

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:33:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223508250

Documents (100)

1. [Jaffna MC polls: UNP files nominations](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

2. [Thousands to march in support of Tamils](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

3. [Horror in sri lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

4. [CALL FOR AN END TO HOSTILITIES IN SRI LANKA](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

5. [AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SAYS DISPLACED IN SRI LANKA TRAPPED BETWEEN MILITARY AND MONSOON -- AMNESTY URGES INCLUSION OF DETAINEES IN TALKS OF RESETTLEMENT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

6. [AFP Asia-Pacific news summary](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

7. [Rebels could win pardon](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

8. [Angry Tamils stage bridge 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,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

9. [Doom & gloom](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

10. [End hostilities](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

11. [DOOM & GLOOM](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

12. [Defeating terrorism, safeguarding human rights](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

13. [Tamil protesters move to The Lodge](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

14. [Magnificent discharge of Presidential prerogatives](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

15. [Sri Lankan president says country 'liberated' from terrorism; As citizens celebrate end of bloody civil war, Rajapaksa tells Tamil minority that 'we all must now live as equals in this free 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

16. [Sri Lanka military helps 35,000 civilians flee](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

17. [The 1530 GMT News Advisory](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

18. [Terrorists or tomorrow's allies?](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

19. [The 1030 GMT News Advisory](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

20. [India 'complicit' in 20,000 Sri Lanka deaths General accuses army of wanting to avenge Gandhi murder](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

21. [*Sri Lanka military helps 35,000 civilians flee*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

22. [*Sri Lankan Separatists Ignore Surrender Deadline*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

23. [*Rights groups write to Japan alleging abuses in Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

24. [*1ST LEAD: Sri Lankan civilians flee rebel-held areas for second day*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

25. [*Woman ' from warrior to terrorist*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

26. [*ROUNDUP: Rebels allege heavy civilian casualties in Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

27. [*Futile attempt to tarnish image of Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

28. [*Practice what you preach!*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

29. [*Victory through commitment, Professionalism and sacrifice*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

30. [*ROUNDUP: Divisions on Sri Lanka at UN while aid restricted =*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

31. [*Tigers hounding out colonists?*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

32. [*Rights groups write to Japan alleging abuses in Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

33. [*A long, long wait for Sri Lanka 's IDPs*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

34. [*UAE : Thousands freed*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

35. [*UAE : Thousands freed*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

36. [*Tigers take the West for a ride*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

37. [Doctor: Sri Lanka hospital shelled, 15 killed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

38. [Doctor: Sri Lanka hospital shelled, 15 killed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

39. [Oppression of Tamils must stop](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

40. [Navy intercepts Sri Lankan asylum seekers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

41. [The black and white of the \(mis\)information industry](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

42. [Thousands march in pro-Tamil rally in Paris](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

43. [GOVERNMENT HAS THE CHANCE TO END CONFLICT: US](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

44. [US Department of State: Call for an End to Hostilities in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

45. [THOUSANDS TO MARCH IN SUPPORT OF TAMILS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

46. [CALL FOR AN END TO HOSTILITIES IN SRI LANKA](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

47. [Thousands to march in support of Tamils](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

48. [People smugglers are watching Canada](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

49. [AFP 1000 GMT News Advisory](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

50. [Sri Lanka 's rebels admit defeat; Tigers vow to lay down arms, but fate of civilians uncertain](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

51. [Fleeing civilians want Army to rescue them - Sunday Telegraph](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

52. [Smart cops rewarded](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

53. [*The death of a coward*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

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

54. [*2ND ROUNDUP: Rebels allege heavy civilian casualties in Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

55. [*UN : Punish Abuse of Children in War*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

56. [*Plot to assassinate Defence Secretary*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

57. [*Malaysian Tamils protest Sri Lankan 'genocide'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

58. [Sri Lanka camps a 'national disgrace': rights group](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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Content Type
News

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

59. [Release Tamils from Sri Lanka camps, say parties](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

60. [2ND LEAD: 17 civilians killed in rebel suicide attack in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

61. [WORLD DIGEST](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

62. [Pope appeals for safety of civilians in Sri Lanka 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,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

63. [Relief agencies urge access to Sri Lankan wounded, displaced](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

64. [Japan : Break Silence on Sri Lanka Rights Abuses](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

65. [Nambiar arrives for urgent talks](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

66. [Doctor: Sri Lankan hospital shelled, 15 killed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

67. [Tamil genocide all but sanctioned by Australia's apathy](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

68. [Doctor: Sri Lankan hospital shelled, 15 killed](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

69. [Saturday Review: FICTION: A healing art: Alfred Hickling acclaims a moving account of the human cost of civil war: Brixton Beach by Roma Tearne 409pp, Harper Press, £14.99](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

70. [JAPAN : BREAK SILENCE ON SRI LANKA RIGHTS ABUSES; NEW ADMINISTRATION SHOULD URGE RELEASE OF DETAINED CIVILIANS AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR WAR CRIMES](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

71. [Strong pro-active system needed to counter detractors - Prof. Rajiva Wijesinghe](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

72. [Japan : Break Silence on Sri Lanka Rights Abuses](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

73. ['War in North has no bearing on PC Election'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

74. [Everything depends on how we view self rule](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

75. [Victory parades & the trouble with this one](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

76. [In the eyes of the Tiger SRI LANKA](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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

77. [NEWS DIGEST 0700](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

78. [SPUR concert raises Rs 1.6 m for Api Wenuwen Api Fund](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

79. [*Rules of military engagement needs re-evaluation- Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

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News

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

80. [*Re-evaluate war on terrorists: Lanka tells UN*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

81. [*UNICEF fears worst is yet to come for tens of thousands of children trapped in Sri Lanka 's conflict*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

82. [*Minister Sirisena escapes suicide blast*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

83. [*Sri Lanka : ICRC calls for exceptional precautionary measures to minimize further bloodshed in "no-fire zone"*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

84. [UN to probe war Crime charges may follow Sri Lanka win](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

85. [India deploys air force, army against Maoists](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

86. [Pardon for rebels plan](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

87. [Doublespeak on Terrorism](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

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

88. [Sri Lanka says aid worker massacre probe concluded](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

News

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

89. [In transition At Cheddikulam...](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

90. [Tamil protests a test of our tolerance](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

91. [Mayor warns defiant Tamils Police 'will remove you,' he says, but protesters say traffic chaos possible](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

92. [AFPTV Updated Advisory for Thursday](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

93. [EXTERNAL LANKA SECOND LEAD INDIA TWO LAST NEW DELHI](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

94. [*SRI LANKA : ICRC CALLS FOR EXCEPTIONAL PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES TO MINIMIZE FURTHER BLOODSHED IN "NO-FIRE 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: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

95. [*Over 20,000 Tamils killed in final Sri Lankan onslaught: 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,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

96. [*JHU vows to take Britain to INTERNATIONAL Courts*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

97. [*International: Iraq : Tamil Tiger teenage girl led the way with the slaying of Rajiv Gandhi: Female 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,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Mar 31, 2009 to Nov 30, 2009

98. [*Female suicide bombers: Tamil Tiger teenage girl led the way*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

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

99. [The Man Who Destroyed Eelam](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed by

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

100. [Sri Lanka :TN to boost funding for Lankan refugee camps](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

News

Narrowed by

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

Jaffna MC polls: UNP files nominations

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

June 23, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 261 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 23 -- The main opposition UNP was the first political party to file nomination papers yesterday for the upcoming Jaffna Municipal Council elections and named A.S. Sathyendra, a leading businessman, as its mayoral candidate.

Dr. Jayalath Jayawardane, the UNP's authorized agent for the northern polls, filed the nomination papers on behalf of the party. The UNP list consists of 29 candidates and includes one Muslim, four women and 12 youth. Alfred Duraipappah the former Jaffna Mayor and SLFP area organizer was allegedly assassinated by the LTTE in 1975. This was the first in a series of assassinations that took place during the decades-long conflict. Local government elections were last held in the North in 1997 after Jaffna was liberated by the security forces in 1996. Sarojini Yogeswaran who was elected Jaffna Mayor at the time was also allegedly killed by the LTTE. Assistant Elections Commissioner S. Kuganathan said that the Jaffna Municipal Council area had some 1,417,000 registered voters but 50 per cent of them were displaced. Some of the residents in Jaffna said they were not interested in the elections as they were only worried about how they were going fend for themselves each day. "My brothers are in the IDP camp in Vavuniya, I want to see them and help them; in this situation how can I be interested in elections," K. Sivanathan a farmer in Jaffna said. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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

Load-Date: June 23, 2009

Thousands to march in support of Tamils

Colombo Times

April 10, 2009 Friday

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Length: 292 words

Body

Colombo, April 10 -- Thousands of people are set to gather in London this weekend for a major protest march against the Sri Lankan government's offensive against Tamil Tiger rebels and alleged human rights abuses.

Hundreds of Tamil demonstrators currently occupying London's Parliament Square will see their numbers swell on Saturday for a renewed push, according to supporters.

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

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

Former aid worker Tim Martin, director of the Act Now campaign group aimed at stopping the war in Sri Lanka, said around 100 civilians are dying each day.

Sources have told him that poisonous gases are being used in combat, with victims suffering vomiting, blisters, breathing problems and extreme pain.

"This is why everyone is protesting," he said.

"The protesters are really upset at what's happening in Sri Lanka, they are really upset that the government is using illegal banned weapons and they will protest there until a ceasefire is agreed."

Two young Tamil men, Sivatharsan Sivakumaravel, 21, and Parameswarn Subramaniyan, 28, have embarked on a hunger strike as part of the ongoing protest in London.

They have not consumed anything since 10pm on Monday, according to Mr Martin, and will not until there is a ceasefire in Sri Lanka and humanitarian aid is allowed to the civilians in the designated "safe zone" in the north of the country.

A sit-in by up to 5,000 people - including **women** and babies - forced the closure of Westminster Bridge on Monday night.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

Horror in sri lanka

Post (South Africa)

April 29, 2009 Wednesday

e1 Edition

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Section: LEISURE; Pg. 17

Length: 245 words

Byline: NARAYAN SWAMY

Body

NEW DELHI: The mass of Tamil women and children struggling to walk out of Sri Lanka's war zone were so emaciated that an aid worker thought he was seeing a horror movie.

Some had become so thin that their bones could be seen under the thin layer of fleshless skin.

They were in bloodstained, dirty and torn clothes that had not been washed for several weeks.

Many had untreated festering wounds and some were so sick that they could not stand on their feet.

At the first opportunity, they collapsed on bare earth.

Barring a few who were willing to speak, most were too weak to even utter a few words. When they did, they had only one wish: water.

And they were famished. Most of them had not had a proper meal for a long time. Their eyes begged for food.

Countless others never made it out of the shrunken territory the Tamil Tigers still hold in Sri Lanka's war-battered northern coast.

Those who have interacted with the civilians undergoing treatment in hospitals in Sri Lanka's north quote them as saying that innumerable people died like flies as they tried to escape the military's far superior firepower.

One survivor described horrific scenes she saw in the rebel land.

"People were blown up. People lost legs or hands. Families got separated. There was no one to care for the seriously injured and dying."

Two small hospitals in Tiger territory inundated with the dying ran out of life saving medicines.

The injured included those shot by the Tigers as they tried to escape.

Load-Date: April 29, 2009

Horror in sri lanka

End of Document

CALL FOR AN END TO HOSTILITIES IN SRI LANKA

States News Service

April 16, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 States News Service

Length: 294 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

The following information was released by the U.S. Department of State:

The United States government is deeply concerned about the current danger to civilian lives and the dire humanitarian situation created by the fighting in the Mullaitivu area in Sri Lanka. We call upon the government and military of Sri Lanka, and the **Tamil Tigers** to immediately stop hostilities until the more than 140,000 civilians in the conflict area are safely out. Both sides must immediately return to a humanitarian pause and both must respect the right of free movement of those civilian men, **women** and children trapped by the fighting.

The United States calls upon the government of Sri Lanka to assist its Tamil citizens by halting shelling of the safe zone, permitting international monitors to ensure the safe exit of the civilians. The government of Sri Lanka should also enforce international humanitarian standards in IDP camps, grant visas to international aid groups and permit entry into Sri Lanka of international monitors and media access to those camps.

The Sri Lankan government, as the legitimate sovereign power, has before it an opportunity to put an end to this lengthy conflict. A durable and lasting peace will only be achieved through a political solution that addresses the legitimate aspirations of all Sri Lankan communities. Further killing, particularly killing of civilians, will not end the conflict and will stain any eventual peace. We urge the Sri Lankan government to employ diplomacy to permit a peaceful outcome of this conflict. We call on the Sri Lankan government to put forward a proposal now to engage Tamils who do not espouse violence or terrorism, and to develop power sharing arrangements so that lasting peace and reconciliation can be achieved.

Load-Date: April 16, 2009

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SAYS DISPLACED IN SRI LANKA TRAPPED
BETWEEN MILITARY AND MONSOON -- AMNESTY URGES INCLUSION OF
DETAINEES IN TALKS OF RESETTLEMENT**

States News Service

October 8, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 States News Service

Length: 734 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

The following information was released by Amnesty International USA:

A quarter of a million Sri Lankans being held in de facto detention camps are facing a humanitarian disaster as monsoon rains threaten to flood camps, said Amnesty International today.

For months, the Sri Lankan government authorities have failed to deliver basic services to camps set up in the Vavuniya District in the north-east that were created following conflict in the area.

These camps remain overcrowded and lack basic sanitation facilities. As a result, during heavy rains in September, rivers of water cascaded through tents and forced camp residents to wade through overflowing sewage.

People living in these camps are desperate to leave, said Amnesty International's Sri Lanka expert, Yolanda Foster, who is in contact with relatives of some camp residents. The government must ensure that the displaced are treated with dignity.

A recent escapee from Chettikulam camp reported to Amnesty International that some women had been forced to give birth in front of strangers without privacy.

Medical staff are only available in the camps 9 to 5, the escapee said. People start waiting in line for medical assistance from early morning...how can you expect a lady who is pregnant to stand in a line for hours? If the war has ended, why doesn't the government let these people out?

The provision of protection, assistance and return is not an act of charity but a basic right, said Foster. They have a right to protection and must be consulted on whether they wish to return to their homes or resettle.

Since the war ended in May 2009, thousands of people detained in camps have been subjected to screening processes by the security forces.

While screenings are used to ensure that detainees are not members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the processes should follow proper procedures and not be used as an excuse for collective punishment.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SAYS DISPLACED IN SRI LANKA TRAPPED BETWEEN MILITARY AND
MONSOON -- AMNESTY URGES INCLUSION OF DETAINEES IN TALKS OF RESETTLEMENT

Approximately 10,000 detainees that have been determined ex-LTTE combatants are held in separate detention facilities.

Amnesty has previously raised concerns about the lack of independent monitoring and lack of accountability for these screening processes.

Despite the governments widely publicized accounts of detainee releases, Amnesty has received reports that many were merely transferred to other camps in the area where they may be subjected to rescreening by local authorities.

Amnesty has also received reports that the military is blocking release attempts by the civilian administration.

The Sri Lankan government must involve the displaced themselves in plans for return or resettlement. Authorities must also facilitate the assistance of independent humanitarian organizations in this regard, in order to effectively deal with the humanitarian disaster the camps are facing.

Freedom of movement is now critical, said Foster. The international community and the government of Sri Lanka can no longer ignore the voices of camp detainees to be allowed to leave.

Background:

According to government figures, the fighting between the Sri Lankan army and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) displaced over 409,000 people. At least 280,000 were displaced from areas previously under LTTE control. Since March 2009, there has been a dramatic influx of people fleeing the fighting and crossing into government controlled areas.

The displaced people, including at least 50,000 children, are being accommodated in 41 camps spread over four districts. The majority of the displaced are in Vavuniya District where Manik Farm is the biggest camp.

When United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon visited some of the camps in May, he said: "I have travelled around the world and visited similar places, but this is by far the most appalling scene I have seen."

While some progress had been made on providing basic needs, much still needs to be done on the right to health, food, water, family reunion and access to relatives.

Amnesty International has also called on the government of Sri Lanka to end restrictions on liberty and freedom of movement; ensure that camps are of a truly civilian nature and administered by civilian authorities, rather than under military supervisions; and give immediate and full access to national and international organizations and observers, including aid agencies, in order to monitor the situation and provide a safeguard against human rights violations.

Load-Date: October 8, 2009

AFP Asia-Pacific news summary

Agence France Presse -- English

May 16, 2009 Saturday 8:40 AM GMT

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Length: 301 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, May 16 2009

Body

AFP Asia-Pacific news summary for Saturday:

SriLanka-unrest

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan troops captured the last patch of coastline held by the Tamil Tigers, leaving the rebels completely surrounded and cut off from any sea escape, the military said.

Pakistan-unrest

PESHAWAR, Pakistan: Pakistan's military pressed its offensive against Taliban militants in the northwest of the country after tens of thousands more people fled the conflict zone.

India-vote

NEW DELHI: India's ruling Congress-led alliance swept to a commanding election victory, crushing its Hindu nationalist rivals and setting up a second term for Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Japan-politics-opposition

TOKYO: Japan's scandal-shaken main opposition party chose political blue-blood Yukio Hatoyama as its leader ahead of a key election battle against Prime Minister Taro Aso this year.

Health-flu-India

NEW DELHI: India confirmed its first swine flu case after a 23-year-old man who had flown to Hyderabad from New York tested positive for the virus.

Health-flu-Japan

TOKYO: Japan confirmed its first domestic infection of swine flu after a male high school student who has never been abroad tested positive for the virus, the government said.

Pakistan-Afghanistan-unrest-US-missile

AFP Asia-Pacific news summary

MIRANSHAH, Pakistan: A suspected US missile strike killed 10 militants in a Pakistani tribal area near the Afghan border, security officials said.

Afghanistan-unrest-Pakistan

KHOST, Afghanistan: Five people died when an Afghan mosque was hit by rockets fired from Pakistan by insurgents targeting a US military camp near the border, police and the US military said.

Taiwan-beauty-Australia-offbeat

TAIPEI: The organisers of a Taiwanese beauty pageant claimed they were conned by a modeling agency when it sent Australian women posing as international contestants, a report said.

afp

Load-Date: May 17, 2009

End of Document

Rebels could win pardon

The New Zealand Herald

May 5, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; World

Length: 303 words

Body

COLOMBO - Sri Lanka's Government says it is considering an amnesty for Tamil Tiger rebels who surrender - although not for leaders of the insurgency, which is facing defeat after 25 years of civil war.

Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe said officials from the Attorney-General's department were studying the legal basis for a possible pardon for separatists who surrender but a final decision had not been made.

Any offer would not be open to rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and others convicted in Sri Lanka for various attacks or wanted in neighbouring India for the 1991 assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

"The leadership will be dealt with under the laws of the country," Samarasinghe said.

Gandhi was blown up by a suspected Tamil Tiger **female** suicide bomber at an election rally in southern India in apparent revenge for sending a peacekeeping force to Sri Lanka in 1987.

Samarasinghe said the Government also plans to offer vocational training for surrendering rebels to help them reintegrate into society.

Tamil Tiger leaders have vowed no surrender. Every fighter is meant to wear a cyanide capsule and swears an oath to swallow the capsule to avoid capture.

But the Government says a number of rebels have already given themselves up, including the group's former media spokesman and an interpreter for its political wing.

Separately, the **Tamil Tigers**' political head, Balasingham Nadesan, wrote to British Foreign Secretary David Miliband and his French counterpart, Bernard Kouchner, saying the insurgents were ready to "engage in the process to bring about a ceasefire and enter into negotiations for an enduring resolution to the conflict".

Fighting continued yesterday. The military said it captured a 500m-long earth fortification erected by the rebels to slow the Army's advance.

- AP

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

Angry Tamils stage bridge protest

ITN

April 7, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 300 words

Body

Hundreds of Tamil protesters have occupied Westminster Bridge in central London and are threatening to throw themselves into the Thames.

One man was rescued after jumping from the bridge and was taken to hospital where his condition is not believed to be serious.

Four RNLI lifeboats are on standby on the river amid concerns other demonstrators would attempt to throw themselves off the bridge.

The demonstrators gathered in the streets around the Houses of Parliament to protest against the Sri Lankan government's offensive against Tamil Tiger rebels and alleged human rights abuses.

Westminster Bridge and a number of surrounding roads are closed as the protest continues.

Several hundred demonstrators are blocking the road, some playing drums, chanting and holding banners saying: "Help now!"

Many of the protesters had brought sheets and sleeping bags to spend the night outside.

One said they would stay "as long as it takes".

"We will stay until we have an answer from Gordon Brown," she said.

"Our relatives are dying out there and so we will stay here. The police tried to move us on in the night, but they couldn't."

A Scotland Yard spokeswoman said the protest was peaceful and there had been no arrests so far.

She said: "Police are continuing to attempt to negotiate with the organisers of the demonstration to facilitate their protest and to minimise disruption to all of London's communities."

The protesters, some of whom were waving flags bearing a Tamil emblem, included women and children.

Angry Tamils stage bridge protest

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

However, the United Nations says up to 150,000 people are trapped in the war zone in the north of the country.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

End of Document

Doom & gloom

Sydney MX (Australia)

April 22, 2009 Wednesday

1 - SYD Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 11

Length: 303 words

Body

CIVILIANS BEAR BRUNT IN SRI LANKA

Tens of thousands of civilians trapped in Sri Lanka's conflict zone face a catastrophic situation, a senior Red Cross official warned today, calling for immediate action to rescue them.

"The situation is nothing short of catastrophic," said Pierre Kraehenbuehl, Director of Operations for the International Committee of the Red Cross.

"Ongoing fighting has killed or wounded hundreds of civilians who have only minimal access to medical care," he said as the **Tamil Tigers** ignored the latest surrender deadline.

"What we are seeing is intense fighting in a very small area overcrowded with civilians who have fled there."

KENYAN VIOLENCE CLAIMS 24

Twenty-four people were killed in violence overnight between residents of a Kenyan town and members of a banned sect.

Deputy Police spokesman Charles Owino said residents of Karatina had been fighting members of the Mungiki sect because they had been extorting money from them.

Most of those killed were Mungiki members.

HOTEL STAFF MAKE GRISLY FIND

Staff at a US hotel unlocked a guest room door and discovered the bodies of a man, two **women** and a teenage girl, according to police who did not release a cause of death.

The four were related and police were not looking for any suspects.

It was unclear if the deaths were a murder-suicide.

The victims were not from the Baltimore area.

ISRAEL ETHNIC CLEANSING CLAIM

Doom & gloom

Nobel Peace laureate Mairead Maguire has accused Israel of "ethnic cleansing" policies in annexed east Jerusalem, where the municipality plans to tear down almost 90 Arab homes.

"I believe the Israeli Government is carrying out a policy of ethnic cleansing against Palestinians here in east Jerusalem," said Maguire, who won the 1976 Nobel Prize for her efforts at reaching a peaceful solution to the violence in Northern Ireland.

Load-Date: April 22, 2009

End of Document

End hostilities

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 18, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 274 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 18 -- The United States government is deeply concerned about the current danger to civilian lives and the dire humanitarian situation created by the fighting in the Mullaitivu area in Sri Lanka.

We call upon the Government and the **Tamil Tigers** to immediately stop hostilities until the civilians in the conflict areas are safely out. Both sides must immediately return to a humanitarian pause and both must respect the right of free movement of those civilian men, **women** and children trapped by the fighting. The United States calls upon the Government of Sri Lanka to assist its Tamil citizens by halting the alleged shelling of the safe zone, permitting international monitors to ensure the safe exit of the civilians. The Government of Sri Lanka should also enforce international humanitarian standards in IDP camps, grant visas to international aid groups and permit entry into Sri Lanka of international monitors and media access to those camps. The Sri Lankan Government, as the legitimate sovereign power, has before it an opportunity to put an end to this lengthy conflict. A durable and lasting peace will only be achieved through a political solution that addresses the legitimate aspirations of all Sri Lankan communities. We urge the Sri Lankan Government to employ diplomacy to permit a peaceful outcome of this conflict, and call on them to put forward a proposal now to engage Tamils who do not espouse violence or terrorism, and to develop power sharing arrangements so that lasting peace and reconciliation can be achieved, the statement said. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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

Load-Date: April 18, 2009

DOOM & GLOOM

Sydney MX (Australia)

April 6, 2009 Monday

1 - SYD Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 8

Length: 269 words

Body

TIGERS TOLD TO GIVE UP FIGHT

Sri Lanka's president has urged Tamil Tiger rebels to surrender to avoid a complete massacre, with the military claiming to have killed at least 420 guerrillas in fresh fighting.

President Mahinda Rajapakse said security forces were about to finish off Tamil Tigers in the island's northeast.

SHOT FOR BEING GAY IN IRAQ

The bullet-riddled bodies of three Iraqis said to be homosexuals have been found in Baghdad's Sadr City.

“Two of the bodies, found on Thursday, had pieces of paper attached on which was written the word ‘Pervert’. The third body was retrieved on Friday,” an official said.

HIV MAN IS A SEX MURDERER

A Canadian man has been found guilty of murdering two women and sexually assaulting others by not warning them he carried the HIV virus before having unprotected sex.

Johnson Aziga, 52, was under a public health order to inform would-be lovers. He is the first person in Canada to be convicted of murder for recklessly spreading the virus.

BOY FIGHTS FOR LIFE AFTER ATTACK

An 11-year-old is in a critical condition after he was burned, knifed and pushed down an embankment at an English beauty spot.

The boy was attacked by youths and fell almost 10m, while his nine-year-old friend was found wandering with head and arm injuries near the quarry in South Yorkshire.

TWO AID WORKERS HELD HOSTAGE

Gunmen in Sudan's Darfur region have kidnapped French and Canadian aid workers from humanitarian group Aide Medicale Internationale.

DOOM & GLOOM

The Sudanese Media Centre said the kidnappers were demanding a ransom after the two employees were abducted at Ed el-Fursan in southern Darfur yesterday.

Load-Date: April 6, 2009

End of Document

Defeating terrorism, safeguarding human rights

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

September 26, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 1826 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Sept. 26 -- My Motherland suffered from almost three decades of destruction from terrorism. But now we have shown the world that it can be defeated.

The FBI has stated that the LTTE is the world's most dangerous and ruthless terrorist organization. We were able to defeat this organization which falsely built an image that it could never be defeated.

To do that, our Government had the support of our people, peace-loving leaders of other states and their citizens, and they helped in different ways to enable us achieving our goal. For that I am deeply thankful.

However, defeating terrorism was not simple or easy. There were those who supported terrorism openly as well as secretly. We invited the terrorists many a time to give up arms and enter the democratic path.

The terrorists ignored our calls. They killed innocent unarmed people. They destroyed the nation's resources and created a bloodbath upon our Motherland.

We were responsible for stopping this. A majority in my country requested the Government to take this responsibility.

We lost a lot of young lives in this war. We had to bear a huge cost.

Despite the cost, being a welfare State, our Government never cut down any welfare services of our citizens. It is during this period that the world suffered from an economic crisis. However, that did not affect us deeply because of our far-sighted financial and economic policies.

When the international community was embroiled in this economic crisis, our problem was this scourge of terrorism.

We are rid of that menace now. But the residual effect and a few related problems remain.

The internally displaced Sri Lankans need to be resettled in their villages again.

These are people who got displaced from their homes due to the conflict between the Tigers and our Security Forces. It is our responsibility to resettle them and to carry out the planned development projects.

It is necessary to completely wipe out the LTTE network which operated locally as well as internationally (supported by both local and international sponsors).

When our Forces were fighting terrorism, the terrorists used various ways and methods to escape the pressure.

Defeating terrorism, safeguarding human rights

Around 300,000 was kept as a human shield by the Tiger terrorists while attacking the military Forces.

These unarmed innocent Tamil civilians tried many times to come over to the Government Forces for security. At times the terrorists shot and killed those who tried to escape.

But finally all of them were able to breakaway from the LTTE and come under the shelter of the Government Security Forces. Among them were children, pregnant women, elderly and those suffering from various illnesses.

Our soldiers received them kindly and treated them as their own.

That is their discipline and how they were trained.

Our Motherland is nourished with the teaching of Buddhism. We were brought up in that background. The true Buddhist shows compassion towards all others. Helping those who suffer enables them to bear suffering with a tranquil mind.

This is the disciplined and civilized Army that the Tiger terrorists attacked. The citizens were aware of this. They respected and trusted the military. Thus, close to 300,000 Tamil civilians came to us for security.

At your know, it is not an easy task to provide welfare to these people all at once. Yet we accepted this challenge. Again my heart goes to the friendly nations who supported us.

Today, the people are being resettled systematically and efficiently. A considerable number of people who were sheltered in temporary camps in Vavuniya, Jaffna and Trincomalee districts are already resettled.

The Government accomplished a huge task in being able to do this in such a short time.

But there is a serious obstacle to overcome. Terrorists have planted land-mines in playgrounds, holy sties, farm fields and on roads. There are death traps in farmland after decades of terrorism. We are not ready to push our people onto these death traps. Mine clearance in the North is efficiently underway. For this, several NGOs are helping the Government with the leadership of the Army. In addition, special machinery is imported from abroad to increase the speed of mine clearance. For the benefit of the displaced persons educational and health services have been revived.

Infrastructure is being developed. Main roads are being rebuilt in those areas. The A9, the main highway to Jaffna is re-opened for public transport.

The Northern and Eastern seas are also open for fishing. For the past few decades the fishing industry in the North and the East faced challenges due to terrorist activities.

The Tigers prevented people from cultivating. But now our Government has started agricultural projects in vast areas. Steps have been taken to provide the necessities to the farming community. Now the future livelihood of the Northern farmers is secure.

Our Government has re-opened the cement and paper industries which once operated very successfully in the Northern and Eastern provinces in the past. Communications have been restored. Programs are under way for the reconstruction and re-wakening of the Northern and Eastern provinces.

Some of the leaders of LTTE understood that this separatist war was not practical. Those leaders laid down arms and joined the democratic process. One of them is a Cabinet Minister in our Government and another is the Eastern Province Chief Minister.

They understood that by a democratic process people's needs can be met, not by the bullet but only by the vote. A great number of youth are regretting that due to intimidation, or voluntarily, they joined the LTTE.

Those who have been harassed physically and mentally will be rehabilitated through several programs implemented by our Government.

Defeating terrorism, safeguarding human rights

We are in a process of rehabilitating them by giving them education, vocational training and psychological treatment.

In our President's manifesto Mahinda Chinthanaya he proposed a way to develop the country by using the talents and powers of the youth. Many of them who were trapped in LTTE's grasp lost not only their childhood but also their youth.

We give them life. Although terrorists took away their childhood, our vision is to secure their future.

Children who were forced to carry arms now experience life without it. They study at school, sit for Government exams, and exercise their vocational skills. A challenge that we are faced with is to channel this talent for the benefit of the country. For this purpose it is necessary to boost the economy of the country which was retarded by the three-decade- long terrorism, with new projects and programs. There is a great opportunity for the investors from countries like yours to visit Sri Lanka and invest.

Our Constitution provides for the protection of foreign investors, perhaps the only instance of such constitutional provision you would find anywhere in the world. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you in advance. We have started to improve the infrastructure which helps the investors in their new projects.

There are lots of new investment opportunities in the North and the East of the country. We request you to join the development process of our nation by taking advantage of the investment opportunities in natural and traditional sectors. There is a great space for the Sri Lankan tourism industry.

The Eastern beaches of Sri Lanka, considered some of the world's most beautiful, are now open to the public. The reknown Arugam Bay, Nilaweli and Pasikuda beaches in the East are fully crowded these days with local and foreign tourists. More opportunities have opened up in the tourism sector as well. Tourist arrivals which stagnated during the years of conflict have begun to catch up again.

Special attention needs to be given to children and women who have suffered from terrorism. We have taken steps to strengthen them physically and mentally through rehabilitation programs.

The Tiger terrorists cared nothing for our traditional consideration for women and children. They gave weapons to children and pushed them to war, and they transformed women into suicide cadres. Those who have surrendered to the Government reveal all these hardships they faced. To cure them psychologically is a duty of our Government. We have taken steps to fulfil that duty.

In the meantime, we have a challenge to stop further LTTE activities. The LTTE will try to reorganize themselves. They will try to influence the people by issuing statements while hiding in various cavities of the globe. It has been revealed that this terrorist organization has links with other extremist organizations in the world.

We need to stop drugs, weapons and people trafficking through these links. All nations should co-operate in eradicating this menace. There should be no double standards in this.

Some powerful nations in the world while invading other countries bring human rights allegations against us for trying to defeat terrorism. There should be a common agreement in war on terror.

It should be common to the entire world. There can't be different treatment or laws for different countries on the subject of terrorism.

If there is a problem for any ethnic group in our country we are ready to solve it. Compassion is ingrained in our national psyche. There is something that our President says often. 'We do not have a majority or a minority in our country, we only have one race; that is, we all are Sri Lankans.' These are his words.

To resolve the issues and grievances faced by the Tamils, discussions were held frequently. On the invitation of the President, an All Party Conference has been meeting to evolve a formula to solve the national problem.

Defeating terrorism, safeguarding human rights

Even the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) considered to be proxies for the **LTTE** had discussions with the President recently. They declared willingness to work with the Government in the interests of national development.

Some believe that devolution of power is not a practical solution. Nearly 47 percent of Tamils in Sri Lanka live in the north and east and 53 percent of Tamils are in the Western Province and other provinces, with the Sinhala people.

It is hard to assume that these 53 percent will migrate to the North and East. Their houses, businesses and day-to-day life are in the Western Province among the Sinhalese majority. There, all races live in harmony I have briefed here the challenges that Sri Lanka is facing at present and what programs are done and others still under way for long lasting peace.

As a world we face two great challenges. One is the environmental crisis, the other is terrorism.

We can overcome these challenges by facing them together, through being united, and co-operating with each other. I beseech you to proceed towards overcoming these challenges together. This will result in building a better world for us all. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: September 26, 2009

End of Document

Tamil protesters move to The Lodge

Canberra Times (Australia)

April 15, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 4

Length: 284 words

Byline: Philip Dorling

Body

Members of Australia's Tamil community converged on The Lodge yesterday demanding Australia take a greater role in efforts to end the violence in Sri Lanka.

Despite intermittent showers, about 200 men, women and children rallied outside the residence to chant slogans calling for an end to the Sri Lankan Government's offensive against Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the rebel group that has been fighting for a separate Tamil homeland since 1972. The protesters said they would stay outside the Prime Minister's residence until Kevin Rudd granted them an audience and agreed to lead an international call for a ceasefire.

The protesters trucked in food and drink and set up portable toilets close to The Lodge and declared their intention to stay overnight.

Australian Federal Police personnel were deployed outside the grounds to monitor the protest. The protesters repeatedly chanted "Australia save the Tamils" and "Australia stop the genocide". Many of the demonstrators came from Sydney, where Tamil supporters spent the weekend demonstrating outside Kirribilli House.

Three hunger strikers, who also came to Canberra, said they were prepared to die for their cause and urged the Australian Government to listen to their concerns.

The group's spokesman, Mahendran Ratnam, said, "We have want Mr Rudd to take action to help stop the genocide."

Foreign Minister Stephen Smith urged the protesters to avoid any incident.

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse has called a two-day halt to the current military offensive to allow an estimated 100,000 civilians to flee the conflict zone in northern Sri Lanka.

The **Tamil Tigers** are not listed as a terrorist organisation under Australia's counter-terrorism laws.

Load-Date: April 14, 2009

Tamil protesters move to The Lodge

End of Document

Magnificent discharge of Presidential prerogatives

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

May 11, 2009 Monday

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Length: 1163 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 11 -- It is three decades since we were unexpectedly forced to accept the novel role of presidential rule and during that space of time, we have seen four past Presidents who tried on their own way to hammer out an approach to the problem of the LTTE terror; the most urgent job faced by them. Their approaches neither bolstered national interest nor yielded tangible success as that of what we see today.

When President Jayewardene, the architect and the first incumbent of the office of presidency, after a long journey of negotiations with the LTTE, arbitrarily signed a Peace Accord with India and invited an Indian Peace Keeping Force to handle the LTTE menace, our people fluctuated between hope and despair, up and down, while some of the militants on this side resorted even to destroy our national assets; their usual form of decent. President Premadasa sent away the IPKF before they could accomplish the task that was so laboriously entrusted to them and befriended with the LTTE with supplies of arms, money and so on. The LTTE in turn became unmanageably strong militarily and also with the blessing of the merger of the Northern and Eastern Provinces by his predecessor. President Premadasa was killed by the same murderers that he helped. President Wijetunga had little time to do anything but he boldly labelled the LTTE as terrorists, contrary to his predecessors who hesitated to call them so. Thus our historians are left with only stories of failures to be recorded in the space of the past thirty years. Of course, they have figures of major resources allocated to such exercises, and investments made in the procurement of arms and technological means to combat terrorism. They will also be no little surprised to learn of the number of people killed and the national assets destroyed by the terrorists during this period. Although President Chandrika Bandaranaike had the best will, given the increasing complexity of the issue she was not able to abandon the traditional approach and design a way out. Thus did the problem pass onto her successor. President Mahinda Rajapaksa assumed the office of Presidency, at a moment when the country was in dire need of a competent leadership, a leader who could alone supply the vitalizing force to stir the people in to action, and to design an effective approach to salvage the nation from the deadly terrorists. He has rightly accepted that the President alone is ultimately accountable for the lives of all men and all women of this country, born and unborn, as their ultimate custodian. When an issue is too important for his Cabinet members or someone else in authority to handle, it usually goes to the President for a decision. But what happens in Sri Lanka is different. Even if a simple matter like an application for transfer is not favourably considered, the affected party's next step is to appeal to the President. Although the President may so design his office and so delegate his authority as to keep such matters away from him, in the society any dissatisfaction is directed towards the President. Further, a nation is judged as good or bad primarily through the availability of morally and otherwise competent leadership. The President is the final backdrop of domestic tranquillity and principal guardian of national security and prosperity. When President Rajapaksa assumed office upon taking and subscribing the Oath, in accordance with the Constitution, he did it with the firm determination to uphold and defend the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka as a unitary state. It was the top priority of the President. He has discharged his presidential prerogatives with absolute effectiveness and

Magnificent discharge of Presidential prerogatives

has ultimately fulfilled his pledge. Now we have a country where every citizen can feel his traditional warmth of brotherhood. President Rajapaksa was faced with so many complex issues, where the solutions were remote, so dependent on the undependable and so tinged with political disaster. No one else faced such multiple responsibilities in so many different and conflicting areas. For every course he examined, there was opposition, as usual, from the other camp. Nevertheless, he surrounded himself with men who possessed the capacity to help him to evolve a strategy to meet the challenges before him and selected the path that he thought was the most effective. He first secured a comfortable lead in Parliament, attracting large fractions of members from the opposition, it is indeed an astonishingly wonderful ability possessed by the President. No President determined to tackle the most crying issue before the nation could do otherwise than accommodating all those needed to maintain a majority in the legislature. The measure was indeed not perfect but the President knew that the alternatives would surely be disastrous. These partners therefore had to be rewarded with patronage to be sure that he would not be deprived of a stable government to fulfil his pledges to the people. He was convinced that the approaches of his predecessors were crude and inadequate although they may have tried them with the best of will. They drew the vehicle just the same way as millions of people drive vehicles without having the faintest idea of how an internal combustion engine works. Today we are, at last, able to see unprecedented success, because, the President designed his strategy in consultation with those that knew the working of the engine well. If anything went wrong he had able and experienced mechanics to whom he could hand the problem over and get the defect corrected. Unfortunately when the President enlisted the support of his resourceful brother, who had excellent knowledge of how a military engine worked, those in the other political camp hastened to call it a brothers' company. Of course, now they may be feeling sorry about their foolish and unfounded utterances, particularly with regard to a matter of national importance. Our brave soldiers successfully carried out the mission that was handed over to them by the President, their Commander-in-Chief. Whether in a city in the South or on a land-mined road or a terrorist infected jungle in the North, members of our forces had been the front-line soldier in defense of the nation. What President Rajapaksa was faced with was a problem that looked un-surmountable even in the eyes of experts of conflict solution. Yet the hopes pinned on him by the people were enormous. It is indeed the result of his ability to direct his prerogatives in the correct direction, and to structure his Government machine accordingly. These measures may or may not be ideal in peace. In war the first essential is planning ahead. Even his strongest opponents now admit it in private that he has done the job extremely well and has secured for us a country in which we can move freely and without risk and one that everyone can call his or hers. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 11, 2009

Sri Lankan president says country 'liberated' from terrorism; As citizens celebrate end of bloody civil war, Rajapaksa tells Tamil minority that 'we all must now live as equals in this free country'

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

May 20, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: CANADA & WORLD; Pg. B4

Length: 669 words

Byline: Emily Wax, Washington Post

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

In a triumphant address to parliament Tuesday, Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa declared his country had been "liberated" from terrorism with the reported death of Tamil Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran, one of the world's most ruthless and elusive rebel leaders.

