

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

Job Number: 223508221

#### Documents (100)

1. ROUNDUP: Sri Lanka puts recent army death toll at over 6,000

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

2. International: Special report: Sri Lanka: Hidden from view: child victims of the battle to end a bloody civil war: President said Tamil Tigers were defeated without inflicting civilian casualties

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

3. UN rights chief presses for probe into Sri Lankan war; Earlier attempt rebuffed by council

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

4. Action not words will count over detained Tamils

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

5. Thousands of Tamils protest in Paris

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

6. Profile: Velupillai Prabhakaran

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

7. <u>Tragic scenes as Tigers hold out Thousands continue to flee rebel-held area as claims, videos of brutality and bloodshed surface</u>

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

8. Robbed of their innocence

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

9. Army gives away gifts to LTTE cadres

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

10. Be in no doubt, there are Tigers among boatpeople

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

11. <u>International: Prisoners of peace: hundreds of thousands face two years trapped in Sri Lankan camps:</u>
Priority is to find Tamil Tigers, says government: UN concern grows over 'shocking' conditions

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

12. Carnage at Habarana LTTE kills over 100

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

13. Sri Lanka rebels ignore deadline to surrender

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

14. Road's end for once formidable rebel force

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

15. 'Hundreds die in Sri Lanka shelling'

Client/Matter: -None-

**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE **Search Type:** Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press

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

16. Rubble, broken bodies litter battlefield Reporters view the carnage in Sri Lanka 's war-torn north

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

17. Sri Lanka under pressure as humanitarian crisis mounts

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

18. LTTE using India just like Taliban, Al-Qaeda use Pak: Stratfor

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

19. Onslaught by LTTE reply to peace moves?

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

20. Interned Tamil fighters being attacked - reports

Client/Matter: -None-

**Search Terms:** "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE **Search Type:** Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

#### 21. THE CRUSHING DEFEAT OF THE TAMIL TIGERS PROVES YOU CAN BEAT TERROR

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

**Content Type** Narrowed by

News Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press

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

#### 22. The tragedy of Sri Lanka;

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

#### 23. Sri Lanka expels UN official over war 'bias'

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

#### 24. Malaysia sends medical team to Sri Lanka

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

#### 25. Assassin of former Indian PM breaks her hunger strike in jail

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

#### 26. Tamil hunger striker hospitalized on Day 6; 34-year-old vows to continue protest from hospital

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

#### 27. Tigers' end is near - army

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

#### 28. Camps overwhelmed by mass exodus

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

#### 29. Sinhalese majority rejoices; military chiefs promoted

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

#### 30. LTTE women, child soldiers to be rehabilitated

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

#### 31. 2ND LEAD: Sri Lankan rebels claim 1,000 civilians killed this week

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

### 32. War by other means As the Tamil Tigers face the failure of their armed struggle a new separatist campaign

is under way. By Shyamantha Asokan

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

#### 33. Sri Lanka victory over Tigers sullied by warcrimes allegations

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

#### 34. Sri Lanka: Ethnic violence rooted in history

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

#### 35. SRI LANKA: ATTACKS ON FREE MEDIA PUT DISPLACED CIVILIANS AT RISK

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

#### 36. Tiger fighting force surrounded

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

#### 37. Guardian Weekly: Sri Lanka hides child victims of war on Tamil Tigers

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

# 38. International: Women killed and children kidnapped as Tamil Tiger remnants suffer brutal revenge: Reports of bodies found in camp with throats cut: Paramilitaries abducting children, say observers

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

#### 39. Sri Lanka army: 3 Tamil Tiger leaders killed

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

#### 40. The final hours of Prabhakaran

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

#### 41. Tamil refugees flee to India to escape fighting in Sri Lanka

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

42. Sri Lanka 's challenge: winning the peace

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

43. International: Thousands of trapped Sri Lankan civilians pour through breach in Tamil Tiger lines: Military smashes barrier holding 'human shields': UN says 35,000 on way to internment camps

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

44. Kill or be killed: 11-year-old girls forced to fight INSIGHT

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

45. Sri Lanka at risk of 'bloodbath'

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

46. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton Commends Congressman Michael E. McMahon's Proposals at Today's

Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing

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

47. ROUNDUP: Sri Lankan rebels claim 1,000 civilians killed this week

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

48. Government officially confirms Praba's death

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

49. Sri Lanka rebels offer to lay down arms

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

50. Sri Lanka rebels concede defeat in civil war

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

51. Not only to crush Tigers but also to save civilians- BBC 's Radio 4

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

#### 52. India 'hopeful of positive outcome' in Sri Lanka (Second Lead)

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

# 53. The hidden human cost of Sri Lanka 's final onslaught Behind the celebrations of victory over the Tamil Tigers lie thousands of injured civilians whose existence has been denied

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

#### 54. 'Sea of mud and misery' in Tamil camps as health disaster unfolds

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

#### 55. Global Issues Explored

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

#### 56. Pain of war always close for Tamil diaspora.

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



#### 57. Sri Lanka president dismisses threat of war crimes charges

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

#### 58. Sri Lanka: Stop Shelling 'No-Fire Zone'

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

#### 59. US Calls for End to Hostilities in Sri Lanka

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

#### 60. Tamil Tiger chief trapped

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

#### 61. Sri Lanka war toll near 6,500, UN report says

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

#### 62. Tigers admit defeat as the army stalks remaining rebels of 26-year conflict



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

#### 63. 'People are sick and dying. There is no food, no water'

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

#### 64. UPI NewsTrack TopNews

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

#### 65. 20,000 Tamils killed in final days

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

#### 66. Beaten by his hubris

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

#### 67. Cause remains for Tiger in our midst

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

#### 68. Doctor: 64 die in attack on Sri Lanka hospital

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

#### 69. Sri Lankan military fights to surround rebels

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

#### 70. Indian military doctors save lives in Sri Lanka

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

#### 71. Inhuman slaughter of villagers by LTTE

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

#### 72. More than 1,000 civilians killed' in attacks on Sri Lanka safe zone

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

#### 73. Elimination of LTTE - all can breathe a sigh of relief - Sports Minister

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

#### 74. End of Tigers' tale

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

#### 75. U.S. Faults Sri Lanka on Civilian Woes

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

#### 76. India seeks scientific confirmation of Tiger leader's death

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

**Content Type** Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press News

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

#### 77. We still haven't defeated LTTE's global terror network

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

#### 78. Tigers lose leaders, weapons

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

#### 79. CORRECTED: Calls grow for war crimes probe into Sri Lanka conflict

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

#### 80. Fugitive rebels shot as Sri Lanka celebrates victory

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

#### 81. Troops march towards Kathirveli and Vakarai

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

#### 82. Doctor: 64 die in shelling of Sri Lanka hospital

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

#### 83. India 's Silence on Sri Lankan Bloodshed



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

#### 84. Fed: Search goes on for Australians lost following Sri Lanka conflict

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

#### 85. UN may seek Sri Lanka 'war crimes' probe

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

#### 86. Prabha killed

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

#### 87. Black july' 1983 marks the start of full-scale civil war in Sri Lanka

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

# 88. National: Sri Lanka war: Nearly 6,500 Tamil civilians killed, says UN: 14,000 also injured since January, figures indicate: Toll greater than that of recent Israel -Gaza conflict

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. The man who destroyed Eelam - Part 2:

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

90. Canada at a Glance: AM

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

91. SRI LANKA \ DOCTOR: 64 DIE IN SHELLING OF HOSPITAL

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

92. Govt. continues rehabilitation

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

93. STF ambush Tigers in Lahugala

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

94. Hospital attack kills 64

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

95. Army teams hunt for Prabha and Pottu

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

96. PROVIDE A HUMANE INCENTIVE FOR ALL PEOPLE TO MOVE

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

97. Tamils find liberators are now captors Hundreds of thousands freed by government troops still held in camps

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

98. Tigers cannot raise head again despite KP's overtures

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

#### 99. Sri Lanka Says Rebels Continue to Fight

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

#### 100. <u>UK Tamil Demonstrators drain Met Police Budget</u>

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



#### ROUNDUP: Sri Lanka puts recent army death toll at over 6,000

#### Deutsche Presse-Agentur

May 22, 2009 Friday 4:42 PM EST

Copyright 2009 Deutsche Presse-Agentur All Rights Reserved

Section: POLITICS Length: 569 words

#### **Body**

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts ROUNDUP: Sri Lanka puts recent army death toll at over 6,000 Eds: UN secretary general arrives late Friday =

Colombo (dpa) - More than 6,000 Sri Lankan soldiers were killed in the final phase of the war against the Tamil separatists, the country's defence secretary said Friday.

The official death toll - which does not include rebel fighters or civilians - put the dead army, police and security personnel at 6,261 since August 2006, with nearly 30,000 injured.

The government in Colombo claimed this week the three-decade old civil war was over, after they reclaimed the north of the Indian Ocean island, and claimed to have killed the leader of the rebel

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Speaking at a celebration rally of more than 100,000 people, President Mahinda Rajapaksa promised the government would help provide for the relatives of those soldiers killed.

The defence secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa - brother of the president - said that since 1981 a total of 23,790 security

personnel, policemen and  $\underline{\textit{women}}$  and paramilitary guards have been killed in the war.

Rajapaksa also appeared to blame the media and foreign nongovernmental organisations for their reporting of the conflict.

He claimed that the government was not only fighting the Tamil

 $\underline{\textit{Tigers}}$ , but accused sections of the media of demoralizing the soldiers with their reporting.

Meanwhile, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon who was due to arrive in Sri Lanka Friday night is to offer further assistance to people displaced by the war, a senior UN official in Colombo said.

Vijaya Nambiar, chief of staff of the UN secretary-general, said

#### ROUNDUP: Sri Lanka puts recent army death toll at over 6,000

Ban plans to tour some of the refugee camps and fly across parts of the combat zone where the final phase of fighting between government

troops and the  $\underline{\mathit{LTTE}}$  took place.

"We hope that the secretary-general's visit can help begin a process of national recovery, renewal and reconciliation for all Sri Lankans," Nambiar said.

He said Ban will offer UN assistance for the displaced and hold discussions about resettling the displaced civilians.

UN officials in Geneva were Friday demanding better access to the north of the island. Aid agencies in Colombo also urged the government to lift restrictions as conditions in the refugee camps deteriorate.

"Thousands of lives are at risk in Sri Lanka because aid to internally displaced people is being restricted by difficulties in securing access for staff and vehicles of international agencies," the aid groups said in a joint statement signed by Oxfam and 12 other NGOs.

The aid agencies said the camps are currently holding 270,000 people and the government expects another 50,000 people who left the area in the last few days of fighting.

The government earlier this week told an Indian official delegation that the bulk of them would be resettled within six months.

The visit of the UN chief came as the country continued its

celebrations to mark the military victory against the  $\underline{\textit{LTTE}}.$ 

President Rajapaksa is to address another ceremony on Saturday in Kandy, an inland city 117 kilometres north-east of the capital.

On Tuesday, Sri Lanka officially declared the military operations

against the rebels over after the  ${\it \underline{LTTE}}$  leadership, including its chief Velupillai Prabhakaran, had been killed by the army.

The <u>LTTE</u> had been fighting for more than 25 years for an independent homeland for Sri Lankas Tamil minority.

May 2209 1642 GMT

Load-Date: May 23, 2009



# International: Special report: Sri Lanka: Hidden from view: child victims of the battle to end a bloody civil war: President said Tamil Tigers were defeated without inflicting civilian casualties

The Guardian - Final Edition
May 25, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved



Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 17

Length: 1096 words

Byline: Gethin Chamberlain, Colombo

#### **Body**

Lying howling on a torn mattress, in a cot by a window overlooking the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo, the wounded toddler was a pitiful sight.

A <u>female</u> relative fretted, trying to calm the girl down as the medics worked around her. The 18-month-old had been shot in the stomach in the final stages of the fighting in the north-east of the country and there was an ugly line of stitches across her abdomen where doctors had operated to remove the bullet. Her right leg was missing a chunk of flesh and had been gashed.

The little girl is one of thousands of casualties hidden away from public view in hospitals across Sri Lanka, guarded by soldiers and police who roam the wards. As soon as they are fit enough to be moved, the injured are returned to the grim internment camps that are home to approximately 300,000 people.

Health workers and human rights activists say that the country's medical services cannot handle the huge numbers of children and adults needing treatment for terrible injuries sustained during the final weeks of the fighting.

But the government appears determined to keep the true scale of the disaster out of the public eye, barring access to the hospitals and arresting three doctors who worked inside the war zone, accusing them of fabricating casualty figures.

According to unofficial UN figures obtained by the Guardian, more than 8,000 civilians were killed in the last four months of the war and more than 17,000 were wounded. The figures do not include those killed and injured in the final three days of the fighting. The Sri Lankan health ministry says it does not have up-to-date numbers.

UN sources say that initial analysis suggests an abnormally high number of child casualties, up to 45% of the overall total; a figure closer to 33% would have been expected. That would mean 3,600 children killed and 7,650 wounded, although some of those are believed to have later died from the injuries because of a lack of facilities to treat them.

International: Special report: Sri Lanka: Hidden from view: child victims of the battle to end a bloody civil war:

President said Tamil Tigers were defeated wi....

After the Sri Lankan president, Mahinda Rajapaksa, claimed last week that victory was achieved without spilling a drop of civilian blood, the Guardian managed to gain access to the Lady Ridgeway hospital for children in Colombo on Saturday and spoke to staff to try to assess the true picture.

The ward on the sixth floor, where some of the most seriously injured children are being treated, was a depressing sight. Small children with amputated limbs, gunshot wounds and burns lay in cots around the ward.

The matron said they had received many such cases, brought down from the war zone for treatment in the specialist children's hospital, but she could not say how many. "This girl was shot in the stomach," she said, gesturing to the child screaming in the cot by the window. "The stitches are from where the doctors removed the bullet."

Other children sat on chairs at the side of the ward, a girl with her arm in plaster, a boy with what appeared to be burns. Others lay in cots with gauze and bandages on their wounds. The wards were clean and tidy and the staff attentive, fussing over their patients, the nurses wearing immaculate uniforms. They appeared surprised to receive a visitor as the ministry of defence had repeatedly refused requests for permission to enter the hospital.

The matron said the children would be treated and then sent back with their parents to the camps around Vavuniya in northern Sri Lanka once they were well enough to be moved. It was not possible to establish how each child had received its injuries and from which side in the conflict.

Staff would not allow the patients or their relatives to be interviewed without the permission of the hospital director, who refused and ordered the Guardian to leave.

But according to others who have been into other hospitals around the country, the situation is the same everywhere.

Wards are packed with the casualties of the war, with doctors struggling to cope with the sheer volume of casualties.

"Children have suffered horrendously and disproportionately," said James Elder, Unicef's spokesman in Colombo. "The medical system is stretched to breaking point dealing with children who have been injured."

He urged the government to allow injured children and their parents to leave the camps so that they could recuperate in a more appropriate environment.

Bhavani Fonseka, from the Colombo-based Centre for Policy Alternatives, said that the government appeared determined to prove that fewer people had been killed and injured than was reported while the fighting was going on.

"There is a policy of don't talk, keep it under wraps," she said. "But the truth is that there are so many injured that they have had to ship them to hospitals around the country. It is huge numbers if you look at the kids spread around the hospitals."

Fonseka, who had visited two hospitals, said she had seen children with both legs or both arms amputated. "We are going to have a generation of amputees," she said.

She added that the situation was made worse for some of the traumatised children because they were being guarded by members of the same armed forces who were responsible, in some cases, for their injuries.

The UN is understood to be concerned about the lack of medical facilities inside the camps and at the government's reluctance to make proper use of outside help.

International: Special report: Sri Lanka: Hidden from view: child victims of the battle to end a bloody civil war:

President said Tamil Tigers were defeated wi....

During a visit to the internment camps on Saturday, the UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, met one young girl with wounds to both her legs. She told him that she had been hit by shrapnel but that there were no medical facilities in the camp where she could undergo surgery and no pain relief available.

Meanwhile Rajapaksa yesterday rejected an appeal by Ban to lift restrictions on aid delivery to the overcrowded camps.

The president said that security had to be assured "in view of the likely presence of <u>LTTE</u> (Tamil Tiger) infiltrators" among the refugees.

"As conditions improved, especially with regard to security, there would be no objections to such assistance, from organisations that were genuinely interested in the wellbeing" of the displaced Tamils, he said.

