to run over injured civilians. There are also allegations that wounded civilians may have been bulldozed into mass graves along with the dead.

The most controversial claim, however, is that the government authorised a massacre of **LTTE** cadres after persuading them to surrender.

Citing sources within the Sri Lankan armed forces, the report points to a "politically ordered massacre of people who wanted to surrender or surrendered".

It adds: "The army had for the most part conducted itself in a disciplined manner in trying to protect civilians. But once the command gives a signal for barbarity to be let loose, the men touch the most depraved depths of humanity."

Surrendering Tamils were massacred by Sri Lankan army, says rights group

The report comes as Amnesty International called on the Sri Lankan government to overhaul its justice system if it was to secure lasting peace.

"If communities that have been torn apart by decades of violence and impunity are to be reconciled, the Sri Lankan government should initiate internal reforms and seek international assistance to prevent ongoing violations and ensure real accountability for past abuses," said Sam Zarifi, Amnesty International's Asia-Pacific director.

In a separate report released today, Amnesty called for an international commission to investigate allegations of abuse and torture, saying that past government probes had had no impact.

Amnesty's findings were given extra weight by the Jaffna report, which found that cornered LTTE fighters were killed after being persuaded by government forces to destroy most of their weapons and to give themselves up.

"Claims of a massacre have been emanating from the security forces ... these were messages from very senior officers, middle-ranking officers and personnel. They were posted in various areas. Some heard it from friends on the scene and others from the armed forces grapevine. The common substance was the same: all LTTE members who were left there were massacred, including the women and children."

The researchers also questioned the use of earth-moving equipment to dispose of the bodies inside the no-fire zone.

"Given also the fact that earth-moving equipment was used to clear the area before the president's victory announcement the following day, we need to ask if adequate care was taken to separate the dead from the injured and the dying. On the testimony of civilians there were several injured persons asking for help."

The report was equally damning about the LTTE and its supporters overseas.

The authors said the rebel group had "tortured, robbed, murdered the people, suffocated alternative voices and conscripted their children in the name of liberation".

It continued: "Even as the LTTE leaders were discussing surrender terms, they were sending out very young suicide cadres to slow down the army advance."

It said sections of the Tamil diaspora "blindly supported the LTTE's terror at home and its political articulation of people as weapons of mass suicide".

It added: "Some cadres were going to bunkers where civilians were sheltering, asking, 'So you want to run away to the army, do you?', and then opening fire at them."

The report suggested that between 1,000 and 4,000 people were killed on the final night of fighting, with the LTTE responsible for the large majority of civilian deaths.

Load-Date: June 11, 2009

Robert O' Blake please awake!

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 25, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 376 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 25 -- Robert O' Blake please awake with your Community of Western World Diplomats in Sri Lanka to witness the re-awaking of the Tamil Community in the North and East of Sri Lanka.

We cannot comprehend why all of you who are the champions of the Free World, Free Media, Democratic Freedoms, Human Rights, etc., don't see the plight of the innocent civilians who are the hostages of the LTTE. You and your lot jolly well know that the LTTE uses these helpless men, women and children as a security cover as well as to obtain free food from the Government to get the strength to shoot at the Security Forces who are engaged in a human mission to save the Tamils from the LTTE suppression. Are you all blind to the fact that these civilians are trying to escape from the clutches of this inhuman Prabhakaran in the uncleared area to the cleared areas to save their lives and you can clearly see that these civilians are not trying to cross over to LTTE controlled area from the Government side. So why don't and why can't you the Western Diplomats pressurize Prabhakaran to let go these civilians to move into the land of their choice without talking about a pointless and fruitless ceasefire. About 60,000 people crossed over to the Government side when the fighting was going on and surprisingly very few crossed over to the Government side during the two-day no fire period observed recently. If you all care a little to visit and speak to the IDPs they will give all the facts about this devil in disguise and demask the LTTE who kill its own people for their survival. It is a pity that the Diplomats of the Western world have become the protectors and the breeders of terrorism and terrorists in Sri Lanka. As we see only Bin Laden is the only terrorist you know as he fights against the Western world. We appeal to Blake and the team in the name of Democracy and anti-terrorism to abandon the double standards towards terrorism and terrorists as there are no good terrorists or bad terrorists. Again I appeal to you and your Western Diplomatic Community to help the civilians imprisoned by Prabhakaran to go to the land of their choice by denouncing the actions of the LTTE. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 25, 2009

Tigers vow to fight on but ready for talks

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 941 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 21 -- The LTTE yesterday, in a significant statement, recognized and welcomed a refreshing attitude in the United States, which was different from other countries. It urged the Sri Lanka government to listen to international opinion and stop the war and enter into negotiations.

But at the same time it warned the Sri Lankan government of dire consequences if the war was continued. "The LTTE and the fight for our freedom will also continue. The methods may vary but Sri Lanka will never be able to live in peace as it imagines a military victory will bring. However, for the record, the LTTE will like to emphasize again that it is always ready to explore peaceful means to resolve the conflict", the LTTE said in a statement issued from in political headquarters in the Vanni. "The LTTE appreciates the genuine concerns expressed by the US Government's statement dated April 16 on the escalating humanitarian catastrophe in the Vanni-Mullaitivu region." "So far, while the rest of the world has concentrated on apportioning blame, the US has stressed the importance of finding solutions to put an immediate end to the plight of the Tamil civilians being lured and attacked in the safe zone by the Sri Lankan Government." "The community that has been fighting for justice over its treatment and unequal status will now never forget the deep wounds left by the innumerable deaths of their kith and kin directly caused by the actions of the Sri Lankan Government." "The LTTE urges the Sri Lankan government to stop its military actions, including shelling and bombing of civilian areas and accept the call of the US and other members of the International community for a ceasefire, which we believe will create a conducive atmosphere for talks on all relevant issues." The text of the statement is as follows: The LTTE appreciates the genuine concerns expressed by the US Government's statement dated April 16, on the escalating humanitarian catastrophe in the Vanni/Mullaitivu region. This is an important step towards meaningful international action to actually protect and provide relief to the forlorn Tamil civilian population incurring daily casualties and unspeakable tragedies from the offensive military operations of the Sri Lankan armed forces towards the safe zone where they were asked to go into, by the same Sri Lankan Government. Apart from the plight of the civilian population in the safe zone, the Tamil people in other parts of the Tamil homeland are facing severe military oppression, countless indignities and denial of basic human rights. The people detained by the Sri Lankan Government at military controlled detention camps in Vavuniya are subjected to incessant persecution and torture by the Sri Lankan state forces. The Tamil people in Jaffna peninsula, Mannar, Vavuniya, Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Amparai are subject to atrocities of the Sri Lanka's military, police and paramilitary rulers on a daily basis. The IDPs in North and East of the Island are subject to indefinite military control without any effective mechanisms to facilitate their safety and return to their own homes and villages. So far, while the rest of the world has concentrated on apportioning blame, the United States has stressed the importance of finding solutions to put an immediate end to the plight of the Tamil civilians being lured and attacked in the safe zone by the Sri Lankan Government. USA has also been openly acknowledge the need to address the basic discrimination, inequality and racism towards the Tamil people by the Sinhalese Sri Lankan Government that was and is the root cause for our fight for freedom. The community that has been fighting for justice over its treatment

Tigers vow to fight on but ready for talks

and unequal status will now never forget the deep wounds left by the innumerable deaths of their kith and kin directly caused by the actions of the Sri Lankan Government. A military solution will never lay this problem to rest, as the Sri Lankan Government envisages and constantly promises everyone. The **LTTE** would like reiterate its commitment to a ceasefire without any preconditions, as urged by the US and other members of the international community. The **LTTE** is also ready for a meaningful negotiation on all issues related to humanitarian access, security, movement and welfare of the Tamil civilian population. The **LTTE** urges the Sri Lankan government to stop its military actions, including shelling and bombing civilian areas and accept the call of the United States and other members of the International community for a ceasefire, which we believe will create a conducive atmosphere for talks on all relevant issues. We note the Sri Lankan Government's recent statements that we are not in a position to ask for any preconditions. We would like to make it clear that while the basic rights of the Tamils continue to be denied, while successive Sri Lankan Governments always consider that the way to address our grievances is through military action and not constitutional changes, while the injustices against the Tamils now also includes daily shelling and killing of Tamil men, **women**, children and even unborn babies (for all of which we have pictorial evidence), while the international community watches on in deafening silence, the **LTTE** and the fight for our freedom will also continue. The methods may vary but Sri Lanka will never be able to live in peace, as it imagines a military victory will bring. However, for the record, the **LTTE** would like to emphasise again that it is always ready to explore peaceful means to resolve the conflict. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 21, 2009

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No More Traitors

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

October 6, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 780 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Oct. 6 -- Last week marked the 20th death anniversary of one of Sri Lanka's most famous human rights activists, Rajani Thiranagama. An anatomist and mother of two, she returned from London where she had sought refuge during the height of the first war in Jaffna in order to lecture at the Medical Faculty.

Jaffna, in the late 1980s was a battlefield between the Sri Lankan state, various Tamil militant groups and the Indian Peace Keeping Force. In addition to assisting the revival of the tertiary education sector, Rajani also attempted to address the human cost of the conflict.

Along with a group of fellow academics she set up the now internationally recognized University Teachers for Human Rights - Jaffna (UTHR-J) to document the violations by all actors. She also attempted to support female victims of violence and set up a safe home to provide refuge for them - Poorani. On September 21 1989 Rajani was shot dead by the LTTE, she was just 35.

Some of us from Junction Talk went to the memorial conference held on September 25th. Despite being rather long, it was a very moving event with songs and poetry, protesting against the terror of war and militancy, and with quietly stirring speeches by her husband and an Indian human rights activist. What was most remarkable of all was that it took so many years for an event like this to take place to remember Rajani in such a public fashion.

Rajani like a number of other moderate and humanist Tamils were killed by the LTTE for being traitors. The dictionary defines a traitor as "One who betrays one's country, a cause, or a trust, especially one who commits treason." For the LTTE a traitor included people who spoke out against the atrocities being committed by the LTTE and challenged their political control. An entire generation of Tamil leaders and activists were killed including A. Amirthalingam, Neelan Tiruchelvam, Lakshman Kadirgamar, Kethesh Loganathan and Maheswari Velautham. Behind the cover of 'liberation' and 'traitors' the LTTE sought to protect its greed for power and for totalitarian control.

The response to these killings by Tamil society was horrifying. While many were deeply disturbed by these killings they were silent. There were others who were willing, publicly even, to defend these killings by the LTTE. It was clear that Tamil society was silenced and terrorized not just by the State but also by the LTTE. Above all, it made clear that there was no room for dissent and for questioning the policies and practices of the LTTE. While the terror of both the LTTE and the State were the principal causes for this silencing of Tamil society, the acquiescence by the Tamil elite was a critical failure. This silencing of dissent has left a gaping hole within Tamil society, and created more intolerance and fear.

The 'traitor' terminology is not a tool exclusive to Tamil politics but has been used in the South. In the late 1980s from the very inception of the bheeshanaya the JVP set about eliminating various 'traitors' including Sinhala

No More Traitors

moderate political activists who supported the Indo-Lanka Peace Agreement. During the last phase of the war we saw the Government and ultra-Sinhala nationalists identifying various actors such as opposition politicians, journalists and human rights activists as traitors. We soon became used to seeing the word in posters, on blog sites and conversations. Among the public it became acceptable that traitors had to be publicly denigrated in the media, jailed and even killed. In a horrible twist the South has come to mimic the terror of the North.

As the general public we all collaborated in this project towards silencing dissent and we are perpetuating this climate of hate. So how do we get out of it? Rajani's prophetic words on the **LTTE** may provide some insight: "The legendary Tigers will go to their demise with their legends smeared with the blood and tears of victims of their own misdoings. A new Tiger will not emerge from their ashes. Only by breaking with this whole history and its dominant ideology, can a new liberating outlook be born."

It's time not just for Tamil society but for Sri Lankan society at large to find a "new liberating outlook" - an outlook that is built on hope not fear, celebrates pluralism not intolerance, that is built out of public debate and not of silencing it. As Rajani's husband urged us in his speech, echoing the words of that famous activist-musician, Bob Marley, it's time to "get up stand up, stand up for your right." Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: October 6, 2009

End of Document

Indian Tamil party demands govt action over Sri Lanka war

Agence France Presse -- English

April 21, 2009 Tuesday 2:40 PM GMT

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Length: 488 words

Dateline: NEW DELHI, April 21 2009

Body

An ally of India's government asked New Delhi Tuesday to press for a ceasefire in Sri Lanka amid mounting concerns among Indian Tamils over the heavy fighting on the island.

M. Karunanidhi, of the regional Dravida Munnetra Kazagham (DMK) party which runs the southern state of Tamil Nadu, said he had asked the government to issue an "ultimatum" to Colombo to stop its onslaught against Tamil rebels.

"India should serve an ultimatum to the Lankan government to declare a ceasefire immediately," Karunanidhi said in an open letter to Prime Minister Manomohan Singh.

"The war situation in Lanka is alarming and the predicament of Tamils is very critical," said Karunanidhi, Tamil Nadu's chief minister.

His state is home to 60 million Indian Tamils and the DMK is a key legislative ally of Singh's Congress party-led coalition.

Congress is banking on the DMK help to retain 10 of Tamil Nadu's 39 constituencies in the ongoing parliamentary elections.

The government, however, has so far brushed off pressure from the DMK, saying India viewed Sri Lanka's Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) as a "terrorist organisation" and its leader Velupillai Prabhakaran as an outlaw.

India banned the **LTTE** following the 1991 assassination of former Congress premier Rajiv Gandhi by a **female** suicide bomber which New Delhi blamed on the Sri Lankan rebels.

"Our position has been explained by the Congress party spokesman that **LTTE** is a terrorist organisation and that Prabhakaran is a proclaimed offender," Singh told the Times Now television network.

"The situation has remained unchanged as far as our government is concerned," Singh said as Gandhi's daughter, Priyanka, said India would not support the rebel group.

Indian Tamil party demands govt action over Sri Lanka war

"The former prime minister of India was assassinated and they (LTTE) cannot be pardoned by India as a nation," she told reporters.

The Congress is headed by Rajiv Gandhi's widow, Sonia.

Colombo says it is poised to defeat the LTTE, which has been fighting for a Tamil homeland on the ethnic Sinhalese-majority island since the 1970s.

Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee meanwhile said India was in touch with Colombo.

"I have appealed to the Sri Lankan authorities to facilitate the return of civilians to a secure zone," Mukherjee told reporters, adding that New Delhi was monitoring the developments.

But junior foreign minister Anand Sharma argued it was also the LTTE's responsibility to keep civilians out of harm's way.

"It is incumbent upon the LTTE also to allow the civilian population to move out to safe zones in the north as far as they are there," Sharma said.

The UN children's agency warned children trapped in the war zone were most vulnerable.

"It is a catastrophic situation for children and we believe that the worst is yet to come," UNICEF spokeswoman Sarah Crowe said in New Delhi.

Sri Lankan "government forces need to exercise maximum restraint, particularly against innocent civilians and children," she added.

Load-Date: April 22, 2009

YMMA calls for Presidential Commission

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

June 4, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 398 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 4 -- The All Ceylon Young Men's Muslim Association (YMMA) Conference which claims to be the largest Muslim charity in the country has called for a Presidential Commission to look into the problems faced by the Muslim IDPs who were chased away by the LTTE in 1990 before resettling them in Jaffna once again.

YMMA Conference National President Iflal Abdulla said they would pass a resolution at its annual general meeting held on June 14, 2009 calling the government to appoint a Presidential Commission on the Muslim IDPs. YMMA claimed that there were several complicated issues faced by the Muslim IDPs who were chased away from Jaffna by the LTTE in the year 1990 and now living in Puttalam. They said the deeds for the land and other documents regarding the business of these IDPs have been destroyed by the LTTE and these properties should be handed over to the Muslims if they are to re-settle in Jaffna. According to Past President of YMMA Conference M. S. Raheem who was among the displaced persons who were driven from Jaffna said the LTTE took the title deeds and other documents and tore them before them. "We were allowed to take only Rs. 350 with us and they took all our belongings including the jewellery owned by the women," he said. Mr. Raheem said the Tigers asked to dump their jewellery and cash into large buckets and took those with them. He said the land and their houses in Jaffna was given to Tamils by the LTTE with title deeds which were registered at the Eelam courts. "Therefore, those who are occupying these assets are living illegally and we want the government to look into this situation," he said. According to YMMA over 60 percent of the IDPs who live in Puttalam want to go while most of the youth prefer to stay back. YMMA which also welcomed the liberation of the country from the LTTE said they were willing to play a role in the rehabilitation of the IDPS and developing the North and the East. "We have 102 branches islandwide. Even the North and the East had made arrangements to work with several other non-Muslim charitable organizations as well. Therefore it is ready to play a major role in this process," National President Abdulla said. YMMA Conference has been founded in 1950 and has been incorporated by the Act No. 31 of 1968 by the Sri Lanka Parliament. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: June 4, 2009

Fed: Tamils protest outside Kirribilli House

AAP Newsfeed

April 13, 2009 Monday 9:42 AM AEST

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Section: DOMESTIC NEWS

Length: 417 words

Byline: Stephanie Gardiner

Dateline: SYDNEY April 13

Body

Hundreds of Tamil demonstrators protesting outside the prime minister's Sydney residence say they will stay there until the Australian government urges the Sri Lankan government to call for a ceasefire with the Tamil Tigers.

More than 1,000 Tamils - including three hunger strikers - staged an all-night rally outside Kirribilli House as part of a global protest aimed at brokering a ceasefire between the Sri Lankan army and the Tamil Tigers.

The protest began as a three-man hunger strike in Parramatta, in Sydney's west, on Saturday but moved to the prime minister's official northern Sydney residence amid reports the Sri Lankan government had broken into the "no-fire zone" in the island nation.

The Sri Lankan government says it is in the final stages of defeating the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, who launched a campaign in 1972 to create a separate Tamil homeland on the island. The remaining Tigers are trapped in the "no-fire" zone, in the island's northeast, along with thousands of civilians.

But Colombo is under pressure to agree to a ceasefire, after claims that 3,500 civilians have been killed in the first three months of 2009.

About 400 protesters remained on the road outside the prime minister's house on Monday morning.

The sombre protest turned noisy before 9am (AEST) with the group chanting "Australia, save the Tamils", "We want ceasefire" and "Stop genocide".

Men, women and young children waved red Tamil flags and banners saying: "Impose sanction on Sri Lanka".

Many had been lying on mats and pillows on the road early in the morning.

Protester Geetha Mano, 24, says the rally will continue until they get some response from Prime Minister Kevin Rudd or Foreign Affairs Minister Stephen Smith.

Ms Mano said the protesters were calling for the ceasefire, for food and medicine to be sent to the Tamil civilians and for Tamil people to have the right to live where they choose.

"It's about time the voice of these people gets heard ... after all, we are all humans," she told AAP.

"We ask the international community and the Australian government to urge, to push the Sri Lankan government to call for a ceasefire and to meet these demands so that these people get the right to live freely and with freedom of choice."

Mr Rudd is currently in Canberra, and his office on Monday said it would not be commenting on the protest.

Fed: Tamils protest outside Kirribilli House

Police are monitoring the peaceful protest and many streets surrounding Kirribilli House have been closed.

Load-Date: April 13, 2009

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How the West lost Sri Lanka

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

May 8, 2009 Friday

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Length: 1699 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 8 -- Ever since gaining independence in 1948, this island state in the Indian Ocean has been playing an active role in international affairs well beyond its size. It has been a committed member of the United Nations contributing to its activities including peace keeping, a senior member of the Commonwealth, and an active player in the non-aligned movement, SAARC and many others.

Literacy It has signed up to all the key United Nations conventions ranging from the conventions on restrictions on the use of certain excessively injurious weapons, to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. With a high level of literacy Sri Lanka is among the few functioning democracies in the region. These factors, along with its strategic location in the world's busiest sea route, make Sri Lanka a useful ally for any country. But historically, Sri Lanka has been identifying itself closely with the Western world following four centuries of colonial rule starting with the Portuguese and ending with the British. It was a mutually beneficial relationship cemented by generous economic assistance provided to the country. In time, with recurrent fluctuations in the price of its commodity exports and sharp increases in the price of essential imports such as oil, the dependence on Western aid increased. Aid came in many forms: some bilateral, and much of it multilateral, mainly from agencies such as the World Bank. Eventually aid constituted an indispensable part of balancing the annual budget and meeting the gap in external balance of payments. The heavy reliance on aid allowed the donor community, initially, to impose conditions which were ostensibly to promote economic growth. It was such an effective tool for donors that the choices for recipients were severely limited - accept the conditions or go without aid. With no other alternatives, almost always countries opted to grin and bear the pain, sometimes with severe domestic repercussions. In time, donors realised the immense potential of this tool to extend their influence beyond the economy to political, social and other spheres. Recent years also mark the upsurge in blatant disregard for human rights in many parts of the world and addressing it has become a top priority for Western Governments. Trying to capitalise on this concern were the INGOs scouring the globe for 'investment' opportunities. Sri Lanka's efforts to deal with a terrorist group which had ravaged the country for three decades turned out to be a fertile ground for them. It was a soft touch compared with Iraq or Afghanistan or Darfur and a pleasant place to live. 'Human rights' was the issue. The only missing link, however, was information to back up a campaign. And that was provided by the LTTE through cooked up data and doctored photos broadcast to the world through their websites, television channels and print media. LTTE trap Not only the gullible Governments, but organisations such as the United Nations, the BBC and respected newspapers such as the New York Times fell into the LTTE trap. It also became a haven for INGOs feeding on each other. Everyone was happy, except the Sri Lankans who felt they were hard done by. However, their protests did not cut much ice since the well tailored information dispensed by the LTTE fitted the human rights abuse model like a glove. Why allow facts to spoil a perfect story, especially when it came neatly packaged without having to do any hard work and catered well to your needs? The irony is this has been going on for over three decades and continues to flourish even today unquestioned. Only a handful of journalists took the time and effort to venture

How the West lost Sri Lanka

beyond the LTTE propaganda. Eliminate terrorism With the first serious attempt by the Rajapaksa Government to eliminate terrorism all the conditions were ripe for Western states to clamp down the screws on Sri Lanka. And they did. The series of demands concomitant to aid included coming up immediately with a political solution, release of those held under the prevention of Terrorism Act, devolution of power and the latest, a ceasefire to allow the civilian hostages held by the LTTE to leave. The Government has clearly spelt out its commitment to a political solution underlining the fact that it was premature to negotiate until the terrorist threat was eliminated. With regard to a ceasefire it has pointed out over and over that the lull in fighting will be used by the LTTE to rearm. That is exactly what happened during the ceasefire agreement of 2002-2006 when the LTTE used it to build its military infrastructure including, adding four new battalions, expanding naval capability - the Sea Tigers, and establishing the nascent air force. During the period it also built up its arsenal and established modern communication systems all in preparation for war. During this period the two parties met six times but the discussions were limited to administrative matters and the LTTE walked out on flimsiest of excuses. Negotiations were merely a cover for military build up. Any new ceasefire would have ended the same way, the Government advised. But in April, at the behest of the international community President Rajapaksa allowed a 48-hour cessation of hostilities to allow the LTTE to release civilians held hostage. The only thing that happened was the LTTE shot at those who attempted to leave and killed two soldiers. Only 28 people managed to escape. So where is the logic for a ceasefire again? It is true that for ages ceasefire has been used by warring parties as the mechanism to evacuate innocent civilians caught up in the fighting. But in the case of Sri Lanka these civilians are purposely held hostage by the LTTE as a human shield to prevent the Armed Forces from attacking them. Ceasefire In fact the 160,000 that escaped from the clutches of the LTTE did so not during a ceasefire: it was through combat operations of the Government soldiers who pushed the LTTE cadres back facilitating the civilians to leave. The only purpose a ceasefire could serve in the circumstances is to help LTTE to buy time to regroup and prolong the agony of those held in captivity. In spite of this, the persistence of Western Governments and INGOs on a ceasefire shows either a surprising lack of understanding of the ground situation or a deliberate decision to ignore it. During the past week Gordon Brown sent his Foreign Minister along with the French counterpart to press the Government and another delegation of British MPs followed immediately after. Canada has followed suit. Demands Hillary Clinton keeps on firing from a distance. Their mantra is ceasefire. It is not surprising that the Sri Lankan Government has not acceded to these demands. No sane Government on the verge of eliminating the terrorists would. It may also come as a surprise to these do-gooders that the representatives from within the region, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee of India, a country which has a greater stake in the issue than any other, and Yasushi Akashi, Japan's Special Envoy to the island, who also visited the country around the same time did not make such demands. Akashi stressed at the end of his three-day visit that there was no link between the aid provided by Japan and progress in peace efforts. An important factor Western countries have overlooked in their manipulations is that unlike in those days, when there was no alternative to Western aid, now there are other donors who are willing and able to step into the breach. As Jeremy Page of the Times noted China's aid to Sri Lanka jumped from a few million dollars in 2005 to almost \$1 billion last year, replacing Japan as the biggest foreign donor. By comparison, the United States gave \$7.4 million last year and Britain just 1.25 million. Beijing also appears to have increased arms sales significantly to Sri Lanka since 2007, when the US suspended military aid over the same human rights issues. According to Jane's Defence Weekly in April 2007 Sri Lanka signed a classified \$37.6 million deal to buy Chinese ammunition and ordnance for its army and navy. It is not China alone that helps Sri Lanka: there is Japan, Russia, Iran, Libya and Vietnam in addition to India and Pakistan. There were rumours of Obama and Brown along with some INGOs urging the IMF not to provide the standby arrangement of \$1.9 billion to Sri Lanka. What the West needs to realise is that the more they attempt to clamp down the more they push Sri Lanka into the fold of China and other friendly nations. Suicide bombers The duplicity of the West does not end there. By all accounts the LTTE led by Prabhakaran is far more deadly than Al Qaeda. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has described it as the "most dangerous and deadly extremists" in the world and ranked it ahead of Al Qaeda and Hamas. According to the agency advisory, the LTTE has perfected the use of suicide bombers; invented the suicide belt; pioneered the use of women in suicide attacks and murdered some 4,000 people in the past two years alone. It goes on to say that the LTTE's "ruthless tactics have inspired terrorist networks worldwide, including Al Qaeda in Iraq." The FBI also notes that the LTTE operatives have assassinated two world leaders, the only terrorist organisation to do so. This is only a part of its resume. Drug dealing, credit card fraud, human trafficking and recruitment of child soldiers are in addition. For the 70,000 deaths he was responsible for, the New York Times called Prabhakaran the Pol Pot of South Asia. And now Prabhakaran and his top leaders are trapped in a five kilometre stretch of land surrounded by

How the West lost Sri Lanka

Sri Lankan Armed Forces. If it was Osama bin Laden who was cornered like this, will the US and UK still call for a ceasefire? It is this deceit in applying double standards that is a further factor in the West losing Sri Lanka. Having come this far there is no doubt the Sri Lankan Government will soon complete the task of eliminating the terrorist group. Simultaneously the window of opportunity for the West to rethink its strategy is rapidly dwindling. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 8, 2009

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Sri Lanka rebels lose earth bund as troops advance

Xinhua General News Service

April 13, 2009 Monday 1:17 AM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Military

Length: 231 words

Dateline: COLOMBO April 13

Body

Sri Lankan troops have captured a rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) earth bund near the no fire zone (NFZ) in northern Mullaithivu district's Puttumatalan area, defense officials said Monday.

The one kilometer long earth bund built by the rebels just outside the NFZ north of the Nanthikandal lagoon was captured Sunday evening by the Army's 58 division.

Troops say the purpose of the bund was to deter civilian from leaving the rebel hold.

The rebels are holding up civilians as shields in the battle against the Army.

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse on Sunday ordered his troops to observe a two day truce in view of the traditional Sinhala and Tamil New Year celebrations scheduled for Monday and Tuesday.

The troops would only act in self defense during the period.

Defense authorities blamed the **LTTE** of responding to the truce offer with a massacre of a group of villagers in the south eastern region of Buttala.

The police said a group of armed **LTTE** had stormed the village around 7:10 p.m. local time (1310 GMT) Sunday and murdered eight civilians, including two children, three **women** and three men by shooting them at point blank range.

The government says the **LTTE**s over three-decade-old armed struggle to create a separate homeland for the minority Tamils would end with the troops' clearing of the NFZ.