Even as a representative for the rebel group insisted that Prabhakaran was still alive, Rajapaksa reached out to the country's ethnic Tamil minority, using their native language during his victory speech to promise that after nearly 30 years of civil war, "we all must now live as equals in this free country."

"We have completely defeated terrorism," Rajapaksa said as fireworks burst into the sky and patriotic songs were played. "It is my duty to protect the Tamil people."

Selvarasa Pathmanathan, head of international relations for the **Tamil Tigers**, disputed the government's claim that Prabhakaran, 54, was killed during a gun battle with government troops.

"It is true that many of our senior members and leaders" were killed, Pathmanathan said in an interview with TamilNet, which is a rebel media website. But he said Prabhakaran -- who moved his jungle hideouts nearly every two nights, often hired body doubles and was known to kill those who displayed even a hint of disloyalty -- had survived the attack and "will continue to lead the quest for dignity and freedom for the Tamil people."

Sri Lankan government officials said DNA tests will soon prove Prabhakaran is dead.

It was a moment many Sri Lankans thought would never come, after more than a quarter-century of sporadic fighting, ceasefires and failed negotiations.

Top military commanders bearing bouquets of flowers met Rajapaksa in his living room Monday to deliver the news that the war was over. The **Tamil Tigers**, who had been fighting for a separate Tamil homeland, were officially defeated, they said, and the entire island was reunited under one flag.

Sri Lankan president says country 'liberated' from terrorism; As citizens celebrate end of bloody civil war, Rajapaksa tells Tamil minority that 'we all must no....

Rickshaw drivers honking in celebration passed dozens of sandbagged checkpoints in central Colombo where normally serious soldiers in flak jackets smiled their approval. Some women cooked or purchased rice and handed out small congratulatory packets to euphoric soldiers.

By dusk, a group of children in one neighborhood had raised a scarecrow-like effigy of Prabhakaran, who was vilified as a despot across much of southern Sri Lanka. Young girls danced and cheered his death, as hundreds of adults lined the road, clapping and waving the country's flag of a sword-wielding lion.

Experts said they hope Rajapaksa's conciliatory remarks will translate into a sincere effort to reach out to Tamils. But in the same speech, Rajapaksa hinted that dissent against the government would be ill-timed.

"There are no minority communities in this country. There are only two communities, one that loves this country and another that does not," he said.

But the war's end -- if it truly is the end -- opens new questions in a nation where armed conflict between Tamil rebels and mostly Sinhalese government troops has been the defining narrative for more than a generation.

"The end of this war is something that we genuinely didn't think could ever happen," said Rajinda Jayasinghe, 27, a civil society leader who is Sinhalese and works in the northern Tamil aid camps. "With the death of Prabhakaran, the symbol of the divisions between Sri Lankan people is gone. The real question now is, will there be goodwill towards Tamils? Will Tamils feel the government has their best interest in their hearts?"

In Tamil areas of Colombo, Sri Lanka's capital and a city with a history of ethnic riots, the change in mood was stark, with streets eerily silent as residents seemed to stay indoors.

Prabhakaran was widely regarded by Tamils as their only hope against the discrimination.

"Now we are fearing. I know people are celebrating the end of the war, but what does it mean for us? No one knows," said Jayea Baladhura, 32, a Tamil and former worker for a German aid agency.

Tamils represent about 15 per cent of the island's 20 million people.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Reuters; Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa arrives at parliament in Colombo, where he made a triumphant address. ;

Load-Date: May 20, 2009

Sri Lanka military helps 35,000 civilians flee

Associated Press Online

April 20, 2009 Monday 6:07 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 709 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A thick line of thousands of Sri Lankan civilians with only a handful of backpacks for belongings among them streamed out of the last sliver of land held by rebels on Monday. Video footage provided by the air force showed some fleeing to a nearby beach and others heading to a military-controlled area.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa called the exodus the "largest-ever hostage rescue mission in history." In a televised speech, he said the military had made the escape possible by opening up several new routes from the **Tamil Tigers'** last holdout.

But a pro-rebel Web site said hundreds of civilians were feared killed in the "total chaos" that prevailed when the soldiers entered the zone.

It is not possible to verify any of the claims because the war zone is restricted to journalists. Footage given to A.P. Television News by the air force showed an orderly exit.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said soldiers advanced into the zone and seized a fortification built by the rebels before rescuing the civilians.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the civilians' escape but said he was deeply concerned about those still trapped and "the potential for large-scale casualties," U.N. spokeswoman Marie Okabe said Monday at U.N. headquarters in New York.

"He deplores the continued use of heavy weapons in the vicinity of civilians, and the use of force by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in preventing the departure of civilians from the conflict zone," she said.

Ban also said the U.N. and other aid workers must be allowed into the area to help civilians.

U.S. State Department spokesman Robert Wood called the humanitarian situation "dire."

"We call on both the government and the **Tamil Tigers** to cease this violent activity, to protect civilians in the safe zones," Wood said.

The move by Sri Lanka's military came as the government warned the rebels it would launch a final assault in 24 hours and urged the rebels to surrender before noon on Tuesday. It also came just days after the military imposed a

Sri Lanka military helps 35,000 civilians flee

unilateral two-day cease-fire to encourage civilians to flee. Only a few hundred left at that time, prompting the government to renew accusations that the rebels were holding civilians against their will to use as human shields.

The charge was also levied by aid groups, though the rebels denied it. It was not possible to contact the rebels for comment.

The U.N. says 100,000 civilians are trapped in the war zone measuring only 7.7 square miles (20 square kilometers). The U.N. also estimates some 4,500 noncombatants have been killed in the last three months amid fierce fighting.

Footage shot by APTN showed men, women and small children resting on a beach in Puttumattalan, on the northeastern coast, after fleeing the war zone. The military estimated the vast majority of those who fled Monday more than 25,000 headed instead to a military-controlled area where they were being screened.

The U.N. and others have called for a negotiated cease-fire to allow the civilians to leave. The government has rejected such calls, saying it's on the verge of crushing the 25-year insurgency.

The government said Monday that rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and his fighters have 24 hours to surrender before a final assault one of many such promises that troops will soon end the conflict.

Defense spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella said the government's preferred option is to catch Prabhakaran alive and said the ultimatum was a final opportunity for the leader to end the conflict.

The rebels have refused previous calls for their surrender.

Rambukwella said the rebel leader's capture or death has now become "inevitable" because he will soon lose his civilian cover.

"He (Prabhakaran) doesn't have that option now," Rambukwella said. "Our first option is to capture him and bring him before the law."

In recent months the military has ousted the Tamil rebels from all their strongholds in an all-out offensive, forcing the rebels to retreat to the "no-fire" zone for a final stand.

The Tamil rebels have been fighting to create an independent homeland for ethnic minority Tamils, who have faced decades of marginalization by successive governments controlled by ethnic Sinhalese. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the violence.

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

The 1530 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

May 17, 2009 Sunday 3:37 PM GMT

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Length: 752 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, May 17 2009

Body

Duty Editor: David Watkins

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

-- WORLD HEADLINES --

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka rebels admit defeat

NEW DELHI: Ruling party basks in polls triumph

YANGON: Suu Kyi to protest innocence in trial

PESHAWAR: Northwest reels as army hunts Taliban

KOBE, Japan: Japanese swine flu cases spike

-- SRI LANKA CONFLICT --

SriLanka-unrest,6thlead-WRAP

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels say they will put down their weapons after a 37-year battle for an independent ethnic homeland, with their last remaining fighters encircled in a tiny patch of jungle.

700 words 1630 GMT by Amal Jayasinghe. Graphic. Picture. Video

SriLanka-unrest-Prabhakaran,lead-FOCUS

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka is gripped by rumours about the fate of Tamil Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran, who is said to either have been killed, smuggled abroad, or even be living under the sea in a survival capsule.

The 1530 GMT News Advisory

600 words moved. File picture

SriLanka-unrest-warcrimes,FOCUS

NEW DELHI

The Sri Lankan government's historic defeat of the ***Tamil Tigers*** has been tarnished by mounting charges of war crimes, with thousands of civilians reported killed in months of indiscriminate shelling.

550 words moved by Stefan Smith

SriLanka-unrest-Tigers,PROFILE

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's ***Tamil Tigers***, who have said they will stop fighting government troops, were once ranked among the world's most formidable and disciplined rebel outfits.

600 words moved by Amal Jayasinghe. File picture

We have also moved: SriLanka-unrest-peace,ANALYSIS

SriLanka-unrest,CHRONO

SriLanka-unrest-country,FACTS

-- ASIA --

India-vote,4thlead-WRAP

NEW DELHI

India's Congress Party begins the task of forming a government after steering its ruling alliance to a second term in office with a resounding win over its Hindu nationalist rivals.

650 words 1600 GMT by Elizabeth Roche. Picture.

Myanmar-politics-SuuKyi,lead-WRAP

YANGON

Myanmar pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi will protest her innocence when she goes on trial starting Monday, her party says as the ruling military junta frees her personal doctor from detention.

650 words moved. Graphic

We have also moved: Myanmar-politics-SuuKyi-ASEAN,lead-FOCUS

Pakistan-unrest,lead-WRAP

PESHAWAR, Pakistan

Pakistan's military says "intense" battles have broken out as it advances on a key Taliban stronghold in a fierce offensive that has scattered more than a million terrified civilians.

700 words moved by Lehaaz Ali. Picture

Health-flu-world,3rdlead-WRAP

The 1530 GMT News Advisory

KOBE, Japan

Japan says that 80 people have tested positive for swine flu, as senior health officials gather in Geneva for talks on how to contain the spread of the virus.

550 words 1630 GMT by Shingo Ito. Picture, graphic

We have also moved: Health-flu-Japan,SCENE

Taiwan-politics-demo-China,2ndlead

TAIPEI

Tens of thousands of protesters march through Taiwan's capital to protest against President Ma Ying-jeou's China-friendly policies, which they say have compromised the island's sovereignty.

650 words moved by Benjamin Yeh. Picture

-- MIDDLE EAST --

Kuwait-vote,2ndlead

KUWAIT CITY

Four **women** win seats in the Kuwaiti parliament in an historic first as Islamist parties face a setback in the oil-rich Gulf state's second general election in a year.

700 words moved by Omar Hasan. Picture

-- AMERICAS --

Mideast-diplomacy-Israel-US,lead

WASHINGTON

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrives in the US ahead of his first talks with President Barack Obama amid divisions over Middle East peacemaking and Iran's nuclear ambitions.

750 words moved by Ron Bousso

US-politics-Obama-abortion-protest,newseries

SOUTH BEND, Indiana

President Barack Obama wades into a storm of protest from anti-abortion campaigners as he prepares to speak at one of America's most prestigious Catholic universities.

650 words moved by Mira Oberman

US-space-astronomy-Hubble,3rdlead

HOUSTON, Texas

NASA astronauts embark on a fourth space walk to overhaul the aging Hubble Space Telescope, with plans to repair a long inactive component once used to study super massive black holes.

700 words 1530 GMT by Mark Carreau. Graphic. Picture.

US-attacks-security-transport,lead

The 1530 GMT News Advisory

NEW YORK

Hundreds of firefighters and police are to swarm over Ground Zero, the site where the World Trade Center once stood, in the largest security exercise here since the September 11, 2001 attacks.

550 words 1730 GMT by Paola Messana. Picture

-- EUROPE --

World-society-gay

BRUSSELS

Gays and lesbians raise a global rallying cry to end discrimination in a world where some countries punish homosexual acts with death, as they mark an international day against homophobia.

650 words moved

afp

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

End of Document

Terrorists or tomorrow's allies?

Canberra Times (Australia)

September 1, 2009 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 11

Length: 1164 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

As they say, history is written by the victors. Equally it might be said that commentary and analysis are provided by those with access to power and influence.

During negotiations over the formation of Israel, frustrated Zionists, members of an organisation known as the Stern Gang, murdered the British ambassador to Egypt, Lord Moyne.

In 1946 they blew up the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, killing 91 guests.

Today, at least in the Western media, the role of Zionists in the formation of Israel is not portrayed as terrorism, nor is the role of the Israeli Defence Force in the invasion of Gaza in early January 2009.

The Viet Cong were once referred to as terrorists, but no longer, not since they and the North Vietnamese Army won the war.

Nelson Mandela was convicted of sabotage under white South Africa's notorious terrorism laws in 1964 and sentenced to life in prison on Robben Island.

A substantial shift in power between white and black South Africans saw Mandela become president of South Africa in 1994.

At Mandela's trial, known as the Rivonia Trial, a lawyer on the defence team, Harold Hanson, said that a nation's grievances could not be suppressed people would always find a way to give voice to those grievances.

"It was not their aims which had been criminal, only the means to which they had resorted."

He pointed out to the judge that the Afrikaner people, to whom both he and the judge belonged, had conducted an armed uprising against British imperialism and had been charged by the British with rebellion and treason.

After the Boer army was defeated by the British in 1900, the Afrikaners conducted guerrilla warfare for a further two years; in fact they invented it in its modern form.

Guerrilla warfare to some is another form of terrorism, but that did not worry Western governments in their relations with Afrikaner governments from the 1950s to the mid-1980s.

Terrorists or tomorrow's allies?

The struggle in Sri Lanka is a civil war, just as it is in Afghanistan.

Without undertaking a detailed analysis, the Australian government accepted the position of the Bush government and declared both the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Taliban terrorists, ignoring that in the case of the latter many were once members of the Mujahideen, supported by the United States in the war to expel the Soviets from Afghanistan. The situation in Afghanistan appears to defy rational analysis now that the Taliban have been branded terrorists and supporters of al-Qaeda.

The civil war in Sri Lanka began with bullying and attacks on Tamils in the north by the majority Sinhalese not long after Sri Lanka gained independence from the British in 1948.

The first act of bastardry was when the Sinhalese Sri Lanka Freedom Party made the demand in 1954 that Sinhala should be the official language. By the election of 1956 it was the dominant political issue.

Under constant and growing pressure, relations between the two communities became worse until in 1977 attacks by members of the Sinhalese community killed 125 Tamils.

From 1983 the conflict between the Sinhalese majority in the south and the northern Tamil minority came to dominate Sri Lankan politics.

And so it continues to this day.

The Sinhalese Government has a monopoly on military power.

The response of the Tamils to this imbalance was similar to the Palestinians and the African National Congress they undertook acts of random terror designed to bolster their limited military resources and create an environment for negotiation.

As with the IRA, secret negotiations with organisations deploying terror as a weapon can take many years, in this case complicated by the fact that the Sinhalese also employed the use of torture and terror. A peace settlement was brokered in 2002 by a representative of the Norwegian government, Erik Solheim.

However, by 2006 it had broken down.

Backed by the Bush administration, who provided military equipment and training in the cause of the war against terror, a revitalised Sri Lankan army launched a massive assault against the **Tamil Tigers** in the second half of 2008. The result was a massacre of Tamils.

Around 300,000 were rounded up and put into concentration camps where conditions for the occupants remain in violation of UN Human Rights Conventions relating to the treatment of prisoners of war, **women** and children.

These conditions are a breeding ground for hatred. The Sri Lankan Government argues that it is holding Tamils in detention in order to weed out members of the **Tamil Tigers**, but the process has taken far too long and looks more like retribution.

The media has been denied access to these camps which, in view of recent clandestine evidence of the extra-judicial killing of Tamil males by the Sri Lankan military, is understandable. Tragically, Australia has taken sides in the Sri Lankan civil war.

Instead of offering humanitarian assistance to those in the camps, it sent the deputy chief of the navy, Rear Admiral Davyd Thomas, to Colombo in June 2009 to urge that young Tamils be prevented from coming to Australia.

His plea amounted to an endorsement of the continued detention of Tamils in appalling conditions. Kevin Rudd supports this position and said as much in an interview with Greg Cary on ABC Brisbane on July 1, 2009.

In the meantime, Sri Lanka has become a military state. Despite the ending of the war, the Sri Lankan army will expand from 200,000 to 300,000 to become an army of occupation in the north and east.

Terrorists or tomorrow's allies?

The Tamils are the big losers. Hated by the Sinhalese, where will they go?

They cannot be held in camps indefinitely, where the child mortality rate is estimated to be in the hundreds each month. Another Australian response has been to give the expanding terrorism industry, driven by an unsophisticated and ill-advised Australian Federal Police, its head.

They continue to pursue through the Supreme Court of Victoria charges of terrorism against three young Tamil men for allegedly being members of the **Tamil Tigers** and sending funds to that organisation.

Why pursue the case when the Sri Lankan Government says that organisation no longer exists? In any case, funds dispatched to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam when it existed could have been used for any purpose, humanitarian, educational as well as military, given that the organisation constituted the governing authority in the north.

What a changed nation we are when we send admirals to argue for incarceration of innocents rather than act as a vehicle for humanitarian assistance.

We have been railroaded by the needs of the terrorism industry, which has fuelled apprehension and fear, when what is required is a more sophisticated understanding of the causes of terrorism. Dealing with poverty, racism, the disproportionate distribution of power, abuse of power and the debilitating effect of corruption would enable the causes of terrorism to be addressed before violence is embraced as a course of action against injustice.

Bruce Haigh is a political commentator and former diplomat who served in Sri Lanka.

Load-Date: August 31, 2009

End of Document

The 1030 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

May 17, 2009 Sunday 10:28 AM GMT

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Length: 760 words

Dateline: HONG KONG, May 17 2009

Body

Duty Editor: David Watkins

News Desk: +852 2829 6211

-- WORLD HEADLINES --

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka rebels admit defeat

NEW DELHI: Ruling party basks in polls triumph

YANGON: Suu Kyi to protest innocence in trial

PESHAWAR: Northwest reels as army hunts Taliban

TAIPEI: Mass demonstration over pro-China policies

-- SRI LANKA CONFLICT --

SriLanka-unrest,3rdlead-WRAP

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Tamil rebels admit defeat after their 37-year battle for an independent ethnic homeland ends with their few remaining fighters encircled in a minuscule patch of jungle by government troops.

600 words 1100 GMT by Amal Jayasinghe. Picture

SriLanka-unrest-Prabhakaran,lead-FOCUS

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka is gripped by rumours and speculation over the fate of defeated Tamil Tiger rebel chief Velupillai Prabhakaran, who is said to be either dead, long fled or even living under the sea in a DIY survival capsule.

The 1030 GMT News Advisory

650 words 1130 GMT. File picture

SriLanka-unrest-warcrimes,FOCUS

NEW DELHI

Sri Lanka's landmark military victory over the ***Tamil Tigers*** is tarnished by allegations of war crimes, with the site of the rebels' last stand reportedly littered with the bodies of civilians killed in indiscriminate shelling.

600 words 1230 GMT by Stefan Smith

SriLanka-unrest-Tigers,PROFILE

COLOMBO

The ***Tamil Tigers*** were once considered as the world's most formidable and disciplined rebel outfits, capable of dramatic suicide attacks, managing a huge overseas fundraising network and lording over a third of Sri Lanka.

600 words 1130 GMT

We will also move: SriLanka-unrest,CHRONO

Have also moved: SriLanka-unrest-country,FACTS

-- ASIA --

India-vote,3rdlead-WRAP

NEW DELHI

India's Congress Party begins the task of forming a government after steering its ruling alliance to a second term in office with a resounding win over its Hindu nationalist rivals.

700 words 1200 GMT by Elizabeth Roche. Picture

Myanmar-politics-SuuKyi,lead-WRAP

YANGON

Myanmar pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi will protest her innocence when she goes on trial starting Monday, her party says as the ruling military junta frees her personal doctor from detention.

650 words 1130 GMT

We have also moved: Myanmar-politics-SuuKyi-ASEAN,lead-FOCUS

Pakistan-unrest,lead-WRAP

PESHAWAR, Pakistan

Pakistan's security forces say they are advancing into a key Taliban stronghold as they push on with a fierce offensive that has scattered more than a million terrified civilians.

650 words 1100 GMT

Taiwan-politics-demo-China,2ndlead

TAIPEI

The 1030 GMT News Advisory

Tens of thousands of protesters march through Taiwan's capital to protest against President Ma Ying-jeou's China-friendly policies, which they say have compromised the island's sovereignty.

650 words 1100 GMT by Benjamin Yeh. Picture

Health-flu-world,lead-WRAP

KOBE, Japan

Japan says that 20 more people have tested positive for swine flu, as senior health officials gather in Geneva for talks on how to contain the spread of the virus.

550 words 1100 GMT by Shingo Ito. Picture, graphic

We have also moved: Health-flu-Japan,SCENE

Malaysia-Somalia-piracy-shipping,ADVANCER

KUALA LUMPUR

International maritime experts, diplomats and security officials will meet here from Monday to map out ways to protect seafarers and the shipping industry from rampant piracy off Somalia's coast.

600 words moved by Romen Bose and M. Jegathesan

Entertainment-film-festival-Cannes-Asia

CANNES, France

Asia makes a splash at Cannes with films from Korea, Hong Kong and the Philippines in the spotlight.

500 words 1200 GMT by Claire Rosemberg. Picture. Video

-- MIDDLE EAST --

Kuwait-vote,lead

KUWAIT CITY

Four **women** win seats in the Kuwaiti parliament in an historic first as Islamist parties face a setback in the oil-rich Gulf state's second general election in a year.

700 words 1100 GMT by Omar Hasan. Picture

-- AMERICAS --

US-politics-Obama-abortion-protest,lead

CHICAGO

US President Barack Obama will wade into a longstanding political thicket Sunday when he speaks at a prestigious Catholic university where right-to-life protesters are gathering to oppose his support of abortion rights.

600 words 1030 GMT

US-space-astronomy-Hubble,lead

HOUSTON, Texas

The 1030 GMT News Advisory

US astronauts on Sunday will undertake a fourth in a series of five daily spacewalks intended to equip the 19-year-old Hubble Space Telescope for at least another five years of valuable scientific work.

650 words 1030 GMT by Mark Carreau

-- AFRICA --

Somalia-unrest,WRAP

MOGADISHU

Somali extremist rebels capture Jowhar, the hometown of beleaguered President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed in a major setback for the fledgling government forces scrambling to contain an insurgent onslaught.

600 words 1100 GMT by Mustafa Haji Abdinur

afp

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

End of Document

India 'complicit' in 20,000 Sri Lanka deaths; General accuses army of wanting to avenge Gandhi murder

The Times (London)

June 1, 2009 Monday

Edition 1

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THE TIMES

Section: NEWS; Pg. 3

Length: 737 words

Byline: Jeremy Page

Body

India was accused yesterday of complicity in the killing of an estimated 20,000 civilians in the last stages of Sri Lanka's 26-year war against the **Tamil Tigers**.

Major-General Ashok Mehta, a former commander of Indian peacekeeping forces in Sri Lanka, said that India's role was "distressing and disturbing". Two international human rights groups said that India had failed to do enough to protect civilian lives.

"We were complicit in this last phase of the offensive when a great number of civilians were killed," General Mehta, who is now retired, told The Times. "Having taken a decision to go along with the campaign, we went along with it all the way and ignored what was happening on the ground."

Despite being home to 60 million Tamils, India has provided Sri Lanka with military equipment, training and intelligence over the past three years, diplomatic sources told The Times. More controversially, it provided unwavering diplomatic support and failed to use its influence to negotiate a ceasefire for civilians to escape the front line, they said.

India joined a bloc led by China and Russia at a special session of the UN Human Rights Council last week to thwart a proposal for a war crimes inquiry, and instead supported a resolution praising Sri Lanka. In January India voted in favour of a war crimes inquiry into Israel's operation in the Gaza Strip, which killed an estimated 926 civilians.

General Mehta said that the Indian Government, led by the Congress Party, wanted to counterbalance China and Pakistan, its main regional rivals, which had each increased arms sales to Sri Lanka in the past few years. It also wanted to avenge the Tigers' assassination in 1991 of Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister and late husband of Sonia Gandhi, the current Congress leader, he said.

India 'complicit' in 20,000 Sri Lanka deaths General accuses army of wanting to avenge Gandhi murder

Brad Adams, Asia director of Human Rights Watch, said that neither reason justified failing to act when the Red Cross warned of an "unimaginable humanitarian catastrophe". India "could have saved many lives if it had taken a proactive position - and it would not have affected the outcome of the war," he said.

Sam Zarifi, Asia Pacific director of Amnesty International, said: "India ... simply chose to support the [Sri Lankan] Government's notion that it could kill as many civilians as it would take to defeat the Tigers."

India says that it provided Sri Lanka with non-lethal military equipment and sent officials repeatedly to persuade the Government to protect civilians. "We've consistently taken the line that the Sri Lankan Government should prevent civilian casualties," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

However, President Rajapaksa of Sri Lanka told NDTV: "I don't think I got any pressure from them. They knew that I'm fighting their war."

Mr Rajapaksa told The Week magazine that he planned to visit Delhi next month to thank Indian leaders. "India's moral support during the war was most important," he said.

Diplomats, human rights activists and analysts say that Delhi either did not use its full diplomatic force or, more likely, gave Colombo carte blanche to finish the war. India's only real concerns, they said, were that the conflict should not create a flood of refugees to India. Some raised questions about Vijay Nambiar, a former Indian diplomat, who is chief of staff to Ban Ki Moon, the UN SecretaryGeneral. The Times revealed last week that Mr Nambiar knew about but chose not to make public the UN's estimate that 20,000 civilians had been killed, mostly by army shelling.

Online

Pictures from the warzone timesonline.co.uk/asia

Changing face of Delhi's policy

1983 **Tamil Tigers** launch armed struggle for independent Tamil homeland. Indian intelligence covertly funds and trains them 1987 Rajiv Gandhi, India's Prime Minister, negotiates a truce and sends 10,000 Indian troops on a peacekeeping mission to Sri Lanka 1990 Indian troops withdraw after losing more than 1,200 men 1991 A **female** Tiger suicide bomber assassinates Rajiv Gandhi 1992 India bans Tigers as a terrorist organisation. It avoids selling lethal weapons to either side for 14 years 2006 President Rajapaksa of Sri Lanka visits Delhi and secures Indian approval for a new offensive 2006-08 India provides Sri Lanka with radar, one ship, military training and intelligence as China and Pakistan increase weapons sales to Colombo 2009 India joins an Asian bloc in supporting Sri Lanka at special session of UN Human Rights Council

Source: Times database

Graphic

India could have used its influence to enable Tamil civilians to escape the fighting, sources said

DAVID GRAY / REUTERS

Load-Date: June 1, 2009

Sri Lanka military helps 35,000 civilians flee

Associated Press International

April 20, 2009 Monday 6:07 PM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 709 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

A thick line of thousands of Sri Lankan civilians with only a handful of backpacks for belongings among them streamed out of the last sliver of land held by rebels on Monday. Video footage provided by the air force showed some fleeing to a nearby beach and others heading to a military-controlled area.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa called the exodus the "largest-ever hostage rescue mission in history." In a televised speech, he said the military had made the escape possible by opening up several new routes from the **Tamil Tigers'** last holdout.

But a pro-rebel Web site said hundreds of civilians were feared killed in the "total chaos" that prevailed when the soldiers entered the zone.

It is not possible to verify any of the claims because the war zone is restricted to journalists. Footage given to A.P. Television News by the air force showed an orderly exit.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said soldiers advanced into the zone and seized a fortification built by the rebels before rescuing the civilians.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the civilians' escape but said he was deeply concerned about those still trapped and "the potential for large-scale casualties," U.N. spokeswoman Marie Okabe said Monday at U.N. headquarters in New York.

"He deplores the continued use of heavy weapons in the vicinity of civilians, and the use of force by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in preventing the departure of civilians from the conflict zone," she said.

Ban also said the U.N. and other aid workers must be allowed into the area to help civilians.

U.S. State Department spokesman Robert Wood called the humanitarian situation "dire."

"We call on both the government and the **Tamil Tigers** to cease this violent activity, to protect civilians in the safe zones," Wood said.

The move by Sri Lanka's military came as the government warned the rebels it would launch a final assault in 24 hours and urged the rebels to surrender before noon on Tuesday. It also came just days after the military imposed a

Sri Lanka military helps 35,000 civilians flee

unilateral two-day cease-fire to encourage civilians to flee. Only a few hundred left at that time, prompting the government to renew accusations that the rebels were holding civilians against their will to use as human shields.

The charge was also levied by aid groups, though the rebels denied it. It was not possible to contact the rebels for comment.

The U.N. says 100,000 civilians are trapped in the war zone measuring only 7.7 square miles (20 square kilometers). The U.N. also estimates some 4,500 noncombatants have been killed in the last three months amid fierce fighting.

Footage shot by APTN showed men, women and small children resting on a beach in Puttumattalan, on the northeastern coast, after fleeing the war zone. The military estimated the vast majority of those who fled Monday more than 25,000 headed instead to a military-controlled area where they were being screened.

The U.N. and others have called for a negotiated cease-fire to allow the civilians to leave. The government has rejected such calls, saying it's on the verge of crushing the 25-year insurgency.

The government said Monday that rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and his fighters have 24 hours to surrender before a final assault one of many such promises that troops will soon end the conflict.

Defense spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella said the government's preferred option is to catch Prabhakaran alive and said the ultimatum was a final opportunity for the leader to end the conflict.

The rebels have refused previous calls for their surrender.

Rambukwella said the rebel leader's capture or death has now become "inevitable" because he will soon lose his civilian cover.

"He (Prabhakaran) doesn't have that option now," Rambukwella said. "Our first option is to capture him and bring him before the law."

In recent months the military has ousted the Tamil rebels from all their strongholds in an all-out offensive, forcing the rebels to retreat to the "no-fire" zone for a final stand.

The Tamil rebels have been fighting to create an independent homeland for ethnic minority Tamils, who have faced decades of marginalization by successive governments controlled by ethnic Sinhalese. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the violence.

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

Sri Lankan Separatists Ignore Surrender Deadline

Colombo Times

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 789 words

Body

Colombo, April 21 -- Tamil separatist fighters on Tuesday ignored a surrender ultimatum by the Sri Lankan government, heightening concerns for tens of thousands of civilians unable to flee a crumbling safe haven that has been the scene of fierce fighting in recent days.

The government said some 9,000 civilians fled the so-called no-fire zone on Tuesday, joining about 30,000 who escaped Monday when soldiers broke through earthen defenses built by the Tamil Tiger fighters.

Fighting continued Tuesday inside the zone, which is now the embattled rebels' last remaining sanctuary - a dwindling patch of lagoons, coconut groves and beachfront. An estimated 60,000 civilians remained trapped inside the zone on Tuesday.

"The situation is nothing short of catastrophic," said Pierre Krahenbuhl, director of operations for the International Committee of the Red Cross. And in a statement, the Red Cross said Tuesday it was "concerned that the final offensive in the area by government forces could lead to a dramatic increase in the number of civilian casualties." It was not possible to verify the on-the-ground situation because the government has prevented independent journalists and most relief agencies from reaching the area.

On Monday, the government issued an ultimatum to the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or L.T.T.E., demanding that the fighters lay down their arms and surrender by noon Tuesday.

That deadline passed without reply on Tuesday, nor were there comments on the pro-rebel Web site that the movement uses to issue its statements, official communiques and news reports.

Streams of civilians fled the safe zone Monday, and the Sri Lankan Defense Ministry called the exodus "the world's largest hostage rescue mission." State television in Sri Lanka broadcast a short video showing hundreds of men, women and children moving through an open area, some carrying large bundles.

Amid the rush, the government said, three Tamil Tiger suicide bombers detonated explosive vests, killing dozens of civilians.

The pro-rebel Web site confirmed the flight of the civilians, describing the situation as "total chaos." It also said Sri Lankan troops had struck the main hospital in the zone with rocket-propelled grenades, causing heavy civilian casualties.

But in an apparent acknowledgment of the army's breakthrough, which occurred Monday morning, the rebels petitioned for a truce on Monday afternoon.

"The L.T.T.E. would like to reiterate its commitment to a cease-fire without any preconditions, as urged by the U.S. and other members of the international community," a statement issued by the movement's political headquarters said.

Sri Lankan Separatists Ignore Surrender Deadline

"The L.T.T.E. urges the Sri Lankan government to stop its military actions, including shelling and bombing civilian areas, and accept the call of the United States and other members of the international community for a cease-fire, which we believe will create a conducive atmosphere for talks on all relevant issues."

The government said there would be no pause in its military operations and then issued the surrender ultimatum.

Sri Lankan troops have pressed the attack against the rebels over the past several months, backing them into a shrinking patch of swampland and coconut groves along the country's northeastern coast. The size of the rebel redoubt is said to be about six square miles.

Ethnic Tamil separatists have been battling the government off and on for 26 years, and an estimated 75,000 people have been killed in the violence. The United Nations said at least 4,500 civilians had been killed since the first of the year, with some 12,000 injured.

Most analysts in South Asia now believe the war to be in its final stages, at least in terms of standard warfare. Although the **Tamil Tigers** have shown great resilience as an insurgency, especially in their use of asymmetric tactics like suicide attacks, they have lost their principal bases of operations and nearly all of their capacity as a conventional military force.

The Red Cross said it had been able to extricate about 10,000 people on intermittent boatlifts from the no-fire zone in recent months, while an estimated 35,000 civilians had managed to escape overland to government-held areas. Almost all civilians escaping the zone have been questioned by the military and held in camps to ensure that escaping Tamil Tiger fighters were not trying to hide among the civilians.

The **Tamil Tigers** have been widely accused of holding civilians inside the zone to use as human shields.

Meanwhile, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and others have criticized the Sri Lankan government of shelling the no-fire zone that has taken a heavy toll on the civilian population.

Both sides deny the accusations.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

Rights groups write to Japan alleging abuses in Lanka

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

October 24, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 307 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Oct. 24 -- Japan's new administration should publicly press the Sri Lankan government to end the illegal detention of approximately 250,000 Tamil civilians, six Japanese and international human rights organizations said in a joint letter to Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, made public yesterday.

The groups said the new government should also urge Sri Lanka to ensure justice and accountability for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by government forces and the LTTE.

The groups urged Okada to take a principled position on rights and use Japan's unique influence as Sri Lanka's largest donor to protect civilians. While the fighting in Sri Lanka ended with the defeat of the LTTE in May 2009, the suffering of a quarter million detained civilians continues.

The letter was signed by the Women's Active Museum on War and Peace, Amnesty International, the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination (IMADR), the Nonviolent Peace force, Human Rights Watch, and Human Rights Now.

"Japan is in an excellent position to make its influence felt with Sri Lanka," said Kanae Doi, Tokyo director at Human Rights Watch. "The new government needs to make clear that it expects Sri Lanka to free the people locked up in the camps and pursue justice for the victims of the war years." The organizations said that, "There will be no reprieve and there will be no accountability unless Japan and others within the international community persistently demand it," and called on Japan to "press for the speedy establishment of an independent international investigation" and "take strong action" to end illegal detention of civilians. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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

Load-Date: October 24, 2009

1ST LEAD: Sri Lankan civilians flee rebel-held areas for second day

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

April 21, 2009 Tuesday 7:36 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 540 words

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts 1ST LEAD: Sri Lankan civilians flee rebel-held areas for second day
Eds: Adds expiration of surrender deadline =

Colombo (dpa) - Large numbers of civilians fled Tamil rebel-held areas in north-eastern Sri Lanka for a second consecutive day Tuesday, military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

He said the exact number of civilians who arrived from the rebel-held areas in Puthumathalan, 390 kilometres north-east of Colombo, were not known but people were continuing to arrive in military-controlled areas.

On Monday, a record 39,081 civilians fled the rebel-held area using land and sea routes, he said.

The military facilitated their escape by breaking through earthworks put up by the separatist rebels to prevent security forces from entering.

The civilians continued to come in from what the government said is the last remaining rebel-held territory in Sri Lanka as a government deadline for rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and his cadres to surrender ended at noon (0630 GMT).

Military officials said though there was no official reaction from the rebels, some of the rebels who had escaped with the civilians had surrendered to the security forces.

As many as 10,000 civilians entered government controlled areas since midnight Monday and more people were expected, military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Nanayakkara said irrespective of the deadline, troops were continuing operations to rescue civilians and clear the area of the

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) as soon as possible.

He said that according to available intelligence reports, Prabhakaran and his intelligence chief, Pottu Amman, were still in the area.

1ST LEAD: Sri Lankan civilians flee rebel-held areas for second day

Rebels are now confined to less than 12 square kilometres on the coast of the Mullaitivu district, which includes the Putumathalan area, a government-demarcated safe zone, officials said.

Before Monday's mass exodus, about 68,000 civilians had fled the rebel-held areas since January and were placed in welfare centres before resettlement.

The government has described the operation to get the civilians out of the rebel-held area as one of the biggest "hostage rescue operations" in the world because it accuses the rebels of preventing the civilians from fleeing.

It said three women suicide bombers on Monday blew themselves up in the Puthumathalan area, killing 17 civilians and injuring 200, while people trying to escape claimed they were fired upon by the rebels to prevent them from leaving.

The LTTE, however, has accused the government of firing on civilians in the safe zone and forcing them into government territory.

Independent verification of these claims was not possible because the government has blocked journalists from the war zone.

The military said it is in the last phase of a drive to crush the LTTE, which has been fighting for more than 25 years for a separate state for the Tamil ethnic minority in the northern and eastern parts of majority-Sinhalese Sri Lanka.

Government troops launched the operations to recapture rebel-held areas in August 2006, first recapturing all rebel territory in the east last year before concentrating their operations in the north.

Apr 2109 0736 GMT

Load-Date: April 22, 2009

End of Document

Woman ' from warrior to terrorist

Hindustan Times

July 22, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 1106 words

Dateline: Guwahati

Body

Guwahati, July 22 -- Men are physically stronger than women. Therefore men were dominant in agriculture-based feudal society. But in modern industry-based societies much of the physical work is done by machine. Women have proved their mettle in almost every field like software, journalism, medical, engineering, teaching or research. And they have become economically independent. Now what about the role of women as fighters or warriors? Throughout history, women have participated in national struggle for independence, in wars and more recently in terrorised attack. Some times they fought for national interest and sometimes they are involved in terrorised activities. The increasing role of women as fighters tends to change the traditional division of labour between sexes.