In a separate development a statement from the <u>LTTE</u> confirmed for the first time that their leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, had been killed. The body of Prabhakaran was produced by the Sri Lankan army last week. Pictures showed him lying with eyes open and a cloth covering an apparent deadly head wound.

Yesterday the BBC said that it had received a statement signed by the *LTTE*s head of international relations, Selvarasa Pathmanathan. The statement said their "incomparable leader" had "attained martyrdom".

Load-Date: May 25, 2009

**End of Document** 



# <u>UN rights chief presses for probe into Sri Lankan war; Earlier attempt</u> rebuffed by council

Ottawa Citizen

May 29, 2009 Friday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 Ottawa Citizen, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. A6

Length: 624 words

Byline: Steven Edwards, Canwest News Service

**Dateline: UNITED NATIONS** 

#### **Body**

The United Nations human rights chief took the extraordinary step Thursday of seeking to override a decision on Sri Lanka by the world body's top rights assembly.

Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, pressed for an independent probe into abuses during the country's war with Tamil separatists after a majority of the 47-member Human Rights Council rebuffed her appeal for that body to launch one.

His move came as the Times of London newspaper revealed that an investigation of photographs shows that more than 20,000 Tamil civilians were killed in the final throes of the Sri Lankan civil war, most as a result of government shelling.

The number of casualties is three times the official figure.

Sri Lankan authorities have insisted that their forces stopped using heavy weapons on April 27 and observed the no-fire zone where 100,000 Tamil men, <u>women</u> and children were sheltering. They have blamed all civilian casualties on Tamil Tiger rebels concealed among the civilians.

Aerial photographs, official documents, witness accounts and expert testimony tell a different story. With the world's media and aid organizations kept well away from the fighting, the army launched a fierce barrage that began at the end of April and lasted about three weeks. The offensive ended Sri Lanka's 26-year civil war with the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, but innocent civilians paid the price.

Canada was among a dozen council members -- most of the others were European -- that on Wednesday opposed a Sri Lankan-drafted resolution describing the conflict as a "domestic" matter that should ensure the UN's "non interference." But the measure passed with the backing of 29 council members, among them China, India, Egypt and Cuba. The remainder abstained.

The document emerged at the end of a special session Canada and other western countries had sought to examine the human rights situation in Sri Lanka following the intensive fighting that ended the country's civil war.

UN rights chief presses for probe into Sri Lankan war; Earlier attempt rebuffed by council

Claiming a propaganda victory, Sri Lanka Thursday said the vote by the Geneva-based assembly vindicated its prosecution of the war, and dealt a blow to western calls for a probe into rights violations alleged by human rights groups.

Pillay has said the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (<u>LTTE</u>) recruited child soldiers and used civilians as human shields. But she has also highlighted evidence indicating the Sri Lankan military indiscriminately shelled areas packed with civilians.

"There are serious allegations out there and (the high commissioner) still thinks an independent inquiry is the best way to go," said her chief spokesman, Rupert Colville. "The council decided otherwise in this session, but more clarity is absolutely necessary, and if the Sri Lankan government and army have done nothing wrong, one would hope an inquiry would show that. There should be nothing to fear."

Canada lists <u>LTTE</u> -- or <u>Tamil Tigers</u> -- as a terrorist organization, but Canada's statement during debate ahead of the resolution focused as much on the actions of the Sri Lankan government.

"Canada understands that the government of Sri Lanka has fought a brutal enemy ... (but) Canada also has serious concerns about the government of Sri Lanka's conduct during the conflict," said Marius Grinius, Canadian ambassador to the UN in Geneva.

The UN estimates that between 80,000 and 100,000 people died in what was one of Asia's longest-running wars.

Some 300,000 people remain in refugee camps after fleeing the conflict, but the Human Rights Council resolution supports the Sri Lankan government's insistence on allowing aid workers access "as may be appropriate."

It was unclear Thursday whether Canada would support Pillay's call for an international investigation outside the Human Rights Council.

Load-Date: May 29, 2009

**End of Document** 



#### Action not words will count over detained Tamils

#### Scotsman

October 27, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 Johnston Press Plc All Rights Reserved



Length: 607 words

Byline: Padraig Colman

Highlight: FIVE months after the defeat of the Tamil Tigers, Sri Lanka is trying to come to terms with its post-war

problems.

#### **Body**

Despite ongoing international concern over the plight of Tamil civilians in government-run camps, there are new signs of reconciliation. These are apparent in the way the authorities are dealing with former rank and file of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*).

Measures have been taken to rehabilitate some 10,000 <u>LTTE</u> fighters - many of whom were forcibly conscripted by the separatist rebels. In September, the justice and law reforms ministry announced a £14 million programme called Reintegrating ex-<u>LTTE</u> Cadres into Civilian Life, in association with the International Organisation for Migration.

Britain, the United States, Japan and India have promised financial assistance to the programme; Unicef and international non-governmental organisations will be helping; and many big Sri Lankan companies have offered their support.

Even before the September announcement, rehabilitation work had already begun.

Major General Ratnayake, Sri Lanka's commissioner for rehabilitation, said more than 80 per cent of these excadres - now sheltered in government schools - would be moved within a month into five new centres, once construction is completed.

Children between 12 and 18 and <u>women</u> have been segregated from the rest of the group. Men over 45 are to be given vocational training suited to their professions, skills and preferences. Young ex-<u>LTTE</u> cadres who had surrendered to the security forces have been undergoing rehabilitation in Jaffna.

The garment firm Tri Star has, with government help, invested in a factory in Trincomalee, which is expected to provide work for 1,000 local people. The firm has asked the government to let them train 500 young <u>women</u> who are currently in the camps for internally displaced people (IDPs).

After training, Tri Star will guarantee jobs in their own factories and will also award them certificates enabling them to get jobs elsewhere. They hope to have the opportunity to train former *LTTE* cadres.

#### Action not words will count over detained Tamils

Despite these initiatives, many within Sri Lanka and abroad doubt the sincerity of the government's promises to release IDPs and are concerned at continuing emergency legislation.

Conditions in the camps were highlighted by an incident at the Menik Farm camp on 26 September when, according to the UNHCR, "several people are said to have been injured, including a child who was hit by a stray bullet and is now paralysed".

Col R Hariharan, head of intelligence at the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka from 1987-1990, believes the EU cannot ignore strong public opinion about Sri Lanka's conduct. He says the government "has to come out with a list of <u>LTTE</u> cadres and camp followers in custody so there is a record of who is where, lest further accusations of executions in custody pile up.

"These are basic norms of good governance and Sri Lanka is expected to adhere to them. These issues are gathering adverse international momentum and nothing convinces the international community as much as visible results."

There are many dissident voices within Sri Lanka who will not be silenced and persist in challenging the government over the situation of the IDPs and its failure to release them, echoing the concerns expressed in the West.

Many of them think the stories about re-integration of former Tigers into society are simply window-dressing. They believe the government is not sincere in its promises to re-house IDPs, and that it simply does not have the capability to make good its promises.

Time will tell. As I write, the heavy rains have brought my guttering crashing to the ground. What will it be like in the IDP camps?

&#149 Padraig Colman is a journalist based in Sri Lanka.

Load-Date: March 14, 2011

**End of Document** 



#### Thousands of Tamils protest in Paris

Agence France Presse -- English May 12, 2009 Tuesday 3:44 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 366 words

Dateline: PARIS, May 12 2009

#### **Body**

At least 8,500 Tamils marched through the heart of Paris on Tuesday to demand an end to the Sri Lankan government's offensive against separatist rebels in their homeland.

France is one of several European countries with a large Tamil immigrant population, and its capital has seen weeks of protests following reports that thousands of civilians have been killed in the fighting.

"We are not terrorists, we want our country," proclaimed a banner borne by the well-drilled column of men, <u>women</u> and children, many of them wearing symbols of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (<u>LTTE</u>).

Several protesters carried a large portrait of Velupillai Prabhakaran, the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>' revered leader, who has not been seen for 18 months while government forces have closed in on the armed group's last refuges.

Organisers claimed that 10,000 people took part in the Paris march, which came one day after police in Britain broke up a London protest, while police said the figure was closer to 8,500.

"For the past 30 days our people has been massacred by the Sri Lankan army," declared Shalini Sakthithasan, a medical student and secretary general of the Tamil-France Coordination Committee, which helped organise the march.

"We demand an end to bombings that kill civilians -- <u>women</u>, children and the elderly -- every day. We demand an immediate and unconditional ceasefire so that the genocide can come to an end," she told AFP.

"We demand humanitarian aid and that the <u>LTTE</u> be taken off the list of terrorist organisations," she added, describing the Tigers as "the only representatives recognised by Tamils in Sri Lanka."

The European Union and the United States consider the Tigers, who have been fighting a bloody war for independence from Sri Lanka since 1972, an illegal terrorist group.

Nevertheless, there has been international concern about mounting civilian casualties since February, when government forces began an operation that has pushed the rebels back to a single besieged enclave.

#### Thousands of Tamils protest in Paris

According to United Nations estimates, some 6,500 civilians have been killed and 14,000 wounded in the offensive, which has seen 200,000 refugees fleeing the frontline and left 50,000 trapped by the fighting.

il/dc/cml/rom

Load-Date: May 13, 2009

**End of Document** 



#### Profile: Velupillai Prabhakaran

Guardian.com

May 18, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Unlimited All Rights Reserved



Length: 616 words

#### **Body**

#### **ABSTRACT**

Tamil Tigers founder who led 25-year war against Sri Lankan government

#### **FULL TEXT**

To the Sri Lankan government, Velupillai Prabhakaran was the leader of one of the world's most ruthless organisations and was comparable to Pol Pot or Osama bin Laden. But to his supporters, he was an indefatigable fighter for Tamil rights.

For three decades, Prabhakaran, 54, who had a fascination with Napoleon Bonaparte and Alexander the Great, eluded death, assassination attempts and capture as he single-mindedly pursued the goal of a homeland for the minority Tamils.

That goal came tantalisingly close as the supreme commander of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) at one stage presided over what was in effect a rebel mini-state in northern Sri Lanka. The Tigers ran their own law courts, police force and Tamil Eelam banks and even their own time zone - half an hour behind the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo.

But after the breakdown of numerous truces and outside attempts by Norway to broker a political settlement, an allout army offensive this year has wiped out the Tigers as a fighting force.

The Sri Lankan military says its troops <u>have killed the man</u> they have been hunting for so long; that they shot him dead as he was trying to escape in an ambulance.

In previous rounds of fighting, Prabhakaran, who carried a cyanide capsule around his neck, reportedly told his bodyguards to kill him and burn his body beyond recognition rather than allow his capture.

Although demonised by the Sri Lankan authorities, Prabhakaran became the symbol of militant Tamil nationalism, appearing on posters, calendars, watches and the placards waved by his supporters around the world, even if they had misgivings about some of the Tigers' tactics - the government accused the rebels of using civilians as human shields and shooting fleeing civilians as the rebels were cornered in their last refuge in north-eastern Sri Lanka.

#### Profile: Velupillai Prabhakaran

Prabhakaran's supporters point out that at one stage he was willing to set aside the military struggle and fight for his goals through political means. In a <u>rare press conference</u> in 2002, when he shed his familiar green fatigues, the short and stout guerrilla leader said he wanted a negotiated political settlement and rejected the label of terrorist organisation, claiming that the Tigers were a liberation movement.

Still he looked distinctly uncomfortable when asked about the assassination of the former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, who was blown up by a *female LTTE* suicide bomber in 1991, describing it as a "tragic incident".

Because of such actions, the Tigers found it hard to shake off their reputation for brazen terrorism.

The youngest of four children, Prabhakaran was born on 26 November 1954 in the northern coastal town of Velvettithurai, on the Jaffna peninsula. An average student, he said in an interview that he was fascinated by Napoleon and Alexander the Great. He was also influenced by the lives of two Indian leaders, Subhash Chandra Bose and Bhagat Singh, who fought for independence from Britain.

He became politically active as a teenager, radicalised by what he what he saw as discrimination by the Sinhalese majority against Tamils in politics, employment and education. In the early 1970s, Prabhakaran founded the <u>Tamil</u> <u>Tigers</u>, and in 1975 he was accused of being responsible for the murder of the mayor of Jaffna, the first of many assassinations for which he is blamed.

In 1983, he launched a guerrilla war, setting the stage for one of Asia's longest conflicts. His death should bring the military conflict to a close for now, but Tamil demands - backed by a vocal diaspora - for better treatment from the Sinhalese are unlikely to be silenced.

Load-Date: May 18, 2009

End of Document



# <u>Tragic scenes as Tigers hold out; Thousands continue to flee rebel-held area</u> as claims, videos of brutality and bloodshed surface

The Straits Times (Singapore)
April 22, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 Singapore Press Holdings Limited All Rights Reserved

Length: 564 words

Byline: Ravi Velloor, South Asia Bureau Chief

#### **Body**

BABIES with shattered knees, <u>women</u> whose eyes had been hit by blast fragments and teenagers who died from shock emerged in video footage from the palm-fringed killing fields in Sri Lanka's north, where Tamil rebels are making their last stand.

As the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> ignored the government's 24-hour deadline to surrender yesterday, some 9,000 civilians fled the no-fire zone, adding to the 30,000 who escaped on Monday.

The video shot by the Sri Lankan Red Cross also showed many of the civilians clutching whatever meagre possessions they could grab, and wading through the knee-deep waters of a lagoon to reach safety.

However, aid groups estimated that between 50,000 and 100,000 people remained trapped with the rebels.

Many Tamil civilians had been held by the rebels to act as human shields, and their escape was possible only because Sri Lankan army troops had penetrated an embankment to give the hostages a way out.

Yesterday, as the Sri Lankan army prepared for its final ground assault on the last Tiger redoubt, both sides exchanged charges of extreme brutality.

The rebels said more than 1,000 civilians had been killed and many more injured by army shelling.

'Sri Lankan forces have deployed three types of internationally banned weapons - cluster bombs, napalm and phosphorus - causing heavy civilian casualties,' said Mr B. Nadesan, who heads the political wing of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*).

The military denied the <u>LTTE</u>'s claims, accusing the Tigers of forcing civilians to stay behind or be killed if they tried to leave.

The United Nations children's agency, Unicef, has appealed to both sides to exercise restraint.

'With the latest surge in fighting, we fear the worst is yet to come,' said Mr Daniel Toole, Unicef's South Asia head.

'We face the intolerable inevitability of seeing many more children killed.'

With a military victory at hand, Colombo seemed in no mood to listen to the growing chorus of international voices calling for an end to the fighting.

Page 2 of 2

Tragic scenes as Tigers hold out Thousands continue to flee rebel-held area as claims, videos of brutality and bloodshed surface

It was also in a hurry to finish the task before pressure mounted even more.

Vociferous pro-Tamil rallies have been held in London and Paris over the past two days, often descending into violence.

'British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd kept calling me during the past few days,' President Mahinda Rajapakse said on Monday.

'I could not talk to them as I was busy with the New Year festivities. I ask them not to talk about a ceasefire or a pause in military operations.'

Meanwhile, an Agence France-Presse report said that Sri Lankan troops had captured more ground and that the last strip of coastal jungle held by the Tigers had been sliced in two.

The agency quoted the Tigers as saying the coastal village of Puttumatalan, which was used as a key port for supplies to the rebel-held territory, had fallen to government forces.

The area was also used by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to operate a ferry to evacuate wounded civilians from the remaining rebel-held territory.

The Tigers said they had suggested an alternative landing place for the ICRC to operate and called for urgent supplies of food and medicine.

velloor@sph.com.sg

LAST GASP?

Trapped <u>Tamil Tigers</u> may be on the verge of total defeat after 25 years of rebellion.

About 40,000 civilians have fled the area.

Between 50,000 and 100,000 remain stranded, said the Human Rights Watch.

Load-Date: April 21, 2009

**End of Document** 



#### Robbed of their innocence

Hindustan Times
September 30, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 433 words

Dateline: New Delhi

#### **Body**

New Delhi, Sept. 29 -- As security forces prepare for the biggest-ever push to take back the vast swathe of territory from the Maoists - 223 of India's 625 districts - the large presence of child combatants, many of them girls, has become a concern for the government.

Maoists borrowed the idea of conscripting children from Sri Lanka's Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (*LTTE*), another organisation declared terrorist by India. The *Tamil tigers* conscripted nearly 6,000 children between 2001 and 2008.

A Maoist document, Post-Election Situation, Our Tasks, said: "The setback suffered by the <u>LTTE</u> has a negative effect on the revolutionary movement. The experience of the <u>LTTE</u>'s setback in Sri Lanka is very important to study and take lessons."

