

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:17:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223508002

Documents (100)

1. [2 Killed In Sri Lanka , Air Raid On Top Ltte Leader's Hideout/ 2](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

2. [UPI NewsTrack TopNews](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

3. [Fed: Govt may appeal Tamil Tiger bail ruling](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

4. [NEWS FEATURE: Political troubles remain for tsunami-wrecked Sri LankaBy Can Merey, dpa](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

5. [Suspected suicide bombing kills 15 in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

6. [*Sri Lankans wary of an uneasy peace*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

7. [*Tamil Tigers kill one soldier, wound another in northern Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

8. [*Here there be Tigers: Thanks to a dysfunctional refugee system and politically motivated interference, Canada is swamped with Tamil Tigers and their supporters*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

9. [*SRI LANKA : 20 YEARS LATER, WOUNDS OF THE TAMIL MASSACRE FESTER*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

10. [*Norway makes new bid to save truce amid massacre charges*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

11. [Elangovan expresses concern over LTTE activities in TN](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

12. [Suspected suicide bombing kills 11 in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

13. [Japanese envoy meets Sri Lanka president in peace bid](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

14. [The tiger's claw](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

15. [VOA NEWS: TWO BLASTS BLAMED ON TAMIL REBELS KILL 19 IN SRI LANKA 'S CAPITAL](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

News

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

16. [Death toll mounts as Sri Lanka mourns](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

17. [All-out war looms after killing of top Tamil Tiger](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

18. [Sri Lankan displacement crisis 'quite serious': Red Cross](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

19. [Road to peace hits snag as Tamil Tigers and military disagree over women's clothing](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

20. [Dhanu](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

21. [40,000 flee Tamil rebel war zone](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

22. [Amid crisis, Sri Lankan Muslims seek global support](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

23. [Tamils flee as civil war looms in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

24. [Tamil Tigers launch PR campaign to stop child recruitment](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

25. [Karuna Group and LTTE Continue Abducting and Recruiting Children in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

26. [Factional fighting kills 11 as Japanese envoy pushes peace bid](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

27. [LANKA TAKES INTEREST IN TAXILA , GANDHARA UPLIFT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

28. [Bus blasts kill 21 in Sri Lanka ; Tamil Tigers deny involvement](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

29. [Tigers a law unto themselves](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

30. [Sri Lanka back on brink as rival sides pay ceasefire little heed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

31. [Policemen suspended in Sri Lanka bus blast investigation](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

32. [War drums beat in Sri Lanka but truce talks still target: analysts](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

33. [Japanese peace envoy to hold talks with Tigers amid unrest](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

34. [Refugees within Sri Lanka face pathetic situation: study](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

35. [Hundreds detained in massive security search in Sri Lanka capital](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

36. [POLITICS- SRI LANKA : FIFTH ROUND OF PEACE TALKS FOCUSES ON RIGHTS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

News

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

37. [*Two female Tamil Tigers, recruited as child soldiers, killed in factional fighting in Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

38. [*Defiant Tigers vow to keep on fighting*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

39. [*Tamil Tigers kill one soldier in violence that could undermine Sri Lankan ceasefire*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

40. [*Thousands flee as air force attacks Sri Lankan rebels*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

41. [*Norway says truce on as Sri Lanka steps up air strikes*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

42. [Sri Lanka peace talks to resume despite deadly clash with Tamil Tigers CORRECTS date to March 10 sted 11 in graf 3](#)
Client/Matter: -None-
Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE
Search Type: Terms and Connectors
Narrowed by:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Content Type News | Narrowed by Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007 |
|-----------------------------|--|
43. [Pushing for 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: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007 |
|-----------------------------|--|
44. [Sri Lanka probe of aid workers' massacre flawed: ICJ](#)
Client/Matter: -None-
Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE
Search Type: Terms and Connectors
Narrowed by:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Content Type News | Narrowed by Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007 |
|-----------------------------|--|
45. [Sri Lankan government, Tamil Tigers determined to keep peace process on track](#)
Client/Matter: -None-
Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE
Search Type: Terms and Connectors
Narrowed by:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Content Type News | Narrowed by Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007 |
|-----------------------------|--|
46. [VOA NEWS: RIGHTS GROUP SAYS SRI LANKA MILITARY COMPLICIT IN USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS](#)
Client/Matter: -None-
Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE
Search Type: Terms and Connectors
Narrowed by:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Content Type News | Narrowed by Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007 |
|-----------------------------|--|
47. [POLITICS- SRI LANKA : SUICIDE BOMBERS STILL EVOKE FEAR](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

48. [*NFB film at Hot Docs festival puts a human face on Tamil Tiger tragedy*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

49. [*18 dead as ferocious battles grip Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

50. [*Tsunami hits political geography as well*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

51. [*Two aid workers freed but Sri Lanka asks if kidnap is a hoax*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

52. [*SRI LANKAN INTIMIDATION OF MEDIA STEPPED UP*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

53. [*Sri Lanka police evict ethnic Tamils from capital*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

54. [*Suicide bombers hit Sri Lanka army camp*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

55. [*Sri Lanka launches strikes on Tamil rebels*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

56. [*ROUNDUP: Colombo to hold full probe on killing of 17 aid workers*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

57. [*In the land of the Tamil Tigers, theft, murder - and sex - can send you to jail*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 200758. [News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 200759. [Bomb Kills 16 Near Sri Lankan Capital](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 200760. [Amnesty International Announces Human Rights Defenders from Sri Lanka and Burundi Share 2007 Martin Ennals Award](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 200761. [Bomb explodes in a suburb of Sri Lanka 's capital, killing 16, military says](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed byPublication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 200762. ["Anarchy" in Sri Lanka as Tokyo peace envoy set to arrive](#)**Client/Matter:** -None-**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE**Search Type:** Terms and Connectors**Narrowed by:****Content Type**

News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press



63. [Sri Lanka and Burundi Human Rights Defenders Win 2007 Martin Ennals Award](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

64. [Five killed in Sri Lanka May Day mine attack](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

65. [Tighter security for Sri Lanka refugees after massacre report](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

66. [Sri Lanka detains 3 after suspected rebel bus blasts kill 21](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

67. [Japanese envoy to save Sri Lanka peace bid amid bloodshed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

68. [Minister targeted in Sri Lanka suicide attack](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

69. [Sri Lankan president's brother escapes suicide attack](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

70. [Suicide truck bombers may hit Colombo's landmarks, report says](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

71. [One killed, three injured in separate attacks in northern Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

72. [Tamil Tigers get ready to defend what they see as their country](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

73. [Don't play with Tigers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

74. [Five years on, Sri Lanka rebels say truce 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,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

75. [Lanka launches air strikes on LTTE positions](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

76. [War kid's play for Tamil Tigers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

77. [Bomb kills three amid fears that island is on verge of renewed war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

78. [Bomb kills six, wounds 31 near Sri Lanka military base](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

79. [The Black Tigers -- Sri Lanka 's deadly suicide squads](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

80. [Bombing Pushes Sri Lanka Closer to War](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

81. [Bus bombing leads to retaliatory airstrikes in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

82. [Sri Lankan Tamils' lone battle 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: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

83. [Tiger tales](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

News

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

84. [*Black Tigers: the deadliest suicide bombers*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

85. [*Can old foes set aside strife?*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

86. [*Japanese envoy holds talks withTigers amid Jaffna protest*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

87. [*Sri Lanka : Ethnic melting pot on the boil*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

88. [*Sri Lankan suicide bomber tries to assassinate government minister*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

89. [*Suicide Bomb Targets Sri Lanka Official*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

90. [*Attack on Tamil air base*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

91. [*Sri Lanka 's Tamil Tigers release abducted students*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

92. [*Sri Lankan suicide bomber kills one in assassination attempt on government minister*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

93. [*SUICIDE TERRORISM ON RISE WORLDWIDE, EXPERTS SAY*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

94. [*STATE DEPT.: EXPERTS SAY SUICIDE TERRORISM ON RISE WORLDWIDE*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

95. [TV talent show may have helped Sri Lanka suicide attack](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

96. [Hopes for peace at Sri Lanka 's frontline as talks near](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

97. [Three Sri Lankan Sailors Missing](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

98. [Sri Lanka Violence Timeline](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

99. [Timeline of the violence in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

100. [Explosion kills six in Sri Lanka as foreigners prepare to ship out](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 2003 to Dec 31, 2007

2 Killed In Sri Lanka, Air Raid On Top Ltte Leader's Hideout/ 2

Qatar News Agency

October 2, 2007 Tuesday 3:43 PM EST

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Length: 227 words

Body

2 Killed In Sri Lanka, Air Raid On Top **Ltte** Leader's Hideout/ 2 2 Killed In Sri Lanka, Air Raid On Top **Ltte** Leader's Hideout /2/ Colombo

During A Search Conducted By Troops Subsequent To A Confrontation With Tiger Militants In Periya Thampahai Area, A Dead Body Of One **Female Ltte** Cadre Was Found By The Troops On Monday Evening, The Official Said.

It Is After Some Time That A **Women Ltte** Militant Has Been Found Dead Though **Women Ltte** Activists Are There In Their Cadre, Military Spokesman Udaya Nanyakkara Said.

Troops Also Recovered A T-56 Weapon, Ammunition Set And A Compass From Her Possession, The Official Said.

The Sri Lanka Air Force Said Its Kfir Fighter Jets And Mig Planes Targeted A Hideout Of A Very Senior **Ltte** Leader At Vishvamadu, In The North Of Iranamadu In Nh V Lanka Today.

The Targeted Location Was Completely Destroyed In The Air Raid, It Said.

The Target Was Aimed At After Keeping It Under Air Surveillance For A Long Time While The Ground Intelligence Sources Had Continuously Updated Recent Activities There. The hideout Was A Srequent Meeting Place For The Top **Ltte** Men Where They Used To Plan Major Attacks, The Air Force Said Citing Defence Intelligence Sources.

Meanwhile, A **Ltte** Cadre Who Was Arrested In Batticoloa Committed Suicide By Swallowing A Cyanide Capsule Last Evening, The Army Said. (qna) qna 1939 Gmt 2007/10/02<

Load-Date: October 3, 2007

UPI NewsTrack TopNews

UPI

December 12, 2007 Wednesday 10:28 PM EST

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Length: 630 words

Dateline: WASHINGTON, Dec. 12

Body

GOP debate: Technology can help eco-issues

JOHNSTON, Iowa, Dec. 12 (UPI) -- Global warming is a real threat and must be addressed, Republican presidential hopefuls agreed Wednesday during their last debate before the Iowa caucuses.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., told the audience in Johnston, Iowa, he's been involved with the climate change issue since 2000.

"It's real. We've got to address it," he said. "We can do it with technology ... with capitalist and free enterprise motivation. And I'm confident that we can pass on to our children and grandchildren a cleaner, better world."

Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney agreed about technologies helping to address climate change, which would help the U.S. economy.

"Well ... we're going to invest in new technologies to get ourselves off of foreign oil, and as we get ourselves off of foreign oil, we also dramatically reduce our CO2 (carbon dioxide) emissions," he said.

Iowa front-runner Mike Huckabee said if the U.S. government committed to being the primary user of alternative forms of energy, "we have a market built in ... and we'll create the kind of demand that lowers price rather than raise the price" of energy.

The Democratic presidential candidates debate Thursday, also in Johnston.

The Iowa party caucuses are Jan. 3.

Suspected militant released on bail

COLOGNE, Germany, Dec. 12 (UPI) -- A German woman suspected of belonging to an outlawed Turkish far-left group has been released on bail in Germany after being detained by police.

The woman, identified only as Heike S., had been on the lam for six years before her arrest Monday at the Cologne airport, Deutsche Welle reported Wednesday.

She appeared before a federal judge in the southern German city of Karlsruhe and was released on bail pending trial.

Authorities allege the woman produced propaganda for the German arm of the communist Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front, or DHKP-C, between 1996 and 1998.

She also allegedly participated in meetings where arson attacks and targeted killings were planned by the DHKP-C, which has been banned in Germany since 1998.

More clashes with Tigers in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Dec. 12 (UPI) -- Violence between the Tamil Tigers and Sri Lankan soldiers took the lives of 49 members of the separatist group Wednesday, the government said.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, popularly known as the Tamil Tigers, claimed that 20 soldiers were killed and scores more wounded, the Press Trust of India reported. The government has been on an offensive in the north against the group.

In India, a senior army official said there was no "specific threat" from the LTTE, although there are reports that the group has become more active in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

"While the Navy and Coast Guard are doing round the clock patrolling, we have also strengthened the off-coast patrolling," said Lt. Gen. Noble Thamburaj, now head of the Southern Command.

He said that officials are monitoring the influx of Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka to keep the LTTE out of India.

Nine charged in exorcism death

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, Dec. 12 (UPI) -- Nine relatives have been charged with manslaughter in the death of a New Zealand woman who died in an exorcism.

Six women and three men were charged in the death of Janet Moses, a 22-year-old mother of two who drowned after she was held down and had water poured down her throat in a ceremony to lift a makutu, or Maori curse, The Dominion Post reported Wednesday.

Moses died as up to 40 family members watched, the newspaper reported.

Detective Senior Sgt. Ross Levy said the arrests followed an intensive seven-week inquiry.

"The circumstances surrounding Janet's death are unusual, and the investigation has focused on those people with primary responsibility," Levy said.

Load-Date: December 13, 2007

Fed: Govt may appeal Tamil Tiger bail ruling

AAP Newsfeed

July 17, 2007 Tuesday 6:08 PM AEST

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Section: DOMESTIC NEWS

Length: 645 words

Byline: Melissa Jenkins

Dateline: MELBOURNE July 17

Body

The federal government has taken steps to challenge the granting of bail to three men facing terror-related charges, as a judge warned against political interference in the justice system.

Attorney-General Philip Ruddock today asked prosecutors to consider appealing the decision of a court in Melbourne to grant bail to two (two) men charged with supplying funds to Sri Lanka's **Tamil Tigers**.

Female supporters in the Victorian Supreme Court wept as Aruran Vinayagamoorthy, 33, of Mt Waverley, and Sivarajah Yathavan, 36, of Vermont South, were granted bail today by Justice Bernard Bongiorno.

In another court, Victoria's chief magistrate Ian Gray bailed their co-accused Arumugam Rajeevan, 40, of Old Toongabbie in Sydney.

Justice Bongiorno stressed the accused men were entitled to the presumption of innocence.

"If that principle is abandoned or even modified for political expediency that risks the whole foundation of our criminal justice system," he said.

But Mr Ruddock said later while he respected the decisions of judges and the separation of powers, the Supreme Court's decision to grant bail to Vinayagamoorthy and Yathavan may be appealed.

"I have asked the Director of Public Prosecutions to examine whether the decision should be appealed," Mr Ruddock said.

Mr Ruddock's office could not immediately confirm whether an appeal was also being considered in Rajeevan's case.

The latest government move follows its decision yesterday to cancel the visa of Indian terror suspect Mohammed Haneef just hours after he was granted bail in Brisbane, which means he will stay behind bars in immigration detention.

Legal figures have accused the Howard government of undermining the independence of the court system in the Haneef case.

Today, Rajeevan's lawyer Rob Stary said he was grateful for an independent judiciary and attacked the terror laws under which the three men have been charged.

"I would hope that the application of these very draconian and repressive laws would occur evenly throughout the community," he told reporters outside court.

"This is the conundrum in the Tamil community. If you charge one person, you may as well charge 30,000 people.

"They all support the humanitarian relief effort and they all support ... the struggle in their homeland against the oppressive circumstances."

Fed: Govt may appeal Tamil Tiger bail ruling

The three men are accused of supporting the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), or Tamil Tigers, through fundraising by the Melbourne-based Tamil Coordination Committee.

The trio are charged with being members of a terror organisation, providing support or resources to a terrorist organisation and making funds available to a terrorist organisation.

Justice Bongiorno said exceptional circumstances were made out in the cases of Vinayagamoorthy and Yathavan, who were interviewed by Australian Federal Police in November 2005 and have been in custody since May this year.

He said delay was a factor, and he considered a trial starting by the second half of next year to be an optimistic assessment.

There were issues with the crown case, including the admissibility of evidence from at least two political scientists relating to the LTTE, Justice Bongiorno said.

Vinayagamoorthy and Yathavan both had children, jobs and had been cooperative with police, Justice Bongiorno said.

In the Melbourne Magistrates' Court, Mr Gray said he would grant bail to Rajeevan.

Mr Stary told Mr Gray issues existed relating to the strength of evidence likely to be given by Sri Lankan government officials.

The three accused men each provided a \$100,000 surety and must report to police daily and not leave Australia.

Vinayagamoorthy and Yathavan are due to face the Melbourne Magistrates' Court for a committal mention on July 24.

Rajeevan is also scheduled to face the same court for a committal mention on August 23.

Load-Date: July 18, 2007

NEWS FEATURE: Political troubles remain for tsunami-wrecked Sri Lanka
By Can Mery, dpa

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

January 10, 2005, Monday 10551810:55:18 Central European Time

Copyright 2005 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: Miscellaneous

Length: 733 words

Dateline: Colombo/Kilonochchi

Body

Relief aid now passes freely through checkpoints in northern Sri Lanka's Omantai region, which has served as the border separating political enemies in the country.

There were initial hopes that the tsunami disaster could have a positive impact on the political turmoil in Sri Lanka and somehow help unite the country. Instead, tensions have intensified between the government and rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) since the tsunami struck.

German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, who is to hold talks in Colombo on Tuesday, is visiting a deeply troubled country. While political observers do not foresee the immediate breakout of civil war, they are not certain what lies ahead.

Immediately after the tsunami, it appeared the nation was coming together in the face of horrible tragedy. Both Tamil Tiger rebels and soldiers pitched in to help desperate disaster victims.

Newspapers showed pictures of President Chandrika Kumaratunga at a shelter smiling and shaking hands with a **female** Tamil fighter. The picture was a powerful one since the Sri Lankan president was blinded in one eye in an attack by a Tamil fighter several years ago.

It would have indeed been a great blessing for Sri Lanka if the tsunami disaster had brought the two warring sides together to improve their troubled situation.

So far, around 65,000 people have been killed in the 20-year-old civil war. A ceasefire was called in February 2002, but since April 2003, peace talks have not moved forward. The **LTTE** has been steadfast in demanding a separate transitional administration, which President Kumaratunga has rejected.

"The disaster will not solve the problems with the peace process," said Ulf Bjornfors, a member of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM), which oversees the ceasefire in the north of the country. "What is essential is that the parties return to the negotiating table."

But in reality, instead of drawing closer to agreement, the warring parties have resorted to the familiar pattern of blaming each other for failed negotiations and have even tried to gain political advantage through the tragedy.

NEWS FEATURE: Political troubles remain for tsunami-wrecked Sri LankaBy Can Merey, dpa

The rebels have accused the government of discriminating against disaster victims in rebel-controlled parts of the country in the northeast, even though relief workers say the victims were receiving the same care as those in other areas.

Members of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) party have described government help in the crisis as "ineffective" and once again demanded that the region be granted an independent administration.

The **Tamil Tigers** are now demanding that the international community provide relief materials to rebels directly in the northeast and not cooperate with government representatives. If the international community complied, it would elevate the **LTTE** to the de facto rulers in the northeastern part of the country and could cement the nation's political division.

The leftist Janatha Vimukthi Perumuna (JVP) party, the smaller member of the government coalition, has suggested that the government withdraw all support to the **LTTE** relief organization TRO, which party officials claimed could be buying weapons with money meant for disaster victims. Some in the party have speculated that the **LTTE** could actually emerge stronger militarily through the tsunami crisis.

According to the head of the **LTTE**'s political wing, Sippiah Paramu Tamilselvan, only six rebels were killed in the earthquake-triggered tsunami. That figure is disputed by Sri Lanka media which reported more than 2,400 rebel deaths, with international observers also saying the **LTTE** suffered heavy losses.

There has also been controversy about the organization of relief operations. Kumaratunga has ordered that the military take charge of shelters for the displaced, a move the rebels view as a provocation.

The **LTTE** also accused the government of preventing United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan from visiting the northeastern region during his trip to get a firsthand glimpse at the devastation.

The rebels also called on Fischer to visit rebel-controlled areas damaged in the tsunami, but the German foreign minister has no plans to visit any of the disaster regions during his stay.

For his part, Annan said that on his next visit he plans to visit all parts of the country and "celebrate peace". It could be a very long time before such a celebration will take place. dpa cy blg

Load-Date: March 3, 2005

Suspected suicide bombing kills 15 in Sri Lanka

Agence France Presse -- English

January 6, 2007 Saturday 1:52 PM GMT

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Length: 507 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Jan 6 2007

Body

Fifteen people were killed and 40 wounded Saturday when a suspected **female** suicide bomber blew up a bus in Sri Lanka, the second deadly bus attack in two days, police said.

The suicide bomber was believed to have detonated explosives that she carried onboard the crowded vehicle, which was travelling along a tourist strip in southern Sri Lanka, police said.

"We suspect it was a suicide bombing," police inspector Upul Ariyaratne said from his regional headquarters at Ambalangoda, 85 kilometres (53 miles) south of Colombo, close to where the bus was blown up.

"We have taken 15 bodies to hospital and another 40 were admitted to two hospitals."

The attack followed a bus blast late Friday when six passengers were killed and another 70 wounded near Colombo.

Authorities blamed both attacks on the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), which is fighting for an independent Tamil homeland.

The **Tamil Tigers** denied involvement in the blasts.

"The government of Sri Lanka is trying to blame the **LTTE** for the two bomb blasts," said **LTTE** defence spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan in a statement.

"This is a baseless allegation made without any evidence to support it".

In Saturday's blast, 60 passengers were in the bus which was driving along the tourist stretch between Ambalangoda and Hikkaduwa when the bomb went off.

The bus was travelling from the capital Colombo to Matara, a distance of 160 kilometres (100 miles).

The route was immediately cordoned off by heavily armed troops. There were no reports of other vehicles or tourists getting caught up in the attack.

Suspected suicide bombing kills 15 in Sri Lanka

In Friday's blast, a two-kilogram (4.4-pound) time bomb was fixed to a seat in the bus, which burst into flames following the explosion.

The bombs came after four days of government air raids against rebel positions in the north.

"We urge civilians to maintain maximum vigilance and cooperate with the authorities to prevent such attacks," said military spokesman Prasad Samarasinghe.

Police said they arrested three suspected Tiger rebels in the area three days earlier on suspicion that they were trying to create trouble.

The worst bus attack in recent times was in June when Tiger rebels set off a powerful landmine and ambushed an overcrowded bus, killing at least 67 passengers.

Suspected Tiger rebels attacked the main sea port of Galle, close to where the bus was hit Saturday, by using a flotilla of boats packed with explosives in October.

Saturday's attack came in the same district where Sri Lanka's aid donors are due to meet later this month.

The United States, Japan, the European Union and Norway have tied 4.5 billion dollars of aid to progress on a peace settlement.

The new violence came after both President Mahinda Rajapakse and the **LTTE** wished for peace in their New Year messages.

"We hope the New Year will bring the long awaited genuine and sustainable peace," Rajapakse said, while the Tigers called for global backing for their "sincere effort to seek a permanent peace through a just political solution".

The conflict has claimed more than 60,000 lives since 1972.

Load-Date: January 7, 2007

Sri Lankans wary of an uneasy peace

Guardian Weekly

March 12, 2003

Copyright 2003 Guardian Publication, Ltd.

Section: LE MONDE; Pg. 25

Length: 766 words

Byline: Erich Inciyan in Kilinochchi

Highlight: On the first anniversary of a ceasefire in the civil war uncertainty still dogs the country

Body

A store on the central square of Kilinochchi, in northern Sri Lanka, still sells propaganda videos that are banned in the rest of the country. They celebrate the battles and suicide bomb attacks of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The manager of the store, which belongs to the LTTE, says: "Videos on the Tigers still sell as well as Indian comedies and action films."

Exactly one year after the ceasefire signed by the Sri Lankan government and the guerrilla forces, people in Kilinochchi, the Tamil Tigers' political capital, still seem to be torn between war and peace.

"Our people are not in a position to celebrate the anniversary of the ceasefire," says S P Tamilselvan, 34, head of the LTTE's political wing. A former Tiger colonel, he was one of the negotiators in the peace process brokered by Norway.

While reaffirming his support for the ceasefire, he stresses that "the army continues to occupy our houses, and displaced persons within Sri Lanka are still unable to go home -- a ceasefire is not peace, just a case of weapons falling silent".

In Kilinochchi, a city devastated by the 19-year war that left 60,000 dead, the LTTE is determined to keep control of everything. Most Tigers have swapped their combat dress for civilian clothes. It is only at official ceremonies, such as the opening of the Tamil Games on February 20, that armed and uniformed Tigers march behind portraits of their "martyrs".

The LTTE regulates society through a parallel administrative system that it controls with an iron hand in a region from which the majority Sinhalese have been driven out.

The "court of Tamil Eelam" tries civil and criminal cases. "All our magistrates are LTTE cadres, as public opinion appreciates our discipline," says the head of the judiciary, E Pararasasingam.

Only one senior Tamil civil servant has decided against putting up a portrait of the Tigers' supreme leader, V Pirapaharan, in his office. He is M S Ireneuss, whom the Tigers appointed head of the provisional joint structure set up by the LTTE and the government, the Sub-Committee on Immediate Humanitarian and Rehabilitation Needs in the north and east (SIHRN), whose documents make no reference to a central state.

"The LTTE still wants a separate state," says Ireneuss. "The integration of its departments into the administration as a whole will depend on the degree of autonomy it is granted as a result of negotiations."

Sri Lankans wary of an uneasy peace

Tamilselvan refuses to give up the idea of a separate state.

The 1,938 graves in Kilinochchi's military cemetery indicate only the date of the soldiers' death in action, not their date of birth, ie their age. The LTTE's tradition of enrolling children is a thorny issue that could scuttle the peace process.

"Despite their promises to the contrary, the Tigers continued to recruit Tamils under the age of 18 until very recently, and even took hostage the close relatives of those who tried to escape being press-ganged," says an international observer who prefers to remain anonymous. "It looks very much as though they are preparing to take up arms again."

That concern is echoed by the Sri Lanka Monitoring Control Mission (SLMM), which is based in the capital, Colombo, and made up of 47 agents from the Nordic countries. Its task is to monitor the ceasefire agreement. Its spokesman, Teitur Torkelsson, says that it has received 600 complaints from parents about the way the LTTE "recruited" their children in 2002. The number of complaints has continued to rise this year, despite Tamilselvan's pledge that "the LTTE doesn't recruit children".

The most serious breach of the ceasefire agreement came on February 6 on the island of Delft, off Jaffna, when an LTTE trawler was intercepted by the Sri Lankan navy in the presence of international monitors. The three Tigers on the vessel committed suicide by triggering their explosive charges after communicating with their leaders by radio.

In so doing they destroyed all traces of the weapons that had been discovered on the trawler by two SLMM monitors, who themselves had a narrow escape.

In this uncertain situation a glimmer of optimism can perhaps be detected in the experience of a young man in Kilinochchi who has been a Tiger since the age of 15. He wanted to get hold of a *kuppi*, the capsule of cyanide that Tigers used to have to wear round their necks so they would not fall into the hands of the enemy alive. He asked 10 fellow Tigers if they still had their *kuppi*, but none of them had seen fit to keep it. That could be a sign that ex-fighters are seriously considering returning to civilian life. *February 25*

Graphic

Photo, Female Tamil Tiger rebels march through Kilinochchi, Anuruddha Lokuhapuarachchi/Reuters

Load-Date: March 19, 2003

Tamil Tigers kill one soldier, wound another in northern Sri Lanka

Associated Press International

February 23, 2005 Wednesday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 301 words

Byline: HRVOJE HRANJSKI; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Tamil Tiger rebels opened fire at two government soldiers near a boundary line for their territory in the northern Jaffna peninsula, killing one and seriously wounding another, the military and guerrillas said Thursday.

The shooting took place Wednesday afternoon near the town of Mukamalai, about 300 kilometers (190 miles) north of Colombo, after the soldiers advanced toward rebel positions, the Liberation Tigers of Tamileelam said in a statement posted on the pro-rebel TamilNet Web site.

A military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, acknowledged that the soldiers apparently had strayed toward rebel positions, but said the army would consider the shootings a rebel violation of the 2002 cease-fire between the sides.

The cease-fire has largely held for three years, though the rebels recently blamed government-backed forces for the Feb. 7 slaying of one of their top political leaders, E. Kausalyn, and said their patience with the government was running out. The government denied involvement and denounced the slaying.

In Wednesday's incident, the soldier who was killed was carrying binoculars and a hand grenade, and the other had a rifle, TamilNet reported. Tamil **women** fighters, who were holding positions at a 600-meter (yard) wide separation zone, opened fire when the soldiers took aim at them, the report said.

The body was later handed over to government troops in a transfer supervised by the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, TamilNet said.

The latest killing came two days after the government and the rebels marked three years since they signed the ambitious Norwegian-brokered truce, which halted fierce fighting and restored a degree of normalcy to the island.

Subsequent peace talks broke down in April 2003 amid rebel demands for wide autonomy in the Tamil-dominated north and east.

Load-Date: February 24, 2005

Here there be Tigers: Thanks to a dysfunctional refugee system and politically motivated interference, Canada is swamped with Tamil Tigers and their supporters

Ottawa Citizen

August 28, 2006 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A11

Length: 842 words

Byline: Martin Collacott, Citizen Special

Body

Following the arrest of a number of Canadians of Sri Lankan Tamil origin on charges of trying to procure arms for the ***Tamil Tigers***, it should come as no surprise that the FBI has identified Canada as a major source of illegal fundraising to the terrorist group.

The Tigers have been able to achieve this for two reasons. Firstly, the federal Liberal government, in an effort to bolster support in the Tamil community, refused to classify the Tigers as a terrorist group despite several recommendations from CSIS to do so.

This gave the Tigers the freedom to intimidate and extort money from the same Tamil community whose support the Liberals sought.

The government's inaction was particularly difficult to justify given that the Tigers are one of the most vicious terrorist movements in the world. In Sri Lanka they used children as young as 11 as soldiers and suicide bombers. In Canada they have been involved in a wide range of criminal activities including murder, arson, home invasions, drug trafficking, and bank and credit-card fraud.

While the Conservatives acted quickly after taking office earlier this year to designate them as terrorists, the fact that the recently arrested Tiger representatives from Canada were able to offer \$1 million for a shipment of arms indicates that they still have a substantial war chest at their disposal.

The second reason the Tigers have been able to establish a major presence in Canada is the ease with which they have brought in large numbers of supporters through our dysfunctional refugee determination system. While the system has been exploited in recent years by many thousands of individuals who would not have been regarded as legitimate refugees in other countries, the Tigers have been particularly adept at using it to build up a terror support network.

Other countries consider relatively few Sri Lankan Tamil claimants to be genuine refugees. In contrast, Canada has been exceptionally generous. In 2003, for example, our approval rate for such claimants was 76.3 per cent, while other nations on average accepted only 15.8 per cent.

Here there be Tigers: Thanks to a dysfunctional refugee system and politically motivated interference, Canada is swamped with Tamil Tigers and their supporters

In consequence, in that year we took in one and a half times as many as the rest of the world combined. From 1989 to 2004 we approved claims from more than 37,000 Sri Lankans, far more than from nationals of any other country.

A further indication of the fact that a high percentage of those we accepted were not genuine refugees was that large numbers went back to visit Sri Lanka while their applications were still pending. Although their claims for asylum were based on the argument that they fled persecution in that country -- in many cases out of fear for their lives -- in one year alone more than 8,600 applied to the Sri Lankan High Commission in Ottawa for travel documents so they could make visits to their homeland.

While the Tigers ran human smuggling operations to raise funds for their terrorist cause by bringing people illegally into Canada, such activities were also aimed at strengthening the ranks of their supporters in this country. The Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) helped out by giving expedited processing and almost automatic approval to persons considered to be at risk, including "young Tamil males aged 10 to 40 or 45 years from the north and east" of Sri Lanka (i.e., from the area controlled by the **Tamil Tigers**) and "young unmarried Tamil **females** aged 13 to 30 years old" from the same area.

As pointed out by former Canadian ambassador and IRB member William Bauer, these two profiles happen to be identical with those of Tamil Tiger guerrillas. (Unmarried **females** are favoured by the Tigers for suicide-bombing missions -- one was Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi's killer.) By 2000 the Toronto police Tamil Task Force estimated that Canada's largest city was home to as many as 8,000 members of Tamil terrorist factions, most notably the Tigers.

As a result of the combined effects of governments that ignored terrorist connections in favour of gaining political support, and a refugee system that laid out a welcome mat for dubious claimants, Canada is now saddled with tens of thousands of terrorists and their supporters -- particularly if we include all the relatives that successful refugee claimants are subsequently able to sponsor. Besides the damage we have done to ourselves, we have by our actions almost certainly contributed to extending the civil war and terrorist violence in Sri Lanka through funds channelled from Canada.

Although the Conservative government appears determined to crack down on Tamil Tiger activities including fundraising in Canada, it will take a major effort to fix the refugee determination system that has made it possible for Tamil terrorists to establish themselves in Canada.

All this is not going to make any easier the task of convincing the United States that we are not a haven for terrorists and that our common border should remain as open as possible to the movement of goods and people.

Martin Collacott lives in Vancouver and is a former Canadian high commissioner to Sri Lanka.

Graphic

Photo: Anuruddha Lokuhapuarachchi, Reuters; Masked members of the **Tamil Tigers** elite Black Tiger squad, which conducts suicide bombings against important targets, march during a 2002 ceremony to mark the Tamil Tiger Heroes Day in eastern Sri Lanka.

Load-Date: August 28, 2006

SRI LANKA: 20 YEARS LATER, WOUNDS OF THE TAMIL MASSACRE FESTER

IPS-Inter Press Service

July 23, 2003, Wednesday

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Length: 1088 words

Byline: By Feizal Samath

Dateline: COLOMBO, Jul. 23

Body

Twenty years after Sri Lanka's worst massacre of minority Tamils, bitterness among Tamils toward the majority Sinhalese has eased but remains hard to forget.

"How can one forget Tamils being stripped in public or running from frenzied mob violence?" Maheswary Velautham, a Tamil who was a fledgling lawyer then and now a human rights campaigner, asked, although she says relations between the ethnic communities have since improved.

"We are still hurt by the violence that was unleashed on our community," she said, recalling how she jumped over a wall at her small apartment in downtown Colombo and hid in a neighbor's house, watching in fear and anger as Sinhalese mobs set fire to the apartment.

July 23 marks an anniversary that most Sri Lankans want to forget - the 'Black Friday' riots in 1983 in which at least 600 Tamils were massacred by Sinhalese mobs and their properties destroyed.

"We lived amicably for many years until this violence occurred. I hope to God it won't happen again. That was like a curse on this country. We lost so much," said Kusumalatha Sewandy, a 45-year old Sinhalese selling lunch packets, shaking her head in disbelief.

The rampage was sparked, among others, by the killing by **Tamil Tigers** rebels of 13 soldiers in the northern city of Jaffna.

The pogrom fed the expansion of Tamil militancy and the ranks of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

Afterwards, thousands of Tamils fled the country and professionals from all ethnic communities scampered overseas. According to the World Bank, 65,000 people have been killed and 800,000 internally displaced while another 700,000 have left the country since 1983.

Over the decades, more than 600 billion rupees (about \$ 6 billion) has been spent on campaigns to quell the Tamil rebellion for their own homeland, economists estimate.

Looking back, Professor S.S. Colombage, an economist, believes that if not for the war, Sri Lanka's growth rates would have been 7 to 8 percent, or about double what it has been in the last two decades. Income per capita, he estimated would have reached \$ 2,000 by now, instead of \$ 870.

SRI LANKA : 20 YEARS LATER, WOUNDS OF THE TAMIL MASSACRE FESTER

But the social wounds are as deep, if not deeper, than the economic costs of the war. Calls for public healing have also been coming.

On Tuesday, a Sri Lankan women's group from the Sinhalese community, known as the Mothers and Daughters of Lanka, publicly apologized to Tamils and said a horror like the 1983 riots should never occur again.

"We recall with deep regret and remorse the tragic events of July 1983 in which thousands of Tamil women, men and children lost their lives and homes due to politicized and organized ethnic violence," movement coordinator Thushari Madahapola said in a statement

Today, two decades after the riots and while the peace process between the Tigers and the government holds, some Tamil academics and media want the ruling United National Party (UNP) government to tender a public apology to the Tamils. The same party was in power in 1983, when Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe was a junior minister.

"It takes a lot of courage to make an apology but such a public statement would go a long way to heal the wounds of the Tamil community," Kethesh Loganathan, a director at the private think-tank Center for Policy Alternatives (CPA), said in an interview.

In an editorial, the 'Sunday Leader' newspaper urged the government and Tamil rebels to resume peace talks that were suspended in April. "What better place to start than for the government on behalf of us all, formally apologize to our Tamil brethren for the events of July 1983?"

The government and LTTE differ over the creation of an interim administration in the war-torn north-east. The rebels want control over finance and use of foreign aid and the latest power-sharing proposals were published last week.

Only now are attempts at accountability coming out in official inquiries. In a strongly worded report released last week, the Truth Commission said the government of then President Junius Jayewardene was "guilty of gross negligence in failing to appeal to the people for restraint, peace, calm on July 25-26 and the evening of July 23".

"There were witnesses who testified that this was due to the complicity of a section of the government in 'teaching the Tamils' a lesson for terrorism in the north," it added, noting that the not a single Cabinet minister appealed for a halt to the carnage at the time.

Both Loganathan and Velautham believe the gulf between Sinhalese and Tamils has narrowed over the years. But they also agree that the gap among the political parties to the conflict - the government, opposition parties and the LTTE - is widening. "All sides view each other with suspicion," said Velautham. "That's the problem. There is no sincerity, no common ground."

Loganathan says unless the two main Sinhalese-dominated parties - UNP and the People's Alliance - agree on a unified stand on the peace process, any solution thrashed out by one party with the LTTE is unlikely to succeed.

Then there are the old hurts. Velautham, secretary of the Forum for Human Dignity, says Tamils still face discrimination in state institutions. She cited a recent case of a specialist doctor whose promotion was withheld in a hospital purely because he is a Tamil, forcing him to go to the courts.

"People and society are by and large friendly but if there is another war, ordinary Tamils will be treated by the state and security forces as if they have links with the Tigers," Velautham added.

At the same time, the Tamil Tigers have been killing their political opponents and even those who have given up politics. "No one cares about freedom and dignity, not even the international community who is turning a blind eye to the behavior of the Tigers," she argued.

Loganathan says that while hardline Sinhalese political parties were initially blamed for attacking the peace process, now the UNP and PA, as well as the Tigers, are seen as spoilers of the process.

SRI LANKA : 20 YEARS LATER, WOUNDS OF THE TAMIL MASSACRE FESTER

"Look at the way the government has handled the peace process, talking to the LTTE while ignoring other Tamil parties and opposition parties. The LTTE is wiping out at will its opponents," he said. "The Norwegian mediators can't get the talks back on track while their peace monitors are unable to bring the rebels to book for numerous ceasefire violations."

The ceasefire, he added, is being sorely tested. Said Loganathan: "Last year if you asked me about the ceasefire, I would have said it would last for at least six to 12 months. Now I'm reluctant to make any guesses."

Load-Date: July 24, 2003

End of Document

Norway makes new bid to save truce amid massacre charges

Agence France Presse -- English

August 6, 2006 Sunday 5:35 AM GMT

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Length: 603 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Aug 6 2006

Body

Peace broker Norway opened crucial talks with Tiger rebels Sunday on saving a collapsing ceasefire as Sri Lanka's warring parties accused each other of slaughtering civilians during the latest fighting which has claimed hundreds of lives.

Norway's special envoy Jon Hanssaen-Bauer began discussions with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) political wing leaders on "very important matters," Tiger spokesman S. Puleedevan told AFP.

"They will discuss very important matters relating to the peace process and the current development," Puleedevan said just before the talks opened at the rebel-held town of Kilinochchi, 330 kilometres (260 miles) north of here.

As Hanssen-Bauer arrived in Kilinochchi, the Tiger rebels said they had pulled back to their original positions in the northeastern district of Trincomalee where 11 days of fighting claimed 426 lives by official count.