Load-Date: April 15, 2009

Sri Lanka's Tamils vie for leadership role

Associated Press Online

May 25, 2009 Monday 4:58 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 999 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Behind sandbagged walls, a driveway lined with metal spikes, a battery of security cameras and rifle-wielding bodyguards sits the man who would be the next leader of Sri Lanka's Tamil community.

Douglas Devananda, a former militant leader who bears the scars of nearly a dozen assassination attempts by the rival **Tamil Tigers**, tells the AP that with the rebels' defeat he is ready to assume the leadership of the minority group's struggle for greater political power.

"Now the path is clear, we want speedy action," said Devananda, a government minister who also leads a Tamil paramilitary group.

The death of Tamil Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran who targeted government leaders and Tamil rivals with equal zeal has left a huge void in the Tamil nationalist movement at a crucial moment when the government is promising to negotiate an end to the country's ethnic divide.

Among those vying with Devananda are a former rebel commander whose defection to the government side helped destroy the group, the **Tamil Tigers**' main ally in parliament and an intellectual critic of both the government and the rebels.

Nearly all say the path to peace lies in the government devolving authority to the provinces, which would give the Tamils more control over their own affairs in the north and east. But they differ on the degree of power sharing, with some demanding the provinces be essentially self governing and others saying control over social services would be enough.

How much support they have among the Tamil community, and whether any of them would be seen as a legitimate negotiator with the government, is difficult to judge since there has not been a legitimate election in Tamil areas for decades.

Some are seen as government quislings, others as frontmen for the rebels who sent hit squads to kill those who dared challenge Prabhakaran's leadership.

Other potential leaders left the country years ago under threat or simply seeking a better life far from the war.

Sri Lanka 's Tamils vie for leadership role

"The Tamil leadership is fragmented and facing a daunting task in regaining legitimacy," said Vasantha Sritharan, a political analyst and a leader of the Jaffna branch of the University Teachers for Human Rights.

Devananda, 52, is blind in one eye and half deaf after 11 attempts on his life blamed on the ***Tamil Tigers***. Two years ago, a ***women*** with a bomb in her bra blew herself up at Devananda's Social Welfare Ministry, killing one of his top aides. A metal cabinet still standing in the waiting room is pocked with shrapnel.

But Devananda has outlived his nemesis, who was killed last week along with most of the Tamil Tiger leadership in the final battles of the quarter-century war here.

"The demon is gone," said Devananda, a feared paramilitary leader himself.

Devananda came of age in a time of nationalist fervor among the Tamils, who had long chafed under what they see as the discriminatory rule of the Sinhalese majority. Many saw no future for themselves in Sri Lanka and began demanding an independent state of their own in the north and east that they called Eelam.

Devananda joined one of many competing militant groups and was sent to Lebanon in 1978 for training by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah group and several years later to Syria for training by other Palestinian militants. In Sri Lanka, he helped lead attacks on Sri Lankan forces.

When Prabhakaran began gunning down his rivals, Devananda and his Eelam People's Democratic Party linked up with the very government they had fought.

The Tamils have serious political grievances, Devananda said, but the community should turn away from violence and calls for independence given the government's promises to negotiate.

"If we can solve this amicably, what is the need for a separate state," he said in his cavernous, heavily guarded office.

He said he planned to contest eventual elections in the north. But his candidacy is complicated by his band of armed militants, who are accused of killing, kidnapping and terrorizing Tamils in parts of the north and east.

Across Colombo, in another heavily guarded government ministry, sits a former Tamil Tiger military commander once known as Col. Karuna.

Vinayagamoorthis Muralitharan's defection to the government side in 2004 along with thousands of rebel fighters weakened the ***Tamil Tigers*** and helped bring about their eventual demise. He still controls a violent militia accused of widespread violence across the east. Now he says he wants to be the Tamils' representative in national politics. But he may have gone too far in his embrace of the government.

He has joined the ruling party, accepted a ministry and perhaps most damning of all, he addressed a victory rally last week in the language of the Sinhalese majority.

Sitting in front of a large Sri Lankan flag at a desk adorned with another smaller national flag, Muralitharan praised President Mahinda Rajapaksa for defeating the rebels and said Tamils have nothing to fear.

"Tamil people can believe the government," he said.

Another contender for the leadership mantle is Rajavarotheyam Sambanthan, a lawmaker from the Tamil National Alliance, which has 22 seats in parliament and was closely allied with the rebels until the final days of the war when it suddenly disavowed the group.

Yet another would-be leader is Veerasingham Anandasangaree, a veteran politician who leads the Tamil United Liberation Front, which fell out with the rebels over its call for a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Anandasangaree dismissed his rivals in the Tamil National Alliance as rebel puppets, Karuna as "a dead person" to the community and Devananda as a "threat to democracy, a threat to people's freedom."

Sri Lanka 's Tamils vie for leadership role

His group, one of the oldest and most respected of the Tamil organizations, was shut out in the last election under orders from Prabhakaran, who often directed the Tamil vote from the barrel of a gun, Anandasangaree said.

"We have no parliamentary representation at all. Other than that, we have the support of the people and the faith of the people," he said.

Load-Date: May 26, 2009

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West, INGOs adopted double standards on Lanka - Governor

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

June 6, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 346 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 6 -- The international community, international human rights organizations and even the United Nations were adopting double standards about the problems of Sri Lanka over the past many decades, Western Province Governor S. Alavi Mowlana said at a press conference held at his office recently.

Associated with the Governor were representatives of the Muslim refugees from Jaffna who were chased out by the **LTTE** in 1990 still languishing in temporary refugee settlements in Puttalam. "Some Western countries were completely silent when the **LTTE** committed gross human rights violations and we were surprised that they dictated terms to our country now. But when the **LTTE** chased away 3000 Sinhala people living in the North in 1983 and chased out 81,000 Muslims giving them only two hours to leave their homes and villages where were those human rights activists and even the UN agencies," the Governor queried. "The **LTTE** robbed our peoples' assets valued around Rs. 11 billion and killed many children, **women** and men. They also desecrated our Usmania mosque in Jaffna and they even removed the roof of that mosque. Yet none of those human rights activists took any action regarding the atrocities the **LTTE** committed," Mowlana said. It was the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapaksa that saved the country from the terrorists while conducting humanitarian operations protecting human rights. We are now breathing the air of freedom," the Governor said. Mohamed Nazeer one of the representatives of the IDPs from Jaffna said countries that could not defeat terrorism were preaching how to protect human rights but it was President Mahinda Rajapaksa who safeguarded human rights while eradicating terrorism. "Though there were 81,000 Muslim refugees who were chased out of Jaffna in 1990 now the population had increased to 185,000 and during the past 19 years they were living only a hand to mouth life and none of those human rights activists who screamed now, took no notice of them," he said. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: June 6, 2009

SRI LANKA: NEW U.S. GOVT REPORT DETAILS WAR ATROCITIES

IPS - Inter Press Service

October 22, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 1016 words

Byline: Eli Clifton

Dateline: WASHINGTON, Oct 22 2009

Body

The U.S. State Department released a report Thursday detailing possible violations of the laws of war in Sri Lanka during the first half of 2009, adding to pressure for an independent, international investigation into alleged atrocities committed by government forces and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) separatists.

"The government of Sri Lanka has said that they are determined to establish a reconciliation process with the people of the north, but we believe strongly that a very important part of any reconciliation process is accountability," said State Department spokesman Ian Kelly.

"This report lays out some concerns that we have about how this military operation was conducted," Kelly said.

The report was welcomed by civil society groups and NGOs who have sought to call attention to war crimes committed against civilians during the recent violent conflict in Sri Lanka from January to May 2009.

"The U.S. State Department report should dispel any doubts that serious abuses were committed during the conflict's final months," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "Given Sri Lanka's complete failure to investigate possible war crimes, the only hope for justice is an independent, international investigation."

The State Department Office of War Crimes Issues' report focuses on crimes committed during the final months of the 26-year civil war between the Sri Lankan government and the **LTTE**.

The fighting resulted in the final defeat of the **LTTE**, but reports have emerged of child recruitment by the insurgent group, **LTTE** and government attacks on civilian populations, killing of captives by the government, disappearances conducted by the government or government supported paramilitary forces, and shortages of food, clean water and medicine for civilians trapped in the war zones.

The report was submitted in accordance with the 2009 Supplemental Appropriations Act, which directed the secretary of state to submit a report "detailing incidents during the recent conflicts in Sri Lanka that may constitute violations of international humanitarian law or crimes against humanity, and, to the extent practicable, identifying the parties responsible."

The act also instructed the U.S. government to cut off financial support to Sri Lanka, except for basic humanitarian aid, until the Sri Lankan government respected the rights of internally displaced persons, accounted for persons detained during the fighting, allowed humanitarian organisations and the media access into affected areas, and implemented policies to promote reconciliation and justice.

SRI LANKA : NEW U.S. GOVT REPORT DETAILS WAR ATROCITIES

The LTTE has been listed as a terrorist organisation by the U.S. since 1997, but the report focuses on incidents occurring from January 2009, when fighting intensified as government and LTTE separatists waged their final battle.

"This report compiles alleged incidents that transpired in the final stages of the war, which may constitute violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) or crimes against humanity and related harms," said the report.

"The report does not reach legal conclusions as to whether the incidents described herein actually constitute violations of IHL, crimes against humanity or other violations of international law. Nor does it reach conclusions concerning whether the alleged incidents detailed herein actually occurred," it added.

The report specifically addresses a number of incidents.

According to reports, during the final months of the civil war, the LTTE took male and female children as young as 12 to fight as soldiers.

Sri Lankan sources have stated that, despite denials from the Sri Lankan military, the government was shelling the no-fire zone and targeting hospitals.

The report details alleged incidents in which the government of Sri Lanka shelled civilian populations before a ceasefire - imposed to give civilian populations time to move to safety - had expired and incidents in which the LTTE prevented the escape of displaced persons and used them as "human shields".

"The Sri Lankan government cannot get away with hiding what it did to civilians during the war," Tom Malinowski, Washington advocacy director for HRW, told IPS. "And this report helps to show that. It compiles all of the information out there about what happened and it turns out there's a lot of sources."

"If their goal was to win the war and not allow the world to see what was happening to civilian caught in the crossfire then they failed," Malinowski went on to say.

The State Department also discusses reports of the killing of captives or combatants seeking to surrender by the Sri Lankan government and disappearances of Tamil civilians by Sri Lankan government forces or government supported paramilitaries.

The report details instances of severe food shortages, malnutrition, surgeries performed without anaesthetic, and significant shortage of support for internally displaced persons even though the government pledged to provide sufficient food, medicine and clean water.

"Human Rights Watch's own research into the fighting found that both sides repeatedly violated the laws of war," said HRW. "The LTTE used civilians as human shields, employed lethal force to prevent civilians from fleeing to safety, and deployed their forces in densely populated civilian areas. Government forces indiscriminately shelled densely populated areas, including hospitals. Both parties' disregard for civilian life resulted in thousands of civilian casualties."

The Sri Lankan government prevented outside observers, media and NGOs from accessing the war zone so reports of war crimes committed by the government and LTTE are limited.

Human rights groups have complained that the Sri Lankan government has failed to take appropriate action to investigate the allegations of war crimes committed earlier in the year.

"In the absence of any domestic steps to investigate these terrible offences there does need to be, in our view, an international inquiry," said Malinowski.

According to the U.N., the conflict between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE killed between 80,000 and 100,000 people since 1983.

SRI LANKA : NEW U.S. GOVT REPORT DETAILS WAR ATROCITIES

Load-Date: October 23, 2009

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Fonseka vows to lead new Salvation Army

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

November 28, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 1759 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Nov. 28 -- As I write General (rtd) Sarath Fonseka is rushing to make his announcement about the so-called common candidacy and leading a motley UNP plus JVP combine to change the politics of Sri Lanka.

The so-called UNP leader Ranil Wickremesinghe's demand that Fonseka should wholly accept the policy of the new and strange United National Front, the alliance of opportunism in the face of defeat, is no doubt grabbing political and public attention today.

Whatever one may feel of Fonseka's decision to shed his uniform so fast, albeit after several extensions in his earlier rank as Army Commander that compelled some good people below him to retire, this insistence on his accepting what this 'manifesto' so hastily put together with sharp contradictions in policy, appears aimed to diminish whatever respect the public have for his handling the military aspect of the strategy that defeated the LTTE, so decisively.

The public are still to be told any of the details of the proposed political arrangements, under which Ranil Wickremesinghe is determined to be Prime Minister in a new caretaker government, and how the Executive Presidency is to be abolished.

Nothing of the Constitutional requirements for this change have been explained, unless we are made to understand that Fonseka and the new opponents of the Executive Presidency will resort to unconstitutional means, which includes violence too, to achieve their goal. No wonder the JVP is there too.

While the whirligig of politics will throw up its failures, dropouts, idiots and the ever expectant fakes in patriotic and democratic garb, there are developments abroad that are proof of the overall success of the Mahinda Rajapaksa strategy for the defeat of terrorism and insurgency, in Sri Lanka. The immediate example is the defeat of the LTTE candidate in the move by the Sri Lankan Tamil expatriates of pro-LTTE persuasion to form a 'Trans-national Eelam Government in Exile', which made its debut in, not surprisingly Norway.

At least 90 percent of Tamil expatriates expected to participate in his launch event abstained from voting, and that Nediyan, who succeeded KP as the new LTTE leader, was in for total disappointment when Tamils in Norway rejected his leadership. The Norway based LTTE leader decided to hold the first phase of 'Eelam Trans-national 'government' election in Norway, hoping for a resounding victory to force Oslo to recognise the separatist outfit. But only 2,667 out of a total of 27,000 Tamils in Norway voted.

The LTTE candidate for leadership of the new 'Trans-national Eelam Government' lost to one Vijaya Shankar a South Indian Tamil from Chennai, who came first with 1,864 votes, defeating the LTTE's Nediyan. With the leadership of the new outfit gone to South India, which is proof of the larger dimensions of Prabhakaran's dream of

Fonseka vows to lead new Salvation Army

Eelam not being confined to a part of Sri Lanka, it is now felt that attempts will be made to revive Tamil separatism in Tamil Nadu, which will make it come into open confrontation with the Indian authorities, who are just now gearing up for stronger action against the other terrorist elements operations such as the Naxalites and Maoists, in a vast swathe of Union territory, making greater use of the Armed Forces for the purpose.

Of greater importance for Sri Lanka, is the fact that the expatriate Sri Lankan Tamil community wrongfully termed the 'Tamil Diaspora', having no claims whatever to be a Diaspora by definition or practice, is fast getting sick and tired of the LTTE and its tactics.

They are settling down to accepting the reality of its defeat, and moving on with their lives, without the threats, extortion and violence that was attached to the LTTE. They are increasingly showing signs of being ready to accept the new realities in Sri Lanka.

This is a reality that politicians in the UK who were wooing the expatriate Sri Lankan Tamil vote, which accounts for nearly 200,000 will have to take note of. As many former Sri Lankan Tamils, now settled down in the UK, told me in the past two weeks, there is no more bloc vote of Tamils either for Labour or the Tories. The support they drew during the days of the LTTE's battle with the Sri Lankan State, and with the hope and promise of victory have now faded away, bringing much more peace, quiet and security to their lives.

With Gordon Brown signalling a Spring election, with the shortest ever - seven minutes - Speech from the Throne by Queen Elizabeth II on Wednesday (18) the two major parties, as well as the Liberal Democrats may have to think twice about the certainties they once had of a block Tamil vote coming in their favour, for all the much publicized attacks they carried out against Sri Lanka, especially in the last months of the war to defeat the LTTE.

Adding to the comfort and satisfaction of the Tamils in Europe is this week's decision by a French court to jail 21 LTTE cadres convicted of extorting millions of euros from the Tamil community in France.

The toughest sentence of seven years was given to Nadaraja Matinthiran, whom the court heard was the leader of the LTTE in France, and was accused of extorting some five million euros (7.4 million dollars) from France's 75,000-strong Tamil community. The court also ordered that the Coordinating Committee of Tamils-France be dismantled after ruling that it was a front for the LTTE, which is on the European Union's list of terror groups.

A matter of further significance, following the defeat of the LTTE by the combined effort of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces, was last week's Zurich meeting of 16 political parties - a cross section from the TNA to the EPDP, TULF and Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and PLOTE - to explore possibilities for future cooperation towards the development of a common political platform for the representation of Sri Lanka's Tamil speaking peoples within the political framework of pre and post-election Sri Lanka.

When the truth is said it is necessary to give even the devil its due acknowledgment. Channel 4 News UK, which smeared itself in the mud of falsehood, media bias, and unverified inaccuracy in reporting that rogue video footage of the alleged summary killing of unarmed Tamil civilians by the Sri Lankan troops, seemed to have resurrected itself to some level of credibility when it made a very good expose of how the Jewish Lobby in the UK, is strongly influencing both the Conservative and Labour parties with its seemingly unlimited funds. Their main target was the Conservative Party and especially its leader and widely acknowledged Prime Minister in waiting David Cameron, and former leader William Hague, who can hardly escape the strong suspicions of singing or being silent, in keeping with the size of cheques that come in from the pro-Israel lobby - the Conservative Friends of Israel (CFI).

In its 'Despatches' program on Monday (16) Channel 4 showed how William Hague faced threats of a withdrawal of funding from CFI after he described a retaliatory attack by Israel on Lebanon in 2006 as 'disproportionate'.

The program also described in considerable detail how Tory leader David Cameron allegedly accepted a ?15,000 donation from Poju Zabludowicz, a Finnish billionaire who chairs Bicom (the Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre). Zabludowicz, the program revealed has business interests in an illegal West Bank settlement. He also gave ?50,000 to Conservative Central Office, which Zabludowicz says "are a matter of public record".

Fonseka vows to lead new Salvation Army

William Hague allegedly accepted personal donations from CFI board members totalling tens of thousands of Pounds after being appointed shadow Foreign Secretary. More than ?30,000 from CFI supporters went to the campaign funds of members of Cameron's team who were first elected in 2005, the program claimed using publicly available information.

It was shocking that at last the annual dinner with the CFI, David Cameron had not mentioned one word about the disproportionate nature of the Israeli attacks on Gaza in the war last year which killed over 1,300 Palestinians, mainly women and children, despite it being a topic of much political interest at the time. The feel of funds from the CFI in his pocket was unmistakable from the report.

The expectation is that if, and most likely when, the Conservatives win the next general election here, there will be a strongly pro-Israeli policy in place, which will be working in tandem with the Hillary Clinton lobby in Washington.

What is necessary to keep in mind is that although the majority of Tamils in the UK, and it seems elsewhere in Europe too, are moving away from the LTTE, the vast funds it held are still unaccounted for, and could well form the core funding of the new lobby groups that may emerge to further the cause of the larger Eelam, with emphasis on Sri Lanka.

The exposure of how the pro-Israeli lobby can virtually buy over whole political parties (the Labour Party is no exception) shows a negative aspect of Western democracy, far removed from what is projected to us in the developing world, and also the duplicity of these governments over issues such as human rights, democracy and matters of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

While the majority of Tamils in the UK are ready to smile with Sri Lanka in the changing situation for their kith and kin here, it will be necessary to keep a close watch on desperate political organizations, such as the UNF, that is placing conditions for Gen. (Rtd) Sarath Fonseka, to be its Presidential candidate.

It will be good to begin probing how much of the LTTE's stacked away funds are behind the moves to use Fonseka as the candidate to prop up those who scoffed at his handling of the war against the LTTE all the while, and have said that the army he led was no better than the Salvation Army.

They may believe that Fonseka is the saviour so badly needed in their politics of desperate opportunism, to lead the Salvation Army of the politically desperate.

He is now showing all signs of being ready to make a bid to save these types who are fast approaching the nadir of politics in Sri Lanka and are most likely funded by the hidden hoards of the LTTE - what is left of the funds used to fight the Sri Lankan Armed Forces and carry out such violence against Sri Lankan civilians.

Onward desperate soldiers, a leader is at hand - the Salvation Army takes stride in a battle for power, not souls. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: November 28, 2009

Ending a three decade old path of blood

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 19, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 1581 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 19 -- "We are not terrorists," claimed Prabhakaran in his annual November speech in 2001. He was naturally aware of the threat the label would prove following the Al Qaeda attack on the US. He knew the changing global opinion would only mount against terror organizations such as his.

"We are not mentally demented to commit blind acts of violence impelled by racist and religious fanaticism. Misguided by the false and malicious propaganda of the Sri Lankan state, some of the world governments have included our liberation movement in their list of international terrorist organizations. This is regrettable and disappointing. The actions of some of the Western governments will seriously impede a political solution through peaceful means and further complicate the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka," he said. This was the same Prabhakaran on whose orders on May 14, 1985, the LTTE killed a total of 146 Sinhalese men, women and children, when they hijacked a bus and drove to the Buddhist sacred shrine in Anuradhapura Sri Maha Bodhiya, and began firing indiscriminately into a crowd that included nuns and monks. The same group of terrorists who killed over 300 Muslim devotees inside a mosque a few years later, while they were in prayer. This was the agenda of genocide against a specific ethnic and religious grouping that Prabhakaran committed in the guise of freedom for his people. 'The Tamil Eelam nation does not want war', said Prabhakaran in what turned out to be his last Heroes' day speech last November. 'It does not favour violence,' said a man who unleashed such terror on humanity that his death calls for celebration in every street corner, every household and more so than ever, within the hearts of his own people. His people held hostage in their hundreds of thousands are today under the care of the government troops, the fleeing Tamil children he ordered to be shot as the world's biggest and most horrendous hostage episode took place, till yesterday, are today thankful that the curse has been lifted. The mothers whose children were forcibly snatched away for war, those youth strapped to suicide kits and ordered to blow themselves up for a cause he himself lost touch of, are today celebrating freedom. It was perhaps ironic that Prabhakaran would say in his 2007 speech that 'those who plan to destroy the Tamil nation will in the end be forced to face their own destruction.' The fact remains that no other person is today more responsible for the destruction of the Tamil people, their livelihoods, education and killing of a large majority of its academia and any form of dissent within, than Prabhakaran. The genocide he unleashed on the Sinhala and Muslim people did not necessarily spare the Tamil people. No Tamil person who questioned the nonsensical notions of his separate state, lived to justify their arguments. Siruthai puligal or the Leopard Brigade of the LTTE was considered one of the movement's fiercest arms. Made up of Tamil children removed from the LTTE's 'orphanages' the children were made to go through a vigorous training in arms and killing. It is estimated that a large number of the dead in the Elephant Pass military complex operation in 1991 were children from this brigade. There were at least 550 cadres dead at that operation. The LTTE's first use of child soldiers in a large scale operation is traced to 1990. Of an estimated 3000 LTTE cadres used for the 1995 operation against the Welioya military camp, more than two thirds were children. The rest were largely women. Children again formed a larger number of some 6000 cadres that attacked the Mullativu camp in 1996. The

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approximately 300 troops who surrendered were all gunned down by these children. Prabakaran had always held that the Tamil struggle had been at first peaceful and 'with weapons thereafter. In the beginning, it was a peaceful and democratic struggle by our people for justice. The armed violent path was not our choice. It was forced upon us by history'. He always sought to mislead the international community with the claim that the LTTE had never stopped to seek a peaceful solution. And every time the world fell for it. Even as news of the death of the LTTE leader was being spread around the world, much of the international media found it difficult to accept the fact. Such was the mysticism, the myth associated with Prabakaran and his group of terror. 'Our freedom movement is always ready for it. We are not opposed to a peaceful resolution. We have never hesitated to participate in peace talks,' he said last year, clearly leaving much needed room for him to raise the call for 'peace' at his most vulnerable. Which, he ultimately did at several crucial intervals, before a world, that was all too ready to jump at the chance. In effect Prabakaran's path to so-called peace has never really materialized. From the historical first talks in Thimpu, in July and August of 1985, to a second ceasefire declared by the then government on account of the Sinhala and Tamil New Year in 1987 where the LTTE murdered 120 Sinhala civilians by ambushing the buses they were travelling in Polonnaruwa, it was always a path of blood. The third time the LTTE breached all norms of bilateral conduct was when they on the pretext of surrendering arms to the Indian Peace Keeping Force in the first week of October 1987, went on to massacre at least 225 Sinhalese and Muslim civilians along the Eastern coast. Then on June 11, 1990 the LTTE seized the police station in Batticaloa abducting and killing over a five hundred unarmed Sinhalese and Muslim policemen who had surrendered to them ending a ceasefire that stood for 14 months. They also walked out of a peace process started with the Kumaratunga regime. the LTTE having violated the CFA signed with the Wickramasinghe regime violated the conditions over 1313 time, over the 162 of the government troops. According to records the LTTE had recruited 7763 new cadres within the first year of signing the agreement alone. Between that year, intelligence reports confirm the LTTE of having received at least 6 shiploads of arms. Indian intelligence in December 2002, reported the presence of an arms ship attempting to smuggle goods in to Mullativu, but it had evaded arrest. By end 2002, none other than the SLMM itself reported that the LTTE had violated the truce 502, (90%) over that of the government troops. In February 2003, just hours before the fifth round of peace talks were to begin in Berlin, three LTTE cadres blew themselves up and the boat they were travelling in when caught transporting weapons and ammo. Immediately following the inauguration of President Rajapaksa the LTTE launched a series of attacks against the forces, leading to serious questions on the validity of the CFA. The LTTE subsequently agreed to return to negotiations, the first round of which took place in Geneva in February 2006. They however refused to attend a second round of talks scheduled for April. Then in June the same year they agreed to sit down for talks, travelled all the way to Oslo and simply refused to sit down for talks quoting various excuses. 'During the peace talks convened in different capitals of the world, there were no attempts to resolve the day-to-day needs of the Tamil people or to negotiate a resolution to the underlying national question,' he said last year. For someone who claimed that 'this war has affected Tamil civilians more than any body else,' he thought nothing of forcing his people hostages for months on end. Ironically the world community that kept stressing on a 'humanitarian catastrophe' had no qualms about, even during this sad episode, pushing the government towards sitting down for talks. In one of the rarest accounts made of Prabakaran, M R Narayan Swamy in his book ' Inside an elusive mind' said in 2003 that, 'Sri Lanka today stands at a decisive turning point where it will have to take politically mature, even if popularly unpalatable, decisions towards a practically workable solution to resolve the larger issues of ethnic divide and economic development. If it were to fail, for whatever reason, the destiny of Sri Lanka with its 20 million people would still be in the hands of one man: Velupillai Prabhakaran.' History has made it not quite so, as President Mahinda Rajapaksa today announces before his Parliament that he has finally vanquished the terror outfit. He has taught the global terrorism pundits that there indeed is only three names to those who question if terrorism can really be defeated militarily; Percy Mahinda Rajapaksa! Not only has Rajapaksa successfully defeated the terror that has consumed every last breath of this country and shed much blood in the land, but also taught the world community a clear lesson in sovereignty. It is today a victorious nation made up of Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim people who celebrate the end of terror in this country; a people who care little for what the likes of Hillary Clintons, Millibands and other so-called members of the world community have to say about how the war was won. Only Sri Lanka and the people who lived in the war torn country, never even entertaining the thought of leaving the land for personal safety, have a right to pass the verdict on that. And if yesterday's celebrations and the outcome of any future election in this country would stand an indication, then it was a war well won. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

Ending a three decade old path of blood

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Load-Date: May 19, 2009

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End of the war

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

May 20, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 586 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 20 -- The Sri Lankan Armed Forces have won a comprehensive victory over the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in a military campaign that began in the Eastern province in August 2006.