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's recent alerts against the Maoists came after the revelation that the rebels were responsible for 90 per cent of the violence in the country. In 2008 alone, 1,591 incidents of Maoist violence resulted in 721 killings. This year till August, there had been 1,405 incidents, resulting in 580 deaths spread over 11 states.

The Central Para Military Forces (CPMFs) and state polices are working on a plan to smoke out the Maoists from their strongholds once more forces could be made available after the Maharashtra elections in October.

But the Maoists are trying new tactics. "The Maoists have made a tactical change to counter security forces, where teenagers and <u>women</u> fight from the front rank," said Brig B.K. Ponwar, Director of Jungle Warfare & Counter Insurgency College in Chhattisgarh.

He said, "The extremists have created Jan Militia (people's army) that includes Bal Sangam (children's collective), for attacking the security forces while the main cadres guide them from behind. The attacks in the last few years in Bastar had shown this," said R.K. Vij, Inspector General of Police, Chhattisgarh.

Over the last three years, 25 children have been arrested in Jharkhand. In just one district of Chhattisgarh over the last two years, nine children - seven of them below 16 years - have been taken into custody.

What's more, medical examinations of the girl recruits also revealed that they were subjected to repeat sexual assaults.

But the Maoist leadership does not accept this fact. "No child below 16 years of age is part of our army. It's all propaganda of our enemies," Koteshwar Rao alias Kishenji, a member of the Maoist Politburo told Hindustan

#### Robbed of their innocence

Times. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Hindustan Times. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/jagirdar.com">https://doi.org/10.1007/jagirdar.com</a> (https://doi.org/10.1007/jagirdar.com)

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: September 30, 2009



# Army gives away gifts to LTTE cadres

Daily News (Sri Lanka) May 26, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 308 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, May 26 -- Army personnel were magnanimous in extending their compassion, universal loving-kindness and divine pardon to the arch-enemy who mercilessly assassinated thousands of troops and civilians in the past 30 years.

It certainly made a difference in Vavuniya during the weekend May 23-24 when the Army decided to share more than half of a donation they received with surrendered <a href="LTTE">LTTE</a> women</a> cadres in Rehabilitation Centres for surrendered Tigers in Poonthottam and Nelukkulam areas. The weekend's huge donation of garments including <a href="www.mem">www.mem</a> wear was made to the troops by allied members of the BOI (Board of Investment) and Executive Officers of the Free Trade Zone Companies. Troops after receipt of the donation from MAS Intimates Pvt Ltd, Slimline and other companies straightaway allocated 976 of those parcels to <a href="mailto:female">female</a> and teenage Tiger cadres under rehabilitation. Army personnel also facilitated donation of those parcels of garments directly to some of those <a href="mailto:LTTE">LTTE</a> women</a> cadres. Another segment of the donation was made to Internally Displaced Persons in the Menik Farm Relief Village on the same occasion. The stock also contained milk powder, biscuits, garments and sanitary wear. Brigadier H.D.W. Kariyawasam, 211 Brigade Commander Lieutenant Colonel R.M.P.J. Rathnayake, Lieutenant Colonel W.H.S. Ariyarathna, Co-ordinating Officer for sector security, Lieutenant Colonel M.G. Gunawardane and Staff Officer I (Logistics) of Security Forces Headquarters (Vanni) and Lieutenant Colonel W.H.S. Ariyarathne participated in the programs. A total of about 9,100 surrendered Tigers are housed for rehabilitation at Pompemadu, Rambakulam, Omanthai, Pallekele, Ambepussa, Thelippalai, Welikanda, Poonthottam and a few more in the Menik Farm along with their parents. 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 <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: May 26, 2009



# Be in no doubt, there are Tigers among boatpeople

The Australian
October 28, 2009 Wednesday
1 - All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: FEATURES; Pg. 16

Length: 1187 words

Byline: Sergei DeSilva-Ranasinghe

#### **Body**

There are bound to be Tamil extremists and sympathisers amid the asylum-seekers from Sri Lanka, warns Sergei DeSilva-Ranasinghe

THE debate in Australia over the influx of Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka should take into consideration the nature of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Sri Lankan conflict that ended on May 19.

Since the <u>LTTE</u>'s defeat, the Sri Lankan government has been weeding out hardcore <u>LTTE</u> fighters to ensure that the group cannot regenerate. So far, according to Sri Lanka's Ministry of Defence, out of nearly 272,000 internally displaced persons, 9818 <u>LTTE</u> fighters have been identified and interned. Nonetheless, the government remains cautious, as suggested by Disaster Management and Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe: "There are still some persons among the IDPs who have not disclosed their former affiliation with the <u>LTTE</u>."

In early August, the Sri Lankan government suspected that about 10,000 unidentified <u>LTTE</u> fighters were hiding in IDP camps, posing as civilians. However, in early October the leader of the Tamil United Liberation Front, Veerasingham Anandasangaree, claimed that most, if not all, of the remaining undetected <u>LTTE</u> fighters had fled overseas.

Sri Lankan military officials believe that two categories of refugees are fleeing: those who are fighters or who have collaborated with the <u>LTTE</u>; and those who are fleeing for economic reasons. Many of these civilians are known to have been strong supporters of the <u>LTTE</u> and constitute maveerar (war hero) families whose children fought in elite <u>LTTE</u> units.

In September, reports emerged that since May about 20,000 IDPs have escaped from dozens of these camps; many of them are suspected by the Sri Lankan government of being former <u>LTTE</u> fighters.

Conditions in these camps have been the subject of considerable media debate, but recent visits by senior foreign officials suggest that significant improvements have been made. For example, IRIN News quotes Walter Kaelin, the UN Secretary-General's representative on the human rights of internally displaced persons, as saying: ``Certainly people do get food, they do get medical assistance and there is education in the camps. So from that perspective, the government and international community have done a lot."

The Indian daily The Hindu reports that 41,685 IDPs have been released and resettled and the government is engaged in the process of resettling another 58,000 in line with its target of releasing and resettling more than 70 per cent of the IDPs by January 31.

The <u>LTTE</u> in the diaspora is engaged in a process of reorganisation and there are no credible indications that it will move away from terrorism, a view affirmed by Canadian terrorism expert Tom Quiggin, who says: ``The <u>LTTE</u> has not given up its program of an independent homeland, and they will continue their campaign of violence from wherever they can re-establish themselves."

It is beyond doubt that hardcore <u>LTTE</u> fighters have infiltrated the Tamil refugees who have arrived in Australia, as noted by Victor Rajakulendran, who represents the Australasian Federation of Tamil Associations: ``There will ... definitely ... be [<u>LTTE</u>] in these boats. The ex-combatants are in danger in Sri Lanka so they will have to flee somewhere."

Australia needs to be aware that many <u>LTTE</u> combatants were involved in serious acts of terrorism against Sri Lanka and its citizens, including suicide bomb attacks, other forms of bombing, torture and murder. For instance, there was a sustained <u>LTTE</u> campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Sinhalese and Muslim populations of northern and eastern Sri Lanka, which from 1984 to this year involved an estimated 257 attacks that killed 4485 civilians, wounded 5897 and displaced close to 200,000 Sinhalese and Muslims. Furthermore, according to Dharmalingam Siddharthan, leader of the anti-<u>LTTE</u> People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam, at least 10,000 dissident Tamils were eliminated by the <u>LTTE</u> during the conflict.

Rajakulendran claims that <u>LTTE</u> combatants ``are not going to be fighters here. They were fighting for a cause, even if some of the tactics are unacceptable ... They are not going to fight for a cause here. They are not like Islamic terrorists." However, evidence of <u>LTTE</u> activities in the West suggests otherwise. For instance, a 2006 Human Rights Watch report, Final War: <u>LTTE</u> Intimidation and Extortion in the Tamil Diaspora, reported serious <u>LTTE</u> infringements of law and order in the West, including extortion, wanton intimidation, violent repression of dissenting Tamil voices and even homicide.

Canadian-Tamil journalist D.B.S Jeyaraj has written that ``the activities of pro-Tiger elements in the West have often been provocative and blatantly defiant of Western laws governing terrorism. In spite of the <u>LTTE</u> being banned under anti-terrorism laws, the diasporic Tiger supporters have flagrantly flouted them."

Examples of serious <u>LTTE</u> infractions of the law in the West include: the murder of a French policeman; suspected murder of dissident Tamil journalist Sabaratnam Sabalingam; death threats to the dissident Tamil Broadcasting Corporation in Britain; assault and intimidation of dissident Norwegian-Tamil journalist Nadaraja Sethurupan; and, according to the Asian Tribune, alleged death threats against Selliah Nagarajah, a political columnist and law lecturer at the University of Western Sydney. In addition, dissident liberal Sri Lankan Tamil group University Teachers for Human Rights-Jaffna claims that the <u>LTTE</u> was responsible for the murder of Subramaniam Muthulingam, an Australian citizen who was on holiday in Sri Lanka and was known to have refused to co-operate with <u>LTTE</u> attempts to streamline fundraising from a Hindu temple in Perth.

Hence, based on its actions in Sri Lanka and abroad, it is not surprising that the <u>LTTE</u> is outlawed in 31 countries. Indeed, the US FBI website states: ``The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> are among the most dangerous and deadly extremists in the world [and their] ruthless tactics have inspired terrorist networks worldwide, including al-Qa'ida in Irag."

The FBI goes on to say: ``[The *LTTE*] perfected the use of suicide bombers, invented the suicide belt, pioneered the use of *women* in suicide attacks, murdered some 4000 people in the past two years alone and assassinated two world leaders [former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan president Ranasinghe Premadasa], the only terrorist organisation to do so."

While the Australian government ponders whether to outlaw the <u>LTTE</u>, as practically every other Western country has done since 2006, it should take an uncompromising view of <u>LTTE</u> combatants and operatives and ensure that a thorough screening process is conducted.

#### Be in no doubt, there are Tigers among boatpeople

Clearly, not all the Tamil refugees coming to Australia fit this category, but those found to be members of the <u>LTTE</u> should be treated no differently from the way Australia would expect other countries to treat operatives of Jemaah Islamiah and al-Qa'ida.

Sergei DeSilva-Ranasinghe is writing his masters thesis at Curtin University on the evolution of Australia's defence policy in the Indian Ocean.

Load-Date: October 27, 2009



# International: Prisoners of peace: hundreds of thousands face two years trapped in Sri Lankan camps: Priority is to find Tamil Tigers, says government: UN concern grows over 'shocking' conditions

The Guardian - Final Edition
May 21, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved



Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 16

Length: 798 words

Byline: Gethin Chamberlain in Colombo

# **Body**

Many of the quarter of a million people held in internment camps in Sri Lanka face up to two years behind razor wire, a government official said yesterday.

Despite international concern over conditions inside the camps, the defence ministry spokesman, Lakshman Hulugalle, said Sri Lanka was not prepared to let the UN dictate terms over the length of time people could be held.

A UN spokesman, Gordon Weiss, said he was "shocked" at the revelation, which ran counter to previous government assurances. "It was our understanding that the government was to return 80% of the people to their homes by the end of the year, or at least try to," said Weiss.

The UN, Britain and human rights groups have been pressing the government in Colombo to release people from the camps as soon as possible. But Hulugalle said: "The UN can't dictate terms to us. They can always make a request but the UN hasn't asked us to release people. The government has a plan to resettle them. Let these agencies come and join us."

Hulugalle said the government had already resettled almost 200,000 people after the east of the country was liberated from Tamil Tiger control. "We were able to resettle them within nine months. This operation will take a little longer - one and a half to two years," he said.

Some elderly people with close relatives who could look after them had been released, but many others would have to stay behind.

Responding to criticism of conditions in the camps, where detainees have told the Guardian they are short of food, water and medicines, Hulugalle said: "You can't expect five-star hospitality in an area like that. What we are providing are the basics - security, food, health and schools. These are basic. You can't expect an Oxford college."

Hulugalle said the government had turned down an offer of 750 previously used blankets from the Hilton hotel group because people did not want to be treated as second-class citizens. "They are not beggars," he said.

International: Prisoners of peace: hundreds of thousands face two years trapped in Sri Lankan camps: Priority is to find Tamil Tigers, says government: UN conce....

The government says it needs to hold the civilians until it can establish whether or not they are <u>Tamil Tigers</u>. The news came as the Red Cross suspended delivery of supplies to displaced civilians after the Sri Lanka government blocked access to camps it controls in the country's north.

"There is no access to these camps at this particular moment," said a Red Cross official in Geneva.

Access to the overcrowded camps has been heavily restricted in recent days, making it difficult for humanitarian agencies to get essential supplies to those detained inside.

Save the Children claims that at least a quarter of pregnant and breastfeeding <u>women</u> in the internment camps are now suffering acutely malnourishment.

Another Sri Lankan official revealed that hardcore rebels were being held and interrogated in a secure unit in the south of the country.

Suhada Gamalath, the man in charge of the jails where the majority of <u>Tamil Tigers</u> who surrendered are being held, said about 100 fighters were being held in a prison in Boosse, in the south of the country. He said they would eventually be brought to trial and could face up to 20 years' jail if convicted of murder.

Gamalath said between 2,000 and 3,000 former <u>Tamil Tigers</u> were imprisoned, with up to 60 more arriving every day. Most had given themselves up, he said. The total included about 250 below the age of 18, he said, with some as young as 14.

Another government minister disputed the military's assessment of the timescale for rehabilitation, but admitted the task posed particular problems.

The disaster management and human rights minister, Mahinda Samarasinghe, claimed that the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> had infiltrated the camps and there was a danger that some of those being held were potential suicide bombers.

Samarasinghe said the area where the civilians once lived had been heavily mined by the group and would take time to clear.

He insisted the government was committed to getting the lives of its citizens back to normal at the earliest possible opportunity and that they would be consulted throughout the process. But he said it was likely to take longer than the year it took to resettle civilians displaced by fighting in the east.

Samarasinghe also criticised some of the efforts of the UN agencies involved, claiming that tents supplied to house detainees were inadequate and unable to stand up to rain, and that toilets supplied by Unicef were not good enough.

The UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, is due to arrive in Sri Lanka tomorrow to press the government to work towards reconciliation after 26 years of war and to allow humanitarian groups access to the camps.

The UN said Ban had met the Sri Lankan health minister in Geneva to press for access to the former battlefields. He said in a statement that the situation in Sri Lanka was of "grave and growing concern".

Load-Date: May 21, 2009



# Carnage at Habarana LTTE kills over 100

Daily News (Sri Lanka)
June 1, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1106 words

Dateline: Colombo

# **Body**

Colombo, June 1 -- When the euphoria of victory dies down, and together with it the media hype ceases, when the guns do not rattle and boom anymore, and the sky, the land and the sea become calm and serene, when tranquillity reigns through it is natural to live in the present moment and forget the past.