History gave us the evidence of women fighters who fought for national interest. The story of Lakshmibai and Razia Sultana are not only adventurous, but also romantic. During independence, Subhas Chandra Bose organised women as combatant in his Indian National Army. The Indian Armed Forces that was considered to be a male dominated workplace, now has confident and bold women. Wars in modern times are not fought with swords and spears, which require physical strength, but with sophisticated aircraft, mechanised weapons and computers. Till 1992, the role of women in armed forces was limited to the medical field, but now they can join as regular commissioned officers. More recently, on February 2009, Suman Sarmah, daughter of a retired Indian Naval officer became the world's first woman to fly the mighty Russian MiG 35 fighter jet at the Aero India International air show in Bangalore. Suman however is hopeful that the IAF would change its role sooner to allow women pilots to fly fighters in light of a recent proposal to recruit about 800 women pilots to commissioned officers in combat flying. On the other hand in the terror world, women have been involved in direct attack equipped with arms and weapons for a long time. The violence and romance created by 'Bandit Queen' Putli Bai in the pre-independence era thrilled us everyone. Probably she followed that path as a legacy of the past. They were exploited and misbehaved by the upper class of the society. Their sole aim was to take revenge. In the same chain, another oppressed girl Phoolan Devi established herself as 'Bandit Queen', who took part in active politics later on. However, modern terrorism differs from that of the past and terrorist outfits have become very powerful beyond our imagination on sound monetary basis. These outfit not only lured men, but women from different types of society. The unjustified behaviour and brutality towards women have turned women into rebels and joined in terrorist group. The cruelty of war hit them indirectly also which has made them widow, half widows of the disappeared, orphaned etc. Security personnel often use 'rape' as a weapon of war. In India women were visible in organized crime and terrorism during the Naxal movement (1967) only. And they still take part in terrorised attack armed with weapons, especially in Central India. Khalistani activities saw a handful of females as active players. In 1989-90, the spirit of Azadi swept over the entire Kashmir Valley, women were visible everywhere as militants. Mothers, wives and daughters in 'Burquas' came pouring out into streets, protesting and lamenting. The symbol of the militant Kashmiri women was Asiyah Andrabi ' the leader of the Dukhtarane militant (Daughter of Faith). Another women militant organisation

Woman ' from warrior to terrorist

was Muslim Khawateen Markaz (council of Muslim Women, MKM). In POK (Pak occupied Kashmir) girls are being trained in the handling of weapons, explosives, jungle warfare and sabotage activities. Women are provided with terror literature and taught how to use small arms like guns and grenades. Some of them are suicide bombers and some of them are knife-wielding attackers. For example one third of the members of the Sri Lankan Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) are women. This again reminds us the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991. Not to speak of that on February 9, 2009 a female Tamil Tiger bomber killed 28 people, including 20 Sri Lankan soldiers, and wounded 60 others when she blew herself up at a checkpoint. The Tamil Tigers have been fighting since 1983 for a separate State for the nation's ethnic Tamil minority after decades of marginalisation at the hands of governments controlled by the Sinhalese majority. More recently terrorist activities in NER have brought forth the active involvement of women in planning and execution of such operation. Women in NER enjoy more liberty in comparison with other States of India. Most of them are educated. But economic backwardness, poverty and unemployment situation compelled them to join in the outlawed terrorist group. These groups recruited young girls of poor families especially from lower Assam and send them to the training camp situated in the dark jungle of Myanmar, Bhutan etc. In the global arena, women terrorist of Arab countries created havoc in the crime world. Arabian societies are based on the principles of collectivity and tribalism. Their society is not individualistic and the good of the individual are assured by the group to which she belongs. In these collective groups, men are higher in social hierarchies than women and children, who are at the bottom of the ladder. Women in Arabian societies are doubly oppressed, suffering from both political and gender oppression. Gender oppression from which women suffer are forced marriage, multiple wives, restriction on movement and contact with members of opposite sex and, being considered as child bearing machines, have turned women into terrorists. Studies reveal that women are more militant, more organised and more unionised. Therefore to handle such organised female groups a competent women force is needed. We should incorporate more women in our intelligence fields that might more stealthily get behind enemy lines to gather information. Women should come forward to join the para-military organisations as combatants. The warfare technique has undergone a sea change from the brutal hand to hand combat to sophisticated form of electronic warfare. But women officers are excelling in their field of duty and it has been proven scientifically that women can handle stress better and are mentally tougher, which is a vital ingredient for sustained electronic warfare. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Assam Tribune. For more information on news feed please contact Surit Das at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: July 24, 2009

ROUNDUP: Rebels allege heavy civilian casualties in Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
May 10, 2009 Sunday 11:55 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 557 words

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts ROUNDUP: Rebels allege heavy civilian casualties in Sri Lanka
Eds; adds quote from rebel statement and medical doctor =

Colombo (dpa) - Tamil rebels Sunday accused the military of firing into a government-demarcated safety zone in north-eastern Sri Lanka, killing over 2,000 civilians during the past 24 hours, but the military rejected the accusation.

S. Pathmanathan, the head of international relations for the Tamil rebels, claimed that bombardment by military planes and shelling was taking place in densely populated areas in the north east of the country.

The Tamil people were dismayed that the United Nations and the international community had failed in their obligations to protect the endangered civilians, Pathmanathan said in a statement posted on the pro-rebel Tamilnet website.

A medical doctor based in the area living under rebel control confirmed heavy fighting since Saturday evening and said he could hear exchanges of artillery in the Karaiyamullivaikal area, 395 kilometres north-east of the capital.

The doctor, Veerachchami Shanmuagaraja, told the German Press Agency dpa by telephone that 257 bodies had been brought to the makeshift hospital where he was based.

He said over 800 wounded persons had also been brought, but he lacked the medicine to treat them at the makeshift hospital which was put up in a school.

He said that among those killed were women and children, but was not in a position to confirm that all the bodies were of civilians.

The doctor said that he would have to await the arrival of the ICRC chartered ship to evacuate the injured. But the time of the ship's arrival was not known immediately. The last time the ship evacuated over 500 injured and ill persons and their bystanders was Saturday.

ROUNDUP: Rebels allege heavy civilian casualties in Sri Lanka

Chief military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara denied the pro-rebel media reports and said 700 civilians were rescued by the army and brought into government-controlled areas on Sunday.

He said that the security forces had not fired into the safety zone which has been demarcated for civilians to gather in order to facilitate the rescue operations carried out by the security forces.

The Defence Ministry in a separate report said heavy combat took place amid stiff resistance against advancing troops, but that troops were able to breach the rebel defences and inflict heavy damage. But it did not mention any casualty figures.

"Intercepting LTTE (rebel) communication channels, Electronic

Warfare sources confirmed that numbers of LTTE terrorists were killed during the fighting while many received injuries," it said.

The government also redefined an area known as the safety zone to enable civilians to gather before launching rescue operations.

The zone is limited to about three square kilometers, out of an area of six square kilometers which the rebels and civilians are confined to.

According to military sources the government was set to step up military operations to rescue some 20,000 civilians held in the area and crush the rebels.

However, UN agencies say the number of civilians trapped in the area may be over 50,000.

The military says it is in the final phase of defeating the

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who have been fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the north and eastern parts of the country.

May 1009 1155 GMT

Load-Date: May 11, 2009

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Futile attempt to tarnish image of Sri Lanka

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

September 9, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 505 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Sept. 9 -- The Channel 4 affair, the telecast of a doctored video clip showing some persons being executed by persons the video clip telecasters claim were members of the Sri Lanka Armed Forces killing civilians is a typical example of the 'holier than thou' attitude of most people and even Governments of the West. The video footage had now been challenged not only by the Sri Lanka Government but also by Sri Lankans living in the UK who staged a demonstration opposite the Channel 4 TV station in London calling it a bogus news service.

Erik Solhiem was quick to make a statement on the telecast to support the wild allegation against Sri Lanka and it reminds one of an ancient adage among Sri Lankans, 'Horage Ammagen Pena Ahanawa' that a person who had lost some valuables had gone to the rogue's mother for seance to find the culprit! Norway's role in trying to bolster the bloodthirsty **LTTE** as is well known does not need further comment as Solhiem was the main player in the latter day version of Hamlet staged in Sri Lanka till its villain was slain.

There was always these holier than thou political figures of the West who had always attempted to tarnish the image of Sri Lanka when it was being attacked by the most ruthless terrorist group, the **LTTE** and the UK was at one time interested in sending their special envoy to learn about the human rights situation here. But most countries in the West, though not all are still guilty of sending in their troops to Third World countries like Vietnam, Afghanistan or Iraq where their human rights records to use a euphemism were shameful.

Most of the Western media, it is no secret are prejudiced against all countries who wish to resolve their problems by themselves without leaning on the shoulders of the powerful Western nations or looking for the prescription of their brand of governance or human rights.

The Channel 4 pundits need a mild reminder that most of the human rights violations, or annihilation of entire villages, with **women**, children and infants like the Mai Lai massacre in Vietnam or the killings of civilians in Iraq or Afghanistan may not have crossed the minds of the Channel 4 managers when they telecast the phony video clip that is now being found a fake. That being so a very vital question has to be raised about the intent of the TV station and its integrity.

Were the same human rights issues brought up when former US President George W. Bush invaded Iraq on a bogus mission of finding 'weapons of mass destruction' in that country?

The least that could be said about Channel 4's unauthenticated video clip is that it is a shame that the mass media was being used for unethical purposes by some elements who may be the sympathizers of the vanquished **LTTE** terrorist group who held the worst record of human rights violations in the present era. - A humane voice Published

Futile attempt to tarnish image of Sri Lanka

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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: September 9, 2009

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Practice what you preach!

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

May 10, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 964 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 10 -- Over the past few years, several countries, INGOs and UN bodies have expressed concern over civilian casualties during Sri Lanka's relentless battle against terrorism.

Influenced perhaps by the false propaganda of the LTTE or the organised campaigns by the Tamil Diaspora in those countries, a section of the international community has intensified their campaign calling for a ceasefire in Sri Lanka. Knowing only too well that they are on their last legs, the Tigers are projecting the civilians' issue and the humanitarian aspect to win international sympathy. They have succeeded to a great extent, judging by the international pressure that has been mounting and the numerous calls for a ceasefire. The Tigers even cooked up stories on the air raids to slow down the current humanitarian operation to rescue innocent civilians.

Some countries seem to be going that extra mile to shield terrorist leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and his remaining cadres. This may be the reason behind the recent calls for a ceasefire, proposal to hand over Prabhakaran to a third party and a general amnesty to the LTTE terror outfit, regardless of the ruthless acts of the Tigers during the past three decades. The Security Forces are making every attempt to maintain zero civilian casualty rates and have earned a name as the most disciplined army in the world. They have made every endeavour to rescue civilians from the jaws of the Tigers through various humanitarian missions. However, the LTTE's propaganda wing and a section of the international media are concocting stories to tarnish the image of our valiant soldiers and project a gloomy picture on the earlier successful air raids before the No Fire Zone was declared. But what have those people, who have been preaching to us on the safety of civilians and shedding crocodile tears on the sufferings of civilians held by the LTTE, done in Afghanistan? The tragic irony is that those who advocate peace talks with the LTTE don't adopt the same policy on Al-Qaeda. Has the definition for terrorism been changed when it comes from the West to this part of the globe? Last week's US air raids in Afghanistan killed over 100 civilians, including children and women. But lo and behold there were hardly any 'concerns' by INGOs or the international community. None of the human rights organisations which issues a plethora of statements on the situation in Sri Lanka, have barely uttered a word on the bombings in Afghanistan. The Pentagon has made a solemn promise to launch a joint investigation with the Afghan government into Monday night's deadly US air strikes. Officials in Afghanistan have estimated that around 100 civilians died in the attack on Bala Baluk, a Taliban-controlled area in Farah Province near the border with Iran. If confirmed, it could be one of the highest civilian death tolls since the US-backed invasion in 2001. According to media reports, villagers brought truckloads of bodies, most of them women and children, to the provincial capital. Unconfirmed reports said children, women and the elderly had gone to the village of Gerani to escape fighting between the Taliban and the Afghan National Army (ANA) but the compounds where they took shelter had been bombed. A similar US bombing raid in August last year in Azizabad killed 90 civilians, though the officials had originally said no civilians died. Though it later issued a directive intended to reduce the chances of similar mass civilian deaths, a similar mass scale aerial bombing on a civilian target took place again. Media reports said Afghan President, Hamid Karzai had criticised the US bombing raids as counter-productive, and called on the

Practice what you preach!

US for restraint in bombing areas where civilians might be at risk. The random US bombardment in Afghanistan, conducted from time to time, has led to catastrophic results as statistics show that over 2,000 civilians had been killed last year alone. We are at a loss to understand the deaf and blind role played by some international human rights organisations, INGOs and the so-called champions of democracy and human rights? Are these double standards - one for the West and another for the East? Human rights' violations and civilian casualties is certainly a matter of concern for one and all. This is precisely why the Sri Lankan Government and its Security Forces are making every endeavour to rescue innocent civilians from the clutches of the terrorists. The Security Forces have been conducting humanitarian operations in the North with the utmost care and respect for civilians. Terrorism in any part of the world should be defeated at any cost. There is no gainsaying it. Following the 9/11 attack in the US, the global opinion against terrorism reached new heights. We wholeheartedly support the initiative of the United States and Great Britain to counter international terrorism. The same policy should be extended to any country where terrorism exists. It is well worth reiterating what President Mahinda Rajapaksa emphasised at the UN General Assembly in 2007, "Terrorism in any part of the world is terrorism and should be defeat in equal fashion. There are no good terrorists and bad terrorists". The end result of terrorism anywhere in the world is identical as terrorism leashed only agony for civilians. Hence, there should be unified world opinion against terrorism. No mercy whatsoever should be shown to terrorists. No country should turn a Nelsonian eye to terrorism and they must support each other to eradicate terrorism. The world's superpowers could play a vital role to put a permanent end to end terrorism by making a concerted global effort to eradicate terrorism once and for all. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Load-Date: May 11, 2009

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Victory through commitment, Professionalism and sacrifice

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

September 30, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 848 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Sept. 30 -- With the unprecedented victory achieved by the Security Forces against the most ruthless terror outfit in the world in May this year, the Sri Lanka Army is set to celebrate its 60th anniversary that falls on October 10, under the theme 'Victory Through Commitment, Dedication, Sacrifice and Professionalism' in a series of programs organized throughout the month of October.

At a recent press conference held at the Army Headquarters to announce the series of programs organised to mark the 60th anniversary celebrations, the Chief of Staff of the Sri Lanka Army Major General Mendaka Samarasinghe who is also the Chairman, Steering Committee of the 60th Anniversary Celebrations said multifarious activities have been organized to Mark This Unique Event.

"The 60th Anniversary falls at a time the entire world looks at the Sri Lanka Army with admiration and respect particularly in the aftermath of the elimination of the scourge of **LTTE** terrorism that affected the entire fabric of our society and the region", Major General Samarasinghe added.

According to the scheduled program for the 60th anniversary celebrations the ceremonies are to be spearheaded at Anuradhapura Jaya Sri Maha Bo dhi, on October 2.

"At this ceremony all the flags of the Army units will be blessed after keeping them at the sacred Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi precincts in Anuradhapura on October 2, and it will be attended by Atamasthanadhipathi, Members of the Maha Sangha and senior Army officers", he added.

The Army is composed of six Security Forces Headquarters, 14 Divisions, six Task Force Headquarters, 64-four Brigades, seven Area Headquarters, two Sub Area Headquarters, 23 Regiments and 265 Battalions.

The mega exhibition to be held from October 3 to 7 will be the centre of attraction of the general public of the country and expected to draw an average of 100,000 spectators per day. The mega exhibition will display captured **LTTE** equipment, arms and ammunition, **LTTE** suicide boats and submarines, model operations that started from Mavil Aru and ended in Puthumattalan, Army's participatory roles in disaster management, humanitarian work and many other spheres of Army involvements. On all five days of the Exhibition, separate entertaining musical programs and firework displays have also been scheduled, providing entertainment to the public.

"It is open to the public from 10.00 a.m to 10.00 p.m each day and the entrance ticket is priced at Rs.50", Major General Samarasinghe added.

According to organizing committee the school children attending the exhibition will be given half priced tickets under special arrangements.

Victory through commitment, Professionalism and sacrifice

The BMICH premises is now busy with all Army regiments making their final arrangements for the display of weapons and exhibition stalls.

"It will not be a showcase of achievement of the SLA but will be an event to encourage the youth of this country to join the SLA as a career and noble profession in the future", Major General Samarasinghe added.

Special traffic arrangements and security arrangements will be in place in and around the BMICH during the exhibition.

On the date the Sri Lanka Army celebrates its 60th anniversary the ceremonial parade will be accorded to at the Army Headquarters.

On October 12, the Sri Lanka Army will accord a ceremonial parade to its most senior officer, Chief of Defence Staff General Sarath Fonseka who led the Sri Lanka Army to achieve that unprecedented victory against the LTTE.

The Army Tattoo, the final and one of the most thrilling and important phases of the whole program is to begin on 17th October 2009 and will continue till 23rd at Kettarama Stadium, Colombo.

It will highlight Army heroism, gallantry, acrobatics and an assortment of undisputed skills of the Army that have now reached international standards in professionalism.

Speedy fixing of vehicles and instant construction of temporary bridges, Special skill show of elite Commando units and Special Forces, inclusive of obstacle crossings, dog shows, model simulation attacks, parachute jumps, cultural shows, women's corps display.

The Tattoo will be open from 5.30 to 10.00 pm on all seven days and tickets for this mega event will be available at Cargills Food City outlets islandwide.

Highlights of the Sri Lanka Army 60th anniversary celebrations

October 02 - The flag blessing ceremony at the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi in Anuradhapura.

October 05 - Islamic Religious observances at Davatagaha Jumma Mosque

October 06 - Hindu Religious observances at Sri Bala Selvanayagama Moorthi Kovil, Maradana

October 07 - Christian service at Cathedral of Christ the Living Saviour in Colombo 7

October 03 to October 07 - Army Exhibition at the BMICH

October 10 - Army Day Military Parade

October 10 - All night Pirith chanting ceremony at Sri Bodhirajaramaya, Panagoda

October 12 - Ceremonial parade to Chief of Defence Staff at Army Headquarters

October 17 to October 23 - Army Tattoo - Kettarama Stadium Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: September 30, 2009

Victory through commitment, Professionalism and sacrifice

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ROUNDUP: Divisions on Sri Lanka at UN while aid restricted =

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

May 26, 2009 Tuesday 5:18 PM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 588 words

Dateline: Geneva

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts UN ROUNDUP: Divisions on Sri Lanka at UN while aid restricted = Geneva
The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights called Tuesday for an independent investigation into abuses during the fighting between government forces and Tamil Tiger rebels in Sri Lanka.

"The images of terrified and emaciated women, men and children fleeing the battle zone ought to be etched in our collective memory. They must spur us into action," Navi Pillay said via a video message to the Human Rights Council which opened a special session on Sri Lanka.

"An independent and credible international investigation into recent events should be dispatched" to the island, she said.

So far, two resolutions have been tabled by council members, neither of which calls for such an investigation.

One, from Sri Lanka itself, commends the government's handling of internally displaced people (IDPs) and its cooperation with UN humanitarian agencies, while asking for international development assistance.

A second one was drafted by Switzerland and supported by a bloc of mostly European Union states, along with others including Ukraine and South Korea. It calls on Sri Lanka to investigate allegations of rights violations, to grant full access to aid groups and to integrate the Tamil minority.

The UN has said its aid workers do not have unhindered access to camps for the nearly 300,000 internally displaced people.

Rajiva Wijesinha, of the Sri Lankan Ministry of Disaster Relief and Human Rights, said earlier Tuesday that aid workers were being restricted access to the camps as they refused to use bicycles as their means of transport instead of "luxury vehicles."

Aid workers said they could not deliver much needed food and

ROUNDUP: Divisions on Sri Lanka at UN while aid restricted =

medical aid without their cars.

The session was set to continue on Wednesday. The two opposing camps agreed, diplomats said, to meet Tuesday evening and try to hammer out a middle-way between the first two texts.

Some suggested the final resolution focus more on long-standing human rights issues in Sri Lanka, such as post-conflict resolution, integration of the minority and the killings of journalists, rather than issues specific to the years of fighting.

At the opening of the session, the president of the council, Martin Ihoeghian Uhomobhi, said the purpose of the meeting was to "address the most urgent humanitarian and human rights challenges facing" the government and people of Sri Lanka.

The session was called for by a largely Western-bloc of nations, headed by Germany.

Sri Lanka has called the nations who backed the session "colonialists." Its officials have said the country should not be criticized for how it dealt with "terrorists," referring to the

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

UN estimates say between 80,000 and 100,000 people were killed in Sri Lanka over the last 25 years of civil strife.

Human rights groups and UN officials have estimated some 8,000

civilians were killed in the LTTE's last stronghold during their final stand against approaching government forces.

The LTTE have been accused of stopping civilians from fleeing the conflict zone, while the government has allegedly used heavy weaponry against dense civilian areas during the final months of the military campaign.

Both sides have also been accused of numerous rights violations over the years, including the targeting of civilians.

Last week, the government declared victory over the Tigers after taking their last stretch of land and killing or detaining the group's leaders.

May 2609 1718 GMT

Load-Date: May 27, 2009

End of Document

Tigers hounding out colonists?

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

June 27, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 296 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, June 27 -- The Security Forces, hard on the heels of the LTTE terrorists responsible for Saturday's landmine at Arawanthalawa, in the Vavuniya district, which killed seventeen persons including women and children, are convinced that the attack is part of an effort directed against Sinhala colonists in the area.

"They are trying to get Sinhala villagers out of these remote farming settlements. The victims are inevitably very poor people," a spokesman said. An investigation is underway to determine how strict rules governing the movement of troops in the troubled areas had been breached at Arawanthalawa in the Vavuniya district on Saturday when a terrorist landmine claimed seventeen lives. The dead included 7 army volunteers, 4 members of the national auxiliary force and six civilians. Authoritative official sources said yesterday that where a vehicle or vehicles had to be used for movement, not more than four persons should ride a truck. Thus rule had been clearly breached. "The civilian can't be blamed for joining the forces. But we've got to find out how the rules were breached," the sources said. The authorities believe that a Mannar-based hit squad had taken a 40-mile jungle route to lay their landmine ambush. Troops from several camps in the area were deployed for a search-and-destroy operation following information that there was an LTTE hideout in the area. Our Anuradhapura correspondent reported yesterday that a 3-day-old child had miraculously survived the attack. One of the dead civilians, a woman whose head had been blasted off her trunk, had not been identified. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: June 27, 2009

Rights groups write to Japan alleging abuses in Sri Lanka

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

October 23, 2009 Friday

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Length: 306 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Oct. 23 -- Japan's new administration should publicly press the Sri Lankan government to end the illegal detention of approximately 250,000 Tamil civilians, six Japanese and international human rights organizations said in a joint letter to Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, made public today.

The groups said the new government should also urge Sri Lanka to ensure justice and accountability for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by government forces and the LTTE.

The groups urged Okada to take a principled position on rights and use Japan's unique influence as Sri Lanka's largest donor to protect civilians. While the fighting in Sri Lanka ended with the defeat of the LTTE in May 2009, the suffering of a quarter million detained civilians continues. The letter was signed by the Women's Active Museum on War and Peace, Amnesty International, the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination (IMADR), the Nonviolent Peaceforce, Human Rights Watch, and Human Rights Now.

"Japan is in an excellent position to make its influence felt with Sri Lanka," said Kanae Doi, Tokyo director at Human Rights Watch. "The new government needs to make clear that it expects Sri Lanka to free the people locked up in the camps and pursue justice for the victims of the war years."

The organizations said that, "There will be no reprieve and there will be no accountability unless Japan and others within the international community persistently demand it," and called on Japan to "press for the speedy establishment of an independent international investigation" and "take strong action" to end illegal detention of civilians. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: October 23, 2009

A long, long wait for Sri Lanka's IDPs

New Straits Times (Malaysia)

September 18, 2009 Friday

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Section: Pg. 19; LOCAL

Length: 317 words

Byline: M.D.

Body

A GOOGLE search on "IDP camps Sri Lanka" reveals a human tragedy with appalling conditions of acute deprivation and hardship suffered by "internally displaced persons" detained against their will in overcrowded and squalid detention camps.

Each day, there are interminably long queues for water, food, medical attention and even for the use of toilets.

There is widespread malnutrition (with 40 per cent of the children malnourished) and a high incidence of infectious diseases (particularly diarrhoea and skin infections).

There are no lists - no central register of displaced people or camp inmates. Family members are split and kept in different camps.

There are no up-to-date public records of the hospitals the sick and injured have been transferred to and no certainty as to whether those taken for screening or those discharged from hospitals will be sent back to the same camp they came from or to other camps.

Men, women and children stand inside barbed wire fences staring out for hours, hoping their relatives will come looking for them. On the other side across the road, stand others who have come to look for their relatives.

It defies logic why these unfortunate civilians - numbering nearly 300,000, ranging from newborns to those in their 80s - continue to be detained four months after the conflict with the Tamil Tigers came to an end in mid-May.

The government justifies the existence of these camps on the grounds that it needed to ensure that any militants mixed with the civilians should be removed and promised that the civilians would be settled in their villages within 180 days.

Four months is surely enough time to screen for militants and start the resettlement process so that all the inmates can be resettled in their own villages or, if their homes have been destroyed, allowed to stay with relatives or friends while awaiting resettlement to new permanent housing.

M.D.

Kuala Lumpur

A long, long wait for Sri Lanka 's IDPs

Load-Date: September 17, 2009

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UAE: Thousands freed

Right Vision News

November 24, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 291 words

Dateline: Pakistan

Body

Pakistan, Nov. 24 -- Sri Lanka has released more than half of the thousands of displaced civilians held in government camps after the end of the country's ethnic conflict earlier this year, a minister has said. "We feel the security situation has eased considerably now to allow people to return to their homes," Human Rights minister Mahinda Samarasinghe said on Friday. He said 136,328 men, women and children still remained inside camps across the island's north, down from some 280,000 at the end of the fighting in May with the defeat of the Tamil Tigers. A batch of 41,000 people were allowed to leave the camps in October, making it the biggest single release of war displaced people held in camps, according to the latest official figures. "While I am fully aware of the undesirability of keeping civilians in camps unnecessarily for long periods, the government is not convinced that it is good policy to rush them into areas that have not been fully cleared," he said. He added over 1.5 million mines need to be cleared and basic infrastructure needs to be in place to allow returnees to resume their normal lives. "Be patient, we will get most of the people home by the end of January next year," he said. On Thursday, UN under-secretary general for humanitarian affairs, John Holmes stepped up pressure on Colombo to free civilians held in internment camps and urged the government to improve their conditions. "Months after the conflict ended, our main concerns haven't changed. People are still not given free access to leave these camps on their own free will," Holmes said.

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Load-Date: November 24, 2009

UAE: Thousands freed

Right Vision News

November 24, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 291 words

Dateline: Pakistan

Body

Pakistan, Nov. 24 -- Sri Lanka has released more than half of the thousands of displaced civilians held in government camps after the end of the country's ethnic conflict earlier this year, a minister has said. "We feel the security situation has eased considerably now to allow people to return to their homes," Human Rights minister Mahinda Samarasinghe said on Friday. He said 136,328 men, women and children still remained inside camps across the island's north, down from some 280,000 at the end of the fighting in May with the defeat of the Tamil Tigers. A batch of 41,000 people were allowed to leave the camps in October, making it the biggest single release of war displaced people held in camps, according to the latest official figures. "While I am fully aware of the undesirability of keeping civilians in camps unnecessarily for long periods, the government is not convinced that it is good policy to rush them into areas that have not been fully cleared," he said. He added over 1.5 million mines need to be cleared and basic infrastructure needs to be in place to allow returnees to resume their normal lives. "Be patient, we will get most of the people home by the end of January next year," he said. On Thursday, UN under-secretary general for humanitarian affairs, John Holmes stepped up pressure on Colombo to free civilians held in internment camps and urged the government to improve their conditions. "Months after the conflict ended, our main concerns haven't changed. People are still not given free access to leave these camps on their own free will," Holmes said.

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Load-Date: November 24, 2009

Tigers take the West for a ride

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

May 17, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 1645 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 17 -- Previous governments in Sri Lanka failed to take notice and act in a responsible manner in the interest of our nation to counter false propaganda and overseas fund raising activities some 20 or 25 yrs ago which could have weakened, prevented or stopped , this war being escalated to these proportions.

It is better to understand the core of the problem we are faced with. A war cannot proceed without expenditure, therefore funds are the most important asset that could play a decisive role in any form of conflict. There is a general belief that the west, importantly the USA and UK would support this cause. But not quite true. They understand terrorism prevailing in Afghanistan and Pakistan are quite different to what prevails in Sri Lanka. Firstly we are not fighting a war against a foreign power. That could be totally devastating and complicated. We are fighting against a ruthless ethnic guerrilla group who wants a separate state within our own country. If the LTTE and the Tamil diaspora believes carving out a separate state within the sovereignty of our country is the only way to satisfy the minorities are quite equal as majority, this cannot be fulfilled under the provisions of the existing legal frame work of our constitution. People of this country going to rejoice about a government decision to take action to counter LTTE's false propaganda work. They will certainly appreciate this decision taken for the best advantage of the country. However not for immediate benefit of that or this politician or party. False propaganda by the LTTE is not a new threat, its been there for decades. Its heartening to see this Government had the vision to size up the menace of this "Unscrupulous mongrel" who is not prevented by scruples of conscience which financed decades of this ruthless war against a democratically elected government. With all the experience in the past with the terrorists previous Presidents and Prime Ministers kept repeating the same mistakes in a sense hitting their heads against a wall built by the terrorists wondering why the wall remains while their heads were hurting ! We need to convince the international community that this Government took every conceivable effort to avoid this war now concluded by adding a jewel to their crown. But those efforts made earlier by the Government were considered too lightly by the LTTE as a weakness of the Government. We won't forget those carnages they staged brazenly which depicted their sheer brutality leaving behind scenes of their invincibility. With these set of feelings that influenced their behaviour on the back of their heads deceived successive governments saying that they wanted peace and willing to negotiate only to betray and attack the Armed Forces. This Government is mindful of what went on in the past and what's going on and be able to convince the international community. Now the Armed Forces uncovered LTTE's top brass luxury living styles up in the Vanni region. Whereas the international community was told those contributions which they made directly went into a charity and it will be used for women and childrens homes but instead of benefiting from their charitable contributions ended up in warfare. LTTE are extremely good at circulating false publicity intended to persuade and convince the international community. Most of the present generation of Tamil diaspora are either born in Europe or accompanied their parents to settle down in European countries. Badly brainwashed from their childhood with wrong beliefs about Sri Lanka which they received as training and education and mentally elevating those influences as they grow older. These beliefs although held, fully knowing the Sri Lanka

Tigers take the West for a ride

government is not against all Tamils, but when it comes to false propaganda the sinister intentions changes according to their faceless deceiving methods and successfully use evil misconceptions among European nations, putting pressure on their local MP's. Isn't this exactly what's happening right at this moment, is this the root and core of the problem we are faced with ? Additionally the Tamil diaspora is a force to be reckoned with, while most of our Sri Lankan associations, Societies and right groups are scattered all over the world needs to be incorporated into one voice where false propaganda and fund raising matters are concerned, we need to show our solidarity, tolerance and our unwavering quest to put the records straight. But now Sri Lanka has to make a conscious decision, we can therefore distinguish between three situations. In the first situation Sri Lanka had got rid of terrorism successfully led by a conscientious leader who applies his theories of principles rigidly against terrorism, an example to other leaders. This impossible task he took like no other, was prepared to put his political survival on the line. It was a feat never equaled by any European or Asian country. Then the Government's capability shut down front organizations fakely operated during the tenure of various past presidents under the guise of charitable organisations. In the second situation we need to continue with the same political leadership to continue without "Breaking the Momentum" and continuity. In the third situation the worst was over and we need to move on, we need to understand how the world community who had been mislead, now look at us with the latest achievement. Despite with unconfirmed beliefs, in terms of being a safe and friendly nation, to deal with, tourists who visit our country will no doubt would harbour those misgivings and feelings need to be explained without putting down the extremists. We, peace loving people of this country really expected the war would go on dragging its feet indefinitely - but to our surprise peaceful transformation was made possible by the government & the Armed Forces. Although the war came to an end does not mean false propaganda will ease, as a matter of fact this problem will be doubled or trebled. There will be more resurgent efforts to nullify and disprove pictures of Sri Lanka. Fresh efforts would emerge to resurrect their crumbled deceitful campaign. As a result our image will be distorted and sullied to affect our tourist industry and our creditworthiness, which will have a bad impact on our economy. We need to find fresh solutions to overcome these barriers. Have to find the most cost effective method to operate from Sri Lanka and now lets see what those options are. The most cost effective method to counter false propaganda would be to obtain the services of our already established Sri Lanka Right Groups, Associations and Societies. These organisations could work with the Sri Lanka Diplomatic missions. This substantial coming together would help us to understand more about the way in which our drive should proceed according to conditions prevailing in those countries avoiding unnecessary time consuming procedures. As these members & their community leaders have been already domiciled and work live with our adversaries, they could play a role avoiding unfavourable elements and only bring harmless inexpensive methods so that this drive become a success. In short they say "Horses for courses" and the "Best way to Advertise is by mouth! President Mahinda Rajapaksa's popularity among Sri Lankans abroad will raise this profile of this push for greater support from these communities. In UK and Canada joining a rally or an organization constitute a human right, the home country cannot blame one political party or the Government specially both institutions are represented at these events, which means they do not know which way to go, which one to believe. The **LTTE** are masters of deceiving international community and knows ways to achieve their aims by using cleverly contrived misinterpretations about Sri Lanka. They can instill damage, injury and tarnish Sri Lanka's image and reduce our "value" as a safe and friendly tourist destination or simply paint the town in red the Sri Lanka Government committing human rights violations. The onus of power sharing resting purely on the people whom they elect as their leaders. In the meanwhile there has been continual interpretation as to how power sharing that will ensure justice to all communities. Basically the power sharing to operate in Sri Lanka rested on a number of notions which became increasingly harder to justify. It must be remembered whilst the British took steps towards granting independence, it also refrained or stop short from any important steps of unifying most of the power sharing with any particular ethnic group or any profound reforms in the legal structure of that transition. The British was essentially handing back our country which they took from us and consolidated those measures. The government and the experts with the help of leaders of different ethnic groups are presently looking at this problem and lets hope, people of these country become victorious and contented, their aspirations and earners desires are fulfilled at least according to international standards and norms. Precisely it must be fair and correct in every sense that Sri Lanka government and it's people are a society which accepted superior beliefs and values of life based on our religions are a better society ; because we care about our minority ethnic groups ; they are our own people, they belong to us ; it is now up to these groups to evaluate whether they would get their aspirations fulfilled in accordance with the existing democracies in the world, a government by all the people favouring democracy. There is no doubt that many of these values and beliefs are held by our people, Sinhalese, Muslims, Burghers, Malays

Tigers take the West for a ride

and Tamils who will no doubts live their lives according to them. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

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Load-Date: May 18, 2009

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Doctor: Sri Lanka hospital shelled, 15 killed

Associated Press International

May 13, 2009 Wednesday 9:10 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 316 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

The only hospital in Sri Lanka's war zone was shelled Wednesday for the second time in two days in an attack that killed at least 15 people, including a volunteer health worker, and wounded 40 others, a doctor at the facility said.

The military has denied firing heavy weapons in recent weeks as it pushes to finish off the Tamil Tiger rebels, though human rights groups and international officials say the government has continued artillery attacks.

The area around the hospital came under heavy shelling at about 1 p.m. Wednesday, Dr. V. Shanmugarajah told The Associated Press by telephone. One shell landed in an administrative office of the hospital while another hit a ward filled with patients already wounded by previous attacks, he said.

The attack killed 15 to 20 people and wounded 40 others, he said.

A second hospital official confirmed the attack, but spoke only on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized by the government to speak to the media. He said he was not aware of the death toll from the attack.

The hospital's admissions ward was hit by a mortar round Tuesday in an attack that killed 49 patients and bystanders, health officials said.

Rebel spokesman Seevaratnam Puleedevan said the shelling also hit a home for mentally handicapped women, killing 38 and wounding more than 40. The health officials said they were not able to confirm that attack.

The government has come under heavy international criticism for the large civilian toll in its offensive against the Tamil Tigers. British Foreign Secretary David Miliband called the conflict zone "as close to hell as you can get," and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton expressed alarm at the civilian casualties.

The U.S.-based group Human Rights Watch said satellite images of the war zone along with witness accounts indicated the government had continued shelling the area, despite its repeated denials.

Load-Date: May 14, 2009

Doctor: Sri Lanka hospital shelled, 15 killed

Associated Press Online

May 13, 2009 Wednesday 10:02 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 316 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

The only hospital in Sri Lanka's war zone was shelled Wednesday for the second time in two days in an attack that killed at least 15 people, including a volunteer health worker, and wounded 40 others, a doctor at the facility said.

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Load-Date: May 14, 2009

Oppression of Tamils must stop

Sunday Tribune (South Africa)

May 24, 2009

e1 Edition

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Section: Pg. 28

Length: 309 words

Body

I agree with Mohamed Essack (Sunday Tribune, May 17) that our government must take a firm stand on Sri Lanka.

We are able to enjoy our freedom because South Africa was sanctioned on all fronts during apartheid.

The Sri Lankan government's drive to wipe out the **Tamil Tigers** has left the Tamils' quest for equal rights and fair treatment unresolved.

Almost every declaration in the UN Human Rights Charter has been transgressed by the Sri Lankan government.

It deported CNN reporter Nick Paton Walsh after he reported on soldiers raping Tamil **women**. It detained four doctors providing critical medical treatment to the thousands of injured civilians in the safe zones, because of their reports on mistreatment of civilians.

Blogs show the racism directed towards Tamils by some Sinhalese people is shocking. Tamils are referred to as "slaves" who don't belong in their country.

The underlying problem has not been addressed by the government. Political solutions cannot be found with military action. It took both parties in South Africa to come to the table to plan a way forward.

The Sri Lankan government refuses to listen to any calls to stop its offensive.

President Rajapakse has said the defeat of the Tigers heralds a new era.

Cut ties

I agree. We will see a new, stronger resistance, especially with the increased support from the Tamil diaspora. No nation can live under oppression.

South Africa must cut all ties, economic, political, cultural and sports with Sri Lanka to show we are serious.

Scenes of people celebrating the Tigers' defeat are disturbing when I think of the Tamils being kept in the safe zones in prison-like conditions.

That government must heed the international calls to allow the UN and the media into safe zones.

It is slowly killing Tamils and we are watching just like we watched the Rwandan genocide unfold.

Oppression of Tamils must stop

Preshnee Govender

Durban

Load-Date: May 23, 2009

End of Document

Navy intercepts Sri Lankan asylum seekers

The Age (Melbourne, Australia)

July 13, 2009 Monday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 289 words

Byline: BRENDAN NICHOLSON, FOREIGN AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

Body

MANY women and children are among more than 70 Sri Lankan asylum seekers now on Christmas Island after they were picked up at sea on Saturday.