With its entire top leadership and thousands of fighting cadres killed in action, its military structure, assets and capabilities destroyed, its political organisation decimated, the LTTE no longer exists as a military force. Belying conventional wisdom, Sri Lanka has found a military solution to what used to be regarded as an intractable armed secessionist and terrorist challenge. There is something poignant about the way in which the low-intensity conflict - which was waged over a quarter of a century and claimed tens of thousands of lives - has ended. The images of terrified children, women and men fleeing the tiny sliver of coastal land in which they were confined by the Tigers for use as a human shield and of a tractor load of bodies of senior LTTE leaders who made a final hopeless stand for a lost cause will continue to haunt the memories of journalists and others who witnessed these scenes. It might have been very different had an organisation that started out, in the 1970s, with some kind of emancipatory political vision and even idealism not turned Pol Potist in its extremism, cruelty and horrific disregard for human life and welfare. As the years went by and numerous proposals for a negotiated political solution fell by the wayside, the one thing that remained constant was the LTTE's uncompromising secessionism and militarism and the rising graph of its terrorist crimes, which included the assassination of a former Indian Prime Minister, a Sri Lankan President, a Foreign Minister, a presidential contender and numerous democratic Tamil leaders, the massacre of Sinhala and Muslim civilians, ethnic cleansing, child conscription and economic offences of various kinds. The ceasefire agreement of February 2002 represented a historic opportunity to break with the past. Tragically, the LTTE, seeing it mainly as an opportunity to re-arm itself and strengthen its parallel State structure in the territory it controlled, did everything conceivable to make the peace process falter and fail. "It was worse than a crime, a blunder," is a Napoleonic era saying attributed to Talleyrand. If the May 1991 assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in Sriperumbudur by an LTTE squad dispatched by V. Prabhakaran made a permanent enemy of India, the boycott enforced in the LTTE-controlled areas during the November 2005 Presidential election, which facilitated Mahinda Rajapaksa's victory over ceasefire-architect Ranil Wickremasinghe in a close contest, was an akratic act that defied all rational explanation. President Rajapaksa has achieved what no previous Sri Lankan leader came close to doing: securing the integrity and sovereignty of Sri Lanka by freeing it from the malevolent challenge of the LTTE. Now, in the post-Prabhakaran era, he needs to address two big tasks: rehabilitation of hundreds of thousands of Tamils who have been through a prolonged nightmare and crafting an enduring political solution based on far-going devolution of power to the Tamils in their areas of historical habitation. India, which has excellent relations with its Southern neighbour, can make a constructive difference by coming up with a massive rehabilitation package for the North and encouraging Colombo to fast-track the political solution. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

End of the war

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PEOPLE PRABHAKARAN OBIT THREE LAST CHENNAI

UNI (United News of India)

May 18, 2009 Monday

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Length: 351 words

Dateline: Kochi

Body

Kochi, MAY 18 -- Such was his commitment to his goal of independent state that Prabhakaran had instructed the LTTE cadres to kill him if he compromised on the goal. Likewise, the LTTE cadres were known for the cyanide vials hung around their necks, to commit suicide when faced with the danger of capture.

Prabhakaran, hailed as a master strategist and known for his military leadership, also made a series of misjudgments over the years that eventually led to his downfall. He alienated his strongest allies in India by felling Mr Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 to a female human bomb, an apparent retaliation for sending an Indian peacekeeping mission to the island nation that turned sour. Prabhakaran and the then LTTE's political advisor Anton Balasingham termed the assassination a "tragic incident" and requested the Press "not to dig into an incident that happened ten years ago", in his first and only major press conference held in Killinochchi on April 10, 2002. During the press conference, Mr Balasingham had introduced Prabhakaran as the "President and Prime Minister of Tamil Eelam". The group's penchant for suicide attacks, including the 1998 bombing of the Temple of the Tooth, Sri Lanka's holiest Buddhist shrine, led the United States, the European Union and India to outlaw it as a terror organisation. This also meant a check on the money flow from the Western countries for the LTTE's activities. The group had also assassinated many Sri Lankan politicians, including former President Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993 and Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar in 2005, TULF leader A Amirthalingam, TELO Founder Sri Sabaratnam, EPRLF leader K Padmanabha, Jaffna Mayors P Sivapalan and Sarojini Yogeswaran, besides several others. In 2004, a top LTTE commander, Col. Karuna, fell out with him and split from the group with thousands of his fighters. Prabhakaran then called a Tamil boycott of the 2005 presidential elections, which helped propel the hardline Mahinda Rajapaksa to victory and eventually proved to be his undoing. Published by HT Syndication with permission from United News of India.

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Why no action taken in Rajiv Gandhi's murder case: SC to ED

UNI (United News of India)

April 27, 2009 Monday

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Length: 464 words

Dateline: New

Body

New, Delhi. Ma -- The Supreme Court today asked Enforcement Direct(ed) "why no action has been taken against controversial godman Chandra Swami when the government suspected that he had financed LTTE's involvement in the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi?"

A vacation bench comprising Justices V S Sirpurkar and R M Lodha put the query to ED council Wasim Ahmed Kadri when he alleged that Chandra Swami was also suspected to have funded the killers of the former premier. Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a women suicide bomber of the LTTE on May 21, 1991, in Tamil Nadu. ED has come in appeal against the High Court order permitting Nemi Chand Jain alias Chandra Swami to go abroad. Chandra Swami is facing allegations of sending about Rs 9.4 crore through Hawala channels. According to senior council Mukul Rohatagi appearing for Chandra Swami, the allegations against his client was totally false. The apex court adjourned till May 28 the hearing of the appeal of ED which is pleading with the apex court. Chandra Swami has in very close to a large number of top politicians in the country, including two late PM's P V Narsimbha Rao and Chandrashekhar. Chandrashekhar was the PM of the country when Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated. Late LTTE Chief Prabhakaran was the main suspect in the conspriacy which culminated into the murder of Rajiv Gandhi. The Supreme Court today asked Enforcement Direct(ed) "why no action has been taken against controversial godman Chandra Swami when the government suspected that he had financed LTTE's involvement in the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi?" A vacation bench comprising Justices V S Sirpurkar and R M Lodha put the query to ED council Wasim Ahmed Kadri when he alleged that Chandra Swami was also suspected to have funded the killers of the former premier. Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a women suicide bomber of the LTTE on May 21, 1991, in Tamil Nadu. ED has come in appeal against the High Court order permitting Nemi Chand Jain alias Chandra Swami to go abroad. Chandra Swami is facing allegations of sending about Rs 9.4 crore through Hawala channels. According to senior council Mukul Rohatagi appearing for Chandra Swami, the allegations against his client was totally false. The apex court adjourned till May 28 the hearing of the appeal of ED which is pleading with the apex court. Chandra Swami has in very close to a large number of top politicians in the country, including two late PM's P V Narsimbha Rao and Chandrashekhar. Chandrashekhar was the PM of the country when Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated. Late LTTE Chief Prabhakaran was the main suspect in the conspriacy which culminated into the murder of Rajiv Gandhi. Published by HT Syndication with permission from United News of India.

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Why no action taken in Rajiv Gandhi's murder case: SC to ED

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Crowds Flee Fighting as Sri Lanka Breaches Rebel Haven

The New York Times

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 11

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Byline: By MARK McDONALD

Dateline: HONG KONG

Body

Sri Lankan troops broke through earthen barriers used by Tamil separatist fighters on Monday, opening a breach that the government said was then crossed by some 30,000 people escaping the fighting inside a no-fire zone originally intended as a haven.

As the crowds tried to flee the safe zone, in what the Defense Ministry called "the world's largest hostage rescue mission," three Tamil Tiger suicide bombers detonated explosive vests, killing dozens of civilians, the government said.

A pro-rebel Web portal confirmed Monday that fierce fighting had resumed inside the safety zone -- the report called the situation "total chaos" -- and that thousands of civilians had fled the area. The report also said that Sri Lankan troops had hit the principal hospital in the zone with rocket-propelled grenades, causing heavy civilian casualties.

State television in Sri Lanka broadcast a short video showing hundreds of men, women and children slowly streaming through an open area, some carrying large bundles, which it said showed the migrants' exodus.

The Sri Lankan government later issued an ultimatum to the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or Tamil Tigers, giving them and their leader 24 hours to surrender, Reuters reported, quoting the government's defense spokesman, Keheliya Rambukwella.

It was not possible to verify the battlefield accounts from either side because the government prevents independent journalists and most relief agencies from reaching the area. But in an apparent acknowledgment of the army's breakthrough, which occurred Monday morning, the rebels, also known as the L.T.T.E., petitioned the government for a truce on Monday afternoon.

"The L.T.T.E. would like to reiterate its commitment to a cease-fire without any preconditions, as urged by the U.S. and other members of the international community," a statement issued by the movement's political headquarters said.

Crowds Flee Fighting as Sri Lanka Breaches Rebel Haven

"The L.T.T.E. urges the Sri Lankan government to stop its military actions, including shelling and bombing civilian areas, and accept the call of the United States and other members of the international community for a cease-fire, which we believe will create a conducive atmosphere for talks on all relevant issues."

Sri Lankan troops, pressing the attack over the past several months, have backed the rebel fighters into a shrinking patch of lagoons, coconut groves, jungle and beachfront along the country's northeastern coast. The rebel redoubt is reportedly down to about six square miles.

Ethnic Tamil separatists have been battling the government for 25 years, and an estimated 75,000 people have been killed in the violence.

Most analysts in South Asia now believe the war to be in its endgame. Although the **Tamil Tigers** have shown great resilience as an insurgency, especially in their use of asymmetric tactics like suicide attacks, they have lost their principal bases of operations and nearly all of their capacity as a conventional military force.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said it had been able to extricate about 10,000 people on intermittent boatlifts from the no-fire zone in recent months, while an estimated 35,000 civilians had managed to escape overland to government-held areas where they were being detained in camps.

The United Nations has estimated that 100,000 civilians remain trapped inside the no-fire zone, and the **Tamil Tigers** have been widely accused of holding the civilians to use as human shields.

The Tigers, as well as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and others, have criticized the Sri Lankan government for artillery barrages that have taken a heavy toll on the civilian population.

The United Nations said at least 4,500 civilians had been killed since the first of the year, with some 12,000 injured. On March 23, Human Rights Watch reported that at least 2,700 civilians had been killed in the no-fire zone this year.

After talks on Sunday with Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations secretary general, and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Lawrence Cannon, the foreign minister of Canada, called for a resumption of the 48-hour cease-fire initiated by the Sri Lankan government last week. The cease-fire has since lapsed.

Other governments have issued similar appeals, although Sri Lanka has rejected further pauses in the fighting, saying the Tigers use the truce periods to reinforce their defenses.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

A perilous journey for freedom

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 28, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 1238 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 28 -- When we started our trip from Colombo on Friday, I had some idea of what to expect. It was not going to be easy. After witnessing TV images of the mass human exodus described as the biggest hostage rescue mission in the world and following it closely since Monday, I knew the picture would be rough.

Around 7.30 in the morning we took off from the Ratmalana Airbase in a light aircraft used to transport goods and soldiers to North and landed in Anuradhapura one hour later. From there we boarded a MI 17 helicopter. There were some 50 journalists representing both foreign and local media organizations. Beginning Soon after landing in Kilinochchi some 45 minutes later, we were given a hurried briefing of our basic program by military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara. We were to have breakfast inside the LTTE's former political office and listen to a media briefing by 58 Division Brigade Commander Shavendra Silva on the military operations. Later, there would be a display of weapons and important documents recovered from LTTE leaders' residence. Then would come the most important part of our trip, a visit to the very edge of No Fire Zone in Puthumattalan, where I saw the other day on TV, a virtual human stampede - a mass exodus of civilians into military held areas, seeking refuge away from the brutal grip of LTTE where they suffered without food, water and security. But nothing could have prepared us for what we saw. The destruction and the devastation caused by the conflict was evident everywhere, from the scorched tops of palm and coconut trees to the pallet ridden shabby structures, some of whose roofs had been blown away by shelling. The entire environment appeared as if a tornado has just crossed its path. As we got nearer the destruction seemed intense. There was hardly any life left. It was hard to believe that one man's eccentricity and lust for a selfish and an impossible dream could bring such suffering to so many people. Brig. Shavendra Silva explained the situation inside the No Fire Zone. Remaining LTTE cadres have donned civvies on strict orders from their hierarchy. And there could still be 10,000-15,000 civilians trapped inside the NFZ. He said this number could be more or less, they had no way of knowing the exact figure. This is the most challenging phase of their operation. In this tail end, they have deployed most of their tactics and the Tigers were able to read them better. "We cannot use the same tactics we used to liberate the civilians from the north of the NFZ. We must plan afresh." The rescue mission was a pre-dawn operation. The military had been announcing their entry into the NFZ via Puthumattalan for days. The civilians were asked to be prepared to flee. By April 19, Sunday this call had become stale in the Tigers' ear. The time was right for the rescue mission, military commanders agreed. "We were closely monitoring their habits. Through our surveillance we knew the cadres' alertness was at a very low level during the early hours. Our operation started late Sunday night and the LTTE taken by surprise could not hold their ground for even half an hour," Brig Shavendra said. Civilian influx As soon as the earth bunt was breached the civilians started to pour out as if the floodgates of a brimming tank were suddenly opened up. At first they threw away their last earthly possessions in the hurry to get to safe terrain and some were lost in the stampede. The scattered belongings were still visible near the boundary of the Puthumathalan Lagoon. But when the pace eased and the LTTE was driven further south, the civilians arrived with ease. Over 100,000 civilians were

A perilous journey for freedom

rescued by Military Forces within the first three days of the operation. Seventeen people died in three **LTTE** suicide attacks on the day one of the rescue operation. Rajeshwari, a middle aged woman who arrived at Iranapalai after fleeing the NFZ with her five year old son and her ageing mother told us a heart wrenching story. "I heard the announcement. I saw people running towards the military controlled area. I ran with my child, hoping that even if I died my child will survive and be freed." Time did not permit us to ask her about the plight of the rest of her family. The Tigers in their desperation to hold their last stand, shoot and beat up anyone who tries to escape. They have been using the civilians as a human shield for the past several weeks. Rajeshwari had been inside the NFZ for two months. The place is said to be a living hell with **LTTE** restricting ration quotas and plundering the rest for their own use. Some civilians said they had not eaten a proper meal for days. This was true for children, **women** and the old. Sleep is a luxury they cannot afford. Fortunately, the group of people whom we met on our visit had no major injuries other than signs of extreme exhaustion but thousands of civilians who were rescued by the Forces since April 20 had sustained injuries including gunfire wounds, a price they paid for freedom over **LTTE**'s insanity. They are being treated in hospitals in Vavunia, Pulmodai, Chettikulam, Trincomalee, Padaviya, Mannar and Colombo. The conditions in the NFZ are such that some of the senior Tiger cadres have also opted to quit and mingle with the civilians and flee at the cost of their dear life. An audacious task Military forces on a daily basis announce safe escape routes for civilians. Helping civilians who want to cross over is an audacious task. The previous day **LTTE** cadres clad as ordinary civilians shot dead two soldiers who tried to usher them to safety responding to their call. After an **LTTE** human bomb killed soldiers and IDPs at a transit camp, the civilians who could barely walk after the perilous and arduous journey need to undergo intense screening at the IDP receiving point. We had a glimpse of the Puthumattalan hospital which fell into the hands of the Forces a few days back. The area has been secured by the Security Forces. We had a view of the distant stretch of land, beyond the lagoon where the **LTTE** was still keeping civilians hostage. Black smoke billowed from the treetops. A special task force soldier said the Tigers could be burning one of their weapons dumps. "We have to surprise the enemy. We are now fighting a very sensitive battle. Our aim is to ensure Zero Civilian Casualties. It has to be a hand to hand fight," Brigadier Silva explained. He said they have to discern Tigers from ordinary civilians and target them. This was a challenge as the Tigers were now in civvies. Pointing to the buildings at the other side of the lagoon where we could see their roofs intact, he explained that was because the military did not use heavy weapons during the rescue operation. Rescue operation On the contrary the **LTTE** was still using heavy weapons and shells to attack the Forces. "We know that there is at least one peddle gun with them in there," a senior ranker whom we met at the location said adding that **LTTE** could very well shell the place where we were standing right then. When asked how long they would take to free the civilians, Brigadier Shavendra said they hope to rescue all the civilians unhurt within a few days. This was a hope we all shared. A hope to see an end to all this suffering soon and the dawn of peace in our Motherland. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 28, 2009

Another 729 civilians rescued

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 10, 2009 Friday

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Length: 272 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 10 -- Over 729 displaced civilians fleeing **LTTE** captivity had been rescued by Navy and Army on Wednesday.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said that around 118 civilians sought protection with the Army 58 division in Ampalavanpokkerni. They included 51 children, 36 **females** and 31 males. "Another 74 civilians fleeing **LTTE** atrocities have been rescued by troops in Munai, Jaffna on Wednesday. Meanwhile, the Navy rescued 537 sick and wounded civilians accompanied by their close relatives from Puthumaththalan on Wednesday in an ICRC chartered ship MV Green Ocean. Navy Spokesman Captain D.P.K. Dassanayake said the 19th batch of 537 patients and civilians were evacuated on board MV Green Ocean on Wednesday. "While the Navy provides safe passage to civilians escaping **LTTE** captivity, the evacuation of patients and civilians were being carried out by the ICRC," he added. "The sick and wounded civilians who disembarked in Pulmuddai were provided with emergency medical treatment by Naval doctors taken to the Field Hospital and the General Hospital in Padaviya. The 19th batch consisted of 153 adult males, 168 adult **females** and 216 children. Among them were 107 males and 63 **females** needing medical treatment. The Navy as part of its humanitarian operations, has put in place a number of comprehensive evacuation measures to facilitate the evacuation process. The naval troops and vessels along with stand-by rescue and medical teams are on special deployment in the North-eastern seas for assisting civilians fleeing from the **LTTE**. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 11, 2009

Minister slams biased media

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

May 13, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 617 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 13 -- Defence Affairs spokesman Minister Keheliya Rambukwella denied troops shelling a makeshift hospital in the No Fire Zone (NFZ) during the weekend as reported in certain media. He said that Security Forces engaged in the hostage rescue mission are not using any heavy weapons to confront LTTE cadres inside the NFZ.

"Troops have nothing to do with shelling incidents in the NFZ since they are not using heavy arms. Besides, troops engaged in humanitarian mission are cautiously stepping forward with least harm to civilians," he added. The media were out of control during the last few days. International media institutions specially, had been reporting totally biased information to tarnish the image of a sovereign nation, said Defence Affairs spokesman Minister Keheliya Rambukwella. Some media institutions reported that Government Forces were shelling the No Fire Zone and it killed over 1,000 civilians and injured 1,600. They reported that children and women were among the killed and wounded. "We totally and categorically deny this baseless and fabricated information which had been obtained from the Tamilnet website," he told the media yesterday at the MCNS. He asserted that Tamilnet was providing fabricated and biased information during the last few years and the LTTE had given credibility to this website. "We have proved that Tamilnet was providing fabricated information on many occasions and it is not new for this pro-LTTE website. What I regret is that these media institutions have reported without any verification," the Minister said. He said this report was false and soon they will prove to the world who was behind the carnage that took place in the NFZ. "We will not give in to accusations against the Government by certain media. We will prove that false reports were disseminated provided by the LTTE," he added. Denying the accusation, Minister Rambukwella reiterated that the Security Forces are not using heavy weapons in the NFZ out of concern for civilian lives. "We did not shell or carry out air raids in the NFZ. Victory is on the hands of Security Forces by rescuing civilians. Our victory is not only getting Prabakaran but rescuing every single civilian trapped under the LTTE," he added. Rambukwella observed that having done all this with least harm to civilians in the world's biggest hostage rescue mission, there had been fabricated information to tarnish the image of the Government and the Security Forces. Some international media spread blatant lies about the humanitarian mission carried out by the Security Forces. "It was carefully planned to arouse and draw the attention of the International Community, particularly the United Nations," the Minister remarked. He said on many occasions, UN officials were crying out before their arrival in the island solely depending on misinformation about the prevailing situation. "Whenever they come and witness the real ground situation, they depart with full satisfaction about the situation." Answering a question by a journalist, the Minister said a pause to rescue civilians will not workout since the LTTE cadres are holding civilians as a human shield. The Government will execute its maximum effort to draw out every single civilian without causing casualties. If not for the civilians, end of the game will come within 72 hours, said Defence Affairs spokesman Minister Keheliya Rambukwella. Minister Rambukwella said the Government already granted 48 hour pause during the Sinhala and Tamil New Year but the LTTE was holding civilians. "If not for the civilians the entire NFZ will be captured within 72 hours."Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

Minister slams biased media

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Load-Date: May 13, 2009

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A spirited response

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 7, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 560 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 7 -- With the LTTE now grovelling under the Forces' onslaught with its last remaining resistance too on the verge of being snuffed out, there is every possibility of a bail out being engineered by vested interests if earlier precedents are anything to go by.

One recalls how when the Forces were on the verge of finishing off the LTTE pressure was brought to bear on the administration of the day, economic embargoes included, leading to capitulation that eventually brought to nought all the hard fought gains by the valiant troops. It is to the eternal credit of President Mahinda Rajapaksa that he has steadfastly refused to bow to the dictates of international forces that would have meant letting the Tiger off the hook. It is this firm resolve that is paying dividends today with the Tigers having all but surrendered the battle after three decades of protracted fighting. But the efforts to scuttle the gains of the Forces have by no means ended. With the human rights whip now losing its sting, the bone of contention has shifted to the civilians trapped in the fighting zone. Never mind that it is the LTTE which is holding these innocent men, women and children hostage in its last stand against the might of the Forces. It is in this context that the broadside fired by seasoned diplomat Ravinatha Aryasinha on the Members of the European Union should be applauded. Intervening at a meeting of the South Asia delegation of the European Parliament, Ambassador Aryasinha told Members of the European Parliament that some apologists among them were trying to save the LTTE by calling for a ceasefire and trying to stop the Sri Lankan Government from militarily defeating the terrorists. He also told them if they care for the welfare of the affected civilians they should use whatever influence they have with the Tamil Diaspora to bring pressure on the outfit to let go of the 50,000 people they are holding as human shields. This is in response to the contention among the EU member countries that there was a catastrophe in Sri Lanka. As reported in our pages yesterday, Aryasinha countered this by saying the catastrophe is in the North where the LTTE is forcibly holding 50,000 civilians as a human shield. He also pointed out that the European Parliament omitted in its last resolution, the fact that the LTTE was firing heavy artillery out of the no fire zone. The combative stance taken by Aryasinha should be lauded by all Sri Lankans. This mirrors the hardened attitude of Colombo in confronting pressure from various quarters to relax the grip on the LTTE. In the past, if at all only feeble resistance was offered with mute acceptance of what was dished out in world chanceries. Thus, it is gratifying to see spirited diplomatic responses which augers well for the country's international standing and moreover effectively setting the record straight. Sri Lanka needs not take anything thrown at it lying down any more. It may be a poor country but a sovereign nation nevertheless with a pride and dignity to protect. The President has shown the way on how to protect this dignity by asking all those busy bodies where to get off. It is now left to his officials, particularly those entrusted with the duty of defending the country overseas to carry the torch. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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A spirited response

Load-Date: April 10, 2009

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Upholding democratic rights of Northern people the next challenge

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

June 28, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 1922 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 28 -- The continuous flow of media reports about the weapons, military hardware and many other assets possessed by the LTTE, both from the North and the East during the past few days indicates about the extent of the assets which were to be recovered by the Security Forces during the search and clear operations now on in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts and also in the Eastern province.

During the past two weeks the Security Forces and the Police were able to recover large hauls of arms and ammunition due to the information provided by the Tiger cadres who had surrendered to the Security Forces and from the civilians now living in transit camps in Vavuniya and Mannar districts. The recoveries made from the Eastern province in Vakarai, Seruvila and Sampoor is a clear indication that even after intense search operations carried out in those areas, large stocks of arms and ammunitions are still buried under the earth. If not for the information given by Tiger surrendees and civilians and the intense search operations conducted by the Security Forces and the Police, they would have remained buried inside the earth for a long period and be a big issue once people are resettled in those villages. The long list of recoveries by the Security Forces conducting search and clear operations in Vellamullivaikkal, Karayanmullivaikkal and Mullaitivu indicates that the LTTE was in possession of large stocks of arms and ammunition even at the last minute of the battle. But they destroyed many of their arms and ammunitions which could not be moved out of the areas once they were boxed to less than one square kilo metre area by the 53, 58 and 59 Division troops during the last few days of the battle. They buried many of their assets within the No Fire Zone hoping that they would get a chance to return to that land. It was with that hope the LTTE cadres, who were fleeing from the Eastern strongholds of Sampoor, Vakara and, Thoppigala, buried many of their heavy caliber artillery guns. However, troops were able to recover those weapons after conducting extensive search operations in the jungle patches and coastal belt of the Eastern Province. If not for those extensive search operations and strict security measures taken when civilians were resettled in their habitations in the Eastern Province, the end result of this nearly three -year effort to eliminate LTTE terrorism would have been a different one. It was due to the deployment of troops in the Eastern Province, especially in the jungle patches, the Security Forces were able to keep the battle in the Wanni intact since they did not leave any room for the LTTE to destabilize the security situation in the East on any occasion except for few incidents that had occurred due to infiltration of small LTTE groups into jungle patches in the East. The troops, who were engaged in intense battles in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu until they fought the final battle in Vellamullivaikkal in the North of Mullaitivu, have not yet been relieved of their duties although people have thought that they are relaxing in their camps. The task of clearing the entire land mass from mines before civilians are resettled in their villages means that their duties will not be relaxed at any moment. They still engage in mine clearing and search operations to facilitate the process of resettling people in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu within the time frame set by the Government. Therefore, the Sri Lanka Army Engineer regiment has already started their battle in the Mannar district to facilitate resettling people in the Mannar district. Since the Government has expressed its commitment to resettle the people in the North by the end

Upholding democratic rights of Northern people the next challenge

of this year all the demining process has to be expedited to facilitate the resettling process. The Government delegation led by Senior Presidential Advisor and MP Basil Rajapaksa, Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa and Presidential Secretary Lalith Weerathunga during their visit to India has also sought Indian assistance for the de-mining process considering large extent of area the Security Forces and other de-mining agencies have to clear within a six month period. The Government delegation to India was the first one after Sri Lanka completely defeated the **LTTE** on May 18, and was specially focused on the resettlement of the displaced civilians in the North. According to reports the Indian Government has pledged to double its assistance for the Government for the demining process due to the urgent requirement of demining teams to achieve the objective of resettling more than 280,000 people in the North after providing them with basic facilities. Following discussions the Sri Lankan delegation had with the Indian Foreign Minister S.M. Krishna, Senior Presidential Advisor Basil Rajapaksa has told the media that the Indian government had earlier agreed to send four demining teams, but now on a request made to them, they are trying to increase the number by eight. The Sri Lankan delegation also detailed the many steps being taken to improve the conditions and facilities for the IDPs in the relief centres, such as the provision of schools and text books, the introduction of solar-powered telephone booths for easier communication and the improved accommodation facilities and health and sanitary services. The delegations also discussed the considerable infra-structure facilities that had to be established to enable the IDPs to be resettled with opportunities for a good livelihood Indian Foreign Minister Krishna has told reporters later that India would assist in the resettlement and rehabilitation process of the displaced persons. New Delhi also stated its commitment to assist in de-mining activity to ensure the safe and speedy return of the IDPs. During these discussions, according to Indian Foreign Minister Sri Lanka has agreed to India's suggestion to allow the ship "Captain Ali" to off-load the relief material meant for displaced persons in Northern Sri Lanka. These items will now be routed by the Government through the Red Cross. The ship Captain Ali was which had entered Sri Lankan territorial waters with a load of relief materials meant for displaced civilians was sent back by the Government authorities as they had not taken prior permission from the Sri Lankan authorities for this mission. After the ship was asked to leave from the Sri Lankan territorial waters and was anchored in the Indian waters as it was running out of fuel and fresh water. With the pledge given to Indian authorities the ship Captain Ali will reach Sri Lanka to unload the relief material meant for civilians within the next few days. Meanwhile, as a part of expediting the process of resettling the people in the Mannar district the sixth Police Station established in the Mannar District after liberating the area from the **LTTE** was declared open in Nachchikuda on Saturday (20). Senior Deputy Inspector General Nimal Lewke, opened this Police station in Nachchikuda. Earlier, the Police Department had opened Police stations in Silawathura, Madhu, Vedattalativu, Illuppukaddavai and Mulangavil were the other Police Stations to commence their operations shortly after the Wanni humanitarian operations were over. The Police Department is planning to set up 35 Police stations in this region as part of reestablishing civil administration in the North. The decision by the Government hold the forthcoming Madhu feast on August 15, is also yet another signal that the area is returning to normality step by step. The Catholic community in the country have expressed their gratitude to President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Government and the Armed Forces for liberating the nation from terrorism to enable the pilgrims to pay homage to the Church of Our Lady of Madhu after 33 years without fear. The Catholic community was held to ransom annually by the **LTTE** preventing them from paying homage to the sacred place. The **LTTE** continuously infiltrated the Sacred Madhu Church and caused damaged to the church in the past. The priests were even forced into **LTTE** held areas last year with the venerated statue of Our Lady of Madhu. The Shrine at Madhu is held sacred and respected by all Sri Lankans irrespective of religion and ethnicity. Thousands of pilgrims used to visit the shrine, especially during the church feast in August, before terrorists took control of the area in 1999. It was in April 25, 2008 the 57 Division of the Sri Lanka Army captured this sacred Madhu shrine from the clutches of the **LTTE** and restored the place which was damaged by the **LTTE** and replaced the sacred statue of Our Lady Madhu which was conveyed out of the Church by the priests under the pressure of the **LTTE** once they were fleeing from the Madhu area. Last year the **LTTE** dug trenches on the pathway close the Madhu Church to prevent troops from clearing the area. With these steps the Government is taking steps to restore the people right to worship their religious places without any harassment from terrorists. Apart from the measures taken by the Government to uplift the livelihood of the Northern people it had also taken measures to establish democracy in the North by announcing elections to the Jaffna Municipal Council, the citadel of Tamil politics in Sri Lanka and also for the Vavuniya Urban Council which were predominantly under the pressure of the **LTTE** for the past three decades. The United People's Freedom Front, United National Party, Tamil National Alliance and the Tamil United Liberation Front are tipped to contest the forthcoming elections on August 08, the same date the southerners voting for the Uva Provincial Council election

Upholding democratic rights of Northern people the next challenge

The Elections Department fixed August 8 as the elections date for the two Local bodies in the Jaffna and Vavuniya districts. The people in the Jaffna district will get the chance of electing their own candidates for these two local bodies as this would be the first instance they are going to cast their vote without any pressure from the LTTE. Therefore, the elections on August 8, will be one of the most crucial elections for the Tamils as it would give an idea about the true political affinity of the Tamil people as they are now free to cast their vote and the candidates are free to engage in their elections without any guns pointed at them. Above all there won't be any terrorists to fix claymore mines and point guns to assassinate elected members to these local bodies to run their own administration in those local bodies. As all these measures are being taken to restore normality in the North the security concerns should also been given top most priority in the North and East and also other part of the country although one month had passed since the elimination of the LTTE from the country. However, the Security Forces have not yet dropped its guard on security as Tiger elements are still haunting in the North and East. The capture of female Tiger cadres inside the jungle in Puthukudiyiruppu South who had survived for one month after eating uncooked dhal and rice hiding from the Security Forces and the killing of LTTE leader in Jaffna were two examples of their alertness. The 522 Brigade troops who conducted a search operation in the Kodikam area on information about the presence of a few suspected persons, observed one suspect hiding behind a bush. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: June 29, 2009

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Special report: Traumatised Tamils live in fear of new crackdown: The Sri Lankan army is on the verge of wiping out the rebel Tamil Tiger forces. But, as Annie Kelly reports, there is concern that the displaced civilian population is suffering a fresh wave of human rights violations including arbitrary arrests and abductions

The Observer (London) (England)

April 5, 2009

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TheObserver

Section: OBSERVER FOREIGN PAGES; Pg. 34

Length: 2216 words

Byline: Annie Kelly

Body

Last year, in a village in the east of Sri Lanka, Selvi Ratnarajah opened her door to find three masked men pointing guns at her face. They pushed inside and screamed at her to turn off the lights. When she refused, they shouted for her husband, Ravanana, dragged him into the street and forced him at gunpoint on to the back of a motorbike.