But one cannot live in the present without a past. Nor can one envision the future discarding the experience of the preceding events. Hence the Daily News is serialising the Chronicle of LTTE Terror taken from our own archives which would remind our readers how it all began. An awareness of the chronology of terror would help us prevent the recurrence of such terror and frustrate any attempts by misguided elements to repeat history to suit their evil designs. It was not simple terror. Nor was terror sporadic. It was all pre-planned, pre-determined, well-calculated terror. The victims were innocent people. Though it is too many innumerate we would like to recall the major episodes in the Chronology of Terror. One of the blackest episodes in the separatist war occurred on Good Friday 1987 when over 100 bus passengers were mowed down by LTTE machine gun fire near Kitulottuwa on the Trincomalee Habarana road. The victims belonging to all communities were shot dead in cold blood, demonstrating the barbaric nature of the LTTE even during the early days of the separatist war. The carnage shocked the entire nation and marked fist instance where innocent defenceless bus passengers became targets of Tiger brutality. This was also believed to the first calculated mass civilian attack carried out by the Tigers, for most of the passengers were journeying after the Sinhala New year festivities, where crowds in buses were more than at normal times. The attack was widely believed to have been carried out by well known LTTE hitman Pullendran who led many a massacre on unprotected villages bordering the North and East. According to a military spokesman a total of 107 persons including women and children were wiped out in one of the worst massacres carried out by the LTTE in it's blood splattered history. Sixty others were injured most of them in a critical state. The passengers were travelling in three buses when the terrorist laid their ambush at a point on the lonely stretch between the 123rd and 129th mile post of the Trincomalee-Habarana road. "They stopped the buses lined up the passengers and mowed them down. It was terrible bushiness," the spokesman said. He said two of the buses were coming from Trincomalee and one going in the other direction. There was no clear information if the buses belonged to the CTB or private coaches or both. Another report said that a fourth vehicle - a private car had also been stopped and the people in it killed. This was later confirmed by a police report. It was later revealed that all three vehicles were private buses some carrying passengers from Colombo to Trincomalee .A number of victims were people travelling at the end of the New Year holiday. First reports received on the attack claimed that between 50 to sixty persons were killed, the majority of them Sinhalese. The casualties were moved to Habarana and some to Anuradhapura. At least two Helicopters were deployed for the task and a AirForce Avro too pressed into service. Initially heavy rains hampered the removal of dead bodies and the transfer of casualties. The attack came on the seventh day of the unilateral ceasefire announced by the Government. The Habarana-Trincomalee road is a desolate stretch wending it's way through thick forests with an eerie backdrop. It is the main supply route to the East but journeying though the starkly lonely

#### Carnage at Habarana LTTE kills over 100

passage had been a risky affair even at the best of times, according to military sources. It was certainly not a proposition for pleasure journeys. The buses are for most part over crowded and one is compelled to endure discomfiture because the journey had to be made. The bus to Trincomalee from Kandy that fateful Friday on the 17th was no exception. There were 113 passengers in it most of whom perished under hail of LTTE gun fire. Evidence of what happened minutes before the massacre were later recounted by the very few survivors some of whom feigned death to escape the LTTE butchery. It appeared that the bus was flagged down at the 124 th mile post, seventeen miles from Habarana, by persons donned in army uniform. According to the only two survivors to help the authorities at the Habarana Hospital Nimal Jayatissa and Shantha Ranasinghe the attackers dressed in military fatigues after stopping their bus demanded money and valuables from the passengers. It was then that it dawned on them that these were terrorists. Their escape from the hail of machine gun fire which turned the bus in which they were travelling into a charnel house was nothing short of a miracle. After the first burst of automatic rifle fire, the killers trod over the dead and the dying shooting all who moved. They did not spare the old, feeble and even children. "When they started shooting I threw myself on the floor of the bus and in seconds bodies fell over me. I held a little girl close to me and she too escaped," Jayatissa said when interviewed by the Daily News. According to him after the first round of firing the killers probed the bodies on the floor with their boots for any signs of life. "I kept my mouth open, dribbling spittle hoping the man would go away. He pulled me up by the head and I went limp. He went away. A few minutes later Jayatissa said he raised his head and heard a young girl telling him that she too was alive. "I daubed her face in blood and told her to pretend she was dead-I am sure she was killed the next time they returned," he said recounting his ordeal. Jayatissa remained motionless till a few minutes later - it seemed like hours - he heard more shooting. This was when the army arrived and realising this, he rushed out of the bus. Sarath Ranasinghe's story was much the same. Both men were in the forefront of the first aid measures the authorities began soon after the tragedy. Jayatissa himself was a Red Cross worker based at Bisa Bandara, in Medirigiriya. Ranasinghe was a timber contractor from Kantalai. Their's was a tale of unspeakable horror tinged with poignant recollection of the ordeal they were forced to undergo and to be fortunate to be alive to recount to the world one of the most barbaric and inhuman acts one could ever imagine of man's inhumanity to man, perpetrated by the most ruthless terrorist organisation in the world. 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 <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: June 1, 2009



# Sri Lanka rebels ignore deadline to surrender

Agence France Presse -- English
April 21, 2009 Tuesday 9:24 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 628 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, April 21 2009

#### **Body**

The Sri Lankan army seized more ground from the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> on Tuesday as the rebels ignored a deadline to surrender, the defence ministry said, and fears grew for tens of thousands of civilians.

Fresh fighting saw government forces effectively slice the last small strip of coastal jungle held by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) in two, and came as civilians flooded out of the area.

"The <u>LTTE</u> has not responded to the government's call to surrender, so we are keeping up our offensive to rescue the civilians," military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said as the midday (0630 GMT) deadline passed.

The government says its troops were poised to defeat the <u>LTTE</u>, a hardened guerrilla group that has been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland on the ethnic Sinhalese-majority island since the 1970s.

The defence ministry said nearly 50,000 men, <u>women</u> and children managed to escape on Monday after troops punctured rebel defences at Puttumatalan, inside the rebel-held area in the island's northeast.

It also said 17 civilians who tried to escape from rebel-held territory on Monday had been killed by the guerrillas while another 373 had been wounded.

The pro-rebel Tamilnet website reported the area was littered with the bodies of hundreds of civilians it said were killed in government shelling.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said it was concerned that the final offensive against the **LTTE** could lead to a "dramatic increase" in civilian casualties, a concern echoed by the UN.

"The situation is nothing short of catastrophic. Ongoing fighting has killed or wounded hundreds of civilians who have only minimal access to medical care," ICRC's Director of Operations Pierre Kraehenbuehl said in Geneva.

In Washington, a US official warned on Monday that time was running out for a deal that he hoped would bring lasting peace to Sri Lanka.

#### Sri Lanka rebels ignore deadline to surrender

Michael Owen, the acting deputy assistant secretary of state for South Asia, said Sri Lanka should offer a package in which the Tigers hand in their arms, possibly to a third party, in exchange for amnesty for low-level cadres.

During the surrender, both sides would hold fire and let civilians leave, he said.

"We are running out of time," Owen told the Brookings Institution think-tank. "Really, there is literally only a couple of days to try to get this finalised."

Sri Lanka's government has resisted calls for any international intervention and for a prolonged pause in the military campaign to minimise the humanitarian suffering.

The government estimates show another 30,000 civilians could still be held by the Tigers but the United Nations says the number could be twice as high and warned Tuesday that an all-out assault risked a bloodbath.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the escape of the civilians but was "deeply concerned" about those still trapped, his office said.

Journalists are barred from working in the north, making it impossible to verify the rival claims independently.

"If fighting continues and if the <u>LTTE</u> refuses to allow people to leave the conflict zone, then we face the intolerable inevitability of seeing many more children killed," said UNICEF's South Asia regional director, Daniel Toole.

The Tigers have not formally responded to the surrender call but renewed their call for an unconditional ceasefire -- something the government has already rejected.

The crisis has sparked protests in Europe and expressions of concern by UN and human rights groups.

In Paris, French police arrested 210 people Monday when a rally by Tamils turned violent as demonstrators threw bottles at security forces and smashed windscreens.

In London, thousands of Tamils blocked some of the city's busiest streets, demonstrating outside parliament and calling for an immediate ceasefire.

Load-Date: April 22, 2009



# Road's end for once formidable rebel force

The Australian

May 18, 2009 Monday

3 - All-round Metro Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Pg. 11

Length: 499 words

# **Body**

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's <u>Tamil Tigers</u> were once ranked among the world's most formidable and disciplined rebel outfits.

Just two years ago, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam appeared indestructible, controlling a large swath of territory in the north of the island with all the trappings of a separate state.

Formed in 1972 by Velupillai Prabhakaran, the Tigers spent more than 30 years confounding expectations of their military defeat, but a sustained offensive by government troops appears to have finally defeated them.

In the fight for a separate Tamil homeland, Prabhakaran, 54, refined the use of suicide bombers who carried out deadly attacks against high-profile targets, including spectacular strikes against economic installations.

Former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a <u>female</u> Tiger suicide bomber in 1991, in retaliation for sending Indian peacekeepers to Sri Lanka in 1987 who ended up fighting the rebels.

The Tigers were also blamed for the 1993 killing of Sri Lankan president Ranasinghe Premadasa and the bombing of the central bank, which left 90 dead.

They had their own naval unit, the Sea Tigers, and even managed to smuggle in light aircraft and launch the Air Tigers -- an air force capable of hitting as far south as the capital and then returning to jungle airstrips unscathed.

In one of their most audacious attacks, the rebels blew up more than a dozen fighter aircraft at a military base just north of Colombo in 2001 and destroyed six passenger airliners parked at the country's only international airport.

The Tigers have been condemned for their use of suicide bombers and child soldiers, but they had the backing of the international community when Oslo-backed peace talks were under way from 2002.

Those negotiations collapsed and the process ended in January last year when President Mahinda Rajapakse pulled out of a moribund truce.

Government forces entered the city of Kilinochchi -- the <u>LTTE</u>'s political headquarters -- in January after the biggest military offensive in the history of what has become Asia's longest-running ethnic conflict.

In his annual speech in November, Prabhakaran vowed to defend his territory and suggested that the rebels would revert to hit-and-run attacks as their area slowly shrank.

#### Road's end for once formidable rebel force

Observers partly attribute the *LTTE*'s spectacular collapse to over-confidence.

"They projected a facade of invincibility," retired army brigadier-general Vipul Boteju said late last month.

"They had also underestimated the military, which had learnt from their mistakes."

The rebels also suffered internal problems, with signs of dissent around Prabhakaran -- whose de facto No2, Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan, defected to the Government in 2004.

On the international front, the <u>LTTE</u> was outlawed as a foreign terrorist organisation by the US, European Union, Australia and India.

This in turn led to more intelligence-sharing on rebel arms procurement overseas and a squeeze on the outfit's lucrative international fundraising network.

Load-Date: May 17, 2009



# 'Hundreds die in Sri Lanka shelling'

#### ITN

May 11, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 Independent Television News Limited. Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company All Rights Reserved



Length: 242 words

# **Body**

Hundreds of civilians have reportedly been killed in an artillery barrage in war-torn Sri Lanka.

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> blamed the Sri Lankan government for the deaths of more than 200 people trapped in the north of the Indian Ocean island, where the rebels have been cornered.

But Sri Lanka's military accused the Tigers of firing shells at civilians themselves in a bid to win international sympathy and force a ceasefire.

The civilian presence in the warzone has prompted Western governments to press Sri Lanka for a truce.

But the Sri Lankan government has refused, saying the Tigers have a history of using them to rearm.

Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, the military spokesman, said troops had not fired into the area and had long ago stopped using heavy weapons in an effort to avoid civilian deaths.

Meanwhile, the government on Saturday revoked the visas of a news crew from Channel 4, saying they had "constantly filed reports with fabricated stories tarnishing the image of the country".

Last week, Channel 4 broadcast a report quoting what it said were Tamil aid workers inside one of the camps for the roughly 200,000 people who have fled the war, saying people had been underfed and mistreated, and some **women** sexually abused.

The government called it an <u>LTTE</u>-planted fabrication, and pointed out that the United Nations' humanitarian chief and other foreign dignitaries who have visited the camps said they were by and large up to international standards.

Load-Date: May 18, 2009



# Rubble, broken bodies litter battlefield; Reporters view the carnage in Sri Lanka's war-torn north

The Age (Melbourne, Australia)

May 4, 2009 Monday

First Edition

Copyright 2009 The Age Company Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; International News; Pg. 7

Length: 767 words

Byline: MATT WADE, SOUTH ASIA CORRESPONDENT

# **Body**

THE legacy of Sri Lanka's bloody civil war was on show as the military helicopter flew fast and low over Kilinochchi, once the headquarters of the Tamil Tiger rebels. Almost every building in the town was without a roof and many had been reduced to rubble.

This part of northern Sri Lanka has long been off limits to foreign journalists. But on Saturday, I was part of a small group of reporters given a rare glimpse of Sri Lanka's battlefields.

From Kilinochchi, we travelled at high speed in armoured personnel carriers towards the front line of fighting. Villages along the way were deserted. About 300,000 people once lived in this part of Sri Lanka, known as Vanni, but they are all gone.

Most are now in overcrowded refugee camps at the town of Vavuniya, to the south, although tens of thousands are still trapped on the tiny strip of coast where the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) are making their last stand.

We were taken to Putumattalan Lagoon, about three kilometres from the fighting, where heavily armed troops guarded a narrow dirt track that led towards the front line.

One of them, a shy 20-year-old called Vishra Tuksharan, said he had lost many friends during the army's final push to defeat the Tigers.

"I'm happy to be alive," he said.

Another soldier on guard near the conflict zone, Athula, said he had lost "most of his friends".

Later, we saw first hand the awful suffering this 26-year civil war is still causing.

While we were waiting at a military helipad not far from the lagoon, a battered green army ambulance arrived carrying soldiers wounded in battle. Two casualties were stretched out on uncomfortable-looking benches in the back.

One soldier, who had lost the lower part of his left leg and sustained serious injuries to both eyes, was taken by stretcher from the ambulance and put on the ground, awaiting transport out.

Rubble, broken bodies litter battlefield Reporters view the carnage in Sri Lanka 's war-torn north

A sheet attached to his arm said he had experienced a "traumatic amputation". Blood seeped through the gauze that covered his face. He was quickly bundled back into the ambulance and taken away when cameras were trained on him.

A fortnight ago, the army destroyed an <u>LTTE</u> defensive wall at Putumattalan, allowing tens of thousands of civilians to flee rebel-held territory. But now the flow of refugees has stopped. The shelter used to receive refugees was empty on Saturday, although buses were on hand to evacuate civilians when the exodus resumes.

Last week, the Sri Lankan Government announced it would no longer use heavy weapons and that its operations would now focus on rescuing civilians held by the rebels.

But according to the pro-<u>LTTE</u> website Tamilnet, the Sri Lankan artillery had been used a few hours before we arrived at Putumattalan. A makeshift hospital inside <u>LTTE</u>-held territory had been hit. The charge is hotly denied by the army.

Such charges and counter-charges have accompanied the 26-year conflict. Both sides have been accused of endangering and killing civilians in battle.

Occasional explosions could be heard in the distance while we were near the conflict zone, but it was unclear if the noises were coming from the front line.

During our tightly controlled tour of northern Sri Lanka, journalists were briefed on the army's campaign to destroy the <u>LTTE</u> as a military force - a campaign that began nearly two years ago when the rebels still held more than 6000 square kilometres of the country.

Brigadier Shavendra Silva, the commander of the Sri Lankan army's 58th division, said the army did not concentrate on winning territory at first but tried to engage the rebels in significant battles. The strategy was to get "maximum kills" of *LTTE* cadres.

The army claims to have killed more than 6000 *LTTE* fighters since September 2007. Major-General Jagath Dias, who commands Sri Lanka's 57th Division, said an average of 11 rebels had been killed for every army fatality. Both he and Brigadier Silva were adamant that heavy weapons were no longer in use on the Government side.

The commanders showed pictures of elaborate <u>LTTE</u> bunkers that were captured and gruesome pictures of rebels' bodies. They also showed off an array of weaponry and other military equipment captured from the <u>LTTE</u>, including a battle tank, artillery guns and suicide jackets.

As the ranks of experienced rebel fighters shrank, the <u>LTTE</u> were forced into a rapid retreat. Fewer than 1000 rebels are now trapped between Putumattalan Lagoon and the Indian Ocean.

General Dias said the rebels were sending a rising number of young <u>women</u> and children to the front line. "We could now get rid of them in 24 hours if not for all the civilians with them," he said.

# Graphic

FOUR PHOTOS: A picture supplied by the pro-<u>Tamil Tigers</u> website TamilNet (above) shows the bodies of civilians killed in an artillery attack on a makeshift hospital in the tiny strip of territory still held by the Tigers. FAR LEFT: Displaced Tamil civilians at a camp in Chettikulam last week. LEFT: A wounded Sri Lankan soldier waits to be evacuated from the war zone at the weekend. PICTURES: REUTERS, AFP A Sri Lankan soldier. PICTURE: MATT WADE. MAP: SRI LANKA

Load-Date: May 3, 2009



# Sri Lanka under pressure as humanitarian crisis mounts

Agence France Presse -- English
April 23, 2009 Thursday 11:43 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 586 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, April 23 2009

#### **Body**

Sri Lanka was under pressure Thursday from the United Nations and aid groups to allow humanitarian access to tens of thousands of sick and injured civilians who have fled Tamil Tiger rebel areas.

The island's government has been blocking most aid agencies from working in the war-torn north for months, and has herded escaping Tamil civilians into closely-guarded internment camps so it can weed out suspected rebels.

The UN's top humanitarian official in Sri Lanka said the situation was disastrous.

"I saw infants with dysentery, malnourished children and <u>women</u>, untended wounds, and people dressed in the ragged clothing they've been wearing for months," said Neil Buhne, the UN's Humanitarian Coordinator in Sri Lanka.

"We need funds for all the basics like food, medicine, water, sanitation, nutrition, shelter, and clothing," Buhne said after managing to visit the northern town of Vavuniya where over 80,000 people are stuck in makeshift camps.