The **LTTE** denied a government charge that they massacred more than 100 Muslims trying to escape the fighting in the coastal town of Muttur and in turn accused the army of slaughtering 15 Tamil civilians, including three **women**.

"There is no massacre as alleged by the Sri Lankan government," Puleedevan said.

"The Sri Lankan government has massacred a lot of Tamils. In one place 15 Tamils working for non-governmental organisations have been killed."

The allegation came after the defence ministry said the **LTTE** blocked civilians, mainly Muslims, fleeing Muttur and killed at least 100 of them Friday night.

Puleedevan also denied an allegation by a leading Muslim figure that they were holding more than 100 Muslims prisoner.

The official count of the fatalities has now risen to 426 with the 100 civilian victims. At least 20,000 civilians fled Muttur and sought shelter in the nearby Kantalai town.

Norway makes new bid to save truce amid massacre charges

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) officials said they had no access to the area and could not verify reports of massacres and other civilian casualties, but were trying to gain access at the earliest.

"We still have no access to the area and therefore we can't say anything about these reports," ICRC spokesman Sukumar Rockwood said.

The **LTTE** said they had returned to their original positions after achieving their aim of stalling a government offensive to capture a sluice gate within rebel-held territory.

The military launched air attacks on July 26 to pressure the Tigers to open the waterway in the Trincomalee district.

The guerrillas resisted and said residents closed the waterway to get the government to improve their drinking water supply.

"Our objective of the mission with a defensive character was accomplished and our forces returned to their positions as per the February 2002 ceasefire," **LTTE** military spokesman I. Ilanthiayan was quoted as saying by the Tamilnet.com website.

He said 32 Tigers were killed during the fighting, far fewer than the 152 rebel fatalities claimed by the defence ministry in clashes in and around Muttur late Friday alone.

Diplomats feared the worsening violence in the island's northeast could lead to full-scale war although both the Colombo government and the **Tamil Tigers** had pledged to uphold the February 2002 truce.

Hanssen-Bauer, who held talks with Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake and Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera on Friday, was expected to spend the weekend in rebel-held territory and return to Colombo for more talks with the government here.

The main Muslim party, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, said Muslims were facing a "humanitarian disaster" and urged the two sides to halt attacks while demanding security for the island's second largest minority.

Load-Date: August 7, 2006

Elangovan expresses concern over LTTE activities in TN

UNI (United News of India)

December 21, 2007 Friday 12:33 PM EST

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Length: 254 words

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

Dateline: Chennai

Body

Chennai, Dec. 21 -- Senior Congress leader and Union Minister E V K S Elangovan today expressed concern over the increasing activities of the banned **LTTE** in Tamil Nadu.

Talking to reporters, Mr Elangovan, who turned 60 today, hoped that Chief Minister M Karunanidhi would take necessary steps to curb such unlawful activities.

Alleging that the law and order in the state had deteriorated of late, he however expressed confidence that the Chief Minister has the experience to deal firmly with extremist and unlawful outfits in the state.

He also had a dig at Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) leader Thol Thirumavalavan for his pro-**LTTE** remarks.

Earlier, political leaders cutting across party lines greeted Mr Elangovan on the occasion of his 60th birthday.

He cut a giant cake on a small podium at his residence and distributed free sarees to over 200 **women**.

Tamil Nadu BJP Vice-president G Kumaravelu, Mr Thirumavalavan, TNCC chief M Krishnaswamy, its treasurer D Sudarsanam, Congress MLA Vasanthakumar, former Mayor Karate Thiyagarajan, AICC member Chiranjeevi, were among those who presented bouquets and greeted him on the occasion.

He said Finance Minister P Chidambaram and AICC representative Arun Kumar would participate in a public meeting in the city tomorrow to commemorate the birthday of AICC president Sonia Gandhi.

The partymen in the state were striving for the establishment of Congress-led coalition in Tamil Nadu, which would usher in Kamaraj rule.

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Load-Date: May 4, 2008

Elangovan expresses concern over LTTE activities in TN

End of Document

Suspected suicide bombing kills 11 in Sri Lanka

Agence France Presse -- English

January 6, 2007 Saturday 2:51 PM GMT

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Length: 583 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Jan 6 2007

Body

Eleven people were killed and 47 wounded Saturday when a suspected **female** suicide bomber blew up a bus in Sri Lanka, the second deadly bus attack in two days, police said.

The suicide bomber was believed to have detonated explosives that she carried onboard the crowded vehicle, which was travelling along a tourist strip in southern Sri Lanka, police said.

"We suspect it was a suicide bombing," police inspector Upul Ariyaratne said from his regional headquarters at Ambalangoda, 85 kilometres (53 miles) south of Colombo, close to where the bus was blown up.

The defence ministry revised the number of people killed down to 11, although local police told reporters that 15 passengers had died. The ministry also revises the number of injured from 40 up to 47.

The attack followed a bus blast late Friday when six passengers were killed and another 70 wounded near Colombo.

Authorities blamed both attacks on the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), which is fighting for an independent Tamil homeland.

The defence ministry in a statement said it was committed to fighting terror.

"At a moment when the security forces are successfully carrying out counter terrorist measures to restore civil administration in the North and East, the **LTTE** has resorted to engage in terror attacks in the south in a bid to disrupt normalcy," the ministry said.

The **Tamil Tigers** denied involvement in the blasts.

"The government of Sri Lanka is trying to blame the **LTTE** for the two bomb blasts," said **LTTE** defence spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan in a statement.

"This is a baseless allegation made without any evidence to support it".

Suspected suicide bombing kills 11 in Sri Lanka

In Saturday's blast, 60 passengers were in the bus which was driving along the tourist stretch between Ambalangoda and Hikkaduwa when the bomb went off.

The bus was travelling from the capital Colombo to Matara, a distance of 160 kilometres (100 miles).

The route was immediately cordoned off by heavily armed troops. There were no reports of other vehicles or tourists getting caught up in the attack.

In Friday's blast, a two-kilogram (4.4-pound) time bomb was fixed to a seat in the bus, which burst into flames following the explosion.

The bombs came after four days of government air raids against rebel positions in the north.

"We urge civilians to maintain maximum vigilance and cooperate with the authorities to prevent such attacks," said military spokesman Prasad Samarasinghe.

Police said they arrested three suspected Tiger rebels in the area three days earlier on suspicion that they were trying to create trouble.

The worst bus attack in recent times was in June when Tiger rebels set off a powerful landmine and ambushed an overcrowded bus, killing at least 67 passengers.

Suspected Tiger rebels attacked the main sea port of Galle, close to where the bus was hit Saturday, by using a flotilla of boats packed with explosives in October.

Saturday's attack came in the same district where Sri Lanka's aid donors are due to meet later this month.

The United States, Japan, the European Union and Norway have tied 4.5 billion dollars of aid to progress on a peace settlement.

The new violence came after both President Mahinda Rajapakse and the **LTTE** wished for peace in their New Year messages.

"We hope the New Year will bring the long awaited genuine and sustainable peace," Rajapakse said, while the Tigers called for global backing for their "sincere effort to seek a permanent peace through a just political solution".

The conflict has claimed more than 60,000 lives since 1972.

Load-Date: January 7, 2007

Japanese envoy meets Sri Lanka president in peace bid

Agence France Presse -- English

May 8, 2006 Monday 5:15 AM GMT

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Length: 559 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 8 2006

Body

A Japanese envoy on a mission to save Sri Lanka's faltering peace process was to meet President Mahinda Rajapakse on Monday as the government imposed a curfew in the northern Jaffna peninsula.

Japanese envoy Yasushi Akashi, who arrived in the South Asian island nation at the weekend, was to meet with Rajapakse after talks on Sunday with Palitha Kohona, head of the government's peace secretariat.

His visit comes amid stepped-up efforts by Colombo to seek international pressure to revive talks with the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), who are fighting for a homeland for minority Tamils.

Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera was visiting neighbouring India to brief officials about efforts to salvage a Norwegian-brokered truce signed four years ago.

On Sunday, security forces clamped the indefinite curfew in Jaffna ahead of protests called by residents after last week's killing of seven men the army said were suspected **Tamil Tigers**, but who the rebels described as civilians.

Authorities also announced the main entry and exit point to rebel-held territory in Jaffna would be shut on Monday, a military official said.

The latest security measures came as eight men were reported missing in Jaffna.

They had slept overnight at a Hindu temple before troops allegedly took them away, the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) said in a statement, adding that villagers had found blood and three identity cards.

The defence ministry said it had no information about the Tiger allegations but that in the country's east, troops and Tamil Tiger rebels traded mortar and automatic rifle fire on Sunday.

"There are no casualties among troops but we don't know if there are any on the other side," the ministry spokesman said, adding that the firefight around the Vavunathivu military base lasted nearly two hours.

A soldier was wounded when suspected Tiger gunmen fired at a sentry point in the same region early Sunday, the spokesman said.

Japanese envoy meets Sri Lanka president in peace bid

Following his talks with Rajapakse, Akashi was to meet on Tuesday with the leader of the LTTE's political wing, S.P. Thamilselvan, in a rebel-held northern town, the Tigers confirmed.

Kohona welcomed Akashi's planned meeting with the senior rebel.

Despite the truce signed in 2002, more than 200 people have died over the last month in tit-for-tat attacks by government forces and the rebel Tigers.

The Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission that oversees the truce has said the violence is out of control and the only way to curb it is for the two sides to agree to talks.

Formal political talks have remained on hold since April 2003 after six rounds of face-to-face discussions that began in September 2002.

In February the government and rebels held an initial round of discussions in Switzerland aimed at shoring up the ceasefire amid a surge in violence, but a follow-up round was postponed indefinitely and killings have since escalated.

In the most serious attack since the truce took hold, a female suicide bomber wounded army chief Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka and 30 others in an attack at army headquarters in Colombo on April 25.

Eleven people including the bomber died.

The government, saying it was acting in self-defence against an LTTE attack, retaliated with air strikes against suspected rebel positions.

More than 60,000 people have been killed in the island's separatist conflict since 1972.

Load-Date: May 9, 2006

The tiger's claw

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

November 8, 2003 Saturday

Late Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; News Review; Pg. 39

Length: 1872 words

Byline: Christopher Kremmer

Body

This week's constitutional coup in Sri Lanka has jeopardised a promising dialogue between the Government and Tamil rebels, writes Christopher Kremmer in Kilinochchi.

THE graves are numbered in thousands, ranked like the battalions of a ghost army trudging through slanting light that turns golden towards sunset. In northern Sri Lanka this is sacred ground, consecrated with the blood of martyrs in a vicious 20-year civil war on an otherwise heavenly Indian Ocean island.

At Kanagapuram cemetery, the tombstones record the names of the fallen and where they fell. Elephant Pass. Mullaittivu. Paranthan. Kilinochchi. Milestones along the epic journey of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam towards what they hope will be self-determination for the country's minority Tamils, and a homeland they call Eelam. The war has claimed at least 65,000 lives.

"We are ready to bury so many more. We have plenty of space," says Thiyaga Rajah, an attendant at Kanagapuram. After this week's constitutional coup by President Chandrika Kumaratunga, they may well have to. Acting while Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe was abroad, the President sacked three cabinet ministers, suspended parliament and sent troops to guard important installations. The show of force was seen as undermining Wickremesinghe's peace overtures to the Tamil rebels.

Kanagapuram is in the heart of the Wanni jungle, where Kumaratunga's previous efforts to crush Tamil separatism have foundered. Sidelining the army's best generals during the 1990s, she took personal charge of the military campaign, sending hundreds of young Sinhalese soldiers to their deaths in a futile bid to capture a 75-kilometre stretch of the A9 highway between Vavuniya

and Kilinochchi.

The Tigers not only resisted the offensive, but took the battle to the capital, Colombo, in August 2001 with an audacious raid on Bandaranaike International Airport. At least 13 aircraft, including three fighter jets and two Sri Lankan Airways passenger planes, were destroyed. The attack rocked the country's economy, which for the first time since independence shrank in 2001. Later that year, war-weary voters punished the President by giving her political opponents control of the parliament.

In February last year, Wickremesinghe took the political gamble of his life by signing a ceasefire agreement with the **Tamil Tigers**. He knew the risks. Cosying up to the rebels had proven fatal for previous leaders, including president

The tiger's claw

Ranasinghe Premadasa, assassinated by the LTTE after co-operating with them. Twenty months on, the ceasefire has lasted longer than any before it, and last week, in an unprecedented move towards reconciliation, the LTTE outlined in detail its terms for ending its secession struggle within a united Sri Lankan state.

The Tigers are seeking control of eight districts comprising the northern and eastern provinces. For five years before elections, they would be responsible for law and order, taxation and government spending, and would even control the seas adjacent to the two provinces. It seems like a big ask, but in much of the north-east, the Tigers already control all of these things.

The A9, or Kandy Road as it is also known, traverses the Tamil heartland, tracking east along the spine of the Jaffna Peninsula. Near the village of Muhamali, a Red Cross flag marks the ceasefire line. At the eastern end of a 500-metre no-man's land, a mound of earth is decorated with painted tin cans that spell out the acronym "L-T-T-E". In a nearby thatched hut, sparrow-thin young women dressed in dark-brown sari uniforms smack travel documents with rubber stamps. Tiger bureaucracy is quiet and efficient.

The oppressive presence of troops, so common in government-controlled parts of the north, is not apparent here. LTTE fighters in their striped camouflage uniforms and with cyanide capsules around their necks in case of capture, stay out of sight.

Along the road to Elephant Pass, signs bearing the skull and crossbones mark kilometre after kilometre of uncleared minefields. Rusting armoured vehicles mark battlefields where the Tamil insurgents cut their teeth with a string of improbable victories. They transformed themselves from a band of a few dozen gunmen into a conventional force of 20,000 troops boasting army, navy and even limited airforce capabilities. TO OUTSIDERS, the ferocity of the Tigers' resistance is unsettling, a product of fanaticism rather than valour. Its roots lie in Tamil reaction to a political system dominated by Sinhalese Buddhists since Sri Lanka gained independence from Britain in 1948. Outnumbered in the new democracy, they were marginalised as successive governments made Sinhala the national language and raised Buddhism above other religions. There were periodic outbreaks of mob violence, in some cases abetted by the authorities, against the 20 per cent Tamil minority. Sinhalese police turned a blind eye as Tamils were butchered and their businesses looted in 1956, 1958, 1961, 1974, 1977, 1979, 1981 and 1983. Tamils of Indian origin were stripped of their citizenship.

In the early '70s a small group of dissidents began to form around a Jaffna Tamil, Velupillai Prabhakaran, who believed violent resistance was the only path to equality and security for Tamils. Calling themselves Tamil Tigers, Prabhakaran's group would move on to bigger things, receiving training in Palestinian militant camps and being patronised by India.

According to official estimates, the LTTE has been responsible for 54 suicide attacks since 1987, including the January 1996 "Black Tigers" attack in Colombo, when a truck crammed with explosives was rammed into the Central Bank headquarters, housed, somewhat prophetically, in twin skyscrapers called the World Trade Centre. Sixty people died and 1500 were injured.

Since September 11, 2001, the world has been told it must fight terrorists, not talk to them. But the complexities of an ethnically divided, economically fragile, and psychologically damaged nation like Sri Lanka mock the simplistic rhetoric of the war on terrorism. Western governments even the Bush Administration have supported the country's peace process despite the fact the US, Britain, Australia and India have all outlawed the Tigers, and tried to disrupt their funding.

The country most affected by the group's activities Sri Lanka lifted its ban in order to negotiate with them. "Yesterday's terrorist is today's freedom fighter," the Foreign Minister, Tyronne Fernando, says. "History is replete with examples of leaders who made war before they made peace . . . If there is peace in Sri Lanka, then I see no reason why Prabhakaran should not walk the streets of Colombo a free man."

In Kilinochchi, the Tigers' de facto capital, Prabhakaran is more than just free; he's in charge. Since the ceasefire, the LTTE's formidable organisational skills have been turned to reconstruction, and in the past year gleaming new

The tiger's claw

buildings have arisen in the midst of others destroyed by war. Norwegian mediators and Western diplomats are frequent visitors.

After a long drive on a severely rutted road, it's nice to find a comfortable hotel even if it's run by one of the world's most feared terrorist groups. At the 1-9 Lodge, owned and operated by the Tigers, the fish curry is hot and the beer is cold. In the reception area a framed portrait of the LTTE leader holds pride of place. A stocky man, 48, and married with three children, his eyes transfix, angry and haunted. FOR years, Colombo tried to strangle the Tigers, imposing a strict embargo on the import of such basic items as fertilisers, fuel and pen-light batteries into the Wanni. Now, reluctant to abandon all claims to the area, the Government continues to provide postal, banking and other services, parallel to the LTTE administration.

Foreign aid organisations are pitching in. New police headquarters, courts and the offices of various LTTE front organisations for women and students have sprung up in the past year, forming the core of the Tigers' civil administration. The Tigers levy duties on goods passing through their territories, and the system is free of the corruption afflicting most South Asian countries.

While facilities in Kilinochchi are rudimentary, the population is well dressed. A dirt lane leads to the Tigers' Peace Secretariat and former Prabhakaran body guard and Jaffna commander, and now chief peace negotiator, S. P. Thamilselvan. Thamilselvan's faultless grooming and soft-spoken manner belie his rugged past. "We are now in this position with international recognition and negotiating as an equal partner with the Government because of our strength," he says through an interpreter.

Many Sri Lankans apparently including Kumaratunga still fear that strength. They suspect the Tigers will soak up the peace dividend and then declare independence anyway. What the sceptics don't mention is the LTTE could have done so long ago. No matter what the Sri Lankan Army does, it is unlikely to destroy the rebels militarily.

Both sides have the capacity to continue the pointless conflict, but not to win it. Both have much to gain from a negotiated settlement. But the national interest has little chance in the opportunistic political climate in the south.

Before this week's crisis, the economy had pulled out of the downward spiral Kumaratunga's war precipitated. Economic growth last year was 3.5 per cent, and headed for 6 per cent this year. The Commerce Minister, Ravi Karunanayake, interviewed last week before the President suspended parliament, foresaw the crisis. He believes Kumaratunga is sabotaging the peace for her own ends: "She's just jealous of the success of the Government one person's madness can bring an entire country to a standstill."

Kumaratunga's actions may have unwittingly put the spotlight on the real problem: a constitution that allows one party to hold the presidency while another controls the parliament. If the peace process collapses as a result of this week's events, the blame will fall on the political establishment, not the LTTE. Most Sri Lankans support the peace process. An election may be the best way to resolve the stand-off.

The crisis will sorely test the Tigers' patience. But the ethnic arithmetic of the island means they will never achieve a secure future by force. That's reflected in their decision to consider a federal solution of Tamil autonomy without secession, and to return to the negotiating table after suspending talks in April

The road to peace is as long and cratered as the A9. Credible reports suggest the LTTE is continuing to target moderate rivals within the Tamil community. It's also still recruiting children living in the areas it controls, brainwashing some of them to enter the hallowed ranks of the suicide bombers. Government forces, too, are using the respite to train and re-equip in the event the peace talks fail.

Before this week, cool heads like Fernando were still in the ascendant: "I think we have to look at the root causes of terrorism. If we go back to war, both sides will lose."

Suddenly, failure seems dangerously possible. Unless Sri Lankans and the politicians they elect can summon the courage to invest in peace, their future is likely to be one of endless war.

Graphic

TWO ILLUS: Determined . . . women soldiers of the Tamil Tigers, left, and, far left, portraits of Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and a Tiger fighter killed in action. Photo: AP/Elizabeth Dalziel and AFP

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

VOA NEWS: TWO BLASTS BLAMED ON TAMIL REBELS KILL 19 IN SRI LANKA'S CAPITAL

US Fed News

November 28, 2007 Wednesday 1:51 AM EST

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Length: 441 words

Byline: US Fed News

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

The Voice of America issued the following story:

By Anjana Pasricha

Two separate bomb attacks in Sri Lanka's capital Colombo blamed on Tamil Tiger rebels have killed at least 19 people, including a **female** suicide bomber. The attacks came a day after the head of the country's Tamil rebels ruled out hopes for a political settlement to the ethnic conflict that has raged for a quarter of a century. Anjana Pasricha reports from New Delhi.

Police say a handicapped woman blew herself up Wednesday morning after security personnel stopped her from entering the offices of Social Welfare Minister Douglas Devananda in Colombo. One of his staff members was killed and two others were injured. The woman, who was apparently wearing a bomb vest, also died.

The woman had been allowed into the complex with other people who had come for a weekly open meeting to discuss their problems with the minister - the apparent target of the attack.

Devananda heads a party representing Sri Lanka's Tamil ethnic minority (the Eelam People's Democratic Party). He once fought alongside the Tamil Tiger rebel group, but renounced violence and joined the political mainstream in 1987.

Police have blamed Wednesday's attack on the rebels, officially known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or **LTTE**. The attack came just a day after the **LTTE** chief, Vellupillai Prabhakaran, said in an annual radio address that peace efforts with the Sinhalese-dominated government are a waste of time.

He described the government as "genocidal", and accused it of aiming to destroy the Tamil community.

Political analyst Rohan Edresinghe of Colombo's independent Center for Policy Alternatives says the message from the rebel chief is clear: there is no hope of a political settlement between the government and the rebels.

"The **LTTE** will now try to show the Sri Lankan government and show the world that they have military strength, they have military prowess, and that they cannot be defeated militarily," he said.

Prabhakaran blamed the international community for fueling the conflict by giving the government economic and military aid.

VOA NEWS: TWO BLASTS BLAMED ON TAMIL REBELS KILL 19 IN SRI LANKA 'S CAPITAL

The conflict has intensified since a 2002 peace agreement began to unravel three years ago. Earlier this year, the government scored a major military success against the rebels by driving them out of their eastern bases.

Observers say the Tigers are also under pressure in their northern bases. They say the government is intent on pressing its military advantage instead of pursuing peace talks.

The **Tamil Tigers** launched their struggle for a Tamil homeland in 1983. The conflict has since claimed more than 60,000 lives.

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

Load-Date: November 30, 2007

End of Document

Death toll mounts as Sri Lanka mourns

UPI

December 31, 2004 Friday 9:55 AM EST

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Length: 755 words

Byline: RAVI R. PRASAD

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Dec. 31

Body

Sri Lanka's flag flew half mast Friday as the nation mourned some 30,000 victims of the tsunami that hit the eastern and southern coasts of the island nation, while heavy rains and strong wind hampered the relief work in most of the areas.

All New Year celebrations were cancelled as Sri Lankans rallied together to help some 1.2 million people, who are braving inclement weather in makeshift shelters along the obliterated coastline.

Addressing a public rally in the capital Colombo, President Chandrika Kumaratunga called upon the people to unite to deal with the disaster of mammoth proportions. "The natural disaster has not spared anyone. All communities have suffered and its time we all forget our differences and work together to rebuild the nation," she said.

The tsunami that hit the country Sunday has certainly brought about unity in the nation divided along political and ethnic lines. Most houses and vehicles had either white or black flags flying on top while vehicles. Even those living in the areas administered by the Tamil Tiger guerrillas joined the nation by putting up flags.

"We too are mourning," said Jagadesan, a resident of the northern Jaffna peninsula, which was once the citadel of the **Tamil Tigers**. "We are Sri Lankans and this country is mourning so we too mourn."

Burying their differences, the two major parties representing the majority Sinhala have come together. The leader of the opposition United National Party and former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, attended the public rally and was the only other speaker to address the gathering. He too called for unity and tolerance.

The separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, who have been criticizing the government for not sending adequate supplies to the areas administered by them in the north and east, have also decided to work with the government. A delegation of government officials met **LTTE** leaders and came to an agreement that the two sides will join hands in providing relief to the people.

Death toll mounts as Sri Lanka mourns

President Kumaratunga has already said that the threat of war is remote. The head of LTTE's political wing Tamilselvam said the disaster would "definitely have a positive impact on the peace process as a whole". The two sides have agreed to launch a joint national relief program.

While visiting the eastern districts President Kumaratunga shook hands with two LTTE women cadres she found working in a community kitchen.

"The disaster is bringing the two sides together," said Ananda Samarasinge, a driver in the capital Colombo. "We all hope and pray that this country remains united and the ethnic problem is resolved."

In a major departure from its defiant stance the government has invited the LTTE to join the national task force set up to provide relief to the tsunami hit areas in the country. A letter was sent from the president's office asking LTTE political wing leader Tamilselvam to come on board as a member.

Aid has begun arriving in the LTTE held areas. A convoy of trucks led by famous Sri Lankan Cricketer Muthaiah Muralitharan reached Kilinochchi town, the political headquarters of the LTTE. A convoy of food sent by the U.N. has also arrived and the LTTE has taken charge of distribution.

But heavy rains have hampered the distribution of food and other relief items. A U.S. military plane carrying relief items including water arrived this morning. It would be handed over to the government for distribution. Another planeload of water and sanitation equipment sent by Oxfam International arrived from U.K. late in the night.

Oxfam International, one of the biggest aid agencies working in the country opened up a field office in southern Sri Lanka to coordinate aid supplied. "We are also transporting more supplies to the east and north, including sleeping mats, food, buckets, soap, matches and candles," said Malcolm Fleming spokesperson for Oxfam. "A priority is the distribution of clean water, which is essential if we are to stop the spread of disease. We have set up water tanks in many areas, whilst in the more isolated areas, where access is more difficult because of the destruction of bridges, we are distributing bottled water."

Relief workers say that the biggest challenge before them is the distribution of medicines to prevent outbreak of epidemic. Another area of concern is revival of economic activity in the region.

President Kumaratunga said Thursday that the reconstruction would cost around \$1 billion and she appealed to the international community to help the government rebuild Sri Lanka.

Load-Date: January 1, 2005

All-out war looms after killing of top Tamil Tiger

The Irish Times

November 5, 2007 Monday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 11

Length: 806 words

Body

Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka is braced for further fighting with the foreign minister insisting conflict cannot be solved militarily, writes Tom Farrell.

Hopes that Sri Lanka can avoid sliding into all-out civil war were dealt a body blow on Friday after the killing of the **Tamil Tigers**' deputy leader.

SP Thamilselvan, director of the political wing of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) was killed along with five other officers when the Sri Lankan airforce bombed Killinochchi, a town in the north of the island that serves as the Tigers' de facto capital.

As the movement's chief negotiator, Thamilselvan attended peace talks in Norway, Germany, Japan and Thailand. He also toured numerous countries, including Ireland, during the 2002-2006 ceasefire that had been brokered by Norway.

In one of his last interviews in July, Thamilselvan told **The Irish Times** that he had benefited from his visit to the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation in Co Wicklow in October 2003.

"We had counselling from academics and officials from various parts of Ireland," he said. "In fact, we were planning to develop on it during our further visits to Ireland.

"Unfortunately, the [Sri Lankan] government saw to it that our visits to Europe were curtailed in many ways."

In April 2005 he met with Minister of State for Overseas Development Conor Lenihan during a visit to Dublin when he warned that the ceasefire was beginning to come apart. The flood of foreign aid after the December 26th, 2004 tsunami, when Irish people had donated EUR 25 per head of population to disaster relief, had only led to bitter disputes over its distribution in **LTTE**-held areas.

Later that year, presidential elections in Sri Lanka brought the hawkish Mahinda Rajapaksa to power. Mr Rajapaksa accused the **LTTE** of simply using the ceasefire to re-supply and rearm.

The Tigers' objective is "Eelam" (Precious Land), a separate state for Sri Lanka's three million Tamil minority. The Tamils are predominantly Hindu unlike the 15 million Sinhalese majority who are Buddhist.

When the ceasefire was called in early 2002, large tracts of the north and east were under **LTTE** control.

All-out war looms after killing of top Tamil Tiger

The Sri Lankan army has recently expelled the Tigers from their eastern territories. Many analysts believe a major offensive into the north is now imminent.

Some 300,000 Tamils live under LTTE rule in an area of jungle and savannah known as the Vanni. Recapturing this area is likely to be a slow and bloody process; the LTTE have at least 7,000 full-time fighters, divided into male and female companies and with an elite suicide bomber division, the Black Tigers.

On October 22nd, a Black Tiger unit of at least 21 male and female fighters managed to penetrate the hangar of the air force base of Anuradhapura. Using RPG-launchers and anti-tank weapons, they managed to destroy two Mi-24 military helicopters and an array of training and reconnaissance aircraft. All were killed in the attack and some Tigers, when cornered, detonated explosive-laden suicide belts rather than be captured.

The Black Tiger attack, in which at least 13 airmen died, was backed with bombing raids by the Vaan Puligal (Air Tigers), the small fleet of propeller aircraft maintained by the Tigers.

Although the surgical strike that killed Thamilselvan was undoubtedly revenge for that attack, foreign secretary Dr Palitha Kohona insists the government is prepared to negotiate a political settlement.

"The government is not committed to a military solution," he says. "It knows from experience, not only with the Tigers, but also watching other conflicts around the world, that a conflict of this nature is never resolved militarily."

Nevertheless, in the aftermath of Thamilselvan's death, the president's brother, Gotabhaya, a former army colonel who is now defence secretary, said that the LTTE leadership could be picked off "one by one" and that "this is just a message, that we know where their leaders are".

The LTTE's navy, known as the Sea Tigers, maintain a fleet of cargo ships along with high-speed attack craft. Last month, the Sri Lankan navy sunk a 3,000-ton cargo ship, the Matsushima at an unprecedented distance of 700 nautical miles, one of several Sea Tiger vessels sunk in 2007.

This latest initiative puts the LTTE's supply lines of weaponry and ammunition in danger. The government has increased defence expenditure by 45 per cent to \$1.29 billion in 2007, even as the Sri Lankan rupee falls against the dollar and inflation reaches 19.6 per cent. Since 1983, at least 70,000 people have died in the conflict.

Tourism, which accounts for 3 per cent of Sri Lanka's gross domestic product, plummeted by 24 per cent in the first six months of this year. Sri Lanka's central bank estimates that growth rates for the \$26 billion economy will drop in 2008 regardless of the course of the war.

Load-Date: November 5, 2007

Sri Lankan displacement crisis 'quite serious': Red Cross

Indo-Asian News Service

August 28, 2006 Monday 1:39 PM EST

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Length: 633 words

Byline: Indo-Asian News Service

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, Aug 28 -- The displacement of thousands in Sri Lanka's north following fighting between the **Tamil Tigers** and the military has led to a "quite serious" humanitarian crisis, says the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

And the Geneva-based body warns that the situation in Jaffna peninsula could take a turn for the worse if a round-the-clock curfew in force there continues because of clashes between the military and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

"The humanitarian crisis in Jaffna is quite serious because of the situation and curfew," ICRC spokesman Davide Vignati told IANS over the telephone from Colombo.

An estimated 40,000 Sri Lankan soldiers are locked up in the peninsula, bracing for a possible major onslaught by the **LTTE**.

Vignati's comments came as authorities in Jaffna began to distribute the 1,500 tonnes of much needed food supplied by the government and the World Food Programme (WFP) and shipped by the ICRC to a population displaced by heavy fighting.

Both Colombo and the Tigers had pledged security guarantees for the ship that docked at Point Pedro with rice, pulses, sugar, beans and tinned fish.

The ICRC, which operates 10 offices in Sri Lanka including nine in the troubled northeast, is also shipping a vessel with 810 hygiene kits and other supplies to Jaffna.

Jaffna peninsula, linked to mainland Sri Lanka by an isthmus known as the Elephant Pass, has been cut off by land and sea since renewed fighting broke out in the peninsula Aug 11-12.

This has led to thousands fleeing their homes in search of safety as the **LTTE** shelled military positions while the Sri Lankan Air Force responded with fierce bombings. There have also been severe targeted killings.

A worried military has closed down several small camps in Jaffna, which is separated from southern India by a narrow strip of sea.

Vignati said local authorities in Jaffna estimated the number of displaced at around 45,000 but the ICRC could not confirm the figure. "We believe at least 25,000 men, **women** and children have left their villages."

Sri Lankan displacement crisis 'quite serious': Red Cross

He said many families had lost contact with their relatives in the LTTE-controlled area of Kilinochchi, south of Jaffna. Since no communication lines were operational, the ICRC was trying to link up such families by noting down their names and addresses.

According to the ICRC, the most serious victims of the latest bloodshed in Jaffna were fishing families who can no more depend on fishing because of the curfew in the sprawling region, in force due to security reasons.

"If the curfew continues, the situation can become more serious," Vignati warned.

But he said the ICRC was not aware of "any huge medical problems" in Jaffna. The main necessities were food and potable water, he added. "We are basically talking about nutritional problems."

In response to a question, Vignati said it would be difficult to compare the civilian suffering in Sri Lanka with that of Lebanon. "No two situations are the same, and the Sri Lankan security situation is changing every day."

Across the island's northeast, the most critical issue for the ICRC is lack of access to all the troubled spots.

"We would have wanted to do more, but the security situation on the ground limits our intervention," the spokesman said. "We are still assessing the situation."

Hundreds have died in recent weeks in fighting and targeted killings involving the security forces, the LTTE and anti-LTTE Tamil groups, causing serious concern in countries which are desperate to revive the flagging peace process. Fighting since April has also displaced some 150,000 people elsewhere in the northeast of Sri Lanka while around 8,000 have escaped to neighbouring India.

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Load-Date: August 29, 2006

Road to peace hits snag as Tamil Tigers and military disagree over women's clothing

Associated Press International

February 10, 2003 Monday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 201 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

They managed to negotiate a cease-fire after 19 years of war. They agreed to return each others' prisoners. But the road to reconciliation between Sri Lanka's government and Tamil Tiger rebels is now buckling over women's attire.

The two sides can't seem to agree on whether women should be allowed to wear belts.

The army has banned female guerrilla fighters from wearing belts while inside military-controlled territory, saying that belts identify the women as rebels and therefore contravene the terms of their cease-fire deal.

Under the year-old truce, insurgents may travel into government areas but they may not wear uniforms or carry weapons.

Initially, the army banned the use of black belts, the color most female rebels use, but have since extended the ban to belts of all colors, the rebel Web site TamilNet reported Monday.

The Tigers are so upset about the rule that their top female commander has lodged a complaint with European cease-fire monitors, the report said.

It was not immediately clear what the peace monitors would do about the issue.

Last week, the two sides held a fifth round of peace talks in Germany during which the matter was not raised.

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On the Net:

Tamil Web site: www.TamilNet.com

Load-Date: February 11, 2003

Dhanu

Gold Coast Bulletin (Australia)

July 16, 2005 Saturday

Copyright 2005 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: FOCUS; Pg. 32

Length: 240 words

Body

DHANU, 1991, Ghandi assassination.

Dhanu was a pretty Sri Lankan woman. She was also raped by Indian peacekeeping forces who killed her brothers, so she joined the Tamil Tigers and became part of the group's campaign of terror.

She beguiled her way to the feet of former Indian prime minister Rajiv Ghandi (pictured) on May 20, 1991, pressed a button connected to the explosives taped around her midriff and blew herself and Ghandi into Nirvana. Ana Cutter, of Columbia University's Journal of International Affairs, wrote: "It was Dhanu's severed head that made the front page of the national newspapers the next day. Visible between the dark arched eyebrows and bloody strands of hair was her bindi, the black dot that unmarried Hindu women paint between their eyes to ward off evil spirits.

"Dhanu was a member of the female suicide bomber unit of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the militarised group representing the minority Hindu population of Sri Lanka who have fought a civil war for nearly 15 years against the Sinhalese Buddhist majority of Sri Lanka. Of the 14,000 guerrillas in the Tamil force, an estimated 4000 are women." Ghandi, as prime minister, had sent troops into Sri Lanka to back the national government there. The prospect of his re-election was enough for the Tamils to send Dhanu on her bloody mission. Statistics show about 30 per cent of the suicide operations in Sri Lanka have been conducted by women.

Load-Date: July 17, 2005

40,000 flee Tamil rebel war zone

The Australian (Australia)

April 28, 2006 Friday

All-round First Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 10

Length: 612 words

Byline: Correspondents in Colombo

Body

The Times, Reuters

TENS of thousands of Sri Lankan civilians fled their homes in the northeast of the country yesterday after air force jets attacked suspected Tamil rebel targets for the second day.

The raids turned the area around the port of Trincomalee into a combat zone and heightened fears the fighting could spread and knock Sri Lanka back into civil war.

"There will be co-ordinated retaliation by the armed forces if the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) continues to attack," said government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella.

The military offensive was ordered after a Tamil suicide bomber, posing as a pregnant woman, infiltrated Colombo's military headquarters on Tuesday.

The chief officer of the Sri Lankan army was badly wounded in the attack and is in a critical condition. Eight others were killed.

Five military personnel were also killed and another five wounded when anti-personnel mines exploded in northern Sri Lanka.

The authorities accused Tamil rebel positions of firing at naval vessels.

In the retaliatory air strikes and bombardments by Sri Lankan gunboats and artillery batteries at least a dozen people were killed.

The Tamil Tigers' website showed photographs of dead civilians, including victims trapped in the rubble of their homes.

About 40,000 people are thought to have fled their villages in search of safety. The Tamil Tigers, who insist they are respecting the four-year-old ceasefire, threatened to counter-attack if the bombardment continued.

"We are in a state of readiness and are waiting for the instruction from our leadership to respond with force that will be catastrophically disabling and devastating to the enemy," said SSElilan, the Tamil Tigers leader in Trincomalee.

40,000 flee Tamil rebel war zone

"It is like a war situation in Trincomalee," the head of the Tigers' peace secretariat said.

The strikes were the first official military action since a 2002 ceasefire halted the two decades old civil war and raised hopes of a lasting peace. Both sides insist they do not want a resumption of the war that killed 64,000 people, mainly civilians.

But experts fear that all-out war is inevitable unless the spiral of violence can be stopped.

Negotiations scheduled for last week were abandoned and there are no plans for a new round of peace talks.

They followed a string of suspected Tiger attacks on the military and ethnic riots against Tamils.

Fearing the possibility of a new sectarian conflict, the Colombo Stock Exchange closed 4 per cent down yesterday and there were indications that foreigners might begin to withdraw from the island.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has warned Australian citizens to "reconsider your need to travel" to the north and east.

The violence could affect the multi-million-dollar reconstruction effort along Sri Lanka's coastline for communities hit by the tsunami 16 months ago. The army said it had closed borders with rebel territory.

Some Western aid organisations were already evacuating their staff from the area. UN agencies stayed where they were, but cancelled transport.

Swedish Major General Ulf Henricsson, who heads the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission that oversees the truce, said if air strikes continued, peace talks would become difficult. The worst-case scenario was a return to war, he said.

"I think the parties are not prepared for that," he said. "And if they were, it would be devastating for the people of Sri Lanka and for their own military capabilities."

More than 100 people had already died in the bloodiest two weeks since the truce, even before the **female** suicide bomber blew herself up at Colombo's high-security army headquarters.

The Tigers on Tuesday denied responsibility for the suicide bomb attack.

Load-Date: April 27, 2006

Amid crisis, Sri Lankan Muslims seek global support

Indo-Asian News Service

August 9, 2006 Wednesday 3:14 PM EST

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Length: 698 words

Byline: Indo-Asian News Service

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, Aug 9 -- Sri Lanka's Muslim community is seeking urgent international support for the thousands rendered homeless in the island's east due to fighting between government forces and **Tamil Tigers**.

With some 30,000 men, **women** and children having already fled Mutur town in Trincomalee district and adjoining areas and more trickling out, community leaders say a major humanitarian crisis has taken root.

"It is perhaps the largest Muslim refugee problem outside of Lebanon," said Basheer Segu Dawood, chairman of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) and also a member of parliament.

Basheer, as he is widely known, told IANS on telephone that Muslims were appealing to the co-chairs of Sri Lanka's peace process (Norway, Japan, the US and the European Union), the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) and India to come to the aid of the beleaguered community.

The refugee crisis began when the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) attacked the seaside town of Mutur, which overlooks Trincomalee harbour, early this month, leading to heavy shelling by the Sri Lankan military. As panic set in, many among the 70,000, mainly Muslim people, started to flee.

Basheer said some 25,000 had fled Mutur so far and more were desperate to get out. Another 4,000 had left nearby Thoppur town. Many Tamils left Mutur for **LTTE** areas even as Muslims made it to safer government-held territory.