"I went out of the house and ran and ran through the bush," she said, fingering her husband's tattered ID card. "I could see the lights of the motorbike ahead and I saw them stop by a bridge. Then I heard shots. I ran towards the noise and I could hear someone breathing. It was dark and there were no lights and I was screaming for him. When I found my husband, they'd shot him in the mouth. He was trying to talk to me. I tried to scream again, but no sound came out. Then he died."

Ratnarajah says she has no idea who took her husband or why. "When they came to the house, all they said was that he was being taken for questioning, but nobody has ever told me why he was taken," she says. "Everywhere there are men with arms. We don't know who they are and what is happening with the fighting, and I don't know who to trust. I saw him being taken from the house but nobody will listen to me. My husband was never accused of anything."

As the Sri Lankan military mounts

a spring offensive designed to eliminate the **Tamil Tigers** and end their bloody 26-year struggle for an independent Tamil homeland, the civilian population of the Tamil-dominated regions is terrorised, displaced and fears the worst.

According to the Sri Lankan army, the Tigers are now making a last stand on a tiny strip of land in the north-east of the country. But the defeat of the rebels as a fighting force is unlikely to usher in a new period of tranquillity. Instead, say human rights organisations, a humanitarian catastrophe of "epidemic proportions" is unfolding in Sri

Special report: Traumatized Tamils live in fear of new crackdown: The Sri Lankan army is on the verge of wiping out the rebel Tamil Tiger forces. But, as Annie

Lanka's north and east. Up to 190,000 civilians are still trapped between remaining Tamil Tiger fighters and advancing government forces in the Vanni region.

As rebel soldiers melt back into the civilian population, and the number of those displaced by the fighting swells, tales of brutality and intimidation are legion. Meanwhile, people are simply disappearing.

Despite journalists being banned from travelling to the war zone and not being allowed free access to "liberated areas", the Observer, working with a local journalist, has obtained the testimonies of women such as Selvi who tell of husbands, brothers and sons vanishing or being taken by force.

Bhavani Varnakulasingham, a 26-year-old mother of two, wept as she held her husband's photograph and told of the day he disappeared on his way home from his job as a driver for an international aid organisation. "He'd gone to [the capital,] Colombo. He called to say he was on his way home, but when he didn't arrive I started calling his mobile," she said. "I tried calling for days. Once, someone answered, and I screamed and pleaded for them to release him, but they rang off. Then I knew for certain he'd been taken."

She has no idea why her husband was taken or who took him. And despite repeated requests to police and government officials, she has received no information about what happened to him.

In a village near Batticaloa on the east coast, Amirtha Sinnathamby said unidentified gunmen had shot her elder brother in 2006 and another died after being caught in crossfire between rebels and government soldiers. Last November, her husband disappeared after travelling to Colombo to apply for a work permit.

"People from Colombo called me and said he'd been taken," she said. "I went to the police station and lodged a complaint, went to Tamil politicians, the Red Cross, the Human Rights Commission, but nobody could help me. Nobody can tell me who abducted him or why he was abducted. Now I have nothing; I have used all my money travelling to Colombo to lodge complaints with the police. But I don't know whether he is dead or alive. I continue to live with tears."

The wave of disappearances and arbitrary arrests has led a host of human rights organisations to sound the alarm. Chris Chapman, conflict prevention officer at Minority Rights International, said: "We are extremely concerned about the situation faced by minorities in Sri Lanka's conflict area. Apart from the humanitarian catastrophe in the battle zone, there is also evidence of rising incidents of human rights violations.

"We are getting reports of arbitrary arrests, abductions and disappearances among Tamils fleeing the fighting. These violations are also happening in other parts of the country. Whatever the military outcome is, we see no evidence that this pattern of human rights violations will stop.

"There needs to be serious international pressure on the Sri Lankan government to put in place a human rights mechanism to ensure that the large number of incidents of abductions and enforced disappearances in the north and east are stopped and the perpetrators brought to justice."

Anna Neistat, senior emergency co-ordinator at Human Rights Watch, said: "This isn't about the conflict; it is about the government doing nothing to acknowledge the current human rights violations being committed against Tamil civilians. We are extremely concerned about the humanitarian crisis faced by thousands still trapped by fighting in the north, and these kinds of violations look set to continue. Continued intimidation of the independent press and human rights activists also continue unchecked."

Both sides have been accused of targeting Tamil civilians caught between the warring sides. There have been reports of civilians being shelled by government artillery, while the Tamil Tigers have been accused of using civilians as human shields and shooting those trying to flee the area.

Last Thursday, the UN sent Walter Kaelin, representative of secretary general Ban Ki-moon on the human rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs), to assess the situation and meet senior government authorities. He is due to stay until tomorrow and is there at the invitation of the Sri Lankan government.

Special report: Traumatized Tamils live in fear of new crackdown: The Sri Lankan army is on the verge of wiping out the rebel Tamil Tiger forces. But, as Annie

The prognosis is likely to be bleak. Charu Hogg, associate director at the international thinktank Chatham House, believes that the destruction of the Tigers as a fighting force will only mark the beginning of a new and ugly phase of civil repression. "The end of the territorial fight will undoubtedly lead to a more authoritarian regime. The fighting forces might be wiped out, but the end of the battle will not mean the end of the [Tigers] or their striking potential," said Hogg.

"There will be severe human rights repercussions for any civilians suspected of being affiliated to or sympathetic to the [Tigers]. Disappearances have been an ugly side of this conflict and are likely to continue as a counter-insurgency tactic used by the government and the pro-government armed groups."

Sri Lanka already has the second highest number of disappearances reported to the UN of any nation. A 2008 Human Rights Watch (HRW) report says that more than 1,500 people were reported missing between 2005-07, with more than 1,000 reportedly "disappeared" in 2006 alone.

Last month, the government ramped up its mandatory registration of Tamils in Colombo on security grounds. There are concerns that, after the end of the conflict, any Tamil will be considered a potential security threat, leading to a rise in detentions and killings.

Fears are already rising for the safety of 60,000 IDPs, the majority of them ethnic Tamils who have fled into government-controlled areas. Reports are already surfacing of enforced detentions, abductions and disappearances at hospitals, "welfare camps" and security checkpoints in the Vavuniya and Mannar districts.

A Sri Lankan aid worker who asked to remain anonymous said there were reports that masked gangs were entering hospitals full of displaced Tamils in Vavuniya and taking patients by force.

Dr Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, executive director of the Centre for Policy Alternatives in Sri Lanka, said enforced abductions were also occurring at "welfare camps" in Jaffna and Vavuniya.

"People fleeing the conflict are being put into highly militarised transit camps or welfare camps that are alleged to be more like detention camps," he says. "There is no proper plan with regards to resettlement and there is a presence of paramilitaries in the camps, where people are being identified and disappeared as being supporters or sympathisers of the [Tigers]."

Saravanamuttu says he "cannot emphasise enough" the importance of independent international monitoring of how the government is screening Tamil civilians fleeing the fighting.

Since the beginning of the civil war in 1983, more than 800,000 Tamils have been displaced and more than 70,000 killed. Although the Tamils are a minority, they constitute the majority in the northern and eastern provinces.

With the government likely to destroy remaining Tiger resistance in the coming days, international and local human rights campaigners say there must be an end to the lack of control over heavily armed pro-government paramilitary groups operating in the north and east of the country. Many of these groups have been accused of unlawful killings, hostage-taking, enforced disappearances and the recruitment of child soldiers since 2006.

"From 2006, the government has increasingly used allied armed groups to carry out its counter-insurgency strategy and has allowed these groups to operate with impunity in the north and east," says Yolanda Foster, policy officer for Sri Lanka at Amnesty International.

"If you look at what happened when the government 'liberated' the east from Tamil forces, we saw an increase in unlawful killings, with no recourse to justice for families who have had relatives disappeared with no indication of what happened to them. In Vavuniya, where most of the camps are based, there are at least 10 armed groups operating and ready to move into the vacuum left by the defeat of the Tigers."

Although the north has been worst affected by fighting, the UNHCR says there has also been a significant increase in the numbers of killings, abductions and injuries in Sri Lanka's eastern provinces. A statement in January said the

Special report: Traumatized Tamils live in fear of new crackdown: The Sri Lankan army is on the verge of wiping out the rebel Tamil Tiger forces. But, as Annie

deteriorating security situation in the region was threatening the safe return of more than 200,000 people displaced by fighting and that families were reporting increasing intimidation and restrictions on their movements by armed groups.

Sri Lanka's civil war has already left thousands of families in the north and east desperately searching for relatives who they say have "disappeared" without trace or been taken by force at security checkpoints or from family homes.

In its 2008 report, Human Rights Watch stated that, despite the hundreds of alleged "disappearances" reported since 2006, little has been done to bring perpetrators to justice. It says the government has also refused to provide statistics about the number of people reported missing.

However, the government rebuts these claims, saying they are unsubstantiated by any hard evidence. It also rejects as propaganda claims of disappearances and abductions at IDP checkpoints and welfare camps.

"We have a resettlement plan in place and are in complete understanding that the screening and registration process of IDPs has to be done properly. We are in a position where one in 1,000 people coming into government-controlled areas are suicide bombers, but one in 1,000 is enough for us to be diligent in our screening processes," says Rajiva Wijesinha, secretary to the ministry of disaster management and human rights.

"The allegations that there are human rights abuses being perpetrated by the government against Tamil civilians is appalling LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] propaganda. We have 250 people who have admitted to being LTTE cadres, but those who obviously are no connection with the LTTE are moving to wherever they can."

The government points to a UNHCR statement on 31 March as evidence that it is adhering to international standards. The statement welcomed what is called "positive developments" at IDP camps in the north, including the recent release of 371 people with special needs, but also called for increased freedom of movement for those IDPs who had already gone through the screening process.

Wijesinha also defended the government's refusal to allow journalists into the conflict zone, saying it was not prepared to have the blood of journalists killed by the Tigers on its hands.

He denied claims by the International Federation of Journalists in Sri Lanka that violence and intimidation are being used to suppress information and silence human rights campaigners.

With the military campaign drawing to a close, there are renewed calls for the international community to put pressure on the government to agree to an establishment of a UN human rights monitoring mission to investigate and report on abuses by government forces and the Tigers throughout the country.

Meanwhile, Selvi Ratnarajah continues to wonder why her husband had to die. "I'm scared of asking for information about my husband," she said, "but I can't bear living if I don't know why they killed him like they did."

Names in this article have been changed to protect identities

Load-Date: April 6, 2009

Tigers reduced to kittens!

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

June 12, 2009 Friday

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Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 12 -- Three decades of terrorist war waged against the democratically elected government of Sri Lanka by the **LTTE** (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) came to an end on May 18, 2009 when the Sri Lankan security forces managed to crush the terrorist menace by eliminating the **LTTE** (Tiger) leader, Megalomaniac murderer, Velupillai Prabhakaran and all his henchmen.

This laudable deed thus created a new world record registering Sri Lanka in the Guinness Book of Records as the only country in the modern history where a democratically elected government eliminated a fast growing fungus of terrorism from its soil, even after thirty years of bloodshed, loss of thousands of innocent lives and destruction to property. The Sri Lanka Security Forces' triumph is not a victory for Sinhalese over Tamils but, against a ruthless Tamil terrorist unit who on the pretext of looking after their own people managed to lead luxurious lives by collecting money through coercion from Tamil diaspora abroad and trying to divide the country and engage in mass killings and drive the country backwards by many years. Military action was also a marvellous humanitarian exercise during the last stages of the battle to rescue hundreds of thousands of innocent Tamil civilians who were kept forcibly under the Tiger boot as human shields. It was an overall exercise to relieve the entire Nation from the clutches of terrorism and to create a single country and one nation, without any racial bias or division, and to promote brotherhood among all. Freedom fight Prabhakaran in early 1970s had gathered a few Tamils from the North and initiated his struggle calling it a freedom fight. Subsequently he demanded a separate State by dividing Sri Lanka into two and called it a liberation struggle and named the outfit as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**). Progressively in an ethnic cleansing operation he massacred scores of Muslims in the East. In 1975, Prabhakaran personally killed the Tamil Mayor of Jaffna Alfred Duraiappa and boasted about his personal involvement in the killing. Subsequently Prabhakaran and his cronies assassinated 13 Sinhala Police officers on duty in Jaffna. To provoke civilians the terrorists had even chopped off the police officers' hands and removed wedding rings from their fingers. His master plan to incite racial hatred in the South worked as planned when on July 24, 1983 during President JR Jayewardene's administration mob violence took to streets (Colombo mainly) where Sinhalese in the South went on an orchestrated campaign to kill innocent Tamils and loot their property. The incident has been described as a holocaust by the Tamil community and this resulted in half a million Tamils seeking refuge in Western countries - some genuine cases and others mostly for economic advantages. It is also mentioned in certain circles that the architect behind such a 'holocaust' was masterminded by none other than Prabhakaran himself because at the time Sinhalese and the Tamils lived in harmony in the South of the country and particularly a good affluent majority Colombo and suburbs. It was alleged that only Prabhakaran's agents in the South were aware of all the details of Tamil households in Colombo and the suburbs. Prabhakaran was not apparently happy with the elite Tamils who lived in the South for not supporting his struggle in the North. He called them 'Week-End' Tamils as they visited their folk in Jaffna only during weekends. In this backdrop an accusing finger was pointed at Prabhakaran for secretly organising the indecorous incident on July 24, 1983 purely to incite racial hatred and take

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revenge from those Tamils who did not support his struggle. Tragic incident Some analysts have even put a theory forward to substantiate such a claim by stating that during the July 24th incident in the South, the Inspector General of Police was a Tamil named Rajasingham with six Deputy Inspector Generals under him, all of whom were all Tamils, who did not take swift action to thwart the outburst but turned a blind eye. Tigers intensified their atrocities after this tragic incident in July 1983 which had overnight won the hearts and minds of the world. Seemingly the organisation which was seen as only a trickle at the inception was allowed to expand and the Tigers started to breed to an alarming state and become one of the most ruthless terrorist organisations in the world. They managed to give birth to a different kind of offspring such as suicide bombers, black tigers, sea Tigers, women fighters and started to recruit child soldiers. Finally it reached a stage where the LTTE virtually controlled the North with a rebel army backed by artillery, a self imposed Navy, Police and a nascent Air Force and their own banks and started printing their own Eelam currency. LTTE's tactics inspired networks throughout the world including Al Qaeda due to either mismanagement or weaknesses of several administrators and politicians in the South over the years. Behind the scenes Prabhakaran worked vigorously and effectively to relate to a vast number of Tamil expatriate Diaspora throughout the world who had fled the country in the 1983 debacle and settled down comfortably in the West as refugees. Prabhakaran's bait of offering his Tamil community abroad a separate Tamil homeland in the North and East of Sri Lanka appealed to many Tamils who had fled the country. Kith and kin who had settled down in foreign lands as refugees soon started to assist those at home and paved the way for many more Tamils in the North and East to flee the country seeking refuge in Western countries. These refugee seekers travelled all the way to Colombo, used the International Airport, went through Customs and Immigration formalities like any other ordinary air passenger without any harassment and took AirLanka and SriLankan flights to the West simultaneously pointing a finger at the Sri Lankan Government for racial harassment and even quoting 'ethnic cleansing' operations by the State. Otherwise how could they have qualified for Refugee status in a foreign land? On another aspect the LTTE became busy in brainwashing the new generation of youth who were born after 1983 by calling Sri Lanka an alien country trying to annex their Tamil homeland. Tamil expatriate diaspora swiftly went into action and backed Prabhakaran with all sincerity with funds, technological know how and expertise in many a field to make the LTTE one of the most richest and effective organisations with a sophisticated network of communication. Successful lobbying of politicians in the West was done with remarkable success to brainwash the international community and condition their minds with distorted information. Refugee status On the other hand, once they had entered foreign lands and sought refugee status they had to make sure that their cause was genuine to remain and continue their new found luxurious lives. Meanwhile, in the South, the self-styled, lethargic, 'we know all' attitude taken by the Sri Lankan administrators and incompetent Sri Lankan foreign high commission and embassy staff were in their slumber. By the time they were whip lashed from Colombo and woken up from their forty winks, Sri Lankan administration was fifteen years behind their communication machinery. Taking the upper hand in the meanwhile the LTTE manoeuvred and launched false propaganda to concrete their ambitions and actions to win sympathy of the international community, which they did quite effectively. In such a backdrop Norway came forward as a peace negotiator on the premise of bringing a negotiated settlement between the Tigers and the Government. In 2002 Norwegians managed to twist the arm of the then Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, while blind folding President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga. Wickremesinghe entered into a so-called 'Cease Fire Agreement' (CFA) with Prabhakaran secretly even without the knowledge of his own Cabinet. This was widely acknowledged and criticised by many as giving an upper hand to the Terrorists to dictate terms to the Sri Lankan Government and Security Forces when demarcation of land was made and given to terrorists on a plate as LTTE territory. Under the provisions of the 'Peace Process' brokered by Norwegians, LTTE was recognised legally as the sole representatives of the Tamil minority in the North and East. No Sinhalese were allowed in their territory while Tamils were free to travel from the North and East to any part of the South, which made their suicide bombers travel freely and blast at will. However, Prabhakaran's monumental and self-centred leadership style did not permit the freedom of speech within the outfit which was thought to be his most foolish mistake in his decision-making process. This was clearly seen during the 2005 Presidential elections of the country when the architect of the Peace Process Ranil Wickremesinghe's plea for his support from Prabhakaran was brushed aside by the Terrorist Leader and instead enforced a boycott of the Presidential Polls in his 'territory' marked as LTTE areas under the CFA. It prohibited the Tamil voters in the area from participating in the Presidential poll which gave an added advantage to Mahinda Rajapaksa, who was Wickremesinghe's rival. President Rajapaksa in his election manifesto did not mix words but categorically emphasised his desire, willingness and the promise to eliminate terrorism from the Sri Lankan soil despite several failed attempts by four former Sri Lankan Presidents. Several endeavours in 1984,

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1987, 1990, 1994 and 2002 had been made by the previous Colombo administrators extending a willing-hand to the Tigers to come forward towards a peaceful settlement which Prabhakaran purposely ignored all the time and made use of every such occasion to mark time, regroup and stock pile more and more sophisticated arms and artillery. Peace Talks held in Geneva in 2006, under the Presidency of Mahinda Rajapaksa too ended up, as before, when the LTTE team walked out of the negotiating table giving lame excuses. However, when the LTTE attempted to assassinate the Army Commander General Sarath Fonseka, who nearly died out of a LTTE suicide bomb attack in Colombo, followed by another suicide attempt on the life of the Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa who escaped death narrowly, President Rajapaksa became more adamant to deal with the LTTE, but still kept all doors open for a peace settlement. By this time the terrorist organisation had become notorious internationally with their indiscriminate killings, coercion and money laundering exposed, and 32 countries including USA, European Union and Canada had proscribed it calling the LTTE as one of the ruthless terrorist organisations in the world. In 2006, Tigers waged Eelam War IV with the help of newly acquired modern artillery, armour and high-tech communication systems which were believed to have acquired during the CFA mainly with the assistance of Norway. Democratic approach Mavil Aru blockage by the LTTE was the greatest blunder Prabhakaran ever made in his self-style, autocratic thinking by blocking the waterway which irrigated thousands of paddy fields, thus affecting thousands of farmers' lives. President Rajapaksa had no choice but to act swiftly. He took the whip firmly into his hand and decided to go the full hog against the LTTE. Prabhakaran was suddenly caught up in two different dilemmas. Firstly, he had under-estimated the impact on the LTTE after his Batticaloa Commander Karuna Amman deserted him in preference to a democratic approach having convinced that President Rajapaksa was genuine in his methodology to help the sufferings of the Tamil folk in North and East who were suffering under Prabhakaran. Secondly, Prabhakaran completely undervalued President's resolve to wipe out the LTTE completely. Defensive strategy As the Commander in Chief, President Mahinda Rajapaksa, gave a free hand to Army Commander, General Fonseka to go hammer and tongs in eliminating the terrorists. A close coordination between the Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa and the three commanders - Army, Navy and Air Force and the Inspector General of Police, the final offensive was launched with all its might showing no mercy on the enemy. LTTE, at this stage, rather than becoming aggressive adopted a somewhat passive defensive strategy with a series of earth bunds. Security Forces True that these earth bunds acted as defensive mechanisms and helped to deter the incoming enemy but they provided only a limited delay before Security Forces approached the foe strategically with heavy fire power. Blowing up of such earth bunds not only paved the way for the security forces to proceed forward towards the enemy but those provided as gateways for hundreds of thousands of Tamil civilians, who were detained by the LTTE as human shields, to flee into No Fire Zones created by the security forces. Despite heavy criticism, condemnation and pressure exerted by the International media, up to the very final hours before the terrorists perished, some foreign countries and INGOs who had a vested interest in the LTTE, and a mysterious affection to save Prabhakaran, the mass murderer, President Rajapaksa and Defence Secretary stood firm in their steadfastness and encouraged the Sri Lankan forces to demonstrate their skill and show to the whole world how trapped civilians could be rescued safely from the LTTE control, which the gallant soldiers did effectively, an example all the world can emulate in their current individual ongoing predicaments. Finally on the 19 May 2009 the final nail on the LTTE coffin was driven by the fearless forces despite heavy artillery from the enemy on one side and the government coming under enormous pressure from the international press and bullying tactics from powerful western countries who seemed to think Sri Lanka was still a colony. It is said that Prabhakaran tried his utmost best even in the eleventh hour through the Red Cross to persuade the Government to come for a negotiated settlement to save his and his family members' skin which did not receive any positive response from the government. The Sri Lankan historical victory has thus exposed and denuded the double standards adopted by Western pundits who seem to preach: 'Do what we say but don't follow what we do!' Today Sri Lanka stands proudly on the map of the world as an independent unitary country. To quote President Mahinda Rajapaksa's words, it is a new independent country where there are 'only two types of people - Those who love this country and others who have no love for this land of their birth.' Freeing the country from terrorist clutches marks a new era for Sri Lanka where history will be re-written in golden letters highlighting the extraordinary role played by a remarkable leader and a committed politician, President Mahinda Rajapaksa, who managed to show his mettle and forge forward with his own agenda with one pointed ambition - to bring peace and harmony to Sri Lanka, by annihilating the LTTE, amidst enormous pressure from some super powers of the West and USA who demanded to halt military operations against Prabhakaran up to the final moments, which only exposed their blatant hypocrisy and duplicity while denuding themselves shamelessly. Sri Lankans are generally warm hearted and sensitive people who sob and

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cry at funerals. Sri Lankans do not consider a person's death as an occasion for 'jollifying' or engage in 'Thamasas'. The level of their compassion was seen on television when the whole country in unison collected food and water to be sent to the displaced Tamil people in the North despite their gruesome memories of the past of **LTTE** atrocities in the form of suicide bombings and indiscriminate killings. The festive atmosphere throughout the country by lighting crackers, jumping for joy and waving the national flag upon seeing the perished terrorist leader Prabhakaran and his lieutenants' bodies has sent a clear message to the world at large about the true feelings of a nation with no more barriers or demarcations of their Motherland. Healthy children After thirty long years of suffering, bloodshed and mayhem in the country Mother Lanka today has stood up firmly and strongly. For thirty long years she has been weeping for not being able to feed her children properly. Her breasts had been withered and only blood came out to feed her loving children, but today her mammary glands are full of nourishing milk and she expects her children to suckle them and grow up as healthy children in the future. The main Tiger has been laid down for good from Sri Lankan soil, but still there are kittens who are scattered around the world who used to follow the big cat. It is up to the Sri Lankan authorities, especially the Foreign Ministry, to ensure that these kittens are not allowed to grow up and metamorphose into the category of Tigers again. In this regard Sri Lankan diplomatic missions must be on alert and take an active role and brief the appropriate governments in the countries they have been posted to, on a tour of duty, to do exactly what they are expected of. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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A shamed West and its agenda of terror

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 26, 2009 Tuesday

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Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 26 -- It seems Sri Lanka is not to be forgiven for winning a war against terror. A world that endorsed an international war against terror, when the western supremacy was threatened by the Afghan terrorists, clearly has a different set of rules for the developing world. The West that happily banded together to destroy terrorism, today prepares to subject the one nation that won that war, on claims of war crimes. Unlike the threat that the US faced several years ago, Sri Lanka had continued to suffer in the hands of the LTTE for three decades.