Above all, however, the Sri Lankan government has been told by UN chief Ban Ki-moon that aid workers must be given full access to the north. The European Union and United States also pressed the same demand again on Thursday, diplomats said.

Over 102,000 civilians have crossed over to government-controlled areas since Monday and Sri Lanka estimates between 15,000 to 20,000 people still remain inside the warzone -- meaning the demand for emergency aid is certain to rise.

French medical aid group Medecins Sans Frontieres said the small number of aid workers allowed to work in the north were unable to cope with the crisis. It also painted a grim picture of life in the camps.

"They arrive, wounded, lost and skinny and then they are put in a camp where they can't leave and they can't call their family," an MSF mental health officer said of the fleeing civilians.

"They have no communication, they have nothing. There can be a husband and wife in two separate camps and they would never know."

#### Sri Lanka under pressure as humanitarian crisis mounts

Sri Lanka in September asked international aid agencies to leave the conflict zone, saying it could not guarantee their safety in the face of the military onslaught against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*).

But the government also regularly accuses UN agencies and NGOs of colluding with the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, especially when the conduct of the Sri Lankan armed forces is called into question.

Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama said the government has since relaxed access and has allowed 14 international aid agencies to work inside the camps -- which he referred to as "welfare villages".

Still, he signalled the government remained suspicious of foreign aid groups.

"Access is dependent primarily on the security situation on the ground and also the government does not wish to encourage... tourism by allowing unstructured visits to the welfare villages," he said.

Journalists and human rights workers are also subject to tight restrictions, with travel to the north and contact with fleeing Tamil civilians invariably blocked.

Sri Lanka's Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe also told AFP that while the camps were "certainly not five-star accommodation, we are trying very hard."

According to the UN, some 4,500 civilians have been killed in the past three months of fighting. The UN's rights chief has also said both sides -- the *Tamil Tigers* and the government -- may be guilty of war crimes.

The International Committee of the Red Cross also said its staff had reported "many civilian casualties" in recent days as the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> lose ground.

Load-Date: April 24, 2009



# LTTE using India just like Taliban, Al-Qaeda use Pak: Stratfor

#### Colombo Times

May 9, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 Colombo Times. All Rights Reserved Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company



Length: 467 words

# **Body**

Colombo, May 8 -- With Sri Lankan troops "hammering them", the <u>LTTE</u>, which has "logistical and training infrastructure" in India, is using the country just like the Taliban and Al Qaeda use Pakistan, a leading US think tank has claimed.

"Support in Tamil Nadu means that the Tigers can -- and do -- exploit the international border to their advantage. The Tigers use India in much the same way that the Taliban and Al Qaeda use Pakistan," Stratfor in its latest report titled - 'The Conflict in Sri Lanka: A Cornered Tiger Is Still Deadly', said.

"The Tigers' logistical and training infrastructure in India is especially important during times (like the present) when the Sri Lankan government is hammering them. The Tigers also have a long history of working with an array of other militant groups in India and the general region," it said.

The Texas based agency said the cooperation between militant groups in India and the <u>LTTE</u> is not based on ideology, but rather on mutual benefit, such as bolstering the groups' ability to smuggle weapons and other goods. Stratfor said if Lankan troops manage to crush the remnants of the Tigers' military forces, "the Tigers will have little choice but to give up on conventional warfare (at least for the time being)."

It, however, said Tigers would not fade into history and will melt back into the populace just like the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"There is very little chance the Tigers will simply accept defeat and fade into history.

"Instead, now that the government has the military advantage, the Tigers can be expected to continue their war against the government by melting back into the populace and resorting to guerrilla tactics and terrorism," it said.

The report added, "This will resemble events in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Tigers, however, have a far more experienced and effective terrorist apparatus than either their Taliban or Iraqi counterparts. This struggle will therefore remain bloody in Sri Lanka (and perhaps even abroad)."

Talking about the <u>LTTE</u>'s intelligence network, Stratfor said the Tigers excel at collecting intelligence, and their <u>female</u> operatives form a significant part of their intelligence apparatus, since they generally can travel more widely than males and do not tend to arouse suspicions to the extent male operatives do.

"<u>Female</u> Tigers who are already willing to serve as suicide bombers not surprisingly have been willing to use seduction to obtain information critical to their cause," it said.

#### LTTE using India just like Taliban, Al-Qaeda use Pak: Stratfor

Pointing out that <u>LTTE</u> could not be just written off, Stratfor said "the group's cadre of dedicated, zealous militants will certainly spill a lot more blood in their quest for independence and vengeance against the Sri Lankan government."

Published by HT Syndication with permission from The Colombo Times.

Load-Date: May 18, 2009



# Onslaught by LTTE reply to peace moves?

Daily News (Sri Lanka)
June 27, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 649 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, June 27 -- The <u>LTTE</u> massacred at least 25 Sinhala civilians in an Eastern village and stepped up attacks on military installations in the North as diplomatic moves were made in Colombo and New Delhi to get the Indian mediated peace process back on track, official sources said yesterday.

Authorities in Colombo read the Tigers' latest strike on the Serunewa village, seven miles North West of Kantalai, and military camps in the North as a signal of their resentment at being pressurised by New Delhi to join the negotiations. "These attacks are an indication that the LTTE is not interested in a settlement. Signs are that India will bring them to the negotiating table and they are trying to resist that," an official source said. In a pre-dawn attack, terrorists killed at least 12 women, five children and eight men and set fire to all the houses in the Serunewa village, the media source said last evening. It said that the security forces have cordoned the area to prevent the escape of terrorists responsible for the crime. In Jaffna, five soldiers were killed and at least a dozen injured when terrorists shelled the main military base inside the Fort and the chest clinic entry points on Sunday night, the media centre and hospital sources said. The media centre in a release issued yesterday morning said that the two sentry points were badly damaged and some soldiers were missing after the attack. The terrorists had fired mortars and small arms at the camp. "The terrorists were heard shouting anti-Indian slogans and that they want war, not peace," the release said. In a simultaneous attack, terrorists shelled the sentry point on the Pannai causeway killing four soldiers and injuring several others. An official spokesman said five soldiers and three constables were believed kidnapped by the terrorists as they were reportedly missing after the Pannai incident. Reports from Delhi say that Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has taken personal charge of the Lankan issue as he feels quick action should be taken to settle the island's ethnic problem. Hospital sources said a dozen wounded men were helicoptered to the Sri Jayewardenepura hospital and about three of them had been critically hurt. The soldiers who died in the Jaffna Fort shelling were named as Sergeant H. W. Zoysa from Balapitiya, Corporal P. H. S. W. Munasinghe from Thihagoda, Matara, Lance Corporal S. S. Pathirana from Thorawewa, Gal Oya and Riflemen Abeysinghe Bandara from Mediyawa, Maho and S. G. L. Samarakoon from Kahatagasdigiliya. Media Centre Chairman Tilak Ratnakara said troops acted with restraint despite the terrorist shelling. "If the security forces retaliated, there would have been several civilian casualties," he said. He said the exact fatality figures would be available today after the debris of the sentry points was cleared. In a separate incident, terrorists shelled the Navatkuli camp, injuring one solider. However, troops retaliated with mortar fire. Another solider was killed and three were injured in an exchange of fire with terrorists at Pan Medawachchiya, in the Trincomalee district, on Sunday night. The terrorists were seen dragging their wounded from the scene, the centre said. In the Kilinochchi and Jaffna districts, troops killed at least five terrorists in separate encounters on Sunday night. At Kilinochchi, forces raided an LTTE hide-out and killed three terrorists and injured one. Those killed were named Vasanthan, Meesai and Vino. "An EROS safe house and a timber collection depot were also destroyed along with cylinders, grenades and claymore mines," the centre said. At Vasavilan in the Jaffna district, patrolling troops confronted a group of terrorists and killed two of them. Published

#### Onslaught by LTTE reply to peace moves?

by HT Syndication with permission from Daily News Sri Lanka.For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/jtms.com">https://doi.org/10.1007/jtms.com</a>

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: June 27, 2009



# Interned Tamil fighters being attacked - reports

The Irish Times
May 22, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 The Irish Times All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Pg. 14

Length: 681 words

Byline: GETHIN CHAMBERLAIN in Colombo

# **Body**

REPORTS ARE emerging from Sri Lanka s internment camps of vicious retaliation being meted out to Tamil Tiger fighters and of the abduction of young children by paramilitary groups.

Detainees in one of the camps told this reporter that a number of <u>women</u> <u>Tamil Tigers</u> have been murdered after surrendering to the authorities.

The bodies of 11 young <u>women</u> were allegedly found with their throats cut outside the Menic Farm camp near the town of Vavuniya, according to people being held behind the razor wire perimeter.

The <u>women</u> s short haircuts are understood to have made them easily identifiable as former members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (<u>LTTE</u>).

The bodies are said to have been discovered in the last two weeks, but there is no way of confirming the allegations because access to the camps is restricted.

On Wednesday the defence ministry said many of the estimated 250,000 people inside the camps might have to stay for up to two years.

But yesterday the government changed tack and insisted it planned to return most of the civilians to their homes this year.

The allegations came as a coalition of humanitarian agencies claimed that paramilitary groups had gained access to the camps and were abducting children.

But aid workers say there is also a growing resentment among inmates in the camps against the <u>LTTE</u> over its treatment of the civilian population in the final months of the fighting, and that many of the <u>female</u> cadres now incarcerated are living in fear of reprisals. The government has denied the allegations.

An official who has visited the camps recently said the <u>women</u> s bodies had apparently been found close to zone two of the camp, where about 70,000 of the more recent arrivals are living under canvas.

A couple of weeks ago, 11 bodies were discovered. All these <u>women</u> had short hair. This is a tell-tale sign of <u>women</u> newly recruited to the <u>LTTE</u>. According to unconfirmed reports, these <u>women</u> had their throats slashed, the official said.

#### Interned Tamil fighters being attacked - reports

According to my sources, there are about 1,000 cadres currently in zone three and two of Menic Farm.

The official said no one was sure who was responsible, but other <u>female</u> residents now feared for their safety. They have heard reports of <u>women</u> being killed . . . so now <u>women</u> have told me they feel afraid.

Speaking through a third party with access to the camps, a number of those detained said they had heard about the discovery of the bodies.

One man pleaded with the government to let them leave. I don't know how much longer we can live like this. There are too many people. I don't know why the government won't start releasing us, he said. There are so many people who very clearly have no connections to the <u>LTTE</u> that can be cleared of any wrongdoing so easily. For example, I have no <u>LTTE</u> connection . . . Why can't they let me and my family go?

But Sri Lanka s disaster management and human-rights minister, Mahinda Samarasinghe, cast doubt on the reports. I don't think it is happening because we would have heard about it, he said. If something like that was happening, the UNHCR [office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees] would be the first to come to me and say they were angry about it, but they have not done that.

Some residents also complained about the disappearance of children from the camps and yesterday the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers said it had verified reports that children as young as 12 were taken from the camps and the town of Vavuniya.

[Some] have been taken away for ransom and their release has been subsequently negotiated by the parents, either by offering jewellery or cash, said Charu Hogg, Asia manager for the coalition, which includes Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

Others had been abducted by paramilitaries and taken to army camps, presumably for questioning over ties to the rebel group, which frequently recruited child soldiers, she said.

UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon is expected to arrive in Sri Lanka today to urge the government to ease access to the camps for the UN and other aid organisations. (Guardian service)

Load-Date: May 22, 2009



# THE CRUSHING DEFEAT OF THE TAMIL TIGERS PROVES YOU CAN BEAT TERROR

DAILY MAIL (London)
May 20, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 Associated Newspapers Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1403 words

Byline: BY MICHAEL BURLEIGH

#### **Body**

THE lifeless body of Tamil Tiger terror mastermind Velupillai Prabhakaran was displayed on Sri Lankan television yesterday as the country's president urged the rebels to join in rebuilding a nation split by a brutal 30-year separatist war. Here, a celebrated historian argues that the Tigers' defeat is a victory in the war against terror. . .

SRI LANKA is shaped like a teardrop below southern India. People there are weeping at the dramatic events of this week. But, contrary to what our Foreign Secretary David Miliband and the commentariat of the BBC would have you believe, not all the tears are those of despair.

In Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, fireworks are being let off to celebrate the deaths of the Tamil Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, his son and heir Charles Anthony and the rest of the Tiger leadership.

They died in a hail of gunfire as they tried to escape Sri Lankan elite troops in an armoured ambulance. This meant they did not get a chance to use the cyanide capsules they always wore around their necks in case they were captured.

The majority population in Sri Lanka are the Buddhist Sinhalese, and they see the Tamil leader's death as the final act of a 30-year-long Sri Lankan government campaign against a murderous separatist terrorist organisation.

To give them their full name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam came into being in the 1970s as a result of the Hindu Tamil population's anger over discrimination by the Sinhalese.

The Tigers were deadly. Demanding an exclusively Tamil state in the north of the island, they combined the nationalist objectives of Sinn Fein or the Basque separatist movement ETA with the suicide tactics that one associates with the Middle East.

In the past few weeks, the Sri Lankan government held its nerve in the face of international outcry over the fate of the civilian human shields the Tigers sheltered behind in their coastal jungle redoubt. The army hit the Tigers with everything it had, whether elite commandos or artillery and air raids.

Crucially, the government in Colombo received diplomatic support from Iran and Russia, aircraft and radar from China and aerial drones from Israel.

This support enabled it to ignore the intervention of the British government -- Mr Milliband called for a ceasefire with the Tamils -- as well as the pro-Tamil bias of the BBC which lavished attention on their supporters in Westminster.

#### THE CRUSHING DEFEAT OF THE TAMIL TIGERS PROVES YOU CAN BEAT TERROR

Right now, the British High Commission in Colombo is being pelted with eggs and vegetables and daubed with graffiti reading 'Tamil Tiger Headquarters', even as the usual human rights lawyers lobby the UN to commence war crimes investigations against the victors.

Although any decent person

should sympathise with innocent civilians caught up in the mayhem, we should not be misty-eyed about the Tigers. They were brutal terrorists with a bloodlust that spanned more than 30 years and resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocents.

And the fact is that their military defeat -- for defeat it unquestionably is now the Tamil leader is dead -- raises one vital question. Is it really always good to talk to terrorists, as the liberal Establishment believes? Or does the annihilation of the *Tamil Tigers* show that brute force and confrontation is sometimes the only solution?

For an answer, let us look closer at the organisation and its late leader.

The Tigers emerged in the early 1970s as one of more than 30 Tamil separatist movements. Their leader, Prabhakaran, was the son of a tax official.

At the age of 26, he gunned down a Tamil mayor whom he regarded as a collaborator with the Sinhalese authorities.

By the end of the decade, his elite Tiger organisation had eliminated all Tamil rivals, while he had established a personality cult. He described himself as the spider at the centre of the web. Tigers could marry one another only with his permission, and they had to swear allegiance to him.

HE WAS as ruthless as he was intelligent. In 1983, after the Tigers killed 13 government soldiers with a landmine, Prabhakaran noted how the Sinhalese backlash involving pogroms and riots against the Tamils boosted the Tigers' support. As a result, he deliberately carried out attacks on the army in order to provoke their heavy-handed reprisals -- which, in turn, gave him more recruits.

During the 1980s, the personality cult also spawned a death cult. Prabhakaran equipped each Tiger with a cyanide capsule that they were supposed to bite in case of capture. Worn on a leather thong around the neck, they were handed out in special ceremonies.

He copied the devastating 1983 Hizbollah suicide truck bombing of U.S. Marine and French UN barracks in Beirut when, in 1987, Tamil suicide bombers drove a truck into a former school used as an army barracks, killing 75 people.

Prabhakaran personally recruited his suicide bombers, putting them through special training courses to focus them on their mission. They were known as the elite Black Tigers -- or, in the case of **women**, Birds of Freedom.

Many of the recruits were little more than kids, for the Tigers used child soldiers extensively. In case they were caught, they carried plastic ID cards reading, 'I am filled with a huge explosive. If my journey is blocked I will explode it. Let me go.'

Prabhakaran was also a keen student of military history -- Alexander the Great and Napoleon being favourites -- and a devotee of thriller films.

It was from a film that he apparently got the idea of using a girl bearing a bouquet of flowers to murder the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991. But this proved a tactical error, since it ensured the undying enmity of India's Congress Party, which in recent weeks imposed a naval blockade on the Tigers.

Three years after Gandhi's death, the Tigers blew up the Sri Lankan president in a similar attack. In 1998 they caused outrage by blowing up Sri Lanka's venerable Temple of the Tooth.