"In just one school building at Kantalai (in Trincomalee district), around 13,000 people are packed. They have nothing except the clothes they were in when they fled Mutur. There are just two or three toilets. Can you imagine what people are going through?" he asked, speaking mostly in Tamil.

"Another 1,500 families have taken shelter in Kinniya (also in Trincomalee). The conditions in the refugee centres are very difficult," the 46-year-old politician added. "This is the biggest refugee crisis Muslims have been battling since the **LTTE** forced out thousands of Muslims from Jaffna in the early 1990s.

"We want the co-chairs to hold an emergency meeting to discuss our plight. This is a humanitarian crisis. We have approached India. We want the OIC to act."

Basheer admitted that the Tigers alerted Mutur's Muslim leadership about their impending attack two hours ahead of time and added that the **LTTE**'s intention was probably not to drive away the Muslims.

Amid crisis, Sri Lankan Muslims seek global support

"But they would have surely known that Muslims would run away," he said. "That did happen because the military also shelled Mutur badly and they did not listen to our desperate pleas to stop the shelling.

"When people fled they had just their clothes; nothing else. People walked and walked for miles. On the way some children fainted asking for water. Why did all this happen?

"There is so much fear now that children fear even the sound of motorcycles. Many do not want to return to Mutur. They fear everyone. The **LTTE** also took away some Muslim men for questioning. We don't know their fate."

Muslims, who speak Tamil but call themselves a distinct community, constitute eight percent of Sri Lanka's 20 million but a third of the population in the multi-ethnic east. Initially many Muslims sided with Tamil militancy. But over the years they drifted away, finally leading to major Tamil-Muslim fissures.

The SLMC leader pointed out that some two months ago anonymous leaflets in the name of the **LTTE** - which the Tigers disowned - warned Mutur Muslims to quit. So some tensions were already in the air.

He said ordinary Sri Lankans and, to some extent, the authorities were providing assistance to the Muslim refugees. Food is being cooked on a mass scale.

"But Kantalai is a Sinhalese-majority area, and so there are tensions," he said. "Many Muslims have gone as far as Colombo, Kurunegala, Anuradhapura and Kandy in search of shelter."

Basheer criticised both Colombo and the **LTTE** for the Muslim suffering.

"The government says it won the Mutur battle, the Tigers claim they achieved their objectives. But people suffered and the government failed to give security in an area it governed. People are now refugees. Is this not a fact?"

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Load-Date: August 15, 2006

Tamils flee as civil war looms in Sri Lanka

The Irish Times

January 14, 2006 Saturday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 10

Length: 514 words

Byline: Rahul Bedi in New Delhi

Body

SRI LANKA: Two groups of Sri Lankan Tamils have fled to neighbouring India by boat in recent days, raising fears that the island republic is sliding back into civil war after nearly four years of a ceasefire between Tamil Tiger rebels and the military.

A group of nine Tamils, including three children and three women, arrived on southern India's coast of Tamil Nadu state yesterday from northwest Sri Lanka where the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have waged a civil war since 1983 for independence that has claimed over 65,000 lives.

Yesterday's group of fleeing Tamils followed an earlier batch of 24 that included seven women and nine children, who crossed the Palk Strait a day earlier.

With still no sign of peace talks between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tiger rebels, many people in the country fear the delay could lead to increased violence and possibly even the outbreak of hostilities.

Nearly 60 military personnel have died in various incidents such as ambushes and mine blasts last month, sparking fears that the 2002 ceasefire agreement could collapse.

The Tamil Tigers have disclaimed all responsibility for the attacks and blamed armed civilian groups for the violence, but their credibility is somewhat suspect.

So far, the army has not retaliated as the government is hoping to put pressure on the Tigers internationally to resume talks, but the security situation on the ground is fast deteriorating, reports from Colombo indicate.

Tensions rose soon after President Mahinda Rajapakse assumed office last November.

Though Mr Rajapakse offered to hold direct talks with the Tamil rebels, analysts said his insistence on a unitary state has disappointed the island's minority Tamils.

For over two decades the LTTE has been waging civil war for a separate state in the north and east of the island republic for ethnic minority Tamils.

They allege discrimination by the majority Sinhalese. They maintain that the minority Tamils can prosper only away from Sinhalese domination.

Tamils flee as civil war looms in Sri Lanka

Despite international intervention in recent weeks, including from the US, talks on a review of the ceasefire agreement are still to begin.

The government is willing to hold talks in any Asian country. But the rebels insist they should be held in Norway - closely involved as a peace facilitator for several years - or in any other European country, but no consensus is forthcoming.

Tension, meanwhile, is high in the **LTTE**'s stronghold in the northern Jaffna peninsula where they run a de facto government, and in eastern Sri Lanka where people complain that increased house-to-house searches, detentions and intense scrutiny at checkpoints are a throwback to the violent past.

Colombo has repeatedly said it will not be provoked into resuming war, but President Rajapakse is caught in a cleft stick - juggling the demands of hard-line allies and an increasingly frustrated military who want to teach the Tigers a lesson.

The rebels, for their part, say they want peace, but add that they are ready to use suicide bombers - like they did before with devastating results - if war resumes.

Load-Date: January 14, 2006

End of Document

Tamil Tigers launch PR campaign to stop child recruitment

Associated Press International

February 7, 2003 Friday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 460 words

Byline: DILIP GANGULY; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Top Tamil Tiger commanders have met with thousands of ethnic Tamil parents to kickoff a public relations campaign aimed at stopping recruitment of child soldiers, a Web site reported Friday, ahead of a fifth round of peace talks with the government that will address human rights issues.

Rebel military commanders and heads of districts' political wings met on Thursday with about 5,000 Tamil parents, mostly women, in eastern Sri Lanka where there have been the most reports of child recruitment, extortion and kidnapping.

"We ask the parents to raise concerns if our cadres have unknowingly committed any mistakes," T. Ramesh, who heads the rebels' Batticaloa command, was quoted as telling parents by TamilNet, a Web site that covers rebel affairs.

"We urge you to help us rectify these mistakes."

Ramesh said the Batticaloa meeting is the first in a series that the rebels will hold in areas where Tamils are in majority.

The rebels are coming under growing international pressure to end child recruitment, a year after signing a cease-fire with the government forces after 19 years of fighting that have killed 65,000 people.

European cease-fire monitors found a 23 mm gun and hundreds of rounds of ammunition on a trawler run by the guerrillas, in violation of the truce, a spokesman for the monitors said Friday. The rebels made no immediate comment.

The Tigers' public relations campaign began ahead of the fifth round of peace talks, due to open in Berlin, Germany, Friday. Human rights is set to be on the agenda for the first time, including the alleged use of child soldiers by the rebels.

Human rights organizations have accused the rebels of using children as young as 12 to fight, and UNICEF says it has received 313 complaints of child recruitment by the rebels, contrary to the terms of the cease-fire.

At Thursday's meeting, Ramesh justified the existence of the rebels' military machine that includes long-range artillery and the dreaded suicide squad, called the "Black Tigers."

Tamil Tigers launch PR campaign to stop child recruitment

"The challenge posed by our military capability is what finally enabled both sides to seek negotiations," Ramesh said of the estimated 4,000 to 5,000 combatants and support staff that have successfully resisted the pressure of Sri Lanka's 100,000-strong military.

"We do not force anyone to join our movement. We have turned away several underage youngsters who tried to enlist with us."

In the four previous rounds of peace talks, the rebels have scaled down their demand for a separate Tamil state. They now say that they would be satisfied with right to self-rule and away from domination on the 3.2 million Tamils by the 14 million Sinhalese majority.

The rebels are still recruiting to its ranks, saying the government is too and they have to maintain a balance of forces.

Load-Date: February 8, 2003

End of Document

Karuna Group and LTTE Continue Abducting and Recruiting Children in Sri Lanka

Targeted News Service

March 29, 2007 Thursday 4:18 AM EST

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Length: 1329 words

Byline: Targeted News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

Human Rights Watch issued the following news release:

Despite promises to investigate abductions of children by the pro-government Karuna group, Sri Lankan authorities have taken no effective action and abductions continue, Human Rights Watch said today. The armed opposition Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) also continue to recruit children in Sri Lanka and use them as soldiers.

In Sri Lanka's eastern Batticaloa district, Human Rights Watch in February witnessed children clearly under the age of 17, some armed with assault rifles, performing guard duty at various offices of the Karuna group's political party, the Thamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP). Sri Lankan soldiers and police routinely walked and drove by the children without taking any visible action.

Human Rights Watch saw a child with an assault rifle guarding the TMVP office in Kiran, home town of the group's leader, V. Muralitharan, also known as Colonel Karuna. Other children, some of them armed, were seen in and around TMVP offices in the district, including in Valaichchenai and Morakkottanchenai, where the office is across the road from a Sri Lankan army base.

"When government troops at a military base look across the street at children standing guard at a Karuna office and do nothing, it's hard to believe the government is taking any meaningful steps to end this abuse," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "The Karuna group's use of child soldiers with state complicity is more blatant today than ever before."

President Mahinda Rajapakse and other Sri Lankan officials have repeatedly said that the government would investigate the allegations of state complicity in Karuna abductions and hold accountable any member of the security forces found to have violated the law. To date, however, the government has taken no effective steps.

According to UNICEF, there were 45 reported cases of Karuna child abductions in three months - 10 in December, 24 in January, and 11 in February. Among these were three children abducted by Karuna cadre from camps for internally displaced persons in Batticaloa district. The actual number is likely to be higher because many parents are afraid to report cases, and these numbers do not reflect the forced recruitment by the Karuna group of young men over 17.

The Karuna group has released at least a dozen children since December. According to UNICEF, however, at least three of the released children were subsequently re-recruited.

Karuna Group and LTTE Continue Abducting and Recruiting Children in Sri Lanka

In February, parents of one abducted child and two abducted young men told Human Rights Watch how Karuna cadre had abducted their sons in recent weeks. In the first case, Karuna group members first abducted the child in July, allowed him home for a family visit, and about one week later came and took him back. In the second, Karuna cadre abducted two young men on the A11 road between Welikanda and Valaichchenai. When relatives of the two complained at the nearby Karuna camp in Karapola, Karuna cadre told them not to report the case - or to say the LTTE took their sons.

At the same time, the LTTE has continued to abduct and forcibly recruit children and young adults, including women and girls, Human Rights Watch said. UNICEF documented 19 cases of LTTE child recruitment in January and nine in February. The LTTE has also abducted at least four people from camps for the internally displaced.

Access to LTTE-controlled areas remains difficult, but credible reports indicate that the group is increasingly recruiting and deploying girls as frontline soldiers in the East. In the recent fighting in the Thoppigala region of Batticaloa district, at least three girls fighting with the LTTE were reportedly killed.

Human Rights Watch has repeatedly documented and condemned the use of child soldiers by the LTTE, and it has called on the United Nations to impose targeted sanctions on the LTTE because of its long history of recruiting children in violation of international law.

"The LTTE is a notorious repeat offender of child recruitment," Adams said. "It's a shame that government forces complicit with the Karuna group are now involved in the same ugly practice."

There is strong evidence that government forces are now openly cooperating with the Karuna group despite its illegal activities, Human Rights Watch said. Armed Karuna members regularly walk or ride throughout Batticaloa district in plain view of government forces.

In February, Human Rights Watch saw a Karuna commander named Jeyam riding atop a Sri Lankan armored personnel vehicle outside Valaichchenai. In Batticaloa town, residents have seen Karuna cadre patrolling jointly with the police.

The Karuna group maintains at least five camps in the jungle about 10 kilometers northwest of Welikanda town in the Polonnaruwa district, about 50 kilometers northwest of Batticaloa town. Welikanda is where the Sri Lankan Army's 23rd division has its base. The area is firmly under government control, as is the main A11 road from the eastern districts to the Welikanda area. The Karuna camp at Mutugalla village is near a Sri Lankan army post.

Independent sources have provided detailed information on abductions and recruitment of children by the Karuna group and the LTTE. In February the UN special advisor on children and armed conflict, Allan Rock, reported to the Security Council on Karuna abductions of children with state complicity and on child recruitment by the LTTE, based on his visit to Sri Lanka in November. Human Rights Watch has provided the government with its 100-page report on Karuna abductions, "Complicit in Crime: State Collusion in Abductions and Child Recruitment by the Karuna Group," published in January. With case studies, maps and photographs, the report shows how Karuna cadres operate with impunity in government-controlled areas, abducting boys and young men, training them in camps, and deploying them for combat.

"The government says it needs evidence to start an investigation, but it already has ample information," Adams said. "In addition to UN documentation and testimonies in our report, many families have made formal complaints to the police."

Last year President Rajapakse created a one-man commission to look at abductions and enforced disappearances across the country. The commissioner came to Batticaloa in January, two months after canceling his first scheduled visit without warning. Families with abducted children were informed in a haphazard manner and then could not find the meeting place, which was changed at the last minute. Some of them did meet the commissioner, but his staff prevented others from providing information.

Karuna Group and LTTE Continue Abducting and Recruiting Children in Sri Lanka

In December the military summoned the mothers of some children abducted by the Karuna group to an army base and asked them to provide information about their cases. The military pressured the mothers to say that their children were taken by "an unidentified group."

Karuna has denied allegations that his forces are abducting or recruiting children. He told Human Rights Watch in a telephone communication on February 9 that his forces had no members under age 18, and that they would discipline any commander who tried to recruit a person under that age.

In January the TMVP released regulations for its military wing, stating that 18 was the minimum age for recruitment, and specifying penalties for members who conscript children. Karuna said he was willing to discuss ways that the regulations could be improved, but said that unscheduled visits to his camps were not possible due to security concerns.

On March 19, Human Rights Watch wrote to the TMVP, requesting a response to the recent allegations of continued child abductions in Batticaloa district. As of March 28, the TMVP had not replied.

"The Karuna group is doing the government's dirty work," Adams said. "It's time for authorities in Colombo to stop this group from using children in its forces."

TNS AVam-070420-912959 Amalone

Load-Date: April 21, 2007

End of Document

Factional fighting kills 11 as Japanese envoy pushes peace bid

Agence France Presse -- English

May 8, 2006 Monday 12:39 PM GMT

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Length: 598 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 8 2006

Body

At least 11 people were killed in factional fighting in Sri Lanka on Monday, defence sources said, as a Japanese envoy sought to salvage the island's faltering peace process.

A breakaway faction of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) launched a pre-dawn attack against a base of the main guerrilla group in the northeastern district of Trincomalee, the sources said.

There was no word from the Tigers or the faction led by V. Muralitharan, better known as Colonel Karuna. But the sources who gave the casualty figure said the attack appeared to be retaliation for an **LTTE** attack on Karuna's forces last month.

The pro-**LTTE** Nitharsanam.com website said the mainstream guerrillas were able to repel the attack by the Karuna faction, which they alleged was supported by government forces. The military denies any involvement.

"An attempt by paramilitaries backed by the Sri Lanka army failed," Nitharsanam said, adding that Tiger rebels captured several guns from the attack force. It did not give casualty figures for either side.

The defence ministry said it had no details because the fighting was in rebel-held territory.

The reports of violence emerged as Japanese envoy Yasushi Akashi met President Mahinda Rajapakse. "They discussed the present state of the peace process for about an hour," a spokesman for Rajapakse's office said, without giving details.

Colombo is seeking international help to revive talks with the Tigers, who are fighting for a homeland for minority Tamils.

Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera was visiting neighbouring India to brief officials about efforts to salvage a Norwegian-brokered truce signed four years ago.

India's Junior Foreign Minister Anand Sharma "expressed the hope that the parties would resume talks at the earliest," the Indian foreign ministry said after Samaraweera's briefing.

Factional fighting kills 11 as Japanese envoy pushes peace bid

A curfew imposed on Sunday in the northern peninsula of Jaffna was lifted Monday afternoon, the military said. But the main entry and exit points to northern rebel-held territory, closed since Sunday, remained blocked by troops.

"We hope to be able to open the entry and exit points very soon," said defence ministry spokesman Prasad Samarasinghe.

Security forces imposed the curfew ahead of protests over last week's killing of seven men whom the army said were **Tamil Tigers**. Rebels described them as civilians.

The security measures also followed reports that eight men were missing in Jaffna on Sunday.

Following his talks with Rajapakse, Akashi was Tuesday to meet the leader of the **LTTE**'s political wing, S.P. Thamilselvan, in a rebel-held northern town, the Tigers confirmed. Akashi is scheduled to brief the press on his talks on Wednesday.

Despite the truce signed in 2002, more than 200 people, mostly civilians, have died over the last month in tit-for-tat attacks by government and rebel forces.

Talks on a permanent settlement have stagnated since April 2003 after six rounds of face-to-face discussions that began in September 2002.

In February the government and rebels held an initial round of discussions in Switzerland aimed at shoring up their ceasefire amid an earlier surge in violence. But a follow-up round was postponed and killings have since escalated.

In the most serious attack since the truce took hold, a **female** suicide bomber wounded army chief Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka and 30 others in an attack at army headquarters in Colombo on April 25.

Eleven people including the bomber died. The government retaliated with air strikes on suspected rebel positions.

More than 60,000 people have been killed in the separatist conflict since 1972.

Load-Date: May 9, 2006

LANKA TAKES INTEREST IN TAXILA, GANDHARA UPLIFT

The Nation (AsiaNet)

July 19, 2007 Thursday

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Length: 694 words

Body

ISLAMABAD -- Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary Dr Palitha TB Kohona has hoped that Pakistan-Sri Lanka bilateral annual trade would reach \$ one billion from the existing \$216 million due to the implementation of Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary was talking to TheNation in an exclusive interview here before returning home Thursday evening. This was his third visit to Pakistan and second one as Foreign Secretary.

During his stay in Pakistan, Dr Kohona met Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri besides holding secretary-level bilateral consultations with the Pakistani officials. Both the sides discussed the matters of mutual concern and sought ways to give more depth and substance to the already good relations enjoying by the two countries.

The Foreign Secretary wanted both the countries to take onboard the private entrepreneurs for the uplift of trade, tourism, education, gemstones and jewellery sectors. He said that Sri Lanka had an edge over apparel and tourism industry and it had an expertise in the management of hotels and restaurants.

He also said that Sri Lanka had much more to offer for tourists, as it has 900 miles beaches spread all over the compact island. It also has sub-tropical history, gigantic ruins, friendly English speaking people and diverse culture. The Foreign Secretary was interested in the development of Taxila and Gandhara towns as according to him, about 200,000 Sri Lankan Buddhists visit India for fulfilment of their religious obligations.

Dr Kohona evaded questions on Kashmir and the prevalent situation in Pakistan but talked about his country's strategy in dealing with the militants of Liberation of Tamil Tigers Elam (LTTE).

According to him, the Sri Lankan government tried its level best to engage LTTE militants into substantive talks but the latter resisted its every sincere effort. Therefore, his government is using military option to counter terrorism, but at the same time it is seeking a process to address the root causes through negotiations.

When asked about the definition of terrorism, the Foreign Secretary, who has also been to the United Nations, said that even the UN had found difficulties in defining this term. However, he believed hijacking of a plane, blowing up of a building, killing civilians indiscriminately and perishing children going to school are the acts of terrorism.

He said LTTE has adopted the approach of killing innocent people indiscriminately, including women and children, destroying worship places, central banks, trains, etc. All these acts cannot be called as a liberation struggle but terrorist acts. He said the world does not recognize terrorism as an acceptable means of achieving political goals. The UN has adopted 13 conventions, which clearly speak of the mood of international community in condemning terrorism in all its forms.

LANKA TAKES INTEREST IN TAXILA , GANDHARA UPLIFT

The Foreign Secretary said there is a lot of pressure on his government from donor countries to resolve the conflict through negotiations. But, he said, the critics don't seem to take into account the consistent efforts of his government in trying to bring the LTTE militants on the negotiating table. The militants instead of finding peaceful means launched massive attacks on government assets as well as private properties leaving no other option for the government but to confront them militarily.

The government has expelled the LTTE militants from the eastern part of the country and President Mahinda Rajapaksa has announced a major reconstruction and development package for the area. He was of the view that if the young generation was given economic initiatives there would less chances of their getting attracted to violence.

Giving facts about his country, the Foreign Secretary said Sri Lanka has 92 per cent literacy rate while the life expectancy for males is 71 years and for females it is 76 years.

The infant mortality rate is 12 to 1000. He said the UN Human Development Index scores very high and the country is about to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of the UN. The per capita income is \$1335, almost touching the status of middle income group.

Load-Date: July 23, 2007

End of Document

Bus blasts kill 21 in Sri Lanka; Tamil Tigers deny involvement

The Associated Press

January 6, 2007 Saturday 12:12 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 402 words

Byline: By KRISHAN FRANCIS, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Separate explosions inside two passenger buses killed 21 people, authorities said Saturday. Officials blamed the Tamil Tiger rebels, but the group denied any involvement.

Fifteen people died and dozens were wounded after a bomb tore through a bus in Meetiyagoda on Saturday, some 60 miles south of the capital. Police said the blast could have been triggered by a suicide bomber.

"There is a **female** body inside the bus and looking at the damage the blast has caused around her, we suspect that she could have been a suicide bomber," said Upul Ariyaratne, a senior police official.

Tamil Tiger rebels fighting for a separate homeland for ethnic minority Tamils in Sri Lanka are known for deploying suicide bombers in their campaign against the state.

Ariyaratne said there were about 65 passengers inside the bus at the time of the blast and about 40 had been admitted to hospital.

The insurgents, however, rejected the military's accusations that they carried out both bus bombings.

"We totally deny that. We did not do that, that's all I can say," Rasiah Ilanthirayan, the rebels' military spokesman, told The Associated Press by telephone from the rebel stronghold Kilinochchi.

A similar blast Friday evening killed six other passengers on a busy highway in Nittambuwa, 25 miles northeast of Colombo, and 30 passengers were wounded.

The government's military spokesman, Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe, said 10 people had been detained for questioning regarding Friday's bus blast. No formal charges had been lodged, but they were still being questioned, he said.

The bus explosions came days after the rebels warned the government of "serious repercussions" for an air force bombing that they say killed 16 ethnic Tamil civilians, including eight children. The military said it targeted only rebel positions in the airstrike Tuesday.

Sri Lanka has recently experienced a sharp rise in violence; more than 3,600 fighters and civilians were killed in renewed fighting in 2006, according to Defense Ministry.

Bus blasts kill 21 in Sri Lanka ; Tamil Tigers deny involvement

A Norwegian-brokered 2002 cease-fire between the rebels and the government has come under serious threat as more than 3,600 fighters and civilians were killed in renewed fighting in 2006. The cease-fire still officially holds.

Before the cease-fire, the conflict claimed the lives of about 65,000 people and displaced another 1.6 million.

Associated Press writers Dilip Ganguly and Ruwan Weerakoon contributed to this report.

Load-Date: January 7, 2007

End of Document

Tigers a law unto themselves

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

November 6, 2003 Thursday

Late Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 9

Length: 381 words

Byline: Christopher Kremmer

Body

Sri Lanka's ***Tamil Tigers*** guerillas are renowned for ruthlessly eliminating their enemies. So it comes as a surprise to learn that the movement has decided to abolish the death penalty.

In the rebel capital of Kilinochchi, in the north of the island, a gleaming new courts complex symbolises the Tigers' yearning for both autonomy and legitimacy. Here, judges trained at the rebels' own law college dispense a form of justice they say is superior to a Sri Lankan judiciary they regard as corrupt and inefficient.

Chickens peck the ground adjacent to the district courthouse, while inside, a judge is dressed like a Mormon missionary. It is stiflingly hot, and the ceiling fans are not making much of a difference, and the case of the male plaintiff, who claims the ***female*** defendant is not paying interest on the loan he made to her, will not make the evening news bulletin on Voice of

the Tigers' radio.

It may appear bucolic, but the rebels' courts have the power of life and death. In the past decade they have ordered the execution of four prisoners.

Now, says the chief of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's (***LTTE***) judiciary, their autonomous state of Eelam is sufficiently secure to dispense with the cruel and barbaric punishment. "Our leader told us that after the war was finished we could finish with the death penalty. Now we are a separate country, so the time to abolish it has come," said Elyaphamphy Pararajasingham, speaking before this week's political crisis in Colombo plunged the peace process into disarray.

Although sceptics question the ability of an unelected militia that rules by the gun to respect the rule of law, Tamil lawyers have constructed an extensive body of law, all of which has been approved by the Tigers' supreme leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran. He has his own legal problems. He is wanted in India for the murder of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi.

The law of Eelam includes complete criminal and civil codes, and a law of evidence, all collected in 19 volumes. Students study the law of torts, international law and English. The courts have ruled on 10,000 criminal cases since they were set up in 1993. But given the ***LTTE***'s record of bombings that have killed hundreds of innocent civilians there is one curious gap there is no offence of terrorism.

Tigers a law unto themselves

Load-Date: July 17, 2007

End of Document

Sri Lanka back on brink as rival sides pay ceasefire little heed

The Irish Times

May 4, 2006 Thursday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 12

Length: 867 words

Body

SRI LANKA: The escalation in violence between Tamil Tigers and government forces suggests a return to civil war may be imminent, writes Rahul Bedi in Sampur

Sri Lanka's undeclared civil war has intensified over the past month, which has been the bloodiest since the 2002 truce between Tamil Tiger rebels and the government, triggering fears of a return to hostilities.

The warring parties have been engaged in tit-for-tat bombings and attacks on one another since early last month, which have claimed more than 100 lives.

But both sides claim they want peace and a return to stalled negotiations to resolve almost 25 years of war that has been waged by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for an independent homeland in the north and east of the island, and which has claimed more than 65,000 lives.

The Tamils, who constitute about 12 per cent of Sri Lanka's population of 19 million, claim relentless discrimination at the hands of the majority Sinhalese community.

There are few positive signs on the ground to indicate that peace is imminent, even though the government has halted air strikes on Tamil Tiger-controlled regions in northeastern Sri Lanka which followed a suspected suicide attack on army headquarters last week.

The government has also been pressing peace broker Norway and aid donors to help bring the Tigers to the table, the government's top official handling the peace bid said.

"We are optimistic. I am an optimist," chief negotiator Palitha Kohona said earlier this week. "We are awaiting responses to the proposals we have made."

But Helen Olafsdottir, spokeswoman for the Nordic-staffed truce monitoring mission, said trouble was escalating. "Both sides seem to be breaching the ceasefire agreement and the breaches seem to be becoming more serious. But most people who suffer are civilians," she said in the capital Colombo.

Meanwhile, dazed survivors of the military bombings in Sampur in northeast Sri Lanka last week wandered listlessly around in makeshift refugee camps, insecure and uncertain about their future.

In debilitating heat, the 15,000-odd refugees, mostly women and children from the targeted coastal fishing village about 300km (186 miles) north of Colombo, lay limply under trees, bullock carts or simply by the side of mud roads leading to their improvised shelter.

Sri Lanka back on brink as rival sides pay ceasefire little heed

Stragglers from adjoining villages continued to swell their numbers, fearing the resumption of shelling by government forces. Food and water were scarce.

"We are tense as we anticipate further retaliation from the Sri Lankan military," said Indrani, a 28-year-old mother of four who fled Sampur a week ago, immediately after the first round of bombing raids and artillery fire began.

It lasted 16 hours and killed 12 people, including children. In its wake it left smashed buildings, tangled power lines and blood-stained bomb and shell craters.

Sampur is one of numerous rebel-held pockets across northern and eastern Sri Lanka that are controlled by the LTTE and entry to which is through heavily manned checkpoints.

In such enclaves, the LTTE manages the local administration - runs schools, collects taxes, dispenses justice and even runs a bank. The Sri Lankan government continues to finance the LTTE-run regions, providing them with money and food but having no say in administration.

The government strikes followed last week's suicide attack in Colombo, which seriously wounded the country's top army commander and killed at least 11 others.

The assassination attempt was carried out by a 21-year old pregnant woman, reportedly a member of the LTTE's Black Suicide Squad, renowned for its skill at deploying against political, military, economic and civilian targets.

The Black Suicide Squad has executed about 240 attacks since its first in 1987.

The LTTE has not reacted to the military's air strikes. But security analysts believe it is only a matter of time before it does.

"The Tigers are masters of the unexpected, hitting high-profile targets after meticulous planning," a senior security analyst in Colombo said.

"We will fight back and retaliate," LTTE's district political chief S Elilan said, sitting under a photograph of his leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran and ringed by young baby-faced armed cadres at Sampur. He also professed ignorance at the LTTE's involvement in last week's suicide bombing.

"The country's future is being held hostage to the security situation and to frantic 'back channel' negotiations between the two sides," a foreign diplomat involved in the peace process said.

The LTTE is acknowledged as one of the world's most efficient, ruthless, committed and innovative guerrilla groups, and has successfully taken on the Sri Lankan and Indian armies, which are superior both in numbers and equipment.

Established by Prabhakaran, a 50-year-old portly Tamilian from Jaffna, in 1976, it has grown from a guerrilla force to a semi-conventional army backed by an unconventional navy, an enviable intelligence network and even a nascent air force.

Current security estimates indicate that it has a fighting cadre strength of between 8,000-10,000. Intelligence officials claim it has used the four-year ceasefire to regroup, re-arm and redeploy in preparation for renewed fighting.

Load-Date: May 4, 2006

Policemen suspended in Sri Lanka bus blast investigation

Xinhua General News Service

April 4, 2007 Wednesday 4:00 AM EST

Copyright 2007 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 291 words

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

At least five policemen have been suspended in the investigation on Monday's bus bomb blast in Sri Lanka's eastern town of Ampara, officials said Wednesday.

A police sergeant, three constables and a woman officer are among those suspended.

A powerful bomb ripped apart a state owned passenger bus in Ampara's Konduvattuvan area around noon on Monday killing 16 people and causing injuries to 26 others.

The government blamed the **Tamil Tigers** for the attack.

Asoka Udayanthi, the **female** police officer who has faced the suspension said "we have done our duty while carrying out the orders from the top so I can't understand why we should be suspended."

The authorities say the police team in question had not carried out proper security checks before the bus left the Ampara bus stand heading for the central province town of Badulla.

The state administrative officials in Ampara said that the government had approved the compensation of 100,000 rupees (926 U. S. dollars) each in respect of the dead married adults while half of that amount would be paid in respect of the unmarried dead.

The next kin of the children being killed would receive 25,000 rupees (231 dollars) and 10,000 rupees (93 dollars) would be paid as compensation for each of the injured.

Officials said the identification process of the dead had been completed and almost everyone were residents of Eastern Province.

The bus blast blamed on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) was part of the growing armed conflict despite the Norwegian backed peace process.

Over 4000 people have been killed in the conflict since the end of 2005 when the new cycle of violence began in the over three- decade-old ethnic conflict.

Load-Date: April 4, 2007

Policemen suspended in Sri Lanka bus blast investigation

End of Document

War drums beat in Sri Lanka but truce talks still target: analysts

Agence France Presse -- English

April 26, 2006 Wednesday 7:28 AM GMT

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Length: 650 words

Byline: Bryan Pearson

Dateline: COLOMBO, April 26 2006

Body

Air strikes, mortar attacks, a suicide bombing in the heart of Colombo -- while it may seem Tamil Tiger rebels and Sri Lanka's government are beating war drums, they are in fact preparing to return to truce talks, some analysts said Wednesday.

The fact that the government has recommitted itself to the ceasefire is a good sign, said retired army brigadier general Vipul Boteju, who added that President Mahinda Rajapakse had little choice but to order limited air strikes after Tuesday's suicide bombing at army headquarters in Colombo.

"The government had to retaliate, they had to do something. They selected Trincomalee. They are showing we are not willing to simply accept what the Tigers have done to us," Boteju told AFP.

Sri Lanka's airforce Wednesday carried out retaliatory strikes against Tamil Tiger positions in the northeastern district of Trincomalee where the military bombed a cluster of boats of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) on Tuesday night, a police official in the area said.

The air assault followed Tuesday's suicide bombing of the army chief's motorcade in Colombo which left lieutenant general Sarath Fonseka badly wounded and 10 others dead.

The attack was blamed on a "Black Tiger" **female** suicide bomber who had pretended to be pregnant.

"Yesterday was to show the world they can hit any place in the country," said Boteju, who warned however that the **LTTE** would not simply take the air strikes lying down.

"They will hit something big, maybe overrun an army camp," he said. "They may go for a big economic target in Colombo. But then afterwards both sides will say, okay, let's now go for talks in Geneva."

Last week the **Tamil Tigers** indefinitely pulled out of scheduled talks on their tottering four-year-old truce in Switzerland, accusing the government of attacks on ethnic Tamil civilians and complaining about the transport arrangements for internal rebel meetings.

War drums beat in Sri Lanka but truce talks still target: analysts

Another analyst, retired air force chief Harry Gunatillake, also believed the Tigers were trying to strengthen their hand before agreeing to further talks in Switzerland.

"They brought the action right to Colombo to get people worried," he said, referring to the suicide bombing.

"They want to create fear among the people so they can strengthen their position if and when they go back to Geneva," he said, adding the Tigers had in the past used similar tactics ahead of scheduled peace talks.

If the government made only limited use of air strikes, he said, there was still a chance talks could resume in Switzerland perhaps as soon as May.

But if Tamil civilians were killed in the strikes, he warned, the situation could escalate into a "big conflagration".

The head of the government body for co-ordinating the shaky peace process in Sri Lanka, Palitha Kohona, said the military response had come after the rebels had fired on army bases in Trincomalee.

"The airforce and naval action is to deter and contain the LTTE from carrying out further provocative attacks," said Kohona, the Director General of the Peace Secretariat.

But Tamil politician Dharmalingam Sidhathan, himself a former rebel, said the suicide bombing and the government's immediate retaliation signaled a return to full-scale hostilities.

"You have the LTTE carrying out an attack inside the army camp and the government retaliating with air strikes," Sidhathan said. "If this is not war, what (else can you) ... call it?"

Nandakalyananda Godage, a former deputy foreign secretary, was also downcast.

"They may be talking peace and a negotiated settlement but they don't want it," he said, referring to the LTTE.

"The government has allowed them to attack us with impunity. Any other country would have hit back very hard," said Godage.

"The only option is to ask the United Nations to send a peacekeeping force as they did in Cambodia and Darfur," he said.

"If the international community doesn't support us we will have a bloodbath."

Load-Date: April 27, 2006

Japanese peace envoy to hold talks with Tigers amid unrest

Agence France Presse -- English

May 9, 2006 Tuesday 5:12 AM GMT

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Length: 550 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 9 2006

Body

Japan's special peace envoy was to hold talks with Tamil Tiger rebels Tuesday as the Sri Lankan government pressed the guerrillas to return to the negotiating table to halt the spiral of violence.

Yasushi Akashi left for the rebel-held town of Kilinochchi, 330 kilometres (200 miles) north of here in a Sri Lankan military helicopter to meet with Tiger political wing chief S. P. Thamilselvan, diplomats said.

Akashi, who helped raise some 4.5 billion dollars in aid to support the island's Norwegian-backed peace process in June 2003, held talks with President Mahinda Rajapakse on Monday.

The government in a statement said it was keen to resume negotiations with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) and end the violence.

"It is imperative that it is through negotiations that the cycle of violence, which is spiraling dangerously out of control, could be brought to a halt," the government said.

It urged the Tigers to agree to an early date to resume ceasefire talks that were held in Switzerland in February. The two parties agreed to meet again on April 19, but the Tigers declined.

Fighting continued in the northern and eastern regions as Akashi arrived here Sunday. At least 11 people were killed in factional skirmishes in the north-eastern district of Trincomalee early Monday, defence sources said.

A breakaway faction of the **LTTE** launched a pre-dawn attack against a base of the main guerrilla group in the district, the sources said.

There was no word from the Tigers or the faction led by V. Muralitharan, better known as Colonel Karuna.

The pro-**LTTE** Nitharsanam.com website said the mainstream guerrillas were able to repel the attack by Karuna's militants despite alleged support by government forces.

The defence ministry, which denies backing Karuna, said it had no details because the fighting was in rebel-held territory.

Japanese peace envoy to hold talks with Tigers amid unrest

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera was visiting neighbouring India on Tuesday to brief officials about efforts to salvage the ceasefire that has been tenuously holding since February 2002.

India's Junior Foreign Minister Anand Sharma on Monday "expressed the hope that the parties would resume talks at the earliest".

A curfew imposed on Sunday in the northern peninsula of Jaffna was lifted Monday afternoon, the military said while the main entry and exit points to northern rebel-held territory, closed on Sunday, was opened on Tuesday.

Security forces imposed the curfew ahead of protests over last week's killing of seven men described by the army as **Tamil Tigers**. Rebels said they were civilians.

The curfew also followed reports that eight men were missing in Jaffna on Sunday.

Despite a truce signed in 2002, more than 200 people, mostly civilians, have died over the last month in tit-for-tat attacks by government and rebel forces.

Talks on a permanent settlement have stagnated since April 2003 after six rounds of face-to-face discussions that began in September 2002.

In the most serious attack since the truce began, a **female** suicide bomber wounded army chief Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka and 30 others at army headquarters in Colombo on April 25.

Eleven people including the bomber died. The government retaliated with air strikes on suspected rebel positions.

More than 60,000 people have been killed in the separatist conflict since 1972.

Load-Date: May 10, 2006

Refugees within Sri Lanka face pathetic situation: study

Indo-Asian News Service

August 20, 2007 Monday 12:46 PM EST

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Length: 752 words

Byline: Indo-Asian News Service

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

New Delhi, Aug. 20 -- The thousands displaced within Sri Lanka because of fighting are leading a miserable life in refugee camps and are at times forced to return to their original areas of residence against their will, says a report.

The refugees, categorised as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), are also used as "pawns" by both the Sri Lankan state and non-state actors such as the breakaway faction of the **Tamil Tigers**, says a South Asians for Human Rights (SHAR) study.

In its 45-page report released this month by its chairperson and former Indian prime minister I.K. Gujral, SHAR has documented the sufferings of the refugees after visits to Sri Lanka's northeast - the war theatre - and areas bordering the region.

Besides refugee camps, the researchers also visited interior areas where people had been apparently persuaded to return to show a sense of normalcy to the world after government troops seized the areas from the **Tamil Tigers**.

"The living conditions in most camps were cramped, and sanitation facilities dismal," says the report, prepared by three groups of four-member investigators from Sri Lanka as well as other South Asian countries including India.

"Some camps had irregular supply of food ... leading to deteriorating health conditions among inmates, especially children, pregnant and lactating mothers.

"Since many camps were situated in isolated spots, the IDP's didn't have access to water, schooling, employment opportunities and health facilities," the report said, adding that conditions in some places were "unbearable".

Sri Lanka's population of the internally displaced has shot up ever since violence and fighting involving government forces, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) and the breakaway **LTTE** group led by Karuna escalated sharply from December 2005.

Most IDPs are Tamils although Muslims and to some extent the Sinhalese have also been uprooted from their homes. The first major refugee movement within the island in April 2006 saw some 6,000 families move from Trincomalee to Batticaloa, both in the eastern province.

Many have been forced to shift from more than one place, at times against their wishes, as they escape relentless fighting. Tamil refugees have also made it to India after crossing the sea dividing the two countries.

Refugees within Sri Lanka face pathetic situation: study

The SHAR report quoted the refugees as saying that they did not wish to return to places from where they fled "until a solution is found to the conflict and arrangements are made for (their) honourable return. (But) most were not given a choice."

The report has criticised the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which is supposed to function as a coordinated agency in Sri Lanka, for giving a virtual clean chit to the government despite many complaints by the refugees against the authorities.

It said that eastern Sri Lanka - which unlike the overwhelmingly Tamil north is multi-ethnic - was witnessing a gradual militarization besides officially sponsored changes in ethnic demography.

"From the appointment of military personnel to high posts in the Provincial Council of the eastern province ... to military oversight of INGO (international NGOs) activities, a militarized civil administration appears to exist in the east.

"Public property such as temples, schools and hospitals have also been taken over by the armed forces, thereby denying the public access to, and the use of, these spaces...

"The current wave of displacement, return and resettlement has also led to fears among the minority communities about state sponsored colonization programmes and alteration of administrative boundaries in the region which they believe seek to change the ethnic demography of the province... The fears are well founded."