A fishing boat carrying the group was spotted by a Customs and Border Protection aircraft about 80 nautical miles from Christmas Island and was intercepted by the navy patrol boat HMAS Armidale.

It has been anticipated that many Sri Lankans would try to reach Australia and other countries after the fierce fighting on their home island in which government forces crushed the Tamil Tigers' insurgency.

Home Affairs Minister Brendan O'Connor said initial indications were that the boat carried 73 passengers.

Late yesterday morning the group was transferred to Christmas Island for security, identity and health checks and to establish why they had made the voyage.

Mr O'Connor said the boat's interception showed that the border protection system was working well.

Foreign Affairs Minister Stephen Smith said yesterday that all passengers on another boat, which sank on its way from Indonesia to Australia last week, were now known to be safe.

He said Australian police had spoken to two passengers who confirmed that all on board had been rescued.

Someone on the boat sent a text message to friends or family in Pakistan saying it was sinking.

The message was redirected to refugee advocate Ian Rintoul in Australia who alerted Australian and Indonesian authorities.

A search was launched in the Sape Strait, near Komodo, and the boat was found.

Mr Smith was initially told by the Indonesians that those on board were safe but he was contacted again and told that that had not been confirmed.

But Australian police in Jakarta spoke to two passengers by phone and were told the asylum seekers were safe.

Graphic

PHOTO: A Customs and Border Protection aircraft first spotted the asylum seekers.

Load-Date: July 12, 2009

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The black and white of the (mis)information industry

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

September 16, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 1099 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Sept. 16 -- There is this strange thing about skin colour. If you are white, you can do no wrong, you are above-board, intelligent, good hearted etc etc, at least that's what certain high-ranking people on the global stage seems to believe. I am talking specifically about James Elder, UNICEF's Communications Director in Sri Lanka, who has been asked to leave the island by September 21, 2009.

UNICEF has howled in protest: "Through Elder, UNICEF has consistently spoken out against the suffering of children on both sides of the intense hostilities earlier this year and called for their protection. UNICEF unequivocally rejects any allegation of bias." UNICEF vows the continue to uphold its mandate in Sri Lanka, to advocate and speak out on behalf of vulnerable children and women.

Is Elder really 'unbiased' though? In an article posted on April 23, 2009, Elder writes about the horrors of war. That's ok. War is horrible. But surrender was out of the question. A ceasefire with a cornered terrorist was out of the question.

Only those ignorant about the LTTE or were complicit in its political project would have thought otherwise. If Elder was sticking to the UNICEF mandate, he would have spoken about the thousands of children recruited for combat purposes by the LTTE. He didn't. That's impartial? That's 'concern for vulnerable children'?

Elder talks about the efforts of aid workers in IDP camps but says zilch about the efforts of the Government. The aid workers worked, yes, but they only 'complemented' the work of the state, including the Security Forces. Elder does not mention the fact that the Government had legitimate reason to restrict access of aid workers including those in UN because there have been innumerable instances where such people have helped the LTTE. James Elder does not mention this fact. That's 'impartial'?

The Government is correct to be wary of loose-cannons located in the premises that house UN. Gordon Weiss, Elder's predecessors (elevated to the post of communications chief of the UN office in Colombo 'for good work'), has been found guilty of leaking totally unsubstantiated information about the conflict to the international media, causing much damage to the country's image.

The man was given to quoting 'doctors' serving in LTTE-held areas, who have since confessed that they were forced to lie by the LTTE. The UN later retracted all these statements, including a horror-mongering one about 20,000 people have been killed in a matter of a few weeks. And we are supposed to believe that UNICEF and other UN are always 'impartial'!

Elder was not mandated to make 'public' statements. That's taking refuge in the broader meaning of 'communications' and surreptitiously expanding mandate arbitrarily. There is no mandate for UN like the UNICEF to

The black and white of the (mis)information industry

'interpret' policy or make public statements that contain interpretation and projection. There are that do have the right to examine, comment and call for action and even this only in fairly well specified forums.

The General Assembly, Security Council, Human Rights Council and the Political Affairs Department have a broad mandate in this regard, not so UNICEF. Elder was not a diplomat, as some newspapers and commentators believe. He was just another information officer. Well, a mis-information officer, as it turns out.

The UN has a role to play but it is selective in affirming its mandate. This is why Boutros-Boutros Ghali was not allowed a second time, as has been 'usual', as UN Secretary General. Why not? Well, the man criticized the USA and Israel in relation to the question of Palestine and the gross violation of human rights against the Palestinians.

The USA used the veto option. Boutros had to go. See? When you talk about certain humanitarian issues, it is ok, while in other instances it is not.

But I am digressing. There is a white-skin issue here. The UN offices in Colombo appear to be peopled by a critical number of people who are rabidly anti- Government and anti-Sri Lanka in general. Plants.

That's what they are. These white people who give all white people a bad name, seem to think that the colour of their skin gives them Viceroy status in this island.

A friend of mine who calls himself Alvis in Wonderland asked some pertinent questions regarding 'white people' (suddhas in common parlance). One could protest that he was engaging in crass generalization but then again, one could insert the qualifier 'some' (which is appropriate) with the added caveat 'extremely powerful' to precede 'suddha'. Anyway, this is what Alvis had to say:

"Can someone explain the common Sinhala term in the expression, "Acting the Suddha," or "Talking like a Suddha"? For I'm trying hard to understand this snafu: five Cubans trying to prevent terrorist attacks on their country are imprisoned for life by the USA, while the same USA gives refuge to a man (named Posada?) who bombed a Cuban civilian airliner killing Guyanese students?

I ask for an explanation of the Sinhala term, for it is apparent, that some white folk can hold the world hostage (threatening to blow the earth up a hundred times over with their nukes), engender daily mass murder in Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine, and yet claim to care for the rights of humans, and, yes, even quadrupeds. Is this what 'Acting/Talking the Suddha' means? Immortal Teflon?

A bloated balloon of flatulent righteousness? Is this why USA also means United Snakes or United Slaves of Amnesia? And if Obama today, continues the embargo to isolate that proud island, can we conclude that he is George Bush III but with a blush, and that in fact, one doesn't need to be pig'mentally challenged to "Act the Suddha"?

He is right. That's why there is a category called 'Kalu-Suddhas' (Black-whites, or 'brown sahibs'). The Government should not be blind to this reality. People like Weiss and Elder compel the Government to keep a watchful eye on their activities.

Perhaps the Government, in terms of diplomatic niceties, would be reluctant to exercise that kind of vigilance. That's the Government's business. The people of this country do not require permission from Ban Ki-moon or the Government to keep their eyes open. Call it community policing or something else; it better be done. We better do it. Sorry ladies and gentlemen in the UN system in Colombo, you've asked for it.

Malinda Seneviratne is a freelance writer who can be contacted at malinsene@gmail.com Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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The black and white of the (mis)information industry

Load-Date: September 16, 2009

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Thousands march in pro-Tamil rally in Paris

Associated Press International

May 13, 2009 Wednesday 12:12 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 313 words

Byline: By SCOTT SAYARE, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: PARIS

Body

Thousands of ethnic Tamils and their supporters, many wearing cloth gags, staged a silent march through Paris Tuesday to denounce what they called the international community's indifference to Sri Lanka's civil war.

The protesters also decried the recent killing of hundreds of ethnic Tamil civilians in the country's north.

"For 35 days we've been mobilized in Paris, and for 35 days we have not been heard," said Mahinthan Sivasubramaniam, who heads a French Tamil activist group. "Silence is a communication tool for us."

Health officials in Sri Lanka have said at least 378 civilians were killed in an artillery barrage in rebel territory that ended Sunday morning. The rebels and the Sri Lankan government blame each other for the attack, which the United Nations on Monday condemned as a "bloodbath."

"They've spoken of a 'bloodbath,'" said Sivasubramaniam, whose group helped organize Tuesday's rally, which began outside Paris' stately opera house. "It's worse than a bloodbath."

The Tamils are an ethnic group native to northeastern Sri Lanka, as well as part of southern India. Their language and culture differ from that of people in the rest of Sri Lanka.

Tamil exiles have been staging protests in major European cities since the latest outbreak of hostilities between Sri Lankan government forces and Tamil Tiger rebels. The group has been fighting for an independent state since 1983, after decades of marginalization by the Sinhalese majority.

Human Rights Watch said last week that about 2,000 civilians have been killed and another 5,000 wounded over the past month.

Protesters at the Paris rally brandished the red flags of the **Tamil Tigers** and banners bearing images of battered and bloodied Tamil infants, sobbing **women** and bandaged children with missing limbs.

"This is our last hope," said protest organizer Sivasubramaniam. "It's our families who are over there."

Load-Date: May 13, 2009

Thousands march in pro-Tamil rally in Paris

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GOVERNMENT HAS THE CHANCE TO END CONFLICT: US

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

April 18, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 318 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 18 -- The US says the Sri Lankan government, as the legitimate sovereign power has before it an opportunity to put an end to the lengthy conflict adding that a durable and lasting peace will only be achieved through a political solution that addresses the legitimate aspirations of all Sri Lankan communities.

State Department acting spokesman Robert Wood said on Thursday the United States government is deeply concerned about the current danger to civilian lives and the dire humanitarian situation created by the fighting in the Mullaitivu area in Sri Lanka. "We call upon the government and military of Sri Lanka, and the Tamil Tigers to immediately stop hostilities until the more than 140,000 civilians in the conflict area are safely out. Both sides must immediately return to a humanitarian pause and both must respect the right of free movement of those civilian men, women and children trapped by the fighting," he said. The United States calls upon the government of Sri Lanka to assist its Tamil citizens by halting shelling of the safe zone, permitting international monitors to ensure the safe exit of the civilians. "The government of Sri Lanka should also enforce international humanitarian standards in IDP camps, grant visas to international aid groups and permit entry into Sri Lanka of international monitors and media access to those camps," he said. "Further killing, particularly killing of civilians, will not end the conflict and will stain any eventual peace. We urge the Sri Lankan government to employ diplomacy to permit a peaceful outcome of this conflict. We call on the Sri Lankan government to put forward a proposal now to engage Tamils who do not espouse violence or terrorism, and to develop power sharing arrangements so that lasting peace and reconciliation can be achieved," Wood added. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 18, 2009

US Department of State: Call for an End to Hostilities in Sri Lanka

M2 PressWIRE

April 17, 2009 Friday

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Length: 335 words

Body

Hostilities in Sri Lanka

Robert Wood, Acting Department Spokesman, Office of the Spokesman,
Bureau of Public Affairs

Washington, DC -- The United States government is deeply concerned about the current danger to civilian lives and the dire humanitarian situation created by the fighting in the Mullaittivu area in Sri Lanka.

We call upon the government and military of Sri Lanka, and the *Tamil*

Tigers to immediately stop hostilities until the more than 140,000 civilians in the conflict area are safely out. Both sides must immediately return to a humanitarian pause and both must respect the right of free movement of those civilian men, *women* and children trapped by the fighting.

The United States calls upon the government of Sri Lanka to assist its Tamil citizens by halting shelling of the safe zone, permitting international monitors to ensure the safe exit of the civilians. The government of Sri Lanka should also enforce international humanitarian standards in IDP camps, grant visas to international aid groups and permit entry into Sri Lanka of international monitors and media access to those camps.

The Sri Lankan government, as the legitimate sovereign power, has before it an opportunity to put an end to this lengthy conflict. A durable and lasting peace will only be achieved through a political solution that addresses the legitimate aspirations of all Sri Lankan communities. Further killing, particularly killing of civilians, will not end the conflict and will stain any eventual peace. We urge the Sri Lankan government to employ diplomacy to permit a peaceful outcome of

US Department of State: Call for an End to Hostilities in Sri Lanka

this conflict. We call on the Sri Lankan government to put forward a proposal now to engage Tamils who do not espouse violence or terrorism, and to develop power sharing arrangements so that lasting peace and reconciliation can be achieved.

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Load-Date: April 17, 2009

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THOUSANDS TO MARCH IN SUPPORT OF TAMILS

Press Association Mediapoint

April 10, 2009 Friday 2:46 AM BST

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Section: HOME NEWS

Length: 313 words

Byline: Emma Rowley, Press Association

Body

Thousands of people are set to gather in London this weekend for a major protest march against the Sri Lankan government's offensive against Tamil Tiger rebels and alleged human rights abuses.

Hundreds of Tamil demonstrators currently occupying London's Parliament Square will see their numbers swell tomorrow for a renewed push, according to supporters.

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

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

Former aid worker Tim Martin, director of the Act Now campaign group aimed at stopping the war in Sri Lanka, said around 100 civilians were dying each day.

Sources have told him that poisonous gases are being used in combat, with victims suffering vomiting, blisters, breathing problems and extreme pain.

"This is why everyone is protesting," he said.

"The protesters are really upset at what's happening in Sri Lanka, they are really upset that the government is using illegal banned weapons and they will protest there until a ceasefire is agreed."

Two young Tamil men, Sivatharsan Sivakumaravel, 21, and Parameswarn Subramaniyan, 28, have embarked on a hunger strike as part of the ongoing protest in London.

They have not consumed anything since 10pm on Monday, according to Mr Martin, and will not until there is a ceasefire in Sri Lanka and humanitarian aid is allowed to the civilians in the designated "safe zone" in the north of the country.

THOUSANDS TO MARCH IN SUPPORT OF TAMILS

The march, which Mr Martin expects could comprise 200,000 people, starts in Embankment at 1pm tomorrow and will progress to Hyde Park over the afternoon.

A sit-in by up to 5,000 people - including women and babies - forced the closure of Westminster Bridge on Monday night.

Load-Date: April 10, 2009

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CALL FOR AN END TO HOSTILITIES IN SRI LANKA

US Fed News

April 17, 2009 Friday 3:04 PM EST

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Length: 314 words

Body

WASHINGTON, April 16 -- The U.S. Department of State issued the following press release:

The United States government is deeply concerned about the current danger to civilian lives and the dire humanitarian situation created by the fighting in the Mullaitivu area in Sri Lanka. We call upon the government and military of Sri Lanka, and the **Tamil Tigers** to immediately stop hostilities until the more than 140,000 civilians in the conflict area are safely out. Both sides must immediately return to a humanitarian pause and both must respect the right of free movement of those civilian men, **women** and children trapped by the fighting. The United States calls upon the government of Sri Lanka to assist its Tamil citizens by halting shelling of the safe zone, permitting international monitors to ensure the safe exit of the civilians. The government of Sri Lanka should also enforce international humanitarian standards in IDP camps, grant visas to international aid groups and permit entry into Sri Lanka of international monitors and media access to those camps. The Sri Lankan government, as the legitimate sovereign power, has before it an opportunity to put an end to this lengthy conflict. A durable and lasting peace will only be achieved through a political solution that addresses the legitimate aspirations of all Sri Lankan communities. Further killing, particularly killing of civilians, will not end the conflict and will stain any eventual peace. We urge the Sri Lankan government to employ diplomacy to permit a peaceful outcome of this conflict. We call on the Sri Lankan government to put forward a proposal now to engage Tamils who do not espouse violence or terrorism, and to develop power sharing arrangements so that lasting peace and reconciliation can be achieved. For more information please contact: Sarabjit Jagirdar, Email:- htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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

Load-Date: April 17, 2009

Thousands to march in support of Tamils

ITN

April 10, 2009 Friday

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Length: 310 words

Body

Thousands are set to gather in London for a major protest march against the Sri Lankan government's offensive against Tamil Tiger rebels.

Thousands of people are set to gather in London this weekend for a major protest march against the Sri Lankan government's offensive against Tamil Tiger rebels and alleged human rights abuses.

Hundreds of Tamil demonstrators currently occupying London's Parliament Square will see their numbers swell on Saturday for a renewed push, according to supporters.

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

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

Former aid worker Tim Martin, director of the Act Now campaign group aimed at stopping the war in Sri Lanka, said around 100 civilians are dying each day.

Sources have told him that poisonous gases are being used in combat, with victims suffering vomiting, blisters, breathing problems and extreme pain.

"This is why everyone is protesting," he said.

"The protesters are really upset at what's happening in Sri Lanka, they are really upset that the government is using illegal banned weapons and they will protest there until a ceasefire is agreed."

Two young Tamil men, Sivatharsan Sivakumaravel, 21, and Parameswarn Subramaniyan, 28, have embarked on a hunger strike as part of the ongoing protest in London.

They have not consumed anything since 10pm on Monday, according to Mr Martin, and will not until there is a ceasefire in Sri Lanka and humanitarian aid is allowed to the civilians in the designated "safe zone" in the north of the country.

Thousands to march in support of Tamils

A sit-in by up to 5,000 people - including women and babies - forced the closure of Westminster Bridge on Monday night.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

End of Document

People smugglers are watching Canada

The Toronto Star

November 10, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. A23

Length: 807 words

Byline: Martin Regg Cohn, Toronto Star

Body

When a boatload of Tamils turned up off the West Coast last month, Canada yawned.

There was a predictable clamour about queue jumpers or potential terrorists on board, but little discussion about the perils of people smuggling: There's been only one boatload and its 76 passengers remain under the radar.

In Australia, it's a different story.

Down under, they don't enjoy Canada's splendid isolation in the northern hemisphere, and they don't let down their guard down on human trafficking. Like the U.S., Australia's geography and prosperity make it a destination of choice.

Canada, if it isn't careful, could become one too.

We're out of sight, but not out of mind. How we handle this latest boatload is being watched closely.

Australia has years of experience in staring down people smugglers who flout the country's border protection rules but also risk the lives of their human cargo.

Now, Tamil refugee claimants are creating a major political headache for Australia's left-leaning Labour government. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd came to power promising to soften the hard-line approach imposed by the previous right-wing government, which fought and won elections on a get-tough policy.

But the human traffickers are back in business, launching waves of Tamil refugee claimants toward Australia via Indonesia's archipelago of 17,000 islands. And the biggest boatload of more than 250 Tamils, intercepted at sea last month, has produced a dubious Canadian connection:

Their unofficial spokesman was a bearded Tamil who went by the name Alex - until the Sri Lankan government identified him as Sanjeev Kuhendrarajah, 27, who has a criminal record for death threats and firearm possession in Toronto, prompting his deportation from Canada in 2003. Alex at first denied that he was a deportee, but has since admitted he was part of Toronto's Tamil gang scene.

His fellow passengers are refusing to get off their boat, in a West Java port, until they get to Australia. This week, 10 women in his group started a hunger strike.

People smugglers are watching Canada

Another 78 Sri Lankans have also been moored off an Indonesian island for the past two weeks, refusing to disembark. A boat suspected of carrying Sri Lankans sank in remote seas 10 days ago, killing 12; some 27 male survivors were rescued. Another 50 Tamils are stuck in Australia's detention centre in Christmas Island after their boat hit a reef.

Under pressure, Rudd is holding delicate negotiations with Indonesia over the fate of the Tamil refugee claimants. This week, he dispatched his foreign minister to Sri Lanka to sign an agreement on information-sharing for prosecuting people smugglers.

This is the situation Canada could soon face. There are no easy solutions, not least the head-in-the-sea approach of refugee advocates who turn a blind eye to human trafficking or sound like apologists for it - "desperate people take desperate measures."

There are many questions about the boat that showed up off Canadian waters, including suggestions it was owned or operated by the **Tamil Tigers**. It was a conspicuously all-male boatload - no **women** or children or seniors that we know of, which is unusual among refugees fleeing conflict or persecution. Sri Lanka is already sowing doubts about them.

On the other hand, this is the same Sri Lankan government that refused to admit Liberal foreign affairs critic Bob Rae into the country when he showed up with a visa, accusing him (falsely) of being a tool of the **Tamil Tigers**.

Sri Lanka has also squandered an opportunity to turn the page after vanquishing the Tigers on the battlefield earlier this year, detaining 250,000 internally displaced people in squalid camps during the monsoon season. The government had good reason to screen the civilian population for Tiger cadres and demobilize them, while demining Tamil areas; but it had no excuse for taking so long to free so many innocent people.

The plight of these Tamil civilians cannot be denied. Whether they qualify for refugee status - all of them, or even some of them - is another question. There is no evidence these are gulags.

As Canada's former high commissioner to Colombo, Martin Collacott has noted, in one particular year 8,600 Sri Lankans with refugee claims pending here in Canada applied for travel documents to make return visits to the homeland they were supposedly fleeing on grounds of persecution.

Skepticism toward Tamil refugee claims is not confined to Australia. Britain's special envoy to Sri Lanka, former Labour cabinet minister Des Browne, recently backed the Australian view that a strong signal should be sent that boat people are destined to be returned home. Indeed, his own country is attempting to do just that.

As Britain and Australia try to close the door to human traffickers, what message does Canada want to send?

Martin Regg Cohn, the Star's deputy editorial page editor, writes Tuesday.

Load-Date: November 10, 2009

AFP 1000 GMT News Advisory

Agence France Presse -- English

May 17, 2009 Sunday 10:02 AM GMT

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Length: 835 words

Dateline: PARIS, May 17 2009

Body

Duty Editor: Denis Barnett

Tel: + 33 1 4041 4636

-- TOP STORIES --

+ Sri Lanka's **Tamil Tigers** admit defeat

+ India's ruling party basks in polls triumph

+ Kuwaiti **women** win first seats in parliament

SriLanka-unrest,3rdlead-WRAP

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Tamil rebels admit defeat after their 37-year battle for an independent ethnic homeland ends with their few remaining fighters encircled in a minuscule patch of jungle by government troops.

600 words 1100 GMT by Amal Jayasinghe. Picture

India-vote,3rdlead-WRAP

NEW DELHI

India's Congress Party begins the task of forming a government after steering its ruling alliance to a second term in office with a resounding win over its Hindu nationalist rivals.

700 words 1200 GMT by Elizabeth Roche. Picture

Kuwait-vote,lead

KUWAIT CITY

Four **women** win seats in the Kuwaiti parliament in an historic first as Islamist parties face a setback in the oil-rich Gulf state's second general election in a year.

700 words 1100 GMT by Omar Hasan. Picture

REGIONAL FILING PLANS

-- EUROPE --

Lithuania-vote,2ndlead

VILNIUS

Lithuanians vote in a presidential election, with EU budget commissioner Dalia Grybauskaite looking set to plunge back into domestic politics in her recession-hit Baltic homeland and become its first **female** head of state.

600 words 1300 GMT by Marielle Vitureau. Picture.

Croatia-vote,2ndlead

ZAGREB

Croatians cast ballots in regional and local elections that will test the strength of ruling conservatives who are implementing unpopular measures to fight the global economic crisis.

500 words 1200 GMT

-- MIDDLE EAST --

UN-climate-disaster,lead

MANAMA

UN chief Ban Ki-moon calls for decisive action to reduce the impact of climate change as he launches a global assessment of ways to minimise the risks of natural disasters.

500 words 1030 GMT by Mohamed Fahel

Iran-media,2ndlead

TEHRAN

Iran urges its media to trigger "enthusiasm" for the June 12 presidential election, but warns it against breaking cultural and ethical guidelines of the Islamic republic.

500 words 1230 GMT by Farhad Pouladi

-- AMERICAS --

AFP 1000 GMT News Advisory

US-politics-Obama-abortion-protest,lead

CHICAGO

US President Barack Obama will wade into a longstanding political thicket Sunday when he speaks at a prestigious Catholic university where right-to-life protesters are gathering to oppose his support of abortion rights.

600 words 1030 GMT

US-space-astronomy-Hubble,lead

HOUSTON, Texas

US astronauts on Sunday will undertake a fourth in a series of five daily spacewalks intended to equip the 19-year-old Hubble Space Telescope for at least another five years of valuable scientific work.

650 words 1030 GMT by Mark Carreau

-- AFRICA --

Somalia-unrest,WRAP

MOGADISHU

Somali extremist rebels capture Jowhar the hometown of beleaguered President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed in a major setback for the fledgling government forces scrambling to contain an insurgent onslaught.

600 words 1100 GMT by Mustafa Haji Abdinur

Nigeria-oil-unrest,WRAP

Nine Filipinos and four Nigerian hostages held by armed militants are freed while two others are killed in clashes as the army continues its foray into MEND's strongholds in volatile oil-rich Niger Delta.

650 words 1100 GMT by Aderogba Obisesan

-- ASIA --

SriLanka-unrest-peace,ANALYSIS

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's hawkish government defeats the Tamil Tigers, but it now faces the equally huge challenge of winning the peace by easing a humanitarian disaster and fixing decades of bitter ethnic division.

600 words 1200 GMT by Mel Gunasekera

We will also move: SriLanka-unrest-warcrimes,FOCUS

SriLanka-unrest-Tigers,PROFILE

SriLanka-unrest,CHRONO

Myanmar-politics-SuuKyi,lead-WRAP

YANGON

Myanmar pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi will protest her innocence when she goes on trial starting Monday, her party says as the ruling military junta frees her personal doctor from detention.

650 words 1130 GMT

We have also moved: Myanmar-politics-SuuKyi-ASEAN,lead-FOCUS

Pakistan-unrest,lead-WRAP

PESHAWAR, Pakistan

Pakistan's security forces say they are advancing into a key Taliban stronghold as they push on with a fierce offensive that has scattered more than a million terrified civilians.

650 words 1100 GMT

Health-flu-world,lead-WRAP

KOBE, Japan

Japan says that 20 more people have tested positive for swine flu, as senior health officials gather in Geneva for talks on how to contain the spread of the virus.

550 words 1100 GMT by Shingo Ito. Picture, graphic

We have also moved: Health-flu-Japan,SCENE

-- ENTERTAINMENT --

Entertainment-film-festival-Cannes

CANNES, France

Asia makes a splash at Cannes with films from Korea, Hong Kong and the Philippines in the spotlight.

500 words 1200 GMT by Claire Rosemberg. Picture. Video

Entertainment-music-Russia-Eurovision-Norway,3rdlead-WRAP

MOSCOW

Norway's Alexander Rybak sweeps the Eurovision Song Contest in Moscow with a brash performance of a folk-inspired ballad he penned himself, sparking celebrations in his Scandinavian home country.

700 words 1100 GMT by Nick Coleman. Picture

afp

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

Sri Lanka's rebels admit defeat; Tigers vow to lay down arms, but fate of civilians uncertain

Ottawa Citizen

May 18, 2009 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A7

Length: 728 words

Byline: Emily Wax, The Washington Post

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

Cornered in a tiny patch of jungle about the size of a football field, the Tamil Tiger rebels -- who once operated a shadow state complete with a law school, a tax system, a navy and even traffic police -- vowed Sunday to lay down their weapons for good, in a stunning and unprecedented admission of defeat in Asia's longest-running war.

"This battle has reached its bitter end. It is our people who are dying now from bombs, shells, illness and hunger. We cannot permit any more harm to befall them," Selvarasa Pathmanathan, the Tigers' chief of international relations, said in a statement posted on the Tamilnet website.

"We remain with one last choice -- to remove the last weak excuse of the enemy for killing our people. We have decided to silence our guns."

President Mahinda Rajapaksa scheduled a news conference for this morning in Sri Lanka's parliament, where he was expected to make an official declaration of victory over the rebels, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

Sri Lanka's military vowed to recapture "every inch of land" and refused to relent in its assault on the rebels, which continued Sunday despite calls from the United Nations, which expressed concern for tens of thousands of civilians, some reportedly huddled in trenches with little water or food.

Although Sri Lanka's military announced that all of the civilians who had been trapped in the country's northern war zone -- an estimated 63,000 people -- have now escaped, journalists are barred from the war zone, and those facts could not be independently verified.

Sri Lanka's violent struggles attracted worldwide attention over the years from rights activists and world leaders. Pope Benedict XVI said Sunday that he was praying for peace and reconciliation. He asked humanitarian groups to do everything possible to care for terrified civilians in Sri Lanka.

"There are thousands of children, women, old people for whom the war has taken years of their lives and hope," the Pope said at the Vatican.

Sri Lanka 's rebels admit defeat; Tigers vow to lay down arms, but fate of civilians uncertain

In Washington, Sri Lankan Ambassador Jaliya Wickramasuriya credited U.S. President Barack Obama's recent public statements with helping to end the crisis. In an

e-mailed statement, he said the Tigers "effectively folded shortly after President Barack Obama told the world that the terrorists were holding innocent Tamil civilians as hostages. He was one of the few world leaders to note that fact so forcefully."

In this deeply divided Indian Ocean island country, many said the war won't really be resolved until the capture or death of the **Tamil Tigers**' elusive leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, whom some here call "Sri Lanka's Osama bin Laden," both for his leadership of a violent movement and for the government's inability to find him.

Under the rebel commander, the Tigers became one of the world's most deadly guerrilla armies, labelled as a terrorist organization by Canada, the United States and other countries for hundreds of suicide attacks on soldiers and civilians.

"Prabhakaran's on the run. He's in hiding. He's facing real danger as we speak. The next few days will decide his fate," said M.R. Narayan Swamy, author of the only unofficial biography of the rebel leader. "He will have to commit suicide, because being captured would be the ultimate humiliation. The third scenario is death at the hands of the enemy, which would propel him as a hero in the eyes of those who consider him as an icon."

Prabhakaran allegedly orchestrated suicide bombings that killed a Sri Lankan president, six cabinet ministers and former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi in May 1991. He trained an elite squad of suicide bombers, the Black Tigers, and was infamous for hosting an elaborate feast for his recruits before sending them to their deaths.

The assassination of Gandhi was apparently to punish India for its military intervention in Sri Lanka in the late 1980s. But Gandhi's death ended any sympathy the Tigers had in the international community.

Prabhakaran and a few bodyguards are probably holed up on a thin ribbon of coast in northern Sri Lanka and are surrounded by five infantry divisions, Udaya Nanayakkara, a brigadier in the Sri Lankan army, said in an interview.

"The Sri Lankan intelligence forces claim that Prabhakaran is hiding in the coastal belts; I feel so, too," Nanayakkara said, adding that the rebels had been "crushed" and that "Prabhakaran's days are numbered."

Graphic

Colour Photo: Buddhika Weerasinghe, Reuters; The streets of Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo, were teeming with celebrants after news that the country's long-running civil war was effectively over. The government was expected to officially declare victory over the **Tamil Tigers** today. ;

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

Fleeing civilians want Army to rescue them - Sunday Telegraph

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

April 1, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 307 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 1 -- The mass circulated Sunday Telegraph of the United Kingdom said the people who escaped from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) controlled area had told them that the remaining people do not like the Tigers' dictatorial mini-state any more and they want the Sri Lankan Army to rescue them.

Quoting a man who escaped to Kilinochchi, Sunday Telegraph's Nick Meo said: What the man had to say about the Tigers would have been unthinkable for a subject of their dictatorial mini-state a few weeks ago. The people do not like the Tigers any more, he said angrily. 'They are trapped by them and they are scared. They want the Sri Lankan Army to rescue them.' Reporting from Kilinochchi, the Sunday Telegraph staffer said people are being used as human shields by the Tigers who have promised to fight to the death. The exhausted businessman was safe in a Sri Lankan army base after weeks trapped with other civilians in a seven square mile strip of land on Sri Lanka North East coast, short of food and fresh water and incessantly pounded by shells, the report said. The **LTTE** who for last 26 years have claimed to be fighting to protect Sri Lankan Tamils have forbidden the refugees to leave on pain of death. But the conflict grinds slowly towards its end with the Tigers apparently facing final defeat, conditions within their enclave have become so grim that in the past week alone that an estimated 5,000 men, **women** and terrified children have risked their lives to flee. Many have been shot by Tiger gunmen and some of those caught have been executed, the report said. Meo wrote: "The elderly man wearing a grimy T Shirt and sarong and clutching a single bag that contained all that remained of his possessions, had managed to get out that morning. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 2, 2009

Smart cops rewarded

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

May 2, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 314 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 2 -- Policemen and women who were involved in arresting criminals, hard drug traffickers and LTTE suicide bombers over the last several months were rewarded with cash and certificates on the direction of Inspector General of Police Jayantha Wickremaratne at a ceremony held at the Crime Record Division auditorium recently.

Over 150 policemen and women of all ranks who had brought honour to the Police Department received over Rs. 8 million in several stages. DIGs K.P.P. Pathirana, Chandana Wickremaratne, H.M. Herath, Head of the STF Sarath Chandra, Newly appointed DIGs Anura Senanayake and Pathmasiri Vithana, several Senior SPs, SPs and ASPs, OICs also participated at the ceremony. IGP Wickremaratne paid a tribute to the police personnel who were responsible for the arrest of an LTTE suspect who was in Colombo to commit a serious crime. The IGP paid a tribute to Senior DIG Nimal Mediwaka, Colombo DIG H.M. Herath and Colombo Central Senior SP Daya Samaraweera. He requested police personnel to have a very close rapport with the public. It is a very difficult task, but try to fulfill this obligation in order to maintain law and order in the country. "Whatever good the Police did, there was a section of people who criticised the police. 'We will not assist or encourage people who are involved in crimes. Our prime duty is to safeguard the law-abiding citizens. Quoting several incidents occurred in the country recently, the IGP said that we also have 'bad eggs' in the department, but just because one person did a wrong thing it was very unfair to put the blame on the entire Police Department, he said. "A section of the media also attempted to sling mud at us, but we will not be shaken by these type of actions. We do our best to maintain law and order in the country," the IGP said. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 2, 2009

The death of a coward

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

May 21, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 313 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 21 -- V. Prabhakaran , the self claimed "sun god" who ordered tens and thousands of Tamil youth to wear cyanide capsules around their necks and asked them to commit suicide if captured, was found by Troops of the 53 Division on Tuesday.

Ironically, he was found with no cyanide capsule, but with his Identity Card and the dog tag, as to prove his identity if he managed to seek refuge with some unknown saviour. He was certainly not man enough to fight a single battle against the Army. Instead, he tried to save his life until the last moment. Not for a moment he wanted to commit suicide, he tried to escape betraying his most loyal followers before a soldier shot him down. We are not going to comment on how he died. Simply, he was the lowliest of the cowards. National Integration and Reconciliation Minister Vinayagamoorthis Muralidharan, who once fought for the LTTE and former media spokesperson of the outfit Daya Master, positively identified the body of Prabhakaran. It is only K.Padmanadan, LTTE's in- charge of cross border terrorism and pro-terror media that continue to have hope on Prabhakaran's life. Minister Muralidharan after identifying the terror chief's body thanked the President and the Armed Forces for freeing the Tamil people from the clutches of the megalomaniac. Daya Master said the villain's death would be a great relief to the people in the Vanni. Indeed, heroic soldiers of the Army finally brought justice to 19 million Sri Lankan citizens who suffered most horrendous acts of terrorism for three decades. The mad man who sent thousands of child soldiers to battle, who ordered his brain washed followers to kill thousands of men, women and children in most abominable orgies of violence , and who spelt the most implacable curse on the Tamil people is no more. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 21, 2009

2ND ROUNDUP: Rebels allege heavy civilian casualties in Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
May 10, 2009 Sunday 6:07 PM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 626 words

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts 2ND ROUNDUP: Rebels allege heavy civilian casualties in Sri Lanka
Eds: updates civilian death figures, adds death of rebel spokesman =

Colombo (dpa) - Tamil rebels Sunday accused the military of firing into a government-demarcated safety zone in north-eastern Sri Lanka, killing over 2,000 civilians during the past 24 hours. The military rejected the accusation.

S Pathmanathan, the head of international relations for the Tamil rebels, claimed that bombardment by military planes and shelling was taking place in densely populated areas in the north-east of the country.

In a statement posted on the pro-rebel Tamilnet website, Pathmanathan said the Tamil people were dismayed that the United Nations and the international community had failed in their obligations to protect the endangered civilians.

A medical doctor based in the rebel-controlled area confirmed heavy fighting since Saturday evening and said he could hear artillery exchanges in the Karaiyamullivaikal area, 395 kilometres north-east of the capital.

The doctor, Veerachchami Shanmuagaraja, told the German Press Agency dpa by telephone that 257 bodies had been brought to the makeshift hospital where he was based.

A Tamilnet later reported that 378 bodies had been brought to the hospital.

The doctor said over 800 wounded persons had also been brought in, but he lacked the medicine to treat them. He said his hospital was set up in a school.

He said the dead included women and children. He could not confirm that all the bodies were of civilians.

Shanmuagaraja said that he would have to await the arrival of a ship chartered by the International Red Cross to evacuate the

2ND ROUNDUP: Rebels allege heavy civilian casualties in Sri Lanka

injured. But the time of the ship's next arrival is unknown. The last evacuation ship took more than 500 injured and ill persons, plus other civilians, out of the area on Saturday.

Chief military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara denied the pro-rebel media reports and said 700 civilians were rescued by the army and brought into government-controlled areas on Sunday.

He said that the security forces had not fired into the safety zone, which has been demarcated as a place for civilians to gather in order to facilitate government-run rescue operations.

The Defence Ministry, in a separate report, said heavy combat took place amid stiff resistance against advancing troops, but that troops were able to breach the rebel defences and inflict heavy damage. It did not mention any casualty figures.

"Intercepting LTTE (rebel) communication channels, Electronic

Warfare sources confirmed that numbers of LTTE terrorists were killed during the fighting while many received injuries," it said.

The government also re-established an area known as the safety zone in order to enable civilians to gather in preparation for rescue operations.

The zone is limited to about three square kilometres, out of an area of six square kilometres in which the rebels and civilians are confined.

According to military sources, the government was set to step up military operations to rescue some 20,000 civilians held in the area and crush the rebels.

However, UN agencies say the number of civilians trapped in the area may be over 50,000.

In a related incident, a Tamil rebel military spokesman who sustained injuries in a military attack on Saturday succumbed to his injuries on Sunday, the Tamilnet said.

The spokesman, identified as Punitharooban, alias Illanthirayan, was 43. He was a senior member in the organization with both military and political experience.

The military says it is in the final phase of defeating the

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who have been fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the northern and eastern parts of the country.

May 1009 1807 GMT

Load-Date: May 11, 2009

UN : Punish Abuse of Children in War

NEWS Press (English)

April 28, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: International; N G O

Length: 1015 words

Byline: Human Rights Watch

Body

The United Nations Security Council should impose sanctions on governments and armed groups for using child soldiers, sexual violence against children, and attacks on schools, and should promote effective prosecution of the commanders responsible, Human Rights Watch said today. The Security Council will hold an open debate on children and armed conflict on Wednesday, April 29, 2009.

On April 22, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon identified 56 governments and armed groups from 14 countries that are violating international laws prohibiting the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Sixteen of these parties have been included in each of the lists published by the secretary-general since he began making the names of violators public in 2002.

"The Security Council has said that it will consider sanctions against governments and armed groups that refuse to end their use of child soldiers," said Jo Becker, children's rights advocate at Human Rights Watch. "Instead, it has allowed these crimes against children to continue for years."

Governments that have been listed in seven consecutive reports from the secretary-general to the Security Council include the government forces of Burma, Chad, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the armed groups include the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) in Sri Lanka, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) in Colombia, and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda.

Human Rights Watch highlighted several cases in which military commanders in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sri Lanka who are well-known for their use of child soldiers are now in government or senior military positions.

- In Congo, Jean-Pierre Biyoyo was recently appointed a colonel in the Congolese army despite being convicted by a military court in March 2006 of recruiting children as soldiers while a leader of the Mudundu 40 militia. He was sentenced to five years in prison, but escaped three months later, in June 2006.