#### THE CRUSHING DEFEAT OF THE TAMIL TIGERS PROVES YOU CAN BEAT TERROR

With some 6,000 core fighters and its own mini Kamikazi air force, navy and artillery, the Tigers were a match for the Sri Lankan army. Relentless suicide bombings in Colombo -- one of which killed 90 and injured 1,500 -- forced the government, in 2001, to negotiate with the Tigers, who had taken over large parts of the north of the island.

But the Tigers never negotiated in good faith. A ceasefire mediated by the Norwegians broke down in

2002. Talks finally collapsed in 2006, with the Norwegian mediators categorically blaming the Tigers for fanatical intransigence.

In their little northern time warp, the Tamil leadership failed to realise that since 9/11 the world had changed. Countries that might have indulged them as freedom fighters now noted the Tamils' connections with radical Islamist groups in Palestine or Malaysia and Indonesia.

THE Tigers were exposed as having recruited orphans from the 2004 Asian tsunami as child soldiers and were shown to be involved in arms and heroinrunning, which meant that aid organisations were not as sympathetic to them as is often the case with so-called liberation movements.

The heroin came from Burma or Afghanistan and was then smuggled to the West (in Italy alone, 200 Tamils have been arrested for drug trafficking), part of a global racket that netted the Tigers 6200 million a year.

Although Sri Lanka may seem remote, there are vital policy lessons in this story. For one thing, it shows that there is no golden rule telling us that peace can be achieved only through negotiation with terrorists.

Even a group as ruthless as the Tigers can be defeated, especially if its leadership is crushed.

That is what happened with the Shining Path movement, a terrorist organisation in Peru whose maniacal leader, Abimael Guzman, was captured in 1992 after intelligence operatives traced a cream he bought for a serious skin complaint. With U.S. assistance, the Colombian government has also crushed the drug-baron terrorists of FARC.

Better trained armies might even fight counter-insurgency wars with greater finesse than the Sri Lankans. The governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan could achieve victory in this way with Al Qaeda if they had the political will, the resources and suitable training.

Britain, rather than glossing over the truly hideous terrorist outrages committed by the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> and calling for dialogue, should have the guts to salute a victory in the war against terrorism.

MICHAEL BURLEIGH'S Blood And Rage: A Cultural History Of Terrorism is published by Harper Perennial.

Load-Date: May 19, 2009



The Gazette (Montreal)
May 2, 2009 Saturday
Final Edition

Copyright 2009 The Gazette, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: SATURDAY EXTRA; Pg. B1

Length: 1637 words

Byline: MARIAN SCOTT, The Gazette

# **Body**

"Why does no one care?" Denesta Davidlambert speaks in a soft singsong as her delicate fingers busily assemble brochures at a community centre for South Asian **women**.

The petite Sri Lankan refugee's voice is gentle, but her words unveil a world of suffering and brutality.

Davidlambert, 37, came to Montreal four years ago from Trincomalee, a port on Sri Lanka's east coast.

Travel guides extol the city's white beaches and deep-water harbour, which has attracted seafarers like Marco Polo since ancient times.

But the images seared into Davidlambert's memory are far less picturesque.

She sees the faces of her two brothers, Anton, 21, and George, 16, abducted 19 years ago by government soldiers.

"We are Catholic and Tamil," she says, carefully threading red ribbon through printed sheets of loose leaf paper.

"They rounded up the boys in each and every house. They brought all the boys to a public place, a playground," she says.

The brothers were never seen alive again. George's murdered body turned up later at a hospital. He had been tortured.

"His hands were tied so tight, they couldn't see the rope," she says. "They don't know how long he was like that.

"I don't know why God was giving suffering to him. He was very young." No trace of Anton was ever found.

Davidlambert's painful memories are ever present this week as Sri Lanka reports it could be days away from crushing a 26-year insurgency by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*).

The war has bitterly divided Sri Lanka's Tamil minority, traditionally based in the country's north and east, from the Sinhalese majority in the rest of the country. The Buddhist Sinhalese make up 75 per cent of the nation of 21 million while mainly Hindu Sri Lankan Tamils represent 4 per cent and Tamils of Indian origin 5 per cent. The Tamils also include Christian and Muslim minorities.

The army has cornered rebel forces and more than 50,000 civilians on a strip of beach barely three times the size of Mount Royal park.

On Thursday, President Mahinda Rajapaksa rejected appeals by Britain and France for a temporary truce after the British and French foreign ministers travelled to the warn-torn country. Sri Lanka denied entry to Sweden's foreign minister.

On Sunday, the Colombo government dismissed the rebels' offer of a unilateral ceasefire as "a joke." More than 6,400 civilians have been killed and 14,000 injured in the last three months, the United Nations reports.

Humanitarian conditions are said to be dire, with overcrowding, malnutrition and limited medical care in government-run refugee camps, according to aid agencies and the UN.

sss Worried sick about loved ones back home, members of Canada's 100,000-strong Sri Lankan Tamil community - the largest outside Sri Lanka - charge the world is sitting on its hands as innocents are slaughtered.

"Day by day, people are dying, my siblings and relatives," Davidlambert says.

"This humanitarian suffering, people are watching like a sad movie. No one is even raising their voice." Last week, Canadian Tamils marched 33,000 strong on Parliament Hill. In Montreal this week, they paraded day and night around the U.S. Consulate on René Lévesque Blvd. W., beating drums and waving the scarlet flag of the <u>Tamil</u> <u>Tigers</u>.

In Toronto, police cleared protesters from University Ave. Thursday after up to 4,000 demonstrators blocked the downtown artery for four days.

Tamils have thronged in cities around the world, including London, where a Tamil student ended a 24-day hunger strike outside the British Parliament Thursday.

Yet tainted by its loyalty to the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, listed as a terrorist organization by Canada and 31 other countries, the Tamil diaspora seems to have lost the public relations battle over the civil war that has wracked Sri Lanka since 1983.

"It's as much a media war as an actual war on the ground," says Jennifer Hyndman, an associate professor of geography at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, B.C.

The tragedy, says Hyndman, is that violent excesses on both sides of the conflict have overshadowed the suffering of Sri Lanka's Tamil minority and the legitimate grievances that gave rise to the *LTTE* in the first place.

"There's blood on both pairs of hands," she says.

Founded in 1972, the <u>LTTE</u> is infamous for having pioneered suicide bombing and the use of <u>women</u> in suicide attacks and for the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.

The rebels have a long history of recruiting child soldiers, according to Human Rights Watch, a non-government organization.

The <u>LTTE</u> has corralled civilians into its ever-shrinking territory and fired on those who attempted to leave, according to a February report by the rights watchdog.

But few in Montreal's 10,000-member Tamil community seem prepared to believe reports of abuses by the Tigers.

"They are the only people who are fighting for us," says Sabapathy Sivasubramaniam, 67, a retired math teacher in St. Laurent who came to Canada as a refugee in 1998.

"They are our only saviours." However, according to the International Crisis Group, an independent non-government organization, the <u>LTTE</u> stifled opposition and assassinated Tamil political rivals.

The government has also committed numerous atrocities, Human Rights Watch charges. Sri Lankan troops have repeatedly bombarded hospitals and government-declared "safe zones" crowded with civilians, the organization reports.

Colombo has barred media and independent observers from the war zone. "The government is determined to fight this war in the dark and they have succeeded," says Brad Adams, Human Rights Watch Asia director, in a telephone interview from London.

But Daya Perera, Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to Canada, dismisses the rights organization's charges, noting that the armed forces recently stopped using aerial raids and heavy weaponry against the remaining rebels in the tiny war zone.

Tamils have long coexisted peacefully with the majority Sinhalese, says Perera, who was a well-known criminal lawyer in Sri Lanka. "When I was at the bar, the chief justice was a Tamil. The attorney general was a Tamil." "There is no discrimination. There is no bitterness in Sri Lanka. The bitterness is here (in Canada)," he says.

But Rev. Seemampillai Joseph Emmanuel, a Sri Lankan Roman-Catholic priest living in exile in Germany, contends the Tamils turned to violence in 1979 only after 31 years of efforts to achieve equal rights and regional self-government by democratic means.

In an interview at McGill University, where he took part in a panel discussion Monday, Emmanuel pointed to a history of assassinations, pogroms and forced deportations of the Tamil minority, which faces quotas at universities and discrimination in the workplace, he says.

The former vicar-general of the Jaffna diocese and rector of a theological seminary, Emmanuel saw three of his best friends - two politicians and a journalist - assassinated. Ten Tamil priests were killed from 1981 to 2008, he says, including five he trained personally.

Journalists have also been targeted. On Jan. 8, assailants gunned down newspaper editor Lasantha Wickramatunga, an outspoken critic of the war. Last month, The United Nations cultural and education agency (UNESCO) posthumously awarded Wickramatunga the World Press Freedom Prize 2009.

"As a Catholic, as a priest, I cannot support terrorism but I can very well understand that when a people is oppressed by state terror, the response is counter-terror," says Emmanuel.

Extreme polarization and abuses by both sides have led to "a clash of barbarisms," says Hyndman.

"There's been no moderate middle ground," agrees Adams of Human Rights Watch.

Sri Lanka is a heart-rending example of missed opportunities, says Liberal Foreign Affairs critic Bob Rae, who called Canada's failure to join Britain and France in pressing for a truce a disgrace.

Rae was active in peace talks in Sri Lanka during a lull in hostilities from 2002-2005 as founding chairman of the Forum of Federations, a non-profit organization to promote and improve federalism.

"Events moved in a tragic direction," he says. "The <u>LTTE</u> was not prepared to stop being a guerrilla army. The government was not prepared to make constitutional change." As government troops squeeze the rebels' last redoubt, Rae warns that a defeat for the Tigers is no guarantee of an end to Sri Lanka's troubles.

"The idea a military victory will solve the problem is a complete illusion," he says.

Hyndman agrees. "A military victory may defeat the <u>LTTE</u> in a military sense but does not engage the Tamil people. They exceed the boundaries of Sri Lanka," she says.

sss In the Côte St. Luc Rd. dépanneur where he works every day from 7:30 a.m. to 11 p.m., Ranjan Kandasamy worries about loved ones back home.

The normally jovial shopkeeper hasn't had news of his 72-year-old mother and 52-year-old sister in Sri Lanka's northern region for more than three months.

"My sister is diabetic and she can't get medicine," he frets.

Kandasamy took a rare day off on April 21 to join 33,000 Tamils who stood under the grey Ottawa drizzle in the biggest demonstration on Parliament Hill in recent years.

In deference to federal politicians, they stowed their <u>Tamil Tigers</u> flags emblazoned with a roaring tiger and crisscrossed machine guns, instead flying black flags of mourning.

Despite the gesture, only NDP leader Jack Layton came out to speak to the crowd, calling on the government to demand a ceasefire.

The marchers were disappointed Prime Minister Stephen Harper was a no-show. "It's like a slap in the face," says Kandasamy, who came to Canada in 1995 from Jaffna.

Now he scans the TV behind the counter for news from Sri Lanka and hopes for the best.

"It's so difficult," he says, wiping away a tear.

"Everyone knows there's a war in our country. Nobody cares." mascot@thegazette.canwest.com

# **Graphic**

Colour Photo: JOHN KENNEY THE GAZETTE; Denesta Davidlambert came to Montreal from Sri Lanka four years ago. "Day by day, people are dying, my siblings and relatives," she says;

Photo: JOHN KENNEY THE GAZETTE; Retired teachers Sabapathy and Lakshmi Sivasubramaniam came to Canada from Sri Lanka as refugees in 1998.;

Load-Date: May 4, 2009



# Sri Lanka expels UN official over war 'bias'

Agence France Presse -- English
September 6, 2009 Sunday 12:53 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 519 words

Byline: Mel Gunasekera

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sept 6 2009

#### **Body**

Sri Lanka said Sunday it had ordered a senior United Nations official to leave the country, accusing him of being biased towards the Tamil Tiger rebels in the final months of the country's civil war.

James Elder, spokesman for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), appeared regularly on television news channels and in print media discussing the bloody separatist conflict and its effects on young people.

There was widespread international concern about civilian casualties towards the end of the war, before Sri Lankan troops finally beat the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (<u>LTTE</u>) in a massive offensive in May to end decades of fighting.

But Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary Palitha Kohona accused Elder of being biased in the conflict in favour of the rebels.

"Mr Elder was doing propaganda in support of the <u>LTTE</u>," Kohona told AFP. "It was unacceptable. UN officials are meant to be impartial and the government took a very dim view of it."

"Towards the end of the conflict, he issued statements that were not researched, not exactly based on fact, but reflective of the *LTTE*."

Elder, an Australian passport holder, had been working for UNICEF in Sri Lanka since July last year and had a residency visa valid until 2010.

The Sri Lanka government maintained tight control of media coverage of the fighting, banning virtually all access to the conflict zone in the northeast and issuing few visas to international reporters.

Before the government's defeat of the Tigers, Elder spoke of the "unimaginable hell" suffered by children caught up in the last stages of the war.

In April he said hundreds of children had been killed in the previous months of battle and that those who survived were "living in dire circumstances, caught in the crossfire".

#### Sri Lanka expels UN official over war 'bias'

Elder had also called for the government to lift its restrictions on aid groups that had been trying to help hundreds of thousands of war refugees still detained in makeshift state-run camps.

Sri Lanka authorities have shown little patience with critics of the military's aggressive push to crush the Tigers, dismissing concerns expressed by the United Nations, the United States and dozens of rights groups.

UNICEF said on Sunday it was seeking further details on Elder's visa status after immigration officials instructed him to leave within two weeks.

"James Elder has been UNICEF's voice advocating on behalf of those who do not have a voice -- children and the most vulnerable," Sarah Crowe, UNICEF's regional chief of communications, told AFP from New Delhi.

"We strongly feel that he should continue to act as an impartial advocate on behalf of Sri Lanka's most vulnerable **women** and children."

Elder declined to comment when contacted by AFP.

The Reporters Without Borders press freedom group earlier this year said that the government had achieved an "almost total blackout of independent and objective reporting" of the war.

Sri Lankan troops finally took control of the last patch of territory held by the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> in May, and killed the rebels' leader and founder Vellupillai Prabhakaran.

The separatist conflict had claimed tens of thousands of lives since 1972.

Load-Date: September 7, 2009



# Malaysia sends medical team to Sri Lanka

Hindustan Times
May 10, 2009 Sunday

Copyright 2009 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 252 words

Dateline: Kuala Lumpur

# **Body**

Kuala Lumpur, May. 10 -- Malaysia has set up four health posts in Vavuniya in northern Sri Lanka for the Tamil civilians who have fled the fierce fighting between the troops and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*).

A report from Vavuniya said Mercy, a Malaysian body, has begun running the first mobile unit at Menik Farm in Cheddukulam.

"There is an urgent need for healthcare in these camps. We were invited by the health ministry of Sri Lanka to run these projects in these camps. Our four posts will cater for about 100,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs).

"We will fully equip these health posts and once completed, local doctors will run the day-to-day operations. We are still raising funds and will soon start our second project in Sri Lanka," said Elliane Arriany Mustapha, Mercy's programme officer, Star Online website said.

The four health posts will be manned by Sri Lankan doctors in the high-security camps, where over 150,000 IDPs are now being housed, Mustapha was quoted as saying Sunday by Bernama, the official Malaysian news agency.

Hundreds of civilians, mostly young <u>women</u> with newborn babies queued up in the blistering heat to seek medical help.

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> led by Velupillai Prabhakaran have been fighting to carve out a separate Tamil state in Sri Lanka over the past quarter century.

Like Sri Lanka, Malaysia too has a large community of Tamils who form a bulk of the two million-plus ethnic Indians. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: August 4, 2009



# Assassin of former Indian PM breaks her hunger strike in jail

Xinhua General News Service

September 23, 2009 Wednesday 12:10 PM EST

Copyright 2009 Xinhua News Agency

Section: DOMESTIC NEWS; Political

Length: 266 words

Dateline: NEW DELHI Sept. 23

# **Body**

A woman convicted for participating in the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi Wednesday broke her two-day fast at Vellore jail in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, after authorities assured that her plea for early release from prison will be considered, Home Ministry sources said.

"Nalini Sriharan has already served over 18 years in jail for assassinating Gandhi. Two years back the Madras High Court ordered her release but an advisory board rejected it. The court then asked the government to set up another board but it's yet to be constituted. So, she went on a two-day hunger strike claiming she deserved to be free for good conduct. Now, authorities have assured her to look into her plea by setting up the board," the sources said.