The report said that women were greater sufferers in the refugee camps. Many faced sexual demands, which they were unable to resist. "Women spoke of lack of privacy in camps and the pressures put on them by husbands who demanded conjugal relations despite the adverse circumstances."

The report also spoke about a gradual radicalisation of Muslim areas, with many complaining that women were now being compelled to "wear the fully concealing garb original from foreign Muslim tradition".

The report has come out with a series of recommendations to improve the lot of the refugees, who are the worst victims of a bloody war that has claimed many thousands of lives and shows no signs of ending.

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Load-Date: August 20, 2007

Hundreds detained in massive security search in Sri Lanka capital

Xinhua General News Service

December 31, 2005 Saturday 3:00 AM EST

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Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 306 words

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

The police in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo have detained over 800 people in a massive security search operation in the city, defense officials said Saturday.

The operation code named "strangers night No 3" was conducted between the early hours of Saturday until mid day under the supervision of the Deputy Inspector General in charge of the city, Pujith Jayasundera, officials said.

Some 2,400 policemen and 2,000 military personnel were deployed in the massive operation encompassing the city suburbs of Dematagoda, Wellawatta, Kotahena, Bambalapitiya, Borella, Kirulapona, Modera, Kolonnawa, Maligawatta and Central Colombo areas such as the Pettah, Fort and Maradana, police said.

The security forces were looking for explosives, drug dealers and criminals, the police said denying that the operation was a manhunt carried out in the predominant minority Tamil community areas in the city in order to nab members of the **Tamil Tigers**.

Officials said that some 899 people were detained including 90 **females** and most of those will be released after questioning.

Their finger prints and photographs would be taken in addition to being video filmed, the police added.

The security in the city has been heightened with the stepped up attacks on the security forces carried out by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) rebels in the northern province.

The Tigers have killed 40 soldiers in claymore mine explosions in the north since Dec. 1 raising fears of a return to hostilities in the separatist armed conflict.

The February 2002 ceasefire brokered by the Norwegian facilitators have become increasingly under threat.

The international truce monitors have warned that resumption of war may not be far away until action was taken to bring the two parties to the negotiating table.

Load-Date: January 1, 2006

POLITICS-SRI LANKA: FIFTH ROUND OF PEACE TALKS FOCUSES ON RIGHTS

IPS-Inter Press Service

February 9, 2003, Monday

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Length: 799 words

Byline: By Johan Mikaelsson

Dateline: BERLIN, Feb. 9

Body

At the fifth round of Sri Lanka peace talks, representatives of the government and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) have agreed to deal with key human rights and political issues.

Concluding two days of discussions, both chief negotiators said momentum toward a peace settlement was now "irreversible." The talks that are being facilitated by the Norwegian government were overshadowed by a suicide blast in Sri Lanka.

Just hours before talks began Friday at the Norwegian Embassy in Berlin, reports came in that two Norwegian truce monitors and a **female** interpreter had been forced to jump overboard after inspecting a rebel boat they said was smuggling weapons into Sri Lanka. The three rebels aboard set fire to the boat and blew themselves up.

LTTEs Anton Balasingham denied the rebels were smuggling weapons and said the gun boat had gone to help a fishing boat that had reported engine failure at sea.

He accused the Sri Lankan navy and truce monitors of mishandling the incident appropriately, but said it had "not affected the spirit of the (peace) process."

"We have had a bitter experience in engaging in a bloody war without achieving anything substantially," Balasingham told reporters. "We are confident that a political settlement is the answer."

The government's chief negotiator, Professor G.L. Peiris said he did not expect the incident to affect the donor countries will to give aid for reconstruction of the war-ravaged country.

"The international community sees this as a process. They are aware it is an extremely complex and painful situation. 20 years of furious war is not going to be sorted out over night. They show maturity in understanding. And the process has had its ups and downs. But one thing that is quite evident is that the two parties hold fast to the political process," Peiris said.

Underlined the progress during the step-by-step process, since the cease-fire agreement was signed, a year ago, Peiris said nobody had been killed due to war, all sections of the society had benefited and economy was on the rise.

POLITICS- SRI LANKA : FIFTH ROUND OF PEACE TALKS FOCUSES ON RIGHTS

The first international donor conference, held in Oslo last November, mobilized about \$ 70 million for rehabilitation. Another donor meeting is scheduled in Japan on June 9-10.

"We are a refreshing example of two combatants, who have been at war for two long decades, now appealing to the world with one voice to rebuild the country which has been ravaged by ethnic conflict," Peiris said.

Norway's deputy foreign minister, Vidar Helgesen, who is one of the facilitators, explained in his opening statement at the Berlin peace talks that the World Bank custodianship of the Northeast Reconstruction Fund would be signed "next week".

The money released will be more than welcome for use in the 15 projects identified by both parties as most urgent. The projects are aimed at improving the humanitarian situation in the north-east of Sri Lanka. They will relate to irrigation, basic health-care and education.

Over 64,000 people have been killed since war broke out in 1983 between the LTTE rebels, fighting for a separate state for the minority Tamils in the north and east, and the government, consisting of mainly the majority of Sinhalese.

A Norwegian-brokered cease-fire signed a year ago has stopped the fighting, and the rebels have expressed willingness to settle for autonomy within Sri Lanka under a federal structure.

Some one million Sri Lankans have fled the country and about as many have been internally displaced as a result of the conflict. The war has left deep scars in the society and a majority of people now support the on-going peace process.

The negotiators reported progress in the first discussion on human rights since peace talks began in September. Both sides agreed to have Ian Martin, a former head of Amnesty International, draft a document outlining human rights commitments to be implemented in the further course of negotiations, a joint statement after the talks said.

An agreement on Martin's significant role was achieved between the government and rebel envoys at the January talks in Thailand.

An issue of discord is the Tamil Tigers' use of children as combatants. UNICEF, Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) and Save the children, a child rights group have all claimed that LTTE continue to have many children in their ranks. The National Peace Council and other NGOs believe the answer lies in civil society pressure against rights violations.

According to Balasingham, however, the LTTE has made a solemn pledge openly and publicly, also to the UNICEF that "we will cease all forms of recruitment of under-age children".

He assured that the LTTE had handed over 350 children to their parents. "Whenever children under the age of 18 years come to LTTE offices, seeking to join the movement, we send them back home."

Load-Date: February 11, 2003

Two female Tamil Tigers, recruited as child soldiers, killed in factional fighting in Sri Lanka

Associated Press International

April 16, 2004 Friday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 306 words

Byline: KRISHAN FRANCIS; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Two **female** guerrillas recruited as child soldiers were killed in fighting between rival Tamil Tiger rebel factions in eastern Sri Lanka last week, the U.N. children's agency said Friday.

The two girls, aged 17 and 18, were conscripted by the rebel army in 2001, and belonged to a breakaway faction that was attacked last Friday, UNICEF said in a statement.

"Even now, in a time of relative peace in Sri Lanka, children have been sent to the front lines and have died there. The events of the past week ... underline exactly why there must be an end to child recruitment in Sri Lanka," UNICEF's Sri Lankan representative Ted Chaiban said.

About 33 people, including civilians, are believed to have died when the mainstream Tamil Tiger rebels, based in northern Sri Lanka, launched its offensive against the breakaway group in the eastern region headed by commander Vinayagamorthy Muralitharan.

Muralitharan, also known as Karuna, split with the mainstream Tigers early last month in a dispute over regional control and political strategy, taking 6,000 of the group's 15,000 fighters.

The rebels released 259 child soldiers after the fighting came to a halt on Tuesday, UNICEF said.

"The Liberation Tigers of Tamileelam cannot allow any re-recruitment of children," Chaiban said. "The large scale release of child soldiers must also happen in the north so we never have a tragedy like this again."

Human rights groups have estimated the Tamil rebels may have used as many as 4,000 child soldiers in their 19-year civil war against the Sri Lankan government.

The rebels began their violent campaign in 1983 to create a separate state for minority Tamils in the country's northeast, accusing the majority Sinhalese of discrimination.

More than 65,000 people perished before a Norway-brokered cease-fire, signed in February 2002, stopped the conflict.

Two female Tamil Tigers, recruited as child soldiers, killed in factional fighting in Sri Lanka

Load-Date: April 17, 2004

End of Document

Defiant Tigers vow to keep on fighting

The Irish Times

July 21, 2007 Saturday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 13

Length: 1152 words

Body

SRI LANKA: Despite major military setbacks in recent weeks, Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger separatists are determined to step up their offensive, Tom Farrell reports from their base in Killinochchi

The deputy leader of Sri Lanka's rebel **Tamil Tigers** has predicted that a major military victory last week by government forces will ultimately be pyrrhic.

Speaking to the Irish Times in the rebel-held town of Killinochchi, Selvakumar Paramoorthy Thamilselvan says that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), whose four-year ceasefire begadisintegrating last year, will henceforth adopt an "offensive posture". Last week, the Sri Lankan military overran Thoppigala, a swathe of jungle territory that was the nerve-centre of the **LTTE**'s eastern operation since the mid-1990s.

When the Norwegian-brokered ceasefire agreement (CFA) was signed in 2002, the Tamil-dominated north and east, claimed as an independent "Eelam" by the Tigers, was divided into a patchwork of government- and rebel-held areas.

The fall of Thoppigala theoretically brings the island's east entirely under government jurisdiction. The **LTTE** is now backed into a triangle of land in the north known as the Vanni.

But SP Thamilselvan, a 40-year-old former guerrilla whose pronounced limp is from a shrapnel wound, is defiant: "The five years saw the **LTTE** with all its power restrained because the CFA bound them," he says.

"But now we see that one party has visibly failed and therefore the leadership's thinking is that we need to go into an offensive posture and then retake our positions so that the people will be free of

military occupation. Then a political resolution can be talked about."

The **LTTE**'s military spokesman echoes this defiance. Rasiah Illanthirayan - nom de guerre "Marshall" - says the **LTTE** will use traditional guerrilla tactics to combat government forces in the east.

"The government controls a very large part of the east," he says. "We still operate there as we have operated for 25 years."

Indeed, within days of Thoppigala's fall, the secretary of the Eastern Province, Herath Abeyweera, was shot dead in Trincomalee, although the Tigers denied responsibility.

Defiant Tigers vow to keep on fighting

SP Thamilselvan welcomes visitors at the LTTE's "peace secretariat", a spacious, air-conditioned building whose sumptuous furnishings contrast with the rest of Killinochchi, a sprawl of shanties and bullet-chipped buildings without electricity.

He is protected by heavily armed bodyguards and he himself was formerly a bodyguard to the seldom seen LTTE leader, Vellupillai Prabhakaran.

He speaks warmly of an October 2003 European tour which included some days at the Peace and Reconciliation Centre in Glencree, Co Wicklow, and talks in April 2005 with the then minister of state for overseas development, Conor Lenihan.

"The rapport that we built with the foreign ministry officials and the various ministers and dignitaries was very interesting and very helpful, very educating," he says.

"We were very unfortunate that we couldn't continue with the process, developing further ties with the people of Ireland." He is also highly appreciative of Martin McGuinness's criticism of the ban on the LTTE last May.

Having visited the peace secretariat last July, Mr McGuinness told local reporters that it was a "huge mistake for the EU leaders to demonise the LTTE and the political leaders of the Tamil people".

"He appeared for all purposes as a most realistic and pragmatic person who had acquired, over time with Irish politics, a wider experience of conflict resolution," Thamilselvan says. "The Tamil perception was that there at least was one sensible person who was able to make the world know that this was a wrong step in the wrong direction."

Day and night the thump of artillery fire echoes around Killinochchi and the roughly 450,000 residents of the LTTE-controlled Vanni live with the fear of air strikes.

At a nearby co-operative shop, S Jegatherasaram weighs foodstuffs using old-fashioned scales. There are sacks of rice and chillis propped up against the counter but his shelves are empty.

The army checkpoint at the village of Omanthai, about 80km to the south, opens three times a week. Foreign NGOs along with a convoy of government- approved trucks are allowed up the A9 highway.

"A 400g packet of milk powder has gone up from 169 to 195 rupees since last year," says Jegatherasaram. "The price of rice is still low because it's produced locally. I only get a quarter of the goods from the convoy I got in 2006. Turnover is so low, there's no incentive to work."

But for all the hardships imposed by renewed war, the Tigers run a strict regime. Their territory is a one-party state with Tiger-run courts, police stations and banks.

Embargoes and inflation aside, alcohol and tobacco are available only to foreign NGO staff and women dress in traditional garb. Such asceticism is reflected in the behaviour of the Tiger cadres who have renounced alcohol, tobacco and sex.

Killinochchi fell to the Tigers in September 1998 when the Sri Lankan army camp there was overrun by multiple human wave attacks that left hundreds dead on both sides. Most of the Tigers' casualties came from the Sunthantira-p-paravaikkal (Freedom Birds), the movement's female wing.

They can be seen on the streets, distinguished by their black pants, belted shirts and tightly braided hair. In battle, they wear green fatigues, banded like a tiger's hide.

Like their male counterparts, they carry cyanide capsules on a string necklace to be taken if captured.

In late 2005 the presidential elections brought to power Mahinda Rajapakse, committed to a more hardline approach towards the Tigers.

Defiant Tigers vow to keep on fighting

The **LTTE** ordered an election boycott in the north and east, which few Tamils dared defy. In the process, the opposition "peace candidate" lost by 180,000 votes.

"The boycott can be defined as a mandate for the Tamil people," says Thamilselvan.

"Invariably, the Tamil people have learned the hard way that these people are not the people who will deliver. We have to get our own independence."

A new front in the conflict opened in March with the first attacks by the Vaan Puligal (Air Tigers).

In what were the first ever air raids by a non-state insurgent group, bombing raids were launched on a Sri Lankan airforce base near the Katunayake International Airport, a military bunker in the northern Jaffna peninsula and a fuel storage facility in Colombo.

The Air Tigers are believed to comprise about four Czech- designed Zlin-143 light aircraft and at least two airstrips within the Vanni.

"During the ceasefire they brought in the parts. Then they got trained pilots elsewhere," says Sri Lankan army spokesman Brig Prasad Samarasinge.

"It's another threat to the world. This is the only terrorist group that has the capability to drop bombs from the sky."

Although there have been no Air Tigers raids since April, they may form part of the "offensive posture" that Thamilselvan speaks of.

Load-Date: July 21, 2007

Tamil Tigers kill one soldier in violence that could undermine Sri Lankan ceasefire

The Associated Press

February 24, 2005, Thursday, BC cycle

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Section: International News

Length: 362 words

Byline: By HRVOJE HRANJSKI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Tamil Tiger rebels opened fire at soldiers near a boundary for their territory in northern Sri Lanka, killing one and seriously wounding another in violence that imperiled the country's fragile cease-fire, the military and guerrillas said Thursday.

The rebels, when reporting the incident to cease-fire monitors, accused soldiers of approaching and taking aim at rebel forces before Wednesday's shooting on Jaffna Peninsula. The military said the troops were within their designated area and accused rebels of violating the cease-fire by opening fire.

The 60-member Scandinavian team that monitors the Norwegian-brokered cease-fire said it would not likely make any speedy ruling on whether the accord was violated.

"We have two versions of the event," team spokeswoman Helen Olafsdottir said.

The cease-fire has largely held for three years, though rebels recently blamed government-backed forces for the Feb. 7 slaying of one of their political leaders, E. Kausalyn, and said their patience with the government was running out. The government denied involvement.

The shooting Wednesday took place near Mukamalai, about 190 miles north of Colombo, after the soldiers advanced toward rebel positions, the Liberation Tigers of Tamileelam said in a statement posted on the pro-rebel TamilNet Web site.

The soldier who was killed was carrying binoculars and a hand grenade, and the other had a rifle, the rebel statement said. Tamil women fighters, who were holding positions at a 600-yard wide separation zone, opened fire when the soldiers took aim at them, the statement said.

A military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed the shootings. He said the incident represented a cease-fire violation by the rebels.

Olafsdottir said the government lodged a complaint saying the soldier was unarmed and within the government-controlled section of no-man's land when he was killed.

She said she expected rebels to file a complaint as well.

Tamil Tigers kill one soldier in violence that could undermine Sri Lankan ceasefire

The February, 2002 cease-fire halted 19 years of fierce fighting and restored some normalcy to the island. Subsequent peace talks broke down in April 2003 amid rebel demands for wide autonomy in the Tamil-dominated north and east.

Load-Date: February 25, 2005

End of Document

Thousands flee as air force attacks Sri Lankan rebels

The Independent (London)

April 27, 2006 Thursday

First Edition

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The INDEPENDENT

Section: NEWS; Pg. 36

Length: 420 words

Byline: By Justin Huggler Asia Correspondent

Body

Fears of a return to civil war in Sri Lanka have grown after a second day of air strikes against Tamil Tiger rebels. Thousands of people were reported to be fleeing the area around the port city of Trincomalee as government forces shelled Tiger positions.

The violence comes after the attempted assassination of the Sri Lankan army chief, Lt-Gen Sarath Fonseka, by a **female** suicide bomber on Tuesday, an attack that has been blamed on the Tigers, although they deny responsibility.

"It is like a war situation. If the attacks continue, the Tigers will be forced to take military defensive action," warned a spokesman for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

At least 15 people have been killed in the air strikes, and many more may be trapped in the rubble of bombed buildings, according to the **Tamil Tigers**. The government says three civilians have been killed in Tiger mortar attacks on government-held areas.

The ceasefire agreed in 2002 appeared to be collapsing yesterday. The head of the European monitoring mission, Maj-Gen Ulf Henricsson, warned that the escalating violence could lead to a return to war. "I think the parties are not prepared for that," he said. "And if they were, it would be devastating for the people of Sri Lanka and for their own military capabilities."

The past two days have seen the most serious military action since the ceasefire began. At least eight people were killed by the suicide bombing at the army headquarters in Colombo, which the military said was carried out by a woman.

A group calling itself the High Security Zone Residents' Liberation Force claimed responsibility for the attack, saying in a statement it "feels that the **LTTE** is merely wasting time by maintaining a ceasefire". However, the group is widely believed in Sri Lanka to be a front for the Tigers.

Thousands flee as air force attacks Sri Lankan rebels

An army spokesman said the air and artillery strikes yesterday were in retaliation for Tamil Tiger attacks on Sri Lankan naval craft near Trincomalee.

The Tigers have fought a two-decade war for autonomy for ethnic Tamils in the north and east of Sri Lanka, saying they are discriminated against by the Sinhalese majority.

The ceasefire has been unravelling for months, with a series of attacks on security forces blamed on the Tigers. At least 100 people have died in violent clashes between the groups over the past two weeks.

Peace talks planned for this week in Geneva were hoped to defuse the tension, but the Tigers pulled out last week accusing the government of blocking the travel of some of its leaders.

Load-Date: April 27, 2006

End of Document

Norway says truce on as Sri Lanka steps up air strikes

Agence France Presse -- English

April 26, 2006 Wednesday 2:59 PM GMT

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Length: 668 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, April 26 2006

Body

Peace broker Norway expressed hope Wednesday that Sri Lanka will retreat from the brink of full-scale war even as 18 more people were killed in escalated air strikes aimed at avenging rebel attacks and thousands of Tamil villagers were fleeing for their lives.

Top peace envoy Erik Solheim said Oslo was trying to salvage the peace process aimed at ending three decades of ethnic bloodshed that has claimed over 60,000 lives and save a Norwegian-arranged truce from total collapse.

"We are working with the parties on an hour-to-hour basis to do whatever possible to bring them back to the negotiating table in Geneva as soon as possible and to put a stop to this violence," he said.

His remarks came as the Sri Lankan government continued to retaliate using coordinated air, sea and land attacks against suspected Tamil Tiger targets to avenge any strikes against security forces.

Solheim said, however, that he did not believe the latest violence signified the end of a ceasefire in place since February 2002.

"Definitely not. Both parties have committed to us that they are still committed to the ceasefire. They have done it publicly and they have done it in all informal conversations with us. So definitely they're committed to the ceasefire," he said.

He stressed that Colombo's strikes should not be interpreted as a sign of the resumption of the civil war.

But Sri Lanka's tiny stock market nose dived on the news of air strikes and fears that war had resumed, brokers said as the benchmark all share price index shed 4.13 percent to close at 2,144.20.

Escalating violence left at least 18 civilians dead and 15,000 Tamil villagers fleeing for their lives, reports from both sides said.

Three people died and 13 were wounded when the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) fired mortar bombs against a naval detachment in the Muttur area of Trincomalee district, defence ministry spokesman Prasad Samarasinghe said.

Norway says truce on as Sri Lanka steps up air strikes

He denied earlier military reports that the civilians had been killed when an Israeli-built Kfir jet accidentally dropped a bomb on Muttur jetty while attacking suspected Tamil Tiger positions in the northeast.

The pro-rebel Tamilnet website reported 12 other civilians died when government warplanes struck the rebel-held Sampur area late Tuesday in retaliation for a suicide bombing that killed 10 and wounded 30, including the army chief.

Police said three Tamil civilians were hacked to death in the Trincomalee district Wednesday.

The military launched the aerial bombardments after a woman pretending to be pregnant blew herself up at army headquarters in the capital, about 260 kilometers (160 miles) from Trincomalee.

"If the **LTTE** continues attacking, there will be coordinated retaliation in the form of defence," Plan Implementation Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said. "This will continue as long as the **LTTE** targets the security forces."

The government confirmed, however, that it was still committed to a negotiated settlement to the long-running Tamil separatist conflict.

"The ceasefire agreement is still on," Media Minister Anura Yapa said.

But on the ground, violence escalated.

Washington led international condemnation of the spectacular bomb attack blamed on a "Black Tiger" **female** suicide bomber.

"It's regrettable that the **Tamil Tigers** have decided to restart the war instead of restarting the peace process," US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher said.

LTTE Trincomalee district leader S. Elilan late Tuesday asked the Swedish-led Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission to "clarify" whether the military had launched a "full-scale war violating the ceasefire agreement".

At least 80 people have died in bombings in the past two weeks while Tamil rebels say 70 civilians have been killed by pro-government militia or security forces, a charge denied by the military.

The Tigers last week indefinitely pulled out of planned peace talks in Switzerland, accusing the government of attacks on Tamil civilians and complaining about transport arrangements.

Load-Date: April 27, 2006

Sri Lanka peace talks to resume despite deadly clash with Tamil Tigers
CORRECTS date to March 10 sted 11 in graf 3

Associated Press International

March 16, 2003 Sunday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 523 words

Byline: BETH DUFF-BROWN; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: TOKYO

Body

A deadly clash at sea between the Sri Lanka government and Tamil Tiger rebels could overshadow a critical round of negotiations to end one of Asia's longest-running civil wars.

The peace talks, to begin Tuesday in the Japanese town of Hakone, in the foothills of Mount Fuji, will focus on power sharing, economic recovery and human rights. But the Tigers are furious over the worst clash between the rebels and government forces since they reached a cease-fire a year ago.

On March 10, Sri Lanka's navy killed 11 rebel sailors and sank their boat, which was suspected of smuggling arms. The rebels warned the incident would have "far reaching implications on the peace process."

The rebels' chief peace negotiator, Anton Balasingham, said the Tigers would respect the peace process, despite speculation they would pull out of the sixth round of talks. The talks began in September, after the Norwegians brokered a cease-fire in February 2002.

Gamini Peiris, the government's chief negotiator, said the talks were expected to focus on how the two sides would share tax revenue and power under a federal government. They will also discuss an international donor conference to take place in Japan in June.

Norway, Japan, the United States and the European Union will co-chair the conference intended to raise millions of dollars for the lush island nation off the southern tip of India. International donors pledged nearly **US\$90 million at a conference in Oslo, Norway, in November, and have since promised more aid.**

"One of the most tangible and visible results of the peace process so far has been the degree of international support for our little country, which was never evident at any time in the past," Peiris said.

He said rebuilding the economy was critical. Yasushi Akashi, Japan's special envoy to Sri Lanka, will join the talks in Hakone to help map out a recovery plan.

"There will be a good deal of emphasis on human rights," said Peiris, noting that the former head of Amnesty International, Ian Martin, was working with both sides to formulate a human rights program.

Sri Lanka peace talks to resume despite deadly clash with Tamil Tigers CORRECTS date to March 10 sted 11
in graf 3

The rebels began fighting for a homeland for the ethnic Tamil minority on the Indian Ocean island in 1983, but now say they would settle for autonomy in a federal state. The war has killed nearly 65,000 people, displaced another 1.6 million and destroyed the economy.

The **Tamil Tigers** are one of the world's most notorious rebel groups, known for suicide attacks by **women** bombers and the cyanide capsules guerrillas wear around their necks to kill themselves if captured.

The Tigers accuse the majority Sinhalese, who are predominantly Buddhist, of discrimination in education and jobs against the country's 3.2 million minority Tamils, most of whom are Hindu and live in the north.

Human rights groups blame the government and the rebels for the deaths and disappearances of hundreds of civilians during the conflict. The Tigers, widely criticized for recruiting children as combatants, have pledged to end the practice, but human rights groups and Tamil parents say they still do it.

On the Net:

Tamil Web site: www.TamilNet.com.

Government site: www.peaceinsrilanka.com

Load-Date: March 17, 2003

End of Document

Pushing for peace in Sri Lanka

The Toronto Star
June 27, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A08

Length: 683 words

Byline: Graham Fraser, Toronto Star with files from the star's wire services

Dateline: OTTAWA

Body

Canada has done the right thing by banning the **Tamil Tigers** and must follow up by making sure there is no more fundraising, a former Sri Lankan peace negotiator said yesterday.

"The financing must stop," said Jayantha Dhanapala, the former secretary-general of the Sri Lankan peace process that negotiated with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**).

Yesterday morning, a suicide bomber in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo killed the deputy-chief of the Sri Lankan Army, Maj.-Gen. Parami Kulatunga.

In other violence overnight, four Tamil Tiger rebels were killed in an attack by a breakaway faction in Vakarai in the east and a soldier was shot dead by suspected Tigers in a separate incident in Trincomalee, further north.

President Mahinda Rajapakse urged calm and said his government would "act with patience" - a sign officials were moving carefully amid fears the island nation was sliding back into all-out war after a four-year lull.

According to a human rights officials, 171 politically motivated killings were recorded in Sri Lanka's north and east in May.

Authorities blamed the Tamil Tiger rebels for yesterday's attack on Kulatunga - a charge the rebels deny.

An insurgent leader, Seevaratnam Puleedevan, insisted the Tigers were abiding by the 2002 ceasefire and were committed to peace, but the denial was viewed skeptically by many diplomats and analysts.

In Ottawa yesterday, Dhanapala called the killing of Kulatunga an indication the **LTTE** is taking advantage of the ceasefire to come into the capital and launch suicide attacks that kill innocent civilians.

Despite the violence, he said he is optimistic there can be peace.

"I know that on one side of the conflict there is a genuine desire to solve it, to have a solution, but we need to have that reciprocated."

Dhanapala said expatriate Sri Lankans can help bring an end to the violence.

Pushing for peace in Sri Lanka

"I think the expatriates have a profoundly significant role to play," he said. "They have been providing much of the finance for the LTTE to buy arms and bullets which have gone to killing innocent men, women and children, which have gone into arming child soldiers in this horrendous conflict."

He said he appreciated that contributing money to the LTTE is illegal under Canadian law. Canada listed the LTTE as a terrorist group in April.

"There are very able professionals among the expatriate community, not only in Canada but in other countries, who can contribute enormously to the development of Sri Lanka, particularly in areas where the predominant population are Tamils," he said.

Dhanapala said there are also lawyers and constitutional experts who could help Sri Lanka achieve what the president calls maximum devolution within a united Sri Lanka.

Dhanapala, who is a candidate to succeed Kofi Annan as secretary-general of the United Nations, was in Ottawa yesterday to meet with Foreign Affairs officials as part of his UN bid.

Identified by the U.S. publication Foreign Policy as a front-runner for the position, Dhanapala was a Sri Lankan diplomat for 30 years, serving in London, Beijing, Washington, New Delhi and Geneva. He speaks Sinhala, English, French and Chinese.

Dhanapala, 67, was the president of the 1995 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review in 1995 and served as UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament from 1998 until 2003, when he returned to Sri Lanka to work on the peace process.

Yesterday, he said that until his experience with the non-proliferation treaty review, it would not have occurred to him to seek the job of secretary-general, but after that success, the New York Times identified him as a potential candidate.

Other candidates include Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Surakiart Sathirathai, India's under-secretary-general for communications and public information Shashi Tharoor and South Korean Foreign Affairs Minister Ban Ki-Moon. Speculation has also included Turkey's Kemal Dervis, the head of the UN development program, and Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga. The UN Security Council nominates a candidate, who must be approved by the General Assembly.

with files from the star's wire services

Graphic

MANISH SWARUP ap Sri Lankan army officers investigate the wreckage of a car in which Sri Lankan military official Maj.-Gen. Parami Kulatunga was travelling in Colombo yesterday when it was hit by a suicide bomber on a motorcycle. Kulatunga died in the attack blamed on Tamil Tiger guerrillas. Jayantha Dhanapala, a former Sri Lankan peace negotiator, is a candidate for the UN's top job. Jayantha Dhanapala, a former Sri Lankan peace negotiator, is a candidate for the UN's top job.

Load-Date: June 27, 2006

Sri Lanka probe of aid workers' massacre flawed: ICJ

Agence France Presse -- English

March 9, 2007 Friday 4:42 PM GMT

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Length: 320 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, March 9 2007

Body

Sri Lanka's probe into the massacre of 17 workers of a French charity was "flawed," but could be salvaged with foreign help, the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) said Friday.

Michael Birnbaum, the ICJ's official observer at the inquests into last August's killing of local employees of Action Against Hunger, said the magistrate had noted shortcomings in the investigation.

"The inquest magistrate has pointed out flaws in the investigation," Birnbaum told reporters here after attending the proceedings on Wednesday.

"The Sri Lankan government needs to dispel serious concerns about whether the justice system is able to carry out independent and credible investigations into who was responsible for these killings and to mount effective prosecutions," he added.

Birnbaum urged the authorities here to seek foreign help to ensure a fair and speedy inquiry that would be acceptable to the families of the victims of the unprecedented massacre of aid workers in Sri Lanka.

The killings came during a period of intense fighting between the government and the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) in the northeastern coastal town of Muttur.

The 13 men and four women, aged between 23 and 54, worked mostly as engineers on water sanitation and farm projects for the charity.

Nordic truce monitors have blamed the killings -- the worst attack on aid workers since the bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad in August 2003 -- on government forces.

The government has denied any role in the massacre.

Birnbaum said police had worked on the basis that the killings were carried out by Tamil Tigers and had made little progress in collecting evidence from the security forces or the minority Tamil community.

He said although Australian forensic expertise was available to Sri Lankan police for the investigation, their help had not been sought in carrying out ballistics tests which were crucial to the case.

Sri Lanka probe of aid workers' massacre flawed: ICJ

Load-Date: March 10, 2007

End of Document

Sri Lankan government, Tamil Tigers determined to keep peace process on track

Associated Press International

March 19, 2003 Wednesday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 442 words

Byline: BETH DUFF-BROWN; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: HAKONE, Japan

Body

The Sri Lankan government and Tamil Tiger rebels shifted focus Thursday to the sensitive issue of sharing power under a federal system in their negotiations to end one of Asia's longest-running and most violent civil wars.

Representatives of both sides say they've tasted life without war and are determined to end the 19-year ethnic conflict that has claimed nearly 65,000 lives and devastated the economy, infrastructure and the psychological well-being of their people.

Meetings were resuming Thursday for a third day in the latest round of talks between the government and Liberation Tigers of Tamileelam in Hakone, a sleepy lakeside town of hot springs in the foothills of Mount Fuji. The talks were launched in September in Thailand.

During the first two days of this week's talks, negotiators discussed recent cease-fire violations in the yearlong truce; efforts to keep donor nations true to their pledges to help pay for economic recovery; the resettlement of 1.6 million displaced people; and a human rights monitoring program.

Topping the agenda Thursday were ways of sharing power and revenue under a federal system of government that both sides have agreed to set up. The rebels began fighting for a homeland for the ethnic Tamil minority on the Indian Ocean island in 1983, but now say they will settle for autonomy in a federal state.

The Tigers accuse the majority Sinhalese, who are predominantly Buddhist, of discrimination in education and jobs against the country's 3.2 million minority Tamils, most of whom are Hindu and live in the north.

The government accuses the rebels of human rights abuses, such as recruiting children into their ranks and using women as suicide bombers, who have carried out some of the worst attacks of the civil war.

On Wednesday, both sides worried that war in Iraq could distract international donors, who have pledged millions to help rebuild the island nation off the southern tip of India.

"The Japanese were confident that despite the hostilities in Iraq, they could persuade the donor communities not to reduce the resources they have pledged," chief government negotiator Gamini Peiris told reporters. "We obviously have to win the confidence of the donor community and that can only be done by making substantial progress in the peace process."

Sri Lankan government, Tamil Tigers determined to keep peace process on track

Twenty donor nations have pledged nearly US\$90 million to help revive the island nation off the southern tip of India. The United States has pledged \$US8 million and Britain US\$4.1 million. Sri Lanka hopes to raise millions more at the donors' conference June 9-10 in Tokyo.

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On the Net:

Tamil Web site: www.TamilNet.com.

Government site: www.peaceinsrilanka.com

Load-Date: March 20, 2003

End of Document

VOA NEWS: RIGHTS GROUP SAYS SRI LANKA MILITARY COMPLICIT IN USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS

US Fed News

January 24, 2007 Wednesday 12:39 AM EST

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Length: 567 words

Byline: US Fed News

Dateline: NEW DELHI, India

Body

The Voice of America issued the following story:

By Suzanne Presto

A leading human-rights group says Sri Lanka's government is ignoring a militant group's use of child soldiers and forced conscripts in battles against Tamil rebels. VOA's Suzanne Presto in New Delhi reports.

New York-based Human Rights Watch says the Karuna militant group is forcing hundreds of Sri Lankan children and young adults to serve as soldiers.

Human Rights Watch South Asia researcher Meenakshi Ganguly says the government has condemned the use of child soldiers by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, but it turns a blind eye to the Karuna group doing the same thing.

"This is being done with government complicity, which is the problematic part," she said. "The Sri Lankan government has been very strong on the LTTE's forced recruitment of children, yet now the Karuna group is operating in Sri Lankan government-controlled areas and the government has not done enough to contain this problem."

Karuna militants were once part of the Tamil Tigers, battling the Sri Lankan government for a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's ethnic minority Tamils for decades. But in 2004, the Karuna faction broke away and has since clashed repeatedly with the Tigers, becoming an ally of the government in its fight against the Tamil Tigers.

Indrani Sugathadasa, the secretary of Sri Lanka's Ministry of Child Development and Women's Empowerment, denies government complicity in the use of child soldiers.

"The allegations are not true and Sri Lanka, the present government, the policy is zero-tolerance," she said. "You know, we do not tolerate any child recruitment."

Human Rights Watch says it has conducted interviews with parents who say they have seen Karuna militants take their children, and they have also seen armed children at Karuna camps, which are near Sri Lankan military camps.

VOA NEWS: RIGHTS GROUP SAYS SRI LANKA MILITARY COMPLICIT IN USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS

"This is very close to the combat areas, so there are military checkpoints all over this area, plus a police presence. And it is impossible for the Karuna group to have done this without government awareness, and in fact, complicity," she said.

In November last year, U.N. special advisor on Sri Lanka, Allan Rock, said government forces were aware of, and at times involved in, child abductions by Karuna militants. The Sri Lankan government says it is investigating the reports.

Sri Lanka's National Security spokesman, Keheliya Rambukwella, said the government takes these accusations very seriously.

"In fact, we want to get into a full scale investigation into it," he said. "Already we are investigating some allegations that have been made against this whole issue."

Rambukwella said the inquiry is ongoing, and the government is waiting for additional evidence before it can say whether any elements of the security forces are aware of the Karuna's alleged use of child soldiers.

Human Rights Watch says it hopes the issue of child soldiers will be addressed when the United Nations discusses the secretary-general's report on the Sri Lanka conflict on February 9.

Presto report - Download 340k:

http://www.voanews.com/mediaassets/english/2007_01/Audio/rm/presto_children_soldiers_24jan07.rm

Listen to Presto report:

<http://www.voanews.com/english/figleaf/ramfilegenerate.cfm?filepath=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Evoanews%2Ecom%2Fmediaassets%2Fenglish%2F2007%5F01%2FAudio%2Frm%2Fpresto%5Fchildren%5Fsoldiers%5F24jan07%2Erm>

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

Load-Date: January 25, 2007

POLITICS-SRI LANKA: SUICIDE BOMBERS STILL EVOKE FEAR

IPS-Inter Press Service

July 16, 2003, Wednesday

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Length: 1081 words

Byline: By Amantha Perera

Dateline: COLOMBO, Jul. 16

Body

Talk about the ***Tamil Tigers***' suicide bombers and many in both the majority Sinhala and minority Tamil communities here react with fear.

"Their commitment is scary," says Lakshman Wickremasinghe, a Sinhalese. His thoughts are echoed by Nadaraja Sivaganashan, a Tamil: "They don't care who, when or what, they will kill themselves."

Both of them think suicide bombings by the Tigers have not ended for good, despite the cessation of hostilities that has been in place since February 2002 in the Tigers' campaign for their own homeland.

The effect of suicide bombings in Sri Lanka's two-decade-old ethnic conflict was underscored this month, which marks the 16th anniversary of the Tigers' first official use of this weapon on July 5, 1987.

On that day, Captain Miller, a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***), as the Tigers are formally known, drove an explosives-laden truck into an army camp housed at a school in Nelliady in the northern Jaffna peninsula.

Since then, the Black Tigers, as the suicide cadres are known, have been emulated by so-called liberation fighters around the world, including Hamas in the Palestinians' campaign against Israeli occupation, and the al-Qaeda terrorists believed to be behind the Sept. 11 attacks.

Lasantha Dahanaiké, a human rights investigator based in the United States, says that poverty, repression -- and the anger and desperation stemming from these -- are responsible for the evolution of the suicide cadre culture.

"I don't condone it, but it is the most effective weapon against an army that has modern weapons at its disposal. The suicide cadres are using their best weapon," said Dahanaiké, a Sri Lankan who has also done research on the suicide attacks in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

If the situation on the ground continues to be a breeding ground for such desperate moves, suicide attacks will continue, he adds.

On July 5, Miller and other ***LTTE*** cadres who followed him were commemorated by the ***LTTE*** all over Tamil-dominated areas in the North and East. At least 243 Tigers have since followed in Miller's footsteps, including 53 ***women***.

POLITICS- SRI LANKA : SUICIDE BOMBERS STILL EVOKE FEAR

Estimates of the number of suicide cadres at present are hard to make, but media quoted one **LTTE** speaker at the July 5 ceremony as saying there are some 500 of them.

Female suicide cadres were responsible for two of the most spectacular Tiger attacks -- the one that killed Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 and the assassination attempt on Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga in 1999. Kumaratunga survived the attack, but lost an eye.

The background of Black Tiger Kandasmy Lingeswaran is typical. Born to a poor fishing family in Jaffna, he witnessed his family and community harassed by government forces. He joined the **LTTE** and like most cadres, was willing to give up his life for the Tigers' elusive leader, Vellupillai Prabhakaran, and what he believes is the Tamil cause.

"If war breaks out, I will fight. And in war you make sacrifices," Lingeswaran said during an interview soon after he was released by the government during a prisoners-of-war swap in September.

"For some, particularly for those who have lost a loved one during an ethnic riot or killed by a soldier, Prabhakaran is a demigod," said author Rohan Gunaratna in his book, 'International and Regional Security, Implications of the Sri Lankan Tamil Insurgency'.

Media reports that emerged during the investigation into the Gandhi assassination revealed that Dhanu's motivation stemmed from her rape by Indian soldiers stationed in Sri Lanka during the late 1980s.

From the time a cadre is singled out to be a Black Tiger, he or she courts mythical admiration. The Black Tiger is separated from ordinary cadres and severs all contact with family and friends. Before embarking on a suicide mission, he or she will partake in a special meal with Prabhakaran.

In death, Black Tigers are venerated. In **LTTE** cemeteries, suicide cadres have pride of place with granite tombstones over graves that hold no bodies.

Shrines built in memory of them dot Sri Lanka's north-east. At the location of the attack in Nelliady, which is now under government control, the Tigers erected a statue of Miller last year. It was here that the main commemoration ceremony in Jaffna took place earlier this month.