- Bosco Ntaganda was made a general in the Congolese army in January, despite being wanted on an arrest warrant by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for the war crime of enlisting child soldiers and using them in

UN : Punish Abuse of Children in War

hostilities. In addition to the ICC charges, Ntaganda has been accused of commanding troops that massacred 150 civilians at Kiwanja in North Kivu province in November 2008.

- In Sri Lanka, Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan (known as Colonel Karuna) became the minister of national integration and reconciliation in April. Prior to April 2004, he was the commander of the LTTE's eastern division and was responsible for recruiting thousands of children into LTTE ranks. He subsequently broke with the LTTE and formed an armed force known as the Karuna Group, which allied with the government and then abducted hundreds of children for use as soldiers under Karuna's command.

"For a state to appoint a known child recruiter to a senior government or military position is simply outrageous," said Becker. "Governments should be prosecuting these individuals for war crimes, not rewarding them."

Human Rights Watch called on the Security Council to impose sanctions, including arms embargoes, travel bans, and asset freezes against individuals and parties that have persistently recruited and used child soldiers in violation of international law. It also called for criminal prosecution of individual child recruiters by national courts or through referral to the ICC, which has jurisdiction to try individuals who have enlisted children under 15 years old or used them in hostilities for war crimes. To date, seven individuals have been issued arrest warrants by the court for such crimes.

Human Rights Watch also called on the Security Council to take stronger action to stop sexual violence against children and attacks affecting education. In Congo alone, tens of thousands of women and girls have been subject to sexual violence since the war began in 1996, with no sign this violence is decreasing. Nearly one-third of those brutalized by rape are children.

According to UNESCO, the number of attacks on schools, teachers, and students increased sixfold between 2003 and 2006. In Afghanistan, roughly 600 schools remained closed as of March following attacks by anti-government forces. In southern Thailand, insurgents have burned down more than 280 schools.

An assessment by Human Rights Watch found that in 2008 the Security Council's working group on children and armed conflict issued 83 recommendations related to the use of child soldiers, but only 13 related to sexual violence and only three regarding attacks affecting education.

"Children who have been raped or are denied an education because of attacks on schools also deserve strong Security Council action," Becker said.

On April 22, 62 nongovernmental organizations representing parents in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo appealed to the Security Council in a letter to end abuses against children in the conflict. The groups cited continued killings, rape and sexual violence, attacks on schools, and recruitment of child soldiers in the conflict areas of eastern Congo.

"We deplore the guilty silence that has prevailed until now among our leaders and the international community," the groups stated. "All of these crimes, whose perpetrators are often well-known, take place in a context of total impunity."

The organizations called on the Security Council to impose sanctions on perpetrators, develop an action plan for Congo that addresses sexual violence and violence affecting education, and strengthen efforts to demobilize child soldiers and reintegrate them into their communities.

The Security Council has required the UN to negotiate action plans with governments and armed groups to end their use of child soldiers. Human Rights Watch called on the Security Council to expand these action plans to address sexual violence against children and attacks on education. It also called for the Security Council to impose targeted sanctions against perpetrators of these crimes.

UN : Punish Abuse of Children in War

End of Document

Plot to assassinate Defence Secretary

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

August 25, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 374 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Aug. 25 -- The National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) officials yesterday succeeded in uncovering a master plan to assassinate Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa with the recovery of a suicide kit , arms and ammunition from a house in Mutwal.

According to Police Spokesman DIG Nimal Mediwaka, the NIB officials found a massive haul of ammunition which included a suicide kit weighing over 5Kg, a most modern machine gun, 121 ammunitions, two ammunition cases, 13 Cyanide capsules, five batteries, remote controllers, Service code and detonators.

He said the NIB officials received information that these explosive items were concealed in a cupboard in a housing unit of a condominium housing scheme in Mutwal under the directive of an **LTTE** leader in Colombo.

This **LTTE** leader has reportedly planned to launch a well coordinated Guerilla attack on Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa. "It is believed that they had planned to hurl hand grenades at Rajapaksa's motorcade as a part of the massive assassination bid.

The Officials have started an investigation as to how a most modern type of machine gun and other equipment were brought to the housing scheme when tight security measures were in place in Colombo and suburbs.

This recovery from a Housing Scheme in Mutwal was the result of a comprehensive investigation conducted by the NIB officials over months through various means such as analyzing intelligence reports, he said.

The terrorists had planned to launch this attack using a explosive laden motor bike.

Officials are combing the island to trace the explosive laden bike and the suicide cadre who were directed to crash into the motorcade of the Defence Secretary.

"It is reported that they had planned to station a **female** suicide cadre to target the ambulance in which the Defence Secretary is brought to the Hospital if he escapes with injuries.

DIG Mediwaka said investigating the owner of the house has already been started. "We are conducting investigations to determine the period during which these explosive items were brought to this housing scheme," he said. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Surit Das at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Plot to assassinate Defence Secretary

Load-Date: August 25, 2009

End of Document

Malaysian Tamils protest Sri Lankan 'genocide'

Agence France Presse -- English

May 24, 2009 Sunday 8:28 AM GMT

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Length: 381 words

Dateline: KUALA LUMPUR, May 24 2009

Body

Nearly 5,000 ethnic Tamil Malaysians gathered at one of the country's iconic Hindu temples Sunday to protest acts of 'genocide' against Tamils in Sri Lanka following the end of hostilities there.

The demonstration by one of the world's largest Tamil communities outside India and Sri Lanka, followed Colombo's declaration of victory over the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) last Monday, amid widespread concern that large numbers of Tamil civilians were killed in the fighting.

Protesters who gathered at the famous Batu Caves Hindu temple, on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur, say Sri Lanka is preventing full humanitarian assistance from getting through to nearly 300,000 displaced people.

Amid a sea of red **LTTE** flags emblazoned with a leaping tiger, men dressed in traditional white vejtis and **women** in sarees with flowers in their hair chanted slogans calling for Sri Lanka's president to be tried for crimes against humanity.

"We condemn the actions of the Sri Lankan government, who, in spite of international pressure, went on to virtually execute 25,000 Tamils in the last 100 days, which can be legally termed as genocide," event organiser S.P. Pathi said.

"The Tamils around the world demand justice," he said, refusing to recognise claims by the government of the death of Tamil Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran earlier this week.

Federal Territories deputy minister M. Saravanan, who had attended along with opposition leaders, said Malaysia should not support a Sri Lankan-sponsored UN bill on non-interference in the battle-scarred country's affairs.

"The Malaysian government should not support any UN resolutions like this one that is being tabled against the Tamils in Sri Lanka," he told AFP.

"The Sri Lankan government should not be looking at short term solutions for itself but for a long term solution that also benefits the Tamils," he added.

The gathering passed several resolutions including calls for an investigation into alleged atrocities committed against Tamil civilians in Sri Lanka and on filing war crimes charges against government leaders.

Malaysian Tamils protest Sri Lankan 'genocide'

Ethnic Indians -- many of whom are descendants of labourers brought over by British colonial rulers in the 1800s -- make up less than eight percent of the 27 million population of this mainly Muslim-Malay country.

Load-Date: May 25, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lanka camps a 'national disgrace': rights group

Agence France Presse -- English

June 12, 2009 Friday 6:48 AM GMT

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Length: 337 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, June 12 2009

Body

The Sri Lankan government faced renewed demands Friday to free nearly 300,000 war-displaced civilians, who fled Tamil Tiger rebel territory, from tightly guarded state-run camps.

New York-based Human Rights Watch said the squalid camps, which are ringed with barbed wire, were a "national disgrace" and violated international law.

"For more than a year, the Sri Lankan government has detained virtually everyone, including entire families, displaced by the fighting in the north in military-run camps, in violation of international law," the group said.

"Treating all these men, women, and children as if they were Tamil Tiger fighters is a national disgrace," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch.

The island's government has promised to resettle those in the camps by the end of the year, once it weeds out suspected rebels.

It also calls the camps "welfare villages" -- even though the civilians have no freedom of movement.

"The Sri Lankan government should end the illegal detention of nearly 300,000 ethnic Tamils displaced by the recently ended conflict in Sri Lanka," Human Rights Watch said.

Sri Lanka promised UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon during his visit to the island last month that most of the civilians will be re-settled in their homes and villages within six months.

The Tamil Tigers were defeated last month with the annihilation of the rebel leadership after an assault in the north-eastern district of Mullaittivu.

"Many people are in the camps not because they have no other place to go," said Adams. "They are in the camps because the government does not allow them to leave."

He said conditions in the camps were overcrowded, some holding twice the number recommended by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Sri Lanka camps a 'national disgrace': rights group

"The poor conditions in the camps may worsen with the monsoon rains," Adams said. "Holding civilians who wish to move in with relatives and friends is irresponsible as well as unlawful."

Sri Lanka has also restricted access of aid agencies and journalists to the camps.

Load-Date: June 13, 2009

End of Document

Release Tamils from Sri Lanka camps, say parties

Indo-Asian News Service

October 3, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 340 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, Oct. 3 -- Five Sri Lankan political parties have demanded that the hundreds of thousands of Tamils interned in camps since the end of the war in May should be released immediately.

In a joint statement, leaders of four Tamil and one Muslim political parties described as illegal the "forcible detention of Tamil citizens" in the island's north.

They said the detention had no "basis in the constitution" and was "in gross violation of international human rights norms".

"These people should be released immediately to return to their homes and permitted to resume without hindrance their traditional livelihood activities," the statement said.

They should also be permitted "to take up residence with friends and relatives... Those likely to face criminal charges should be produced in a court of law without further delay".

The statement was issued by V. Anandasangaree, Mano Ganesan, Rauff Hakeem, K. Vigneswaran and R. Sampanthan.

An estimated 280,000 Tamil men, women and children have been kept in government camps since they fled the Tamil Tiger territory just before and after the guerrillas were crushed by the military.

The mass detention has come under international criticism.

The leaders also demanded that Muslim people evicted from the north by the Tamil Tigers some two decades ago should be allowed to return to their homes and resume their economic and social activities.

"The curfew and other restrictions on normality in many parts of the Northern Province and elsewhere are unjustified. People in certain parts of the country live in fear, avoid even essential travel, and are inhibited in employment related and social activities," they said.

"We call for an end to military administration and restrictions placed on civilians, and we urge the restoration of full civilian administration to facilitate return to economic and social normality." Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

Release Tamils from Sri Lanka camps, say parties

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Load-Date: October 3, 2009

End of Document

2ND LEAD: 17 civilians killed in rebel suicide attack in Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur
April 20, 2009 Monday 7:58 AM EST

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Section: POLITICS

Length: 374 words

Body

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts 2ND LEAD: 17 civilians killed in rebel suicide attack in Sri Lanka
Eds: Adds details of suicide attack, rescue mission continuing =

Colombo (dpa) - At least 17 civilians, including women and children, were killed when Tamil separatist rebels carried out a suicide attack in northern Sri Lanka, where government troops rescued about 5,000 civilians, military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

He said troops broke through an earthen barrier in Puthumathalan village, 390 kilometres north-east of Colombo, early Monday and rescued the civilians, including a large number of women and children.

The suicide attack was reported from the area where the civilians were being rescued.

The military said that an estimated 10,000 more civilians were trying to take refuge in military-controlled areas as the government tries to take back what it says is the final remaining territory in

Sri Lanka held by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

A doctor stationed in the rebel-controlled area, speaking by telephone to the German Press Agency dpa, said he could hear close-quarter fighting between the rebels and troops in the area.

Dr Thiyagaraja Sathiyamoorthy said almost all patients in the hospital have run away from the facility and the medical staff were living in bunkers.

"When I came out of the bunker, I could see people running in various directions," he said. "Most are running to find places in bunkers."

The civilians have been trapped in a 12-kilometer stretch along the coast for the past three months although some of the villagers have been able to escape against the wishes of the rebels, military officials said.

2ND LEAD: 17 civilians killed in rebel suicide attack in Sri Lanka

According to army estimates, 70,000 civilians remained in the area, where drinking water is scarce. The government has been sending shipments of food by sea into the area.

An estimated 68,000 civilians have left the rebel-held areas and are currently in camps controlled by the government.

The military said it is in the last phase of a drive to crush the LTTE, which has been fighting for more than 25 years for a separate state for the Tamil ethnic minority in the northern and eastern parts of majority-Sinhalese Sri Lanka.

Apr 2009 0758 GMT

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

End of Document

WORLD DIGEST

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

April 22, 2009 Wednesday

THIRD EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A7

Length: 370 words

Byline: From news services

Dateline: 0

Body

Satellite shows mass of trapped Sri Lankans

The State Department is releasing satellite imagery that shows Sri Lankan civilians squeezed into the last small strip of land controlled by Tamil Tiger rebels. The State Department says the image released Tuesday shows about 25,000 tents estimated to hold 125,000 people packed into an area of 8 square miles. Human rights groups say the **Tamil Tigers** are using the people as human shields.

Chavez opponent seeks asylum - Venezuelan opposition leader Manuel Rosales has requested political asylum in Peru. Rosales is a leading opponent of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and has been charged with corruption in Venezuela.

Payment cleared for Cole survivors - Nearly nine years after 17 sailors were killed in a terrorist attack on the destroyer Cole, a judge has ordered New York banks to release \$13.4 million in frozen Sudanese accounts to family members of the victims.

Bolivia declines to share information - Bolivian President Evo Morales rejected requests from the governments of Ireland, Croatia and Hungary seeking information about the deaths of three of their citizens accused of plotting to assassinate Morales.

200 illegals found in Calais camps - French police raided tent camps for a mass identity check and detained nearly 200 people found without residency papers around Calais, an English Channel port that is a magnet for illegal migrants trying to reach Britain. France is being pressed by Britain to do more to keep migrants from crossing the channel.

North Korea rejects request - North Korea refused to release a seized South Korean worker during tense talks with Seoul officials, underlining the soured nature of relations between the two rival countries. The meeting lasted just 22 minutes.

London taxi driver sentenced - A London taxi driver who systematically drugged and sexually assaulted **female** passengers was sentenced to at least eight years in prison.

WORLD DIGEST

Tibetan lama goes on trial on weapons charge - A respected Tibetan lama went on trial on weapons charges as three people were sentenced to lengthy prison terms for deadly arson attacks during last year's rioting in the Tibetan capital. Phurbu Tsering Rinpoche is accused of illegally possessing weapons.

Load-Date: April 23, 2009

End of Document

Pope appeals for safety of civilians in Sri Lanka war zone

Agence France Presse -- English

May 17, 2009 Sunday 11:19 AM GMT

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Length: 330 words

Dateline: VATICAN CITY, May 17 2009

Body

Pope Benedict XVI on Sunday called for the safe passage of civilians from the combat zone in the north of Sri Lanka as the rebels conceded defeat in a major government offensive.

"I wish to address an urgent appeal to the belligerents to facilitate the evacuation, and I join my voice... to that of the (UN) Security Council that just a few days ago asked for guarantees for their safety and security," Benedict said.

"There are thousands of children, women, elderly from whom the war has taken away years of life and hope," the pope said at St Peter's Square.

Sri Lanka said Sunday it had rescued all civilians held by the rebel Tamil Tigers, as the island nation's president claimed victory over the separatist rebels who have fought the government for decades.

Thousands of non-combatants have been held hostage by the Tigers in a diminishing pocket of land on the northeast coast, though the exact number has been a matter of dispute between the United Nations and Sri Lankan officials.

"More than 50,000 people have come out of that area in the past three days and with that we have rescued all the civilians held as a human shield by the Tigers," military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said on Sunday.

The government had previously maintained less than 20,000 civilians were being held hostage, while the United Nations said there could be 50,000 people trapped.

"I also ask humanitarian institutions, including Catholic ones, to do their utmost to provide the urgent food and medicine needed by the refugees," the pope said before reciting the seasonal Marian hymn "Regina Coeli".

The pontiff said he prayed for the "protection of Our Lady of Madhu, loved and venerated by all Sri Lankans."

A Marian shrine to Our Lady of Madhu in northwestern Sri Lanka is considered the holiest Catholic site on the island, as well as a symbol of unity not just between Tamils and Sinhalese Catholics, but also between people of different religions, including Buddhists, Hindus and Protestants.

Pope appeals for safety of civilians in Sri Lanka war zone

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

End of Document

Relief agencies urge access to Sri Lankan wounded, displaced

Agence France Presse -- English

May 18, 2009 Monday 5:24 PM GMT

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Length: 355 words

Dateline: GENEVA, May 18 2009

Body

The international Red Cross said on Monday that it had been unable to reach the wounded in Sri Lanka's northeastern conflict zone since the reported end of fighting there.

UN relief agencies also said that their access to some government-run camps housing thousands of people who had managed to flee the combat zone had been restricted in recent days and warned that the camps should be "demilitarised."

The director of operations of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Pierre Kraehenbuehl, said in a statement: "Under international humanitarian law, the lives of all those who are not or are no longer fighting must be spared."

"This is all the more urgent since no humanitarian aid has reached those who need it for over a week," he added, referring to the combat zone.

ICRC spokesman Marcal Izard told AFP that the agency had even been without news of its 20 Sri Lankan staff and their families for a day.

They had been trapped behind the frontline for weeks and providing aid there until supplies were cut off more than a week ago.

The Sri Lankan government on Monday declared an end to its decades-old conflict with the ***Tamil Tigers***, after its forces overran the last sliver of rebel territory, killing the last 300 fighters and decimating the rebel leadership.

Meanwhile, UN relief agencies said the government was restricting access to camps for displaced people.

"Our access to the Vavuniya sites has been greatly curtailed over the past few days and this affects our ability to monitor and distribute aid to the displaced," said Ron Redmond, a spokesman for the UN refugee agency (UNHCR).

"We hope this ends quickly," he added.

Relief agencies urge access to Sri Lankan wounded, displaced

The UN humanitarian coordination office (OCHA) also complained of restrictions, especially to the 400 hectare Menik Farm camp, and urged the "demilitarisation" of the camps.

OCHA spokeswoman Elisabeth Byrs said they should be managed by civilian personnel or police including women as well as police officers from the Tamil minority.

Aid supplies were running low and some camps were "buckling under the pressure" of the numbers, the UNHCR said. Some 265,000 people were displaced in recent weeks.

Load-Date: May 19, 2009

End of Document

Japan: Break Silence on Sri Lanka Rights Abuses

Targeted News Service

October 22, 2009 Thursday 2:17 AM EST

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Length: 698 words

Byline: Targeted News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

Human Rights Watch issued the following news release:

Japan's new administration should publicly press the Sri Lankan government to end the illegal detention of approximately 250,000 Tamil civilians, six Japanese and international human rights organizations said in a joint letter to Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, made public today. The new government should also urge Sri Lanka to ensure justice and accountability for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), the letter said.

The groups urged Okada to take a principled position on rights and use Japan's unique influence as Sri Lanka's largest donor to protect civilians. While the fighting in Sri Lanka ended with the defeat of the **LTTE** in May 2009, the suffering of a quarter million detained civilians continues. The letter was signed by the **Women's** Active Museum on War and Peace, Amnesty International, the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination (IMADR), the Nonviolent Peaceforce, Human Rights Watch, and Human Rights Now.

"Japan is in an excellent position to make its influence felt with Sri Lanka," said Kanae Doi, Tokyo director at Human Rights Watch. "The new government needs to make clear that it expects Sri Lanka to free the people locked up in the camps and pursue justice for the victims of the war years."

In the letter, the six organizations urged the new Japanese administration to:

- * Call upon the Sri Lankan government to end the arbitrary detention of civilians and permit those who wish to leave the detention camps to do so immediately; and to use every opportunity to express Japan's profound dismay at the deprivation of the fundamental right to liberty and absence of freedom of movement of the civilians there;
- * Urge the Sri Lankan government to respect and follow the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and abide by these principles in the return and resettlement process;
- * Insist that the Sri Lankan government facilitate safe, unimpeded, and timely access to camp residents by humanitarian agencies and human rights organizations and to allow these groups to undertake protection and monitoring activities; and
- * Publicly denounce the Sri Lankan government's clear lack of will to investigate impartially credible allegations of serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law and to see that those responsible are brought to justice.

Japan : Break Silence on Sri Lanka Rights Abuses

Since March 2008, the Sri Lankan government has confined virtually everyone displaced by the war with the LTTE in detention camps, depriving them of their liberty and freedom of movement, in violation of international law. The government is still holding about 245,000 internally displaced persons in overcrowded, sewage-infested camps, breaking its repeated promises of rapid return. With the monsoon season fast approaching, the health and welfare of these civilians is increasingly at risk. The United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and India have all called on the government to release civilians detained in camps as soon as possible, but the Japanese government has remained silent.

In addition, five months after what the head of the United Nations' humanitarian agency described as a "bloodbath" in northern Sri Lanka, there has been no government investigation, despite the promise made by President Mahinda Rajapaksa in a joint statement with the United Nations secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, in May 2009. The armed conflict in Sri Lanka was characterized by serious violations of international humanitarian law by both sides.

"The new Japanese administration should not continue the silence on rights from the previous administration," said Kinhide Mushakoji, president at the IMADR-JC.

The organizations said that, "There will be no reprieve and there will be no accountability unless Japan and others within the international community persistently demand it," and called on Japan to "press for the speedy establishment of an independent international investigation" and "take strong action" to end illegal detention of civilians.

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Load-Date: October 23, 2009

End of Document

Nambiar arrives for urgent talks

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 18, 2009 Monday

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Length: 363 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 18 -- Vijay Nambiar, special envoy of the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon arrived in Colombo late on Saturday for talks with the Sri Lanka Government.

Nambiar is a veteran Indian diplomat and the Chef de Cabinet (Chief of Staff) under UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon since January 1, 2007. He holds the rank of Under-Secretary-General and is a member of the Secretary General's Senior Management Team. The office of the Spokesman to the Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki-Moon announced last Friday that the purpose of his visit to Sri Lanka was to push forward the Secretary-General's agenda, which involved asking for restraint and negotiations to allow the endangered civilians to leave the conflict zone. Meanwhile the Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's Special Adviser on the prevention of genocide has said that "it is not too late" for Sri Lanka's Government forces and rebels to end their brutal conflict, underscoring the toll the clashes are taking on civilians. There is still time for the Government and the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) to halt their fighting and "pursue a reconciliatory and peaceful path with the ethnic Tamil population," Francis Deng said in a statement. "This polarizing conflict is identity-related with ethnicity and religion as deeply divisive factors," he said. "It will not end with winners and losers and it cannot be ended solely through a military victory that may not be sustainable in the long-run unless legitimate grievances are addressed." Mr. Deng underscored that **women** and girls are particularly vulnerable to "excesses of conflict," stressing that the Government is legally obligated to give them special protection. He called on authorities to allow the UN and other agencies "full and unfettered access to all civilians and detainees." The Special Advisor also called on the **LTTE**, for its part, to "immediately cease holding human shields and let civilians leave the conflict area," a shrinking pocket of land on Sri Lanka's northern coastline where the UN estimates that at least 50,000 people are still trapped. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 18, 2009

Doctor: Sri Lankan hospital shelled, 15 killed

Associated Press Online

May 13, 2009 Wednesday 11:05 AM GMT

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 870 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Shells hit the only hospital in Sri Lanka's northern war zone Wednesday, killing 15 people in the second such attack in two days, a doctor said, as a human rights group accused the government of breaking its pledge not to fire artillery into the tiny coastal strip.

The military has denied firing any heavy weapons in recent weeks as it pushed to finish off the Tamil Tiger rebels, but Human Rights Watch says both sides are using the estimated 50,000 civilians packed into the last rebel-held territory as "cannon fodder." The Red Cross said one of its workers was killed in the shelling Wednesday.

The **Tamil Tigers** are cornered in a two square-mile (five square-kilometer) pocket of land. The military said it pressed ahead with its offensive into the strip Wednesday, capturing one of the rebels' heavy guns and fending off a suicide attack launched by the group's naval wing.

On Wednesday afternoon, the area around the hospital came under heavy shell attack, Dr. V. Shanmugarajah told The Associated Press by telephone the third time it has come under fire in the latest offensive and just one day after the last attack. One shell landed in an administrative office of the hospital, while another hit a ward filled with patients already wounded by previous shelling, he said.

The attack killed 15 to 20 people, and wounded 40 others, he said.

A second hospital official confirmed the attack, but spoke only on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized by the government to speak to the media. The official said he did not know what the death toll from the attack was.

More than 1,000 civilians many with amputations or chest wounds were waiting for treatment at the hospital when it was struck, and every 10 minutes or so another one or two died, he said.

Overwhelmed doctors have been reduced to handing out gauze and bandages to the seriously wounded, the official said. More than 100 dead bodies have been left inside the compound because no one will risk burying them amid the constant shelling, he said.

The hospital's admissions ward was hit by a mortar round Tuesday in an attack that killed 49 patients and bystanders, health officials said.

Doctor: Sri Lankan hospital shelled, 15 killed

Rebel spokesman Seevaratnam Puleedevan said shells also hit a home for mentally handicapped women, killing 38 and wounding more than 40. The health officials said they were not able to confirm that attack.

The shelling in the area also killed Red Cross worker Mayuran Sivagurunathan, according to Sarasi Wijeratne, spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross. It also prevented a Red Cross ferry off the coast from delivering food aid and evacuating the wounded, she said.

Reports of the fighting are difficult to verify because the government has barred journalists and aid workers from the war zone.

The government has come under heavy international criticism for the large civilian toll of its offensive against the Tamil Tiger rebels. British Foreign Secretary David Miliband called the conflict zone "as close to hell as you can get," and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton joined him in expressing alarm at the civilian casualties.

Human Rights Watch said witness testimony and satellite images of the area taken Sunday and analyzed by experts "contradict Sri Lankan government claims that its armed forces are no longer using heavy weapons" in the war zone.

The group also accused the rebels of using the civilians as human shields and shooting those who try to escape.

"Neither the Sri Lankan army nor the Tamil Tigers appear to have any reluctance in using civilians as cannon fodder," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science analyzed satellite photos of the area taken Sunday morning after a night of heavy shelling was reported in the area and compared it to an image taken four days before. The report was done at the request of Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

"By comparing before-and-after satellite images, we were able to see a significant movement of the region's human population, suggesting widespread displacement. We also saw destroyed structures and circular, crater-like features consistent with widespread shelling," said Lars Bromley, director of the association's Geospatial Technologies and Human Rights project.

One area, which had been densely packed with tents and other structures in the earlier photo was nearly empty Sunday morning. Another photo provided by Amnesty showed two white circles near a cluster of trees that were identified as impact craters.

While Bromley said the images did not show who was behind the destruction, Human Rights Watch said a health official in the area had told them the artillery was being fired from an area under the control of government forces.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara denied troops were responsible for any shelling. He said the war zone had grown too small for the use of such weapons and rebel booby traps might be exploding by accident.

The U.N. has cast doubt on the government's claim.

"The government have said they are not using heavy weapons, but the evidence suggests that they are continuing to do so, at least to some extent," U.N. humanitarian chief John Holmes said.

Load-Date: May 14, 2009

Tamil genocide all but sanctioned by Australia's apathy

Canberra Times (Australia)

May 22, 2009 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: A; Pg. 13

Length: 869 words

Byline: The Canberra Times

Body

For the past two decades, reports produced by the Australian high commission in Colombo have favoured the Sri Lankan Government at the expense of the Tamils in the north and east of the island. The Australian Government has been poorly informed on the situation in Sri Lanka. Canberra has sought to demonise the Tamils.

Reports from Australian embassies supporting the status quo are nothing new. For 25 years, the Indonesian occupation of East Timor was supported by our embassy in Jakarta and it was with reluctance that support for the apartheid regime was gradually reduced by the embassy in Pretoria in the late 1970s.

The war in Sri Lanka is a civil war.

After the ending of British colonial rule, the minority Tamils were progressively marginalised by the Sinhalese in the social, cultural, political and economic life of their country. Both sides vied with each other in acts of violence. The Sinhalese have long "disappeared" young Tamils off the streets of Colombo. White windowless vans are feared by Tamils. The Sinhalese have murdered Tamil prisoners of war and raped, tortured and killed Tamils in internally displaced camps under their control.

The **Tamil Tigers** were prone to violence against Sinhalese civilians.

The Tamils, like the Palestinians, fought back from a limited military, diplomatic and economic base with skill and ferocity. They sought to maximise power, and to do that they needed the support of the Tamil population. When that wavered, they used threats, punitive measures and punishment to force support.

Those measures were not condoned by anyone in the international community. But in the absence of the diplomatic and international support given to the Sinhalese, the Tamil leadership felt they had no other option than to force compliance and to secure negotiations by military means.

Mutual antipathy between Tamils and Sinhalese turned to hatred over the years, to the point that it is difficult to see reconciliation. Backed and encouraged by the Bush administration, who declared one side in a civil war terrorists, the Sinhalese army has militarily overwhelmed the **Tamil Tigers**.

There are reports that the Tigers used Tamil **women** and children as human shields, and they may have done, but that does not excuse the Sri Lankan Government from carrying through on what amounts to genocide. The solution was always for a separate Tamil state. However, this outcome will need to be negotiated by third parties as the

Tamil genocide all but sanctioned by Australia's apathy

effect of the horrible crushing of the Tamils will spawn another generation of suicide bombers and guerrilla fighters, just as it has done with the Palestinians.

Australian diplomacy, which had plenty of opportunity to get it right in Sri Lanka, has failed. It followed rather than led, and as a result Australia has no leverage.

The Australian high commission in Colombo reported developments with the bias and language that Canberra wished to hear. With scant regard to the realities of the situation, the Department of Immigration insisted on the high commission obtaining Sinhalese police clearances in relation to Tamils applying for refugee status. Thus notified, the police and army were then in a position to persecute family members in Sri Lanka.

Reporting by the high commission in Colombo was so poor that when working on the Refugee Review Tribunal from 1995 - 2000, I found I could not rely on reports from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in arriving at a decision.

Incredibly, Australia appears determined to compound its past errors. It has been reported that Australia has sent a team to engage with the Sri Lankan Government on ways of preventing Tamils coming to Australia and seeking refugee status.

The Sri Lankan Government is facing pressure from the United Nations, Amnesty International and the British Government for an investigation into war crimes committed by the Sinhalese army over the past four months.

The Opposition spokesperson on Immigration, Sharman Stone, has called for some internally displaced Tamils to be given temporary protection visas in Australia; an act of faith that assumes Sri Lanka will soon revert to a tolerant society. This proposal ignores the Sinhalese chauvinism and racism that led to the civil war and which after "victory" is stronger than ever.

A far better arrangement involving both compassion and common sense would be for the Australian Government to consult with members of the Tamil community to facilitate the permanent settlement of displaced Tamils with relatives in Australia. Such an arrangement would ensure maximum care for traumatised families and a more secure base from which to rebuild shattered lives.

In marked contrast to the fearful and mean-spirited Australian mission to Colombo, senior Indian officials are holding talks with senior Sri Lankan ministers, including the President, to seek assurances on the proper treatment of the wretched Tamils.

Surely Australia could behave with a modicum of decency, but it seems Kevin Rudd has little interest in human rights. Our weakness of character is noted.

India looks at Australia with a cynical eye.

Bruce Haigh was Australian deputy high commissioner in Sri Lanka in 1994 prior to his appointment to the Refugee Review Tribunal in 1995.

Load-Date: May 21, 2009

Doctor: Sri Lankan hospital shelled, 15 killed

Associated Press International

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 870 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

Body

Shells hit the only hospital in Sri Lanka's northern war zone Wednesday, killing 15 people in the second such attack in two days, a doctor said, as a human rights group accused the government of breaking its pledge not to fire artillery into the tiny coastal strip.

The military has denied firing any heavy weapons in recent weeks as it pushed to finish off the Tamil Tiger rebels, but Human Rights Watch says both sides are using the estimated 50,000 civilians packed into the last rebel-held territory as "cannon fodder." The Red Cross said one of its workers was killed in the shelling Wednesday.

The **Tamil Tigers** are cornered in a two square-mile (five square-kilometer) pocket of land. The military said it pressed ahead with its offensive into the strip Wednesday, capturing one of the rebels' heavy guns and fending off a suicide attack launched by the group's naval wing.

On Wednesday afternoon, the area around the hospital came under heavy shell attack, Dr. V. Shanmugarajah told The Associated Press by telephone the third time it has come under fire in the latest offensive and just one day after the last attack. One shell landed in an administrative office of the hospital, while another hit a ward filled with patients already wounded by previous shelling, he said.

The attack killed 15 to 20 people, and wounded 40 others, he said.

A second hospital official confirmed the attack, but spoke only on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized by the government to speak to the media. The official said he did not know what the death toll from the attack was.

More than 1,000 civilians many with amputations or chest wounds were waiting for treatment at the hospital when it was struck, and every 10 minutes or so another one or two died, he said.

Overwhelmed doctors have been reduced to handing out gauze and bandages to the seriously wounded, the official said. More than 100 dead bodies have been left inside the compound because no one will risk burying them amid the constant shelling, he said.

The hospital's admissions ward was hit by a mortar round Tuesday in an attack that killed 49 patients and bystanders, health officials said.

Doctor: Sri Lankan hospital shelled, 15 killed

Rebel spokesman Seevaratnam Puleedevan said shells also hit a home for mentally handicapped women, killing 38 and wounding more than 40. The health officials said they were not able to confirm that attack.

The shelling in the area also killed Red Cross worker Mayuran Sivagurunathan, according to Sarasi Wijeratne, spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross. It also prevented a Red Cross ferry off the coast from delivering food aid and evacuating the wounded, she said.

Reports of the fighting are difficult to verify because the government has barred journalists and aid workers from the war zone.

The government has come under heavy international criticism for the large civilian toll of its offensive against the Tamil Tiger rebels. British Foreign Secretary David Miliband called the conflict zone "as close to hell as you can get," and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton joined him in expressing alarm at the civilian casualties.

Human Rights Watch said witness testimony and satellite images of the area taken Sunday and analyzed by experts "contradict Sri Lankan government claims that its armed forces are no longer using heavy weapons" in the war zone.

The group also accused the rebels of using the civilians as human shields and shooting those who try to escape.

"Neither the Sri Lankan army nor the Tamil Tigers appear to have any reluctance in using civilians as cannon fodder," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science analyzed satellite photos of the area taken Sunday morning after a night of heavy shelling was reported in the area and compared it to an image taken four days before. The report was done at the request of Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

"By comparing before-and-after satellite images, we were able to see a significant movement of the region's human population, suggesting widespread displacement. We also saw destroyed structures and circular, crater-like features consistent with widespread shelling," said Lars Bromley, director of the association's Geospatial Technologies and Human Rights project.

One area, which had been densely packed with tents and other structures in the earlier photo was nearly empty Sunday morning. Another photo provided by Amnesty showed two white circles near a cluster of trees that were identified as impact craters.

While Bromley said the images did not show who was behind the destruction, Human Rights Watch said a health official in the area had told them the artillery was being fired from an area under the control of government forces.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara denied troops were responsible for any shelling. He said the war zone had grown too small for the use of such weapons and rebel booby traps might be exploding by accident.

The U.N. has cast doubt on the government's claim.

"The government have said they are not using heavy weapons, but the evidence suggests that they are continuing to do so, at least to some extent," U.N. humanitarian chief John Holmes said.

Load-Date: May 14, 2009

Saturday Review: FICTION: A healing art: Alfred Hickling acclaims a moving account of the human cost of civil war: Brixton Beach by Roma Tearne
409pp, Harper Press, £14.99

The Guardian - Final Edition

July 4, 2009 Saturday

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theguardian

Section: GUARDIAN REVIEW PAGES; Pg. 11

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Byline: Alfred Hickling

Body

On 19 May this year the president of Sri Lanka officially declared the defeat of the **Tamil Tigers**, apparently bringing to an end 26 years of civil conflict. The duration, as well as the complex ethnic divisions, caused the Sri Lankan civil war to go unreported for long periods of time. As Roma Tearne observes: "the war had become a worn-out habit on the island . . . the brutality of which was hardly noticed in the west. Other wars, more important ones in larger, richer countries, hit the headlines."

Tearne came to England at the age of 10, when her Tamil father and Sinhalese mother settled in south London in 1964. Since then she has pursued a dual career as a visual artist who has exhibited at the Royal Academy, and a novelist whose recurrent themes are the devastating impact of the war on domestic lives and the redemptive power of art.

Her debut novel, *Mosquito*, featured an exiled Sri Lankan writer returning to the country and falling in love with a 17-year-old artist. Of all Tearne's work, this was the book that most directly engaged with the violence of the civil war, particularly the **Tamil Tigers**' deployment of **female** suicide bombers, who descended from the north like mosquitoes "but, unlike the mosquitoes, were full of a new kind of despair and frightening rage".

Bone China, which followed, was an expansive, semi-autobiographical family saga spanning the 1960s in which a Sri Lankan girl finds her feet in Swinging London and discovers a rare talent as a composer. Once again, the central character of *Brixton Beach*, Alice Fonseka, is an artist - a sculptor who works with found objects - though this time Tearne brings the story shockingly up to date, as the novel begins with a vividly realised account of the aftermath of the 7 July bombings of 2005.

The opening scene plunges straight into the horror and confusion of a British doctor, Simon Swann, as he runs towards the carnage on the Edgware Road. Tearne establishes a potent sense of the atrocity through sharp, sensory fragments, incorporating flashes of "acid green jackets", "a bracelet on a blackened arm" and the all-pervasive smell of "sweat and rubber and explosives".

Saturday Review: FICTION: A healing art: Alfred Hickling acclaims a moving account of the human cost of civil war: Brixton Beach by Roma Tearne 409pp, Harper Pr....

It is clear, as Dr Swann performs his duty, that he is frantically worried about the whereabouts of a woman who lives in a house known as Brixton Beach. To discover who this woman is, and how Brixton mysteriously came to possess a shoreline, Tearne winds the narrative back 30 years to an idyllic Sri Lankan beach, where the young Alice is receiving her first cycling lesson from her beloved grandfather Bee, a renowned artist and printmaker.

At first, the war seems safely remote from Alice's blissful childhood. But intimations of the conflict begin to infiltrate; first when Alice is discriminated against at school for having a Tamil father; then when her mother loses her baby due to the wilful negligence of a Sinhalese doctor. The family head for Britain, where the Fonsekas' marriage crumbles as Alice's father joins a radical sect which supports the Tigers, and her mother slips into dementia, crafting cardboard coffins and dressing a collection of dolls in her dead baby's clothes.

As with the heroines of Tearne's previous two novels, the therapeutic power of art enables Alice to survive. She names her house Brixton Beach and is mentored by a young art teacher who encourages her to develop the driftwood creations which provide a symbolic link to her lost home.

As a visual artist, Tearne instinctively thinks in terms of texture and colour. Yet more often than not her metaphors have a musical value. She writes of tension on the island "stretched like a cello string", or of Alice's footprints "marking the sand like musical notation". The conflict itself sets a discordant tone: "The war began drumming again. After months of silence it marched in two-four time; a two-conductor orchestra without direction."

Above all her prose is illuminated by a painterly sensitivity to light. Alice inherits her talent from Bee, who is slaughtered in reprisal for harbouring Tamil refugees. "Words were not his thing; explanations were best done with brushes. The colour of a place, the angle of the light, a tree, these spoke volumes."

In Bone China, Tearne observed that "a mantle of despair was settling like fine dust on the island, clogging the air, blotting out its brilliance and choking its people". It remains to be seen if the pall of civil war has finally lifted, or whether Sri Lanka is experiencing another of its many false dawns. Whatever happens, Tearne has preserved the emotional impact of this sad historical chapter in three remarkable novels dedicated to what has become "the invisible story of the British empire".