Nalini has also approached the Madras High Court recently, saying: "I would like to settle down peacefully. I am already 43. Due to my health condition after 18 years in jail, I cannot expect to live long."

An Indian court sentenced Nalini to death for killing Gandhi in 1991. But Gandhi's wife Sonia Gandhi, now the chief of ruling Congress party, pleaded that her death sentence be commuted to life after Nalini gave birth to a girl inside jail.

Rajiv Gandhi's daughter Priyanka met the assassin secretly last year and later said in an interview that she had forgiven her father's killer.

Rajiv Gandhi was killed by a <u>female</u> suicide bomber sent by the Liberation of <u>Tamil Tigers</u> Eelam (<u>LTTE</u>) of Sri Lanka. Some other people who participated in the assassination plot were arrested.

Load-Date: September 24, 2009



# <u>Tamil hunger striker hospitalized on Day 6; 34-year-old vows to continue</u> protest from hospital

Ottawa Citizen

April 15, 2009 Wednesday

Final Edition

Copyright 2009 Ottawa Citizen, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: CITY; Pg. C4

Length: 492 words

Byline: Glen McGregor, The Ottawa Citizen

# **Body**

One of the Tamil hunger strikers protesting across from Parliament Hill was hospitalized Tuesday afternoon, the sixth day of his fast.

Julius James, the youngest of the group at 34, asked to be examined in hospital after complaining of stomach pains, believed to be caused by a pre-existing ulcer condition that was aggravated by his decision to stop taking water.

As he was escorted away by paramedics, Jones told fellow protesters he would continue his hunger strike in hospital and promised to rejoin the four others who are fasting to pressure the Harper government to recall Canada's ambassador to Sri Lanka.

Demonstrators accuse the Sri Lankan government of conducting a genocide against ethnic Tamils in a military

offensive aimed at crushing the secessionist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or the <u>LTTE</u>, in the country's northeast. Thousands of Tamil civilians have been trapped in the fighting.

On Monday evening, protesters heeded a request from Ottawa police to move off the square in front of the National Capital Commission's information centre, at Wellington and Metcalfe streets. On Tuesday, several hundred protesters waving red flags and placards filled the wide sidewalks in front of Parliament and spilled onto the Hill.

Two men and two <u>women</u> continue their hunger strike, heading into its seventh day on Tuesday evening. The eldest vowed he wouldn't stop until Canada's envoy in Colombo is temporarily recalled as a sign of diplomatic protest against Sri Lanka's offensive.

"I will fast until death," said Kanapathipillai Thulasigamony, 74. "Death is the best bed if I die for this cause."

The Brampton, Ont., senior said he may stop taking water and is also phasing out his diabetes medication.

Ottawa paramedics have been visiting the hunger strikers' tent two or three times daily since they began their fast last week. On Tuesday, they handed out small paramedic teddy bears to the strikers after performing blood-pressure checks.

Tamil hunger striker hospitalized on Day 6; 34-year-old vows to continue protest from hospital

Senthan Nada, a Toronto management consultant who was speaking on behalf of the protesters, said the group is growing frustrated that no federal politicians from any

of the parties have come to speak to them. The protesters were able to deliver a written message to the office of Foreign Minister Lawrence Cannon, but had received no response to their demand to recall the ambassador.

Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney had said he would not meet with the protesters as long as they were waving the flags of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, but Nada said Kenney's objections were based on misinformation. While they bear the same drawing of a tiger found on the <u>LTTE</u> emblem, the flags waved by the protesters represent Tamil nationalism, not the <u>LTTE</u>, which is considered a terrorist organization in Canada and other countries, he said.

The hunger strikers are willing to meet government officials, with or without the flags, Nada said.

"Let us know where we can meet," he said. "We'll wheel them over there."

# **Graphic**

Photo: Christopher Pike, The Ottawa Citizen; Hunger striker Julius James, shown Friday, was taken to hospital with stomach pains on Tuesday. James has a pre-existing ulcer condition, which is believed to have been aggravated by his decision to stop drinking water.;

Load-Date: April 15, 2009



# Tigers' end is near - army

Herald Sun (Australia)
April 23, 2009 Thursday
2 - SECOND Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 38

Length: 531 words

# **Body**

SRI Lanka's government claimed the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> were close to complete defeat as France proposed a joint relief operation with Britain to help civilians fleeing the fighting.

The Government said last night the main spokesman for the Tamils had surrendered as the army pressed its final offensive against the rebels.

Velayudam Dayanidi gave himself up to troops on the edge of the small strip of territory still held by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in the northeast, the army said in a statement.

Another rebel official who goes by the name of George also gave himself up, the statement added.

Sri Lanka's defence spokesman said more than 80,000 people had fled the shrinking patch of territory still controlled by the separatist guerillas, saying troops were ``rescuing" and not harming civilians.

"Our operation to rescue civilians is continuing," Keheliya Rambukwella said, describing the **LTTE** as a spent force with just 12 sq km of land left.

The **LTTE** has accused the Government of killing 1000 civilians in recent days.

French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said the situation for civilians was dire and his country would approach Britain about a relief operation.

He said French and British boats could be dispatched to help the tens of thousands of civilians who have fled the conflict zone ``because these people are on the beaches and some are drowning at sea".

But he cautioned the proposal was still at an early stage. He also said there were no plans for a military intervention.

US and Red Cross officials have raised alarm over the plight of civilians. Washington said it feared for the safety of 65,000 or more civilians crowded into tents and makeshift shelters on a beach on the Bay of Bengal.

The Sri Lankan military said it had managed to aid the escape of 81,420 men, <u>women</u> and children. It said those fleeing were fired on by the rebels, who it says have used villagers as human shields.

Independent reporters are not allowed near the conflict zone.

#### Tigers' end is near - army

But Pierre Kraehenbuehl, operations director for the International Committee of the Red Cross, said, ``The situation is nothing short of catastrophic.

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

He estimated there could be tens of thousands more people still in rebel-held territory.

The US and other nations have urged both Sri Lankan troops and Tiger rebels not to fire indiscriminately. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has asked that UN staff be allowed to enter the area for relief operations.

The apparent endgame in Sri Lanka has triggered protests around the world. Up to 30,000 Tamil demonstrators clogged the Canadian capital Ottawa to press for mediation, and similar rallies have been held in London, Paris, and Sydney.

The <u>LTTE</u> were once considered one of the world's most efficient guerilla outfits, running a de facto mini-state in a third of Sri Lanka's territory.

A Norwegian-brokered truce between the Government and the rebels began falling apart in December 2005, and fighting since then has seen the progressive collapse of the rebel army.

Last month the UN's human rights chief said both sides may be guilty of war crimes.

Load-Date: April 23, 2009



# Camps overwhelmed by mass exodus

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

April 23, 2009 Thursday

Third Edition

Copyright 2009 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

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

Length: 623 words

Byline: Matt Wade South Asia Correspondent with agencies

#### **Body**

NORTHERN Sri Lanka has been engulfed by a refugee crisis as more than 100,000 civilians flee fighting between Tamil Tiger rebels and Sri Lankan troops.

In a sign Tamil Tiger resistance may be unravelling, a senior Tamil leader reportedly surrendered to the military last night.

The military says more than 100,000 refugees have crossed from the small area controlled by the rebels to Government-controlled territory over the past three days.

The mass exodus began when the military broke through a key rebel bunker on Monday.

Thousands had to wade through waist-deep water carrying their possessions to escape the combat zone. Some carried babies and elderly relatives.

The refugees are being screened by the military to ensure Tamil Tiger cadres are not among them and will then be transported to temporary camps in northern Sri Lanka.

Local television showed thousands of men, <u>women</u> and children sitting on a road in government-held territory, near the conflict zone, waiting to be processed by the army.

A satellite image (on the right) released by the US Government yesterday showed how, before the mass exodus of the past three days, about 120,000 people were packed into a "safe zone" in the small coastal area held by the *Tamil Tigers*.

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> ignored a government ultimatum to surrender made earlier this week and have vowed to continue their struggle for a separate Tamil homeland inside Sri Lanka. However, the rebels are surrounded by more than 50,000 troops and the Government has signalled it is determined to finish the war.

But last night Velayudam Dayanidi, better known as Daya Master and the main spokesman for the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, had surrendered to government forces, the army said. A second Tamil leader had also reportedly surrendered.

A defence spokesman, Lakshman Hulugalle, said Daya Master's surrender was an "indication that the **LTTE** is accepting defeat" and predicted more Tamil Tiger leaders would surrender.

#### Camps overwhelmed by mass exodus

The whereabouts of the Tamil Tiger leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, is still unknown but Mr Hulugalle said the army believed he was trapped inside the small area still under the rebel control. As many as 50,000 people remain in the rebel-controlled area where heavy fighting was reported yesterday.

"This is a catastrophe for those who remain trapped amid fierce fighting," said James Elder, the spokesman for UNICEF in Sri Lanka. "There are still tens of thousands of children who have been living through unimaginable hell, and are now caught in the final, intense stages of a war. With this latest surge in fighting, UNICEF's greatest fear is that many more will be killed."

On Tuesday the International Committee of the Red Cross described the humanitarian situation in the war zone as "catastrophic". It said several hundred civilians had been killed since Monday and those remaining had limited food, water and medical care.

A military spokesman, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, said refugees continued to make it to Government-controlled areas yesterday.

"Rescue operations are continuing and more refugees will be received," he said.

However, aid groups are concerned conditions in the temporary camps will deteriorate quickly with the massive influx.

Mr Elder said the number of people in camps in the north of the country would more than double, from 65,000 to more than 140,000, over the next 24 hours.

"The Government needs to be doing more to show some sort of a peace dividend to people who have lived a nightmare these past months," he said.

The Government says the Tigers have used civilians as shields and has called the plan to allow refugees to leave the rebel-held area as the "biggest hostage rescue in history".

But the rebels have accused the Government of killing more than 1000 innocent people.

# **Graphic**

TWO PHOTOS: Before and after . . . the first picture, taken in February, shows the "safe zone" in the north before about 120,000 civilians were herded onto the beach, as pictured in the second photo, taken this month. Photos: Reuters

Load-Date: April 22, 2009



## Sinhalese majority rejoices; military chiefs promoted

The Straits Times (Singapore)
May 20, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 Singapore Press Holdings Limited All Rights Reserved

Length: 509 words

#### **Body**

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's Sinhalese majority danced in the streets and set off firecrackers as the teardrop-shaped island savoured the prospect of peace after nearly three decades of ethnic conflict.

People poured out of their homes throughout the country's populous south to cheer the military's victory over the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

In towns like Galle, Hambantota and Matara, they fed rice cakes - a traditional celebration - to <u>women</u> widowed by war and those who had lost sons in the fighting. Others went to open water tanks near Buddhist temples to feed the fish as a token of thanksgiving.

'This is the biggest day of my life,' said Ms Thushari, a Colombo department store worker, as she stood before a television screen displaying an image of slain <u>Tamil Tigers</u> chief Velupillai Prabhakaran. 'If anyone told me a year ago I would be watching this scene today, I would not have believed it.'

The quarter century of conflict cost some 70,000 lives. A third of Sri Lanka's Tamils are said to have fled the island.

Among the casualties of the long war were 1,248 Indian soldiers sent in to enforce a New Delhi-brokered peace accord between Colombo and the Tigers in 1987 that came unstuck.

Because of the conflict, tourists have ignored the lure of Sri Lanka's glorious beaches, its hotels are half empty and its currency's value is less than half of that of neighbouring India's.

Now, with the military campaign having crushed the separatist movement, Sri Lanka is celebrating. President Mahinda Rajapakse has declared today a day of national celebration.

The three service chiefs have all been upgraded to four-star rank, signalling the state's gratitude for their success in routing the Tigers, who once controlled 15,000 sq km of territory.

The trio include air force chief Roshan Goonathillake, who will now be called Air Chief Marshal. He is the son of the late air chief Harry Goonathillake.

Air Chief Marshal Roshan's brother, also an air force pilot, was killed in 1995 in one of the earliest ground-to-air missile attacks mounted by the Tigers.

As the nation came together to celebrate the end of war, opposition leader Ranil Wickremesinghe called Mr Rajapakse to offer congratulations.

#### Sinhalese majority rejoices; military chiefs promoted

Mr Wickremesinghe later told the press that the Tigers had always rejected the chance to resolve the war through negotiations or by holding free elections in the Tamil-majority provinces.

Instead, they had stayed fixed on fighting for a separate state.

'The 2005 presidential election is the best example,' he said, referring to the poll he lost to Mr Rajapakse. 'I offered a solution to the problem. The Tigers responded by engineering a boycott of the election by Tamils.'

Amid the celebrations, there was anger at those seen to be supporting the *Tamil Tigers*.

In Colombo on Monday, a mob gathered at the gates of Britain's High Commission to chant slogans against British Foreign Secretary David Miliband.

Some threw rocks, smashing the glass windows of the building.

One person spray-painted the wall with the words 'LTTE Headquarters'.

**RAVI VELLOOR** 

Load-Date: May 19, 2009



## LTTE women, child soldiers to be rehabilitated

Daily News (Sri Lanka) May 8, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 330 words **Dateline:** Colombo

## **Body**

Colombo, May 8 -- There are around 600 <u>women</u> soldiers, 400 child soldiers and a large number of orphaned children among the <u>LTTE</u> members who surrendered to the Sri Lankan armed forces.

The Child Development and Women's Empowerment Ministry will make arrangements to re-integrate them in to the society after rehabilitation, a Child Development and Women's Empowerment Ministry spokesman said. He said the Ministry will set up four rehabilitation centres for them in Bogawanthalawa, Thalawa, Biyagama and Paranthan to carry out this task. The Ministry will use six abandoned state schools located in the North Western and North Central Provinces as rehabilitation centres. UNICEF will support the Ministry to implement this project. The National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) commenced a project on May 4 to gather information and data about all children staying in welfare centres. It has already sent food, clothing and other requirements for those children. Probation and Child Care Services Department also commenced gathering data on displaced children. Gathering data is aimed at setting up an individual record/report on each child. According to the spokesman, the Ministry sent a container full of sanitary towels, and other clothing required for women and children, milk powder and dry rations for the women and children staying in welfare centres. This is the third consignment of items sent by the Ministry and it will continue to send more containers. Donations can be made at the Ministry located at No.177, Nawala Road, Narahenpita during office hours. The Probation and Child Care Services Department has sent 5000 exercise books and Rs.100,000. The Ministry has also sent a special team of officials to look into the problems of women and children in these welfare centres. Provincial Child Right Development Officers and other officials attached to Provincial Departments will also contribute. 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 <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: May 8, 2009



# 2ND LEAD: Sri Lankan rebels claim 1,000 civilians killed this week

#### Deutsche Presse-Agentur

April 21, 2009 Tuesday 11:07 AM EST

Copyright 2009 Deutsche Presse-Agentur All Rights Reserved

**Section:** POLITICS **Length:** 785 words

# **Body**

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts 2ND LEAD: Sri Lankan rebels claim 1,000 civilians killed this week Eds: Adds appeal from rebels, details on civilians; epa photos available =

Colombo (dpa) - Tamil rebels claimed Tuesday that as many as 1,000 civilians were killed and 2,300 injured in military operations carried out in northern Sri Lanka since Monday, prompting nearly 50,000 to flee the area.

The rebels made an urgent appeal to the United Nations and international organizations, saying civilian casualties were mounting due the Sri Lankan army's move to evacuate civilians from the war zone.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam  $(\underline{\textit{LTTE}})$  said it had made an appeal to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as well to evacuate the injured.

Sri Lankan military officials denied rebel claims of casualties caused by army operations aimed at rescuing civilians.

Meanwhile, security forces moved further into the rebel-held

areas, capturing some of the last  $\underline{\textit{LTTE}}$  strongholds, including a

police station that had been run by the  $\underline{\textit{Tamil Tigers}}$ .

Government troops also captured a coastal area held by the rebels which was used to unload food sent by the government and international agencies under the ICRC flag.

The Defence Ministry said the army killed four rebels in a clash in the Puthumathalan area, 395 kilometres north-east of the capital.

The area was earlier designated a "no fire zone" by the government to protect civilians, but rebels and troops were now engaged in fighting the in area, the ministry said.

A medical doctor was among the civilians killed in the Puthumathalan area on Tuesday, Dr Thiyagaraja Sathiyamoorthy, another

#### 2ND LEAD: Sri Lankan rebels claim 1,000 civilians killed this week

doctor based in the area, told the German Press Agency dpa by telephone.