The consequences of the war against the LTTE that the US's own CIA named the most ruthless in the world; were nothing like what the world witnessed in Afghanistan or Iraq. The global human rights bodies that endorsed the atrocities that were committed in the name of 'perceived threats' to the US when it occupied Afghanistan and killed many of its civilians, today sit at a special session to crucify Sri Lanka. The sessions are convened at the request of 17 of the 47 members of the Human Rights Commission, including Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Britain. According to its President Martin Ihoeghian Uhomobhi "It is hoped that the holding of this special session will contribute towards the cause of peace." A cause that was denied all assistance the country needed in assuring its people, by the entire western world. Strangely this was a peace that has finally come to the country after three decades. The HRC has had only 10 previous special sessions relating to, among others, Palestine, Lebanon, Darfur, Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Interestingly none that involved the US and the UK. The United States invaded Afghanistan in October 2001 on the grounds that the Afghan Government was "protecting" the Al Qaeda of the 9/11 that killed 3,000 people. What resulted as the war continued in this occupied land was an atrocity that accounted for according to the UNICEF data 3.3-6.6 million post-invasion excess deaths (avoidable deaths, deaths that should not have happened) in Occupied Afghanistan. According to these records the killings have included 370,000 infant deaths (under five). And post-invasion under-5 infant deaths had reportedly accounted for 2.3 million. The number of post-invasion violent deaths about 3.3 million leaving an upper estimate of non-violent plus violent post-invasion excess deaths to a shocking 6.6 million excess deaths. However there has not been one country that has called for an investigation in to this atrocity. There isn't one member of the European Union that has dared to demand that former US President George Bush be tried for war crimes. It is such a world that openly exercises duplicity of action that today directs the finger of accusation towards Sri Lanka. Do the lobbyists that question the Sri Lankan government on the condition of the civilians in displaced camps, know what the plight of Sinhala and Muslim people who have languished in similar camps for over two decades? These are civilians who were evicted by the LTTE overnight threatened with death, who to date remain displaced. Where were these international bodies when the LTTE were on a killing spree massacring men, women and children in their thousands? There was no discussion on passing any UN resolution against the LTTE when it was using human bombs to kill innocent civilians all over the country for over three decades. No world body thought it necessary to convene a special session of the UN Human Rights Council when Prabakaran continued to use children as young as 11 years forcibly recruited to his terror outfit and

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used as militants. And as recent as few months back when the LTTE openly defied all humanitarian laws in the world by using a human shield, daring to kill little children as they were attempting to flee the LTTE; the world did nothing. It was a much isolated Sri Lanka with its limited resources that succeeded in resealing the last surviving member of these civilians from the biggest hostage situation the world has ever witnessed. No doubt there is a humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka. It is one created by the LTTE when it held innocent Tamil civilians hostage who today are free of the violence that the LTTE forced upon them. These are people in their hundreds of thousands who need medical, food and shelter on an immediate basis. There isn't a single Sri Lanka who would deny this reality. But what the situation demands is immediate international assistance and not mere rhetoric. The fact remains that as the war intensified and the LTTE launched its most ruthless of attempts to hold these civilians as hostages, it was the care of the government that the fleeing civilians sought. A care they did receive. No world body that questions the government can deny that not a single death has occurred due to malnutrition or lack of care in any of these camps. The government itself must be mindful that today's meeting is neither an isolated one nor to be taken lightly given the seriousness of its consequences. The sessions follow closely with a request by Bruce Fein, earlier this month, in a letter addressed to the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), requested that it 'opens investigations under the Rome Statute' on President Rajapaksa, Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa, MP Basil Rajapaksa and Army Commander Sarath Fonseka, for alleged 'war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide of Sri Lankan civilian Tamils unconnected with the conflict between the government and the LTTE'. However given that Sri Lanka is not party to the Rome Statute and hasn't accepted its jurisdiction, the chances of such moves are miniscule. But if the ICC decides to open an investigation on his own based on information furnished by such organisations like the UN or NGOs he could recommend the Pre-Trial Chamber for authorization of an investigation. Certainly, given the ground realities of the war and the humanitarian efforts made throughout by the government forces, such attempts would easily fail. But we need to be mindful that the threat remains. The threat emanates from every NGO or lobby group that was in the payroll of the LTTE, who today need for the attention on Sri Lanka to continue for its own survival. The government must understand that these lobbyists care little for civilians, but need the civilians and their 'plight' for funding to continue. Therefore they will continue relentlessly to devise way and means to accuse the government of various things and keep international attention on the issue. The longer these groups are able to allow any funding in to the rehabilitation of the civilians, the longer their own survival ensured. This is why the government needs to intensify its humanitarian efforts and lobby the world for funding for rehabilitation. The responsibility of our emissaries abroad can not be emphasised more at this crucial hour. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Jaffna Tamils flock to join Sri Lanka police

The Independent (London)

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First Edition

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The INDEPENDENT

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Byline: Andrew Buncombe

Body

For the first time in more than three decades, Tamils from the northern Sri Lankan city of Jaffna are being recruited to join the police force in a move that may go some way towards aiding political reconciliation.

Officials said more than 6,500 people, including 400 women, had applied for 500 advertised police constable positions. It will be the first time such jobs have been taken up by Tamils in the city since 1978. "The youth are very enthusiastic to join," a police spokesman, Nimal Mediwake, told Reuters. "We couldn't recruit any officers since 1978, [but] after the death of the LTTE we see an interest."

The government has not recruited Tamils from Jaffna for more than 30 years, when the recently defeated rebel group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), began killing and threatening Tamils who worked for the government. The rebels wanted independence for the north and east of the country and viewed Tamils who worked for the government as traitors. Although Jaffna itself had been in government control since 1995, areas nearby remained in the control of the LTTE, which destroyed three police stations in the city during the early stages of its decades-long struggle for a separate state.

In the aftermath of the defeat of the LTTE this year, President Mahinda Rajapaksa called for national reconciliation and said minorities should not face discrimination. However, Tamils have remained largely unconvinced by his rhetoric.

The return of some kind of police powers to Tamil-majority areas like Jaffna had been part of efforts to bring one of Asia's longest-running wars to a peaceful end. But after the collapse of peace talks in 2006, the government decided to crush the rebel forces once and for all. The UN has estimated that up to 10,000 civilians were killed in the final stages of the conflict.

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World: Sri Lankan army claims 'total victory' over Tamil Tigers: Fears are growing for the safety of up to 80,000 civilians still trapped with the remaining rebels in an isolated coastal strip

The Observer (London) (England)

May 17, 2009

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Byline: Gethin Chamberlain, Delhi

Body

The violence in Sri Lanka was close to a bloody conclusion last night as the country's armed forces sought to destroy the last pocket of Tamil Tiger fighters in defiance of international pleas for a halt to the fighting and accusations from the UN that they had triggered a bloodbath.

While leaders of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam were reported to be preparing to kill themselves rather than be captured, explosions reverberated around the tiny coastal strip where as many as 80,000 civilians remained trapped alongside the cornered rebels.

Humanitarian aid workers were in despair as sporadic reports filtered out of thousands of civilians killed inside the "no fire zone", the government-designated haven where non-combatants were supposed to be able to escape the fighting.

"It is hard to think of a worse place on earth to be right now than on that stretch of beach," said James Elder, the Unicef spokesman in Sri Lanka, as he struggled to contain his emotions.

The final assault went ahead in spite of a warning from British Prime Minister Gordon Brown to Sri Lanka that "there will be consequences for its actions". Downing Street said Brown had made several phone calls during the day to Sri Lankan president Mahinda Rajapaksa, urging him to bring the violence to an end. His pleas were ignored.

The Sri Lankan military said the Tigers, which have used the trapped civilians as human shields in an attempt to keep the army at bay, were detonating their ammunition dumps.

There were no reliable figures available for civilian casualties, but with tens of thousands of people crammed into an area of less than one square mile, humanitarian agencies feared the worst.

The military said last night that 10,000 civilians had breached the Tigers' inner cordon and were being shepherded to safety under fire from the rebels. Elder said those who remained were at the mercy of "indiscriminate firing" from

World: Sri Lankan army claims 'total victory' over Tamil Tigers: Fears are growing for the safety of up to 80,000 civilians still trapped with the remaining reb....

all sides. "It is a bloodbath. It is a catastrophic situation," he said. "We are seeing a complete disregard for civilian life. Everyone's worst-case scenario is coming to pass."

About 20,000 people are believed to have escaped from the no-fire zone between Thursday and yesterday afternoon, but Elder said many of those who had managed to get out were in a terrible condition. "When you look at the state of the first people to leave three weeks ago, there were malnourished children and women, and people with gunshot wounds and shrapnel injuries, and these people now have been there for another three weeks with next to nothing to eat in terrible conditions. It is going to be a nightmare," he said.

Gordon Weiss, the UN spokesman, said reliable reports from inside the war zone had dried up after the "courageous" doctors who had been working out of the last makeshift hospital at Mullaivaikal East primary school were forced to abandon the building in the face of heavy fighting on Friday. "We are most concerned about the fate of the 30,000 to 80,000 people who are left inside the combat zone," he said. "This is precisely the situation we feared all along - that they would be left inside at the penultimate moments of the battle."

Despite the mounting death toll, neither side in the conflict showed any willingness to lay down arms to allow the trapped civilians to escape. The Tigers said in a statement that they were "extremely mindful of the civilian hardships" and were "prepared to take all necessary measures that would immediately stop the current carnage". They said that "an onslaught by the government will only result in thousands more dying and will not pave a way for a dignified and respectful outcome".

The Sri Lankan military said it would press on with what it described as a humanitarian operation. Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, the military spokesman, said: "Operations are continuing to rescue the civilians still being held hostage by the terrorists."

Yesterday the Sri Lankan army completed a pincer movement to surround the Tigers, seizing control of the coastline and cutting off the rebel group's escape route to the sea. The whereabouts of the group's leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, and other senior commanders are unknown.

The UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, has sent his chief of staff, Vijay Nambiar, to Sri Lanka for a second time to try to bring the conflict to a peaceful conclusion. Nambiar was due to arrive last night for meetings with government officials. The government has brushed off calls from foreign diplomats for a humanitarian truce, saying this would only give the rebels time to regroup.

Attempts by the International Committee of the Red Cross to evacuate thousands of wounded civilians failed last week. The organisation said the scale of the fighting made it impossible to get casualties out.

Load-Date: May 19, 2009

Resettlement in former Tiger terrain

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

October 24, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 303 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Oct. 24 -- The former strongholds of the **LTTE** - Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi Districts - are among the areas in which the internally displaced Tamils of the North will be resettled under the Government's IDP resettlement program. The resettlement of 41,685 persons from 12,095 families will take place in the current phase of resettlement which began Thursday.

Kilinochchi was the administrative center of **LTTE** in what it claimed to be the separate state of Eelam. Mullaitivu was the military stronghold of the **LTTE** for many years, from which it directed most operations against the Security Forces. This was also the Headquarters of its leader Velupillai Prabhakaran.

The Government had earlier resettled more than 15,900 of the IDPs which included the elderly and pregnant **women** who have been re-united with their families, according to their wish, and also the elderly who have no family sent to institutional care.

All children who have no family care are resettled under foster care through courts of Sri Lanka. The completion of the current resettlement would leave 210,138 IDPs in relief centers whose resettlement is also planned for early implementation.

The current phase of resettlement will see displaced persons going to the districts of Vavuniya, Mannar, Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi. Of these Oddusudan, Manthai East and Thunukkai in Mullaitivu District, and Karachchi and Poonakary in the Kilinochchi District were heavily damaged during the days controlled by the **LTTE**, and as they forcibly moved the people as human shields with the advance of troops, in the latter stages of the battle to liberate the North from terrorism. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: October 24, 2009

FROM CHILD COMBATANTS TO SYMBOLS OF HOPE

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

July 8, 2009 Wednesday

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Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 8 -- "Kindness will help you make friends," the bold print hung on a lime green wall is the first thing that grips your attention as one enters the administration building at the Ambepussa rehabilitation centre for ex-child combatants.

Tucked away in a lush green alcove, in Wahawita Ambepussa, about two and a half hours away from the capital Colombo the centre houses 76 children. Abducted, forcibly recruited or allured by the fake bravado of the LTTE, these children have served as front line fighters, cooks, drivers or even messengers in the most ruthless terror regime in Asia. As the curtain falls on the three decade long bloody civil conflict in Sri Lanka, between the government and the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the stage has been set for these children to shed their former lives and redefine themselves as envoys of peace and become the most potent symbol of hope in post war Sri Lanka. Grappling with inner ghosts But learning to cope with painful memories is a daily struggle. According to the Ambepussa Centre Manager Major Fernando, the children have made a remarkable turnaround.

But there are still a few who suffer from epileptic seizures, mainly due to post traumatic stress. Senthuran*, one of the children who suffer seizures was injured in a shell attack four months ago, while fighting in the LTTE front line for the first time. He was captured by the army, produced before courts and brought to the centre. However Senthuran says that he still has shrapnel's left in his skull and his shoulder and that has resulted in fits and fainting spells. "I only saw my mother once after being captured from the clutches of the LTTE. I want to see my mum. I will only be happy if I can see her," he urged. Senthuran's mother and two sisters are currently in a camp for the displaced in Vavuniya. Senthuran's hometown is Vavuniya. Their family fled to Vanni after being displaced due to fighting. It was then that he dropped out of school, in grade five and started working as a mechanic. "We were all afraid of the LTTE. They were a brutal outfit. We are happy and safe here. But I want to see my mother," he said. This is a common request amongst many children who were part of the newest batch of over 50 kids who arrived at the centre about two months ago in a bus at about 3.00 a.m. They were mainly children who were either captured while fighting with the LTTE or those who had surrendered at the Omanthei checkpoint, the main cross over point from the former rebel held Vanni to government controlled areas. Unicef is making arrangements to facilitate parents in Internally Displaced camps to visit their children at Ambepussa soon. "We have also urged the Unicef to increase the communication facilities available for the their parents at the displacement camps, so that they can be in touch with the children more often. But at our end, we have only one phone, so the kids queue up on Sundays to wait for their call," Major Fernando, the centre manager said. The children's day starts early at about 5.00 a.m. "One measure of progress is based on how our water bills increase. The children, specially the girls, like to bath twice a day," he chuckles. Everyone assembles at 7.30 at the play ground, to begin the day by hoisting the national flag and singing the national anthem. According to Major Fernando one child is appointed as the leader each day, and that person is responsible for hoisting the flag. Regular classes commence at 9.00 a.m. At present the

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vocational training courses include aluminium fabrication and welding, tailoring, cookery and basic computing. A retired teacher also comes to teach Maths and English. The children are also taught spoken Sinhalese. The classes usually end with a song and an appraisal of each student's performance that day. Then its time for lunch. "Each meal we give them is a daily ration of a soldier, which ensures they get a balanced diet. For instance lunch consists of 4 vegetables and either fish or chicken every day," he said. Group games like cricket and netball follow. Then the children are free to read books, newspapers and watch TV until the light are switched off at 10.00 p.m. "A routine helps children adjust quickly. Most children settled down soon," Major Fernando, a veteran teacher at the Combat training school said. At first he was apprehensive of the task at hand. "My wife was a little jittery when I said I'll be working with former child combatants. That was because of the misconceptions about these children. But after coming here I have realized that they are no different from my own kids. Even the boys put powder and you'll see that quite a few of them have even painted their nails. They are trying to relive the childhood that was snatched away from them," he said. At first glance one may wonder why military personnel have been deployed as rehabilitation officers. However, all the rehabilitation officials at centre are from the Army cadet corps. They are trained teachers, with extensive teaching experience in civil setups, before volunteering to become part of the cadet corps. Hunting for their families We met chirpy 17 year old Devi while she was engrossed in her sewing lessons. Devi's mother had abandoned her family and gone abroad when Devi was a mere toddler of two. She was bought up by her aunt in Yatiyanthota, and studied in a Sinhala medium school until grade 5. Then she had gone back to the North, to live with her younger aunt. Devi was abducted when she was 16, in a white van and put into a makeshift jungle kitchen to churn out food and deliver it to carders fighting in the front line amidst the shelling. "I was given weapons training but they put me to the kitchen after I started having fits and fainting spells. There were several children some as young as 12 with their heads shaved," Devi said. "The LTTE camps were in a thick jungle in Pudemattalan. We were really afraid, because we could hear constant explosions. Five of us were plotting to escape and one morning we ran away, when the commanders allowed us to go to the toilet in the morning," Devi recalled. She managed to go back home to her aunt. But she was separated from her family at the Omanthei checkpoint, amidst the exodus of civilians who were fleeing LTTE controlled areas. "The army called for persons who were with the LTTE to come and register. So I went to this big tent. They took my information and handed me over to the police. Then I was produced before the Vavuniya magistrate and brought here. But my aunt doesn't know I'm here," she said. The International Red Cross has promised to find Devi's aunt. "Some children receive letters from their parents. Some parents come to visit. But many children don't hear from their parents at all." She said. The Bureau of the Commissioner General for Rehabilitation is attempting to setup the next rehabilitation centre in Vavuniya, to house another 250 ex-child combatants who are currently with their families in IDP camps. The decision was made to locate this centre in Vavuniya to ensure that the children are living in close proximity to their families. The Ambepussa centre was started in March 2008, mainly to rehabilitate children who were freed from the clutches of the TMVP, a breakaway group of the LTTE which fought in the Eastern province. About 99 persons freed from the TMVP, including 21 children, 3 adult females and 75 adult males who were former TMVP cadres have already been released from the centre. Five others, who had joined the TMVP as children but are now above 18 are waiting to go abroad for employment opportunities. Vageesh, who came to the centre 26 months ago, is one of them. "The LTTE caught my brothers and sisters as well, but they escaped. I was the only one who joined the movement. At first I didn't realize the seriousness of this move. But I had to suffer a lot. My life was totally different to that of my brothers and sisters who were with my parents," he said. "After I joined the LTTE I ran away. But then they took my sister forcibly. So I went back to get her released. Later on I escaped again. But this time they came and assaulted my father. They took my family members hostage for 4 months. Therefore I had to rejoin," he added. "I was in the Mannar LTTE camp and food was scarce. Three of us decided to surrender to the army and then we were bought to Vavuniya. We surrendered in 2005 and was first taken to the rehabilitation centre in Pallekele and was then bought to Ambepussa. My father came to visit me once. I haven't seen my parents since," Vageesh continued. His father and sister were killed in a shell attack on his village in Killinochchi. His 11 year old brother lost one leg and had to insert a plate to the other. Only his mother was spared. "I couldn't even go to put soil on my father's grave because the war was raging at that time. All I want to do now is to look after my family the same way my late father did. If I can work abroad for five years, that's enough. I need to save money to secure the future of my younger brother and sisters. One of my sisters is 18 and I have to collect the dowry for her," Vageesh said. About his life with the LTTE Vageesh said "I don't want recall that life. I want to forget it. It was two years of suffering. If I was told to shoot I shot, if I was told to cut I'll cut. I did what they asked. I want to have my own family. I want to have my own life now." "I even have a girl friend now," he said, with a shy smile. Ragu, another

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experienced fighter, who joined the movement when he was 12 and had risen up the LTTE hierarchy to reach a 'major' rank, is also awaiting his visa to go abroad. He has been in rehabilitation for 23 months and has followed three courses in tailoring, landscaping and another basic compute skills program. "Before I came here I didn't know much about the outside world. But now I regret what I had done," this young man of 28, who had been a front-liner fighter with the LTTE for 12 years said. Ragu had participated in several major operations and lead a group of 150 carders. However, disillusionment set in after a group of senior leaders jumped to Switzerland during the ceasefire period. However, he was too involved in the movement to escape at this time. But Ragu seized the opportunity when the Karuna group split from the LTTE and surrendered to the army with a five others. "Two of my friends were also rehabilitated at the centre here. They have gone back home and one had married. I have two elder sisters and one younger sister. Our parents abandoned us when we were small," Ragu said. Ragu's birth wasn't registered by his parents and he didn't have a birth certificate. It was the officers at the rehabilitation centre that helped him to get a birth certificate and a passport with the aid of a doctor who estimated his age. Ragu had joined the LTTE after being allured by the bravado claimed by the tigers during a cultural show in Batticaloa. But with time he realized the hollowness of his decision. "Sometimes when small children used to come and voluntarily join the movement, I would give them cash and ask them to go back home," Ragu, a sensitive soul according to many, said. According to Captain Chanaka Weerasinghe, a rehabilitation officer, Ragu still has childish ways. "He dressed as a Vedda at the fancy dress competition we organised for the Sinhala and Hindu New Year in April. The child in him sometimes comes out all of a sudden and then it feels as if he is trying to relive the childhood that he never had," he said. "His girl friend came to visit him once. Now he is looking forward to settling down after returning from Malaysia," Captain Weerasinghe added. The rehabilitation officers accompany those who go abroad for jobs to the airport. According to statistics from the Rehabilitation Commissioner's Bureau over 50 rehabilitated persons have been facilitated with finding jobs abroad. Catch up Education While many are encouraged to find jobs after rehabilitation, steps will be taken to provide 'catch up education facilities' for younger children, who are keen to pursue formal studies. "There is one promising child who was trained as a Black tiger. He was an orphan living in the Senchollai orphanage. He was allowed to continue with his education but was given weapons training intermittently during school holidays. He was captured by intelligence officers when he was sent to Vavuniya on a suicide mission. He had just sat for his Ordinary Level exams. He had learnt that his exam results had just come out, while on his way to the suicide mission," Captain Weerasinghe said. Now the Bureau of the Rehabilitation Commissioner General is taking steps to help this bright spark, restart his advance level studies. "He had succeeded in scoring a B for mathematics in his OL's despite being shifted from place to place and his education being interrupted by intermittent training periods. The Commissioner General is keen on getting him into a good school in Colombo, where he will be given all the facilities to proceed with his ALs," Captain Weerasinghe added. The "three day" cadre Not all the children at the centre had experienced active combat. Some children had been with the LTTE for a few days, some for a few months. Forcible abductions had sky rocketed in the past two-three months of the battle as the Tigers made a desperate attempt at replenishing their dwindling cadre base. Karthik is chided by his friends as the "three day LTTEier." He was abducted from his temporary hut in Puthukudirrupu. We met Ganesh, the youngest son in a Mahaveera family at the netball court. The children are encouraged to engage in group games like cricket and netball after the regular classes finish. "In the final days people were dying of hunger. The LTTE killed one of my brothers and dumped his body on a cross road because he broke into an LTTE flour store, where they stockpiled food relief sent for civilians. It was meant as a lesson for other civilians who were demanding the LTTE to release the food rations that were coming," he said describing the agony of the civilians stuck in the thin strip of land designated as the no-fire zone in Puthukudirrupu "My father was a trader in Settikulam. One of my elder brothers was a martyr. The LTTE forcibly took me and my sister. I escaped after nine days in captivity. My sister also managed to run away after 15 days," he said. "But they came after me again and dragged me to their fighting line in Putumattalan. Five of us decided to run away after realizing that the LTTE refused to treat children injured in battle if they had once attempted to run away before. The LTTE fired at us as we tried to escape. I surrendered to the army in Valayanmadam," he said. * Names have been changed to protect the identity of the children. Life after rehabilitation According to Unicef Child Protection Officer Andi Brookes, Sri Lanka has made real progress in the area of rehabilitating child-soldiers by taking a series of constructive steps. "Firstly, the push to rehabilitate children, separately from adults as per the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict was realized by setting up of the centre in Ambepussa, that mainly focuses on children" he said. "Furthermore, there was a memorandum of understanding signed between the government, the TMVP and the Unicef, to release all child combatants recruited by this breakaway faction of the LTTE. This was then translated

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into an action plan from December," he said. He also noted that the Emergency regulation issued by the Presidential Secretariat on December 15, was a progressive step that translates Sri Lanka's global commitment as one of the first signatories of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict into national law. Unicef is also engaged in monitoring and doing a follow-up on children once they are reunited with their families. "Probation officers continue to report on the child after an year of being released from rehabilitation. The key to ensuring their smooth reintegration is ensuring access to healthcare, education and other opportunities. A community based rehabilitation effort also runs in parallel to ensure smooth reintegration," he said. According to Brookes, the children who return may have a higher security risk than normal children. "There is a threat that they might be victims of acts of revenge or remobilization. However, it is being viewed through a child safety lens and not a military lens," he added. As a key stakeholder in the rehabilitation process Unicef made a significant investment in the entire rehabilitation process by funding road repairs to improve access and covering certain running expenses. They had also helped organise several trips for the children including a visit to the zoo in Colombo, the botanical gardens, and the elephant orphanage in Pinnawale. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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"There's an international conspiracy to oust the President"- GOTABHAYA

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

November 30, 2009 Monday

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Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Nov. 30 -- Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa speaks to Hard Talk about the threat of an international conspiracy at work against the country in the form of seeking a regime change, as former Army Commander Sarath Fonseka enters the Presidential fray. He attributes this to the 'disappointment' that certain countries and their political elements may have experienced with the country's victory over the LTTE and the decision by the President to not give in to international pressures he alleges were moved by elements who sought to safeguard the LTTE during the last stages of the war.

There are certain elements of the international community who see the President taking a hard stand on the international community when the war was on, taking it personally. Maybe these elements want governments like this changed. We certainly see an international conspiracy to oust the President. I don't point my finger at any government, but there were pressures that came through to safeguard the LTTE. These elements want to see the President out. Maybe they see that they can come out in a different way to give the LTTE Eelam. We have to be aware of this situation. The people have to be mindful of this danger', he maintains.

Q: Who in your opinion was most instrumental in defeating the LTTE? Claims of a varying degree from government side and the newly announced Presidential candidate Sarath Fonseka has left the people confused.

Without the political commitment no one can win a war. It is the President who makes the decision to start military operations and gave the clear aim to defeat the LTTE. If you go through interviews given by Gen. Sarath Fonseka initially he has mentioned that without the political will and direction nobody can win a war. The Army is only a department of the government. It acts according to the wishes of the government and implements the policy of that government. No Army Commander can do otherwise. This explains why this victory could not be achieved before under previous leaderships.

It is the President of a country who decides whether to talk to the terrorists or start military operations. And it is the President alone who can decide how much money to spend on a war, or if to increase the numbers in an army. And one of the key factors for the victory was the increase in the numbers. And this is very clear by the fact that various previous governments decided to increase or decrease the numbers. Then there were the decisions regarding equipping the men, getting the right arms, the salaries etc.

It is very clear to anyone it was the President's political commitment and decision to start military operations that all this was possible. Don't forget that Gen. Fonseka wasn't born just 4 years ago. He was in the Army for 35 years. But what has he done? Has he achieved one tenth of what we had achieved during those years? Take for examples Generals like Kobbekaduwa, Janaka Perera, Wimalaratne etc. Everyone talks about them. They didn't become Army Commanders or SF commanders but their contribution was very effective. Kobbekaduwa as a

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Brigadier conducted Wadamarachchi operation and Wimalaratne was a Colonel at that time, but everyone knew about them because they performed well. But we have not heard of Gen. Fonseka in the same manner. And if he says that he alone did this whole thing why did he not perform one tenth of this during the past years. There are a lot of failures under him. In fact he's the one who ordered to withdraw troops from Jaffna in 2000.

I'm not saying that he's not a good military officer, but that without the political direction and assistance a military officer can't do certain things. This is why under different governments, different officers performed in a different way. Gen. Fonseka himself performed in a different way during the Wickremesinghe regime as he did differently under the Rajapaksa regime. The best example is how the same officers who had to coordinate with the LTTE during the Wickremesinghe regime ended up killing the same seniors of the LTTE during the end of the war.

And don't forget the contribution of everyone from privates whose numbers were the most sacrificed in the field, to SF commanders or the battalion commanders or Brig. Shavindra Silva whose division captured Pooneryn and going all the way to Pudukudiiruppu. If the Army Commander claims that his was the only contribution then what of all these persons? Then everyone can individually start claiming credit. This was purely the work of team effort. And what about the Navy thanks to whom the Sea Tigers couldn't get out to the sea, or the Air Force? This is the selfishness. It is wrong to give this impression.

Q: He blamed weak military leadership, not political leadership, for allowing the LTTE to survive so long. He said that in 1999, he had told President Chandrika Kumaratunga in reply to a question that the war could be finished off in four years when 4 other military seniors had not supported that view. He also claimed that the army was modernized during Kumaratunga's regime. Is this an indication that the contribution of the Rajapaksa Presidency has really been minimal in providing political commitment to war?

How can you say that when it is the President who decides whether to go on or give in when international pressures come in? It is the President who has to face that and decide whether he goes ahead or stops. How do you explain the decision to stop the Wadamarachchi operation despite it being a successful operation during a previous regime? How can you blame that on a weak military leadership when Wadamarachchi was won? There were much better leaders in the Army than Gen. Fonseka. Who was he before 2005? Now he's trying to become a cheap politician. He shouldn't try to disgrace the military this way. Officers like Chagi Gallage, Shavindra Silva, Jagath Dias or Kamal Gallage were products of Wijeya Wimalaratne. So where is the weak military leadership when he was an excellent officer?