To order Brixton Beach for £13.99 with free UK p&p call Guardian book service on 0330 333 6846.

Load-Date: July 4, 2009

**JAPAN: BREAK SILENCE ON SRI LANKA RIGHTS ABUSES; NEW
ADMINISTRATION SHOULD URGE RELEASE OF DETAINED CIVILIANS AND
ACCOUNTABILITY FOR WAR CRIMES**

States News Service

October 22, 2009 Thursday

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Byline: States News Service

Dateline: Tokyo

Body

The following information was released by Human Rights Watch:

Japan's new administration should publicly press the Sri Lankan government to end the illegal detention of approximately 250,000 Tamil civilians, six Japanese and international human rights organizations said in a joint letter to Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, made public today. The new government should also urge Sri Lanka to ensure justice and accountability for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), the letter said.

The groups urged Okada to take a principled position on rights and use Japan's unique influence as Sri Lanka's largest donor to protect civilians. While the fighting in Sri Lanka ended with the defeat of the **LTTE** in May 2009, the suffering of a quarter million detained civilians continues. The letter was signed by the **Women's** Active Museum on War and Peace, Amnesty International, the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination (IMADR), the Nonviolent Peaceforce, Human Rights Watch, and Human Rights Now.

"Japan is in an excellent position to make its influence felt with Sri Lanka," said Kanae Doi, Tokyo director at Human Rights Watch. "The new government needs to make clear that it expects Sri Lanka to free the people locked up in the camps and pursue justice for the victims of the war years."

In the letter, the six organizations urged the new Japanese administration to:

Call upon the Sri Lankan government to end the arbitrary detention of civilians and permit those who wish to leave the detention camps to do so immediately; and to use every opportunity to express Japan's profound dismay at the deprivation of the fundamental right to liberty and absence of freedom of movement of the civilians there;

Urge the Sri Lankan government to respect and follow the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and abide by these principles in the return and resettlement process;

Insist that the Sri Lankan government facilitate safe, unimpeded, and timely access to camp residents by humanitarian agencies and human rights organizations and to allow these groups to undertake protection and monitoring activities; and

JAPAN : BREAK SILENCE ON SRI LANKA RIGHTS ABUSES; NEW ADMINISTRATION SHOULD URGE
RELEASE OF DETAINED CIVILIANS AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR WAR CRIMES

Publicly denounce the Sri Lankan government's clear lack of will to investigate impartially credible allegations of serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law and to see that those responsible are brought to justice.

Since March 2008, the Sri Lankan government has confined virtually everyone displaced by the war with the LTTE in detention camps, depriving them of their liberty and freedom of movement, in violation of international law. The government is still holding about 245,000 internally displaced persons in overcrowded, sewage-infested camps, breaking its repeated promises of rapid return. With the monsoon season fast approaching, the health and welfare of these civilians is increasingly at risk. The United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and India have all called on the government to release civilians detained in camps as soon as possible, but the Japanese government has remained silent.

In addition, five months after what the head of the United Nations' humanitarian agency described as a "bloodbath" in northern Sri Lanka, there has been no government investigation, despite the promise made by President Mahinda Rajapaksa in a joint statement with the United Nations secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, in May 2009. The armed conflict in Sri Lanka was characterized by serious violations of international humanitarian law by both sides.

"The new Japanese administration should not continue the silence on rights from the previous administration," said Kinhide Mushakoji, president at the IMADR-JC.

The organizations said that, "There will be no reprieve and there will be no accountability unless Japan and others within the international community persistently demand it," and called on Japan to "press for the speedy establishment of an independent international investigation" and "take strong action" to end illegal detention of civilians.

Load-Date: October 23, 2009

End of Document

Strong pro-active system needed to counter detractors - Prof. Rajiva Wijesinghe

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka)

October 4, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 2778 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Oct. 4 -- The Secretary of the Ministry of Human Rights Prof. Rajiva Wijesinghe, in an interview with the Sunday Observer, said that the country needs to implement a strong pro-active system to be tough on people who are trying to be 'nasty' to Sri Lanka.

He said that the UN rapporteurs would make positive remarks about situations once they come to know the reality. "I don't think that they intended to make some controversial statements, but could not realise the difference between the Tamils and LTTE. Sri Lanka knows that Tamil citizens are basically very decent people while few LTTEers were monsters, but the West does not know this difference. Due to propaganda lots of Westerners think that Tamils means the LTTE", he said.

Disclosing the UN's decisions to send six of its officers who were young, earlier, Prof. Wijesinghe said: "In some cases I have not recommended to extend their visas as I don't think they are appropriate persons to represent the UN. They are immature to handle the issues in Sri Lanka."

Excerpts of the interview:

Q: While Channel 4 has decided to probe into the fake video by having an investigation, still the UN Special Rapporteur on Extra-Judicial or Summary or Arbitrary Executions Prof. Alston is of the view that the report was not impartial. Are we going to have a fresh study?

A: No. All what I can say is that Prof. Alston could have checked before making any comment on the video. I know he is bit eccentric, but honourable. When we were in Geneva last time some told us that he would not talk about certain things and he did not talk about that at the hall, but later on he gave a press conference outside. When they challenged him he said, "No I never said that". That is Alston and none can change him.

When I asked about the video Navaneethan Pillai told us that she would not make a statement on the basis of the video and then Dr. Radhika Kumaraswamy told me that she would examine the video first.

Some are saying that the Channel 4 has helped us to clear the doubts about war crimes because people claimed that we have committed war crimes. So we were asking for evidence and now they have shown the video and we have proved it's a fake. In that sense Channel 4 has helped us to prove the truth.

With regard to Channel 4, very distinguished Britishers told me, "You don't take this seriously as they have lost their reputation. It was so funny because one time they try to be racists."

Strong pro-active system needed to counter detractors - Prof. Rajiva Wijesinghe

Another point is that the High Commissioner of Britain was asked to comment about the video during the program, but he had asked them to show the video before the program. But, Channel 4 had refused the request. They have told that they cannot show it to anybody.

The High Commissioner told me that the producer had come and talked to him, but nothing was mentioned about the video. Later he has arranged some meetings but Channel 4 had refused to come.

Channel 4 is dishonest, morally bankrupt and don't give the other side to talk. I told them if they can show the video against us give us a chance to talk.

What I can say is that Prof. Alston keeps on changing all the time and gets easily carried away with ideas.

Q: What are the steps taken by the Government to clear the damage caused by such propaganda with ulterior motives?

A: We know these things will prop up. What we have to do is implement a much stronger pro-active system where we need to be quite tough on people who are trying to be nasty on us. The comments of the special rapporteurs that visited the country are really helpful for us for future actions. They have criticized us with certain respect and we have briefed them about the real situation. Many of them have shown an interest in human rights in the country. Take the incident at Angulana where two young men were arrested and subsequently killed. One could say this was definitely a clear case of extra-judicial or summary of arbitrary execution. Why Prof. Alston is not interested about this case, because for him human rights violations are racial problems.

Again I am also disappointed that Prof. Manfred Nowak, the Special Rapporteur on Torture has not inquired about the abduction and apparent torture of the SLIT student. However, unlike his peers, Prof. Nowak has not confined to incidents relating to the struggle of the Government against terrorists and has regularly reported cases of alleged torture islandwide.

Prof. Nowak had very rightly pointed out that most of our torture cases happen in the South of the country. It is not that our police is attacking poor Tamils or torturing Tamils.

The other action that we should take is holding regular press conferences to give the correct picture to the media and tackle any question in a transparent manner while being honest. Minister of Human Rights Mahinda Samarasinghe used to hold very productive press conferences earlier and it proved very effective.

Secondly, we have to accept that certain things are wrong and we should not try to go to deny every thing. We know that we are facing some problems with regard to IDPs and the Government wants always to do better for them.

We have to publicise the fact that over so many years of struggle not a single allegation was recorded against the military and the Sri Lanka Army has a 100 percent clean record on that.

One other thing is when there is an allegation we have to follow them and we are here to do that. Prompt reaction is vital to face any allegation.

Two weeks ago, the Swedish Embassy had made a statement that there are allegations of 'ill-treatment by the Government's forces, especially of women and children in the IDP camps'. So I asked them to give the reasons. We have to follow all these allegations. I asked them first, then sent a fax and an e-mail asking reasons to say so. If I don't get a reply I am going to write to the Swedish Embassy here demanding a clarification. I am also going to copy the letter to all the EU countries in Sri Lanka asking why they have not responded as this letter was issued on behalf of the EU countries.

Likewise, we must react to these allegations systematically and we mustn't react to little things. For example, if Dr. Kaelin claims that there are problems in Manik Farm, we shouldn't react because there are problems in these camps. But when they are telling that Tamils are being tortured by Sinhalese then we have to react warning them not to make these claims as these will create problems.

Q: The LTTE sympathizers with the blessings of the West are trying to charge Sri Lanka for war crimes. What is your comment?

A: It is a bit of nonsense. I think that the intelligent people in the West now have realised that if they go on and on about war crimes they will procure in the positive influence they could have. Our position is very clear. If the West tells us to 'resettle the IDPs soon', we will say 'yes we will try'.

The India has done a wonderful impact on Sri Lanka by being very sympathetic by saying that India will never support terrorism but will encourage to support Tamils. Some of these good that India did in that respect has been destroyed by the Western countries by sympathizing the LTTE. I don't think that they intended to that but they could not realise the difference between the Tamils and LTTE. Sri Lanka knows that Tamil citizens are basically very decent people while few LTTEers were monsters but the West doesn't know this difference. Due to propaganda, lots of Westerners think that Tamils means the LTTE.

When Minister Douglas Devananda spoke they could not believe him. They were surprised to see a Tamil politician in the Sri Lankan delegation and this is purely due to LTTE propaganda. In that way, the West got to realise that war crimes are something that not only upset us but creates an opposition. We know there is a need to improve our human rights. But we do not want to be told by anybody that our human rights is bad because of the war. The war was fought in a much better basis.

What I saw when I was in Geneva conference last time, there was much more lesser aggression and Ambassador Dayan Jayatilake's approach was perfect. He had a very good rapport with Asia, Africa, South America and the East and he accepted the need of improving the human rights. The Indians and Pakistanis commended about the resettlement process.

Q: What is your view on the UN rapporteurs frequently visiting Sri Lanka?

A: Once they really understand about the country's situation and the Government's efforts to solve the problems they don't make nasty statements. To me rapporteurs of water, health and sanitation, should really address the issues related to their fields. I have written to the officer in-charge of sanitation asking to do something about the terrible toilet facilities at IDP camps. These toilets were put up by the UN sub-contractors but were not upto the mark. I found that senior UN rapporteurs do not make such statements.

Q: What was the outcome of the recent visit of Dr. Walter Kaelin?

A: His report was good and very positive. He has done two things; one is that he has accepted that we have security concerns and the second is that he has recommended to look into the human rights immediately. These are good points.

In Sri Lanka lots of things get delayed. Instead of saying that we will do it at our time schedules, we have to do it quickly. Of course we don't have to do it to their times. If they tell us to do it tomorrow we can't do as we have our security concerns. But within the framework we have a responsibility to resettle them and de-mining as soon as possible. Dr. Kaelin was very impressed by the de-mining process. We don't say that we can't resettle them soon but we cannot take the responsibility if a single mine causes damage.

Q: But some of these top UN officers have double-handed policies where they praise us here but make controversial statements at important forums. Why, and is there a conspiracy against Sri Lanka in the UN?

A: No. I don't agree. No one has changed their views about us later. I know that John Holums had a major problem, but he became very good after that. Then he gave an interview to a private media which he had promised not to do. Later, he told us that one remark that he had made was taken out of context. Then we asked him why did he gave the interview.

Later the same thing happened with Louise Arbour. She was to give a private interview and she had arranged it after she promised not to. Fortunately Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe had stopped it.

Strong pro-active system needed to counter detractors - Prof. Rajiva Wijesinghe

What these officials don't know is why their staffers had arranged the interviews. I do not think that the UN senior people are doing these. The UN Secretary General Ban-Ki-Moon is a great gentleman. When these officials politely ask us to do things we must also respond to them.

Ban-Ki-Moon once talked about war crimes and it was wrong. But after that he had never said anything wrong but he asked us to do things to improve the conditions. Pillai had once released her statement without consulting us. We had objected and after that she released the truth. Later, we found that one of her staff had done that.

Q: Do you mean to say that there are LTTE sympathizers within the UN?

A: Let me put it this way. Lots of the younger people in the West don't know better. Secondly, in the period between 2002 and 2005 we also encouraged to talk to the LTTE. I don't mean there was any wrong in that as we wanted to civilize the LTTE. Lots of people got into that mindset and even now some people think that the UN must have the balance between the LTTE and the Government.

This had misled lots of young people. We had about six examples where the UN had planned to send away their young officers who were immature to handle the issues in Sri Lanka. Some such officers are still here, but I believe that they could have been sent a long time ago. We have cancelled their visas as they are quite immature officers. In some cases, I have not recommended to extend the visas as I don't think they are not the appropriate persons to represent the UN.

Q: There are mounting domestic and international criticisms on sheltering the IDPs. They accused the government of detaining them without their consent and also with less facilities. What do you have to say about these allegations?

A: We know that the IDP camps are overcrowded. There are bad conditions in some areas. I think these allegations were propped up because of the initial plan which was unnecessarily elaborated. They assumed that the relatively comfortable facilities that were proposed were designed to keep the displaced in captivity for a very long period.

I have read those criticisms and when I actually saw the conditions in these camps where the IDPs have much more comfortable lives during my visits I was really surprised.

When nearly 280,000 IDPs came out, the UN funding said that they can feed and look after these people for only three months. When we asked what will happen after three months they said that they can upgrade the conditions. But some of the NGOs, not the UN, have asked not to upgrade the facilities but to send them back. But even if we have sent half, another half will be there. So, that is why we also believed that the conditions in the camps should improve and we have been telling the UN that you have an obligation under international law to upgrade the facilities of these camps. That is what the UNHCR's Amin Avad was telling us too. He has promised us to do so.

We agree with Kaelins recommendation to be 'quick' in resettling these people. He also makes a very important point that when there is a delay in resettling people, there can be unnecessary incidents as the sleeping LTTEers would try to arouse the people. That is why he also recommended to us to expedite the resettlement process soon considering the security concerns.

Q: It is said that over 20,000 IDPs have already fled the camps and there are LTTE suspects among them. Is it true?

A: I don't how this number came up. We know that a certain number has got away. The military had confirmed this and confirmed that they have caught a couple of them trying to escape. Some of those who have helped to smuggle the IDPs are NGO workers.

We also know that some workers in different departments working there were bribed and had helped to smuggle them out. It is not a serious problem but we have now increased security at these camps.

Q: Why doesn't the government release the IDPs who have their kith and kin willing to shelter them?

Strong pro-active system needed to counter detractors - Prof. Rajiva Wijesinghe

A: To release these IDPs we have two things. One is the security concerns and we need to check the whereabouts of their relatives. In some occasions the IDPs have given the addresses in the East but they are false addresses. Some were pretending that they were from Jaffna but later we found that they were from the East. Therefore, we have to check the addresses of their kith and kin before releasing them and it will take time but it could be quicker.

The Government's priority is security and we do not want to experience an IDP crisis as in other countries. We have handled the IDPs fairly well and we want to resettle them soon.

Q: But some have criticised the idea of setting up transit camps.

A: The Government wanted to send them directly from East to North, Jaffna and to Mannar. But the issue of false addresses came up and now we want to double check the addresses that they gave. Even Kaelin agreed with the problem but told 'don't do the checking for too long'. He said that if the IDPs are sending to a transit for a week it's ok but keeping them for two months is too much.

Q: UN Under Secretary General for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe demanded the Wannu IDPs should be granted freedom of movement. What are the obstacles to consider this demand?

A: Of course we are moving on to do that but we have to be careful because as I said earlier due to security reasons. This is very important and the second factor is that we don't want people vanishing into the town and becoming a burden. What we want is to send Jaffna people to Jaffna, where they could easily find their livelihood.

Q: The Government boasts of a 180-day speedy resettlement program for the IDPs. Why does it go at a snail's pace?

A: I have asked the same question as I got in here first. But remember it is not 80-days but 180-days. When look at the Eastern resettlement process it was done very quickly but it was done at the end. If 100 people are to be settled within 100 days it is just one percent of the total and 90 per cent went in the last days. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: October 5, 2009

Japan: Break Silence on Sri Lanka Rights Abuses

Targeted News Service

October 22, 2009 Thursday 2:17 AM EST

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Length: 698 words

Byline: Targeted News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

Human Rights Watch issued the following news release:

Japan's new administration should publicly press the Sri Lankan government to end the illegal detention of approximately 250,000 Tamil civilians, six Japanese and international human rights organizations said in a joint letter to Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, made public today. The new government should also urge Sri Lanka to ensure justice and accountability for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), the letter said.

The groups urged Okada to take a principled position on rights and use Japan's unique influence as Sri Lanka's largest donor to protect civilians. While the fighting in Sri Lanka ended with the defeat of the **LTTE** in May 2009, the suffering of a quarter million detained civilians continues. The letter was signed by the **Women's** Active Museum on War and Peace, Amnesty International, the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination (IMADR), the Nonviolent Peaceforce, Human Rights Watch, and Human Rights Now.

"Japan is in an excellent position to make its influence felt with Sri Lanka," said Kanae Doi, Tokyo director at Human Rights Watch. "The new government needs to make clear that it expects Sri Lanka to free the people locked up in the camps and pursue justice for the victims of the war years."

In the letter, the six organizations urged the new Japanese administration to:

- * Call upon the Sri Lankan government to end the arbitrary detention of civilians and permit those who wish to leave the detention camps to do so immediately; and to use every opportunity to express Japan's profound dismay at the deprivation of the fundamental right to liberty and absence of freedom of movement of the civilians there;
- * Urge the Sri Lankan government to respect and follow the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and abide by these principles in the return and resettlement process;
- * Insist that the Sri Lankan government facilitate safe, unimpeded, and timely access to camp residents by humanitarian agencies and human rights organizations and to allow these groups to undertake protection and monitoring activities; and
- * Publicly denounce the Sri Lankan government's clear lack of will to investigate impartially credible allegations of serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law and to see that those responsible are brought to justice.

Japan : Break Silence on Sri Lanka Rights Abuses

Since March 2008, the Sri Lankan government has confined virtually everyone displaced by the war with the LTTE in detention camps, depriving them of their liberty and freedom of movement, in violation of international law. The government is still holding about 245,000 internally displaced persons in overcrowded, sewage-infested camps, breaking its repeated promises of rapid return. With the monsoon season fast approaching, the health and welfare of these civilians is increasingly at risk. The United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and India have all called on the government to release civilians detained in camps as soon as possible, but the Japanese government has remained silent.

In addition, five months after what the head of the United Nations' humanitarian agency described as a "bloodbath" in northern Sri Lanka, there has been no government investigation, despite the promise made by President Mahinda Rajapaksa in a joint statement with the United Nations secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, in May 2009. The armed conflict in Sri Lanka was characterized by serious violations of international humanitarian law by both sides.

"The new Japanese administration should not continue the silence on rights from the previous administration," said Kinhide Mushakoji, president at the IMADR-JC.

The organizations said that, "There will be no reprieve and there will be no accountability unless Japan and others within the international community persistently demand it," and called on Japan to "press for the speedy establishment of an independent international investigation" and "take strong action" to end illegal detention of civilians.

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'War in North has no bearing on PC Election'

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 399 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 21 -- Gampaha district UNP candidate for the Western Provincial Council and Biyagama UNP chief organizer Ruwan Wijewardene said the war in the North does not have any bearing on the provincial council election. Addressing a meeting of the UNP **Women's** Organisation at Malwana to create awareness on the Ruwan Wijewardene Foundation he said the UNP would support the on- going military operations against terrorism.

"Several UNP leaders including President Ranasinghe Premadasa were assassinated by the **LTTE**. The UNP leader Ranil Wickremesinghe was defeated at the presidential election by obstructing the poll in the North. However, the government accused us of having a secret pact with the **LTTE**. He could have won the election by cheating the people with false promises. However, it was not his policy. The government recently imposed an import tax further burdening the people who are already facing hardship due to the spiraling cost of living. The **women** in the villages are compelled to ask for packets of milk power from the temples at cheap prices. The factories and business enterprises that provided employment to thousands of people are endangered with closure. It is a matter of serious concern that 17 garment factories in the Biyagama Investment Zone alone have been closed. The people in the Biyagama electorate are facing hardship for want of basic facilities including water, a national school and a hospital. Many areas in the electorate went under water during the recent rains. I want to be a servant of the people and to find solutions to the burning problems of the area," he said. He requested the masses to rally round the UNP and guarantee its victory at the Provincial Council Election. President of the **Women's** Organisation Padmini Sigera said, "Biyagama electorate had been neglected since long and that it needs a dynamic leader. Gampaha district has the reputation of producing several leaders of the country. The late Prime Ministers D.S. Senanayake, Dudley Senanayaka and S.W.R.D. Bandaranayake and the late President J.R. Jayewardene were from the Gampaha district." Anuradhapura District UNP Parliamentarians Chandrani Bandara, Renuka Herath, Central Provincial Council Member Shanthini Kongahage and UNP Provincial Council candidate Mali Maduwanthi Algama addressed the gathering. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 21, 2009

Everything depends on how we view self rule

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

July 23, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 2484 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 23 -- Leader of the Tamil United Liberation Front speaks to Hard Talk about the aspirations of the Tamil people towards a political solution, the duplicity within the Tamil political scenario and the futility of announcing a Provincial Transnational Government (PTG) of Tamil Eelam by the Tamil Diaspora.

Q: With the failure by the APRC in bringing a consensus on a political solution, are you concerned that there is a delay in seeking a political solution as Tamil political leaders like you have been calling for? I warned the President soon after the end of the elections about the possibility of such a delay affecting a political solution being sought in the country. The experience of the Tamil people has been that the promises made by politicians soon as they come to power on this issue are forgotten within a few months. I knew this would happen so I am not surprised. But the situation is such that new problems have cropped up and the problem has been further complicated as a result of this delay. I don't think the government will look at this issue till the Presidential election is over. My concern is that because of the delay the problem is being unnecessarily complicated and the people are further confused. There is a group that says that now that the war is over, there are no more problems and that the people can now live peacefully. How can it be so easy? My one consolation is that the young Tamil people are no longer poisoned and misled that there will not be another militant struggle. I have full faith in the educated youth who are thoroughly uncommunal, unlike the older generation. Q: So you don't agree with those that argue that development and a sustainable economy in the North and the East is all the solution that the problem need to be resolved? This is a section of the people who are day dreaming about ideal situations. The fact remains that the Tamil people don't want any development till a political solution ensures their rights. What is new about re-running the Yal Devi train? These things won't win the people over. They want genuine peace. These people have lived under the worst of human conditions under the **LTTE**, their children had no electricity so studied for examinations under an oil lamp. They have suffered immensely. Can such a people forget everything simply because development takes place? It is utterly foolish to think that these problems of the minorities can be solved merely by developing the areas. Q: But the President in his address to Parliament immediately following the defeat of the **LTTE** stressed that there were no longer minority communities in the country, that all would remain equal citizens under the Constitution. Are you having your reservations about this commitment of the government? The very fact that the President had to mention that denotes the fact that there is a problem of the minority communities in this country. You can't deny that there are religious and ethnic minorities in this country. Of course the President may have been talking about what he perceives the future Sri Lankan society to be. In fact that is our plan as well where no Tamil man feels a minority, or being discriminated against. But the fact still remains that today there is a problem to do with the minority communities that needs to be resolved through a political solution. We are as a country, just months after the end of a war, facing the problems that such a country would face at this juncture. A lot of minority problems have cropped up. I am fully with the President on the dream to create such a society possible. But that is not yet so. He must make every Tamil citizen feel that everyone is equal in the country. Q: What in your opinion needs to be done on

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am immediate basis by the government to ensure that the path is made clear for such a situation? The President must now openly tell the people, even by legislation that any form of ridicule or discrimination based on someone's ethnicity is banned by law. Everyone must campaign for a minority and class less society. We can't deny the fact that we live in a society where the minorities are discriminated against. The government must bring in laws that ensures rights against language discrimination. To date I get letters from Parliament in Sinhala. The law must exist where that person who sends that letter can be taken action against. These are simple measures that can solve this problem. I intimated to the President to address this issue by going before the people for a mandate on grounds that granting the minority communities would not mean selling the country. The people would follow such thinking because it comes from the leader. If that assurance can come from him and what is offered became reasonable enough to the minority community then the majority community would be willing to grant them. The President would have his mandate he needs to do that. Q: But isn't there already a resentment towards the 13th amendment growing in the country which is most likely to prevent such a move taking place? I always held that the 13th amendment was the cure for an ulcer that was delayed thereby it having to now cure a cancer. The late Mr. Bandaranaike was the leader who thought of a federal solution and saw it as the solution for the problem. I was at the inaugural meeting he had when forming the SLFP where he clearly supported the language policy of 'swabasha'. However within six years when he was given the opportunity to capture power he betrayed that policy and within 24 hours made the Sinhala only policy law. My point is that if he could attempt a 'swabasha' policy when there was no ethnic disharmony in the country, why can't we implement the 13th amendment when there is such a feeling of communal harmony and as desire for peace in the country? The President should do it so that we eliminate all room for any form of separation in the future. This is why I have always called for an Indian model of devolution. It is really a duplicity of the British system. The fact also remains that, what ever you choose to call it if you follow it the pressures mounting from the 60 million people in Tamil Nadu would also subside. Of course we're under no obligation to TN but if we do that we'll be releasing the tensions on the Central government as well. It is irrelevant whether it is home grown or imported as long as we remove all room for future meddling by anyone. Q: So would you say that the argument that the desire of the Tamil political culture for some degree of self rule has been removed by the defeat of the LTTE is not entirely true? It all depends on how we view self rule. Why do people talk about it? Its only because they believe that some of these issues can only be solved under self rule. But as an ordinary citizen he won't be happy without it even if he has equal rights, if such rights make him feel different. For instance how can I feel I have equal rights when I see the way the elections are currently being held in Jaffna? There are silent cyclones blowing in Jaffna which are gaining momentum today. No people should be forced under a leader in these areas. People must have the freedom to choose. No leader should be brought from some other province and dumped here. The good name earned by the government over the last three years seems to be losing over the last two months because of the way the elections are being held here. There are Ministers who come here and promise various things and allow very little room for people to freely think. When they go in to their houses and tell them to vote, can that be called democracy? If I am armed and tell you to do something would you question me? How can people freely express themselves if they are living under another armed group today? Q: Are you saying that the people did not get the breathing space they needed to face an election after the war? Are the polls being held too early in your view? Its not just too early but also unwanted. Half the people are not even in their homes today; they are displaced and scattered all over. The other half don't even know if they have a vote or not. The people's movements are restricted therefore making it difficult for them to even come for an election meeting. I don't have people even coming for my meetings. Jaffna is under the dominance of a heavily armed group with offices in every junction today. I still strongly urge the President to postpone the elections. A9 has been opened to please one person. I am someone who fully supported the end of terrorism, but I am now suffering under those I supported. I am being slaughtered like a temple cow, by setting people against me. I was someone appreciated for my moderate stand. My election is not to confront the government but to serve the people enjoy the peace. Q: But Minister Muralitharan (Karuna) is very strong on the opinion that the desire of the voter in Jaffna is for the educated young and no longer these with old ideas of the past. How difficult is your position with the Jaffna voter made in this scenario? With all due respect to him, I must mention that he is in no way qualified to make such a statement. Don't forget there are even those who will vote for Minister Devananda in these areas because of the many promises made by him! I personally have nothing to offer them except the promise of a genuine attempt at negotiating with the government on their rights. The President himself is in agreement with the Indian model of a solution. Q: The LTTE last month announced that a committee was established to form a Provincial Transnational Government (PTG) of Tamil Eelam. The Committee is to recommend how to pursue the Thimpu Principles which has always

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seen as the common link of all Tamil political parties. Where do you stand in this aspect of Tamil nationalist politics? These are mad people who propose these governments. If anyone thinks they can do from outside what Prabakaran failed to do with arms inside the country, they are foolish. These are people who only have their interest in earning money from this. In fact this is the biggest disservice to the Tamil community in this country, because it has the threat of forcing the government to have to tighten the screws on the Tamil people, because of the threat such a move would hold. All I have to say to these people is that we can look after ourselves here. Let KP and others like him not ruin us further. There won't be any support for such a move from the Tamil people in this country. Their wrong if they think the Tamil people are that foolish. They will now only threaten our chances of peace here, but also their own existence in those countries, because those foreign governments are not going to tolerate such moves in those countries either. Look at the danger done to societies like Canada already by such people? I personally don't believe in the Thimpu principles. I believe in a united country where people can live in peace of the pre 1956 era; where the Sinhalese people enjoyed visits to the North and the Tamils can visit areas like Polonnaruwa or Kandy. Let everyone, even the co-called patriots mend themselves so that this can be allowed to grow. A patriot is someone who loves his country and its people and not just his people. Thankfully the ultra nationalist feelings of some sections of the Sinhala society which seemed to gain strength immediately after the victory has now subsided. I think these feelings will die if these people are allowed to see the plight of the IDPS in those camps. These people have lost everything. There are rich Tamil people whose most treasured item is a plastic plate or a cup today. This is not the life they desired. Q: There is one school of thought that believe that the Tamil people lost all its bargaining power with the defeat of the LTTE. Is this your reading of the current situation with regard to your position as a representative of the Tamil people dealing with the government as well? The government failed to take some important steps after the defeat of the LTTE, thereby moving the people away from them. There are people in these areas who are wondering if their suffering has subsided. These are people who suffered immensely under the LTTE, which is why they chose to leave LTTE areas and sought refuge under the government. But kept behind barbed wires their trust on the government may wean. Children must go back to school and not be put in to vocational training courses. Husbands can't be kept isolated from wives, or grandparents from their grand children. Pregnant women find it difficult to spend days on end under the scorching hot sun in tin roofed areas. Why would I talk like this having supported the government if there were no issues? I know what is happening there. Certainly these claims of government adopting a Sinhalization process in resettling people and distributing land are not those that I would ever make. I have no objection to Sinhala people being able to buy land or live in these areas. Q: But with the strong likelihood of Minister Douglas Devananda following on the footsteps of Minister Muralitharan and joining the SLFP, do you fear the loss of a Tamil political base strong enough to stand together in support of the needs and concerns of the Tamil people? I too like the idea and would support this two party theory. I don't believe in regional parties but of national political parties. But now is not the time for it. This must happen gradually with the people's consent. Once everyone feels equal and when regional parties are no longer felt the need for I'll be the first to join the national party. But this is the worst time to think about it. Let us always understand what happened and appreciate their implications. Q: What is your own role today as a moderate Tamil political leader in a scenario where the LTTE's militant struggle for a separate state for over three decades today stands defeated? Although the Sri Lankan forces had a bad name for some time because of the propaganda spread by the LTTE and the failures of the political administration of the South, they did a wonderful job with the war this time around. We are very thankful for that. But the room for a military rule that we're hearing of must not take place. The Army especially is favored very much today and their commitment to civilian welfare is immense. But I can't agree that because there is still a danger of a militant struggle in the future therefore the need to keep the pressure alive with a military presence. Certainly, this structure may be needed and could go on for a couple of years till all normalcy is in place, after that they must revert back to normal police and army duties. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Surit Das at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: July 23, 2009

Everything depends on how we view self rule

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Victory parades & the trouble with this one

Hindustan Times

June 10, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 408 words

Dateline: India

Body

India, June 10 -- Last week, Colombo put its final seal of military victory over the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***). Thousands of troops marched through the city to mark the 'national victory parade', and hastily assembled cultural groups played out Sinhala stories of bravado and sacrifice.

Ships small and large sailed the seas, and fighter jets screamed across the skies in triumphant sorties. Below, from roofs and balconies, citizens cheered and waved. Executives and saleswomen hurried to the streets to catch a glimpse of the fighter jets - Russian MiGs, Israeli Kfirs and Chinese F7s - as they flew past, leaving a trail of trembling window panes in nervous homes in other parts of Colombo. "This victory parade, with its fanfare and grandeur, betters Colombo's last victory parade, after the Allied victory at the end of World War 2 in 1945," a Lankan army officer told the Asian Tribune newspaper. All that nationalistic cheering drowned out some very worrying developments. Yet another journalist from a government-owned newspaper was picked up and thrashed. A civil society group, the Centre for Policy Alternatives, was threatened and told to wind up its activities. A leading intellectual was instructed in no uncertain terms to stop writing for foreign publications. The Supreme Court cited lack of evidence while releasing the editor of a Tamil newspaper picked up for links with the ***LTTE*** - all of this a parade of travesties under the parade of fanfare and grandeur. The UN continued to bicker with other rights bodies and newspapers over the civilian death toll, which allegedly crossed the 20,000 mark. "I categorically reject - repeat, categorically - any suggestion that the United Nations has deliberately underestimated any figures," secretary-general Ban Ki-moon told the UN General Assembly, quickly adding that "whatever the total, the casualties in the conflict were unacceptably high, as I have said repeatedly." What was also unacceptable was reports of groups of youths clashing in the days after the government-declared victory. Members of one community were reportedly harassed, their ***women*** teased. President Mahinda Rajapaksa had to issue a statement about "being magnanimous" in victory and announcing "friendship to all". The statement was issued hours after he joined a group in its late night celebrations on a frenzied Colombo street. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Hindustan Times.

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Load-Date: June 10, 2009

In the eyes of the Tiger; SRI LANKA

The Age (Melbourne, Australia)

May 23, 2009 Saturday

First Edition

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Section: INSIGHT; Pg. 7

Length: 1606 words

Byline: Russell Skelton - Russell Skelton is a contributing editor

Body

In a clandestine encounter in the jungle, one of the few Western journalists to ever interview the ruthless Tamil leader Velupillai Prabhakaran recalls the smile of a man who incited fear.

I MET Velupillai Prabhakaran - the Tamil Tiger commander who had made suicide bombing his weapon of choice - in a suburban-looking safe house hidden in the scrubby jungle of the Jaffna Peninsula, a crook of land at the northern tip of Sri Lanka.

It was April 1990. At the time, he was being hunted by the murderous Sri Lankan president Ranasinghe Premadasa (who was later assassinated by a Tiger bomber) and the Indian special forces. By then, Thavalar, as he was known to his cadres, was the undisputed spokesman for the Tamil insurgency and commander of the peninsula, from which the Indian peacekeeping forces had retreated humiliatingly.

I had been blindfolded and driven, along with a freelance colleague of mine, the late, legendary Kurt Schork, to the house where we were left under guard. One hour turned into two, then three. As the sun rose higher, Schork wondered whether the agreed rendezvous had been called off.

What we did not know then was that the Tigers had us under observation. We had flown to Jaffna from Colombo on an old military twin-engine Convair640 (I remember the bald tyres and popped rivets in the wing flaps). Our hitching a ride to the war zone with a plane-load of Sri Lankan paratroops had made the Tigers wary.

As we were about to call it a day, a four-wheel drive loaded with boy soldiers waving weapons swept into the drive. Some jumped out and scrambled to the front of the house to secure the perimeter; others flooded into the room, AK-47s raised, looking for weapons and explosives.

A young Tiger shouted something into a field radio. Moments later, a beaming Prabhakaran made his entrance with Anton Balasingham, the movement's political strategist, at his side.

The commander of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) grabbed my hand in a way that assumed respect and political sympathy. He had an instant smile that switched on and off like a bedside light. I was unnerved. Everybody deferred to him, including Balasingham, who had taught political science at a London polytechnic before joining the insurgency.

In the eyes of the Tiger SRI LANKA

A graduate of Palestinian nationalist George Habash's "academy" of political violence in Damascus, Prabhakaran dressed for the role, even looking a little like that so-called godfather of Middle Eastern terrorism. Prabhakaran was Beirut-chic: close-cropped hair, a thick caterpillar moustache, pressed jungle fatigues, a pistol on hip. I failed to spot the cyanide capsule he was reputed to carry on a cord around his neck.

It would be many years before a Western journalist would get to sit with Prabhakaran again. Balasingham, who had set up the meeting, had an Australian connection. He was married to Adele Ann Wilby, a nurse from Warragul who played a key role in the movement. She was identified with the so-called Black Tigers, a group of girls and young women who fought on the front line and later carried out suicide missions.

Our interview, scheduled for 20 minutes, went for more than an hour. When the leader took a bathroom break, the boy soldiers dutifully followed, waiting at the door, guns ready. Balasingham acted as interpreter, sanitising and smoothing over the leader's more frank comments. Many awkward questions that we asked were not put to Prabhakaran. Whether this was out of concern for our safety, contempt for reporters or clever politics, we never knew.

Prabhakaran brushed away most of our questions about Tiger atrocities with indignant denials. However, two aspects of that interview stayed with me over the years. The first was how openly contemptuous he was of other Tamil groups, blaming them for the lack of past military success. He insisted the Tigers had been "scrupulous" in their ruthlessness. "The sons and daughters join our movement even though we have killed their fathers who have been traitors," he said.

The second was his inability or unwillingness to spell out just what he meant by democracy, pluralism and a sovereign state - all concepts he had signed off on but never fully articulated. Back then it seemed (erroneously I now suspect) that the Sri Lankan government was prepared to give the Tamils a homeland, but not a separate state. I asked if he would accept such a deal. He was evasive and irritated by the question. As tensions rose, Balasingham cut off the line of questioning, stating the leader had already given an answer.

I was left to form my own conclusion. It seemed the LTTE stood for a one-party, Marxist (sovereign) state where Prabhakaran would be the self-appointed leader. Given that he openly admitted to shooting his Tamil rivals, his commitment to free and fair elections was barely credible. With bodies piling up on both sides, notions of pluralism and democracy amounted to little more than black humour.

What troubled me most was not so much Prabhakaran's smiling face and unmoving dark eyes, but the fear in the faces of those who worked to protect him: the cluster of teenage boys and twenty-something men. They were frightened, not daring to catch his eye and only speaking when spoken to. There was not a skerrick of camaraderie in the room.

Schork and I had gone to the meeting armed with a good deal of scepticism. Tamil intellectuals from Jaffna University, which had been bombed into oblivion by both sides, had briefed us on the LTTE's brutal ways. They told us that Prabhakaran had murdered rival Tamil leaders, had boys and girls conscripted, had courts closed and imposed martial law and oppressive taxes. He had organised an army of pushbike couriers to overcome petrol shortages, ferrying cans of fuel from the south to the north. Newspapers were censored and several Sinhalese journalists reporting on the insurgency were missing, presumed dead. According to an unconfirmed report - denied by Prabhakaran to us - they had been "necklaced": strung with car tyres and burnt alive.

Why Thavalar (it means leader, in Tamil) had agreed to be interviewed was not obvious. He had been on a PR offensive, wanting to persuade a sceptical international community that he believed in "Swiss-style" democracy. Premadasa, who had unleashed death squads on Maoist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna extremists in the south, killing more than 500 civilians in the process, was trying to lure the Tigers into political negotiations aimed at setting up an autonomous, not sovereign, homeland. How sincere the president was nobody knew. Prabhakaran did not trust him and two years later sent a suicide bomber on a bicycle to blow him up.