The Tiger rebels also look after suicide cadres' families after their demise. For Lingeswaran, in death he may be able to give his poor family something that he never could in life, a comfortable life and respect. Miller's mother too was among the chief guests at the July 5 ceremony.

The newest addition to the suicide wing is the Sea Tigers. Footage of their attacks has shown them speeding toward Sri Lankan Navy crafts in explosive-ridden crafts, waving and acknowledging the cheers of cadres on other boats.

Some suicide attacks have caused massive casualties, among them the 1996 bombing with an explosives-ridden lorry of the Central Bank building in which 86 were killed and 1,338 injured. In the June 1995 attack on the Joint Operation Command, 21 people were killed and 120 injured.

A suicide cadre is a potent weapon that cannot be detected very easily, says government military spokesman Brig. Gen. Sanath Karunaratne. "It is a one-way soldier and there is very little stopping him. Once you get someone into that mentality, there can be no limit," he told IPS.

For instance, Babu, the **LTTE** cadre who killed President Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993, had infiltrated the President's staff through a household staffer and remained inactive for almost two years before carrying out his attack.

The **LTTE** realises that the Black Tigers give them an unmatched edge. "The Black Tigers are the strongest force of a much weakened people," said Amithaab, an **LTTE** official at the Nelliady ceremony.

POLITICS- SRI LANKA : SUICIDE BOMBERS STILL EVOKE FEAR

The Tamil daily 'Sudar Oli' recently quoted Prabhakaran as paying tribute to suicide cadres. "No weapon and no technology on earth, can stop the determination of the ***LTTE***'s suicide bombers. The suicide squad came into being at a critical juncture in the history of the Tamil liberation movement and has taken it to the next stage."

In many ways, this month's ceremony in Nelliady was a means for the Tigers to tell the Sri Lankan government and other parties in the peace process that it is still a force to reckon with militarily.

For the time being, the Black Tigers are hibernating. They have only been put on public display once, during the Heroes Day celebrations in November, when they marched with black face masks.

Load-Date: July 17, 2003

End of Document

NFB film at Hot Docs festival puts a human face on Tamil Tiger tragedy

The Canadian Press (CP)

April 26, 2005 Tuesday

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Section: ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURE

Length: 831 words

Body

TORONTO (CP) _ In 1989, a young professor who headed the anatomy department at the University of Jaffna in Sri Lanka was killed while riding her bike home after grading exams.

Once a supporter of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (the LTTE, more popularly known as the Tamil Tigers), Rajani Thiranagama, 35, left the movement and, under extreme risk, began collecting evidence of human-rights tragedies suffered by Tamils at the hands of both Tamil insurgents and government-aligned forces. Her murder made her the face of the underground human-rights movement in the region.

Now, nearly 16 years later, in the National Film Board of Canada documentary No More Tears Sister, her older sister alleges that LTTE insiders told her privately that Thiranagama was killed because she was undermining their independence struggle. Local protests condemning her death were crushed and their organizers threatened and killed, according to the film. Human-rights reporting in the region, as in so many conflicts worldwide, became an increasingly clandestine act.

CP

"I think this film and the story of Rajani (touches on) many generic issues about human rights, about justice, about armed violence. They are not exclusive to Sri Lanka," said the older sister, Nirmala Rajasingam, in a telephone interview.

Both she and the documentary's director emphasized that blame for human-rights abuses should be placed on all sides of the conflict, including the Sri Lankan army and the years of repression by the Sinhalese-dominated government which helped spark the Tamil fighting (to say nothing of the initial tensions between Sinhalese and Tamils caused by British colonial policies which were perceived as favouring certain Tamil groups).

Rajasingam, who was also once a pivotal figure in the LTTE movement, has so far made her killing accusations only at small gatherings. This is the first time she has come out so publicly. The Tigers have never claimed responsibility for the murder and no one has been charged, she noted.

Because of her accusations, the NFB has taken a number of precautions, such as keeping the project quiet during its two years in production and not giving out information about where Thiranagama's family currently lives. In fact, the Film Board is becoming somewhat expert in maintaining security surrounding controversial documentaries, particularly after last year's premiere of What Remains of Us, a documentary that directly puts some Tibetans at risk of imprisonment.

Security concerns are nothing new to Thiranagama's family. Rajasingam, for instance, can no longer return to Jaffna because of worries about her safety.

NFB film at Hot Docs festival puts a human face on Tamil Tiger tragedy

"I'm not underground, but I'm being very cautious about where I go, what I say, who I meet, that sort of thing. Once the film is shown, I'll have to take greater precautions," she said.

"We as a family and myself personally, we made a very conscious decision to go public about the killing of Rajani. We thought long and hard about it. It was our decision. We were ready to tell the story, because really the whole discussion about Rajani's murder wasn't a closed chapter," Rajasingam said.

The NFB film was shot with the full co-operation of the family, although family members did not have the final say in its content, said Helene Klodawsky, the director of *No More Tears Sister*. The documentary has been endorsed by a host of notables including former Ontario premier Bob Rae and former United Nations special rapporteur on violence against women, Radhika Coomaraswamy. It is narrated by Michael Ondaatje.

Rajasingam, who talks at one point in the film about how she feels responsible in some ways for what happened to Thiranagama, is careful to add that she is the one making the film's main accusations, not the other family members.

But what unfolds in the documentary is not just a story of how a family got caught up in armed rebellion. It's a far more complicated story of how Rajasingam, the older sister, was buoyed by 1970s leftist radicalism and early insurrections in the country. She wound up becoming involved with the Tigers and was imprisoned by the state. Thiranagama had also become a strong supporter of leftist causes while in medical school. Her husband was a Sinhalese radical who could not bring himself to support the Tigers. This ultimately tore their marriage apart.

While studying in Britain, Thiranagama made her sister's imprisonment into an international cause, which in turn provided an important boost for the LTTE movement. But the more the sisters were drawn into the Tigers, the more they began to question the armed struggle, particularly as fighting between nationalists and Indian peacekeeping forces escalated in the late 1980s. By then, the sisters had quit the LTTE. After another stint in Britain, Thiranagama returned to Jaffna to reopen the anatomy department at the university, while also working to document human-rights abuses perpetrated by all sides of the fighting. She was then murdered.

(The Globe and Mail)

Load-Date: April 27, 2005

18 dead as ferocious battles grip Sri Lanka

Agence France Presse -- English

March 21, 2007 Wednesday 7:51 AM GMT

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Length: 523 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, March 21 2007

Body

Tiger rebels on Wednesday fought pitched battles with troops in Sri Lanka while war planes bombed guerrilla positions, the military said, placing the death toll from both sides at 18.

Troops and the **Tamil Tigers** were locked in fierce mortar and artillery duels for five hours in the east of the island, where some 150,000 civilians had been displaced by recent fighting, the defence ministry said.

"The fighting went on for five hours and the air force was called in to bomb identified concentrations of the Tigers," ministry spokesman Prasad Samarasinghe said. "We were also firing rockets at fleeing Tigers."

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) launched a pre-dawn assault against four key military camps in the coastal Batticaloa district and several civilians were caught in the crossfire.

Local military officials said about 40 civilians were wounded in rebel mortar bomb attacks that also hit a relief centre.

The military said four soldiers were killed and 30 wounded while troops recovered the bodies of eight male rebels and one **female**. Another five Tigers were killed in a similar confrontation on the Jaffna peninsula, the military said.

The air force deployed Israeli-built Kfir jets to bomb two positions in the Batticaloa district, air force spokesman Ajantha Silva said.

"We have bombed two identified targets where there were concentrations of Tigers who had been involved in the attacks against the army earlier in the day," Silva said.

There was no immediate word from the Tigers about the latest fighting, but the **LTTE** said in a statement that eight civilians disappeared in the district of Batticaloa on Tuesday.

Official figures show 148,419 people were listed as internally displaced in the Batticaloa district since the military captured a key base of the Tigers in January.

18 dead as ferocious battles grip Sri Lanka

Since then, the military has also stepped up attacks against Tamil Tiger boats and claimed sinking three large supply ships that were allegedly trying to smuggle weapons into the island since February 28.

The UN food relief agency in a statement said some 95,000 people had fled fierce fighting in the Batticaloa district in the past week alone, adding to the problems of providing shelter to refugees.

A consortium of charities, including UN agencies, last week appealed for more money to look after thousands of refugees displaced by fighting in the restive eastern province.

Relief workers also raised concerns for the safety of civilians in Batticaloa, but the government Wednesday said it was trying to re-settle those who wished to go back to their homes.

"So far, we have got only four percent of our funding requirement," Orla Clinton, a UN spokeswoman here said. "And with the latest influx of refugees we need more money now -- much more than 66 million dollars we anticipated a few months back."

More than 4,000 people have been killed in a new wave of fighting since December 2005 between government troops and rebels fighting for an independent homeland for the Tamil minority.

The fighting comes despite a truce in place since February 2002.

More than 60,000 people have been killed in Sri Lanka's Tamil separatist campaign since 1972.

Load-Date: March 22, 2007

Tsunami hits political geography as well

UPI

January 5, 2005 Wednesday 12:24 PM EST

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Length: 1335 words

Byline: HARBAKSH SINGH NANDA

Dateline: NEW DELHI, Jan. 5

Body

The tsunami disaster is fast emerging as a political hunting ground for many nations. While hundreds of thousands perished in the raging waters on the morning after Christmas, different nations are now looking to use the aftermath of the disaster to advance their national interests.

Sri Lanka, the second worst hit nation that accounted for nearly 41,000 deaths, hopes the tragedy would draw the government and separatist **Tamil Tigers** close. Sri Lankan troops and rebels have been taking care of survivors side by side in the ethnically torn island nation.

The Liberation of **Tamil Tigers** Eelam, or **LTTE**, one of the deadliest rebel outfits in the world, and the Sri Lankan troops have been at war for nearly two decades. The two sides signed a truce accord in early 2002 but the peace talks were suspended in April 2003.

The killer sea waves of Dec. 26 have brought the two warring sides shoulder to shoulder. If the rebels recover the body of a soldier, they hand it over to the authorities and if soldiers recover a body of a Tamil, they hand over to the **LTTE** cadres.

In an interview with the TamilNet, Col. Bhanu, (one name) Special Commander of the **LTTE** in Batticaloa-Amparai area said: "We are not looking at this disaster in terms of Tamils, Muslims or Sinhalese. Our concern is only with people hit by the tsunami. We took our heavy vehicles to Kattankudy the day after the sea surge to repair and clear roads. We helped the Muslim people recover bodies of their dead too".

He said that the **LTTE** and some civilians rescued at least 10 Sri Lankan army soldiers who were dragged by the surging sea far into the lagoon. They were treated for their wounds and handed over to the army in Batticaloa town.

"The natural disaster has not spared anyone. All communities have suffered and its time we all forget our differences and work together to rebuild the nation," Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga said.

While visiting the eastern districts President Kumaratunga also shook hands with two **LTTE women** cadres she found working in a community kitchen.

Tsunami hits political geography as well

"The disaster is bringing the two sides together," said Ananda Samarasinge, a driver in the capital Colombo. "We all hope and pray that this country remains united and the ethnic problem is resolved."

Washington is trying to grind its own axe in the tragedy. Following the charges of being a "stingy" nation, United States upped its initial relief grant of \$15 million to \$350 million for the victims.

Washington now believes its largesse of \$350 million will go a long way in polishing its battered image in the Muslim world.

U.S. Secretary of State, who is touring the tsunami-ravaged regions of Indonesia, said, "I think it does give to the Muslim world and the rest of the world an opportunity to see American generosity, American values in action."

"America is not an anti-Islam, anti-Muslim nation. America is a diverse society where we respect all religions," Powell said in Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim populated nation and ground zero of the Dec. 26 quake of 9.0 magnitude that unleashed tsunamis across the Indian Ocean.

"And I hope as a result of our efforts, as a result of our helicopter pilots being seen by the citizens of Indonesia helping them, that value system of ours will be reinforced."

Powell was truly moved by his on the spot assessment of the devastation. "I have been through war. I have seen tornados and other relief efforts, but I have never seen anything like this," Powell said after touring Banda Aceh, the worst hit Indonesian province. "I can't begin to imagine the horror of the people who heard the sound of this coming and whose lives were snuffed out."

India, the third worst hit nations with 11,500 deaths has used the tragedy to consolidate its relations with neighbors like Sri Lanka and Maldives. New Delhi humbly declined the international financial aid thus proclaiming its financial state of health, saying the world should pay attention to other worst hit nations like Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

New Delhi not only took control of its tsunami ravaged southern parts but also dispatched 11 ship loads to Sri Lanka with relief supplies and doctors to help Colombo tide over the worst natural disaster to hit the region in several decades.

The world media has also taken note of the politics being played by the different governments.

"India's refusal of aid for the tsunami disaster has been both polite and reasonable... Refusing the money is a gentle reminder to the world of India's potential. Such an image is important for an aspirant to a seat in the U.N. Security Council," India's Telegraph daily said.

"The tsunami catastrophe presents the Australian government with an excellent opportunity to advance the national interest. But to maximize it we must act in cooperation with like-minded allies, such as the U.S., in helping our South-East Asian neighbors rather than subordinate our aid effort to the orders of the U.N.," The Australian daily said.

While the rest of the world joined hands to put together the biggest ever relief operation, the rich Arab nations were found missing in the list of donors which is topped by Australia with \$764 million grant followed by Germany with \$680 million and Japan with a \$500 million check.

"We Arabs have failed in war as we have in peace. We have also failed all democratic and human rights tests -- and here we are now adding fresh failure to our human rights record by not responding effectively to the tsunami victims," London-based Arabic Al-Quds Al-Arabi reported.

Austria's Die Presse shunned the anti-U.S. feelings in the post tsunami period. "Anger has been directed in concentrated form against the U.S. administration, as if somebody responsible for the tragedy had been found. Anti-American thinking is always in season, even on the occasion of a natural disaster."

Tsunami hits political geography as well

Hong Kong's Singtao Daily rued Beijing being left out of the relief loop. "When the U.S. proposed an alliance of donor countries to deliver aid, President Bush named Japan, Australia and others which are all long-term U.S. strategic allies, but he did not mention China."

With hundreds of thousands dead and millions rendered homeless, the tsunami is being used as a political platform by different nations to push forward their foreign policy.

Meanwhile, The Times of India warned the tsunami stricken nations to count their chicken before they hatch since many nations in the past have announced huge relief grants but failed to honor their word.

Citing examples, The Times said that the devastating earthquake in Iran a year ago saw commitments worth \$1.1b, but just \$17 million or less than a quarter of 1 percent of the pledged amount has materialized so far.

Hurricane Mitch swept across Honduras and Nicaragua in 1998, killing thousands and leaving millions homeless, and was followed by pledges of over \$8b. Less than a third of that was ever given. Floods ravaged Mozambique in 2000 and more than \$400m was promised to help in rebuilding affected areas, not even half the money has seen the light of the day.

The Gaza Strip and the West Bank saw over \$3.4b pledged for the foundation of Palestinian self-rule after the historic peace accords in the early 90s. Only \$1.5b of that materialized

"From Cambodia to Bosnia, from Guatemala to Gujarat, the check often remain in the mail," The Times reported.

For now, all attention is focused on Thursday's international donor summit in Jakarta, Indonesia, where scores of world leaders are arriving to pitch in their efforts to help millions of tsunami survivors to help rebuild their lives.

At least 156,000 people have been reported killed and thousands are missing and presumed dead in the Black Sunday's watery fury that followed a massive quake off Sumatra Island in Indonesia. The giant waves then traveled as far as East Africa, flattening coastal cities in 12 nations, mostly in Southeast and South Asia.

At least five million people have lost their families or homes and are being housed in refugee camps across the affected regions.

Load-Date: January 6, 2005

Two aid workers freed but Sri Lanka asks if kidnap is a hoax

Agence France Presse -- English

February 2, 2006 Thursday 1:09 PM GMT

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Length: 351 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 2 2006

Body

Sri Lanka's government Thursday cast doubt on the claimed abduction of 10 aid workers as a pro-rebel charity said two of the victims had been freed.

Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera said President Mahinda Rajapakse was closely following the high-level police investigation, but so far the authorities were trying to establish that an abduction had indeed taken place.

"I am not saying that it is a hoax... but there are conflicting and contradictory statements," the minister told reporters.

The Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO) has said that 10 of its aid workers were abducted in two batches of five on Sunday and again on Wednesday by "unidentified paramilitary personnel" near a military checkpoint.

Samaraweera described the TRO as the "fund-raising arm of the Tamil Tigers."

"During the investigations so far we have come up with more questions than answers. Was this staged? Is this an attempt to sabotage the peace process?" he said. "The government wants to expose and nail the culprits."

The TRO said two women were released Monday, a day after being captured.

But they only reported to the charity Wednesday after being told by their abductors "not to make a report to the police or anyone else and thus feared for their lives and the lives of their family," the TRO said in a statement.

"The TRO requests that the government of Sri Lanka and civil society exert pressure to ensure the safety of these women."

Eight aid workers are still held by "unidentified paramilitary personnel," the TRO said, calling for their immediate release.

Colombo and the Tamil Tiger rebels agreed last week to meet for the first time in three years to try to save their fragile ceasefire.

The charity's allegations came as a breakaway faction of the Tiger guerrillas declared its own truce.

Two aid workers freed but Sri Lanka asks if kidnap is a hoax

The faction which operates in the east decided to stop attacks against the mainstream rebels, the Asian Tribune website said, quoting renegade leader V. Muralitharan, known as Colonel Karuna.

The **LTTE** said the offer was "totally irrelevant" and insisted the group should have no part in the Norwegian-backed peace process.

Load-Date: February 4, 2006

End of Document

SRI LANKAN INTIMIDATION OF MEDIA STEPPED UP

Media Blab News Bites

October 9, 2007 Tuesday

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Length: 575 words

Byline: Peter Olszewski

Body

Senior Sri Lankan officials have threatened independent news media and investigative journalist Iqbal Athas in recent weeks, and the government is reportedly planning to increase restrictions on coverage of the security situation as fighting rages in the north, Reporters Without Borders said today.

Athas, who writes about defence affairs for The Sunday Times, was accused of being a "traitor" and of helping the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels in an article posted on the defence ministry website and published in a government newspaper on October 2. The attack came just a few weeks after Athas resumed working following a period spent in self-imposed exile, without doing any writing, because of death threats.

A defence ministry article headlined "Mr. Iqbal Athas, stop insulting our soldiers' sacrifices," suggested that he was "assisting in the psychological operations of the LTTE terrorists."

Three days earlier, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakakara accused Athas of "supporting terrorism" in his articles and urged the media to stop publishing them. All the media have reported the accusation being made against Athas, who said told he was very worried about this new campaign of intimidation.

A foreign TV crew was also prevented from working in the northern city of Jaffna at the end of last week.

Although UN human rights high commissioner Louise Arbour is due to begin a visit to Sri Lanka in a few days, the government is seriously jeopardising the safety of certain journalists and is preventing the press from operating in areas hit by the fighting.

The latest incident was the expulsion of three women journalists working for the British TV production company Quick Silver Media from Jaffna on October 5.

Reporter Sandra Jordan, camerawoman Siobhan Sinnerton and local producer Dushiyanthini Kanagasabapathipillai arrived in the city on October 4, and went to a hotel. But soldiers arrived and forced them to spend the night in a military base in nearby Palaly. They next day, the soldiers took them on a two-hour tour of the city and then told them to take a flight back to Colombo. As a result, they were prevented from working.

The Free Media Movement, a Sri Lankan NGO, meanwhile reported at the end of last month that the government was planning to use new emergency measures to step up its control of the media's reporting on the fighting, and

SRI LANKAN INTIMIDATION OF MEDIA STEPPED UP

would use the need to protect national security as its justification for the new restrictions. It challenged the government to confirm or deny whether it was indeed planning to do this.

Government ministers have attacked the privately-owned media in speeches. Transport minister Jeyaraj Fernandopulle accused the management of privately-owned Sirasa TV of links with the head of the **Tamil Tigers** on September 22, pointing out that the station had not provided direct coverage of a ceremony marking a recent navy defeat of **LTTE** sea-borne forces.

A few days before that, labour minister Mervin Silva attacked the privately-owned media, accusing Sirasa TV and the Daily Mirror newspaper of defamation in their coverage of his son's arrest. At the same time, the minister's thugs prevented a Sirasa TV crew from attending an event at which he was present. Sirasa TV and the Daily Mirror had accused Silva of intimidating the judge in charge of his son's case. The claim has not been denied by the judge, and judicial officials have also accused Silva of intimidation.

Load-Date: October 25, 2007

End of Document

Sri Lanka police evict ethnic Tamils from capital

Agence France Presse -- English

June 7, 2007 Thursday 11:22 AM GMT

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Length: 521 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, June 7 2007

Body

Sri Lankan police forced hundreds of ethnic minority Tamils out of the capital Colombo Thursday as part of an effort to clear the city of feared Tiger terror cells, officials and witnesses said.

Armed police stormed Tamil-majority areas of the capital under cover of darkness and frogmarched guests at low-budget hostels into buses at gunpoint, residents said.

One man who was forcibly removed told a local radio station by mobile phone that they were woken at 3.45am and moved while still wearing their night clothes.

They were not even allowed to use the toilet, the man said while his bus was being escorted by police and speeding out of Colombo.

The forced eviction came even as Japanese peace envoy, Yasushi Akashi, was visiting the island in a bid to try and revive the island's tattered peace process.

The local media rights group, the Free Media Movement (FMM) slammed the government action and said the eviction was "tantamount to ethnic cleansing."

"This reminds us of what Hitler did to the Jews," said FMM spokesman Sunanda Deshapriya.

The defence ministry confirmed the eviction, but said the move was necessary to prevent Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) bomb attacks. Nine people were killed in and around Colombo, a city of 600,000 people, in two blasts last month.

"Investigations have also confirmed that those responsible for these brutal killings have hatched their brutal plans and executed them from these 'lodgings'," the ministry said in a statement.

It said 376 people, including 85 ***women***, were sent in seven buses to their homes in Vavuniya and Jaffna in the north and Batticaloa and Trincomalee in the east. Police sources, however, said nearly 50 buses were used.

Sri Lanka police evict ethnic Tamils from capital

It was not clear how the civilians would be taken to the Jaffna peninsula. There is no land access to Jaffna which has been cut off since August last year.

Police had last week announced they would provide transport for Tamils to return to their homes in the embattled northern and eastern regions unless they could prove they were employed in Colombo.

"This operation is a very bad example," Tamil political leader Dharmalingam Sithadthan said.

"It is OK for the LTTE to indulge in this sort of ethnic cleaning because they have no moral responsibility, but a government can't behave like this," he said.

He said the police move reminded him of how the Tamil Tigers had evicted thousands of minority Muslims from the northern peninsula of Jaffna in 1990.

Thousands of Tamils from revolt-hit areas arrive in the capital monthly in the hope of obtaining passports to travel abroad for employment or to secure political asylum overseas.

But Tamils are required to obtain permits from the police to travel to the rest of the country under a de facto visa system put in place to prevent Tiger rebels infiltrating the capital.

Official sources said restrictions were set to tighten, with the deployment of cameras to photograph anyone leaving the embattled north and east and travelling to the rest of the country.

The evictions reverberated in the national parliament, where ethnic Tamil lawmakers briefly held up proceedings to protest, officials said.

Load-Date: June 7, 2007

Suicide bombers hit Sri Lanka army camp

The International Herald Tribune

March 28, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 3

Length: 509 words

Byline: Anthony David and Somini Sengupta - The New York Times Media Group

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

A day after Tamil guerrillas bombed an military air base on the edge of Colombo, seven people were killed Tuesday when a pair of suspected rebel suicide bombers tried to drive a tractor loaded with explosives into an army camp in eastern Sri Lanka.

The two suspected bombers were also killed. At least 23 people were wounded, including at least six children, according to the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, which monitors a now effectively defunct truce.

Suicide strikes are a hallmark of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, who have fought for over two decades for a separate ethnic Tamil homeland. They did not comment on the suicide attack Tuesday on Chenkaladi military camp in eastern Batticaloa district.

A Sri Lankan military spokesman, Major Upali Rajapaksa, said the bombers tried to enter the camp with a tractor carrying some 200 kilograms, or 440 pounds, of explosives, only to be intercepted by troops at a checkpoint. The bombers blew themselves up; among those killed immediately was a 12-year-old boy, according to the military.

"They are showing signs of desperation," Rajapaksa said of the rebels. "If they had managed to enter the camp it would have been a disaster."

The rebels claimed responsibility for the attack on Monday, the first time they had struck from the air. It was unclear whether the air force had picked up the approaching aircraft on its radar, but the rebels, known here as the **LTTE**, were able to attack and get away unscathed.

Late Monday the government said that two separate inquiries were under way to determine whether any lapses had allowed the attack to take place.

"The security forces will now have to take into account the air threat factor of the **LTTE**," Iqbal Athas, a defense analyst and a columnist with The Sunday Times here, said by e-mail. "Now VIP homes, naval ships, frontline troops, ports, key military establishments all become vulnerable."

The **Tamil Tigers** have been listed as a terrorist group by the European Union, the United States and other countries. They were blamed for a suicide attack that narrowly missed the Sri Lankan Army chief, Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka, last year, when a **female** bomber managed to penetrate deep into the heart of army headquarters in Colombo.

Suicide bombers hit Sri Lanka army camp

The back-to-back strikes this week come on the heels of a steady advance by the military on rebel-held areas of the east, in what appears to be a bid to flush out rebel bases along the strategic coast and reinstate government control. The government has been aided in its efforts by the emergence two years ago of a breakaway Tamil Tiger faction, known as the Karuna group. The renegade faction operates openly in government-held areas in the east; the government insists it has no control over it.

The rebel consider the east part of the traditional Tamil homeland - the ethnic Sinhalese-dominated government does not - and to wrest it away from rebel control would be politically advantageous for the government. Government officials have said they plan to hold elections in the east in the coming months.

Load-Date: April 1, 2007

End of Document

Sri Lanka launches strikes on Tamil rebels

Agence France Presse -- English

April 25, 2006 Tuesday 10:05 PM GMT

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Length: 601 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, April 26 2006

Body

The Sri Lankan government launched strikes on Tamil Tiger rebels Tuesday in retaliation for a failed assassination attempt that left at least 10 people dead and risked returning the country to war.

Air and naval attacks were carried out against a cluster of boats of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) and their land bases within the northeastern district of Trincomalee, the defence ministry said in a statement.

"The Sri Lanka navy retaliated with the assistance of the Sri Lanka army and Sri Lanka airforce troops," the statement said. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

The strikes were ordered after a *female* suicide bomber blew herself up at army headquarters in Colombo killing 10, seriously wounding intended target army chief Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka, and injuring 30 others.

Fonseka was riding in a silver Peugeot 406, escorted by Land Rover Defender jeeps packed with armed soldiers, when the bomber approached the convoy pretending she was pregnant, police said.

When the woman detonated the explosives strapped to her body five of Fonseka's bodyguards riding on motorbikes were killed instantly and the army chief was critically wounded, police said.

A doctor who treated Fonseka said he was in a "stable" condition following surgery to remove shrapnel from his chest and abdomen.

The bombing threw into doubt the future of a shaky four-year ceasefire between the Sri Lankan government and the rebels that was already in danger of collapsing after two weeks of escalating violence.

"This attack is yet another serious blow to the ceasefire agreement and the peace process," the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission said in a statement issued before the government launched its retaliatory strikes.

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse was unbowed, vowing to stand tough in the face of terrorism as he blamed Tamil separatists for the attack.

"Friends, no type of terrorism will frighten me," he said in a televised address to the nation.

"Similarly, I and my government will not be brought to our knees by whatever challenge that we face.

Sri Lanka launches strikes on Tamil rebels

"I emphasize and caution that one should avoid mistaking our desire for peace and our responsibility to achieve it as a government, as weakness."

Despite the retaliatory strikes, the government insisted it remained committed to the Norwegian-brokered peace process and expected the rebels to return to talks.

But Tamil politician Dharmalingam Sidhathan, himself a former rebel, said the suicide bombing and the government's immediate retaliation signaled a return to full-scale hostilities.

"You have the LTTE carrying out an attack inside the army camp and the government retaliating with air strikes," Sidhathan said. "If this is not war, what (else can you) ... call it."

Tuesday's suicide bombing, the largest blamed on the rebels since they entered into a truce with the government in February 2002 and the first in Colombo since July 2004, brought immediate international condemnation.

The UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said he was "disturbed by the rapidly escalating violence on the island, as seen in a vicious cycle of attacks and retaliations that appears to seriously endanger the fragile peace process."

At least 80 people have been killed in bombings in the past two weeks alone while Tamil rebels say 70 civilians were slain by pro-government militia or by security forces, a charge denied by the military.

Last week the Tamil Tigers indefinitely pulled out of scheduled peace talks in Switzerland, accusing the government of attacks on ethnic Tamil civilians and complaining about the transport arrangements for internal rebel meetings.

Load-Date: April 26, 2006

ROUNDUP: Colombo to hold full probe on killing of 17 aid workers

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
August 9, 2006 Wednesday 2:34 PM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 790 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts ROUNDUP: Colombo to hold full probe on killing of 17 aid workers Adds details on probe Colombo

The Sri Lankan government Wednesday ordered a full-scale probe into the killing of 17 local workers of a French aid agency and has invited an Australian expert to help in the investigations, Humanrights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe said.

"We will hold an impartial inquiry into this incident," Samarasinghe said while condemning the incident which occurred in the Muttur area, 260 kilometres north-east of the capital over the weekend.

Tamil rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam claimed that the army which entered the area had lined up the workers, including

four females, and shot them inside their office.

They were employees of the French aid agency Action Contre La Faim (ACF) helping persons to rebuild their houses damaged in the 2004 December 26 tsunami which caused extensive damage in the country, killing an estimated 40,000 persons.

The government in a statement said President Mahinda Rajapaksa had ordered the inquiry and that Colombo had invited a forensic expert from Australia to assist in the investigations.

"The Government wishes to reiterate that it greatly values the contribution made by aid agencies in providing humanitarian assistance to the community, and assures that these agencies will be facilitated at all times," the statement said.

Earlier five people were killed when their ambulance was hit by a Claymore mine in northern Sri Lanka, a pro-Tamil rebel website reported Wednesday.

The Tuesday night explosion killed a doctor, his wife, two nurses and the driver of the ambulance near Nedunkerny, 360 kilometres

north-east of the capital, in an area held by the LTTE according to

ROUNDUP: Colombo to hold full probe on killing of 17 aid workers

the Tamilnet website.

The Tamil Tigers said government forces had infiltrated the area to carry out the attack, but there was no immediate independent confirmation who was responsible for the attack and the military had no information regarding the blast.

Earlier Tuesday two people, including a 3-year-old child, were killed in a car bomb attack in Colombo that targeted a leading Tamil politician and opponent of the Tamil Tiger rebels. Former legislator Sankarapillai Sivadasan was injured along with six other people, including the mother of the child.

For the past two weeks, government forces and Tamil Tiger rebels have been locked in a bitter battle over the control of water in the north-eastern district of Trincomalee.

Late Tuesday the rebels lifted their blockade of the canal and government troops said they had opened the sluice gates, providing more than 15,000 families with much-needed water.

The government and Tamil rebels are both taking credit for opening the sluice gates, though there were reports of renewed fighting between them from the north-eastern part of the country.

Tamil rebel area leader S Elilan said that the gates were opened following discussions between political wing leader S P Thamilselvan and head of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) Major General Ulf Henricsson.

"The LTTE, as agreed with the Norwegian facilitators, opened the sluice gate as a good-will gesture," Elilan was quoted as saying.

An army spokesman in Colombo said the gate was opened due to an operation carried out by the security forces.

Government officials in the area confirmed that for the first time in two weeks water flowed down the canal on Wednesday morning enabling farmers to make use of the water.

"However, already some 20,000 acres of paddy land has been damaged

of some 30,000 acres in the area. The LTTE have virtually destroyed their income for this season," said the official speaking on the grounds of anonymity.

Elilan was quoted by the Tamilnet on Wednesday as saying that a fresh attempt by the army to move in additional troops to the sluice gate area of Mavilaru was prevented by the rebels, forcing them to withdraw to their positions amidst heavy artillery fire and mortar attacks.

Reports from the area said that even if the army had been able to open the gate they would find it difficult to remain there as it is located in a rebel controlled area.

An estimated 300 people were killed in the two-week battle to open the sluice gate and more than 30,000 residents in the area have fled their homes for temporary shelters to escape the artillery fire between government forces and Tamil rebels.

ROUNDUP: Colombo to hold full probe on killing of 17 aid workers

The recent clashes in north-eastern Sri Lanka have been the heaviest fighting the country has seen since a 2002 ceasefire.

Tamil rebels have also demanded that cease-fire monitors from Finland, Denmark and Sweden also withdraw by the end of the month as they are from countries belonging to the European Union which has

banned the LTTE as a terrorist organization.

Aug 0906 1434 GMT

Notes

Adds details on probe

Load-Date: August 10, 2006

End of Document

In the land of the Tamil Tigers, theft, murder - and sex - can send you to jail

The Associated Press

October 18, 2003, Saturday, BC cycle

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Section: International News

Length: 938 words

Byline: By TIM SULLIVAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: KILINCHCHI, Sri Lanka

Body

The prosecutor wore a cheap black suit. The judge, sitting on a raised dais, stared down coldly. And in the stand marked "accused," a young man and woman were careful not to look at one another as the charges were read.

"According to the constitution of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, it is a serious offense to have sexual contact with another person while married," the prosecutor said.

Then, he asked for their pleas.

"Guilty," said the woman, Nirmala Manoharan, arms crossed protectively in front of her and fear clearly written on her young face.

"Not guilty," grumbled her alleged ex-lover, Vasanthan Koolkaiyah.

If convicted, they could serve up to a year in prison.

This is the law in the land of the **Tamil Tigers**, a brutal, secretive rebel movement that has carved its own state from the bombed-out villages of northern Sri Lanka. Here, the penal code is tough and unforgiving. Adultery is illegal, and even premarital sex can mean trouble with the law.

Punishments are also harsher. Jail terms are longer than in government-controlled Sri Lanka, and the death penalty is legal.

At the root of Tiger law is a stew of Sri Lankan court precedents, a handful of European legal influences and a large dose of Tamil tradition.

"We are very concerned the law should be in accordance our Tamil culture, and our Tamil race," said C. Oppilan, chief justice of the Tiger court system.

Among those traditions: Sex is sacred.

"In our tradition, there's only one law: one man for one woman, and one woman for one man," said Kala Thiyagaragh, defense attorney for the **women** facing the adultery charge. Asked whether she believed her client was facing excessive prosecution, she shook her head: "This is a serious offense."

In the land of the Tamil Tigers, theft, murder - and sex - can send you to jail

Technically, there shouldn't even be a Tiger court system.

On maps, this tropical island nation is only one country. But 18 years of civil war, with the Tigers fighting for a separate homeland for the island's minority Tamil people, created what is effectively an independent state.

Today, the south of this former British colony is government-controlled Sri Lanka, a tourist brochure paradise of white sand beaches and misty highlands dominated by the Buddhist Sinhalese people. Much of the northeast is "Tamilleelam," the Tiger-created homeland for Hindu Tamils. Here, jobs are nearly nonexistent and electricity even scarcer.

The guerrilla group, long known for its child soldiers, suicide bombers and fearless woman warriors, now also has everything from paper-shuffling bureaucrats to police officers running speed traps on the region's only reasonably paved road.

A Norwegian-brokered peace process led to a February 2002 cease-fire that has brought the Tigers, to a degree, into the mainstream. While the peace process has stalled - mired in disagreements over the fate of the war's many displaced people, and the degree of autonomy the Tigers should have - the guns have remained silent.

The Tigers have had their own court system for 10 years, beginning with semiformal panels that often judged cases in makeshift jungle bases.

These days, in Kilinochchi, the war-savaged town that has become their de facto capital, the Tigers have a court building, judges, prosecutors, and black-robed defense attorneys who charge clients 350 rupees a day, or about \$3.60. Outside town, a law school churns out graduates to keep the system running.

In many ways, it's a system that works well. Trials move quickly, unlike government territory, where they can drag on for decades. Proceedings are held in the Tamil language, and corruption is unheard of.

What the judicial system doesn't have is political autonomy.

"That's the mortal flaw in the whole system. It is the court of one party, one organization," said Jehan Perera, an analyst with the National Peace Council, an independent Sri Lankan think tank.

The system makes no attempt to separate the law from Tiger ideology, which is a rigid doctrine of Tamil nationalism, self-sacrifice and near-religious belief in the group and its leader, the seldom-seen Velupillai Prabhakaran.

Open criticism of the Tigers is rare in their territory, and rights groups say dozens of their political opponents have been killed or kidnapped since the cease-fire began.

Reflecting the group's secretiveness, court officials refused to provide the prosecutor's name in the adultery case. The chief justice also declined to reveal his given name, preferring the name - Oppilan - he was given when he became a Tiger.

In the courtroom, a photograph of Prabhakaran hangs behind the judge's bench. Similar photos are in most every home and office in Tiger territory. He is referred to, with worshipful reverence, simply as "the leader."

The court system is very much a part of that reverence.

"Our leader's main interest is to reform the Tamil people," said Thiyagaragh, the defense attorney. "It is under his acceptance that we work, and his acceptance that we hear cases."

But despite the Tigers' well-earned reputation for brutality, court officials and lawyers say their law is far from pitiless.

Thiyagaragh said the woman's guilty plea in the adultery case, and a difficult home life with an allegedly abusive husband, would almost certainly spare her a prison term.

In the land of the Tamil Tigers, theft, murder - and sex - can send you to jail

Her alleged ex-lover, though, might not get off so easily. With witnesses lined up who can testify to the affair, and his not-guilty plea, he'll probably serve jail time, the lawyer said.

"When Tamil culture is violated, it's a severe punishment," she said.

On the Net:

Sri Lanka government site on peace talks: <http://www.peaceinsrilanka.org>

Tamil affairs: <http://www.tamilnet.com>

Tamil Tiger site: <http://www.lttepeacesecretariat.com>

Graphic

AP Photos NY337-341 of Oct. 12 by Elizabeth Dalziel

Load-Date: October 19, 2003

News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Xinhua General News Service

December 25, 2005 Sunday 12:30 PM EST

Copyright 2005 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS

Length: 436 words

Dateline: HONG KONG

Body

Following are news items from the Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua in Hong Kong on Saturday:

Major news items in leading Japanese newspapers

More snowfalls expected in Japan

Major news items in leading Australian newspapers

Foreign exchange rates in Hong Kong -- Dec. 24

Gold price lower in Hong Kong -- Dec. 24

Foreign exchange rates in Nepal

Cambodian legislature approves budget for 2006

Guerrilla shot dead in central Nepal

Japanese gov't approves smaller FY2006 budget

Major news items in leading Philippine newspapers

Sri Lankan gov't condemns **LTTE** for killing 13 Navy soldiers

Nepal's maternal mortality rate among highest in world

Production of quality tea increases in Nepal

Major news items in Pakistani newspapers

Bird flu seen as real problem in Indonesia

Siem Reap Int'l airport traffic records 1 mln passengers in year

Vietnam's tea export falls below year's target

Japan's Cabinet approves joint missile project with U.S.