We had enough brilliant officers. Who created the Special Forces or the Commanders? They were not done during the last 4 years? If the military leadership was weak how can these happen? They were the ones who made these sacrifices, who trained these officers, who were simply not given the proper political direction because the political will was not there. How can he blame the men of this great Army going back 35 years like this to portray himself as the only good one? He's ridiculing the entire army.

Q: He levels some very serious charges against you on grounds that you are threatening his security by lowering the numbers allocated to him. Gen. Fonseka claims that Military Police personnel had entered his house midnight on the 25th to remove the vehicles provided the General on an order issued by you. He alleges that you are threatening his security by such measures. His notion is that if the President still needs 2000 people for security and if you need 500 people for your security, how is he expected to manage with 25 men and 3 vehicles? What is the basis for these charges?

First he must remember that he is a retired army officer when you lose some privileges. But when he went to meet the President and requested certain security to which the President agreed and then when he mentioned a certain number the President said to give that in writing. In that letter he wrote a certain number of security and we gave everything requested except for the 6 women's cadres. That was also because there were certain administrative problems related- remember he was going out to civilian life where you needed a certain structure to be maintained. Still we approved even these 6 although the lack of it is not a serious weakness in a security structure! It is sheer hypocrisy to go for a FR case asking for a tenfold number in security, when we have given everything he has

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requested. This is lying to get the sympathy of the people by showing a completely different picture. It's very clearly a political game he is playing; one unbecoming of an officer.

Q: But according to intelligence reports available to you what is the level of threat to his life at present? He claims that the Security Council is trying to reduce his security to get him assassinated. He alleges that if anything happens to him the President has to take direct responsibility.

We understand that if possible, LTTE will target the President, myself or any one of the Commanders. But don't forget that the situation is very different today. The LTTE has been destroyed. But when he removed Gen. Parakrama Pannipitiya from the Eastern Command for whatever the reason, when the war in the North was still on and suicide cadres were in Colombo, Sarath Fonseka removed his security. This was the man who was responsible for clearing the East. And when Gen. Panipitiya filed a FR case Fonseka gave an affidavit agreeing to give only 6 people when there was a definite threat to his life.

Q: He cites Intelligence Services Head J B Galanayaka on information that an explosive laden van had come to Colombo to target a VIP. He alleges that the government is using these tactics 'intentionally' to ensure that he gets blasted on the road.

I'm trying to bring legislation to provide security to the three commanders. But it takes time. I initiated that and he knows that. I always say that we should give security. I have no issue with that. But when we have given security and then ask for unreasonable amounts just to ridicule us or gain sympathy is not right. I'm the one who initiated the action to provide life time security to all Commanders which is now in Legal Draftsman's Dept. I don't say that he shouldn't get it.

But the situation has changed in the country today which is why we had decided to open up the roads and not even close them for VIPs. We have defeated the LTTE now we have to bring normalcy to the country. That threat has passed. And if we have given what he requested what is the issue?

Q: He also points a finger at you on defence purchases claiming that if there is any corruption it is you, the President, and the Tender Board that must take responsibility.

How can he say that? Again he's trying to cover the truth behind this. He himself alluded to this. He told an interview that although normally the Chief of Staff sits on the Tender Board, 'but I changed that and I sat on the Tender Board' he said! Then what is he talking about. What Tender Board was he referring to? I don't want to get in to the blame game but all I want to say is that as there are various allegations that have come in various papers etc. that the Army has purchased various things from his son-in-law's company. All I can say is that this is unethical and illegal, because he himself accepted that he himself sat on the Army Tender Board. Again he's trying to cover certain things and project a different picture which is not right.

Q: But he says that the political leadership has failed to give priority for democracy, national security, including the people in the North and East, those displaced. Would you say that you have failed to win the peace as alleged?

I don't know how he can talk on democracy and media freedom or the minorities. This is just politics. It's unfair for a person who held such a position in the army to talk like that now that he has retired. I know his ideas and how he spoke in the Security Council. It's ungrateful of him to talk like that just because he's in politics, especially because he knows how we brought in a process of democracy to the East by holding elections and disarming the paramilitary groups. What about the development work that was done there and bringing normalcy to that part of the country. Now because he's standing with the people who opposed the war for his personal ambitions, and said we can't win the war or that he himself was not fit enough to lead the Salvation Army, he's coming out with these things. This shows his character. He's teaming up with a politically bankrupt crowd, an unpatriotic lot to win his political ambitions.

Q: There is sufficient indication to confirm a regrouping of the LTTE internationally. What is the government doing to face this threat?

"There's an international conspiracy to oust the President"- GOTABHAYA

We are doing a lot to curb this threat. The government didn't believe its work ended after defeating the LTTE here, we went ahead and captured KP; who went on international TV and said he was the new leader. Again Gen Fonseka can't take responsibility for it, it was the team effort of everyone involved that helped capture him. And such work is continuing. One success of the operation was the secrecy maintained. No one knew about it till the capture. Very soon you will see more arrests, acquisition of LTTE assets and frozen accounts. We are working with international intelligence to continue this work.

Even locally our policing are working out very well, in interrogations and making more important arrests. All this continues while we are pursuing the development programs, and bringing investors in etc. During the last 4 years we have signed many international agreements that help us share information between the countries.

Of course there are pressures coming through from some of these countries but we have to work with them and win them over to neutralize the LTTE coming through. I know even countries like Canada wants to help break the LTTE network there. It's a problem for them. There is a threat of LTTE's shipping network being used by any other terrorist organization thereby threatening any country in the world. All these countries have to work together if they are working to rid the world of terror.

Q: How do you see the pressures that threaten to come through in the form of you and several other key members of the defence team being charged with war crimes violations?

Of course although a lot of countries appreciate our victory, there are some who are disappointed due to various reasons. Maybe it's because of the Diaspora activities, because LTTE's presence outside has become a political power which affects the governments in those countries. They can influence these countries. This maybe also due to certain strategic interests they have in our country. There are certain elements of the international community who see the President taking a hard stand on the international community when the war was on, taking it personally. Maybe these elements want governments like this changed. We certainly see an international conspiracy to oust the President. I don't point my finger at any government, but there were pressures that came through to safeguard the LTTE. These elements want to see the President out. Maybe they see that they can come out in a different way to give the LTTE Eelam. We have to be aware of this situation. The people have to be mindful of this danger.

These charges of war crimes are very unfair. It's not the time to punish political leaders or officers or military leaders for fighting against terror. We defeated a terror organization that caused so much destruction to property and stalled democracy and destabilized the country. The LTTE caused more harm to the Tamil culture; they killed more Tamil people than any one people. The international community must understand this. They should help us build this country and bring the communities together. All these war crimes charges don't do that. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: November 30, 2009

Navy destroys Six Tiger boats

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 30, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 307 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 30 -- Naval troops patrolling the North Eastern seas yesterday foiled a desperate **LTTE** attempt to breach its first defence line killing 28 Sea Tigers including three **female** Sea Tiger leaders and destroying six Tiger boats in the sea off Mullaitivu, Navy Spokesman Captain D.K.P. Dassanayake told the Daily News yesterday. The Navy Special Boat Squadron confronted with six Tiger boats including four suicide craft launched from Vellamullivaikkal in the southern part of the No Fire Zone for hours from 4.30 am yesterday.

Intercepted **LTTE** radio communication have confirmed that 28 Tiger cadres were killed during this confrontation and **female** Sea Tiger leaders Manparithi, Ariyu and Manmadhi were among the killed. The Navy Spokesman said the **LTTE** facing heavy defeat in the ground was making desperate attempts to flee the area from the sea, but Navy has already secured all sea routes to thwart any such attempts. Brigadier Nanayak- kara said troops are continuing their mission of rescuing the remaining civilians after capturing the 700 metre long and 10 feet high ditch cum earth bund in Rettavaikkal. "The **LTTE** had made seven suicide attempts to recapture the earth bund using three human bombs, one explosive laden truck, three motorbikes and a double cab during 24 hours ending Wednesday morning," the Brigadier added. "Our troops also suffered casualties but managed to foil those suicide attempts," he added. The Brigadier said Security Force so far have been able to rescue 113,270 civilians after launching the humanitarian operation on April 20 bringing the total number of civilians rescued by the troops to 185,831. "These civilians are sheltered in 30 welfare centres in Mannar, Vavuniya and Pulmudai and 11 welfare centres in Jaffna," he added. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 30, 2009

Western bloc wanted to save Prabhakaran

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

May 31, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 1926 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 31 -- The **LTTE** has been eliminated from the Sri Lankan soil and the nation is now celebrating that glorious victory as their right to fight terrorism in domestic front has been endorsed not only by the Sri Lankan community, but also by the international community with an overwhelming majority at the special session on Sri Lanka at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva on Wednesday.

The victory achieved by Sri Lanka at the UNHRC special session marked the victory of the diplomatic warfare fought by the Government against those countries that opposed Sri Lanka eliminating the **LTTE**, in the guise of safeguarding the civilians trapped inside the safe zone. It was a group led by the Western bloc and the EU which tried to adopt a resolution to conduct investigations into Human Rights violations and war crimes committed by the Sri Lankan Security Forces during the battle to eliminate **LTTE** terrorism. But that effort was finally defeated by the friendly nations dominated by the South Asian, Asian, African, Middle Eastern countries. That explicitly demonstrated how Sri Lanka maintained diplomatic relationships with the entire world who are genuinely expressing their view on the Sri Lankan situation whilst another section of Western displayed their hypocrisy towards the victory achieved by a little nation like Sri Lanka against what they branded as the most ruthless terror outfit in the world. The latest international media reports soon after the **LTTE** leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and its top level leaders were killed in the last battle very clearly indicates that the efforts made by the Western nations to negotiate for pause in the battle was no meant to rescue the civilians kept hostage by the **LTTE**. It has been proved beyond any doubt that the intention of the arrival of so many western diplomats to Sri Lanka was to exert pressure on the Sri Lankan Government to stop the last ditch of battle in Vellamullivaikkal and finally to rescue Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and his gang from the Sri Lankan Security Forces, but not to safeguard the civilians. That confidence placed on the western nation by the Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran did not pay off with the terrorist falling to the gunfire of the Sri Lankan Security Forces. If he had placed confidence on the Sri Lankan Government and the Security Forces and negotiated directly with the Sri Lankan Government and the President he would not have faced this destiny at the last hour of the battle. Repeated appeals President Mahinda Rajapaksa made repeated appeals to Velupillai Prabhakaran to disarm and surrender to the Security Forces, at each and every victory they secured against the **LTTE**. That humble and genuine appeal to that terror leader was made after the capture of Pooneryn, Paranthan, Kilinochchi, Elephant Pass and finally when the civilians were rescued by the Security Forces in Puthumattalan. But the Tiger leader Prabhakaran did not want to heed it and continued his terror campaign risking the lives of innocent Tamil civilians until his death, keeping faith on the negotiations continued by Kumaran Pathmanathan the international negotiator of the **LTTE**. Those efforts of the Tiger leader to surrender to a third party were futile as the Government did not waver in its position and rejected the offer made by the US government. It was due to miscalculations in his judgments on this Government, that the Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, wanted by the Sri Lankan Government and the Indian Government for his acts of terror, had to die under those circumstances. Displeased due to the rejection of all the conditions laid down by the Western nations

Western bloc wanted to save Prabhakaran

by the Sri Lankan Government, those western nations tried their best to belittle the victory achieved by this Government against the most ruthless terror outfit in the world at the highest international forum. Finally, it was defeated by the friendly nations who had understood the ground realities in a fight against terrorism. Belittle Even after the effort to belittle the victory achieved by the Sri Lankan Security Forces, many international media, who had not even reached the conflict zone, are trying to gather evidence to charge the Sri Lankan Security Forces for war crimes. It is ridiculous and hilarious to learn that some journalists, who had a bird view on the conflict zone over helicopter rides across the conflict zone, are trying to gather information about the use of heavy caliber weapons by the Security Forces. Those efforts even ridicule their journalistic instinct as local journalists covering the battlefield with unimpeded access to this zone had not seen such craters created by the use of heavy weapons by the Security Forces. But we have seen the mayhem the **LTTE** had created there through huge explosions and suicide attempts on the advancing troops under the cover of the huge civilian influx. It is pathetic to observe that they have kept a blind eye to those incidents when tens of thousands of Tamil civilians were suffering due to the inhuman acts of the Tiger cadres on their own community. Those NGOs and INGOs are trying to accuse the Security Forces of killing over 20,000 civilians in the last ditch of battle according to their calculations made out of the situation but not considering any verified evidence from the ground. The basic fact is that they were baffled as to how our Security Forces were able to rescue such a massive number of civilians from the clutches of the **LTTE**, as there is no such example for them in the West to talk about such a victory without civilian casualties. As this argument over the elimination of **LTTE** terrorism continued, the Security Forces are still trying to ascertain the way the Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed in Vellamullivaikkal in the Nanthikadal lagoon and how he had arrived there. According to military sources, there is information that the Tiger leader had reached there from his hideout in the early hours on May 19 as troops had heard a pedalling of boat under the cover of the thick darkness. It was after that sound that the commando troops engaged in fierce fighting with that group. A number of commando troops were injured and also killed during that confrontation. Therefore, troops believe that Prabhakaran was killed during that confrontation in the early hours of May 19. But the troops engaged in search operations on Tuesday (May 19) morning had reportedly engaged with the group of terrorists before they recovered the body of the Tiger leader in a small islet in the Nanthikadal lagoon. So the military is still piecing together all this information to have a clear picture about the way Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed. Much speculation is being made about his death and circulated among the general public. DNA test However, the DNA test carried out to identify the bodies of Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran with his son Charles Anthony has been positive clearing all doubts about his death. Apart from the way the Tiger leader got killed, the military is also still investigating Tiger Intelligence Wing leader Pottu Amman's death as they could not find his body among the top level Tiger leaders. Therefore, they have to believe in the information divulged by a Tiger cadre who surrendered said that Pottu Amman got killed before the **LTTE** teams arrived in military controlled areas to escape. The deaths of Prabhakaran's wife Madivadane and daughter Dvaraka is also a puzzle to the military as they could not find their bodies among the scores of Tiger cadres killed. But military on Wednesday found the parents of Prabhakaran among the civilians in the Zone -4 of the Menik Farm welfare camp. Veraswami Thiruwengadam Velupillai (84) and mother Velupillai Parvathi Pillai (79) had been identified by military authorities on the information given by the civilians. According to the statements given by the Tiger leader's father, they have lived in exile in Trichy in India and returned to Sri Lanka in 2003 during the ceasefire period. Although they had asked Prabhakaran whether they could go to their native village in Velvetithurai the Tiger had not allowed them to go there. So they had lived in Visuamadu area after their return to Sri Lanka but separately from Prabhakaran's family. According to Prabhakaran's father, they had not met their son regularly despite occasional visits. When the fighting erupted in Puthukudiyiruppu, Prabhakaran has sent a vehicle for them to arrive in Puthumattalan area and they had lived among the other Tamil civilians in the safe zone. They had left the safe zone on May 17 among the last batch of civilians who were arriving in Mullaitivu area across the Vadduvakkal bridge. Among these civilians, a large number of ex-Tiger cadres are still living and the military is in the process of identifying them. The identification of **LTTE Women's** Political Wing leader Thamiliini among the civilians was due to these efforts. If these hardcore Tiger cadres are allowed to move, they will try to regroup and reorganize as a strong Tamil diaspora across the globe with those still backing them to reorganize the **LTTE** in Sri Lankan soil. So, those, who pressurised the Government to allow free movement for these civilians and free access for the outsiders to meet them inside camps, should understand the danger behind that move as the Security Forces were able to bring down a terrorist organization to this level after their existence in this country for more than 30 years. Operations The Security Forces have launched extensive search and clear operations in the Eastern jungle patches as a handful of Tiger leaders and cadres are still operating inside the jungles in the East, especially

Western bloc wanted to save Prabhakaran

in Trincomalee and Batticaloa. According to military intelligence, Tigers Ram and Nagulan are still operating in the Eastern jungles in the Trincomalee district along with a 12 to 14 members of LTTE. Apart from them, two other Tiger leaders Thevan and Kulilan are reportedly operating along with another 12 to 14 cadres. Kokkadicholai Tiger leader Daya Mohan is also missing from the Tiger leaders who had got killed among the last batch of Tiger cadres. The Special Forces and Commando troops are engaged in extensive search operations in the East to nab the last set of Tiger cadres operating in the East. A set of Tiger cadres got killed at the hands of the Special Forces troops in the Peraru jungles soon after the final assault on the LTTE on May 19 in Vellamullivaikkal. It included all the top Tiger leaders. Ram, who had fled to the East, had contacted Nation Building Minister Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan to negotiate his surrender soon after he got information about the death of Prabhakaran. But, there was no communication from him thereafter. However, it was on Wednesday the commando teams operating in Kanchikudichchiaru jungles lay in ambush and killed 11 Tiger cadres operating there. Although it was believed that the team was led by Nagulan, they could not find a trace about him. Therefore, the Security Forces along with the Police Special Task Force troops have launched extensive search operations in the Eastern jungles. The Security Forces also facing the challenge of searching the estate sector and also in Colombo to eliminate the remaining Tiger links locally as the threat of the emergence of the LTTE still exists internationally with the presence of Kumaran Pathmanathan emerging as the leader of the LTTE. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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End of Document

A month since victory

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

June 19, 2009 Friday

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Length: 2100 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 19 -- A month has already passed since the glorious victory achieved by the valiant Security Forces that completely eliminated **LTTE** terrorism from Sri Lankan soil following the final battle they fought on the banks of the Nanthikadal lagoon in Vellamullivaikkal in Mullaitivu on May 18 and 19.

This great victory is now slowly entering history books as one of the major milestones in the country's march forward under the leadership of President Mahinda Rajapaksa. The Sri Lanka Army will mark the completion of one month to that great victory today in Mullaitivu with the participation of Army Commander General Sarath Fonseka and other senior officials of the Sri Lanka Army who had greatly contributed to this victory at a function to be held at a Karayanmullivaikkal closer to the wreckage of the Farah III ship. For many it was an unbelievable episode which had flashed in their minds, as they never believed in eliminating **LTTE** terrorism from Sri Lankan soil during their life time. Brigade Commanders and Commanding Officers at the final day of battle in Vellamullivaikkal Death of Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran was shocking news for them as they never imagined seeing his body lying on the ground like any other Tiger terrorist who got killed after a failed mission to accomplish his terror plan. But circumstances made him to die in the same death trap he set to kill innocent men, **women** and children in a democratic society. Like his existence, Prabhakaran's death also became a puzzle for many ordinary citizens since it was not the way they wanted to see his death and many ran after imaginations, stuck onto their own assumptions and believed in wild rumors spread across the globe, over his death. It was due to these myths, imaginations, assumptions and rumors that the way Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and his top rung leaders were killed during their last attempt to breach the Security Forces defences and escape became a controversy for the past one month. Even today, some sections of people are not ready to accept the fact that the Tiger leader was killed inside the mangroves in Vellamullivaikkal in Mullaitivu despite the military and the Government strongly rejecting the allegations that he was tortured before his death. Not only did they believe in those myths and assumptions but also tried to charge the Security Forces and the Government of war crimes for killing the last batch of top level leaders. But one month is more than enough to brush off all those myths about the death of Prabhakaran and all his top rung leaders as numerous post mortems have been conducted into it by many. Field commanders It has to be mentioned that it took two weeks to brush off all those myths about the Tiger leaders death even the soldiers, commanding officers and field commanders who were engaged in the last ditch battle in Vellamullivaikkal and Karayanmullivaikkal had to piece together each and every incident they had come across on May 18 and 19 to get an overall picture of the incident. Until then there were many versions to the incident that took place in Vellamullivaikkal as only a handful number of people were aware of what exactly took place in Vellamullivaikkal. But a considerable number of journalists, including this correspondent who was there at Vellamullivaikkal were witnesses to what had happened there. There was nothing for the military to hide. All those journalists who were there at Vellamullivaikkal on May 18 and 19 rejected all those rumours that were widespread in Colombo when many journalists including some foreign correspondents were highly skeptical about what had

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happened there. Search operation Although, what had happened within the LTTE still remains a mystery, the rest of the story about the battle in Vellamullivaikkal is now very clear except for the exact time the Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed on May 19 although the body was recovered around 10 am on May 19, by the troops attached to the 4 Vijayaba Infantry Regiment troops led by Lt. Colonel Rohan Aluvihare after an intense search operation carried out by the Commando troops along with the 4 VIR troops. However, the military is yet to know about the destiny of Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran's wife and daughter Duaraka as there is strong evidence to prove that they were killed in the last battle. The investigations carried out by the military based on the data from the satellite phones collected from Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and from other top level leaders have so far given indications that the Tiger leaders were in contact with their supporters in UK and USA till the last moment. The satellite phone which was found in the possession of Tiger leader was of no use as the chip had been removed from it. But investigators have been able to restore four satellite phones out of the eight they have found among the Tiger cadres and are conducting investigations based on the data available in those phones. Intense fighting According to military officials other satellite phones have been discarded as they were beyond restoration due to leakage of water inside. However, through the data collected from the available phones there are strong indications they have made a last minute attempt to negotiate with many of their high level contacts while intense fighting was going on to counter their attack on the Security Forces defences. They had strong faith in Western nations until the last moment but miserably failed in their attempt as it was ill timed. By this time all those human right activists and international journalists who tried to charge the Security Forces and the Government for committing war crimes and violating human rights have silenced their guns as they have already realized the fact that they all have gone after a mirage driven by the LTTE proxies operating internationally. Although, the roots of terrorism have already been uprooted from the Sri Lankan soil, various elements of the LTTE are still trying to reorganize themselves at international level. According to reports two blocs of LTTE, one operating in the West under the leadership of Kumaran Pathmanathan and the other under the LTTE intelligence wing are making separate attempts to reorganize themselves internationally. According to intelligence reports those who are operating in Europe are still collecting funds for the organization, and depositing them in the Tiger bank accounts. However, the Government has intensified its effort to arrest the Tiger leaders operating internationally including KP with the support of the foreign nations whilst intensifying operations to nab suicide cadres and other Tiger supporters based in Colombo and other parts of the country. According to intelligence reports there are dozens of suicide cadres still wandering in Colombo and the suburbs after their leadership perished in the last battle in Mullaitivu. But they are still receiving instructions from their handlers based in Western and European countries as witnessed by the investigators after the arresting some of those suicide cadres sent to Colombo. Suicide cadres They are still giving a moral boost for these suicide cadres and depositing money in their bank accounts unaware of the fact that these cadres are under arrest. Through such networks the Police and the military are trying their best to identify those who had supported the LTTE locally and internationally. As a result of these investigations, many businessmen, Security Forces personnel based in Colombo have been detained by the Police, who are conducting further investigations as to how they had operated from Colombo to extend their support to the terror activities. Therefore, the Criminal Investigation Department and the Terrorist Investigation Division are conducting investigations in to these cases. The objective is to weed out the Tiger cadres fully so that the Government can assure the people a peaceful environment for them to move freely in any part of the country. Until then the Security Forces and the Police will have to maintain barriers and security check points to detain those Tiger cadres still operating freely mingling with the civilians. Whilst search operations were going on in Colombo the military is still running after Tiger leader Nagulan and Kuilan operating in Batticaloa and Trincomalee along with a handful of Tiger cadres. Military officials believe that they have already moved into the civilian settlement in the East as intense search operations conducted by the Security Forces have made it difficult for them to operate in the jungles. The Security Forces and the Police however, would not leave any room for any terror element to raise its ugly head once again in this country. As the Security Forces and the Police are taking these security measures and the Government has taken initiatives to rebuild the conflict affected areas in the North. As a step towards bringing normality to the North the Security Forces on Wednesday took the initiative to open the key Jaffna - Kandy A-9 road for lorries taking essential items to the Jaffna peninsula. It was after August 11, 2006, that lorries taking essential items to Jaffna peninsula plied on the A-9 road. It has become a big relief for the people in Jaffna and also for the traders in Jaffna as they get free access to Jaffna through the A-9 road to transport essentials to the peninsula. The closure of the A-9 road following the escalation of hostilities between the Security Forces and the LTTE on August 11, 2006 was the biggest blow to the LTTE and for its downfall as they never thought that the people in Jaffna would be separated from the people in Vanni at any moment. It was true that

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the people in Jaffna and other parts of the country had to undergo difficulties due to the closure of the A-9 road from Muhamalai but the overall benefit of that far sighted decision by the defence authorities has finally brought fruitful results for the country as it led to the elimination of terrorism from the country. Peace talks If one can remember the effort the LTTE made at each and every international fora to exert pressure on the Government to open this road for the civilians and the way the LTTE withdrew from the peace talks in protest against the decision to close the A-9 road in the year 2006, he or she can imagine the huge impact on the LTTE due to the closure of this road. But it was due to that firm decision taken by the Government to curb the terror activities of the LTTE, the Security Forces could achieve this victory against the LTTE. If the Government succumbed to that international and local pressure and opened the A-9 road fearing that the Government would lose support from the minority political parties the country would have plunged into utter chaos leaving room for the LTTE to unleash their terror plans without any hindrance. It was due to that far sighted decision by the defence authorities, the people of this country especially the Tamil people for the first time in the recent history are getting free access to Jaffna peninsula through the A-9 road without paying any extortions to the LTTE. It gives the strong feeling to the people that they are living in a unified country without any influence of terrorism for the first time in many decades. The Tamil community for the first time will understand the difference between living under the jackboot of terrorism and in a free country where there is no influence of terrorism once they are resettled in their own villages when Security Forces complete the process of demining and search operations, whilst the Government completing its reconstruction programs in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts. It is commendable that a MP from the Tamil National Alliance, Sivanathan Kisshore has pledged his support to the Government initiated development program in the North after taking an independent decision considering the current situation of the country. Tamil politicians who were not outspoken in their expression due to the fear of the LTTE have now for the first time got the chance to engage in the democratic process as the Government has already taken initiatives to hold elections for the Jaffna and Vavuniya Municipal Councils. The forthcoming elections would be the first elections in which the Tamil community would cast their vote without any influence of the LTTE after a lapse of three decades and would signal a green light for their desire to live in democratic society. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: June 19, 2009

Fed: Govt searching for Aussies in Sri Lankan refugee camps

AAP Newsfeed

June 17, 2009 Wednesday 6:11 PM AEST

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Section: DOMESTIC NEWS

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Dateline: CANBERRA June 17

Body

Australia is continuing the search for three NSW residents thought to be in refugee camps in northern Sri Lanka, where Tamils are being kept following the end of the civil war.

Human rights groups have labelled the camps a disgrace, urging Sri Lanka to free the 300,000 displaced people being held there.

Foreign Minister Stephen Smith put Sri Lanka on notice that it would be judged according to how it dealt with those in the camps.

"We think the Sri Lankan government and the Sri Lankan authorities will now be judged on two things - how they manage and deal with the vast number of people in the displaced camps," he told reporters.

"And ... how they move to a reform program that enables all of the Sri Lankan community to feel that they have a share in a democracy in Sri Lanka."

About 300,000 people are being held in the government-run camps following Colombo's defeat of the Tamil Tigers' long-running rebel campaign.

The government is keeping people in the camps until they determine whether they are members of the Tamil Tigers.

The three Australians - two women aged 26 and 29, and a 62-year-old man - believed to be in the camps are all from NSW.

Mr Smith said there was nothing to suggest they weren't safe.

"We currently have officials in the north of Sri Lanka to seek to locate the whereabouts of three Australian citizens who we believe are in one of the displaced persons camps," he said.

"We don't have any information that would cause us to believe that the three aren't safe.

"It's just we haven't been able to locate them, either through the UNHCR ... who are working in the displaced camps, nor have we been able to locate them through Sri Lankan authorities, but we are working very hard to do that."

The Tamil community in Australia is continuing to pressure Canberra to speak out about human rights in Sri Lanka.

It held a forum at Parliament House on Wednesday where community leaders spoke of the plight of the Tamils.

John Dowd, president of the Australian section of the International Commission of Jurists, told AAP the federal government needed to do much more to draw attention to the problems in Sri Lanka.