Blood debts ran deep on both sides of the conflict, between the predominantly Hindu Tamils and the mostly Buddhist Sinhalese majority government. At the time of our meeting, negotiations were nothing more than

In the eyes of the Tiger SRI LANKA

posturing. They staggered on for another 19 years, interrupted by shocking bouts of retributive bloodshed. In the 1990s, an estimated 20,000 civilians had died in the conflict, mostly Tamils. By this week - when news of Thavalar's shooting death spread on the news wires - the toll had climbed to 70,000.

It was probably always going to end badly for Prabhakaran, especially after his intelligent counsel, Balasingham, who had a long battle with diabetes and kidney failure, died of cancer in 2006, aged 68.

Watching the conflict from afar, nothing seemed to change. Both sides were caught in a deadly conflict that killed the very people each claimed to be liberating. A political solution seemed beyond the grasp of Prabhakaran - and, besides, it would have put him out of business.

He never struck me as a Nelson Mandela - a leader who could make the transition from liberation politics to uniting statesman. He had reportedly walked around the grounds of Jaffna University, calmly shooting the Indian paratroopers sent in as peacekeepers, as they swung from the trees they were caught in, defenceless in their harnesses.

After Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated while accepting flowers from a Tamil woman who had plastic explosives strapped to her body, I travelled back to Jaffna, this time by car, through no-man's land, with a big white flag saying: PRESS. Prabhakaran had gone into hiding, but I managed to locate Balasingham. Over tea in a hotel, he tried to persuade me, without much success, that the woman who carried out the Tigers' trademark assassination had not been a member of the LTTE.

And strangely, it might just be the women, and one in particular, who are the survivors and inheritors of this bloody philosophy. The Australian-born Adele Wilby was last heard of in London, apparently in hiding, but still a fervent member of the movement.

One of my most enduring memories of visits to LTTE-controlled Jaffna and the LTTE camp is of Wilby, the elfin Gippsland nurse with a pleasant sunny face who had fallen in love with her political science lecturer, proudly talking about women Tigers - how they had escaped arranged marriages and embraced enlightened feminism and the "burning spirit of freedom".

No doubt that was how she saw it. When I went on to tell her I had spent an afternoon talking to a platoon of women cadres, her sunny disposition evaporated. She became terse and unfriendly, and anxiously grilled me on what they had told me, what views they had revealed. I told her they had described themselves as freedom fighters willing to give their lives for a Swiss democracy in the jungle. And this was exactly what they had expressed.

I felt it would have been dangerous for them to have said anything else.

Russell Skelton is a contributing editor.

Graphic

TWO PHOTOS: Velupillai Prabhakaran with wife Mathivathani and son Balachandran; ABOVE RIGHT: Anton Balasingham with Australian wife Adele Wilby. PICTURE: AP

Load-Date: May 22, 2009

NEWS DIGEST 0700

Canwest News Service

October 27, 2009 Tuesday 06:54 AM EST

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Body

Study finds 1 in 5 teens at risk for coronary woes - (CNS-TEENS- CORONARIES)

High blood pressure, high cholesterol and obesity are affecting young teenagers in Canada at alarmingly high rates, and are increasing over time, says a new study to be presented today at the Canadian Cardiovascular Congress in Edmonton.

One in five young teens studied had high blood pressure and most already had at least one major risk factor for heart disease and stroke, says the study, which examined the heart health of 20,719 Grade 9 students aged 14 and 15 over the course of seven years.

Dr. Brian McCrindle, a cardiologist at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, said the ``most disturbing thing is that the trends have shown that this is either getting worse, or at best, hasn't changed over this period of time."

Heart Niagara Ltd., a non-profit organization, collected the data for the study between 2002 and 2008, and McCrindle and his childhood obesity research team partnered with them to analyze and interpret the results.

8 out of 10 Canadians are online: Survey - (CNS-BRF-INTERNET-USE)

More Canadians than ever are online, according to a new study that found eight out of every 10 people in the country have access to the Internet at home.

An Ipsos Reid study released Tuesday suggested that 82 per cent of Canadians have Internet access - an increase of four per cent from 2008 - and that it is ``almost universal" for those under 55.

Elderly Canadians are the least likely to be connected to the Internet, with about seven out of 10 seniors reporting to be online.

The survey found that the proportion of people using dial-up Internet is now only eight per cent, while eight out of 10 use broadband and the remainder have likely turned to online-enabled cellphones and mobile broadband sticks.

Scientology convicted of organised fraud in France - (AFP)

A French court convicted the Church of Scientology and a top leader of defrauding vulnerable members today, but stopped short of banning the group's activities in France.

The Celebrity Centre and a bookshop - the two branches of Scientology's French operations - were ordered to pay a \$900,000 fine for preying financially on its followers in the 1990s.

NEWS DIGEST 0700

Scientology's leader in France Alain Rosenberg was handed a two-year suspended jail sentence and fined 30,000 euros on the same charge.

A lawyer for Scientology's French operations said he would appeal.

The Paris case was launched after a complaint from two women, one of whom says she was manipulated into handing over 20,000 euros for costly products, including an "electrometer" to measure mental energy.

A second plaintiff alleges she was forced by her Scientologist employer to undergo testing and enroll in courses in 1998. When she refused she was fired.

Lines long as Canadians swamp H1N1 clinics - (CNS-CXN-UPDATE2-FLU-VACCINE)

On Day 1 of the largest mass-vaccination program in history, thousands of at-risk Canadians waited patiently in long queues yesterday, to be among the first to receive the H1N1 shot.

Lines containing hundreds of people snaked through shopping malls, local arenas and community centres, as mothers and fathers pushing strollers, seniors, pregnant women, and other Canadians believed to be most at risk of serious flu complications lined up before clinics opened.

Most provinces are first vaccinating Canadians who are believed to be most at risk of developing flu-related complications, such as those with chronic medical conditions, children between the ages of six months and five years, pregnant woman and health-care workers. The general public is being asked to hold off on going for their shots until priority groups have received theirs.

Canada, meanwhile, is spending more than \$2 million to buy H1N1 vaccine from Australia, so that pregnant woman can get their recommended shot "on a timely basis."

Boisterous climate-change protest hits the Hill - (CNS-UPDATE4-HOUSE-PROTEST)

Six people were arrested and released, and two were injured - one bleeding from his mouth - after more than 120 people were forcibly removed from the House of Commons yesterday after interrupting question period with a climate-change protest.

The demonstrators hollered at MPs and chanted slogans, urging legislators to pass Bill C-311, an NDP bill that would commit Canada to meeting aggressive targets to cut the greenhouse-gas emissions that cause climate change. The protesters said they were not affiliated with, or organized by, the NDP.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff were not in the House.

One of those arrested, Jeh Custer of Edmonton, was seen bleeding from the mouth after his head struck the concrete walls inside the House of Commons.

Protest organizers at the scene identified the six people arrested: Custer, affiliated with Sierra Club Prairies; Eriel Deranger of Fort Chipewyan, Alta., affiliated with the Rainforest Action Network; Chelsea Flook of Ottawa, Dave Vasey of Walkerton, Ont., Ian Brannigan of Ottawa, and Adam MacIsaac, who is from Prince Edward Island.

Coyotes to be sold to NHL - (CNS-UPDATE-COYOTES)

The owner of the Phoenix Coyotes has agreed to sell the troubled franchise to the National Hockey League for an undisclosed price.

The decision was announced late yesterday following talks between lawyers for Jerry Moyes and the NHL.

Bill Daly, deputy commissioner of the league, said in a statement late Monday evening that the goal is for the NHL to stabilize the franchise and sell it to a new buyer who would keep the team in place.

NEWS DIGEST 0700

The statement said that ``in Phoenix (yesterday), a tentative agreement was reached among the parties to amend the NHL's offer to purchase the Coyotes franchise out of bankruptcy, and a proposed order, mutually agreed to by the parties, will be filed with the court seeking approval of the NHL's amended bid, "

The sale will not be made official until it receives the approval from Judge Redfield T. Baum in an Arizona bankruptcy court, which has been overseeing the case for months.

Migrant ship rusty outside but tidy, well-provisioned inside - (CNS-MIGRANT- SHIP)

Despite its rusty exterior, the 100-metre coastal freighter that carried 76 Sri Lankan migrants to Canada was outfitted with an immaculate diesel engine, tidy living quarters and an ample supply of food.

New details about the ship emerged yesterday amid allegations that one passenger - 26-year-old Kartheepan Manickavasagar - is the subject of an Interpol notice for his role in a procurement ring that smuggled electronic equipment to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), the separatist guerrillas known as the **Tamil Tigers**.

Canadian Navy Cmdr. Derek Moss, captain of HMCS Regina, didn't personally board the Ocean Lady when his frigate intercepted the vessel as it entered Canadian waters off the northwestern tip of Vancouver Island on Oct. 16, but was given a rundown of the ship's condition.

According to Moss, the interior was clean, the engine immaculate, and people on board were in the habit of removing their shoes and putting on slippers before entering their sleeping quarters.

Load-Date: October 28, 2009

End of Document

SPUR concert raises Rs 1.6 m for Api Wenuwen Api Fund

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

July 29, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 428 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 29 -- The Society for Peace, Unity and Human Rights for Sri Lanka (SPUR) handed over a cheque for Rs 1,662,224 to Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa as a contribution towards the 'Api Wenuwen Api' Housing Project for soldiers.

SPUR, has been in the forefront in countering **LTTE** misinformation on Sri Lanka and contributing to welfare projects in Sri Lanka since 1995, organised and held a musical concert in Melbourne on May 16 to raise funds for 'Api Wenuwen Api'. An up and coming musical group 'Hela Shakthi', consisting of young Sri Lankans who have come together through their love for music and their motherland, joined SPUR in this endeavour. The concert commenced with a two minute silence to honour servicemen and **women** who sacrificed their lives in defending the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the motherland and the civilians who were victims of **LTTE** terrorism. This was followed by the lighting of the traditional oil lamp. Joining Hela Shakthi on stage was a wealth of talent in both singing and dancing. Two well known artistes from Sri Lanka performed at this event. One of them was the differently abled soldier-singer, Colonel Rajitha Ampemohotti of the Sri Lanka Army Ranaviru Band, who was specially invited for this musical concert. The other was singer Malith Perera. They were ably supported by popular Melbourne singers Athula Leuke Bandara, Sewwandika Abeyratne, Ruvini Dunuwille, traditional dance specialist Keshala Aparakka as well as several others. One of the first SPUR initiatives was to donate ten Australian 'Sniffer Dogs' to assist Sri Lankan security forces in the detection of suicide bombs and hidden explosives. Later, through fund raising projects like 'Sapumal Vyaparaya', 'Deya Sarana' and many others, SPUR provided thousands of dollars in contributions towards the Ranaviru Apparel Factory in Yakkala, the hostel constructed for the use of visiting Ranaviru families, donations of equipment to Ranaviru Sevana, artificial limbs and wheelchairs for the disabled, hospital equipment, emergency packs, foot spray, drinking water and many other items large and small. SPUR also commenced a program to sponsor children of disabled and deceased soldiers to continue their education. This on-going program has now been expanded to include children in remote victimised by terrorist activities as well as children of other destitute families. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Surit Das at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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

Load-Date: July 29, 2009

Rules of military engagement needs re-evaluation- Lanka

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

November 13, 2009 Friday

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Length: 421 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Nov. 13 -- Taking Sri Lanka's fight against the **LTTE** as an example, the government has told the UN Security Council that the challenges posed by terrorism in many parts of the world today may necessitate a re-evaluation of the rules of military engagement.

Ambassador Palitha Kohona, the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the UN said that much of the rules of war are based on the presumption that the parties to the conflict are conventional armies of responsible states engaging other state parties.

"But terrorists totally disregard these laws and principles as they wage asymmetric warfare. They mingle with and use civilians to achieve their goals. Once again, the practical realities based on the experiences of Member States must be seriously looked at instead of a theoretical application of humanitarian norms to all situations," the Sri Lankan mission at the UN quoted Dr. Kohona as telling the UN Security Council.

He noted that in Sri Lanka, the **LTTE** made the Tamil civilian population a part of their military strategy and this posed extraordinary operational challenges to the security forces engaged in combating the terrorist group while ensuring civilian protection.

"The terrorists' inhumane strategy was to create a situation conducive to large scale civilian casualties by herding the civilians to form a human shield and by placing heavy guns in their midst. Our security forces, consistent with their orders, had no choice but to intervene to rescue the civilians by creating a safe passage for them," he said.

The Ambassador has further said that the Sri Lanka is deeply committed to the protection of human rights and the implementation of International Humanitarian Law and that during almost three decades of combating terrorism Sri Lanka has taken utmost care to draw a clear distinction between civilians and terrorists.

"We have engaged closely with the international community and related human rights and humanitarian mechanisms, the UN, the ICRC and local and international NGOs. This close cooperation has extended to the aftermath of the conflict, in providing for the needs of the displaced population. We also welcome the progressive strengthening of this concept by the international community over the past decade, including through focusing on vulnerable categories such as **women** and children," he added. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Rules of military engagement needs re-evaluation- Lanka

Load-Date: November 13, 2009

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Re-evaluate war on terrorists: Lanka tells UN

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

November 14, 2009 Saturday

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Length: 420 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Nov. 14 -- Taking Sri Lanka's fight against the **LTTE** as an example, the government has told the UN Security Council that the challenges posed by terrorism in many parts of the world today may necessitate a re-evaluation of the rules of military engagement.

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Re-evaluate war on terrorists: Lanka tells UN

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Load-Date: November 14, 2009

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UNICEF fears worst is yet to come for tens of thousands of children trapped in Sri Lanka's conflict

Colombo Times

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 413 words

Body

Colombo, April 21 -- As 35,000 people today fled Sri Lanka's conflict zone, UNICEF said it held grave fears for those children who remain trapped in escalating fighting.

With tens of thousands of children still caught amid growing hostilities between the **LTTE** and troops of the Government of Sri Lanka, UNICEF warned of dreadful consequences for children.

"If fighting continues and if the **LTTE** refuses to allow people to leave the conflict zone, then we face the intolerable inevitability of seeing many more children killed," said UNICEF's Regional Director for South Asia, Daniel Toole.

The United Nations estimates that more than 100,000 people remain trapped in the middle of intense fighting on a 14square kilometer strip of beach in Sri Lanka's north.

"With this latest surge in fighting, our greatest fear is that the worst is yet to come," said Mr Toole. "With the high concentration of people in a small space, the number of children killed in this conflict will continue to escalate. This is a price too heavy to pay. Solutions should be sought not just to win the war, but to win the peace."

UNICEF supports calls by the UN Secretary General for a cessation in fighting during which aid workers could access the conflict zone and those civilians who want to leave are given the chance to do so.

To date there are 65,000 IDPS in camps in Vavuniya, Jaffna and Mannar, with 35,000 more to arrive in the next 48hours. Overcrowding is a problem in most of the camps. **Women** and children coming out of the conflict affected areas have endured extreme conditions, including scarcity of food, for extended periods of time. UNICEF and the United Nations strongly advocate an early resettlement of IDPs. In the meantime, emergency relief assistance is required for these people.

UNICEF's emergency support for children and their families includes nutritional support to malnourished children and their mothers, the provision of hygiene kits, emergency health kits, safe water, latrines and bathing facilities, and temporary learning shelters and educational kits for children. At the same time UNICEF is supporting hospitals to meet the increased needs for mother and child health, and is supporting the provision of psychosocial support and the identification of separated and unaccompanied children.

UNICEF is in urgent need of US \$3.5million to cover the most immediate needs of the affected population in health and nutrition, water and sanitation, protection and education.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009

UNICEF fears worst is yet to come for tens of thousands of children trapped in Sri Lanka 's conflict

End of Document

Minister Sirisena escapes suicide blast

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

September 4, 2009 Friday

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Length: 421 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Sept. 4 -- Agriculture Development and Agrarian Services Development Minister Maithripala Sirisena narrowly escaped an **LTTE** attempt on his life yesterday afternoon in Pirivena junction, Boralesgamuwa.

Army forces surrounding the vehicle of Minister Sirisena that came under attack

A **female** suicide terrorist blew herself targeting Minister Sirisena's motorcade at Pirivena junction around 1.15 p.m. when the Minister was returning after a Government function in Bandaragama, Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

The Minister escaped unharmed and one of the cars in the convoy was caught in the suicide attack. "A civilian was killed and five others injured including Deputy Minister Siripala Gamlath and newly appointed Ministry Secretary Ranjith Wijethilaka," he added.

"Wijethilaka had taken oaths today in the presence of Minister Sirisena before the suicide blast," Ministry sources said.

According to sources at Kalubowila hospital, five persons were admitted to the hospital immediately after the bomb blast. The Deputy Minister and the Ministry Secretary had been transferred to the Colombo National Hospital later.

Deputy Director of the Colombo National Hospital Dr. Anil Jasinghe told the Daily News that three injured persons had been brought to the CNH including Ministry Secretary Wijeyathilaka and two others. One succumbed to his injuries on admission to hospital.

"Ministry's Secretary Wijethilaka who is seriously injured in the blast was treated at the ICU and the third victim Ananda Withanage had undergone brain surgery," he added.

Minister Sirisena's vehicle

Two of the Minister's vehicles and several other vehicles were damaged in the incident.

"The minister's convoy vehicle bearing the number KB-0935 caught in the blast was badly damaged and several other vehicles in the vicinity were also damaged," police spokesman SSP Ranjith Gunasekera said. He said police beefed up security and a subsequent search operation was launched in the area. "Four police teams were deployed to conduct a full scale of investigation," he added.

The Government Analyst had visited the scene.

Minister Sirisena escapes suicide blast

He however declined to reveal the weight of the explosives used by the Tiger suicide cadre as it was early to ascertain the degree of explosives.

Minister Sirisena earlier escaped an **LTTE** suicide attempt on his life in Modera on March 1, 2008. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: September 4, 2009

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Sri Lanka : ICRC calls for exceptional precautionary measures to minimize further bloodshed in "no-fire zone"

NEWS Press (English)

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: International; N G O

Length: 400 words

Byline: International Committee of the Red Cross

Body

As fighting rages in north-eastern Sri Lanka, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is warning that conflict parties must take immediate action to prevent further mass casualties among civilians.

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

"What we are seeing is intense fighting in a very small area overcrowded with civilians who have fled there," said the ICRC's director of operations, Pierre Krähenbühl. "The situation is nothing short of catastrophic. Ongoing fighting has killed or wounded hundreds of civilians who have only minimal access to medical care."

The ICRC is concerned that the final offensive in the area by government forces against fighters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) could lead to a dramatic increase in the number of civilian casualties.

It has reminded both parties of their obligation to comply with international humanitarian law in all circumstances. In the current context, which is exceptional in that combat is occurring in a very densely populated area, extreme precautions must be taken to avoid or in any event minimize civilian casualties. The ICRC has also reminded the parties of the prohibition on attacking persons hors de combat and of the obligation to treat captured combatants humanely.

"The LTTE must keep its fighters and other military resources well away from places where civilians are concentrated, and allow civilians who want to leave the area to do so safely," said Mr Krähenbühl. "On their part, government forces are obliged to ensure that the methods and means of warfare they employ make it possible to clearly distinguish at all times between civilians and civilian objects, on the one hand, and military objectives, on the other. In this situation, we are particularly concerned about the impact on civilians of using weapons such as artillery."

Sri Lanka : ICRC calls for exceptional precautionary measures to minimize further bloodshed in "no-fire zone"

"In the coming days the ICRC will strive to assist and protect the thousands of displaced civilians fleeing the hostilities," said Mr Krähenbühl. "However, it is imperative that independent humanitarian organizations also be allowed to provide desperately needed services and relief for civilians still trapped in the 'no-fire zone' today."

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

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UN to probe war Crime charges may follow Sri Lanka win

Geelong Advertiser (Australia)

May 21, 2009 Thursday

1 - Main Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 14

Length: 390 words

Byline: INDIA New Delhi, Wednesday

Body

THE prospect of war crimes charges following Sri Lanka's military victory over Tamil Tiger rebels loomed larger on Wednesday, with UN chief Ban Ki-moon backing growing calls for a full investigation.

Thousands of civilians are believed to have been killed during the offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

Both sides in the conflict have been accused of human rights violations, with numerous aid agencies and rights groups alleging indiscriminate army shelling and condemning the Tigers for using civilians as human shields.

The UN secretary general, who is due to visit Sri Lanka at the end of the week, told reporters in Geneva on Tuesday that any serious allegations of war crimes "should be properly investigated".

"I remain concerned about the welfare and safety of the civilian population," Mr Ban said.

The UN's main human rights body is to hold a special session on Sri Lanka next week.

"The Human Rights Council cannot be silent when innocent civilians are caught up in armed conflicts," said council president Martin Ihoeghian Uhomibhi.

"The international community must strive to deliver justice to victims of human rights violations."

The military declared final victory in the decades-old conflict on Monday after overrunning the rebels' last holdout in the northeast.

In the run-up to the final battle, there was a stream of eyewitness testimony to shelling by government troops that caused significant civilian casualties -- testimony that has been staunchly denied by the military.

Aid workers were also denied access to those trapped by the fighting, despite accounts of a jungle area littered with the dead or dying, with the elderly, women and children cowering in shallow dug-outs with little food or water for several months.

"There has to be accountability for what has gone on in Sri Lanka, there has to be clarity and there cannot be impunity," Rupert Colville, a spokesman for UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay said last week.

UN to probe war Crime charges may follow Sri Lanka win

The hawkish government of President Mahinda Rajapakse described its military operation against the **Tamil Tigers** as the ``world's largest hostage rescue mission," and has yet to acknowledge blame for a single civilian death.

It is also convinced that any criticism of its handling of the war has been either an effort to save the rebels or blatant hypocrisy.

Load-Date: May 20, 2009

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India deploys air force, army against Maoists

South China Morning Post

August 9, 2009 Sunday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 08

Length: 374 words

Byline: S. N. M. Abdi in New Delhi

Body

India is deploying the army and air force for the first time against Maoist guerillas, described by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh as the biggest threat to its internal security.

The Cabinet Committee on Security had also approved the use of helicopter gunships if the situation warranted their deployment, said a source in the inter-services committee preparing the blueprint for next month's assault.

Air power was last used in the 1960s during the counter-insurgency operations in Nagaland, in northeastern India.

Dr Singh's United Progressive Alliance government gave the go-ahead last week to the military offensive as the number of policemen gunned down by Maoists rose sharply to 250 by the end of last month - 10 times the number of security forces killed in violence-prone Kashmir and the northeast combined so far this year.

Maoist rebels, who say they are fighting for the rights of poor and landless people, call the shots in 170 of the country's 602 districts by the government's own admission.

The dreaded "red corridor" extends from the India-Nepal border in the north to the south across Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. More than 6,000 police officers and civilians have died in the insurgency in two decades.

Referring to Maoist-controlled zones as India's "killing fields", Home Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram regretted in Parliament that federal and provincial governments had underestimated the radicals' strength.

"The decision to unleash the army and air force is a virtual admission that guerillas belonging to the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist) are better armed and trained than policemen," Delhi-based security analyst Ajai Sahni said.

Dr Singh has summoned chief ministers of Maoist-affected states to New Delhi on August 17 for a private conference to discuss the military offensive, which is estimated will last up to two years.

Home Ministry figures show that there are about 15,000 armed male Maoist fighters besides 5,000 women who often spearhead attacks on police stations or convoys.

The Maoists have responded by threatening to counter "state-sponsored terror" with lessons from the Tamil Tigers' defeat in Sri Lanka.

India deploys air force, army against Maoists

Load-Date: August 9, 2009

End of Document

Pardon for rebels plan

The Courier Mail (Australia)

May 5, 2009 Tuesday

1 - First with the news Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 23

Length: 390 words

Byline: Krishan Francis IN COLOMBO

Body

SRI Lanka's government says it is considering an amnesty for Tamil Tiger rebels who surrender -- although not for leaders of the insurgency, which is facing defeat after 25 years of civil war.

Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe said officials from the attorney general's department were studying the legal basis for a pardon for separatists who surrender, but a final decision had not been made.

Any offer would not be open to rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and others convicted in Sri Lanka for various attacks or wanted in neighbouring India for the 1991 assassination of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi.

“The leadership will be dealt with under the laws of the country,” Mr Samarasinghe said.

Gandhi was killed by a **female** suicide bomber at an election rally in southern India in apparent revenge for sending a peacekeeping force to Sri Lanka in 1987.

Mr Samarasinghe said the Government also planned to offer vocational training for surrendering rebels to help them integrate with society.

Tamil Tiger leaders have vowed no surrender. Every fighter is meant to carry a cyanide capsule and swears an oath to swallow the capsule to avoid capture.

But the Government says several rebels have already given themselves up, including the group's former media spokesman and an interpreter for its political wing.

Separately, the **Tamil Tigers'** political head, Balasingham Nadesan, has written to British Foreign Secretary David Miliband and his French counterpart, Bernard Kouchner, saying the insurgents are ready to “engage in the process to bring about a ceasefire and enter into talks for a resolution to the conflict”.

Excerpts of the letter were emailed to media.

Mr Miliband and Mr Kouchner visited Sri Lanka last week to press for a truce, but the Government refused to let up its offensive, saying it was on the verge of victory.

Fighting continued yesterday. The military said it had captured a 500m long rebel fortification.

Pardon for rebels plan

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said the rebels were now confined to 4.5km of coast in the northeast, along with about 50,000 non-combatants.

The rebels have fought since 1983 to create an independent homeland for ethnic minority Tamils, who have suffered decades of marginalisation by successive governments controlled by majority ethnic Sinhalese. More than 70,000 people have been killed.

Load-Date: May 4, 2009

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Doublespeak on Terrorism

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

May 11, 2009 Monday

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Length: 928 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, May 11 -- Doublespeak is another name for Western Foreign Policy. It is an opportune moment to examine the varying attitudes by the West, shown to the **LTTE** and the Taliban; and to the civilians in Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

Hillary Clinton says (in a bout of doublespeak?) she "deeply regrets Afghan casualties" in the Afghanistan theatre of war due to overhead bombing by US fighter planes. Pakistan has declared war on the Taliban terrorists at the bequest of America. The fighting on the edge of Swat Valley has led to the inflow of nearly 500,000 refugees from the war zone. It is a war designed by United States with active participation and heavy funding against ethnic Pashtun tribesman in the North West frontier carried out by Pakistan on the instructions of White House. These are the tribes that sheltered Osama bin Laden and the Taliban after the attack on the Twin Towers which led to the invasion of Afghanistan. It was America that assembled the Taliban as an effective fighting formation to be their proxies in their war against the occupying Soviet forces, with CIA funding. The madrasas (Islamic schools) in Pakistan which are alleged to breed terrorism in the Islamic world were created by funding originating from US, Britain and Saudi Arabian sources. To the United States, the terrorists in Pakistan and Afghanistan on the borders of the North West frontier must be mowed down by helicopter gun ships and heavy armour. Otherwise it is detrimental to western interests. Taliban must be eliminated comprehensively is the western military anthem. Yet Millebrand or Koucher have not opted to visit the devastated regions in Pakistan and make a humanitarian plea to save the civilians trapped in a war zone where heavy weaponry and air strikes are the order of the day. They have not made an appeal on behalf of the civilians who cannot flee due to a round the clock curfew. The West is not seeking Pakistani military assistance to save the civilians from a war situation. They show no concern for civilians unlike in Sri Lanka. They have not called for any restraints on civilians by the Pakistani Forces. The freedom to shoot is open ended. There is no demand for No Firing Zones or a safe sanctuary for the civilians. Television images show tens of thousands on the road with no assistance unlike in Sri Lanka where the soldiers are running to assist the civilians with food and medical care. The Pakistanis or the Afghans do not have a vocal Diaspora with a vote catching machine to deliver voters in the west on polling day. Has the West asked the resident Diaspora what contribution they have made to the refugees outside **LTTE** controlled areas. Are the civilians relevant only in the custody of the **LTTE** to the Diaspora! No Western Power is seeking an amnesty for the Islamic militants. Instead there is rendition to torture camps to elicit confessions. It is conducted on foreign soil to escape from the due process of the law under American territorial jurisprudence. There are no calls of cease fires from America. Instead the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the President of Afghanistan are summoned to Washington and demanded the war be intensified to wipe the Taliban from the face of the Earth. The West is calling on Sri Lanka to enable the **LTTE** to surrender to an international third party. In Afghanistan more Western fighting forces are inducted to fight the Taliban--there is no call for a pause for negotiations or opportunity to surrender to a friendly force. The Nordic countries are not sending emissaries to talk peace. Instead efforts are being made to enlarge the fighting contingent

Doublespeak on Terrorism

and arm them with modern sophisticated weaponry. Are we stupid as the West to create Madrasas and Talibans and bin Ladens as surrogates and then be the target of attack and undergo a metamorphosis after 9/11 and then declare war? Is it smart foreign policy that in the American backyard the bulk of the Latin American nations are electing by popular vote administrations hostile to the US? Did not America have to bail out of Viet Nam and Laos? How many times have US Presidents have lost elections because of harmful foreign policy? In the humanitarian lexicon is there a difference between Sri Lankan refugees from Wanni and the Pakistan refugees from the Swat Valley? They are civilians by status and the West sadly is not sending emissaries to speak of their plight. Why not a call for a cease fire for those innocent civilians in the Swath Valley on whom the West has turned a blind eye and are instead firing to kill? Indeed Hillary Clinton admits US helicopter gun ships had targeted innocent civilians. How many children and **women** died in these attacks? In fact America is persuading the Pakistanis and the Afghan to intensify the attacks. Has the west forgotten we are providing food and medical facilities including infrastructural benfits to the civilians including the terrorists for the last 25 years during the entire course of the War? Has the West carried on a war while supplying provisions free to the enemy? The bottom line is what is good for America is not what is best for Sri Lanka. Interfering West do not have our interest in their agenda. We have to steer our ship to suit our voyage. The West will sail with the flag of skull and bones to navigate any country to dangerous waters to extract the best for themselves. We must be circumspect to work on the lines of our priorities. National Interests of two countries can never be the same. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: May 11, 2009

End of Document

Sri Lanka says aid worker massacre probe concluded

Agence France Presse -- English

June 18, 2009 Thursday 10:06 AM GMT

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Length: 380 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, June 18 2009

Body

Sri Lanka's top rights panel said Thursday it has concluded investigations into the murder of 17 local employees of a French charity and six other high profile cases from the island's civil war.

The head of the probe, however, refused to say who had been found responsible for the 2006 massacre of the aid workers, which international monitors and rights groups have blamed on Sri Lankan government forces.

"We have completed seven cases, including the ACF (French charity Action Against Hunger) case, and we have asked for a date to hand over the report to the president," Nissanka Udalgama said.

"I can't discuss our findings because it is up to the president to decide," he added, saying his panel would ask the president to establish a more permanent body to keep up investigations.

Thirteen men and four women who worked on water sanitation and farm projects for the ACF were found shot dead in August 2006 in the northeast of the island while troops and Tamil Tiger rebels were locked in combat.

Nordic peace monitors at the time 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.

Udalgama's investigation has been controversial from the start, with rights activists dismissing it as a government cover-up.

Colombo did appoint 11 senior foreign diplomats and dignitaries to supervise the probe, but they eventually pulled out in April 2008 saying that the investigations did not meet minimum international standards.

Amnesty International repeated calls for the findings to be made public.

"Families of the victims and survivors need answers," said Yolanda Foster, the group's Sri Lanka expert.

"These people still have not received any justice from the Sri Lankan government... It proves a real need for an international, independent mechanism to investigate the allegations of war crimes and grave human rights violations committed by both sides."

Sri Lanka says aid worker massacre probe concluded

Sri Lanka continues to come under pressure over its rights record, with the UN reporting the deaths of thousands of civilians in a government offensive that led to the defeat of the **Tamil Tigers** last month and calling for a war crimes probe.

The Sri Lankan president has rejected the demands.

Load-Date: June 19, 2009

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In transition At Cheddikulam...

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

August 26, 2009 Wednesday

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Length: 1323 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka, Aug. 26 -- Sheer frustration and hopelessness were clearly evident on the faces of youth when they talked to the Daily Mirror. They do not know when they would be able to get out of the camps and start a normal life and engage in their chosen field of livelihood.

It is true that they are no longer subjected to the dictates of the LTTE and there was no fear of being targeted in the crossfire between the armed forces and the LTTE. Yet they wish there was a change in their present living conditions and are desperate to go back to their homes.

One of the main grievances of Tamil youth in the IDP camps in the 'Transition Relief Village', a part of the Manik Farm in Cheddikulam was that they have nothing to do and had to kill time doing nothing in the camp.

Another complaint was that they are not allowed to go out of the zone even to visit a sick family member living in another camp.

"My parents were working at the 'Komadola Tea and Rubber Estate' in Udugama in the Galle District before we were driven away by the 1983 riots. We came to Kilinochchi as refugees and settled there. Our family was fortunate enough to build a small business in Kilinochchi which brought us a good income. The LTTE forced us to travel with them when the war came to Kilinochchi in January this year. We were compelled to work for them and shift places with the LTTE when the fighting intensified. The LTTE at end did not have time to take care of us and fled deserting us," Chrishna Kandasami, (43) a small scale businessman said.

He lives with his three children and wife in Zone 3.

"I brought about Rs. 250,000 with me when we came here. It has now been reduced to a few thousand rupees as we have to buy all our extra provisions from the boutique or the cooperative," he said.

Inmates of the IDP camps say that they receive rice, flour, sugar, lentils and medicine free from the government. "Cooking at home has become quite a problem in the last few days with the incessant rains. All our huts and surrounding areas have become muddy," K. Thyagamurthi (26) of Trincomalee said.

He had been a paddy farmer before becoming a displaced person. He is impatient to see his 20 year old wife who is reportedly an inmate of Zone 4 since the authorities at Zone 3 do not permit him to visit his wife.

The boutiques and co-op shops that sell essential provisions have mushroomed in the IDP camps.

In transition At Cheddikulam...

When asked whether they were not satisfied and contented as there was no threat to their lives and are being fed by the government, most of young men did not agree fully.

The frustration of being displaced persons without identity and acceptance, not been able to do any productive work and just hanging around among the same people perennially is extremely difficult they said.

"We want to go back to our places of residence and start our traditional way of life. But we do not know when we will be given that opportunity. We do not know when the mine clearing operations would be concluded in our area," Mohan Nagulaeswaran of Vishwamadu (29) said.

They would be very happy if the authorities employed them even as labourers .

"We do not care much about the wages. What we desperately want is a change from this perpetually monotonous life. The government can employ us in construction or even in cleaning work. But only a very few have got that opportunity at the moment," Naguleswaran opined.

An NGO representative understanding the sense of frustration among the youth in the IDP camps said it will be of immense help if the authorities draw up a plan to employ them in some kind of employment under the supervision of the Army so that they will be occupied .

"These Tamil youths will never take up arms for sure. All must accept that the entire re-settlement process is a tricky business and government must act tactfully as the problem is very sensitive., The government needs to seek the avenues to expedite the de-mining and resettlement process. not because the NGOs or the International Community want. I think there is room for further expansion and improvement in the de-mining and re-settlement activities," he said on condition of anonymity.

Another negative development at the IDP camps was the highly unhygienic conditions, due to the existing bad weather. Though the heavy clouds of dust familiar with the camp environment had been settled, the muddy roads, soggy grounds and paths in and out of the huts and dirt filled drains created a sorry picture of the camps.

The scenes of Tamil youths in large groups hanging around near boutiques, health centres and water holes were common at the IDP camps. But it was a relief to note that they did not show any confrontational sentiment or quarrelsome attitude at all, even under this situation. Another phenomenon was that the desperation was mainly rampant only among the male youth.

Dr. Damayanthi Perera, Pediatrician who has been serving at the Lady Ridgeway Children's Hospital prior to her secondment to Chettikulam said there was a severe shortage of pediatricians and she had to work at the IDP camps more that 10 hours a day serving sick children.

"I need a minimum of three more pediatricians as the number of children with typhoid, dysentery, chicken pox, and skin diseases seeking medical care are increasing rapidly. Diseases have not developed into epidemic proportions but are on the rise alarmingly. The health sector must take note of the impending danger and must act fast," she stressed.

She said the incidence of pregnancy among women has increased sharply.

"Almost all married women in the productive range are pregnant. We are concerned on their nutritional condition as a big majority of children under 15 and women of all ages are malnourished and anaemic," she said.

The Ministry of Health with the assistance of the WHO, UNICEF, Medicines Sans Frontiers and UNHCR has initiated a series of health programs to maintain health services to a satisfactory level at IDP camps and to improve the nutritional level of children and expectant mothers.

Chief Zonal Health Coordinator in charge of six IDP camps in Cheddikulam, Dr. Novil Wijesekara said the Health Ministry has done its utmost to maintain health facilities at the six zones in Cheddikulam catering to approximately 2,12,000 IDPs with limited resources.

In transition At Cheddikulam...

"We have 17 Public Health Centres and five Referral Health Centres in six zones from 0 - 5. This is in addition to the Indian Field Hospital, a dozen of mobile clinics and Day Care centres. We maintain Night on Call and Ambulance Services round the clock in all six zones," he said.

Drinking water is provided in large containers. Water is pumped for several hours a day to the camps both for drinking and washing. However, long queues for water are seen at every zone.

Lack of a proper drainage system was a major problem at every camp. Only a narrow and shallow drain had been cut on the either sides of the dusty roads within the camps . The drains filled with dirt, food leftovers and rubbish make the camps environment highly unhygienic.

One plus factor that I noticed was that IDPs' effort to grow whatever possible in the surrounding areas of their dwellings. Almost all inmates had grown at least one plant of tomatoes, maize, capsicum, vegetables or green leaves on the tiny plot of land next to their hut.

One other phenomena was that they live as a closely knit family despite their grievances and shortcomings.

It is of utmost importance that the government must act fast to set up a few community centres with reading materials and a couple of play grounds in each zone to enable youth to spend their time meaningfully. A proper counselling system will also do wonders among young inmates as they are of the view that they are a marginalized lot and are being separated from the outside world. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: August 26, 2009

Tamil protests a test of our tolerance

The Toronto Star

May 16, 2009 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A01

Length: 936 words

Byline: Haroon Siddiqui, Toronto Star

Body

The global has never been more local than now. The prospect of an end to the civil war in Sri Lanka by tomorrow, as promised yesterday by Colombo, raises hopes for a truce in the rhetorical war in Canada - Toronto, in particular.

This past week we've had a cacophony of competing Canadian voices, about the Sri Lankan crisis itself and, more vociferously, about what may constitute the limits of multiculturalism.

Following the much-derided blockade of the Gardiner Expressway, Tamil Canadian demonstrators have taken to handing out leaflets saying, "Sorry for the trouble, understand our struggle." They did so again at last night's protest at Yonge and Dundas Sts.

We do understand the bloodbath going on in Sri Lanka but, please, don't clog our roads and disrupt our commute; that's been the public response, spat out on hotline radio and expressed politely elsewhere.

This has been described as a milestone event in multiculti Canada. Not really. We've had bigger ones - both pre- and post-multiculturalism, involving the majority and several minorities: The World War II internment of Japanese Canadians; the 1985 Air India crash; the many post-9/11 episodes, from Maher Arar to the ongoing terrorism trial in Toronto; and the periodic disruptions caused by native protests over land disputes.

But the loud public conversation we've been having does reveal a great deal about our home and native, and adopted, land, circa 2009.

It tells us, first, that the sky is not falling. Police have been exemplary in handling the demonstrations, which have gone smoothly compared to, say, London, England, where the protests turned ugly.