News items from Asia-Pacific Desk of Xinhua

Banking deposit touches 3.67 billion USD in Nepal

18,000 km river routes in Bangladesh lose navigability

28 countries to attend commemoration of tsunami in Aceh

More Sri Lankan flights to Maldives

Foreign exchange rates in Indonesia

Indonesian police link recent robberies with terrorism

Indonesian president signals succession of military chief

One in five tsunami survivors suffers PTSD

Major news items in leading Afghan newspapers

Tightening anti-fakes program to boost HK tourism

Roundup: Christmas full of joy, love, care in HK

Petroleum consumption increases in Thailand

Bus plunges into ravine in Malaysia, killing 2

Afghan govt to try former intelligence chief

MC6 shows HK civil service's efficiency: HK official

Thailand warned of terrorism during festive season

Efficient HK police builds up reputation

Weather information for Asia-Pacific cities -- Dec. 24

Co-chair countries diplomats to meet Tigers of Sri Lanka

Sri Lankan govt awaits positive response from **Tamil Tigers**

Sri Lanka sees tsunami recovery as both challenge, opportunity

1 policeman, 3 Taliban militants killed in firefight in S. Afghanistan

Malaysian Qualification Agency to begin monitoring education on Jan. 1

4 rebels killed in north Sri Lanka

Heavy snowfall affects normal life in far-western Nepal

Feature: Tourism industry slowly recovered in southern Thailand

by He Jing & Ling Shuo

Another move to combat terrorist activities in Bangladesh

Women share significant part of Malaysian workforce

Sri Lankan Chinese make donation to tsunami orphans

Load-Date: December 25, 2005

End of Document

Bomb Kills 16 Near Sri Lankan Capital

Associated Press Online

November 28, 2007 Wednesday 5:32 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 596 words

Byline: By ERANGA JAYAWARDENA, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: NUGEGODA Sri Lanka

Body

A bomb exploded Wednesday evening near the entrance to a popular department store in a busy Colombo suburb, killing 16 people and wounding 37 in a rare attack on civilians that the military blamed on Tamil Tiger rebels.

The blast occurred just outside the four-story No Limits store in Nugegoda as commuters crowded a nearby bus stop during the evening rush hour, officials said.

"We know that the attack bears all the hallmarks of the LTTE," military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said, referring to the rebel group by its formal name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. "It is nobody else but the LTTE."

If confirmed, it would be a rare attack by the separatist group on a purely civilian area in recent years, although civilians have been killed in previous attacks on government and military targets.

Rebel spokesman Rasiiah Ilanthirayan did not answer repeated calls from The Associated Press seeking comment.

Earlier in the day, a female suicide bomber sent by the Tamil rebels killed one person and wounded two others in an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate a government minister in his office in Colombo.

The rebels' top leader blamed the government for a recent escalation of fighting in the more than two-decade-old civil war that has killed an estimated 70,000 in the Indian Ocean island nation.

The powerful blast at the department store shattered windows and left piles of crumbled concrete on the bloodstained sidewalk, according to an AP photographer at the scene.

Crumpled and charred pieces of motorcycles and three-wheeled taxis were scattered nearby.

Police and firefighters searched the debris for victims.

The military said at least 16 people were killed and 37 injured. At a nearby hospital, residents came in search of missing relatives. One girl who suffered a broken arm in the attack sat with her mother as she received treatment.

"I was on the top floor of a shoe shop with my wife and child when I heard a big blast and there were glass pieces all over us," resident A. Jayasena told AP Television News. "As we ran away, I saw the entrance of the No Limit shop burning, and in the midst of it, a schoolgirl on the floor trying to get up and then falling back again."

Bomb Kills 16 Near Sri Lankan Capital

Jayasena and his daughter suffered minor injuries, while his wife was in the hospital being treated for more serious wounds, he said.

The bomb may have exploded when a security guard at the mall became suspicious about a package and tried to open it, a defense official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

However, police at the scene said the explosives may have been in one of the three-wheeled taxis that were destroyed.

The earlier suicide bombing targeted the offices of Douglas Devananda, the minister of social services and the leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party, an ethnic Tamil party considered a rival to the separatist **Tamil Tigers**, the military said.

Devananda, the target of repeated assassination attempts, was not injured in the attack, the military said. The blast killed one of his staff members and injured two others, one critically, said Dr. Hector Weerasinghe, the medical director of Colombo National Hospital. The bomber also died.

The rebel group has been fighting since 1983 to create a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils following decades of discrimination by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority.

In the past two years, rebel bombers had avoided deliberately targeting civilians, though they have ambushed military convoys at crowded places, causing many civilian deaths.

Load-Date: November 29, 2007

End of Document



Amnesty International Announces Human Rights Defenders from Sri Lanka and Burundi Share 2007 Martin Ennals Award

U.S. Newswire

May 3, 2007 Thursday 8:01 PM EST

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Public Interest Services
Delivering the most policy, issue & advocacy news

Section: POLITICAL EDITORS

Length: 642 words

Dateline: WASHINGTON, May 3

Body

Amnesty International, as one of the members on the Jury of the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders (MEA), announces that the 2007 Laureates are:

Rajan Hoole and Kopalasingham Sritharan, co-founders of the University Teachers for Human Rights (UTHR), Jaffna, have monitored and documented in regular reports the human rights abuses committed by the Sri Lanka Government as well as the **Tamil Tigers (LTTE)**. At great personal risk they have reported on the effects of armed conflict on children, **women**, minorities and displaced people over the past 18 years. Since the latest upsurge in fighting, the UTHR has conducted groundbreaking investigations into the most serious atrocities, including the Trinco 5 (January 2, 2006), the Mullaitivu bombing that killed some 51 young **women** and girls (August 5, 2006), and the execution-style slaying of 17 humanitarian aid workers in Muttur (August 14, 2006). Often alone in exposing abuses by all parties, both men are under death sentences from the **LTTE**. Since the assassination of their colleague, Rajani Thiranagama, the two men have been forced to work underground for more than a decade, but their reports are well known in Sri Lanka and abroad.

Pierre Claver Mbonimpa served as a policeman in Burundi until December 1994. He spent two years in prison on the basis of false accusations. Upon his release, he founded non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to help protect the rights of prisoners, including the 9,000 prisoners that have been waiting for trial for years in the country's overcrowded jails. He has campaigned fearlessly against torture, and organized events where police and military representatives have had to face public questions from human rights activists and victims. When civil society members and journalists were arrested recently, he again spoke out despite the risks. In a fragile country, where civil war has claimed thousands of lives, Pierre Claver Mbonimpa is often hailed as the only person who stands up for the rights of Hutu, Tutsi and Batwa. He is outspoken about human rights violations, even in the public media.

The Chairman of the Jury of the MEA, Hans Thoolen, describes the laureates as "symbols of the human rights movement in their respective countries, where standing up for human rights and democracy is a dangerous activity". He draws attention to the laureates' principled stand to effectively cover abuses committed by both sides in

Amnesty International Announces Human Rights Defenders from Sri Lanka and Burundi Share 2007 Martin Ennals Award

the conflict. The eleven organizations on the Jury of the Martin Ennals Award call on the Governments of Sri Lanka and Burundi to ensure the safety of the Laureates and allow them to work without harassment. The Ceremony of the Martin Ennals Award will take place in Geneva in October.

MEA: the main award of the human rights movement. The Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders (MEA) is a unique collaboration among eleven of the world's leading human rights organizations to give protection to human rights defenders worldwide. The Jury is composed of the following NGOs: Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Human Rights First, International Federation for Human Rights, World Organization Against Torture, International Service for Human Rights, Front Line, International Commission of Jurists, Diakonie Germany, International Alert and Huridocs.

Previous laureates: Akbar Ganji, Iran and Arnold Tsunga, Zimbabwe (2006); Aktham Naisse, Syria; Lida Yusupova, Russia; Alirio Uribe Munoz, Colombia; Jacqueline Moudeina, Chad; Peace Brigades International; Immaculee Birhaheka, DR Congo; Natasha Kandic, Yugoslavia; Eyad El Sarraj, Palestine; Samuel Ruiz, Mexico; Clement Nwankwo, Nigeria; Asma Jahangir, Pakistan; Harry Wu, China.

Patrons of the Martin Ennals Award: Asma Jahangir, Barbara Hendricks, Jose Ramos-Horta, Adama Dieng, Leandro Despouy, Robert Fulghum and Theo van Boven.

SOURCE Amnesty International

Contact: Ruby Bolaria of Amnesty International, +1-202-544-0200 ext. 494

Load-Date: May 4, 2007

End of Document

Bomb explodes in a suburb of Sri Lanka's capital, killing 16, military says

The Associated Press

November 28, 2007 Wednesday 5:32 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 596 words

Byline: By ERANGA JAYAWARDENA, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: NUGEGODA Sri Lanka

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The blast occurred just outside the four-story No Limits store in Nugegoda as commuters crowded a nearby bus stop during the evening rush hour, officials said.

"We know that the attack bears all the hallmarks of the LTTE," military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said, referring to the rebel group by its formal name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. "It is nobody else but the LTTE."

If confirmed, it would be a rare attack by the separatist group on a purely civilian area in recent years, although civilians have been killed in previous attacks on government and military targets.

Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan did not answer repeated calls from The Associated Press seeking comment.

Earlier in the day, a female suicide bomber sent by the Tamil rebels killed one person and wounded two others in an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate a government minister in his office in Colombo.

The rebels' top leader blamed the government for a recent escalation of fighting in the more than two-decade-old civil war that has killed an estimated 70,000 in the Indian Ocean island nation.

The powerful blast at the department store shattered windows and left piles of crumbled concrete on the bloodstained sidewalk, according to an AP photographer at the scene.

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Bomb explodes in a suburb of Sri Lanka 's capital, killing 16, military says

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The earlier suicide bombing targeted the offices of Douglas Devananda, the minister of social services and the leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party, an ethnic Tamil party considered a rival to the separatist **Tamil Tigers**, the military said.

Devananda, the target of repeated assassination attempts, was not injured in the attack, the military said. The blast killed one of his staff members and injured two others, one critically, said Dr. Hector Weerasinghe, the medical director of Colombo National Hospital. The bomber also died.

The rebel group has been fighting since 1983 to create a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils following decades of discrimination by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority.

In the past two years, rebel bombers had avoided deliberately targeting civilians, though they have ambushed military convoys at crowded places, causing many civilian deaths.

Load-Date: November 29, 2007

End of Document

"Anarchy" in Sri Lanka as Tokyo peace envoy set to arrive

Agence France Presse -- English

May 6, 2006 Saturday 11:13 AM GMT

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Length: 629 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 6 2006

Body

A Japanese peace envoy was to arrive in Sri Lanka for talks Saturday as Scandinavian monitors said violence between government forces and Tamil Tiger rebels was out of control.

Tokyo's special peace envoy Yasushi Akashi was to hold talks with President Mahinda Rajapakse and would also try to meet leaders of the ***Tamil Tigers*** during his four-day visit, the Japanese embassy said.

Despite a four-year ceasefire, more than 200 people have died over the last month in tit-for-tat attacks by government and rebel forces from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***), who are fighting for a Tamil minority homeland.

"The escalation of violence that's occurring now is completely out of control," Helen Olafsdottir, spokeswoman for the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission that oversees a four-year-old truce, told AFP.

"There's anarchy on the ground."

Saturday saw a rare lull in the attacks. The only casualty was a soldier wounded when suspected Tamil Tiger gunmen opened fire as he guarded a Tamil newspaper office, the defence ministry said.

The pro-rebel newspaper had been provided with armed guards after unidentified gunmen killed two employees four days earlier.

On Friday, government forces attacked several rebel boats off the island's northwest, destroying one vessel and a truck transporting reinforcements.

The navy had hit back and sunk the rebel boat after sustaining damage to a naval vessel from Tamil Tiger fire, said defence ministry spokesman Prasad Samarasinghe. No casualties were reported among the sailors.

The fighting occurred after the navy had confronted at least four rebel boats off Kuthirimalai Point in the coastal district of Mannar, the military said.

Also on Friday, three soldiers were wounded in a mine attack near the main railway station at Vavuniya, 260 kilometres (160 miles) north of Colombo, Samarasinghe said.

"Anarchy" in Sri Lanka as Tokyo peace envoy set to arrive

A policeman died in a similar attack at Nellyadi in Jaffna on Friday, police said.

Akashi's visit comes as the government seeks international pressure to revive talks with the rebels on saving a ceasefire that has tenuously held despite the rising violence.

Akashi is a key figure who helped raise about 4.5 billion dollars in pledges to rebuild Sri Lanka during a meeting of international aid donors he organised in June 2003.

Much of the aid was linked to progress in the Norwegian-backed peace process. Peace talks have remained on hold since April 2003 after six rounds of face-to-face talks that began in September 2002.

In the most serious attack since the truce took hold, a **female** suicide bomber wounded army chief Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka and 30 others in an attack at army headquarters in Colombo on April 25. Eleven people including the bomber died.

The government, saying it was acting in self-defence against an **LTTE** attack, retaliated with air strikes against suspected rebel positions.

Sri Lanka is seeking foreign forensic help to establish whether the 21-year-old bomber was pregnant as she claimed, investigators said Saturday.

Tests by local laboratories proved negative, a doctor close to the investigation said.

Fonseka was discharged from intensive care on Saturday and would resume work "in the near future", the army said in a statement, adding that he would remain in hospital for the time being.

Olafsdottir said the only way to bring the latest deadly cycle of violence under control was for the two sides to agree to resume negotiations.

Government officials held a two-day meeting with rebel representatives in Switzerland in February and agreed to review the ceasefire at another meeting in April but those talks did not take place.

Diplomatic efforts by peacebroker Norway have failed to bring the parties back to the table.

More than 60,000 people have been killed in the island's separatist conflict since 1972.

Load-Date: May 7, 2006

Sri Lanka and Burundi Human Rights Defenders Win 2007 Martin Ennals Award

Targeted News Service

May 4, 2007 Friday 6:29 AM EST

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Length: 631 words

Byline: Targeted News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

Human Rights Watch issued the following news release:

Human Rights Watch, as one of the members on the Jury of the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders (MEA), announced today that the 2007 Laureates are:

Rajan Hoole and Kopalasingham Sritharan, co-founders of the University Teachers for Human Rights (UTHR), Jaffna, have monitored and documented in regular reports the human rights abuses committed by the Sri Lankan government as well as the ***Tamil Tigers (LTTE)***. At great personal risk they have reported on the effects of armed conflict on children, ***women***, minorities and displaced persons over the past 18 years. Since the last upsurge in fighting, the UTHR has conducted groundbreaking investigations into the most serious atrocities, including the Trinco five, the Mullaitivu bombing that killed some 51 young ***women*** and girls, and the execution-style slaying of 17 humanitarian aid workers. Often alone in exposing abuses by parties on all sides, both men are under death sentences from the ***LTTE***. Since the assassination of their colleague, Rajani Thiranagama, the two men have been forced to work underground for more than a decade, but their reports are well known in Sri Lanka and abroad.

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The Chairman of the Jury of the MEA, Hans Thoolen, described the laureates as "symbols of the human rights movement in their respective countries, where standing up for human rights and democracy is a dangerous activity." He drew attention to the laureates' principled stand to effectively cover abuses committed by both sides in the conflict. The 11 organizations on the Jury of the Martin Ennals Award called on the governments of Sri Lanka and Burundi to ensure the safety of the laureates and allow them to work without harassment. The ceremony to bestow the Martin Ennals Award will take place in Geneva in October.

The Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders is a unique collaboration among 11 of the world's leading human rights organizations to give protection to human rights defenders worldwide. The jury is composed of the

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TNS AVam-070505-938160 Amalone

Load-Date: May 7, 2007

End of Document

Five killed in Sri Lanka May Day mine attack

Agence France Presse -- English

May 1, 2006 Monday 8:08 AM GMT

Copyright 2006 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 618 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 1 2006

Body

A Claymore mine exploded in Sri Lanka's port town of Trincomalee on Monday, killing five people after political parties called off May Day rallies in fear of an attack, officials said.

The dead included four civilians, local military officials in Trincomalee, 260 kilometres (160 miles) northeast of Colombo, said by telephone. The fifth victim was a sailor on foot patrol.

Four sailors were critically wounded and four civilians also hurt when the mine, rigged up to a bicycle, was detonated, the military said.

They blamed the rebel *Tamil Tigers*.

"Two sailors approached the bicycle and were about to check it when the bomb went off," an official told AFP. "The civilians were travelling in the area in a three-wheel taxi at the time."

The attack came as the country marked international labour day on a low key with all major political parties calling off their annual rallies -- which traditionally attract tens of thousands -- fearing bomb attacks by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*).

Plan Implementation Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said on Sunday the parties agreed to avoid large meetings after a *female* suicide bomber killed herself and 10 others inside army headquarters in Colombo last Tuesday.

The military carried out air strikes against suspected Tiger positions in Trincomalee last week after the suicide bombing. The rebels said at least 15 civilians died in the government strikes.

"We felt that if there were large crowds gathering at public places, they could be targets for bomb attacks," said Rambukwella, who is the government spokesman on defence matters.

Some of the decorations and platforms set up for Monday's celebrations in Colombo were dismantled over the weekend. The then-president Ranasinghe Premadasa was assassinated by a suicide bomber at the 1993 May Day rally.

Five killed in Sri Lanka May Day mine attack

Tamil Tiger rebels, who authorities suspect of carrying out the recent Colombo attack, are leading a drawn-out campaign for independence for minority Tamils in the island's northeast.

More than 60,000 people have died in the separatist conflict since 1972.

There were no major political rallies scheduled in Trincomalee, which has remained tense since a high-profile assassination of a local politician on April 7.

Monday's Trincomalee blast was the latest in a worsening series of deadly incidents to shake a four-year-old ceasefire between the government and Tigers.

Nearly 200 people have been killed in the past month alone according to figures given by the two sides.

In a separate attack Monday, another five sailors were wounded when seaborne Tigers fired on a naval gunboat in waters off Trincomalee, military officials said.

"At least two big boats of the LTTE were involved and a Dvora gunboat (of the navy) was able to repulse the attack," an official in Trincomalee said.

A pro-rebel website earlier Monday reported the Tigers had moved an unspecified number of fighters along the island's northeastern coast to Trincomalee, in defiance of the ceasefire's ban on sea transport.

Tamilnet.com said the rebel boats came under attack from shore-based artillery, which the Sea Tigers countered.

The town of Trincomalee has been under night curfew since a massive bomb exploded at the local market on April 12, killing 17 people, mostly civilians. The government and many Sinhalese locals blamed the blast on Tiger rebels.

Two days after the attack, on the Sinhalese New Year, mobs retaliated by attacking the mainly Tamil village of Selvanayagampura adjoining Trincomalee, burning 46 houses and beating a woman to death.

Faced with the recent escalation of violence, peacebroker Norway has been trying to arrange a fresh round of talks amid mounting international pressure on both sides to return to the table.

Load-Date: May 2, 2006

Tighter security for Sri Lanka refugees after massacre report

Agence France Presse -- English

August 5, 2006 Saturday 8:14 PM GMT

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Length: 630 words

Byline: Lakruwan Wanniarachchi

Dateline: KANTALAI, Sri Lanka, Aug 5 2006

Body

Sri Lankan troops tightened security Saturday in the island's northeast for 20,000 Muslim refugee families fleeing fighting after the government and Tiger rebels traded accusations of atrocities against civilians.

Half of the men, women and children refugees were housed in schools and other buildings while the overflow huddled under trees and tents in Kantalai.

Tensions were heightened by a defence department claim that Tamil rebels had massacred at least 100 Muslim men whom they suspected had told security forces about the rebels' movements.

The massacre is said to have taken place 40 kilometers (25 miles) away in Muttur.

The Tamil Tigers denied the charge and in turn accused the army of slaughtering 15 Tamil civilians, including three women.

"There is no massacre as alleged by the Sri Lankan government," Tiger spokesman S. Puleedevan told AFP.

"The Sri Lankan government has massacred a lot of Tamils. In one place 15 Tamils working for non-governmental organisations have been killed."

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said it had no access to the Muttur area and was unable to verify claims of casualties.

Puleedevan also denied an allegation from Sri Lanka Muslim Congress leader Rauf Hakeem that the LTTE were holding 100 innocent Muslims youths prisoner, but admitted that some might have been held briefly for questioning.

Hakeem also accused security forces of staging artillery and mortar bomb attacks that have killed 27 Muslims civilians in Muttur since Thursday.

ICRC spokesman Sukumar Rockwood said the organisation had begun moving relief supplies to the thousands of people who have fled to Kantalai, where local officials estimate at least 20,000 people are sheltering.

Tighter security for Sri Lanka refugees after massacre report

The ICRC was moving 5,000 packs containing essentials such as soap, toothpaste and tarpauline sheets, Rockwood said.

He added they were hoping to get into the Muttur area, where fighting subsided Saturday.

The first refugees to escape Muttur were holed up in four schools in Kantalai where hundreds of Sinhalese were already living as refugees after Tiger rebels cut off their water supply last month.

"We've no place to go -- that's why we're sleeping here," a Muslim man said as he sheltered under the bullock cart he, his family and his neighbours had used to flee the conflict zone.

The official death toll in 11 days of fighting now stands at 426 following the defence ministry claim that 100 civilians have been killed by the Tigers.

"We have a list of 14,380 people already on the move," administrative officer H. K. Karunawathi said.

"There are many more who have not been registered yet. They belong to Sinhalese, Muslim and Tamil families," she added.

However, the majority were Muslims from Muttur, she said.

Chief Minister Berty Premalal Disanayake said arranging cooked food for the refugees was a major challenge and authorities had brought in extra supplies.

Muslims in Muttur started leaving in droves after 27 civilians were killed in shelling on Thursday and Friday amid a battle between government troops and the LTTE.

Military officials said two ambulances transporting wounded came under attack Friday just outside Muttur.

International concern for civilians has mounted.

Muslims are the second-largest minority in Sri Lanka, accounting for 7.5 percent of the 19.5 million population. Tamils make up 12.5 percent and about 70 percent are Sinhalese.

The fighting gripping the island is the worst since an Oslo-brokered truce took effect in February 2002.

The government said its military assault was aimed at opening a canal in the northeast supplying water to thousands of families downstream but which had been blocked by the Tigers.

The rebels said their action was aimed at pressuring the government to provide a better drinking water system in areas held by them.

Load-Date: August 6, 2006

Sri Lanka detains 3 after suspected rebel bus blasts kill 21

Associated Press International

January 7, 2007 Sunday 3:34 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 621 words

Byline: By KRISHAN FRANCIS, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Three people have been detained for questioning after bus bombs blamed on Tamil separatist rebels killed at least 21 people and wounded dozens more, Sri Lanka's Defense Ministry said Sunday. The insurgents have denied involvement.

The government meanwhile reaffirmed its commitment to the peace process and urged the rebels to resume negotiations.

Security forces said a Tamil rebel suicide bomber killed at least 15 people and wounded 40 more Saturday on a bus in the coastal town of Meetiyagoda, 95 kilometers (60 miles) south of the capital, Colombo, and near several popular resort towns.

It was not clear if the dead bomber was included in the official death toll. Police could not immediately be reached early Sunday.

Less than 24 hours earlier, a bus bomb also blamed on the **Tamil Tigers** killed at least six people just northeast of Colombo.

Police detained three people late Saturday in connection with the blast earlier that day, an official at the Defense Ministry's Media Center for National Security said Sunday. The officer, who cannot be named due to military policy, had no other details.

The rebels, formally known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, have been fighting for decades for an independent homeland for the Tamil ethnic minority in Sri Lanka's north and east, because of discrimination at the hands of the majority-Sinhalese government.

As a major foreign donor called for an end to the escalating violence that killed more than 3,600 in 2006, Sri Lanka's government urged a return to peace talks.

"The government reaffirms its total commitment to a peaceful settlement for the north and east," it said in statement released late Saturday.

"The government appeals to the international community to condemn such acts of terror and prevail on the **LTTE** to renounce violence and return to the negotiating table," it said.

Sri Lanka detains 3 after suspected rebel bus blasts kill 21

Japan also called for change in a statement e-mailed to news organizations.

"These attacks, which deliberately targeted innocent common people, must be condemned as cowardly acts of terrorism, and such incidents must not be repeated in future," the Japanese Embassy said in a statement.

Police said Saturday's blast was triggered by a **female** Tamil rebel.

"There is a **female** body inside the bus, and looking at the damage the blast has caused around her, we suspect that she could have been a suicide bomber," said senior police official Upul Ariyaratne.

Violence has risen sharply in Sri Lanka over the past year, but most has occurred in the ethnic Tamil-dominated north and east, where the rebels run their own de facto state in some areas. The latest bloodshed appeared to signal an escalation of the ethnic conflict ravaging the South Asian island nation.

"The **LTTE** are losing their strength in the east. Because of this, they are targeting innocent civilians," said military spokesman Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe.

The rebels have made suicide bombings a hallmark of their two-decade campaign to carve out a separate state for minority Tamils.

Yet the rebels said they were not involved.

"We totally deny that. We did not do that, that's all I can say," the rebels' military spokesman, Rasiah Ilanthirayan, told The Associated Press by telephone from the group's northern stronghold, Kilinochchi.

On Wednesday, the rebels warned the government of "serious repercussions" for a government airstrike they said killed 16 Tamil civilians, including eight children, in a Tiger-controlled northwestern area. The military said it targeted only rebel positions in the raid Tuesday.

The renewed fighting has seriously threatened a 2002 cease-fire between the rebels and the government, although the truce still officially holds.

The civil war has claimed about 68,000 lives, and displaced 1.6 million people.

Load-Date: January 7, 2007

Japanese envoy to save Sri Lanka peace bid amid bloodshed

Agence France Presse -- English

May 6, 2006 Saturday 5:05 PM GMT

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Length: 594 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 6 2006

Body

A Japanese peace envoy arrived in Sri Lanka Saturday for talks aimed at saving the island's troubled peace process as Scandinavian truce monitors said violence was getting out of control.

Tokyo's special peace envoy Yasushi Akashi was to hold talks with President Mahinda Rajapakse and would also meet leaders of the **Tamil Tigers** during his four-day visit, diplomats said.

The Tiger rebels confirmed that the leader of their political wing, S.P. Thamilselvan, would hold discussions with Akashi on Tuesday in the rebel-held northern town of Kilinochchi.

Despite a four-year ceasefire, more than 200 people have died over the last month in tit-for-tat attacks by government and members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), who are fighting for a homeland for minority Tamils.

"The escalation of violence that's occurring now is completely out of control," Helen Olafsdottir, spokeswoman for the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission that oversees a four-year-old truce, told AFP.

"There's anarchy on the ground."

However, Saturday saw a rare lull in the attacks.

The only casualty was a soldier wounded when suspected Tamil Tiger gunmen opened fire as he guarded a Tamil newspaper office, the defence ministry said.

The pro-rebel newspaper had been provided with armed guards after unidentified gunmen killed two employees four days earlier.

On Friday, government forces attacked several rebel boats off the island's northwest, destroying one vessel and a truck transporting reinforcements.

The navy had hit back and sunk the rebel boat after sustaining damage to a naval vessel from Tamil Tiger fire, said defence ministry spokesman Prasad Samarasinghe. No casualties were reported among the sailors.

Japanese envoy to save Sri Lanka peace bid amid bloodshed

The fighting occurred after the navy had confronted at least four rebel boats off Kuthirimalai Point in the coastal district of Mannar, the military said.

Akashi's visit comes as the government seeks international pressure to revive talks with the rebels on saving a ceasefire that has tenuously held despite the rising violence.

Akashi is a key figure who helped raise about 4.5 billion dollars in pledges to rebuild Sri Lanka during a meeting of international aid donors he organised in June 2003.

Much of the aid was linked to progress in the Norwegian-backed peace process. Peace talks have remained on hold since April 2003 after six rounds of face-to-face discussions that began in September 2002.

In the most serious attack since the truce took hold, a **female** suicide bomber wounded army chief Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka and 30 others in an attack at army headquarters in Colombo on April 25.

Eleven people including the bomber died.

The government, saying it was acting in self-defence against an **LTTE** attack, retaliated with air strikes against suspected rebel positions.

Sri Lanka is seeking foreign forensic help to establish whether the 21-year-old bomber was pregnant as she claimed, investigators said Saturday.

Tests by local laboratories proved negative, a doctor close to the investigation said.

Fonseka was discharged from intensive care on Saturday and would resume work "in the near future", the army said in a statement, adding that he would remain in hospital for the time being.

Government officials held a two-day meeting with rebel representatives in Switzerland in February and agreed to review the ceasefire at another meeting in April but those talks did not take place.

Diplomatic efforts by peacebroker Norway have failed to bring the parties back to the table.

More than 60,000 people have been killed in the island's separatist conflict since 1972.

Load-Date: May 7, 2006

Minister targeted in Sri Lanka suicide attack

Guardian.com

November 28, 2007

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theguardian

Length: 426 words

Highlight: Handicapped **female** suicide bomber with explosives hidden in bra kills one person outside government ministry in Colombo

Body

A handicapped **female** Tamil Tiger suicide bomber with explosives hidden in her bra blew herself up in the Sri Lankan capital today, killing one and wounding three security men outside a government ministry.

The attacker, believed to be a member of the Black Tiger suicide squad, was dressed as an office worker and attempted to enter the heavily guarded complex of social development minister Douglas Devananda this morning.

However, when the bomber was stopped by security guards she detonated the device in her underwear, police said. Devananda, who escaped unhurt, was holding an "open day" to meet the public.

Devananda is leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party, an ethnic Tamil party that opposes the Tigers and is seen as a democratic alternative to the rebel leadership. He has been the target of repeated assassination attempts by the rebels.

The blast killed one of Devananda's staff and critically injured another. Hector Weerasinghe, the medical director of Colombo National Hospital, told reporters that a third worker was lightly injured. The bomber died on the spot.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam have been fighting for more than two decades to create a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils after decades of discrimination by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority. The civil war has claimed more than 70,000 lives.

Yesterday in his annual Heroes Day speech, Velupillai Prabhakaran, the reclusive leader of the Tamil Tiger rebels, said that peace efforts were a waste of time and vowed to strike back at the island's "genocidal" government.

Underlining that the peace would give way to war, Mr Prabhakaran said that "all the Sinhala political parties are essentially chauvinistic and anti-Tamil. To expect a political solution ... is political naivety."

He also lashed out against nations who have listed the **LTTE** as "terrorists" - such as India, the US and Britain.

Many analysts are concerned over the rebel leader's use of the phrase "Sinhala people ... (who were) immersed in the poison of racism" in his speech - indicating that the Tigers may once again target civilians.

Minister targeted in Sri Lanka suicide attack

The government attempted to shut down the speech before Mr Prabhakaran began by destroying the **Tamil Tigers'** radio station with an airstrike. The rebels said that five employees and four civilians were killed.

The Sri Lankan government has vowed to kill Mr Prabhakaran. Meanwhile, the economic consequences of war are extracting a heavy toll - official figures show that tourist arrivals have dropped more than 20% in the 10 months to October.

Load-Date: November 28, 2007

End of Document

Sri Lankan president's brother escapes suicide attack

Guardian.com

December 1, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 412 words

Highlight: Sri Lanka's defence secretary, the brother of the country's president, narrowly escaped with his life today after a suicide bomber targeted a military convoy in which he was traveling through the heart of the island's capital.

Body

Sri Lanka's defence secretary, the brother of the country's president, narrowly escaped with his life today after a suicide bomber targeted a military convoy in which he was traveling through the heart of the island's capital.

The audacious strike, by a suspected Tamil Tiger bomber, left at least two people dead and 15 wounded. Moments after the explosion police sprayed the site with bullets.

It appears the bomber drove a rickshaw alongside the five-car convoy, carrying the defence secretary, Gotabhaya Rajapakse, and detonated the device.

"[Mr Rajapakse] is safe, no harm has come to him," a military spokesman said. The government blamed an "**LTTE** suicide bomber", using the acronym of the rebels' official name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

Anticipating the public reaction to the bombing, the government also released photographs of president Mahinda Rajapakse hugging his younger brother.

The defence secretary is a key target for the **Tamil Tigers**. He has overseen the government's military strategy against the rebels - a conflict that has flared into a vicious "shadow war" over the past year in which more than 3,000 have been killed.

There was no immediate response from the Tigers, whose leader this week warned peace talks were going nowhere and that the rebels were not prepared "to walk along the same old futile path" any longer.

In the past year, the rebels - who demand a homeland for Sri Lanka's minority Tamil population - have been blamed for the assassinations of high-profile officials, including the country's foreign minister in August 2005.

A **female** suicide bomber feigning pregnancy tried to kill the head of the army, Lieutenant-General Sarath Fonseka, in Colombo in April. The bomber and 11 others died but her target survived with serious injuries.

The country's third highest-ranking soldier, Major General Prami Kulathunge, was killed two months later by a suicide bomber on a motorbike as he was driving to work in the capital.

Sri Lankan president's brother escapes suicide attack

Analysts said that Sri Lanka should be braced for a return to the kind of "protracted war" that bedevilled the island for two decades and cost almost 70,000 lives.

"The Tigers have said that they have tried everything and have been taken for a ride. They are saying there is no option but secession and war," said Sara Paikiasothy, director of Colombo's Centre for Policy Alternatives.

"The current administration in Colombo has shown no commitment to explore a solution that will be acceptable [to the rebels]."

Load-Date: December 1, 2006

End of Document

Suicide truck bombers may hit Colombo's landmarks, report says

Associated Press International

January 15, 2006 Sunday 7:07 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 443 words

Byline: By DILIP GANGULY, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Soldiers in full battle gear manned checkpoints and patrolled Sri Lanka's capital Sunday after an intelligence report warned that prominent landmarks could be targeted by Tamil Tiger suicide bombers

Colombo's World Trade Center, Central Bank and its port may be targets of a Tiger attack as a 4-year-old cease-fire continues to be threatened by an upsurge in violence, the investigative weekly Sunday Leader newspaper said, quoting the intelligence report.

Explosive-laden vehicles could be used for suicide attacks, the news report said Sunday. In the past, the rebels have twice used suicide truck bombers to hit the Central Bank and Sri Lanka's World Trade Center.

"We have taken all possible security precautions in Colombo and our forces are on full alert," Deputy Inspector General of Police P. Jayasundara told The Associated Press, declining to comment on the news report.

The **Tamil Tigers** who fought a 19-year civil war for a separate homeland in the northeast for ethnic minority Tamils have been blamed for only one attack in Colombo since the 2002 cease-fire was signed with the government.

Before the truce, rebel suicide bombers mounted numerous attacks on government installations and targeted opponents to highlight their campaign for autonomy.

The last suicide attack was carried out by a **female** bomber who detonated explosives at a police station in July 2004, killing four officers and herself.

The government has blamed the Tigers for attacks that have killed 72 Sri Lankan security forces since Dec. 4, sparking fears that the cease-fire could collapse.

Soldiers in full battle gear were posted Sunday on Colombo's major roads, while other heavily armed troops patrolled in military vehicles.

The rebels, meanwhile, denied involvement in a grenade attack on European cease-fire monitors' compound, calling it a bid to sabotage the truce.

Attackers in the eastern city of Batticaloa, 220 kilometers (135 miles) east of Colombo, hurled a grenade Friday into the monitors' compound, damaging three vehicles. No injuries were reported.

Suicide truck bombers may hit Colombo's landmarks, report says

"Our leadership views this attack as an attempt to wreck the cease-fire agreement," the Tigers' Web site quoted their top political leader, S.P. Thamilselvan, as saying Sunday.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or **LTTE**, began fighting in 1983 to create a Tamil homeland, claiming discrimination by the majority Sinhalese. The conflict claimed at least 65,000 lives.

The Tigers have routinely denied involvement in recent violence that threatens to derail the Norway-brokered government-rebel cease-fire but it is rare for Thamilselvan to condemn attacks.

On the Net:

Tamil Tiger rebels' Web-site: <http://www.ltteps.org>

Load-Date: January 16, 2006

One killed, three injured in separate attacks in northern Sri Lanka

AP Worldstream

August 21, 2005 Sunday

Copyright 2005 Associated Press

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 277 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels shot dead a rival political activist while a **female** rebel and two supporters were injured in a grenade attack in northern Sri Lanka, the military said Sunday.

Nadaraja Kesavavarnan, 25, was shot dead by suspected **Tamil Tigers** Saturday evening as he rode his bicycle near his office in Vavuniya, 210 kilometers (130 miles) north of the capital, Colombo, military spokesman Brig. Daya Ratnayake said.

Later that night, one **female** Tiger rebel and two **female** supporters were injured when unidentified assailants hurled grenades into a rebel office in Vavuniya, Ratnayake said.

Kesavavarnan belonged to Eelam People's Democratic Party, or EPDP, once an ally of the **Tamil Tigers** in their violent quest to carve out a separate state for ethnic minority Tamils, but subsequently renounced violence and joined mainstream politics in 1987.

The Tigers, however, accuse the EPDP of corroborating with government forces to attack them.

The EPDP denies the charge and says the rebels have killed more than 40 of their members since a cease-fire was signed in 2002 between the **Tamil Tigers** and the government.

The **Tamil Tigers** began fighting in 1983 for a separate homeland for minority ethnic Tamils in the country's north and east, claiming discrimination by the majority Sinhalese. The conflict killed nearly 65,000 people before the cease-fire.

Post-truce peace talks have been stalled since 2003 over rebel demands for wide autonomy and political killings have escalated, peaking with the assassination July 12 of the country's foreign minister.

Tiger rebels on Friday agreed to return to talks with the government but prospects for peace remain uncertain.

Load-Date: August 22, 2005

Tamil Tigers get ready to defend what they see as their country

Associated Press International

June 21, 2006 Wednesday 12:16 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 841 words

Byline: By MATTHEW ROSENBERG, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: KILINCHCHI Sri Lanka

Body

Every map in Sri Lanka is about one of two fantasies.

The official one in the south shows an undivided nation, the picture-postcard tropical paradise of white-sand beaches and Buddhist shrines.

Up where the Tamil Tiger rebels reign, maps show the island's north, along with much of the west coast and all the east coast as "Tamil Eelam," the homeland of the Hindu Tamil minority.

It's a stretched reality, but not without some truth. In swaths of the north and east carved out during 18 years of fighting, the rebels have created a country part real and part imagined, one where women warriors stamp forms at border crossings while suicide bombers train at hidden bases.

Now they are readying for the possibility of renewed war.

"We must be prepared to protect ourselves," said Markanbu Anandan, a 48-year-old Tamil mason who, like many others in Kilinochchi, the de facto rebel capital, spent Tuesday in his dusty yard digging a bomb shelter, a six-foot-deep trench covered with wood planks and sandbags.

Here, school principals are lecturing students to be extra cautious, elderly women are learning to use weapons and international aid workers scurry into cement bunkers at the sound of fighter jets roaring overhead.

On the other side of the frontier, the Sri Lankan military is also shoring up its defenses. It is buying new weapons, strengthening military bunkers and recently recruited 5,000 Sinhalese villagers to help protect the area bordering Tiger territory.

Discrimination against the 3.2 million Tamils, most of whom are Hindu, led the Tigers to take up arms in 1983. The spark was anti-Tamil riots, and the resulting war on this island of 19 million people nearly three-quarters Sinhalese, most of them Buddhist left more than 65,000 people dead before a 2002 cease-fire.

But four years of uneasy calm have given way since April to a back-and-forth of bombings and shootings. Nearly 700 people have died and many say Sri Lanka is sliding back into ethnic conflict.

Both sides say they want peace. But their demands remain as far apart as their maps, leaving little hope for compromise.

Tamil Tigers get ready to defend what they see as their country

"We want to live amicably," said Thramathy Sivasabranmaniam, a 35-year-old Tamil. "But we want a separate Tamil Eelam. The government does not want this."

The government made that clear Monday. There is not, it insisted, a de facto State of Tamil Eelam. "This remains a myth," a government statement said.

But facts on the ground are hard to dispute. And the facts say "state."

There is a border with immigration officials and customs officers who seize banned goods, such as pornography. There is a police force, an education system and tax collectors whose work, along with money raised from the Tamil diaspora, helps keep everything running.

At Tamil Eelam's heart lies Kilinochchi, a town that seems like it could be swallowed by the bush and forest that surrounds it. Mildew stains the sides of buildings, many of them pockmarked with bullet holes. The tallest building is four stories. Monuments to "martyrs" Tigers killed in the war dot the town.

The Tigers go to great lengths to show they are not running a lawless state. Ask to see Tiger soldiers, and you get a few minutes with traffic police who wield nothing more than a radar gun to catch speeders.

The conversation is banal, mostly talk of how the radar gun has helped control traffic in a town with one main road.

Even the Tigers' elusive leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, has gotten a makeover.

His picture is omnipresent in Tiger country, and in newer ones, he has traded in camouflage fatigues for civilian clothes.

As for rebel soldiers fighters so disciplined and loyal they have been known to swallow cyanide rather than be captured alive they are nowhere in sight. It's a stark contrast to the other side of the border, where troops are dug in behind sandbags, barbed wire and land mines.