"They should be talking out volubly so that the rest of the world knows that Australia is concerned," he said.

Fed: Govt searching for Aussies in Sri Lankan refugee camps

"Its approach has been far too muted. The Australian government has conveniently not made as much of a fuss as it ought."

Paediatrician John Whitehall, an associate professor of public health at James Cook University, said it was a euphemism to call those in the camps displaced people.

"They are inmates of concentration camps and history has few precedents for incarcerating all the people after a civil war indefinitely and isolating them the way that they have," Dr Whitehall said.

Load-Date: June 18, 2009

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STF - an elite force

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

June 21, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 1860 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 21 -- Their expertise spread from providing close range protection for key VVIPs to wide range protection provided to the public. They are the skilful creators of solid protection against any variety of terrorism or insurgency situations. They are the task oriented, battled hardened elite para-military arm of the Sri Lanka Police - The Special Task Force.

Hand picking the best men of the Police Department and seasoning them with specialised para-military training the STF was started on March 1, 1983 guided by the Motto 'Victory Assured'. They were subjected to specialization in counter terrorism operations and VIP security detail recognized throughout the past for its complexity and success. Liberating East Of the entire STF history the liberation of the Eastern theater in 2006/2007 marked a turning point. It was the beginning of the victorious end of the Eelam War IV. "The STF was more familiar with the Eastern grounds as we were operating in the area since inception," Senior DIG Mahinda Balasuriya, Admin/STF/Operation Command said explaining the significant contribution of the STF. "Our troops were more familiar with the people, their social characteristics and the ground situation, specially in Ampara and Batticaloa," he added. By the time the LTTE closed the sluice gates of Mavil Aru in July 2006, the STF was dominating the Ampara and Batticaloa districts. Enabling the Sri Lanka Army troops to advance for their operational commitments to liberate the Mavil Aru area, the STF was ordered to take over the areas dominated by the Army. The Sri Lanka Army launched the humanitarian operation to liberate the entire Eastern and Northern Provinces. The STF successfully took over the security in Kalladi area, Batticaloa town to Mailambaveli in Eravur. In September 2006, the STF received orders to take over Vavunativu and Black Bridge Army bases. The Army troops were relieved for the operations launched to liberate Vaharai. In January 2007, Sri Lanka Army successfully liberated Mavil Aru, Sampur and Vaharai areas from LTTE clutches. Victory assured On January 04, 2007 the STF launched 'Niyathai Jaya' (Victory assured) operation in the Kanchikudichcharu jungles parallel to the Army operations conducted to liberate Vaharai and Thoppigala areas. The 'Victory Assured', was launched when Senior DIG Nimal Lewke was the Commandant of the STF and the Operation successfully captured and destroyed 24 main LTTE bases in the Kanchikudichcharu jungle. In their unique operational method the STF launched striking attacks in the approximately 2900 square kilometres of the Kanjikudichcharu jungle. "Our strength is small teams and it would comprise not more than 8 men. And with these teams, the entire jungle area was secured by our officers," Commandant of STF DIG K.L.M. Sarathchandra said explaining the key points of the history of STF operations. The operation, spearheaded by SSP M.R. Latif, eliminated the LTTE threat in the Ampara district with support of the entire team of STF officers deployed in the area lead by SP W.P. Wimalasena, SP Madduma Bandara, ASP T.F. Hadji, ASP Vidura Dissanayake, ASP P.K. Kulatunga, ASP P.G.S. Rathepitiya, ASP M.G.S.K. Muruthetuwegama and ASP W.M.K.S. Pandivita. Liberating A5 The STF received instructions in early February to assist the Sri Lanka Army to launch the military campaign flushing away the LTTE threat from Batticaloa. "When the Sri Lanka Army started advancing deep into Thoppigala (Baron's cap) area the STF took over a total of 38 detachments from the Army enabling their advance movement,"

STF - an elite force

DIG Sarathchandra said. These were in general areas of Wellaweli, Kokkadicholai, Vavunativu, Kakkachiwatta, Kalawaya, Porativu, Shanthimalai, Atuchenai, Mavadimunaru, Paladiwatta, Magaladathivu, Purasari, Naripulthottam which were mainly villages where Tamil people were living. During this period the STF was deployed in Pulkunawa, Kohombagasthalawa, Maha Oya, Pullumalai and Unnichchi - villages in the Ampara district bordering the Batticaloa district. In the early stages of this operation the STF launched several missions to regain the control of part of the A5 road. The initial operational plans were drawn on the basis of the information provided by the Intelligence Units and by Intercepting **LTTE** communications done by the STF. In the next few days the Long Range Reconnaissance Petrol teams belonging to the Army Commandos conducted their missions stationed at these STF camps - specially during the regaining of the A5 road. More Army troops were received and settled in STF camps such as Manmunai, Vavunativu, Chenkaladi etc in the Batticaloa district with Army's Armoured Corp, Artillery and MBRL units. From April 5, 2007 the STF took over more newly cleared areas dominated by the Sri Lanka Army enabling them to move forward. Three new STF sectors were formed in Vellavelli, Kokkadicholai and Vavunativu. The STF dedicates gratitude for the efforts made by the then Director (Operations) SSP R.W.M.C. Ranawana, ASP Waruna Jayasundara, ASP J.R. Senadira, ASP Vidura Dissanayake, ASP G.S. Rathepitiya, ASP Sylvester Wijesinghe and ASP N.K.S.N. Gunaratne assisted the STF to regain the maximum domination and the best public confidence in the newly liberated areas. The combined military campaign continued till the fall of Thoppigala **LTTE** bastion in July 2007. Displaced civilians Thousands of civilians, living in the **LTTE** dominated areas continued to flee seeking the protection of the Sri Lanka security forces as the Sri Lanka Army troops were progressing deep in to the Tiger held areas in Thoppigala. Automatically the STF was vested with an additional responsibility of assisting and over looking the newly arrived IDPs. From May 14, 2007 the STF commenced the re-settlement of IDPs in Vellaveli Divisional Secretariat Division with the assistance provided by the Government. At the end of the programme the STF commendably resettled nearly 100,000 IDPs in four DS Divisions successfully. In the North "By coordinating and consolidating the security of the recently liberated areas under the humanitarian mission the STF greatly supported the Sri Lanka Army in rear," Snr. DIG Balasuriya said explaining the contribution of the STF to the recent operation in the Wanni theatre. Be it evacuation of casualties, stabilising the security of the liberated areas, securing main supply routes the STF was ready for any of the responsibilities directed to them. In January 2009, the STF took over securing the Weli Oya road from Omanthai in Vavuniya. Next, in February, they were instructed to take over the areas of A9 road from Omanthai to Kanagarayankulam via Puliyankulama. The STF was securing the Vavuniya - Mannar road and Madhu road. On the other side, the STF was securing the Kebithigollewa general areas giving protection to number of villages threatened by the **LTTE** terrorism. Early victories Among the early operational victories of the STF since its inception, Operation 'Weera Vikum' (1996), Operation 'Weera Gigum' (1997) and Operation 'Akunu Pahara' (2001) launched during Eelam War 3, were significant. "The special operational strategy of the STF is swift actions by small teams. The less time you take more effective the attack would be," DIG Sarathchandra, battle hardened leader of the STF said. In June 2001, under the direction of DIG Sarathchandra, the then Director Operations, the 'Akunu Pahara' (Lightning strike) was launched. "As per the information available, operation 'Akunu Pahara' was reported to be the mission conducted in a shortest time period," DIG Sarathchandra said. "We launched the mission around midnight on June 04, destroyed the main **LTTE** base in the Kanchikudichcharu jungle and returned to our base by 11 am next day. The enemy was totally unaware of our presence until we started firing and assaulting," DIG Sarathchandra said. "We didn't suffer a single death or a casualty in that mission," the triumphant leader pointed out. The present On April 03, 2009 under the direct leadership provided by the Commandant DIG Sarathchandra the STF successfully launched an offensive to eliminate terrorist threats in the Yala area. "We believe these **LTTE** cadres were those who escaped during the intense operations in the Kanjikudichcharu jungle. And at the beginning approximately 55 terrorists were in our areas as per ground information and intelligence sources," DIG Sarathchandra said. The STF was operating in approximately 6000 square kilometres in the Yala, North of Kumbukkan Oya, and within a short period the STF officers killed 35 **LTTE** cadres including several leaders. The entire **LTTE** operations malfunctioned and nullified with the dedication and commitment of the elite troops. Among the list of **LTTE** leaders Lavamohan, Tuviraj, Balaturai, a **female** leader Swarna and explosive expert of the gang 'Paramanandan' master were prominent. 'Paramanandan' master was responsible for many of the claymore and landmine attacks that happened in the Yala area in the recent past. Securing the nature Though the elite force is specially trained for anti terror activities, they were dealing with a another form of terrorism in the East for a long time. Illegal timber felling and Cannabis plantations were damaging the entire Eastern sector in a large scale. If not properly controlled the menace could create worse damages than terrorism. The STF caught 50 people red handedly engaged in this trade along with

STF - an elite force

their specially designed bullockcarts, which are twice as large and strong than the normal carts. After being produced in Courts these people are still under rigorous imprisonment. Hence, the area is under stiff control providing strength to the entire security of the area. Speciality The elite force is given a sixteen week initial extensive training. Their speciality is working as small teams. "Depending on the requirement we sent smaller teams called 'Cheetah groups' and for these we specially train our officers with several years of combat experience. They are the cream of our fighters," Commandant said. Deployment of motorcycle teams, Snipers and 'Cheetah groups' in their areas of control are few of the specialized areas of the STF. Their training from the inception was exclusive. Trainers polished by the initial training by the reputed British Special Air Service and the Special Air Service Officers Organization of Great Britain gave a boost for the entire upbringing of the organization. The negative impact the **LTTE** felt with these training became evident with the assassination of former Commandant of STF training School SSP Upul Seneviratne at Kandy. The enemy knew it is the training that made these men so unique. Stabilizing peace in the country is the Special Task Force's future responsibility would be. "We are unique. We are the only para-military organization with police powers. Hence we are confident that our future tasks would be similarly successful," Commandant DIG Sarathchandra stated. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Pressure grows on Sri Lanka for ceasefire with rebels

Agence France Presse -- English

April 24, 2009 Friday 5:00 AM GMT

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Length: 647 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, April 24 2009

Body

India's foreign secretary flew to Sri Lanka Friday as international pressure intensified on Colombo to halt its assault on Tamil Tiger rebels and save thousands of trapped civilians.

The Indian government said Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon and Indian National Security Adviser M. K. Narayanan would stress the severity of the humanitarian crisis facing up to 50,000 non-combatants hemmed into the island's northeastern coastal area.

"There is tremendous international pressure building on us to call a ceasefire," acknowledged a Sri Lankan government official who declined to be named.

The announcement of Menon's visit was backed by a strongly-worded statement from Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee who demanded an immediate end to the loss of civilian life.

"These killings must stop. The Sri Lankan government has a responsibility to protect its own citizens and the LTTE must stop its barbaric attempt to hold civilians hostage," Mukherjee said.

The Sri Lankan military says it is on the brink of wiping out the remnants of the once powerful Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who have been cornered in sliver of jungle on the northeast coast.

More than 100,000 men, women and children have managed to escape the area still under LTTE control in recent days, but the United Nations believes up to 50,000 still remain trapped.

The government, however, has steadfastly resisted appeals to call a proper truce and has also turned down requests to send humanitarian teams into the area.

"It would not be sensible to let aid agencies into the conflict zone because there is already an army operation in progress to rescue civilians," Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse told the BBC.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon announced Thursday that he had a humanitarian team ready to travel to northern Sri Lanka "to do whatever we can to protect the civilian population."

Pressure grows on Sri Lanka for ceasefire with rebels

Sri Lanka also refused to accept a special envoy named by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, but a minister from the Department for International Development is expected here next week to discuss the crisis.

The LTTE has been accused of using non-combatants as human shields and the the UN has urged the surrounded and outnumbered Tigers to surrender in avoid the loss of more civilian lives.

President Mahinda Rajapakse has insisted that the rebels lay down their arms, while ruling out any amnesty for LTTE supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran, who has led the group's ruthless decades-long battle for a separate Tamil homeland.

At the height of their power in the mid 1990s, the LTTE controlled more than a third of the island, but a massive military offensive over the past year triggered a spectacular collapse of their mini-state in the north.

The plight of those trapped by the fighting has been highlighted in recent days by television footage of desperate civilians struggling through waist-deep water to get to safety.

The UN's top humanitarian official in Sri Lanka said the situation was disastrous.

"I saw infants with dysentery, malnourished children and women, untended wounds, and people dressed in the ragged clothing they've been wearing for months," said Neil Buhne, the UN's humanitarian coordinator in Sri Lanka.

As well as blocking most aid agencies, the Sri Lankan authorities have herded escaping Tamil civilians into closely-guarded internment camps so it can weed out suspected rebels.

India has adopted a hands-off approach to the Sri Lankan conflict since a disastrous military intervention in the 1980s, but New Delhi continues to exert significant leverage over the government in Colombo.

India is currently in the middle of a month-long general election and the government is under pressure to respond to the concerns of around 60 million Tamils in Tamil Nadu -- a key swing state in the south -- over the fate of their fellow Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Load-Date: April 25, 2009

Tigers' harsh taming

Financial Times (London, England)

May 16, 2009 Saturday

Asia Edition 1

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Section: ANALYSIS; Pg. 8

Length: 1588 words

Byline: Joe Leahy

Body

In an old administrative building in the fallen Tamil Tiger capital of Kilinochchi, Brigadier Shavendra Silva clicks through a gallery of grisly pictures. His PowerPoint presentation shows scores of bodies clad in the checked shirts and dark trousers typical of cadres of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, many of them women. Some decapitated, others merely blown to pieces.

"Our intention was to get maximum kills of LTTE," Brig Silva says bluntly.

Such ruthlessness has served Sri Lanka's armed forces well. With the LTTE now hemmed into a tiny coastal strip in the island's north-east, the government looks set to become the first in the post-9/11 world summarily to defeat a prominent terrorist insurgent group.

But even as humanitarians express their horror and colder-blooded strategists ask what other nations fighting similar conflicts might learn from Sri Lanka's experience, others say the real victor in the island's 25-year civil war is China.

Beijing has in the last few years become a crucial supplier of weaponry and aid to Sri Lanka. More than that, it has helped to deflect international criticism of mass civilian casualties in the war. In return, Beijing has won access to a key Sri Lankan port, giving it a strategic foothold next to one of the world's premier shipping lanes, right under the nose of the south Asian regional power, India.

"China has played a very important role in tilting the balance in favour of the government forces," says Brahma Chellaney of the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi. Beijing's Communist leaders "have been responsible for trying to prevent the United Nations Security Council from issuing any harsh resolutions on Sri Lanka".

But this week, even the Security Council could no longer ignore the human cost that Sri Lanka's conflict has exacted on its Tamil population. Shelling of civilians that last weekend killed 400 people, including 100 children, forced the council to issue its first formal statement of protest on Sri Lanka's civil war this year.

Separately, US President Barack Obama demanded that the government cease "indiscriminate shelling" of civilians and that the LTTE release thousands of non-combatants it is holding at gunpoint in its territory. Hillary Clinton, his secretary of state, even called for the International Monetary Fund to withhold a \$1.9bn (£1.2bn, EUR1.4bn) loan that Colombo badly needs to support its shaky economy.

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The horror of the war stands in sharp contrast to the beauty of Sri Lanka, a tropical island that once drew hordes of tourists to its beaches, elephant parks, hillside tea gardens and mountain-top temples. If the war can be brought to a close, an expected resurgence in tourism would help lift its economy out of the doldrums.

The government rejects outright any allegations of shelling civilians. But that has not stopped the reverberations from the killing spreading across the narrow Palk Strait to Tamil Nadu, the state at India's southern tip, from which Sri Lanka dangles like an earring. The slaughter of ethnically related Tamils in neighbouring Sri Lanka has been an issue in this important swing state in India's general election, results of which are due today.

"Of course, we are caring for our fellow people," says Sashi Tharan, a voter in Chennai, Tamil Nadu's capital. But while deploring the humanitarian crisis, few even in India would disagree with the need to crush the LTTE.

Velupillai Prabhakaran, the rebels' elusive leader, was seen as a hero by Tamils when the war began in 1983. Comprising about 13 per cent of Sri Lanka's 19m population, the Tamils suffered heavily after independence from the British in 1948 under governments dominated by the island's Sinhalese Buddhist majority. In the ensuing decades, however, the LTTE developed into an internationally proscribed terrorist organisation known for perfecting the use of suicide bombers.

After India intervened in 1987 with a peacekeeping force, suspected LTTE suicide bombers four years later assassinated Rajiv Gandhi, former Indian prime minister. Other high-profile victims include, in 1993, Ranasinghe Premadasa, who was Sri Lankan president at the time, and countless other rival Tamil and Sinhalese politicians and ordinary citizens before and since.

In 2002, Mr Prabhakaran nearly achieved his dream of independence for the island's north and east. He agreed to a ceasefire that left him in control of most areas claimed by the Tamils as their traditional homeland. What followed, however, was a sequence of unforced errors on Mr Prabhakaran's part. He lost effective control of the LTTE's eastern territories by falling out with his commander there. Next, his obdurate stance during the 2005 election helped bring to power Mahinda Rajapaksa, the current president - and it was he who was to become the LTTE's nemesis.

When the rebels began violating the ceasefire the following year, even attempting to kill Mr Rajapaksa's brother Gotabhaya, a top defence official, the president resumed hostilities, staking his political future on total military victory.

The Tigers' leader had also not counted on the toughness of the president's new military commander - Sarath Fonseka, a hardline Sinhalese nationalist. Himself the survivor of a suicide bombing, Lt Gen Fonseka enlisted western help to cut off the LTTE's illicit global financial network and sent his navy and air force to sink the rebels' supply ships in international waters. On the ground, he used creeping artillery barrages to force villagers to evacuate the battlefield before turning his guns and air force directly on the rebel positions. He supplemented this with jungle-trained special forces, who went behind LTTE lines to kill rebel leaders.

Mr Rajapaksa also ramped up military spending, last year alone increasing the forces by 20 per cent to about 190,000 personnel, making it proportionally one of the region's biggest. "He has focused his entire policy, whether diplomatic, economic or political, on getting rid of these guys," retired colonel R. Hariharan, a Chennai-based political analyst who was head of intelligence for the Indian army's peacekeeping force in Sri Lanka, says of the president.

In addition, Sri Lanka gained China as an ally. Mr Rajapaksa cemented relations with Beijing in 2007 when he awarded Chinese companies the contracts for developing a port in his home constituency in the island's south.

Although Beijing says its intentions are peaceful, many believe China wants eventually to use the port as a naval base to project power into the Indian Ocean and over the nearby shipping lanes, which carry two-thirds of the world's oil trade.

Tigers' harsh taming

Military analysts dub this the "string of pearls" strategy in which China is building a network of Indian Ocean allies, including Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Burma. In Delhi, Mr Chellaney says China has boosted its aid to Sri Lanka fivefold to \$1bn a year. It has also stepped up its supplies of sophisticated weapons such as Jian-7 fighter jets, anti-aircraft guns and JY-11 3D air surveillance radar.

Others counter that China's intentions in Sri Lanka can be overstated. In Chennai, Col Hariharan argues that Beijing does not want to risk seriously antagonising Delhi, an important trade partner, over Sri Lanka.

Yet whatever China's role, Colombo now faces new problems. As the LTTE retreated, its cadres herded at gunpoint an estimated 250,000 civilians into the group's diminishing territories. With nowhere to run, civilian casualties have mounted since January to what the UN estimates is 20,000 killed or wounded.

With 50,000 civilians still trapped in the LTTE's remaining pocket, said to be little more than a few square kilometres in size, the president risks further alienating the Tamil minority through mass casualties in the final push against the rebels. Even if the army eliminates Mr Prabhakaran, who is said still to be on the battlefield, analysts believe the president needs to produce a credible political package granting Tamils some autonomy if he is to avoid a resurgence of separatism.

Worse, the injustices of the war have taken a vicious toll on Sri Lanka's civil society. The country has become heavily militarised. Dissent has been quashed. Scores of prominent journalists have been murdered by unidentified assailants or driven from the country. Others are being prosecuted for writing articles seen as pro-LTTE.

Mr Obama raised the case of one such journalist, J.S. Tissainayagam, on World Press Freedom Day this month. When the Financial Times tried to speak to Mr Tissainayagam during a break in his trial in a lonely colonial-era courtroom in Colombo this month, he declined. The FT was later informed he feared for his life if he spoke out.

With Sri Lanka badly in need of IMF loans and foreign aid to run camps for the more than 200,000 refugees so far displaced in this phase of the war, Mr Rajapaksa needs to regain world goodwill. The commanders at the front line near Kilinochchi, such as Brig Silva, know this. As they show off captured LTTE rifles and artillery, they pepper their speech with the propaganda of the war. Previous military campaigns are called "humanitarian operations" - and the battle now under way in the Tigers' final redoubt is referred to as the "world's biggest hostage rescue mission".

But the officers cannot suppress their pleasure at the imminent prospect of victory over an enemy once thought to be unbeatable. "Prabhakaran should be told to release those civilians. If you can do that for me, please, it will be over in 24 hours," says the brigadier.

Load-Date: May 15, 2009

Security in Western Province tightened

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

September 27, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 468 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Sept. 27 -- With the arrest of two **LTTE female** suicide cadre in Vavuniya, security in the Western Province has been strengthened with frequent cordon and search operations and new checkpoints to prevent sleeper **LTTE** cadre from carrying out attacks.

Inspector General of Police Jayantha Wickramaratne told the 'Sunday Observer' that though the Security Forces do not have information about such attempts, the security of the main cities is under the microscope as LTTEers now appear in different forms.

"They are doing odd jobs in different parts of the country and waiting till the time comes to activate themselves", he said.

The Police have arrested the two **female LTTE** members following information they had received, but one member had committed suicide by swallowing a cyanide capsule. Later, the Police had recovered a stock of explosives comprising two kg of C-4, three suicide jackets, three electric detonators and ammunition from an abandoned land.

The Police Chief said military intelligence personnel were closely monitoring suspected persons and activities, but emphasised the need for more public assistance and vigilance on suspected people and objects in their environs.

"The security of the main cities including Colombo has not been neglected, but we cannot deploy cops or soldiers to each and every place in the country as we are saddled with many other commitments. Therefore, we need support from the public", he said.

IGP Wickramaratne said that people should be more vigilant about abandoned houses, small boutiques which have been closed for long and bare lands, which were possible 'breeding grounds' for sleeper **LTTE** cadre.

He said that Police had discovered T-56 guns, explosives and suicide jackets from two such abandoned lands in Mount Lavinia and Wattala. "These places had remained abandoned for many years and had gone unnoticed", he said.

He said the **LTTE** had buried or hidden hauls of explosives and weapons in some areas to carry out attacks, but the Police had recovered several such stocks of explosives during the last few months; some of these were after tip-offs by the public.

According to the Police Chief, people should also be concerned about houses which see a lot of activity at night, but remain closed during the day.

Security in Western Province tightened

He advised the public to inform the nearest Police station or the Army checkpoint about suspected people, objects or activities.

Meanwhile, sources from the Army, in-charge of the Western Province, said that additional troops have been deployed to strengthen the security in the Province with spot checks, additional road blocks and cordon and search operations. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Popular Army officer turned politician killed with 26 others

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

September 4, 2009 Friday

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Length: 440 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Sept. 4 -- The day marked an important event in the Provincial Council election campaign of the North Central Provincial Council in October 2008. The main opposition political party had chosen a retired Major General Janaka Perera as its leader among the candidates contesting the election. The UNP organizers of the province had come to Dharmapala Mawatha to attend a meeting and a function chaired by Janaka Perera who after his successful career in the army had also been appointed the Sri Lanka High Commissioner in Australia. He was a successful military officer who had routed hundreds of **LTTE** terrorists who came to attack the Welioya military camp he was commanding.

The UNP perhaps believed his fame as a general would make him an ideal chief minister though very clearly there was a major **LTTE** terrorist threat on his life. Therefore he had some of his former army men providing security for him.

On October 06 at this function in Anuradhapura a large gathering was present including former provincial council members and party activists and the meeting was going on without incident. But a short man in a checked shirt and trousers came into the premises where the function was going on. It appeared that Janaka's security or the police who were present at the time had noticed anything strange in the short man.

As soon as he was at close range to Janaka Perera the man exploded a powerful bomb that was tied to his body and 26 people including Janaka were killed instantly. Scores of others were injured.

This was not the first suicide attack on a political meeting carried out by the **LTTE** terrorists but the UNP charged the government of not providing sufficient security for Janaka though it was well known that he had deployed his own security men drawn from among former army personnel who were loyal to him.

The **LTTE** terrorists in 1994 also assassinated a former senior army officer Lucky Algama who was also equally well known as a military officer who had defeated the **LTTE** in the eastern province again at a political rally. The clear signal was that the terrorists would wait for months if not years to kill those they had placed on their hit list. In the case of Janaka Perera his wife Vajira was also killed with him.

Vajira too was one of the first **female** officers to be commissioned by the Sri Lanka Army and the two had fallen in love and married. The suicide attack on Janaka was a shock to the nation as he had served the country well. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

Popular Army officer turned politician killed with 26 others

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Load-Date: September 4, 2009

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Monumental rescue mission

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 815 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 21 -- Sri Lanka yesterday witnessed a monumental landmark in its history when the country's Security Forces succeeded in pulling off the biggest known human rescue mission at any time anywhere in the world.

Tens of thousands of civilians who were held prisoners by the LTTE, yesterday, breathed the fresh air of freedom thanks to one of the bravest manoeuvres by an armed forces in the known history of mankind. It was certainly the biggest hostage drama in recorded history and every Sri Lankan to a man no doubt would be proud of this mind boggling achievement which put their country on the world map and brought honour and glory to the Security Forces. At the time of writing, tens of thousands of civilians were still pouring into the Government controlled areas after the Forces breached the last earth bund blocking access into the No Fire Zone beginning what is certainly one of the biggest human exodus reminiscent of biblical times. Television showed men women and children enmasse carrying with them their meagre belongings walking out to freedom a la Cecil B de Mille masterpiece of yesteryear. According to latest reports when the Forces overran the earth bund at Puthumattalan on the edge of the No Fire Zone tens of thousands of civilians broke free and surged out of the NFZ even as the LTTE kept firing at them.

But not even the incessant firing by the LTTE were able to halt this massive avalanche of civilians in their quest for freedom from the harrowing ordeals they were put through during the past few months when they were used as a human shield by their so called liberators. Reports also said that clashes had broken out between the civilians and the LTTE cadres who were trying to staunch the avalanche. From the trend that is being witnessed it is doubtful if all the LTTE guns will be able to stop this massive exodus. As we commented yesterday in this column, the civilians have had enough. Not for them, any longer are the promised land of Eelam or any other utopian dreams. Their sole intent is to escape fast into a new dawn of freedom. This they have now achieved ending their long struggle against tyranny and oppression. No doubt all eyes of the world will be on Sri Lanka marvelling at the magnitude of the achievement of its Security Forces - even though grudgingly in certain quarters, and also pondering on the mind boggling humanitarian drama that is unfolding. Our soldiers have come in for high praise from world's military powers with some describing Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka as the best military Commander in the world for his insistence on zero casualties while battling the most ruthless terrorist outfit in the world. This praise and commendation has now proved to be not misplaced. For the Army had taken great care not to open fire even when the LTTE was using its heavy weapons from the No Fire Zone, fearing harm to the civilians. It was only the other day that the Television showed the Forces enjoying Avurudu fare with the civilians who has escaped the LTTE. No doubt this camaraderie and togetherness would be a harbinger of a greater bond between the Tamils and the majority community now that all barriers are fast being dismantled paving the way for a new beginning in a united Sri Lanka. President Mahinda Rajapaksa as Commander-in-Chief can justly be proud of this monumental achievement of the Armed Forces. There were both overt and subtle pressures to halt the on going humanitarian operations or at least to go slow on the current offensive. Shuttle diplomacy by roving ambassadors, vocal protests

Monumental rescue mission

in Tamil Nadu failed to sway the President from his single minded goal to rid the country of the scourge of terrorism. In this, he was assisted by Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, himself a battle hardened warrior, and the unswerving commitment of the Three Service Commanders. As for Velupillai Prabhakaran it is immediately not clear what his next option is. But even he should realise that this is the end of the road for his Eelam dream. The Tamil people on whose behalf he professed to have fought, have now abandoned him and the **LTTE**. There is now no way that he could achieve his separatist dream. In any event, there will be no people to populate this utopian state. They have now crossed the Rubicon and have expressed the desire to be willing partners with the majority community. As President Rajapaksa said he can now only jump into the deep blue sea or take cyanide and end his miserable life. The exodus has sounded the death knell of Tamil Eelam. It is now time for everyone to embrace our Tamil brethren who had come into their midst after their harrowing experience, with open arms and start building fresh bonds that would ensure they all live as brothers and sisters under one banner in a single nation. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 21, 2009

End of Document

The enemy within

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

August 25, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 493 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Aug. 25 -- The past week saw the unfolding of several conspiracies the LTTE had hatched with dozens of military men and police officers who were on its payroll. The bulk of the plots was aimed at killing the military and political hierarchy of the country.