Chief Bill Blair's orders - "our response has to be proportional to the threat" - has been carried out with a massive and visible presence of police in the hope that it does not have to be used. And, for the most part, it has not been.

For their part, the protesters, whatever you thought of them, have been highly organized. But for the Gardiner fiasco, they have been orderly and peaceful.

"They are as good as I've ever seen," a senior police officer told me. "They mobilize quickly. They are disciplined. They feed the people, serve tea. They even pick up and cart away their garbage. All this is good to see - and scary."

The rallies, an internationally co-ordinated mixture of moxie and stealth, carried some unspoken messages as well.

Tamil protests a test of our tolerance

While rightly condemning the Sri Lankan government for not caring for the 50,000 civilians trapped in the northeastern tip of the island, the protesters have not called on the **Tamil Tigers** to stop using the civilians as human shields.

The rallies have been about the humanitarian crisis of the Sri Lankan Tamils. But they have also been about solidarity with the terrorist-designated Tigers and its leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran.

The rallies may also be an expression of hope that he and the Tigers survive, so that the legitimate Tamil struggle against Sri Lankan oppression is not wiped out with them.

The Tamil Canadian community is divided between those who condemn or condone the Tigers. It is clear the latter have big support.

Equally, alternative Tamil voices have been eliminated in Sri Lanka and silenced in Canada, notes Professor David Cameron of the University of Toronto, who worked on the 2002-04 peace process through the Ottawa-based Forum of Federations.

"The Tamil community feels, 'the **Tamil Tigers** are the only ones to speak for us.' But the dilemma is a creation of the Tigers. The community has been intimidated into adopting positions they don't want or they are forced to shut up."

Canadian politicians are thus "wary of entering into a dialogue with the community that's organized under the Tiger banner."

That said, our politicians have come across as trying to have it every which way - upholding the rights of a grieved minority but siding with the annoyed majority, sympathizing with Tamil Canadians but not wanting to be seen with them.

Tamil Canadians are not the only ones to bring baggage to this debate. In the last few days we've heard, over and over again, an old Canadian myth: Let the immigrants not import their old country troubles to Canada. Except that they always have: the British and the French, to start with, and the Irish, the Ukrainians, the Serbs, the Sikhs, etc. etc. Canadian politics and the Canadian character have been shaped, in some ways, by "old country" politics.

What can Ottawa do, beyond the \$7.5 million aid it has announced, given that Canada has little clout? Even the U.S. and India, the regional super-power, have had their entreaties for a ceasefire rejected by Colombo, which is determined to finish off the Tigers.

"We should offer the DART team," says Cameron. The military's Disaster Assistance Response Team is designed to fly into conflict zones to provide drinking water, medical treatment and other help. "It would be direct and very visible and very symbolic."

Canada, home to a large Tamil diaspora, has been inconvenienced far less than India, Sri Lanka's neighbour. Just across the Indian Ocean is the large Indian state of Tamil Nadu, home of 60 million Tamil-speaking people.

It was in Tamil Nadu that a **female** Tiger suicide bomber assassinated Rajiv Gandhi in 1991. As prime minister he had sent Indian troops to help the Sri Lankan government. But the popular sentiment in Tamil Nadu is different, where the opposition leader has called for a separate Tamil homeland, "carved out" of Sri Lanka.

It is not yet clear as to how the issue got played out in the just-finished, closely fought, election.

Haroon Siddiqui is the Star's editorial page editor emeritus. hsiddiq @ thestar.ca

Load-Date: May 16, 2009

Tamil protests a test of our tolerance

End of Document

Mayor warns defiant Tamils; Police 'will remove you,' he says, but protesters say traffic chaos possible

The Toronto Star

May 12, 2009 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A01

Length: 909 words

Byline: Nicole Baute and Kenyon Wallace, Toronto Star

Body

They stormed the Gardiner Expressway and screamed for help until their voices were hoarse - and yesterday Tamil protesters said there could be more drastic traffic-stopping demonstrations in the coming days if the Canadian government does not hear their cries.

"We don't care what happens to us," said Ghormy Theva, 21. She and other young protesters have run out of ideas for "extreme measures," but she said she's willing to risk everything to draw attention to the suffering in Sri Lanka.

Hundreds were reported killed Sunday and Monday in artillery barrages that struck the narrow strip of territory controlled by the **Tamil Tigers**. A UN spokesperson called it a "bloodbath."

In Toronto, Tamil Canadians called the attacks genocide. Senthana Nada of the Coalition to Stop the War in Sri Lanka said there could be more large protests soon.

"No one wants to cause an inconvenience but ... members of the community have seen their blood relatives massacred and killed in the most inhumane ways," he said.

Yesterday, politicians faced the difficult task of criticizing the protesters for the Gardiner blockade while showing support for the Tamil community, and yet distancing themselves from the **Tamil Tigers**, labelled as terrorists by Ottawa.

"The protesters were endangering themselves, they were endangering the public, and they were endangering the Toronto police," Mayor David Miller said.

"The Tamil community needs to hear two things from us. First is, occupying roads like the Gardiner isn't acceptable, and the police will prevent you from doing it and will remove you when you do."

Then he took a more sympathetic tone: "The second is that Torontonians understand that there needs to be an end to the hostilities in Sri Lanka and certainly understands the pain people feel."

Premier Dalton McGuinty echoed the mayor's sentiments, saying yesterday there is a "right way and a wrong way to protest."

McGuinty said people have the right to demonstrate on the front lawn of Queen's Park, but not the Gardiner.

Mayor warns defiant Tamils Police 'will remove you,' he says, but protesters say traffic chaos possible

But he said he recognized how the violence in Sri Lanka is affecting the local community. There are some 200,000 Tamil Canadians in the GTA, the largest population outside of Sri Lanka.

"They are talking about family and friends who are mired in a very difficult circumstance in Sri Lanka."

In a statement, Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff said his party's officials stepped in to try to end Sunday's protest in the interest of public safety.

"The protest had blocked the highway and put the safety of the protesters and innocent bystanders - including women and small children - at risk," Ignatieff said in the statement.

"Our party has raised, and will continue to raise, the plight of the Tamils in Sri Lanka in the House of Commons.

"But the Liberal Party of Canada stands firmly against terrorism, and I restate our unequivocal condemnation of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam."

Ignatieff was asked about the Tamil demonstrations in a meeting with ethnic reporters at Queen's Park last night.

"We made it very clear we do not approve of these demonstrations on public roadways because they're dangerous," he said. Despite speculation Ignatieff was going to talk to Tamil protesters outside Queen's Park, a vehicle whisked him away after the meeting with journalists.

The protesters who flooded the Gardiner Sunday night are demanding international sanctions against the Sri Lankan government until it enters into a ceasefire with Tamil rebels in the country's north.

Sitting under a white tent on the lawn of Queen's Park yesterday morning, Gunam Veerakathipillai, 52, said he has been on a hunger strike for eight days. The Pickering resident said he won't eat anything until he has a written promise from the federal government that it will intervene to end the carnage in his native country.

"I have lost 18 family members to the Sri Lankan armed forces so I can't live a normal life anymore. Nobody seems to care and that is why I'm taking this very hard decision," said Veerakathipillai, lying on a mattress, his voice cracking. "I'm suffering but my suffering is nothing. My people are suffering a hundred times more than this."

On Sunday, about 5,000 grief-stricken Tamil Canadians marched from Queen's Park to the Gardiner around 6: 30 p.m. The elderly, children and even toddlers camped out on the highway for up to seven hours, blocking traffic in both directions and shouting, "No more genocide!" Organizers agreed to move from the roadway around midnight only after a representative in Ignatieff's office promised to bring up the demonstrators' cause in Parliament.

In the House of Commons, Liberal MP Rob Oliphant accused the government of failing "to step up to the international plate."

When asked what instructions the government had given to Canada's UN ambassador and high commissioner to aggressively pursue a ceasefire and to ensure international humanitarian presence, federal International Cooperation Minister Bev Oda said her government had taken "significant steps."

"We've continually asked for a ceasefire and unhindered access for humanitarian aid," she said.

But such comments did not placate a crowd of about 300 protesters gathered at Queen's Park yesterday chanting slogans of "Stephen Harper don't be silent" and "Canada take immediate action." Another 200 protesters gathered outside the Sri Lankan consulate near Yonge St. and St. Clair Ave.

With files from John Spears, Jason Miller, Tanya Talaga, Mike Funston and Star staff.

Load-Date: May 12, 2009

Mayor warns defiant Tamils Police 'will remove you,' he says, but protesters say traffic chaos possible

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AFPTV Updated Advisory for Thursday

Agence France Presse -- English

April 30, 2009 Thursday 5:18 PM GMT

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Length: 982 words

Dateline: PARIS, April 30 2009

Body

We will file the following videos:

US hospitals lay down swine flu strategy

WASHINGTON

Hospitals in Washington are laying out detailed plans to combat swine flu as cases of likely infection continue to crop up across the country.

NEWS/HEALTH

Images and soundbites transmitted by 1900 GMT

RAW - VID80350

WEB - MMV80351

Anger rises in Mexico as swine flu spreads

MEXICO CITY

Even as the spread of the lethal swine flu appears to be slowing in Mexico, the discontent of residents is rising, with people questioning the government strategy to fight the disease.

NEWS/HEALTH

Images and soundbites transmitted by 0100 GMT Friday

RAW - VID80350

WEB - MMV80351

EU meets to hammer out common stance on flu

AFPTV Updated Advisory for Thursday

LUXEMBOURG

EU health ministers and the health chief of the 27-nation bloc are meeting in Luxembourg to hammer out a common stance to handle the spreading swine flu. France's call for a ban on flights failed, while Italy has urged Europe to stockpile vaccines and antiviral medicines.

NEWS/HEALTH

1. Images of ministers arrivals and round table discussions

RAW - VID80300

WEB - MMV80301

2. Images and soundbites of press conference transmitted by 1800 GMT

RAW - VID80310

WEB - MMV80311

Chrysler to file for bankruptcy protection

WASHINGTON

Chrysler will file for bankruptcy protection after major creditors balked at a deal to reduce a big part of the ailing automaker's debt, a White House official said Thursday. The official said the expected court filing would not deter the administration from supporting Chrysler as it seeks to emerge from restructuring in the court process under Chapter 11 of the bankruptcy code. News coverage of President Barack Obama's statement on the auto industry to the press.

NEWS/ECONOMY

Voiced report transmitted by 1900 GMT

VUS1132

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Dutch royals escape 'attack' during festival

APELDOORN, Netherlands

A car slammed into Dutch festival-goers Thursday, killing four and injuring 13, as Queen Beatrix looked on in horror in what officials believe was an attack on the royal family. Investigators said they arrested the seriously injured driver of the black car which rammed into the foot of a monument after mowing down people gathered for the annual Queen's Day royal procession in the central city of Apeldoorn.

NEWS

Images transmitted by 1800 GMT

RAW - VID80345

WEB - MMV80346

A wall around Rio slums?

AFPTV Updated Advisory for Thursday

RIO DE JANEIRO

Authorities in Rio de Janeiro have a new strategy to contain the spread of one of the city's most infamous favelas. They plan to encircle it with an "environmental wall" -- they say to protect the neighbouring rainforest from encroachment.

SPECIAL REPORT

Voiced report transmitted by 2200 GMT

NSV - VID80250

BROADCAST-READY - VID80251

WEB - MMV80252

Bollywood meets Bronte

LONDON

Bollywood is taking on the mainstream with a musical adaptation of Wuthering Heights. The colour, dance and music of classic Indian cinema comes face to face with Emily Bronte's classic tale of unrequited love on the London stage.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

Voiced report transmitted by 1800 GMT

NSV - VID80293

BROADCAST-READY - VID80294

WEB - MMV80295

We have already filed the following:

Sri Lanka dismisses critics, vows to crush rebels

UNDISCLOSED LOCATION, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's president on Thursday ruled out halting the military's offensive against the **Tamil Tigers**, and warned the rebels that they must give up or be killed. Tens of thousands of civilians are trapped by the fighting and many victims remain without adequate medical aid. Raw images and soundbites released by the Coordination Office for Humanitarian and Human Rights for Tamils, dated 28 April 2009.

NEWS

Images

RAW - VID80308

WEB - MMV80309

French hospital helps Sri Lankan civilian victims

VAVUNIYA, Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's president on Thursday ruled out halting the military's offensive against the **Tamil Tigers**, and warned the rebels that they must give up or be killed. A hospital provided by France is now up and running, providing much-

AFPTV Updated Advisory for Thursday

needed help to civilian victims of the conflict. The hospital is based in Cheddikulam, near the town of Vavuniya, about 80 kilometres (50 miles) south west of the conflict zone where tens of thousands of refugees remain trapped.

NEWS

Images and soundbites

RAW - VID80263

WEB - MMV80264

Prince Charles given German environmental award

BERLIN

Prince Charles, the British heir to the throne, received an award for his environmental campaigning during a two-day trip to Berlin. Charles, accompanied by his wife, Camilla Duchess of Cornwall, received the German Sustainability Award.

ENVIRONMENT

Images and soundbites

RAW - VID80305

WEB - MMV80306

Congo's male rape victims speak out

KAKU, Democratic Republic of Congo

In Democratic Republic of Congo's troubled and lawless east, sexual violence against women is commonplace and often used as a weapon of war. But now, increasingly, male rape victims are coming forward.

SPECIAL REPORT

Voiced report

NSV - VID80285

BROADCAST-READY - VID80286

WEB - MMV80287

Ahead of the five-year anniversary of EU enlargement on Friday, we have filed the following:

2004 ceremonies of EU enlargement

PARIS

The European Union welcomed 10 mostly Eastern European nations into its fold on May 1, 2004, ushering in a new era for the bloc and erasing boundaries drawn by the Cold War. File footage of the enlargement ceremonies presided by former European Commission President Romano Prodi.

NEWS

Images

RAW - VID80372

AFPTV Updated Advisory for Thursday

Language barriers in the Baltics

RIGA

Of the three Baltic states, Latvia has the biggest Russian-speaking population. Moscow argues the minority group faces institutionalised discrimination, including on job applications in which they must submit to Latvian language tests.

SPECIAL REPORT

Voiced report

NSV - VID80290

BROADCAST-READY - VID80291

WEB - MMV80292

Contact:

Michelle Hoffman: +33 (0)1 40 41 48 62

afptv

Load-Date: May 1, 2009

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EXTERNAL LANKA SECOND LEAD INDIA TWO LAST NEW DELHI

UNI (United News of India)

April 23, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 428 words

Dateline: Kochi

Body

Kochi, April 23 -- The Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry said the exodus of Tamil civilians from the No Fire Zone (NFZ) to the Safe Zone in government territory since yesterday was 35,000. This was in addition to the 105,000 civilians who had already come to freedom and safety from the early hours of Monday April 20.

"With more than 65,000 civilians already fled the **LTTE** area till last weekend brings the total number of civilians now in the Safe Zone of the government in the North East of Sri Lanka to be in excess of 170,000." The Government chartered vessel Green Ocean transported 353 injured and sick persons from the NFZ for medical treatment at Trincomalee. This is the first movement of injured and those needing medical help from the NFZ since the surge of civilians began April 20. It said the government had stepped up relief supplies including food, medicines and other essential items. There were apprehensions of rising civilian casualties as the situation worsened and Sri Lanka called international help to handle the "emergency humanitarian situation." The Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry has said 102,790 civilians escaped the conflict zone so far this week. "Our friends in the international community are most welcome to provide emergency relief assistance by way of semi-permanent shelter, water purification plants, sanitation facilities and medical assistance," Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama said in Colombo. As the humanitarian situation worsened following closing-in of the Sri Lankan troops on the last **LTTE**-held bastion, the UN voiced deep concern over the safety of tens of thousands of civilians trapped in a shrinking pocket of land on the northeast coast where fighting raged. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) described the situation as "chaotic." According to the Sri Lankan Defence Ministry, more than 60,000 civilians fled the area since April 20 with nearly 83,000 leaving between October 2008 and April 2009. More than 81,000 are now accommodated in relief camps. About 1,200 tonnes of humanitarian assistance, which was due to embark for the area on April 19, could not leave due to the fighting, according to OCHA. No assistance had been delivered in the conflict area since April 1. The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) said it was providing some 25,000 hygiene packs for **women** and girls to meet their needs. It had also provided over 20 beds to furnish the proposed post-natal care unit at a hospital in Vavuniya. Published by HT Syndication with permission from United News of India.

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Load-Date: April 24, 2009

SRI LANKA: ICRC CALLS FOR EXCEPTIONAL PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES TO MINIMIZE FURTHER BLOODSHED IN "NO-FIRE ZONE"

States News Service

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 States News Service

Length: 445 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: GENEVA, Switzerland

Body

The following information was released by International Committee of the Red Cross:

As fighting rages in north-eastern Sri Lanka, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is warning that conflict parties must take immediate action to prevent further mass casualties among civilians.

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

"What we are seeing is intense fighting in a very small area overcrowded with civilians who have fled there," said the ICRC's director of operations, Pierre Krhenb¼hl. "The situation is nothing short of catastrophic. Ongoing fighting has killed or wounded hundreds of civilians who have only minimal access to medical care."

See also: press briefing by Pierre Krhenb¼hl

The ICRC is concerned that the final offensive in the area by government forces against fighters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) could lead to a dramatic increase in the number of civilian casualties.

It has reminded both parties of their obligation to comply with international humanitarian law in all circumstances. In the current context, which is exceptional in that combat is occurring in a very densely populated area, extreme precautions must be taken to avoid or in any event minimize civilian casualties. The ICRC has also reminded the parties of the prohibition on attacking persons hors de combat and of the obligation to treat captured combatants humanely.

"The LTTE must keep its fighters and other military resources well away from places where civilians are concentrated, and allow civilians who want to leave the area to do so safely," said Mr Krhenb¼hl. "On their part, government forces are obliged to ensure that the methods and means of warfare they employ make it possible to clearly distinguish at all times between civilians and civilian objects, on the one hand, and military objectives, on the other. In this situation, we are particularly concerned about the impact on civilians of using weapons such as artillery."

SRI LANKA : ICRC CALLS FOR EXCEPTIONAL PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES TO MINIMIZE FURTHER
BLOODSHED IN "NO-FIRE ZONE"

"In the coming days the ICRC will strive to assist and protect the thousands of displaced civilians fleeing the hostilities," said Mr Krhenb¼hl. "However, it is imperative that independent humanitarian organizations also be allowed to provide desperately needed services and relief for civilians still trapped in the 'no-fire zone' today."

For more information, please contact:

Simon Schorno, ICRC Geneva, tel. +41 79 251 9302

Sarasi Wijeratne, ICRC Colombo, tel: +94 11 250 33 46 or +94 773 1588 44

Load-Date: April 28, 2009

End of Document

Over 20,000 Tamils killed in final Sri Lankan onslaught: report

Agence France Presse -- English

May 29, 2009 Friday 8:42 AM GMT

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Length: 453 words

Dateline: LONDON, May 29 2009

Body

More than 20,000 Tamil civilians were killed in the final onslaught by the Sri Lankan government on separatist rebels this month, which ended Asia's longest civil war, a British newspaper said Friday.

The figure was three times the official casualty figure, the Times said.

Fighting ended when Sri Lankan troops crushed Tamil Tiger rebels accused of holding tens of thousands of civilians as human shields, said the Times.

Citing its own investigation, the paper said most of the 20,000 deaths were caused by the government.

Sri Lanka has insisted its forces stopped using heavy weapons on April 27 and respected a no-fire zone where 100,000 men, women and children were sheltering, the newspaper reported.

Confidential UN documents indicated 7,000 civilians died in the no-fire zone up to the end of April, said the Times, noting that journalists had been barred from the conflict zone.

But citing aerial photographs, official documents, witness accounts and expert testimony, the paper said the death toll mounted, with 1,000 civilians killed each day until May 19, the day after the death of Tamil Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran.

Photographs published by the Times appeared to show sand mounds, indicating makeshift burial grounds, the paper said, citing analysis of the images by independent defence experts.

Charles Heyman, editor of the magazine Armed Forces, said it seemed unlikely that Tamil Tiger mortar fire or artillery caused a significant number of deaths, from the layout shown in the aerial photos.

"It looks more likely that the firing position has been located by the Sri Lankan Army and it has then been targeted with air-burst and ground-impact mortars," he told the Times.

A spokesman for the Sri Lankan High Commission in London dismissed the report.

"We reject all these allegations. Civilians have not been killed by government shelling at all," he told the paper.

Over 20,000 Tamils killed in final Sri Lankan onslaught: report

"If civilians have been killed, then that is because of the actions of the LTTE who were shooting and killing people when they tried to escape," he added.

The French daily Le Monde this week cited UN figures putting the death toll at 7,720, including 678 children, between January 20 and May 13, while 18,465 people were injured, 2,384 of them children.

But it said there had been "an attempt to systematically suppress this material" by the UN.

On Thursday UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay maintained her demand for an investigation into abuses allegedly carried out by both sides in Sri Lanka's just-ended civil war.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) launched a campaign in 1972 to create a separate Tamil homeland in the Sinhalese-majority island, with much of the group's funding coming from Tamils overseas.

Load-Date: May 30, 2009

JHU vows to take Britain to INTERNATIONAL Courts

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

April 28, 2009 Tuesday

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Length: 436 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, April 28 -- Head of the Jathika Hela Urumaya Ellawala Medhananda Thera said yesterday that his party was ready to take the British, who are constantly interfering in the internal affairs of the country, to International Courts for their past crimes against Sri Lanka. "We have all the necessary evidence to prove that in the past they have plundered the island of our valuable archaeological and historical artefacts and literature," he said. He further explained the heinous crimes committed by the British during the Uva Wellassa war of 1817.

Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Patali Champika Ranawaka stated that Britain was responsible for terrorist attacks in the country; "every claymore bomb that has gone off in this country has been detonated following calls from London. We challenge them to expose the court transcripts of Shanthan's trial. The connections between Anton Balasingham, the head of the **LTTE female** soldiers Adele Balasingham and MI5 also need to be exposed," He said. Ven.Athureliye Ratana Thera stated that any interference by the International Community would be tantamount to undermining our sovereignty and democracy, a democratic government elected by the people and further strengthened by the verdict received at the Western Provincial Council Elections. "If they intend to take over from the **LTTE**, then they are taking over a humanitarian crisis, the sweat, the blood and the tears of the past 30 years and the economic downfall of this nation too," he added. Minister Ranawaka also accused the British government of not giving Internally Displaced Persons "even a biscuit," but said they simply used words to fight for them. Recently Elected Western Provincial Councillor Udaya Gammanpila was also present at the press conference. Although it was stated that the intention was not to harp on the tremendous victory of the Alliance, the party said that the support of the people for the government and the Mahinda Chinthanaya was shown through the results of the WPC. A teary eyed Gammanpila thanked the people for the confidence placed in him and expressed his elation at having won while abiding by all election rules and refraining from using crackers and posters. "I believe that this victory is a call from the people for gentlemanly politics to come back," he added. Minister Ranawaka stated that in every area outside Colombo three of four Sinhalese voted for the Alliance and in future five out of every six Sinhalese would vote for the Alliance. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

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Load-Date: April 28, 2009

**International: Iraq: Tamil Tiger teenage girl led the way with the slaying of
Rajiv Gandhi: Female suicide bombers**

The Guardian - Final Edition

June 12, 2009 Friday

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the**guardian**

Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 19

Length: 404 words

Byline: Stephen Khan, Rory McCarthy, Jerusalem and Luke Harding Moscow

Body

The sudden emergence of **female** suicide bombers in Iraq in 2007 shocked a country already inured to violence. From late 2007 to late 2008 there were 33 **female** suicide bombings. In the four preceding years there had been only two or three. But Iraq was not the first conflict to generate **women** desperate enough to sacrifice themselves.

Sri Lanka

Of the 200 or so suicide bombings carried out by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) in their civil war with the Sri Lankan government at least 60 are thought to have involved **female** attackers. The first, on 21 May 1991, remains among the most politically devastating suicide missions ever launched. The target - former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi - was killed by a 17-year-old girl known as Dhanu.

Black Tigers, as the Tamil suicide bombers liked to be known, introduced suicide belts to make their task easier and **female** volunteers were said to have been enthusiastic to wear them, with dozens putting their names forward for each mission. In February this year 26 people were killed by a **female** Black Tiger at a checkpoint in the north of the country as the **LTTE** made its desperate last stand against government forces.

Palestine

The Palestinians, too, have had **female** suicide bombers. The first came in January 2002, at the height of the second intifada. Wafa Idris was a divorced paramedic who had been wounded at work by rubber-coated bullets fired by Israeli troops. She detonated a bomb she was carrying in Jerusalem and killed an elderly Israeli man. A month later Dareen Abu Aysheh, 21, a student, blew herself up at a roadblock in Ramallah, injuring Israeli policemen. The following month Ayat al-Akhras, 18, from the Deheishe refugee camp near Bethlehem, killed two people when she blew herself up in Jerusalem.

The number of suicide bombings has since decreased significantly, but occasionally **women** are still involved. Three years ago a 70-year old great-grandmother and Hamas loyalist, Fatma al-Najar, blew herself up in Gaza near a group of Israeli soldiers during a major military incursion of the strip.

International: Iraq : Tamil Tiger teenage girl led the way with the slaying of Rajiv Gandhi: Female suicide bombers

Russia

The Kremlin's second war in Chechnya created a new breed of **female** suicide bombers known as black widows - who carried out a string of attacks in Russia from 2000-04. Of the 50 terrorists who took part in the theatre siege in Moscow in October 2002, 18 were **women**. Other bombers targeted the capital's cafes and hotels, as well as trains and planes.

Load-Date: June 15, 2009

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Female suicide bombers: Tamil Tiger teenage girl led the way

Guardian.com

June 11, 2009 Thursday

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theguardian

Length: 426 words

Body

ABSTRACT

Iraq, Sri Lanka, Palestine and Russia have all been plagued by female suicide bombers

FULL TEXT

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Female suicide bombers: Tamil Tiger teenage girl led the way

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Stephen Khan, Rory McCarthy

Load-Date: June 11, 2009

The Man Who Destroyed Eelam

Daily News (Sri Lanka)

July 2, 2009 Thursday

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Length: 2440 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Colombo, July 2 -- Prabhakaran had everything: territory, international support and committed fighters. Senior journalist SHYAM TEKWANI, who has covered the LTTE and Sri Lanka for almost three decades tracks the alarming rise and astonishing fall of a man who sought to live to fight another day, but found only death at the hands of his nemesis

More vividly than anything that came afterwards in the Sri Lanka war, I remember his first handshake. The hand was soft, the grip delicate and limp. On that occasion in Madras, as he contentedly claimed credit for assassinating the Tamil Mayor of Jaffna and later, the slaughter of 13 Sri Lankan soldiers that ignited the conflict following the anti-Tamil riots of 1983, Velupillai Prabhakaran's dainty handshake seemed in harmony with his soft voice. A few more meetings and a couple of years later in 1987 - after successfully evading a media ban to reach the frontlines in Jaffna - I found myself reporting in the company of Prabhakaran's ragtag troops in their war against the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF). In the bougainvillea-lined mud tracks, while attempting to photograph his boys gunning down the Indian soldiers in an ambush, I was transfixed by the memory of that handshake as I watched the blood seep from an ill-fated jawan's head and mingle with the Jaffna dirt. The other memory is his startled expression when I congratulated him on his newborn towards the end of a long discourse on Eelam. Soon after his fleeting pause, it became clear that he had lost interest in going on and on with his vision of Eelam. He was less voluble, withdrawn and then abruptly left the room. It was left to the master's voice, Anton Balasingham, to cautiously quiz me on how and what I knew of the addition to his leader's family. These two memories define, at any rate for me through all my experiences over the last 25 years in Sri Lanka, the man who has finally destroyed the dream he almost made true. Both the memories give a certain insight into the mind of the man. First, deceive all into believing the contrary about your capabilities - deception is the core of all his strategy. Second, never trust your own shadow - paranoia dictates his behaviour. These traits contributed to the amazing rise - and eventually the astonishing fall - of the leader of the most ruthless terrorist organisation in the world. To suggest that Prabhakaran worked to a master plan in building and shaping his image of invincibility and developing the organisation from a ragtag bunch of boys into the outfit that inspired awe and envy would be to bestow upon him the title of a genius - which he is not. From the beginning, he adopted a twofold strategy - consisting on the one hand of an 'international political campaign' by galvanising the diaspora and international opinion in his favour and on the other by bleeding the economy and weakening the state through acts of terror. His success in sustaining the conflict for over a quarter century came from a combination of his own cunning and the lack of purpose, unity and determination in his enemies. The propaganda carpet bomb "Today we're engaged in the first war in history - unconventional and irregular as it may be - in an era of e-mails, blogs, cell phones, Blackberries, instant messaging, digital cameras, a global internet with no inhibitions, cell phones, hand-held video cameras, talk radio, 24-hour news broadcasts, satellite television. There's never been a war fought in this environment before." That was former US Secretary of State, Donald Rumsfeld in 2005 referring, of course, to his woes stemming from the unnecessary war in Iraq. If

The Man Who Destroyed Eelam

propaganda wins wars, then the IPKF, which saved Sri Lanka from becoming another Lebanon, fell victim to a weapon far more effective than the deadliest conventional weapon in Prabhakaran's jungle arsenal - his propaganda tool, the media. Central to Prabhakaran's guerilla strategy - over two decades before Rumsfeld made his observation - was a powerful communications network and a sympathetic media. Hence, his exclusive interviews to handpicked influential publications while he was enjoying the hospitality of the Indian government in Madras during the mid-80s, when I first got to shake his hand. From the outset, it was not difficult to win the support of the media, particularly in the West. Prabhakaran played his underdog cards adroitly with the help of his advisor Anton Balasingham and his Australian born wife, Adele and the LTTE's media headquarters in London. In November 1986, on the eve of the SAARC summit in Bangalore, the police under instructions from the Chief Minister MG Ramachandran, raided and seized arms and sophisticated communications gear from the assorted Eelam groups operating out of Tamil Nadu. Prabhakaran went on a much publicised fast-unto death in Madras quoting Mahatma Gandhi, whom he said he was emulating in peaceful protest for the return of the equipment. He demanded the immediate return of - not his rocket launchers, SAM missiles and AK-47s - but his lifeline to the world, his wireless sets. By this time, he had the media eating out of his hands and the romanticisation of Prabhakaran - already in motion - now entered the process of deification. Everything was returned to him in good order along with a glass of fruit juice that he sipped to declare his victory. Tiger's pride Prabhakaran posing with his soldier 'cubs' in a safehouse Battelines Prabhakaran at a strategy meeting with his aides in Jaffna Light moment Sharing a joke with Yogi, a close aide Less than a year later, I walked into a scoop in the Jaffna peninsula. IPKF Mi-24 helicopter gunships were on the attack in Chavakachcheri, an LTTE stronghold. People around me were killed, most of them civilians. And my cameras were the only media instruments witnessing the deaths. A week later, when I surfaced in Colombo and rushed to the phone in my hotel room to break the exclusive story, I was dismayed to find that the attack was already the big story in the media. Prabhakaran had already beaten me to it - even though there was no electricity to light up his bases in the jungles. Even as the body count in the damaged market area was in progress, his 'boys' had radioed their souped-up version of the 'bombing' from their jungle hideouts to their 'media' headquarters in London from where a telex was sent out to every major international publication. Photographs of death and destruction from an assault during Operation Liberation (or Vadamarachchi Operation) by Sri Lankan gunships six months earlier were circulated as evidence of the Chavakachcheri attack. The LTTE's powerful communications network transmitted daily situation reports (sitreps) from Jaffna to its media headquarters in a Western capital where the sitreps were distributed as press releases through telex machines (later with the introduction of fax machines and the internet, it was able to readjust its media budget) to media and governments in Western capitals. Printed material was a prime means of LTTE propaganda till the early 1990s, when the group went to great expense to publish multilingual and expensively produced four-colour booklets and pamphlets with profuse illustrations. These publications were distributed to the local and international media and select government organisations. The LTTE's high degree of familiarity with modern telecommunications enabled it to occupy a very definitive niche in the international public eye, in spite of the fact that it is party to a conflict in a small south Asian nation, largely ignored by the West, and the fact that its acts of violence have impacted only Sri Lanka and occasionally India. The reason counter-terrorism practitioners began to focus their attention, after 9/11, to Sri Lanka is Prabhakaran's global reach. His group is an integral part of the international terror network. Tactical and technical contagion is a fact of terrorist tactics. From hostage-taking, to hijacking to car-bombs, new methods have been quickly absorbed and copied among terrorist groups worldwide. Witness the Taliban's use of civilians as human shields during the Pakistani-led assault in Buner district last week. Years before the world heard of Osama bin Laden or al Qaeda, Prabhakaran was pioneering a new method of guerrilla warfare - the suicide bomber. Innovations in the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and the rampant use of child soldiers and new media technologies - were quickly copied as regular methods of warfare following the invasion of Iraq in 2002. Prabhakaran has successfully operated in volatile environments where his ability to change has been the group's linchpin not only of effectiveness, but also of survival. While Prabhakaran has had ample motivations for change - technological developments, counterterrorism measures, and shifts in people's reactions to terror attacks - the change has not occurred automatically. As adaptive as a chameleon Prabhakaran's ambition to sever the island in two has been the only constant in his life. Sustaining that for 30 years required a continuous evolution and a firm hand. The practices he adopted were based on selectively chosen models appropriated from a range of religious and political traditions and rituals for a variety of political and publicity goals. The flavor of the 1980s, for him, was Marxist rhetoric. When his oft-repeated desire for a single party socialist government in his imagined Eelam drew gasps of horror, the Lenin portrait in his den was summarily removed and Marx was forsaken in all conversation. He

The Man Who Destroyed Eelam

then abandoned ideology to aggressively build the cult around his persona. An adoring media lent as zealous a hand as his followers to help build his cult to mythical proportions - tales of his marksmanship, valour and genius became commonplace. Soon, taking an oath in his name by his cadres, celebrating his birthday, and displaying his portrait everywhere became mandatory. Adele introduced the concept of feminism to recruit girls. In her words, "Nowhere in the world has male chauvinism been eradicated and it certainly has not disappeared from the Tamil society. In his own image However the male cadres show a great deal of respect, appreciation and pride in the women combatants' achievements." From Hinduism, he borrowed the practice of deifying his martyrs and erecting shrines where people were expected to make offerings and pray on a day designated as holy. Western military traditions provided him a model to build his army while Hollywood, apart from inspiring movies of bravery and heroism, taught him to produce slickly produced audio-visual presentations for profit and for goodwill. Food for fight Snacking at one of his safe houses in Jaffna Powerful trio Prabhakaran, Adele and Anton Balasingham in Mullaitivu Acutely conscious of the power of propaganda and his image as the most lethal weapon in his arsenal, Prabhakaran ensured that everybody in his group understood how to use it. Cadres were not to interact with anyone outside the fold. His photograph - and only his - would be the single image that hung on the walls of all denizens in his territory. Every street corner would have his speeches or Eelam national songs playing from the loudspeakers at all hours every day. Every offer of a ride in the Balasingham's air-conditioned SUV, with Adele at the wheel, in the Jaffna peninsula perforce meant listening to Prabhakaran blaring from the only cassette she would insert into the music player. Calendars, posters, CDs, DVDs, newspapers, magazines, radio stations, TV stations - he had them all out years before the world had heard of the al Qaeda propaganda machinery. And while the word 'web', at any rate for most of us in south Asia in 1993, triggered images of the common house spider, the LTTE had its first website running on the server of a university in the United States. This conveniently coincided with an increasingly unfriendly media following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. A computer academy funded and run by professionals from among the diaspora in the Vanni region ensured that the 'brains trust' of the LTTE kept abreast with the latest know-how. A wing of the group (Internet Black Tigers) is credited with the first ever cyber attack (1997) known to the world when it downed the networks of Sri Lankan embassies across the world for a fortnight. In the same year, it was able to hack into a university in the United Kingdom, steal legitimate email IDs and solicit funds for a fictitious hospital in Colombo. And as recently as last week, a group calling itself Kalai Amman Electronic Warfare Unit hacked into the Sri Lanka Army website and defaced its home page. Social network sites were quickly adopted and a search on YouTube yields several hundred videos of the group. During one of our initial photo sessions (in the early 1980s), Prabhakaran was awkward, uncertain of what was expected of him and very receptive to being directed. When it was suggested he change into combat fatigues, he went one further and emerged from the room with his pistol fully loaded. Within seconds, framed by his bodyguards and a huge cut out of a Tiger, with a huge portrait of Lenin in the background, he was in his elements and an hour later eagerly asked for copies of his performance. Several photo sessions later and in Jaffna while fighting for his supremacy against the IPKF, he reveled in playing the role of actor and director with consummate ease. He would tease a twinkle into his eyes with as much ease as a flash of fury. There was bluster in his voice, preparedness in dealing with questions and animation in his conversations but his grip had lost none of its daintiness. He would play to the gallery with sardonic witticisms, refrain from any response in English, ponder a bit to deliver a quotable quote and strike the pose that struck him as just right for the occasion. In one of his hideouts during the IPKF operations, he called for his leopard cub and while bantering with his friend and deputy, Yogaratnam Yogi, posed gleefully for the camera stroking his pet - much like a prosperous zamindar back from a hunt. It was essential to his strategy to get the message across that he had a committed following - and that this commitment came from man, woman and child. The cyanide pill was the emblem of commitment - which he generously arranged for me to photograph as his boys gamely posed with them around their necks. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Load-Date: July 2, 2009

The Man Who Destroyed Eelam

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Sri Lanka :TN to boost funding for Lankan refugee camps

Right Vision News

November 15, 2009 Sunday

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Length: 382 words

Dateline: Pakistan

Body

Pakistan, Nov. 15 -- The Tamil Nadu government Thursday decided to allocate Rs.100 crore for improving the amenities in the 115 camps for Sri Lankan refugees in the state and also for extending various welfare measures to them on par with Indian citizens. The decision was taken at a State Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister M.Karunanidhi at the secretariat here Thursday. The state government has allocated around Rs.37 crore for repairs to dwellings and roads inside the camps and around Rs.9 crore for extending the healthcare scheme to the refugees, provision of free colour television sets, marriage assistance to **women**, free bus passes and other such things. The cabinet decided to utilise the balance for building concrete houses for the refugees. The DMK earlier demanded Indian citizenship for over 100,000 refugees living in the camps. The decisions were taken on the basis of reports submitted by the ministers who earlier visited these camps to get a first hand information on the living conditions prevailing there. On Oct 31, Karunanidhi asked the ministers to visit various camps and submit a report by Nov 10 when he announced Rs.12 crore additional funds for improving the amenities in these camps. The report was submitted by Deputy Chief Minister M.K.Stalin Tuesday. Soon after the DMK government assumed office in 2006, ministers visited and submitted a report on the refugee camps, which first came up in 1983. Based on that report, the Tamil Nadu government sought Rs.16 crore assistance from the central government for these camps. While the centre did not respond to the request since 2006, the state government allocated Rs.5 crore in its latest budget. India has decided to give Rs.

1,000 crore to the Sri Lankan government for rehabilitation of Tamils displaced by the military campaign against the rebel **Tamil Tigers**, who were defeated in an armed conflict in May this year. Sri Lankan Tamils have fled their country in large numbers since Tamil militancy erupted into insurgency over a quarter century ago. While many thousands live in India, many more have chosen the West to begin their lives anew. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Right Vision News. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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