For the most part, the image projected along Kilinochchi's single commercial strip is normalcy. There are uniformed schoolchildren, offices for government agencies like the Sports Council of Tamil Eelam, and the Bank of Tamil Eelam, which boasts a shiny new glass facade.

The rebels advertise it as a modern state albeit one where most are poor farmers who live with a spotty power supply and phones that barely work. But it is governed with an old-time morality that borders on the puritanical.

Adultery can mean jail time, and premarital sex is taboo. People are expected to take their lead from the Tigers, who don't drink or smoke.

"It's not part of our traditions, and our movement reflects Tamil traditions," said Daya Master, the rebel spokesman.

Tamils unhappy with the high taxes on cigarettes and alcohol are not willing to openly complain, an indication of the fear with which they regard the rebels who have been known to torture and kill dissenters.

One woman in Kilinochchi said she did not want to live under Tiger rule because they are "mean." Still, she insisted the rebels "do nothing I can find to criticize."

But she did not want to give her name.

On the Net:

Tamil affairs: <http://www.tamilnet.com>

Load-Date: June 21, 2006

Tamil Tigers get ready to defend what they see as their country

End of Document

Don't play with Tigers

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

January 14, 2005 Friday

National Edition

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Section: EDITORIALS; Pg. A17

Length: 401 words

Byline: National Post

Body

Ordinarily, it would be hard to quarrel with a Member of Parliament touring a tsunami-ravaged corner of South Asia to ensure that Canadian aid is arriving as it should. And if the MP in question were coming in with a clean slate, it might be possible to get past the fact that the area he was touring is controlled by the terrorist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam -- better known as the *Tamil Tigers*. But because the MP happens to be Jim Karygiannis, alarm bells should be ringing.

Mr. Karygiannis, recall, has made headlines for his connections to the *Tamil Tigers* before. In addition to appearing -- alongside Paul Martin (then the finance minister) and fellow Liberal MPs Maria Minna, Roy Cullen and Bryon Wilfert -- at a 2000 dinner hosted by a Sri Lankan group that was documented as a front for terrorists, Mr. Karygiannis showed up at a Toronto party celebrating the *Tamil Tigers*' recent campaigns and proudly hoisted the Canadian flag alongside the Tigers' flag. So as he tours northern Sri Lanka meeting with leaders of the Tigers' political wing, Canadians have ample reason to be concerned.

Representing the riding of Scarborough-Agincourt, Mr. Karygiannis likely has more Tamils in his constituency than any other Canadian MP -- and most of them, no doubt, have no connection to any terrorist group. It is only reasonable for him to work diligently to represent their interests -- especially at a time when their friends and family back home are still recovering from a horrific natural disaster. But that does not give Mr. Karygiannis licence to cozy up to one of the world's most brutal terrorist groups.

While they do not tend to get as much ink as Hamas, al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations, and while their fundraising efforts within Canada have inexplicably not been outlawed, the *Tamil Tigers* are responsible for a staggering amount of carnage. The world's most prolific suicide bombers, they have exacted a death toll of more than 60,000 over the past two decades. Known for targeting civilians, the *Tamil Tigers* routinely stage attacks on villages in which they ruthlessly slay women and children.

Mr. Martin, who took considerable heat for attending the dinner in 2000, has declined to visit Sri Lanka's Tiger-controlled regions in the wake of the tsunami. If going there means making nice with some of the world's worst terrorists, Mr. Karygiannis should have made the same decision.

Graphic

Don't play with Tigers

Black & White Photo: P. Nedumaran, left, an extremist implicated in violence in Sri Lanka, is shown with Liberal MP Jim Karygiannis in this photo on the Eelamweb Web site.

Load-Date: January 14, 2005

End of Document

Five years on, Sri Lanka rebels say truce dead

Agence France Presse -- English

February 23, 2007 Friday 2:14 AM GMT

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Length: 466 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb 23 2007

Body

Sri Lanka and the rebel ***Tamil Tigers*** mark the fifth anniversary of their truce on Friday just a day after the guerrilla group said the deal was all but dead and that their "freedom struggle" would go on.

The pact, brokered by Norway in 2002, was meant to end a deadly conflict that has claimed more than 60,000 lives on this island nation in the past 35 years.

But the deal has collapsed amid an ongoing cycle of violence, with the government blaming the rebels and the Tigers, who have been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland, saying Colombo is responsible for the bloodshed.

Nearly 4,000 people have been killed since the ceasefire was agreed, and the rebels said late Thursday -- after the navy said it had sunk two suspected rebel boats, killing at least nine -- that the truce was effectively over.

"Even though today it exists only on paper, it remains a unique document in the search for an end to the national conflict in the island of Sri Lanka," the Tigers said in a statement.

They warned that the government's military drive against them would only add to the "bloodstained pages of the island's history."

"It has also compelled the Tamil people to resume their freedom struggle to realise their right to self-determination and to achieve statehood," the Tigers said.

Norway's top peacebroker in the process, Erik Solheim, offered Thursday to try to revive peace talks, even as thousands of Sinhalese nationalists took to the streets in the capital Colombo calling for the truce to be scrapped.

"It is my strong hope that both parties will recognise the need to secure the full implementation of the ceasefire agreement as a first step toward reaching a political solution," Solheim said in a statement.

"Norway is willing to go the extra mile to assist their peace endeavours at their request," he said. "As soon as the parties renew their peace efforts, we will be ready to do all we can to help."

Five years on, Sri Lanka rebels say truce dead

Security forces also launched ground attacks against Tiger rebels Thursday as the guerrillas said thousands of civilians in the north had fled their homes in fear of an upsurge of fighting.

Military officials confirmed they were retaliating against rebel harassment, but said there was no major offensive in the region.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) said thousands of men, **women** and children from half a dozen villages along the de facto border between the two sides were on the move, seeking refuge deeper inside rebel territory.

On Wednesday, 25 Tamil civilians carrying white flags entered a government-held area in the northern district of Vavuniya and were provided with shelter and food by the troops, a military official said.

An exodus of civilians from the island's troubled regions is usually a first sign of stepped-up fighting between troops and the rebels.

bur-mc/pch

Load-Date: February 23, 2007

End of Document

Lanka launches air strikes on LTTE positions

Hindustan Times

April 26, 2006 Wednesday 3:29 PM EST

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Length: 367 words

Byline: Hindustan Times

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 26 -- Sri Lanka on Wednesday launched a series of air strikes on suspected Tamil Tiger rebel bases, a day after a **female** suicide bomber attacked the army headquarters here and grievously injured the country's Army chief, Lt-General Sarath Fonseka and killed eight people.

Military sources said that Tiger bases around Trincomalee Port were being targeted.

In a televised address to the nation, President Mahinda Rajapakse said his desire for peace should not be construed as weakness, and warned the rebels that they would be dealt with firmly if they continued with their aggression.

"I emphasize and caution that one should avoid mistaking our desire for peace and our responsibility to achieve it as a government, as weakness," Rajapakse said hours after Tuesday's suicide bombing.

Military spokesman Brigadier Prasad Samarasinghe said that the aerial strikes had been launched as a counter to an unprovoked attack on Sri Lankan naval ships off the Trincomalee coast.

Latest reports said that at least one civilian had died and nine were wounded in the strikes. The pro-rebel Tamilnet website said 12 civilians had been killed.

The air strikes are the first official military action since a ceasefire was signed in 2002.

Investigations following Tuesday's explosion at the army headquarters in Colombo bears all the hallmarks of the Tigers.

A woman who made herself appear heavily pregnant is believed to have carried out the attack. She presented fake identification and said she had an ante-natal appointment at the army hospital inside the heavily guarded army complex, unnamed officials told a foreign news agency.

The attack was aimed at Lt. General Fonseka, who was seriously injured along with 27 other people.

This was the first suicide bombing in the Sri Lankan capital since July 2004.

The Tigers began their armed campaign for a separate homeland for the island's Tamil minority in the 1970s. Efforts are continuing to persuade the rebels to return to peace talks in Switzerland. Last week they pulled out of negotiations, accusing the government of attacks on ethnic Tamil civilians.

Lanka launches air strikes on LTTE positions

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Load-Date: April 27, 2006

End of Document

War kid's play for Tamil Tigers

Hamilton Spectator (Ontario, Canada)

January 7, 2003 Tuesday Final Edition

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Section: CANADA & WORLD; Pg. D05; News

Length: 1689 words

Byline: Amy Waldman

Dateline: KINNAIYADI, SRI LANKA

Body

The floods ruined this season's paddy harvest in this village of sandy earth and slanting palms.

The harvest of its youth went ahead.

On Dec. 19, at least 18, and possibly 60 or more, young people, according to different villagers' estimates, were taken off to join the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, one of the world's most ruthless and effective secessionist movements. They were boys and girls, some as young as 12.

Some were taken by force, yanked from houses or scooped up along the road like found treasure. Others went "voluntarily," to spare their parents after Tiger cadres repeatedly threatened them if they did not supply the movement with a child. They were loaded into tractor-trailers and taken away.

New York Times News Service

For 20 years, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam have fought for a separate state for the minority Tamils of Sri Lanka, the island nation off India's southern tip. The Tamils, many of whom are Hindu, are concentrated in the northern and eastern parts of the country. They say their cause has been motivated by discrimination against them by the Sinhalese, many of whom are Buddhist, who make up three-quarters of the country's population of 18 million.

Much of the rebels' battle has been fought on the backs, and bodies, of child soldiers, according to human rights organizations, such as the UN.

Today, however, the Tigers have paused in their armed struggle, and put aside the quest for their own state. They are in peace talks with the Sri Lankan government. They are trying to obtain regional autonomy for the Tamil people and to transform themselves into a legitimate political group.

They insist that they no longer have, or accept, children in their ranks. In recent months, they have undertaken the publicized releases of 165 children.

In Kilinochchi, the Tigers' administrative capital, the movement's political leader, S. Thamilchelvam, said: "We want to discount the disinformation campaign of previous governments. There was no conscription. There were no child soldiers."

War kid's play for Tamil Tigers

But in whispered interviews here, villagers -- afraid for their lives if their identities were revealed -- told of a relentless recruiting campaign, in which the only way to save children was to send them away. One woman, who lost two nieces and one nephew, told how parents, angry they were losing their own child, had steered cadres toward their neighbours' children as well.

A police intelligence official confirmed 30 to 35 children were taken. One villager put the number at 60 over three days. A human rights group said 100 kids, mostly under 18, were taken.

There was a time when young people, including some children, joined on their own. The cause seemed just, and for a poor child, the movement offered meals and security.

While some children still join voluntarily, swayed by recruiting meetings at which Tigers show propaganda films of battle victories, villagers say the appetite for war here is gone. The Tigers alone have lost 17,600 cadres in battle, and in the country a total of more than 65,000 lives. So to bolster their ranks, the Tigers appear to be continuing to use coercion, both of those under and over 18.

Whether classified as recruitment or abduction, the taking of children into the movement is a violation of a cease-fire agreement signed last February, which bars, in accordance with international law, hostile acts against civilians. It is also a violation of the Tigers' own public pledges.

The Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, a team of Scandinavians invited in by both sides to monitor the cease fire, has certified 281 cases of child recruitment from February through October, with more than 400 cases still being investigated; in November it was 24.

"We also clearly realize our complaints are the tip of the iceberg," the group's spokesman, Teitur Torkelsson, said. "They're not even half." In the north, international aid groups have about 50 open cases of kids who have been taken since the cease fire was signed. But most of the complaints come from Batticaloa district in the Eastern Province, where this village is.

In fact, conscription in Kinnaiyadi appears to be only the latest wave of forced recruitment, often of children, in the Batticaloa area. Here, Tamils said, the Tigers' policy remains as it has long been: Every family with three or more children must give one.

"They have thousands, and they're still taking them," said Rev. Harry Miller, an American Jesuit priest who has lived in the town of Batticaloa for more than a half century. In July, Miller said, Tigers swept up eight children from outside a Hindu temple feast on the edge of Batticaloa. "We haven't gotten any back," he said.

Of the problems in the east, Thamilchelvam said these were "instances" that had been brought to the notice of the high command, and the political hierarchy had been ordered to make sure they were not repeated. But he said the demographics of the area -- large Muslim and Sinhalese populations as well -- meant that Tamil youths often sought protection by joining the guerrillas.

This village is under government control, with an army camp just feet from its edge. But it has largely been forgotten by the government. The school ends at fifth grade and often is closed by flooding; the only nearby hospital, serving many villages and towns, can see only 50 patients a day.

Instead, it is the Tigers who hold sway here, which is why villagers have been afraid to even make an official complaint to the police. Terror chokes the shady byways. Residents, as in much of Batticaloa, say they do not open their mouths except to eat. To speak, even anonymously, they said, could mean putting their lives on the line. No one knows who is with the Tigers, but anyone might be.

If the past is any guide, the child recruits will be taken to Tiger training camps, given new names and told that their past is a closed chapter. Some parents may never see their kids again.

War kid's play for Tamil Tigers

One fearful 64-year-old woman near Kinnaiyadi, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told how last February, Tigers tried to extort money from her son under threat of death. To save him, his own son, 19, agreed to join the movement. He hasn't been seen since.

Others catch glimpses, often in brief and tearful reunions, of their children at the Tigers' annual Heroes' Day celebrations. Some children escape, although the Tigers sometimes take a relative hostage until the escapee returns.

A few, as with five young men from the town of Batticaloa between 18 and 22 who were taken by the Tigers on Dec. 17, have been released.

One of them, who spoke along with his mother -- both of them too fearful to be named -- said he and his friends had gone to a Tiger office with some cadres because they thought they would be able to watch films. Instead, they were put in a van, taken two hours away, and told that now that they were 18, it was their duty to join the movement and either fight for a separate state or help run a peacetime administration.

Their families, meanwhile, had found their sons' bicycles outside a Tiger office. The Tigers said the young men had willingly joined the movement, and told the parents to take home their bikes and jewelry.

Skeptical, tenacious mothers demanded that their sons be asked in front of them if they had joined voluntarily, and protested to international organizations. The young men were quietly released two days after they had been taken.

Thamilchelvam, who is third in the Tigers' hierarchy, repeatedly insisted there had been no forced conscription, of children or adults. Civilians, "especially young people," had voluntarily supported the movement, he said.

Children who had lost parents and relatives during the war had sought refuge with the movement, and been placed in orphanages, he said. Tiger officials insisted that children from the orphanages were not allowed to join the movement.

But critics of the guerrillas have long insisted that the orphanages were themselves fertile recruitment grounds for the organization. One 18-year-old girl in Batticaloa told how after her two brothers were forcibly conscripted by the Tigers and then died fighting for them, the Tigers told her mother they were taking her sister to an orphanage to educate her. She, too, ended up dead on a battlefield.

Visits to two orphanages in the north, in the jungle area that is the Tigers' base, did little to clarify their real purpose. At the Sencholai orphanage for girls, the picture of Velupillai Prabhakaran, the Tigers' revered and feared leader, is in the classroom, and the girls call him "Uncle."

"He's more or less the foster parent for these children," said Janani, the 43-year-old Tiger who runs the orphanage.

At the boys' orphanage, there was a shrine to the Tigers' suicide bombers.

One girl who had come at 14 -- out of her "desire," she said nervously, as several cadres listened -- was now, at age 17, a cadre, as were several other girls. Janani said perhaps "two or three" had joined the movement. She would not permitted a visit to the older girls' quarters.

The 17-year-old cadre was also not an orphan -- her parents were alive and living in the area. Tiger officials say that if they believe the movement can better raise a child from a poor family, they will take him or her, with the parents' permission.

Janani said that perhaps 10 per cent of the girls were not truly orphans. Sometimes parents came wanting to take their children back, she said, but if the children did not want to go, "We can't force them."

It is not hard to find evidence of the Tigers' history with children, particularly as they move former military cadres into the civil administration they run in the north. There is the 18-year-old customs official who said he joined at 16;

War kid's play for Tamil Tigers

the assistant in the political wing who joined at 15 or 16; another who joined at 12 and from the battles he named, first fought at 14 or 15.

Then there is the cemetery outside Kilinochchi, the final resting place for 1,938 war dead. The headstones have the cadres' real names, their "movement names," their parents' names, their villages of origin and the dates of their deaths.

On each, the only thing missing is the date of birth.

Graphic

Photo: Anuruddha Lokuhapuarachchi, Reuters; Two Tamil women in Mullathivu grieve over the grave of a loved one, to mark 'Heroes' Day' in eastern Sri Lanka, as mothers protest the use of child soldiers.; Photo: Anuruddha Lokuhapuarachchi, Reuters; Soldiers -- boys and girls as young as 12 -- have been 'recruited' into service.

Load-Date: January 7, 2003

Bomb kills three amid fears that island is on verge of renewed war

The Times (London)

August 9, 2006, Wednesday

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 25

Length: 875 words

Byline: Nick Meo in Colombo and Ashling O'Connor in Bombay

Body

A VETERAN political opponent of the ***Tamil Tigers*** was wounded yesterday and three people were killed when his vehicle was torn apart by a bomb in the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo.

The bomb, the first in Colombo in nearly four months, coincided with the funerals of 17 local tsunami aid staff shot dead in northeastern Sri Lanka at the weekend, and brought the death toll over the past fortnight to 440.

The remote-controlled bomb yesterday marked a change in tempo in the fighting which, since it erupted last December, had been confined to the north and east, and raised fears that a tattered three-year-old ceasefire had finally given way to all-out war.

The target was Sankarapillai Sivathasan, an adviser to the Eelam People's Democratic Party, which broke with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam when it went mainstream in 1987.

The 72-year-old former MP was in a stable condition in hospital last night, but his bodyguard died in the fireball that engulfed Mr Sivathasan's Hyundai van outside a girls' school in a residential area.

The other victims were a three-year-old girl whose mother was severely wounded, and a male passer-by. As police scientists examined the scene hours later a charred corpse could still be seen in the van's wreckage and the badly burnt body of the young girl, Asini Sashida, lay a few yards away.

John Rasah, the child's 61-year-old grandfather and a Tamil Catholic, motioned to a spilt bag of rice and said his daughter had been carrying it home for dinner.

"We are only poor people. I don't understand all this," he said through tears.

The only good news for the battered island yesterday came when Jon Hanssen Bauer, the Norwegian peace envoy struggling to hold together the 2002 ceasefire agreement, convinced the Tigers to reopen a blocked waterway over which the rebels and Sri Lankan military had been fighting for the past two weeks.

That fighting had centred on the northeastern town of Muttur, causing thousands of residents to flee. It was there that the 17 Sri Lankan employees of Action Contre la Faim (ACF), a Paris-based international relief agency, were found on Sunday, lying face down on a lawn outside their office with bullet wounds to their heads.

Two had been shot as they tried to escape in a car. The rebels and the Government blamed each other for the killings, and the Government ordered an investigation.

Bomb kills three amid fears that island is on verge of renewed war

"(They were) seemingly lined up and shot at very close range. The sight was too much to handle," the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, an independent monitor, reported.

"ACF's entire team in Muttur was assassinated," the charity said. "Now that it is clear this was a mass murder targeting clearly identified humanitarian workers, ACF is determined not to settle for vague answers from the parties to the conflict ... and will demand exemplary punishment."

The thirteen men and four women water sanitation engineers -sixteen of whom were Tamils -were buried yesterday by the seafront in the nearby port city of Trincomalee, where one woman collapsed, grieving for her husband, 54, and her 27-year-old daughter.

"We believe it was the army," said Richard Arulrajah, 50, whose 24-year-old son was among the dead. "On Friday he phoned and said he would be back by Saturday.

After that we heard the military personnel came and shot them."

Aid workers are targeted by Sri Lankan hardliners because they are perceived to harbour pro-Tamil sympathies. Others have been attacked by Sinhalese mobs in recent days.

Yogaraja, a 62-year-old labourer trying to identify the body of his son Kodeswaran, 31, said: "I don't know who killed my son. But everyone involved in the fighting should be blamed."

ACF has now suspended its mission to Sri Lanka where its 15 expatriate and 224 local staff have been providing humanitarian relief in areas hit by the December 2004 tsunami.

Philippe Douste-Blazy, the French Foreign Minister, condemned "the appalling and cowardly murders", which represented the worst attack on aid workers since the 2003 bombings of the UN's Baghdad headquarters.

Bill Clinton, the former US President and UN envoy for tsunami recovery, urged the authorities "to do everything possible to apprehend the perpetrators of this crime and to bring them to justice".

Despite the Tigers' agreement to reopen the waterway, which supplies 60,000 people in government-controlled villages, the Government said that it had not been involved in the talks and continued to fire artillery.

DIVIDED ISLAND

RIVAL FACTIONS

LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM (LTTE)

Separatist militant organisation, considered terrorists by the EU.

Waged 20-year civil war with Sri Lankan Government, resulting in 64,000 deaths. Since 2002 ceasefire agreement has run a de facto state behind line of control.

KARUNA FACTION (TMVP)

Breakaway Tamil faction; regional commander Colonel Karuna split from the LTTE in 2004. Since then have fought the Tigers. Believed by many to be covertly funded and supported by the Sri Lankan Government.

EPDP

Tamil political party rooted in the violence of the civil war, but since 1987 dedicated to working within Sri Lanka's democratic process. Gained just one parliamentary seat out of 225 in last elections, but suffered from LTTE enforced Tamil boycott.

ETHNIC MAKE-UP

Bomb kills three amid fears that island is on verge of renewed war

SINHALESE 74%

TAMIL 18%

MUSLIM 7%

OTHER 1%

Load-Date: August 9, 2006

End of Document

Bomb kills six, wounds 31 near Sri Lanka military base

Agence France Presse -- English

May 28, 2007 Monday 2:47 PM GMT

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Length: 481 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 28 2007

Body

At least six civilians were killed and 31 other people wounded Monday in a powerful bomb blast near an air force base just outside Sri Lanka's capital, police and hospital sources said.

The evening rush hour explosion was along the main Galle Road at Ratmalana where the air force has a base, police said, adding that the roadside bomb had targeted a truck carrying police Special Task Force (STF) commandos.

"Seven commandos were taken to hospital together with 30 civilians who were also wounded in the blast," a police officer said by telephone. "We think the bomb was planted on an upper floor store facing Galle Road."

Police said they believed the bombing was the work of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). There was no immediate word from the Tigers, who are fighting for an independent homelands for minority Tamils.

Doctors at the Colombo South hospital said five people, including two women, were dead on admission. A total of 31 people -- including the police commandos -- were admitted to three hospitals. There were no foreigners among the casualties.

Five civilians wounded in the blast were taken to the nearby Panadura hospital where one of them was found to be dead on admission, doctors said.

Several private vehicles were also hit by the blast which came during the evening rush hour. Police cordoned off the area as forensic experts began combing the site for clues.

"It looks like a 'Claymore mine' was placed on the roof of a roadside shop and detonated with a remote controlled device as the truck passed," a police officer at the scene said.

The owner of the shop was complaining to police that the premises had been broken into when the blast ripped through, the police officer said.

He said the STF truck was headed towards Colombo from a training facility at Katukurunda, further south of Ratmalana. There were nine commandos in the vehicle at the time of the bombing.

Bomb kills six, wounds 31 near Sri Lanka military base

The Ratmalana military air base is used by police and security forces to travel to the island's northern peninsula of Jaffna.

Hundreds of troops daily pass through the suburban area just 15 kilometres (10 miles) south of the city centre.

The blast came four days after a mine attack on an army bus in the heart of the capital, which killed one soldier and wounded six others. The attack was blamed on Tamil Tiger rebels.

A similar roadside blast killed three civilians as they returned in a light truck after making a delivery to an STF camp at Thirukkivil in the eastern district of Ampara on Sunday evening.

The latest wave of bombings came as analysts said they expected more violence in the Tamil separatist conflict in the coming weeks.

More than 5,000 people have been killed in a new wave of fighting since December 2005 despite a truce in place since February 2002.

Sri Lanka's Tamil separatist conflict has claimed more than 60,000 lives since the birth of the **Tamil Tigers** in 1972.

Load-Date: May 29, 2007

End of Document

The Black Tigers -- Sri Lanka's deadly suicide squads

Agence France Presse -- English

April 26, 2006 Wednesday 4:05 AM GMT

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Length: 499 words

Byline: Amal Jayashinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, April 26 2006

Body

"Black Tiger" suicide squads, secular Hindus driven by loyalty to the Tamil cause rather than religion, have been sowing terror in Sri Lanka for over two decades.

The audacious bombing Tuesday inside Sri Lanka's main military base, in which a **female** member of the **Tamil Tigers** feigning pregnancy blew herself up, was just the latest attack blamed on the ruthless rebel group.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) have so far commemorated over 240 suicide bombers since they launched their first kamikaze mission in July 1987 when a cadre rammed a truck into an army camp, killing 40 soldiers.

Although not credited with starting the lethal form of guerrilla or terrorist attack, the Black Tiger unit has staged some of the world's most spectacular suicide bombings and has been described as the most effective unit of its type anywhere in the world.

But unlike the Al-Qaeda network and many other Islamic groups in the Middle East, they are not driven by the idea of holy war.

It is the veneration of 51-year-old Tiger supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran and the dream of a separate homeland for ethnic Tamils that drives cadres to give their lives.

Prabhakaran, a shy school dropout, has built a highly-efficient guerrilla organisation based on absolute loyalty based in northeast Sri Lanka.

"It is difficult to fight suicide bombers because they have no fear of taking their lives or those of any one else," says Tamil politician and former rebel Dharmalingam Sidhathan.

Sympathisers say the elusive Prabhakaran has a magnetic persona that motivates his cadres to lay down their lives for his cause.

Tiger cadres that volunteer for the Black Tiger unit get special training before returning to their unit incognito to be called up at a later date if needed.

The Black Tigers -- Sri Lanka 's deadly suicide squads

Suicide bombers are known to have a last supper with Prabhakaran before undertaking a mission, and the dinner date is considered to be a huge honour within Tiger ranks.

The Tigers, who celebrate Black Tiger Day every July 5, have said that demand to go on one-way missions is so great that they often need to draw lots to decide who will undertake an attack.

The Black Tigers have been blamed for a series of spectacular attacks including the 1991 assassination of Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and the 1993 killing of Sri Lankan president Ranasinghe Premadasa.

Among other attacks were the bombing of the Central Bank, which left 90 dead, and the 1997 bombing of Colombo's World Trade Center.

Former Sri Lankan president Chadrika Kumaratunga, who narrowly escaped a Black Tiger attack in December 1999, asked the Tigers to disband suicide bombers as a sign of their commitment to peace, but the rebels refused.

The Black Sea Tigers have also boasted that the Al-Qaeda militants who bombed the USS Cole in October 2000 off Yemen may have been inspired by them.

Long before the USS Cole attack, the Tigers were ramming explosives-packed boats, each manned by two Black Sea Tigers, into Sri Lankan naval gunboats and merchant vessels.

aj-pch/jah

Load-Date: April 27, 2006

End of Document

Bombing Pushes Sri Lanka Closer to War

Associated Press Online

June 16, 2006 Friday 5:37 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 885 words

Byline: By ERANGA JAYAWARDENA, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: KABITHIGOLLEWA Sri Lanka

Body

Suspected Tamil separatists attacked a crowded bus Thursday, triggering a pair of hidden bombs that killed at least 64 people the worst violence since a 2002 cease-fire began unraveling in recent months.

With peace talks largely abandoned, the attack edged this tropical island nation off India's southern tip further toward all-out war in a conflict that killed 65,000 people before the truce. The government quickly launched retaliatory airstrikes on rebel areas.

On Friday, the air force launched a second day of aerial attacks on the rebel-held north, a senior insurgent leader said.

"They are carrying out attacks, at least eight bombs have been dropped since dawn today" around the rebel-stronghold of Kilinochchi, Seevaratnam Puleedevan told The Associated Press.

The dead from the bus attack included at least 15 children, their blue school uniforms coated with blood and gore as authorities laid out corpses at a hospital in the island's north so relatives could identify them. At least 78 people were wounded in the attack.

The rebels, a well-armed movement that began fighting in 1983 to create an independent homeland for the ethnic Tamil minority, denied responsibility for the attack. They suggested it was done by shadowy forces they accused of trying to create unrest.

But Sri Lanka's government, which is dominated by the majority Sinhalese, insisted rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam movement were responsible.

"This is a barbaric act of the LTTE," said government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella. "Their aim is to provoke a backlash."

The bus was blown up with a pair of land mines hung from a tree and detonated by remote control, said a military spokesman, Brig. Prasad Samarasinghe. Rigging bombs to trees or bicycles is a common rebel tactic, so the ground does not absorb much of the blast, officials say.

Police said most of the victims were Sinhalese, the group the rebels accuse of discriminating against Tamils.

Bombing Pushes Sri Lanka Closer to War

Officials said many passengers were headed to the funeral of a policeman killed Monday in another attack blamed on rebels.

Thursday afternoon, the wrecked yellow bus still lay on its side as heavily armed soldiers stood nearby. The roof of the bus was stained with blood. Shoes, a mobile phone and women's purses were scattered around.

At the hospital, relatives wept.

"They are all gone," screamed Bandula Gamini, who lost his wife, son and mother-in-law in the blast.

Gamini said he was standing three rows behind his family when "there was this blast and I recall being trapped." He was pulled from the bus by two policemen.

A doctor at the hospital, S.B. Bothota, said 49 adults and 15 children died. An additional 78 people were wounded, he said.

Dozens of people were fleeing villages near the attack site, fearing more violence. They took shelter in a school guarded by soldiers.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said the United States condemned the attack and called for resumed negotiations.

"This vicious attack bears all the hallmarks of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam," and violates the cease-fire agreement, he said.

Rebel leaders said the air force conducted about five bombing runs on the outskirts of the rebel-controlled town of Kilinochchi near the island's northern tip.

"There are casualties but we don't know the exact figures. People are tense, confused and some are fleeing," Puleedevan told The Associated Press.

The military spokesman, Samarasinghe, confirmed that jets bombed rebel positions. He said the air force was taking only "limited" deterrent action.

The rebels denied involvement in the bus attack, with Puleedevan suggesting it could be "the work of forces seeking to create ethnic tension."

"The Liberation Tigers condemn the attack on civilians in strongest possible terms," he was quoted as saying by TamilNet, a pro-rebel Web site.

The rebels fought for 20 years seeking to carve out a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's 3.2 million Tamils, who are largely Hindu. They contend years of oppression by the 15 million Sinhalese, who are mainly Buddhists, left them no choice.

Years of war left the Tamil Tigers in control of large parts of the teardrop-shaped island's north and east, where they run their own de facto state.

A cease-fire four years ago ended full-scale fighting, but sporadic violence persisted.

There was a brief calm after the 2004 tsunami, which killed 35,000 Sri Lankans and which many hoped would bring the sides together. But squabbling over control of aid money reignited tensions.

The situation grew worse last August with the assassination of Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar. The government blamed the Tigers.

Four months later, the rebels killed 12 sailors the first major attack in four years and the situation on the ground has continued to deteriorate, with violence that has killed more than 600 soldiers, rebels and civilians.

Bombing Pushes Sri Lanka Closer to War

Both sides blame the other for the violence, and the **Tamil Tigers** also routinely accuse a breakaway rebel faction of attacking civilians.

Diplomatic efforts to halt the violence and get peace negotiations back on track have struggled. The Tigers pulled out of peace talks in April, and last week scuttled talks in Norway by refusing to sit down with representatives of the Sri Lankan government.

Associated Press writer Krishan Francis contributed to this report.

Load-Date: June 17, 2006

End of Document

Bus bombing leads to retaliatory airstrikes in Sri Lanka

The Associated Press

June 16, 2006 Friday 5:37 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 885 words

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Associated Press writer Krishan Francis contributed to this report.

Load-Date: June 17, 2006

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Sri Lankan Tamils' lone battle for freedom

Post (South Africa)

May 16, 2007 Wednesday

e1 Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 18

Length: 792 words

Body

THERE is remarkable similarity in the plight of the Muslims in Palestine and the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Both trusted the British and both were grossly betrayed by them. Palestine was a mandated territory, held in trust by the British.

Well, they and the French and the Americans together carved that up, giving the best portions to the newly formed Israel way back in 1947. And largely because the more than a billion strong Muslims of the world have courageously taken up the cause of the Palestinians, the world knows the story of the sufferings of the Palestinians.

Some European nations that want to trade with the Muslim world also help out. But the Tamils of the world, and there are nearly a hundred million of them, do little or nothing to help their co-linguists of Sri Lanka. Except of course, for dedicated groups in Malaysia, Singapore, some in Tamil Nadu, and of course Sri Lankan Tamils living in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom.

It is in Britain that the most momentous development has recently occurred. Even the British parliamentarians are so upset by the genocide practised by the Buddhists of Sri Lanka against Tamil fellow-citizens, that an all-party committee has been formed to try and promote justice for the Tamils. That may well help to bring Mahinda Rajapakse, the rapacious president of Sri Lanka, back to the negotiating table.

Another development was the bombing by airplane of the airport in Colombo. Some years ago, **LTTE** (The Liberation **Tamil Tigers** for Eelam) commando units blew up many air force planes on the ground. This time, the pilots contented themselves with merely attacking peripheral targets at the airport, maybe just as a warning to Rajapakse.

Since 1983, the Sri Lankan Tamils have been fighting for an independent homeland. Their problem is that when the British left, they were too trusting. They could have, on the grounds that the north and east of the island had been a Tamil Kingdom when the colonisers conquered it in the 19th century, desired a Tamilistan. Since that is what the British engineered in respect of Pakistan against a unified India, that call would have had logic on its side.

But the Tamils, who had been in the forefront of the struggle for the liberation of Sri Lanka from British rule, did not want to blunt the revolution. Also, their leaders were misled by the seeming liberal stance of the Buddhist leaders of that time. That was their terrible mistake. For shortly after Sri Lanka became a separate entity, the Buddhist monks exerted their evil influence over the Sinhala politicians. Tamil was relegated to a second-class language. Tamils were ousted from government posts. Business opportunities were restricted. In fact, the Tamils in Sri Lanka suffered almost all the disabilities that non-whites were subjected to in South Africa, save for official group areas.

Sri Lankan Tamils' lone battle for freedom

The more anti-Tamil activities were perpetrated, the more the appetite of the Buddhists monks was whetted. Then came the appalling violence, nothing short of a pogrom, directed against Tamils in 1983. In the capital city, Colombo, every Tamil home was looted. Scores of Tamil girls and women were raped and many more Tamil men were murdered. Many Tamil homes were burnt. And all the while, the Sinhala politicians and the police gave direct support to the rapists and the murderers. Until then the demand for a separate Tamil homeland called Eelam had been by peaceful process of memoranda and petitions. But the horrific events of 1983 at last proved to the Tamils, just as 1952 proved to the ANC in South Africa, that non-violent means alone were not working. Therefore, just as the ANC did here, so too the LTTE was formed. And the war for the liberation of Tamil Eelam has proceeded ever since.

Encouraged by India's apparent apathy, the US, which seeks a naval base in Trincomalee and would like to control Sri Lanka's foreign relations, has given massive aid, both material and moral, to the perpetrators of the genocide.

And through its surrogate, the US sees to it that Israel keeps the murderers fully supplied with airplanes and ammunition. Israeli-made jet fighters have been used ruthlessly to massacre thousands of Tamil civilians.

Meanwhile, India, "Mother India", looks the other way. Partly because of the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. But mainly because independence for Eelam will give support to those in Kashmir and in Assam and the north-east who also clamour for independence from India. That great citadel of freedom allows innocent women and children to be murdered because of its self-interest.

Any yet, if only Tamils worldwide were to take even half as much interest in the plight of the Sri Lankan Tamils as Muslims rightly do in respect of Palestine, what a difference that will make.

Load-Date: May 23, 2007

End of Document

Tiger tales

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

January 21, 2005 Friday

National Edition

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Section: EDITORIALS; Pg. A17

Length: 810 words

Byline: National Post

Body

Earlier this week, we criticized the federal government's indefensible reluctance to place the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) -- better known as the Tamil Tigers -- on its list of prohibited terrorist groups. As we noted, the group has cast Sri Lanka into a lengthy civil war that has killed 60,000 people, many by suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks. Since much of the Tigers' funding comes from Tamils living in Canada, the move to outlaw the LTTE would be more than mere symbolism: It would save lives.

So when federal Justice Minister Irwin Cotler met with this editorial board on Wednesday, the topic was at the top of our agenda. Our meeting began in promising fashion: Mr. Cotler spoke in high-flown terms about a "principled" approach to fighting terrorism, explaining the importance of "stat[ing] clearly, unequivocally that terrorism constitutes an assault on the security of a democracy and on the fundamental rights of its inhabitants."

Unfortunately, this commitment to principle seemed to evaporate when the discussion turned to the Tigers.

First, Mr. Cotler tried to carve out an exception to his "principled" strategy for fighting terror -- which he described as "a more contextualized approach."

"There has begun between the parties a peace process in which statements have been made by the Sri Lankan government almost suspending their judgment regarding the whole question of whether the Tamil organizations ... qualify for terrorism purposes," the Justice Minister explained. For Canada to render any definitive judgment about the Tigers, he concluded, would be wrong.

That is a strange argument for a veteran law professor to make. Any law student knows that a contract is void if a party enters into it under duress. Why should we accord legitimacy to the Tigers merely because their campaign of slaughter has forced the government of Sri Lanka to enter into negotiations?

Mr. Cotler went on to make an even stranger argument: that it may be too early to tell whether the Tigers actually qualify as a terrorist group. "You don't want to go ahead and engage in any kind of determination of an entity as being a terrorist entity unless you've got clear and unequivocal evidence," he said. But the Tigers' brutal campaign has been going on for more than two decades. Those who have lost family in the group's pre-dawn raids on Sri Lankan villages, in which Tigers slaughtered innocent women and children, might be intrigued to learn of this evidentiary shortfall.

Tiger tales

In trying to explain the government's reluctance to outlaw the Tigers without explicitly stating the obvious -- that it results from political pressures imposed by Tamil-Canadian constituencies in Canada's urban ridings -- Mr. Cotler dug himself an even deeper hole. On one hand, he claimed: "I'm not saying that because the preponderance of Sri Lankans in Canada happen to be Tamil, therefore we're not paying sufficient attention to [Sri Lanka's] Sinhalese [majority]." But in another breath, he candidly acknowledged: "The Sri Lankans who are living in Canada are ... Tamils, for the most part, I'd say about 80%. And you know, Toronto I think has the largest number of Tamils in the Tamil diaspora than anywhere else outside of Sri Lanka, so we've got to be very careful just in terms of our own relationships."

As far as we can decipher, Mr. Cotler's point is that political considerations are never on the government's mind when such important decisions are being made -- except when they are.

The low point came when Mr. Cotler tried to suggest that outlawing the Tigers might somehow represent a racist smear on all Tamils. In a statement of the obvious, he opined: "You've got to be very careful in terms of criminalization because you don't want to engage in any kind of stereotypical indictment of a community as a whole." But, of course, no one is proposing to persecute Tamil-Canadians. Indeed, it is largely for their benefit that Tiger fundraising should be outlawed, since it would help end the extortionate tactics used by the Tigers' Canadian bagmen to raise funds.

We have no illusions about what is happening. Mr. Cotler has a long-standing record of opposing terrorism in all its forms. We are sure that, if it were up to him, the Tigers would be placed alongside Hamas and Hezbollah on the government's list of prohibited groups. But the Justice Minister has been forced to accommodate the crass reality of electoral politics -- in particular, the Liberals' need to pander to ethnic constituencies, even when the values espoused by their most militant leaders clash head-on with hallowed Canadian "principles."

Mr. Cotler must do all in his power to convince his colleagues that this is one instance in which there are bigger issues at play than a few ethnic votes. If they don't agree, perhaps he should rethink whether this is a Cabinet he belongs in.

Load-Date: January 21, 2005

Black Tigers: the deadliest suicide bombers

Agence France Presse -- English

October 17, 2006 Tuesday 7:06 AM GMT

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Length: 528 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Oct 17 2006

Body

The ***Tamil Tigers***' latest suicide bomb attack, the deadliest in the island's history, has illustrated that the rebel army still ranks as a master of the tactic.

The elite band of "Black Tigers" is regarded by guerrilla supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran as a "protective armour" and one of the most effective weapons in his battle for an independent homeland for ethnic Tamils.