One of the most shocking revelations was that it was the cook of former Army Commander and present CDS Sarath Fonseka who had provided information to the LTTE female suicide cadre about the former commander's movements. The cook hailing from Jaffna had got the bomber into the Army headquarters to carry out the suicide attack.

Then there is Gampaha SSP Lakshman Cooray, who was in charge of VIP movements in the district and is now in police custody for transporting LTTE cadres to VIP functions and elsewhere.

There's a long list of such cases where dozens of security forces personnel and police officers have betrayed the trust and worked with the enemy.

Complete trust has always been a rare commodity. Human civilization is full of the betrayals of kings, military leaders, religious leaders and many others by those closest to them.

Trust is generally built on prediction of reliance. One feels that another is trustworthy when the latter's behaviour becomes predictable, one that would suit the agendas of the former.

Despite having a history peppered with betrayals, instances of gross disloyalty continue to send shockwaves through societies, political parties and even the military establishments since more often than not, the infidelity comes from the most unexpected quarters.

Given the plethora of betrayals that had plagued the forces including assassination attempts on the Army Commander and the Defence Secretary one should consider that it's a miracle that Sri Lanka won its war against the LTTE.

On the other hand it was the decision by Karuna to betray his leadership that created a major dent in the LTTE and helped the forces to consolidate in the East and later the North. As such while betrayals by a few in the security forces and the police had inflicted near lethal blows on the Sri Lankan State, the State itself has benefited immensely by the betrayals from the enemy side.

It is only natural to see exacerbated versions of divisions within political and military institutions to surface once the common enemy is gone. It has happened in almost all countries after a protracted war. In the absence of a common

The enemy within

cause, the hitherto dormant ambitions of the most unexpected individuals can take flight causing deadly damage to societies. Betrayals can take place from the most unforeseen quarters. Once they form small groups to fan the flames of ambitions, loyalty is the last word that one would hear.

Complacency certainly has its own perils. The biggest is the failure to see through people around one. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Surit Das at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: August 25, 2009

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Sri Lanka:TID locates 31 pistols at women suicide cadres' training facility

Right Vision News

November 21, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 237 words

Dateline: Pakistan

Body

Pakistan, Nov. 21 -- The Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) has found a cache of arms belonging to **LTTE** suicide cadres based at a training facility in the Puthukudirippu area. Police headquarters said that the weapons, including ten 9mm pistols, 20 micro pistols, one revolver, one T-56 assault rifle, two repeaters, one AT 16 weapon and nine 0.22 weapons had been buried at playground. According to senior DIG Nimal Mediweka, DIG C. N. Wakista had informed Police headquarters of the recovery made by Fourth Investigation Unit headed by Inspector Jagath Bandara. An official said that a hardcore **LTTE** terrorist, who had been captured from an IDP facility in Vavuniya, led the TID to Anandi base, exclusively used to train **women** suicide cadres. Responding to The Island queries, he said that the informant had been living among civilians accommodated at an IDP facility in the Vavuniya area before being arrested and interrogated by the TID. Sources said that the **LTTE** Intelligence, too, had maintained a permanent presence at the facility. Sources emphasised the importance of recovering buried arms, ammunition and equipment in areas east of the A9 before resettlement begins. Since the end of war last May, the TID had made several important recoveries. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Right Vision News. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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

Load-Date: November 24, 2009

A battle of humanity Vs inhumanity

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

May 28, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 2196 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 28 -- All the tales of misery, agony and horror they experienced are carved in their faces as they were leaving the hell they were living as the LTTE was drawing out their last breath when the valiant troops surrounded them in the last terrain in Karayanmullivaikkal in Mullaitivu.

Not that they were allowed to leave but they were rescued by the valiant troops of the Sri Lanka Army after fighting a battle which dragged on for months due to concerns of the lives of these innocent civilians trapped inside this so-called 'safe zone'. Not at all did I feel a need of an interpreter to learn their tales of horror, nor did I need any briefing from the troops operating there or from a Tiger cadre hiding deep inside the safe zone to understand what was going on there. The atmosphere and the facial expressions of civilians described it all. Last batch of civilians But it was with great relief I observed the final hours of this 26 year-long conflict that engulfed the North and East. The banks of the Nanthikadal lagoon facing the Vadduvakkal causeway gave me a good view to observe the last batch of civilians arriving in the military controlled areas across this narrow causeway. The old, maimed and injured were included in the last lot and were slowly moving through the Vadduvakkal bridge across the Nanthikadal lagoon as the huge influx of civilians thinned out into dozens as if they were stepping into a different country. The elderly without help were crawling whilst maimed and the injured were moving on crutches and wheel chairs. It was so pathetic to observe the scene but heartening to see soldiers offering their bottled water to this hapless crowd seeking protection at the last leg of the battle and were carrying them on their shoulders for immediate treatment. That was the paradox in this war. It was a humanity versus inhumanity battle. At last, these Tamil civilians breathed the air of freedom and the Sri Lankan Nation has got only a few hours left to liberate the last inch of the land under the LTTE control on that eve, on May 17, 2009. Historic occasion The occasion was so historic for me as a person who observed the way the LTTE made its first attempt to defeat Security Forces in Trincomalee South in the wee hours of August 2, 2006 and take control of Trincomalee South in their bid to cut off vital links between the South and the Jaffna peninsula, while the Mavil Aru humanitarian operation was in progress. The two years and 10 months brought disasters to the LTTE while the Security Forces fought this battle explicitly displaying humanity towards the Tamil community even at this very last moment. It was horrific to learn that the international community, trying to charge Sri Lankan Government and the Security Forces over war crimes even at a time they were risking their lives to liberate the Tamil civilians. As a journalist who followed the entire humanitarian mission from Mavil Aru to the last battle in Mullaitivu, I am aware that the Security Forces had more than enough opportunities if they wanted to get rid of the Tamil civilians as alleged by the so-called international community. If they were not concerned about human rights, they could have won this war a long ago, bombing the entire area where LTTE cadres were taking cover of the civilians, without an iota of respect for civilians, like the way the Western nations fight wars ignoring the civilian factor. Even in their wildest dream they never wanted to eliminate the terrorists along with civilians and they trod the most difficult path towards their objective, picking off the target carefully among the civilians. They never wanted to become nasty towards these people. It was with great respect to our valiant Security

A battle of humanity Vs inhumanity

Forces I recall the way they assisted Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims displaced from the Trincomalee South areas when the **LTTE** launched its first offensive against the Security Forces in August 2006. There was no difference in their treatment to the Tamils who were kept as a human shield by the **LTTE** in Vakara in the last few months of 2006, when they were being liberated in December 2006 and the way they treated the Sinhalese from Somapura, Serunuwara, Mahindapura and other Sinhalese settlements. Humane approach As a Sri Lankan and a journalist, I was proud to feel the humanity hidden in their uniforms, as I was among the few journalists who could observe how those soldiers treated pregnant **women** and children arriving in military controlled areas amidst heavy downpour. Just like I was watching civilians fleeing into Rideetenna, Welikanda, I was observing the last batch of civilians leaving the safe zone. A fine example of their humane approach towards the Tamil civilians I snatched during my visits to the No Fire Zone soon after 58 Division troops liberated more than 117,000 people from Puthumattalan on April 20 and also my visit to Mullivaikkal Safe Zone on May 16, soon after the troops liberated thousands of trapped civilians. I can still recall the way the troops were making a last minute attempt to save the lives of the old, maimed and the injured left behind by the fleeing civilians and offering their lunch packets to those starving for days. It was on May 16 eve, during my visit to the Mullaivaikkal safe zone along with 58 Division GOC Brigadier Shavendra Silva a panic stricken soldier came towards us to inform that a number of injured civilians were still inside the safe zone. "Please, Sir, send a vehicle to transport them towards a medical facility", that was his plea to Brigadier Silva. It was amidst the flames of fire caused by the suicide attempts by the **LTTE** to stop the military from advancing, he had managed to find those injured civilians, among dozens of bodies of Tamil civilians who got caught in those suicide blasts. His humane feelings emerged above all the horrible scenes that clearly depict the brutality of the **LTTE** and their disregard for their own community. But he made a lonely attempt to save the lives of those innocent civilians left behind by the fellow Tamils. At last he saw the result of his humane attempt as those injured civilians were evacuated to a safer place. And at the same moment an elderly woman with an injury in her hand emerged from the flames murmuring some words might be out of fear that she would get killed at the hands of the Security Forces. But I was highly moved when a soldier took her in his arms and took her out of the rubble towards a safer location. She was immediately dispatched to a safe place as Brigadier Silva offered his vehicle to transport that elderly woman. If the Tamil Diaspora and the international community blindly point fingers at them, I must mention here that our soldiers would have become demons and devils if they really reacted emotionally to the brutal acts of horror by the **LTTE** targeting dozens of civilians into their claymore mines exploded in the South. No need to explain the horror they created in Kebithigollewa, Piliyandala and at Fort railway station. But even at the last moment of the fighting they did not run after emotions and were not ready to take revenge from the Tamil community though the outsiders tried to add an ethnic flavour to the last battle. They strictly maintained it as a fight against terrorism but not against the Tamil community. That was why they were able to take wounded Tiger cadres in stretches on their shoulders and airlift some of them to Colombo to treat them equally with the fellow soldiers while the Tigers were harassing our soldiers captured alive during military operations. So those who tried to safeguard the **LTTE** terrorism may have been displeased with the way the Security Forces have acted during the past two years and 10 months in which the Security Forces were able to totally eliminate the **LTTE** terrorism. Disappointed parties If not for such stern action this country would not have reached this historic victory against the most ruthless terror outfit in the world while treating the Tamil community in the most humane manner. The international media and even the so-called free media was worried as they were not given a free hand to report the battle and unimpeded access to the displaced. They were worried because the Sri Lankan Security Forces did not fight the battle the way they have dictated but continued the battle in the way they thought was right. Finally, the Sri Lankan Security Forces were proved right. The so-called free media in the country were not aware that they have become puppets of the **LTTE** proxies who were funding their so-called organizations to scuttle the military efforts in defeating the **LTTE**. They might have not been aware that they were campaigning against their Motherland to drag it into a disaster. It could have been a fair attempt if it was done to secure the lives of civilians at the initial stages but it cannot be justified at the last moment after they failed in all their endeavors. The emerging factor was that the Sri Lankan community who had the tendency to believe in foreign reports were placing their confidence in the State media rather than the highly exaggerated reporting by so-called free media. It was after the Thoppigala operation they started believing in military victories, completely rejecting the utterances of the disgruntled politicians. What those so-called international organizations could not understand was the Sri Lankan Security Forces' humanistic approach to the problem. If they had to launch military operations taking any risks, in civilian populated area that was meant for the benefit of the entire Sri Lankan Nation especially, the Tamil community suppressed by the jackboot of Tiger terrorism. What I was observing on May 17, 2009 on the banks of Nanthikadal lagoon was the final result of that two

A battle of humanity Vs inhumanity

years and 10 month-long humanitarian operation to fully liberate the Tamil community from the clutches of the LTTE after the Security Forces saw its turning point on April 20, 2009 with the liberation of more than 117,000 population within four days. Last battle The three battle formations, the 58 Division commanded by Brigadier Shavendra Silva, the 53 Division commanded by Major General Kamal Gunaratne and the 59 Division by Brigadier Prasanna Silva had already encircled last terrain of the LTTE which has now been reduced to 300 to 400 square hundred meters. They were aware that the international community was closely monitoring what they were doing. But they were not hesitating to do what they were doing as they were doing the correct thing at the appropriate time and were aware that the last civilian has been rescued from the clutches of the LTTE. Dusk fell on that fateful day and we still hear the sounds of small arms fire in Mullaivaikkal area as we visited the defences of the 59 Division along the Mullaitivu coast with Brigadier Prasanna Silva on the sandy beach and we retreated to our resting places hoping we will get a good news at the earliest possible. As we expected, we got the news in the early hours on Monday, May 18. "The Tiger leaders have been surrounded in Vellamullivaikkal and their bodies were lying all over", the message came from the 58 Division. We rushed towards the 53 Division Headquarters in Puthukudiyiruppu and all the journalist reporting the final battle were gathered in groups. We waited until we got clearance from the military to visit the battle scene. But the area was not safe for us to visit but managed to visit the place where Charles Anthony's body was lying, his face bruised in the gun fire. Time was around 1 p.m. Firing was still going on and we were asked to take cover. Tractor loads of terrorist bodies collected by the troops were laid in lines and were being identified. Many were disfigured after getting caught in the massive fire. Soldiers were telling us how they have thwarted the Tiger leaders last attempt to breach the Security Forces' defences and the way they killed scores of Tiger cadres hiding inside bushes and firing upon them. Final result The search operations were going on throughout. They could not find the body of Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran as they were certain that he had been surrounded by them. The 53 Division and the 58 Division continued their search ops along with the Commando and Special Forces troops. The final result of their two years and 10 months long operation came only around 10 am on Tuesday. The troops of the 4 Vijayaba Infantry Regiment attached to 681 Brigade had recovered the body of Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran. Major General Kamal Gunaratne and Brigadier Shavendra Silva stood like lions keeping the Prabhakaran's body below their feet. And the troops thronging in thousands paraded the Tiger leaders body along the streets in Vellamullivaikkal. His decade long terror had come to an end. But the flames of fire still emanated from the Safe Zone as if his soul whisked into the air hours ago as the last batch of civilians left him in isolation in the last terrain as he was well aware that there was no survival for him without that human shield around him. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 28, 2009

Australia should not cave into human smugglers

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

October 21, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 504 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Oct. 21 -- The boat people from "Sri Lanka" in Indonesian waters, issuing various threats including hunger strikes and blowing up their vessel, continue to make headlines in Australia.

It is likely that the interviews recorded and photographs taken of this group over the media have prompted the Australian authorities to be sceptical about this well planned adventure.

It is obvious that this is a cleverly assembled group of men, women and children of a privileged section of 'Sri Lankans'.

The manner of speech of the spokesperson, Alex and the little girl revealed that their mission is to live in Australia purely for economic reasons.

Sri Lankans do not have to live any longer with suicide bombings and terrorist attacks as in some other parts of the world.

The fact that the 'civil war' in Sri Lanka is over is under played by the interested groups to create an opportunity to continue their Sri Lanka bashing campaign.

There is only one airport with facilities for international flights in the country, where outbound travellers have to pass through immigration and passports checks.

How is it they could leave Sri Lanka without fear of revealing their identity, but are now fearful of going back? Or did they leave from Sri Lanka at all? "Alex" the "spokesman" for the group has explained he acquired his American accent because he worked in a call centre in Chennai. This opens up the possibility that this group has actually arrived from Tamil Nadu in India - where there are Sri Lankan Tamils in refugee camps, and are trying to get into Australia via the back door?

The Australian authorities along with Indonesian counterparts should investigate fully the subject group to ascertain their identity and take joint action to nab the ringleaders of this human smuggling group.

If this group is molycoddled, Australia should get ready to open the gates for thousands of LTTE members and cadres who have access to millions of LTTE funds at their disposal to travel by air from Sri Lanka and get on board the boats in the Indonesian or Australian waters with human smugglers.

Australia should not cave into human smugglers

The **LTTE** strategically places its sympathizers in various countries including Australia, often exploiting humanitarian sentiments of host nations. Such **LTTE** operatives across the world have constituted part of its network for raising material and financial support for its campaign of terror in Sri Lanka.

The Australian Government should seriously consider helping Sri Lanka to resettle and rehabilitate the displaced people of all ethnicities so that the 'push factors' from Sri Lanka even for genuine asylum seekers will be minimal.

Meantime, the active **LTTE** fronts in Australia disguised under various nameboards collecting funds in encouraging racism and separatism in Sri Lanka should be monitored, as their ultimate objective is to revamp terrorism in Sri Lanka. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: October 21, 2009

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UN to offer Sri Lanka more assistance as casualty numbers released =

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
May 22, 2009 Friday 7:53 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 586 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts UN to offer Sri Lanka more assistance as casualty numbers released =
Colombo

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is to offer further assistance to people displaced by Sri Lanka's war, a senior UN official in Colombo said Friday as the government for the first time released updated military casualty figures.

Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa for the first time released details of military casualties in the final phase of the operations against Tamil rebels.

He said on state television channel ITN late Thursday that more than 6,261 security personnel, policemen and paramilitary guards were killed and nearly 30,000 soldiers wounded in the offensive which commenced in August 2006 and concluded Sunday.

The defence minister said that since 1981 a total of 23,790 security personnel, policemen and women and paramilitary guards have been killed in the war. However, he did not give details of civilian or LTTE casualties.

Vijaya Nambiar, chief of staff of the UN secretary-general, said Ban plans to tour some of the refugee camps and fly across parts of the combat zone where the final phase of fighting between government troops and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) took place.

Ban is expected to arrive in Sri Lanka late Friday

"We hope that the secretary-general's visit can help begin a process of national recovery, renewal and reconciliation for all Sri Lankans," Nambiar said.

He said Ban will offer UN assistance for the displaced and hold discussions about the challenges related to resettling the displaced.

Regarding investigations into possible war crimes, Nambiar said

UN to offer Sri Lanka more assistance as casualty numbers released =

that was a matter for the UN Human Rights Council to look into, and would be based on factual evidence.

Nambiar said that the UN has accepted the government's position that large numbers of relief workers cannot be allowed into the camps due to limited space, but the government is making arrangements for a certain number of UN and other relief workers.

However, aid agencies in Colombo urged the government to lift restrictions as conditions in the refugee camps deteriorate.

"Thousands of lives are at risk in Sri Lanka because aid to internally displaced people is being restricted by difficulties in securing access for staff and vehicles of international agencies," the aid groups said in a joint statement signed by Oxfam, ASB/Solidar, Acted, the Danish Refugee Council, ZOA Refugee Care, Forut, UMCOR, Relief International, Handicap International and Save the Children, Welthungerhilfe, CARE, World Vision and Medical Teams International.

The aid agencies said the camps are currently holding 270,000 people and the government expects another 50,000 people who left the area in the last few days of fighting.

The government Tuesday assured an Indian official delegation that the bulk of them would be resettled within six months.

The visit of the UN chief came as the country continued its celebrations to mark the military victory against the LTTE.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa was to address a ceremony on the outskirts of Colombo on Friday, and one on Saturday in Kandy, a town 117 kilometres north-east of the capital.

On Tuesday, Sri Lanka officially declared the military operations against the rebels over after the LTTE leadership, including its chief Velupillai Prabhakaran, had been killed by the army.

The LTTE had been fighting for more than 25 years for an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's Tamil minority.

May 2209 0753 GMT

Load-Date: May 23, 2009

Highlights of the AAP world wire at 19:00 May 17

AAP Newsfeed

May 17, 2009 Sunday 7:31 PM AEST

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 492 words

Body

HIGHLIGHTS WORLD (ATTN EDITORS)

Highlights of the AAP world file since 15:00

ASIA: Tamil Tigers have stopped fighting: rebel spokesman

COLOMBO, May 17 AFP - The Tamil Tigers have given up their fight against a Sri Lankan government offensive and "have decided to silence our guns," a statement carried by the pro-rebel Tamilnet website said on Sunday. (SRILANKA TAMILS Update sent at 19:16, 102 words.)

ASIA: Taiwan opposition rallies against Ma's China policies

TAIPEI, May 17 AFP - Tens of thousands of protesters marched through Taiwan's capital on Sunday to protest President Ma Ying-jeou's China-friendly policies, which they say have compromised the island's sovereignty. (TAIWAN MARCH sent at 18:48, 520 words.)

EUR: Norwegian wunderkind sweeps Eurovision

MOSCOW, May 17 AFP - Norway's Alexander Rybak swept the Eurovision Song Contest in Moscow with a brash performance of a folk-inspired ballad, sparking celebrations in his Scandinavian home country on Sunday. (EUROVISION 2nd Wrap sent at 18:13, 684 words.)

ASIA: Pakistan's northwest reels as army hunts Taliban

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, May 17 AFP - Pakistan's northwest was on Sunday reeling from a wave of violence as the toll from a car bomb rose and the army hit Taliban hideouts in an offensive that has sent a million civilians fleeing. (PAKISTAN UNREST Update sent at 18:10, 569 words.)

ASIA: Swine flu spreads in Japan ahead of WHO meet

KOBE, Japan, May 17 AFP - Japan said on Sunday that 13 more high school students had tested positive for swine flu, as senior health officials gathered in Geneva for talks on how to contain the spread of the virus. (FLU WORLD Wrap sent at 17:33, 559 words.)

MID: Kuwaiti women make history by winning parliament seats

KUWAIT CITY, May 17 AFP - Kuwaiti women achieved another historic milestone on Sunday by winning their first ever seats in the oil-rich Gulf state's parliament, with four women elected according to official results. (KUWAIT WOMEN Wrap sent at 15:19, 555 words.)

ASIA: India's Congress revels in electoral triumph

NEW DELHI, May 17 AFP - India's Congress Party basked on Sunday in its best electoral showing for decades, after steering its ruling alliance to a second term in office with a resounding win over its Hindu nationalist rivals. (INDIA VOTE 3rd Wrap sent at 16:36, 673 words.)

US: Astronauts to make fourth walk to repair Hubble telescope

Highlights of the AAP world wire at 19:00 May 17

HOUSTON, Texas, May 17 AFP - US astronauts on Sunday will undertake a fourth in a series of five daily spacewalks intended to equip the 19-year-old Hubble Space Telescope for at least another five years of valuable scientific work. (US SHUTTLE Wrap sent at 16:18, 579 words.)

CAN: Pain, progress, pride on global day against homophobia

MONTREAL, May 17 AFP - The International Day Against Homophobia, initiated by a Quebec organisation, will be celebrated in more than 50 countries on Sunday, decrying discrimination against gays and lesbians. (GAY sent at 16:05, 456 words.)

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

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1ST LEAD: 6,261 soldiers and police killed in Sri Lankan offensive

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
May 22, 2009 Friday 11:32 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 725 words

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts 1ST LEAD: 6,261 soldiers and police killed in Sri Lankan offensive
Eds: Releads with comment from defence secretary; epa file photos
available =

Colombo (dpa) - During the final phase of Sri Lanka's military offensive against Tamil rebels 6,261 soldiers and police were killed in action, Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa said, for the first time releasing details of military casualties for that three-year period.

He said on state television channel ITN that more than 6,261 security personnel, policemen and paramilitary guards were killed and nearly 30,000 soldiers and police wounded in the offensive which commenced in August 2006 and concluded Sunday.

The defence secretary said that since 1981 a total of 23,790 security personnel, policemen and women and paramilitary guards have been killed in the war. However, he did not give details of civilian or LTTE casualties.

"Our security personnel have sacrificed a lot," he said.

He claimed that the government was not only fighting the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), but had to overcome pressure from various groups and accused sections of the media of demoralizing the soldiers with their reporting.

Repeating earlier accusations by Sri Lankan government outlets, Rajapaksa said some of the foreign non-governmental organizations were acting the way they wanted when the war was ongoing, but now the government was able to keep a close tab on these organizations.

Meanwhile, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon who was due to arrive in Sri Lanka Friday night, is to offer further assistance to people displaced by Sri Lanka's war, a senior UN official in Colombo said.

Vijaya Nambiar, chief of staff of the UN secretary-general, said Ban plans to tour some of the refugee camps and fly across parts of

1ST LEAD: 6,261 soldiers and police killed in Sri Lankan offensive

the combat zone where the final phase of fighting between government troops and the LTTE took place.

"We hope that the secretary-general's visit can help begin a process of national recovery, renewal and reconciliation for all Sri Lankans," Nambiar said.

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However, aid agencies in Colombo urged the government to lift restrictions as conditions in the refugee camps deteriorate.

"Thousands of lives are at risk in Sri Lanka because aid to internally displaced people is being restricted by difficulties in securing access for staff and vehicles of international agencies," the aid groups said in a joint statement signed by Oxfam, ASB/Solidar, Acted, the Danish Refugee Council, ZOA Refugee Care, Forut, UMCOR, Relief International, Handicap International and Save the Children, Welthungerhilfe, CARE, World Vision and Medical Teams International.

The aid agencies said the camps are currently holding 270,000 people and the government expects another 50,000 people who left the area in the last few days of fighting.

The government Tuesday assured an Indian official delegation that the bulk of them would be resettled within six months.

The visit of the UN chief came as the country continued its celebrations to mark the military victory against the LTTE.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa was to address a ceremony on the outskirts of Colombo on Friday, and one on Saturday in Kandy, a town 117 kilometres north-east of the capital.

More than 100,000 people from all parts of the country gathered on Friday outside the Parliamentary complex to celebrate the military victory. The event was due to continue late into the evening.

On Tuesday, Sri Lanka officially declared the military operations against the rebels over after the LTTE leadership, including its chief Velupillai Prabhakaran, had been killed by the army.

The LTTE had been fighting for more than 25 years for an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's Tamil minority.

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Indian efforts helped in declaration of ceasefire in Lanka: Chidambaram

Asian News International (ANI)

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Body

New Delhi, Apr 28 (ANI): Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram on Tuesday welcomed Sri Lanka's decision to call a ceasefire against the rebel Liberation of Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), and said the diplomatic efforts made by India paid off and combat operations came to an end.

"Thanks to international pressure, thanks to the diplomatic efforts made by India, the Sri Lankan government has now said two important things. First, that the combat operations have reached their conclusion, and the second the Sri Lankan security forces will confine themselves to rescuing civilians who are trapped in the conflict zone. Sri Lankan forces will no longer engage in a battle that will cause civilian casualties, death or injury. This is what we wanted and we've got that," Chidambaram said in an exclusive interview with NDTV.

Chidambaram further said that Sri Lanka respected the sentiments of India and stopped the combat operations against the rebel **LTTE**.

"We told the Sri Lankan government that in this neighbourhood, India and Sri Lanka would have to remain as neighbours, forever and ever, and that Sri Lanka therefore, has an obligation to respect the sentiments of India, especially the people of Tamil Nadu, who are just about 20 miles to the north of Sri Lanka. We are a neighbour of Sri Lanka, that's a sovereign country, yet we have an obligation to the Tamil people to ensure that they are safe and secure," Chidambaram added.

When asked about the **LTTE** chief Prabhakaran, the Home Minister said India appeals to Prabhakaran and his cadres to lay down arms.

"We don't wish Prabhakaran ill. Our concern in the immediate past and now is the welfare of the Tamil citizens of Sri Lanka, especially **women** and children and others who were trapped in the conflict zone. Over a hundred thousand have, fortunately been freed from the conflict zone. Our appeal to the **LTTE** is to lay down arms and come forward to the negotiating table. If they do so, there's no reason to believe that their lives will be in danger. My appeal to Prabhakaran and his cadres would be to offer to lay down arms and offer to start negotiations," he added.

Indian efforts helped in declaration of ceasefire in Lanka: Chidambaram

Chidambaram claimed that most of the equipments used by the Sri Lankan army against the LTTE came from Pakistan and China.

"Some time ago we gave them some defensive radar equipment that would detect hostile aircraft. But then, much of the equipment that Sri Lanka has got, come from Pakistan and China. And somehow people are not focusing on that aspect. We have not given any kind of aid to Sri Lanka that can be used for offensive operations. That's been the policy of successive Indian governments in which every Tamil Party was a member at some time or other- the AIADMK, the DMK, the PMK, the MDMK and how can they pretend that they don't know what has been happening over the past several years. Every one of them was a member of one or the other government between 1998 and 2008," he added. (ANI)

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