On Monday, suspected Black Tigers drove a truck packed with explosives into an open area where 24 busses were parked in a circle with 350 sailors waiting for transport. At least 103 of them were killed and 150 wounded.

Tiger suicide squads are driven by loyalty, and not religion, unlike their Islamic counterparts in the Al-Qaeda network. Tigers are secular Hindus driven by single-minded allegiance to elusive Prabhakaran.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) have so far commemorated over 261 suicide bombers, including 69 ***women***, since they launched their first suicide mission in July 1987 when a cadre named Captain Miller rammed a truck into an army camp, killing 40 soldiers.

Monday's truck bombing, similar to Miller's mission, also surpassed the fatalities in the January 1996 truck bomb attack against the Central bank building here where 91 people were killed and 1,400 wounded.

Although not credited with starting the lethal method, the Black Tigers have staged some of the world's most spectacular bombings and are described as the most effective unit of its type anywhere in the world.

The guerrillas also boast that there is a scramble to go on suicide attacks, given that the chosen few are entertained to a last supper with the supremo -- a high point in a rebel's short but effective career.

"They can reverse military setbacks by using just one suicide bombing," said Namal Perera, the defence analyst for the Ravaya weekly newspaper. "The security forces still don't have an effective counter against suicide bombings."

Sympathisers say Prabhakaran is a charismatic leader who motivates his cadres to lay down their lives for his cause.

Black Tigers: the deadliest suicide bombers

Even those who are not in the Black Tiger squads carry a cyanide capsule to commit suicide in case they are captured.

The Black Tigers have been blamed for a series of savage attacks including the 1991 assassination of Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and the 1993 killing of Sri Lankan president Ranasinghe Premadasa.

Until the 2001 September 11 attacks in the US, the Tigers held the record for the worst suicide attack against civil aviation, destroying six passenger jets parked at the island's only international airport on July 24, 2001.

Former Sri Lankan president Chandrika Kumaratunga, who narrowly escaped a Black Tiger attack in December 1999, asked the Tigers to disband suicide bombers as a sign of their commitment to peace, but the rebels refused.

The naval unit of the suicide bombers known as "Black Sea Tigers" have also boasted that the Al-Qaeda militants who bombed the USS Cole in October 2000 off Yemen may have been inspired by them.

Long before the USS Cole attack, the Tigers were ramming explosives-packed boats, each manned by two Black Sea Tigers, into Sri Lankan naval gunboats and merchant vessels with deadly results.

Load-Date: October 18, 2006

End of Document

Can old foes set aside strife?

The Toronto Star

October 12, 2005 Wednesday

Copyright 2005 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A08

Length: 571 words

Byline: Graham Fraser, Toronto Star

Dateline: OTTAWA

Body

When a natural disaster like the weekend's earthquake strikes, the hope is that old hostilities, in this case between neighbours India and Pakistan, will take a backseat to humanitarian needs.

Unfortunately, the record suggests otherwise.

"The assumption seems to be that empathy and compassion arising from a natural tragedy will trump politics, long-standing grievances or strategic interests," says Robert Muggah, a Canadian working with the Geneva-based institute, the Small Arms Survey. "Sadly, human behaviour doesn't always conform to these expectations."

Sri Lanka was levelled by the tsunami, Sudan has faced drought and Colombia landslides. But in all these countries, the natural disasters have had no effect on ending long-running conflicts.

"I have a hard time thinking of examples of reconciliation taking place" after a disaster, adds David Welch of the University of Toronto's Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. "People have disputes for tangible reasons. Natural disasters rarely make those tangible reasons go away."

Disasters can even exacerbate the antagonism.

"Any time a natural disaster causes the mass relocation of people, or increased competition for scarce resources, it can make things worse," Welch said.

The head of a group that works with women's groups in the developing world also finds that while there is an immediate impulse to forget hostilities in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, the sentiment doesn't last.

Vivian Stromberg, executive director of MADRE, says communities that are routinely neglected continue to be overlooked in disasters.

"What happens is that there is too small a response to the need, and that exacerbates the tensions rather than easing them."

For instance, in Nicaragua, political parties took over the job of delivering aid after Hurricane Mitch in 1998.

"It wasn't to their political advantage to deliver to the very poor indigenous communities along the Atlantic coast," she said. "So (those communities) actually were ignored."

Can old foes set aside strife?

Optimism was high after the Dec. 26 tsunami that the devastation would force better relations between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamil minority. And it appeared to - at first.

In the early days, there were cases of the Sri Lankan army helping the LTTE (Tamil Tigers) and vice-versa, said University of Toronto political scientist David Cameron, who has worked in Sri Lanka with the Forum of Federations.

"But pretty rapidly, they reverted to the status quo," Cameron said, with hostilities re-emerging. The 2002 ceasefire was breached and assassinations resumed as both sides accused the other of bad faith.

The one bright spot on an otherwise grim horizon: Aceh province, where a peace agreement was reached with the Indonesian government in the wake of the tsunami.

Muggah points to the deal between the Free-Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Indonesian government as the exception to the rule.

"(It) emerged partly because GAM's popular base was severely affected (by the tsunami)," he said. "It also emerged after an arduous period of negotiation."

Despite the gloomy record, Cameron sees some grounds for hope in the wake of the earthquake in Pakistan and Kashmir.

India has offered assistance, and Pakistan has accepted it, providing Indian troops do not cross the border.

"India has seen this as an opportunity, and Pakistan has been open to it," he said. "It is a sign that on both sides they are inching towards accommodation."

Load-Date: October 12, 2005

Japanese envoy holds talks with Tigers amid Jaffna protest

Agence France Presse -- English

May 9, 2006 Tuesday 8:44 AM GMT

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Length: 548 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 9 2006

Body

Japan's special envoy held closed-door talks with Tamil Tigers Tuesday in a bid to save Sri Lanka's peace process as the government pressed the rebels to resume negotiations and halt violence.

Yasushi Akashi met with the Tamil Tiger political wing chief S. P. Thamilselvan at the rebel-held town of Kilinochchi, 330 kilometres (200 miles) north of Colombo, diplomats said.

Details were not immediately known, but Akashi intended to persuade the guerrillas to enter negotiations and salvage a truce after a month of bloodshed, diplomats said.

Further north in government-held Jaffna, residents staged a one-day strike to protest against the killing last week of seven Tamil men, police said.

The military claimed the seven were Tamil Tiger rebels shot dead by security forces, but the Tigers maintained they were civilians on their way to a birthday party.

Jaffna's banks and offices closed and public transport stopped running as part of the stoppage, police said.

A curfew imposed Sunday in the northern peninsula of Jaffna was lifted Monday afternoon, the military said while the main entry and exit points to northern rebel-held territory, closed on Sunday, re-opened Tuesday.

Meanwhile, parliament was expected later Tuesday to extend by a further month a state of emergency which gives sweeping powers to security forces to detain suspects, officials said.

The tough laws were introduced after Tiger rebels were blamed for the August assassination of foreign minister Lakshman Kadirgamar.

Akashi, who helped raise 4.5 billion dollars in aid to support the island's Norwegian-backed peace process in June 2003, held talks with President Mahinda Rajapakse on Monday, officials said.

The government said in a statement it was keen to resume negotiations with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and end the violence.

Japanese envoy holds talks withTigers amid Jaffna protest

"It is imperative that it is through negotiations that the cycle of violence, which is spiraling dangerously out of control, could be brought to a halt," it said.

It urged the Tigers to return to ceasefire talks last held in Switzerland in February. The two parties agreed to meet again on April 19, but the Tigers declined.

Fighting continued in the northern and eastern regions as Akashi arrived here Sunday. At least 11 people were killed in factional skirmishes in the north-eastern district of Trincomalee early Monday, defence sources said.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera was visiting neighbouring India on Tuesday to brief officials about efforts to salvage the ceasefire.

India's Junior Foreign Minister Anand Sharma on Monday "expressed the hope that the parties would resume talks at the earliest opportunity".

Despite a truce signed in 2002, more than 200 people, mostly civilians, have died over the last month in tit-for-tat attacks by government and rebel forces.

Talks on a permanent settlement have stagnated since April 2003 after six rounds of face-to-face discussions.

In the most serious attack since the truce began, a **female** suicide bomber wounded army chief Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka and 30 others at army headquarters in Colombo on April 25.

Eleven people including the bomber died. The government retaliated with air strikes on suspected rebel positions.

More than 60,000 people have been killed in the separatist conflict since 1972.

Load-Date: May 10, 2006

Sri Lanka: Ethnic melting pot on the boil

Agence France Presse -- English

April 27, 2006 Thursday 10:19 AM GMT

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Length: 569 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, April 27 2006

Body

Sri Lanka's Tamil separatist conflict is rooted in the nation's history, but the past three decades have been the bloodiest on an island colonised by Europeans and invaded by Indians.

At least 60,000 people have been killed since minority Tamils took up arms in 1972, about 24 years after the Indian Ocean island won independence from Britain.

The British, the last in a long line of imperialists, dominated the island for 133 years with a policy of "divide and rule" among the majority Sinhalese and ethnic Tamils.

Moves by the Sinhalese to retake key state jobs that had been controlled by the better-educated Tamils brought communal tensions into the open. But folk stories have long been told of ancient wars between Tamil and Sinhala kings.

Many believe the state policy of adopting Sinhalese as the official national language while, at the same time, dropping both English and Tamil as a turning point in the chequered history of the island.

"The conflict possibly started in 1956 when we adopted the Sinhala-only policy," said retired airforce chief Harry Gunatillake. "From there onwards, we have gone down hill."

In 1972 a disgruntled Tamil school dropout, Velupillai Prabhakaran, formed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), or Tamil Tigers, who were to become one of the world's most ruthlessly efficient guerrilla organisations, known for trademark suicide bombings.

Tamils have long claimed that they were discriminated against in education and jobs. Equal opportunity legislation has been put in place, but its implementation has been slow and inadequate.

Tamil discontent, which had traditionally been expressed in small-scale unrest, turned into a full-scale guerrilla war after a 1983 anti-Tamil riot left 400 to 600 people, mostly Tamils, dead on the streets.

Unofficial figures suggest up to 60,000 people may have been killed in ethnic clashes over the past three decades.

Sri Lanka : Ethnic melting pot on the boil

The Sinhalese are mostly Buddhists while the Tamils are Hindus but religion has not played a role in the long conflict.

The majority Sinhalese trace their origins back to a North Indian prince, Vijaya, whose father banished him for disobedience. Vijaya is said to have taken a native princess of the yaksha or demon tribe as his wife and together they gave birth to the Sinhalese race.

After being colonised by the Portuguese, the Dutch, and later the British, many Sinhalese have mixed European blood.

Arabs, who controlled the old trade routes between the east and west, also came to Sri Lanka in search of cinnamon and ended up marrying local women.

Their descendants, known as Sri Lanka Muslims, make up 7.5 percent of the 19.5 million population. They are the second largest minority after Tamils who make up 12.5 percent of the population.

In the 5th and 6th centuries Tamils arrived in Sri Lanka from neighbouring India, but they fought many wars with the kings who ruled the island's different provinces.

The "Sri Lankan Tamils" are distinct from the Tamil labourers imported much later from the subcontinent by the British in the 19th century to work on their plantations.

The British left Ceylon, the name they gave the island, in 1948 but their divide and rule policies left a legacy of ethnic conflict.

In December 2002 a peace deal brokered by Norway, a country with no role in the island's colonial past, was agreed. The two sides said they would settle for a federal state but that agreement has never moved forward.

Load-Date: April 28, 2006

Sri Lankan suicide bomber tries to assassinate government minister

The Associated Press

November 28, 2007 Wednesday 6:31 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 534 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A **female** suicide bomber blew herself up in the heart of Colombo on Wednesday, killing one person in an attempt to assassinate a government minister, the military said.

The attack took place outside the office of Douglas Devananda, the minister of social services and the leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party, an ethnic Tamil party seen as a rival to the **Tamil Tigers** rebel group, the military said.

Devananda, the repeated target of assassination attempts, was not injured in the attack, the military said. The blast killed one of his staff members and critically injured another, said Dr. Hector Weerasinghe, the medical director of Colombo National Hospital. A third person was lightly injured, he said.

"This was an attempt to kill the minister," said military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara.

Rebel spokesman Rasiyah Ilanthirayan said he was unaware of the blast. The **Tamil Tigers**, listed as a terror organization by the United States and the European Union, have carried out more than 240 suicide bombings.

The rebel group has been fighting since 1983 to create a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils after a history of discrimination under governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority.

In addition to attacking government forces and Sinhalese officials, the **Tamil Tigers** also routinely target Tamils they perceive as rivals.

The bomber was allowed past the gate and into the ministry complex Wednesday with other members of the public who had gathered for the minister's weekly open meeting to discuss their problems, Nanayakkara said.

The military initially said the woman had been dressed as an office worker.

After the blast, dozens of soldiers armed with rifles sealed off the compound and set up roadblocks on the streets outside.

When Devananda's security personnel searched her at the door to the building, she detonated the bomb vest she was wearing, he said.

Sri Lankan suicide bomber tries to assassinate government minister

The attack came a day after 11 schoolchildren and two others were killed when Sri Lanka's military activated a roadside bomb near a car traveling inside the Tamil Tiger rebel stronghold, the rebels said.

Nanayakkara denied the military was behind the attack.

The children were on their way to a cemetery to participate in the annual Hero's Day memorials for dead rebel fighters when they were hit by the blast about 15 miles west of the Tigers' de facto capital of Kilinochchi, rebel spokeswoman Selvy Navaruban said in a statement.

Also Tuesday, air force jets dropped 12 bombs on the **Tamil Tigers'** radio station just an hour before it was to broadcast the traditional Hero's Day address from rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran. The airstrike killed five employees of the station and four nearby residents, a rebel statement said.

The military confirmed the attack on the Kilinochchi station.

In his speech, which was e-mailed to journalists, the reclusive Prabhakaran blamed the international community for the worsening violence plaguing the Indian Ocean island, saying military, economic and diplomatic assistance to the government was feeding the bloodshed.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in the fighting between the rebels and the government 5,000 of them since a 2002 cease-fire broke down in late 2005.

Load-Date: November 29, 2007

Suicide Bomb Targets Sri Lanka Official

Associated Press Online

November 28, 2007 Wednesday 6:31 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 534 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

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Load-Date: November 29, 2007

Attack on Tamil air base

Weekend Australian
June 9, 2007 Saturday
All-round First Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 16

Length: 382 words

Byline: Bruce Loudon, South Asia correspondent

Body

Additional reporting: AFP

SRI Lanka's air force last night pounded a **Tamil Tigers** air base as police commandos in the capital, Colombo, uncovered a powerful bomb.

Fighter planes had hit the rebels' Iranamadu base in the northern Kilinochchi district, air force spokesman Group Captain Ajantha Silva said.

A 7kg Claymore mine was wrapped in a sleeping mat and left just a few metres from a police station and a school in Colombo. Police quickly removed it from the scene.

The discovery was made a day after the Government forcibly evicted hundreds of ethnic minority Tamils from the city, saying the move was to prevent bomb attacks by Tamil Tiger rebels.

The Supreme Court last night ordered an immediate halt to the evictions. The court said it would hear on June 22 a case prompted by a claim yesterday by a political activist that the evictions were a violation of human rights.

Earlier, human rights groups accused Sri Lanka of ethnic cleansing after government officials arrested hundreds of Tamils in Colombo and forced them back to their homeland, in the country's east and north.

Officials said the crackdown was for security reasons, aimed at suspected Tamil Tiger insurgents who had infiltrated the city, where about 5000 Tamils live in workers' hostels and lodges.

Defence ministry spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella said the moves followed two recent landmine blasts in Colombo.

"Experience in the past 10 years shows that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (the **Tamil Tigers**) use the lodges (hotels and hostels) in the city to plan terrorist strikes," he said.

A government statement said 376 people, 85 of them **women**, had been picked up after being found to have no valid reason to be in the city.

But human rights workers said all those who were picked up were minority Tamils, most of whom had travelled to the capital from the northeast to seek work or apply for visas. that would enable them to seek jobs abroad.

Attack on Tamil air base

"This is a very serious violation of human rights," said Dharmalingam Sithadthan, a Tamil political leader said. "It is OK for the **Tamil Tigers** to indulge in this sort of ethnic cleansing because they have no moral responsibility, but a government can't behave like this."

Civil Monitoring Committee chairman Sirithunga Jayasuriya said: "This is like ethnic cleansing and we strongly condemn it."

Load-Date: June 9, 2007

End of Document

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers release abducted students

Xinhua General News Service

December 19, 2006 Tuesday 10:30 AM EST

Copyright 2006 Xinhua News Agency

Section: WORLD NEWS; Political

Length: 176 words

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels have released 15 female students and two teachers they abducted in the eastern district of Ampara on Monday, said the military on Tuesday.

In a statement, the Media Center for National Security said the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) released the students at about 6:45 p.m. (0115 GMT) "due to the enormous pressure exerted on them by both local and international community."

However, the rebels are still holding seven school children they abducted on the same occasion, said the statement.

The military said the abductions had been carried out with the intention of forcibly recruiting them in the LTTE.

According to the pro-rebel website TamilNet, LTTE's military spokesman Irasiah Ilanthirayan described the event as an "unfortunate episode."

Ilanthirayan said the LTTE has ordered immediate release of the abducted students and teachers.

"If any of our members are involved in outlawed activities, the punishment would be severe," Ilanthirayan was quoted by the TamilNet as saying.

Load-Date: December 20, 2006

Sri Lankan suicide bomber kills one in assassination attempt on government minister

Associated Press International

November 28, 2007 Wednesday 5:17 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 637 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A handicapped **female** suicide bomber blew herself up at Sri Lanka's social services ministry in the heart of Colombo on Wednesday, killing a government employee in a failed attempt to assassinate a government minister, the military said.

The attack took place outside the office of Douglas Devananda, the minister of social services and the leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party, an ethnic Tamil party considered a rival to the separatist **Tamil Tigers** rebel group, the military said.

Devananda, the repeated target of assassination attempts, was not injured in the attack, the military said. The blast killed one of his staff members and critically injured another, said Dr. Hector Weerasinghe, the medical director of Colombo National Hospital. A third worker was lightly injured, he said. The bomber was also killed.

"This was an attempt to kill the minister," said military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara, blaming the separatist **Tamil Tigers**.

Rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilanthirayan said he was unaware of the blast. The **Tamil Tigers**, listed as a terror organization by the United States and the European Union, has carried out more than 240 suicide bombings.

The rebel group has been fighting since 1983 to create a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils following decades of discrimination by governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority. The fighting has killed an estimated 70,000 people.

In addition to attacking government forces and Sinhalese officials, the Tamil rebels routinely target Tamils they perceive as rivals.

The Eelam People's Democratic Party, once part of the rebel cause, renounced violence and joined the political mainstream in 1987.

The bomber, a polio victim with a limp, was allowed past the gate and into the ministry complex Wednesday with other members of the public who had gathered for the minister's weekly open meeting to discuss their problems, Nanayakkara said.

Sri Lankan suicide bomber kills one in assassination attempt on government minister

When Devananda's security personnel searched her at the door to the building about 8:05 a.m., she detonated the bomb vest she was wearing, he said.

The suicide attack came a day after 11 schoolchildren and two adults were killed when Sri Lanka's military detonated a roadside bomb near a vehicle traveling inside the Tamil Tiger's stronghold in northern Sri Lanka, the rebels said.

Nanayakkara denied that the military was behind the blast.

The children were on their way to a cemetery to participate in the annual Hero's Day memorials for dead rebel fighters when they were hit by the blast about 25 kilometers (15 miles) west of the Tigers' de facto capital of Kilinochchi, rebel spokeswoman Selvy Navaruban said in a statement.

The driver and an adult traveling with the students also were killed, the statement said.

Also Tuesday, air force jets dropped 12 bombs on the **Tamil Tigers'** radio station just an hour before it was to broadcast his traditional Hero's Day address by rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran. The airstrike killed five station employees and four local residents, a rebel statement said.

The military confirmed the attack on the Kilinochchi station.

In his speech, made from an undisclosed location Tuesday evening, the reclusive Prabhakaran blamed the international community for the worsening violence plaguing the Indian Ocean island, saying military, economic and diplomatic assistance to the government was feeding the bloodshed.

"This partisan and unjust conduct of the international community has severely undermined the confidence our people had in them. And it has paved the way for the breakdown of the cease-fire and the peace efforts," the rebel leader said in his address, which was e-mailed to journalists.

He also accused the government of continuing "on the path of violence. It only desires to find a solution to the Tamil question through military might and oppression," he said.

Load-Date: November 29, 2007

SUICIDE TERRORISM ON RISE WORLDWIDE, EXPERTS SAY

States News Service

October 19, 2007 Friday

Copyright 2007 States News Service

Length: 943 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

The following information was released by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State:

Suicide terrorism is on the rise and increasingly includes children as both victims and perpetrators, say terrorism experts.

"What suicide terrorist attacks are about is ... killing large numbers of people in a target audience in order to generate the kind of fear and chaos that can produce political change in various ways," Robert Pape, a political scientist at the University of Chicago and director of the Chicago Project on Suicide Terrorism, said in a recent interview with USINFO. Pape noted that suicide terrorism has been increasing steadily since the early 1980s.

According to the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, children were reported as victims more often in 2006, up by more than 80 percent as compared to 2005, with more than 1,800 children either killed or injured in terrorist attacks in 2006. Targeting children creates enormous suffering and loss to families and inflicts much deeper economic and social damage on societies because children's deaths destroy future generations, experts say.

Pape says from his research that teenagers from 15 to 18 years old make up about 20 percent of all suicide bombers. Participation by children younger than that age group is rare, but not unheard of, he said, because terrorist groups experiment constantly with different tactics to defeat strengthened security measures.

The use of women, who make up about 20 percent of attackers worldwide, and children in suicide attacks serves a central strategy to avoid early detection by security forces, Pape said. Terrorist groups tend to rely less on younger children, too, because the terrorists intend that the attacker actually will conduct the attack, he said.

The great majority of suicide bombers are often middle-aged and young adults, married and unmarried, and some have children, Bruce Hoffman of Georgetown University wrote for the magazine Atlantic Monthly. In his article, "The Logic of Suicide Terrorism," Hoffman says that there is not a clear profile of what makes up suicide attackers today, which, in turn, makes detection doubly difficult for police and security forces.

ATTACKS NOT NECESSARILY RELATED TO RELIGION

Pape said that more than half of the attacks are unrelated to religion.

Until recently, Pape said, the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) in Sri Lanka had committed more suicide terrorist attacks than any other single group. The LTTE is motivated largely by Marxism, he says, not religious doctrine. Since 1980,

SUICIDE TERRORISM ON RISE WORLDWIDE, EXPERTS SAY

Pape said, nearly half of all attacks have not been associated with the religious fundamentalism often cited in Middle Eastern-based groups.

The use of suicide attacks has grown for several key reasons, according to experts, and the frequency of their success is the most critical factor. The use of suicide terrorist attacks first emerged in Lebanon in 1983 from the group Hezbollah, which initially perfected the technique.

Pape said his research indicates that most suicide terrorist attacks, about 95 percent since 1980, stem from the real or imagined perception of foreign occupation of a country or region. But, he added, that is only a general pattern. Whatever the cause, Pape said, "you're not seeing a decline in suicide terrorism."

"Suicide tactics have been adopted by a growing number of terrorist organizations around the world because the tactics are shocking, deadly, cost-effective, and very difficult to stop," says Hoffman, a professor of security studies at Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, writing recently for the RAND Review.

The RAND Review is a publication of the RAND Corporation, a nonprofit organization that conducts policy-related research and analysis.

Hoffman, an international terrorism expert and formerly director of RAND's Washington office, says that suicide terror attacks are undertaken as part of a larger campaign "to undermine confidence in government and leadership, to crush popular morale, and to spread fear and intimidation."

According to the National Counterterrorism Center, suicide bombings fell slightly in 2006 largely because of a decline in the use of car bombings, which are less reliable than a suicide attacker. However, the report also notes that suicide bombers operating without vehicles increased by 25 percent in 2006, "and the ability of these attackers to penetrate large concentrations of people and then detonate their explosives probably accounted for the increase in lethality of bombings in 2006."

Disturbingly, the terrorism report also notes that religious education and training, thought to be a contributing factor in an attacker's radicalization, plays a small role in the making of suicide attackers, experts say. Pape says religious education plays a small role in helping to encourage young men to become attackers.

Dr. Marc Sageman, a medical doctor and an independent researcher on terrorism and founder of Sageman Consulting near Washington, said his research on terrorists in several key regions indicates that 87 percent of terrorists in his study received secular educations, and religious education was not a significant factor in their radicalization.

"The vast majority of al-Qaida terrorists in the sample came from families with very moderate religious beliefs or a completely secular outlook. Indeed, 84 percent were radicalized in the West, rather than in their countries of origin," Sageman said in an August 2006 eJournal Rebuilding and Resilience Five Years After 9/11.

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

Load-Date: October 20, 2007

STATE DEPT.: EXPERTS SAY SUICIDE TERRORISM ON RISE WORLDWIDE

US Fed News

October 19, 2007 Friday 11:44 PM EST

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Length: 936 words

Byline: US Fed News

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

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

Load-Date: October 20, 2007

TV talent show may have helped Sri Lanka suicide attack

Agence France Presse -- English

October 23, 2007 Tuesday 7:40 AM GMT

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Length: 593 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, Oct 23 2007

Body

Sri Lankan defence officials said Tuesday that a major Tamil Tiger suicide attack against a key military base may have been helped by security lapses during the screening of a popular TV talent contest.

A rebel "Black Tiger" suicide squad of 21 on Monday infiltrated the Anuradhapura army and air force base north of Colombo, killing 13 servicemen and destroying several aircraft including a multi-million-dollar spy plane.

Military officials said the commando-style attack began in the early hours of Monday, meaning the rebels would have had to be at the perimeter fence at least three to four hours earlier to get into position.

"That takes us to the time when Sirasa Super Star was shown on TV," a military official said, referring to a hugely popular talent show inspired by "American Idol."

"There are no TVs at sentry points, but the alertness of sentries and whether all positions were properly manned is being probed," said the official, who asked not to be named.

Three layers of razor wire protect what was considered one of the island's most secure bases. The installation serves as a key logistics hub for operations against the rebel-held north.

Military officials said the Tamil Tiger suicide squad, three of whom were women and all of whom died, were wearing camouflage uniforms similar to those worn by government soldiers and may have even just strolled in unchallenged.

"We have seen several places where the fence had been cut, but we are also checking if everyone got through that way, or some actually managed to walk in disguised as soldiers," the military official said.

The base is 210 kilometres (130 miles) north of the capital and 60 kilometres from the front line separating government-held territory and the northern mini-state controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The military had previously moved its spy planes to Anuradhapura from an air base at Vavuniya, a tense town closer to the front line, for safety reasons.

TV talent show may have helped Sri Lanka suicide attack

Hours before the attack, the base had hosted a cross-country motor sporting event followed by a spirited party. The attack also came on the eve of the change of command at the Anuradhapura base.

"Was it a happy coincidence for the Tigers or did they know all that in advance? This is something that will be covered by the investigations," another senior defence official close to the probe said.

"Defence top brass have already visited Anuradhapura, and are taking stock of the situation and looking at possible lapses. The question is how the Tigers managed to get in unnoticed."

While attacking on the ground, the Tigers also sent in their light aircraft to bomb the base from overhead and cause more damage -- making the assault their first ever coordinated land and air strike.

Monday's pre-dawn assault also featured the deployment of the largest number of suicide cadres for a single attack.

In July 2001, the guerrillas deployed 14 of their men and staged a similar strike against the main air force near Colombo, which shares a runway with the international airport.

The Tigers see their suicide squads as "protective armour", with recruits showing a fanatical devotion to their 52-year-old supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran. They also get to dine with him before going on a mission.

The latest Tiger attack comes after a string of setbacks for the rebels, who in July this year were ejected from their last stronghold in the east of the island amid a breakdown in a Norwegian-brokered 2002 truce.

The government also claimed earlier this month that it had sunk the Tamil Tigers' last gun-running ship.

Load-Date: October 24, 2007

Hopes for peace at Sri Lanka's frontline as talks near

Agence France Presse -- English

October 25, 2006 Wednesday 2:40 AM GMT

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Length: 587 words

Byline: Seth Meixner

Dateline: TANDIKALUM CHECKPOINT, Sri Lanka, Oct 25 2006

Body

A long wooden pole laid across the road up ahead marks the start of Sri Lanka's "Tigerland".

On this side of the pole lies the town of Vavuniya and the last few kilometers of civilian ground before a no man's land that divides government-controlled territory from land ruled by the rebel **Tamil Tigers**.

For the soldiers manning this small checkpoint at an intersection on the A9 highway -- Sri Lanka's most bloodily-contested road -- the vast stretch of rice fields and scrubland in no man's land has produced nothing for years but death.

Day after day, mortars fell suddenly out of the sky, and shots ruptured the night, fired by rebel infiltrators creeping through the undergrowth.

But one recent afternoon, the checkpoint seemed calm and soldiers said they hoped weekend peace talks between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) would stem the violence that has ravaged Sri Lanka's north.

"The coming peace talks are good," said one military police corporal in his roadside bunker.

"But I'm not sure (they will end the fighting)," he added, echoing the skepticism that reigns among many of those bearing the brunt of Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict.

Buses stopped occasionally to let off passengers, and a group of pretty young **women** in saris walked down the road, holding umbrellas against the newly arrived monsoon rains.

Government and rebel negotiators headed to Switzerland on Tuesday for talks aimed at saving a 2002 ceasefire shattered by 10 months of fighting, during which more than 3,000 people have been killed.

The negotiations are seen as a final bid to keep the battered island country from descending into all-out war.

The two sides met in Geneva in February and agreed to scale down the violence and meet again in April.

Hopes for peace at Sri Lanka 's frontline as talks near

But neither promise was fulfilled and a subsequent meeting in June was abandoned amid escalating fighting.

At least 133 soldiers were killed on October 11 when the Tigers repulsed a major military offensive against them in the northern peninsula of Jaffna.

In the bloodiest suicide attack ever against government forces, the Tamil rebels killed at least 116 people, mostly sailors, a week later in the northeastern region of Habarana.

Despite the guarded optimism and semblance of calm, the checkpoint remained tense in the wake of the recent bloodshed.

A young soldier stared intently down the barrel of a machine gun that was hanging from the ceiling of his guard post by metal wire twisted into a makeshift rope.

Several young men on bikes were stopped, and the military police officer speaking to them instinctively placed a hand on his assault rifle that was propped up against the inside wall of the bunker.

After several minutes, they were sent back towards town. And despite an invitation to lunch with an artillery commander closer to the forward defense lines, journalists were told that no one from the media crosses this line.

Nearby in Vavuniya, dozens of vehicles formed loose lines in a muddy sports field as police inspected documents and issued passes for those leaving the town to head south.

"For five days we've done this, the situation here has forced us to," explained one police officer who did not want to be named, saying that they were checking for people attempting to smuggle explosives into southern Sri Lanka's urban centers amid the spike in violence.

"We think things will get better after the peace talks -- we hope," he said.

A colleague of his motioned to the field of vehicles and added: "After the peace talks, hopefully we won't have to do this."

Load-Date: October 25, 2006

Three Sri Lankan Sailors Missing

Associated Press Online

December 22, 2005 Thursday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 454 words

Byline: DILIP GANGULY; Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Separatist rebels attacked two Sri Lankan navy boats off the northwestern coast Thursday and destroyed on vessel, officials said, in an escalation of violence that is threatening to return the island nation to civil war after a nearly four-year truce.

The navy said one sailor was wounded and three others were missing and presumed captured. It said seven rebels were captured, but offered no details.

There was no confirmation from the Tamil Tiger movement of the navy's report of the first clash at sea during the surge of violent incidents in recent weeks.

Meanwhile, suspected rebels hurled grenades at a military roadblock in the northern city of Jaffna, wounding a police sergeant and two women civilians.

Violence has worsened since last month's election of Sri Lanka's new president, Mahinda Rajapakse, who campaigned on a promise to take a tough line in negotiations with the rebels.

The rebels' leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, warned after the election that the Tamil Tigers would intensify their struggle if the ethnic minority's grievances were not addressed.

The rebels began fighting in 1983 for a separate homeland in the north and east for ethnic Tamils, who claim discrimination at the hands of the Sinhalese majority. The conflict killed some 65,000 people before Norway mediated a truce in February 2002.

Since Dec. 4, at least 20 government soldiers have been killed and many more wounded in attacks blamed on the Tamil Tigers.

Navy Cmdr. Jayantha Perera said about 10 rebel boats surrounded and then fired on two naval vessels Thursday near Talaimannar, 155 miles northwest of the capital, Colombo.

"We put up resistance and fired in self defense," he said.

He said one navy boat sank and a seaman was wounded. Three more sailors were unaccounted for after the firefight and were believed captured by the rebels, Perera said. He said seven rebels were captured by sailors on the surviving navy boat.

Three Sri Lankan Sailors Missing

The government condemned the attack as a "very, very serious violation of the cease-fire agreement."

Cabinet minister Nimal Siripala de Silva said the government would ask the international community, particularly Norway, Japan, the European Union and the United States to pressure the rebels to end violence.

Meanwhile, a pro-rebel Internet site said the **Tamil Tigers** sent a letter to Norway's ambassador accusing the Sri Lankan military of harassing civilians, citing a recent attack on a protest by university students and teachers.

"The international community has a moral obligation to prevail upon the government to pull back its forces into the barracks and bring about normalcy," the chief of the Tigers' political wing, S.P. Thamilselvan, said in the letter.

Norwegian officials could not be contacted for comment.

Load-Date: December 22, 2005

End of Document

Sri Lanka Violence Timeline

Associated Press Online

November 2, 2007 Friday 5:21 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 719 words

Byline: By The Associated Press

Body

Major developments in Sri Lanka's conflict.

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

1983: Civil war begins, sparked by anti-Tamil riots in the capital, Colombo. Many believe the riots were organized by the majority Sinhalese-dominated government.

1987: Former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan President Junius Richard Jayawardena sign a pact, and Indian peacekeeping troops arrive.

1991: **Female** Tamil Tiger suicide bomber assassinates India's former prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, at an election campaign rally in southern India, apparently in revenge for sending Indian peacekeeping troops who ended up fighting the rebels.

1993: Tamil Tiger suicide bomber kills Sri Lanka's President Ranasinghe Premadasa at a May Day parade after his government's failed peace efforts.

1999: Tamil Tiger suicide bomber tries to kill Sri Lanka's President Chandrika Kumaratunga at an election meeting. Kumaratunga survives, but loses an eye.

February 2002: The Sri Lankan government signs a cease-fire agreement with **Tamil Tigers**, ending 19 years of civil war, which left more than 65,000 dead.

Dec. 26, 2004: The Indian Ocean tsunami kills more than 35,000 Sri Lankans and leaves tens of thousands homeless.

Early 2005: Hopes rise that the tsunami and post-disaster reconstruction efforts could bridge the island's ethnic divide and bring hostilities to an end.

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

August 2005: Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, an ethnic Tamil who opposed a separate state for the minority, is assassinated by snipers in a killing blamed on the Tigers.

Sri Lanka Violence Timeline

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

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April 19, 2006: A second round of peace talks is postponed as the two sides argue over transport and security.

April 25, 2006: A suicide bombing blamed on rebels targets the government's top military commander, killing eight. Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka is hurt along with 26 others. The army responds by attacking rebel bases.

May 11, 2006: Rebel suicide boats ram and sink a navy patrol craft, killing at least 17 sailors. Five Tiger ships are destroyed in the battle, killing 50 rebels. The government responds with airstrikes on Tiger positions.

June 8, 2006: Talks in Norway aimed at restoring peace collapse, after the Tigers refuse face-to-face meetings with Sri Lankan government representatives.

June 15, 2006: A land mine blast under a bus kills 62 and wounds 78. The government blames the rebels and launches airstrikes. The Tigers deny involvement.

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

August 2006: Seventeen aid workers from Action Against Hunger group are found killed execution-style amid heavy fighting between government soldiers and the rebels in the eastern town of Muttur.

Aug. 14, 2006: Air force bombing in rebel-held Mullaithivu district allegedly kills 61 school girls. Government claims its target was a rebel base.

Dec.14, 2006: Anton Balasingham, the Tamil Tiger chief peace negotiator and adviser to guerrilla leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, dies of cancer.

March 26, 2007: **Tamil Tigers** launch their first airstrike in more than two decades of separatist fighting, on an air base outside Colombo. Three airmen are killed and 16 more wounded.

July 11, 2007: Government announces its troops capture the Eastern Province, restricting the rebels to the north.

Oct. 22, 2007 : Tamil Tiger suicide fighters, backed by the rebels' small air force, launch a pre-dawn attack on an air base in Anuradhapura, north-central province, destroying eight aircraft. Fourteen troops and 21 rebels are killed.

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

Load-Date: November 3, 2007

Timeline of the violence in Sri Lanka

Associated Press International

November 2, 2007 Friday 4:13 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 720 words

Byline: By The Associated Press

Body

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Load-Date: November 3, 2007

Explosion kills six in Sri Lanka as foreigners prepare to ship out

Agence France Presse -- English

August 26, 2006 Saturday 11:21 AM GMT

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Length: 578 words

Byline: Paul Peachey

Dateline: COLOMBO, Aug 26 2006

Body

A bomb killed six Sri Lankan soldiers and wounded 11 Saturday as they cleared up after fierce fighting with Tamil Tiger rebels in the besieged northern Jaffna peninsula, a military source said.

The improvised device exploded as soldiers maintained their defences on the frontline at Muhamalai on the peninsula where 11 days of battles left some 650 rebels and soldiers dead.

"Troops were on an operation clearing bunker lines when an IED (improvised explosive device) went off and six soldiers were killed and 11 injured," said the source from Jaffna.

The authorities said the rebels left booby traps and improvised explosives behind after a failed attempt to capture the peninsula by seaborne Tamil Tiger rebels that dealt a further blow to a tattered 2002 ceasefire.

Sri Lankan warplanes later bombed a rebel mortar position near the front line, the defence ministry said.

The Tigers have fought a three-decade battle for a homeland for the minority Tamil population in the country's northeast and the cultural capital of Jaffna is seen as symbolically important to both sides.

The majority of the peninsula is held by government forces who reported no major overnight clashes as the Red Cross were due to ferry out 158 foreigners and three seriously-ill Sri Lankans trapped by the fighting.

Up to 500 foreigners, including aid workers and foreign passport holders of Sri Lankan origin, want to leave the peninsula which is cut off by road from the rest of Sri Lanka.

In the country's biggest city, Colombo, Sri Lankan police arrested 18 people, including two women, Saturday and seized a cache of weapons that included grenades and mines at a building.

The defence ministry said the seizure followed a tip-off and indicated a likely attack in the city where bomb attacks in recent months have targeted senior politicians and a Pakistani diplomat.

Meanwhile, a Sri Lankan policeman was released Saturday after being held for nearly a year by Tamil Tigers as he pursued a suspected British paedophile into rebel-held territory, ceasefire monitors said.

Explosion kills six in Sri Lanka as foreigners prepare to ship out

The officer and two others were seized in September 2005 after they went into the jungle and crossed into the northern Mannar district held by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**). The two other men were released earlier this year.

The latest release followed a request from Ulf Henricsson, the outgoing head of the team monitoring the crumbling 2002 ceasefire between rebels and government forces.

"He has been handed over to the government ... and his family were waiting for him," said Thorfinnur Omarsson, spokesman for the Sri Lankan Monitoring Mission. "Apparently he was well."

A surge in fighting has left at least 1,500 people dead since December in clashes between rival forces. The total toll during the conflict is more than 60,000.

Aid agencies said they were struggling to reach many of those cut off by the fighting with 204,000 people having fled their homes across the country, according to the United Nations.

An aid ship arrived late Thursday and docked off Jaffna where food stocks were running low but no food would be distributed until Sunday because of the slow rate of unloading, said the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The World Food Programme also warned Friday that the government was not allowing them to reach other parts of rebel-held northeastern Sri Lanka.

In some areas fuel was being sold at four times the normal price and piped water was available only four hours a day, it said.

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