He said that he himself was forced to flee the makeshift hospital where he had been treating patients as the army had entered the area and taken control of the place.

Earlier in the day large numbers of civilians fled Tamil rebel-held areas in north-eastern Sri Lanka for a second consecutive day, military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

He said the exact number of civilians who arrived from the rebel-held areas in Puthumathalan was not known but people were continuing to arrive in the military-controlled areas.

On Monday, a record 39,081 civilians fled the rebel-held area using land and sea routes and more than 10,000 came on Tuesday, he said.

Another 52 boats carrying civilians are heading towards a northern port, navy spokesman Commander DKP Dassanayaka 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.

Nanayakkara said irrespective of the deadline, troops were

continuing operations to rescue civilians and clear the area of  $\underline{\textit{LTTE}}$  rebels as soon as possible.

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

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 camps awaiting resettlement.

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

It said three <u>women</u> 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.

#### 2ND LEAD: Sri Lankan rebels claim 1,000 civilians killed this week

The  $\underline{\textit{LTTE}}$ , 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.

Apr 2109 1107 GMT

Load-Date: April 22, 2009



# War by other means; As the Tamil Tigers face the failure of their armed struggle a new separatist campaign is under way. By Shyamantha Asokan

Financial Times (London, England)

October 17, 2009 Saturday

Europe Edition 1

Copyright 2009 The Financial Times Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: FT WEEKEND SUPPLEMENT - LIFE & ARTS; Pg. 19

Length: 2459 words

## **Body**

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

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

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

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

"Literally every spare minute I have, I spend on this," Muhunthan said when we met for a cappuccino a month after the downfall of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>. We first shook hands at the chaotic Westminster protest, where matronly <u>women</u> in saris had guided me to the front of the mêlée to meet him. Two of his fellow protesters were on hunger strike, wrapped in blankets in Parliament Square.

We sat down to talk at Cass Business School, where Muhunthan is studying for a master's degree in banking and international finance. He said the recent reversal in the Tigers' fortunes had taken the diaspora by surprise. "A lot of

War by other means As the Tamil Tigers face the failure of their armed struggle a new separatist campaign is under way. By Shyamantha Asokan

Tamils felt that the <u>LTTE</u> was their voice in the war. A lot of people are asking: 'What are we going to do now?' People looked to Prabhakaran like he was a god."

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

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

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

Muhunthan is certainly upbeat. "At every step, I'm looking at it like a business. It's about getting any small Tamil groups together to have more power - like merging to form a big company," he explained. "Then it's about networking with as many MPs as possible. When I go to see David Miliband, I want to have a huge folder of the names of the people behind me - and I want some big names in there." He says he has so far convinced more than 140 British MPs to support his campaign. In April, Simon Hughes, a London MP, took him to meet officials at the US State department. Muhunthan hopes his parliamentary backers will persuade the British government to put economic pressure on Sri Lanka until it releases the estimated 280,000 Tamil civilians still held in displacement camps and, ultimately, allows them their own state. Such pressure would include cancelling Sri Lanka's status as a "GSP+" state, a designation bestowed after the 2004 Asian tsunami and intended to assist recovery by waiving certain taxes on exports to the European Union.

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

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

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

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

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

War by other means As the Tamil Tigers face the failure of their armed struggle a new separatist campaign is under way. By Shyamantha Asokan

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

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

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

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

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

Many well-to-do Tamils headed west, and the diaspora soon became an important crutch for the Eelam campaign. They were able to assist the Tigers in times of financial difficulty. Today, up to 250,000 Tamils live in Canada, 200,000 in the UK and 130,000 in the US, although estimates vary widely and these numbers include Indian Tamils. However, donations have not always been voluntary - Tamil communities are rife with stories of "when the Tigers come knocking". Representatives of the group were known for turning up on migrants' doorsteps and threatening to harm relatives back in Sri Lanka unless money was forthcoming. This created a complex relationship between many Tamils and the Tigers, who became both a guardian against Colombo and a predator on their own community.

Despite such reports of intimidation, many first-generation Tamil migrants openly supported the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> at this year's protests.

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

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

War by other means As the Tamil Tigers face the failure of their armed struggle a new separatist campaign is under way. By Shyamantha Asokan

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

Some terrorism experts refer to the Tigers' proven ability to come back from the brink, and say they could soon resume sporadic guerrilla attacks. But few think they can recreate their former, sophisticated operation.

Early attempts seem to be foundering: in August, Colombo said Selvarasa Pathmanathan, the new head of the Tigers, had been arrested. For many first-generation migrants, the task of reinventing a 25-year struggle in their declining years is too great.

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

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

Sri Lanka's strategic location, at the crux of vital shipping routes to south-east Asia, is undeniable and China has snapped up the rights to develop the island's once sleepy Hambantota harbour. The country's central bank has upgraded its 2009 economic growth forecast from 2.5 to 4.5 per cent.

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

Whether it is through continuing to fund the Tigers in some form, or through the next generation's "new way", it seems that the struggle for Eelam is far from over.

Shyamantha Asokan is a former FT journalist. She is now a freelance writer based in Nigeria

Load-Date: October 16, 2009



## Sri Lanka victory over Tigers sullied by warcrimes allegations

Agence France Presse -- English
May 17, 2009 Sunday 11:48 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 527 words

Byline: Stefan Smith

Dateline: NEW DELHI, May 17 2009

## **Body**

The Sri Lankan government's historic defeat of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> has been tarnished by mounting charges of warcrimes, with thousands of civilians reported killed in months of indiscriminate shelling.

As its troops mop up the remnants of the rebel army, who on Sunday said they were giving up the fight to defend a tiny patch of jungle in the northeast, the island's government is also facing a major diplomatic headache.

While few dispute that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (<u>LTTE</u>) have been holding tens of thousands of civilians as human shields -- a war crime -- there has been a stream of eyewitness testimony to indiscriminate shelling by government troops.

Aid workers have also been denied access to those trapped, despite accounts of a jungle area littered with the dead or dying, with the elderly, <u>women</u> and children cowering in shallow dug-outs with no food or water for several months.

The United Nation's human rights office is demanding an investigation.

"There has to be accountability for what has gone on in Sri Lanka, there has to be clarity and there cannot be impunity," said Rupert Colville, a spokesman for UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay.

Pillay said in March that both sides may be guilty of war crimes.

"Nothing we've seen since then has caused us to change our minds, quite the contrary," Colville said on Friday, adding that an independent inquiry of some form "is now essential."

Former colonial power Britain also wants a probe, junior foreign minister Bill Rammell said last week, citing "truly shocking and appalling" numbers of civilian dead.

"Sri Lanka must understand that there will be consequences for its actions," British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said on Saturday.

#### Sri Lanka victory over Tigers sullied by warcrimes allegations

UN officials say over 6,500 Tamil civilians have died in the conflict since the start of the year, with the final days of the battle described as a "bloodbath on the beaches."

According to the campaign group Human Rights Watch, satellite imagery and witness accounts contradict government claims that heavy weapons have not been used. It said both sides in the war were using civilians as "cannon fodder."

Amnesty International has also demanded that "the mounting evidence of serious violations of international law" be investigated.

The United States has sought to apply pressure by pushing the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to delay a 1.9 billion dollar bailout package for Sri Lanka.

The United States is the main shareholder in the IMF and its approval is key to the release of money.

Sri Lanka has responded angrily, arguing that political factors should not influence IMF funding.

The hawkish government of President Mahinda Rajapakse described its military operation against the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> 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.

"They are trying to preach to us about civilians," Rajapakse said at a recent public rally after meeting British and French ministers. "I tell them to go and see what they are doing in Iraq and Afghanistan."

Load-Date: May 18, 2009



## Sri Lanka: Ethnic violence rooted in history

Agence France Presse -- English April 26, 2009 Sunday 1:30 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 484 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, April 26 2009

#### **Body**

Sri Lanka's government may be close to declaring final victory over Tamil Tiger rebels, but the roots of the ethnic conflict run deeper than the bloody decades of armed struggle.

More than 70,000 people have been killed since the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) took up arms in 1972 to fight for their own homeland in the northeast of the Sinhalese-majority island.

The British colonial regime, which ended with independence in 1948, was marked by a policy of "divide and rule" among the Sinhalese and ethnic Tamil minority which now comprises 12.6 percent of the island's 20 million population.

The Sinhalese are mostly Buddhists while the Tamils are Hindus, but religion was never the divisive issue.

After the British left, moves by the Sinhalese to retake key jobs that had been controlled by the better-educated Tamils brought communal tensions into the open.

Those tensions were fuelled by a 1956 policy of adopting Sinhalese as the country's official language, while at the same time dropping both English and Tamil.

Tamils who could not speak Sinhalese consequently found themselves excluded from government jobs.

In 1972, a disgruntled Tamil school dropout, Velupillai Prabhakaran, formed the <u>LTTE</u>, or <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, who were to become one of the world's most ruthlessly efficient guerrilla organisations.

Capitalising on Tamil nationalism and anger at discrimination on the basis of language, Prabhakaran built a fighting force which controlled nearly a third of the island during the height of its power in the mid-1990s.

Tamils have long claimed discrimination both in education and the workplace. Equal opportunity legislation was introduced in the late 1980s, but its implementation has been slow and piecemeal.

Tamil discontent, which had previously been limited to small-scale unrest, turned into a full-scale guerrilla war after a 1983 anti-Tamil riot left hundreds of Tamils dead on the streets.

#### Sri Lanka: Ethnic violence rooted in history

The majority Sinhalese trace their origins back to a North Indian prince, Vijaya, whose father banished him for disobedience. Vijaya is said to have taken a native princess of the yaksha, or demon tribe, as his wife and together they gave birth to the Sinhalese race.

After being colonised by the Portuguese, the Dutch, and later the British, many Sinhalese have mixed European blood.

Arabs, who controlled the old trade routes between the east and west, also came to Sri Lanka in search of cinnamon and ended up marrying local **women**.

Their descendants, known as Sri Lanka Muslims, make up 7.5 percent of the population -- the second largest minority.

In the 5th and 6th centuries, Tamils arrived in Sri Lanka from neighbouring India, but they fought many wars with the kings who ruled the island's different provinces.

The "Sri Lankan Tamils" are distinct from the Tamil labourers imported much later from the subcontinent by the British in the 19th century to work on their plantations.

Load-Date: April 26, 2009



# SRI LANKA: ATTACKS ON FREE MEDIA PUT DISPLACED CIVILIANS AT RISK

States News Service
August 14, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 States News Service

Length: 1176 words

Byline: States News Service

Dateline: NEW YORK, NY

# **Body**

The following information was released by Amnesty International USA:

Attacks on journalists, relentless intimidation, and government-imposed restrictions on reporting threaten freedom of expression in Sri Lanka and jeopardize the safety and dignity of civilians displaced by war.

The Sri Lankan government actively obstructed reporting on the last stages of the recently concluded armed conflict with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (<u>LTTE Tamil Tigers</u>). Civilians were subjected to artillery attacks and both sides were accused of committing war crimes.

The government continues to deny journalists and media workers unrestricted access to hundreds and thousands of displaced people living in camps, hindering reporting on their war experiences and on conditions in the camps themselves.

At the same time, unprecedented levels of violence against media workers engaged in critical reporting has contributed to a climate of fear and self-censorship that has deprived the people of Sri Lanka of their right to information.

Sri Lankan press freedom advocates say that more than 30 people working for Sri Lankan media outlets have been killed since 2004. Many others have been abducted, assaulted or threatened for their war reporting. Newspapers have been seized and burned, newspaper offices have been vandalized and printing equipment destroyed.

Months after the war in Sri Lanka ended journalists and media workers are still facing murder, abduction, censorship and intimidation. The vast majority of victims were members of the minority Tamil community, but Sinhalese and Muslim journalists have also been killed. The perpetrators of many of these crimes have not been identified, let alone punished.

Sri Lankan journalist and human rights activist Sunanda Deshapriya says the government never recognized that journalists and media workers, (or through the media the public) had a right to information, but for most of the conflict (which lasted from July 1983 until May 2009) journalists had "mechanisms" to get information.

However, pressure on Sri Lanka's journalists escalated along with the intensity of the fighting, and during the last phase of war, said Mr. Deshapriya, from 2006 onwards, the government tightened restrictions, producing a number of statements saying that journalists were not even allowed to report casualty figures.

#### SRI LANKA: ATTACKS ON FREE MEDIA PUT DISPLACED CIVILIANS AT RISK

Journalists writing about the war without getting approval from the Media Centre for National Security put themselves at risk. "Killing journalists, threatening journalists, abductions, disappearances all these things happened to journalists who would try and push the limits," he said.

Threats and acts of harassment against journalists and the media have increased unabated in a prevailing culture of impunity, and have blunted reporting.

"If you read Sri Lankan newspapers, you still get the government version. Very rarely, you get a critical point of view," said Sunanda Deshapriya.

"Everyone is self-censoring themselves ...some of them willingly because some of them really support the system and some of them unwillingly. In Sri Lanka, there is no freedom of press."

Critical and dissenting voices are more or less silenced in Sri Lanka today.

"So even someone like me, who writes a column from abroad, I censor myself. I always see whether my column is going to offend the government, because they are going to attack me. You know, I have family back at home. So we all, to some extent, censor ourselves when writing about the situation."

Sunanda Deshapriya is a regular columnist for the weekly newspaper Ravaya. He has researched the media's role in the Sri Lankan conflict and has presented papers at national and international media workshops. He has also written and lectured on the code of ethics for journalists in Sri Lanka.

But Sri Lankan journalists are not the only ones under pressure. Foreign correspondents have been denied visas or deported for stories that offended the government.

In July, Ravi Nessman, Sri Lanka Bureau Chief for the Associated Press was compelled to leave Sri Lanka after the government refused to renew his visa. Ravi Nessman reported extensively on civilian casualties in the governments final assault against the <u>LTTE</u>.

He also broke the story of a government plan to detain hundreds of thousands of displaced people in camps for up to three years, and raised questions about the decision to block media access.

How has this restrictive media culture hurt civilians?

Sunanda Deshapriya recalls that not long ago, both the government and the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> were giving heavily distorted figures for the amount of people living in the war zone in areas under Tiger control:

"Access to information was blocked, and because of that what happened? Tigers said they have 400,000 people in Wanni. That's the Tiger number. Government said: there's 120,000.

"And there was no independent verification, no journalists, no media was allowed. And government [was] asking people to come...they said 'we are ready to welcome you.' And, at the end, it turned out to be nearly 300,000 people."

The government, said Mr Deshapriya, urged civilians from the war zone to flee into its territory, but its own agencies, relying on erroneous government figures, were unprepared for such vast numbers.

When the civilians arrived, "...there were no facilities. Still, after three months, after the war is over and people does not have even basic facilities [in the camps] because there was no freedom of information. Journalists could not report [on] how many people are there, what conditions they are living in," he said.

This also meant that the international community could not effectively address the situation because there was no verification of facts.

With no independent verification, the Sri Lankan government and the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> were both able to use the world's appetite for information as a means of promoting their own agendas.

#### SRI LANKA: ATTACKS ON FREE MEDIA PUT DISPLACED CIVILIANS AT RISK

The flow of information from the camps now consists mainly of information provided by relatives of those detained, of individual leaks from aid workers to journalists and of anonymous blog entries.

In almost all cases, those providing the information remain anonymous to avoid reprisals. As a result, the information finding its way out of the camps is often unreliable. This can only hurt the detained civilians.

"There has to be a system, there has to be free access," said Sunanda Deshapriya.

Human rights violations

"Human rights violations of all types have the potential to be ignored by the authorities when access to the camps and their inhabitants is restricted," said Yolanda Foster, Amnesty International's Sri Lanka expert.

"Of particular concern is the potential for abuse against the most vulnerable people in the camps, those needing the most urgent protection such as unaccompanied minors, <u>women</u>, the elderly and people with disabilities.

"Exploitation of vulnerable individuals by government forces has been a longstanding problem in conflict areas and among the displaced; social stigma and Sri Lankas pervasive culture of impunity further compound the problem."

Load-Date: August 15, 2009



## Tiger fighting force surrounded

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

April 3, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1963 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, April 3 -- The war between the security forces and the <u>LTTE</u> entered its final phase on Wednesday as the army cut off all supply routes to a large number of <u>LTTE</u> cadres surrounded by the army in less than one square kilometer area outside the 'no-fire zone.'

Troops of the eleven Light Infantry of the 58 Division captured the last junction named Pachchapulmudai manned by the Tigers that connected the very limited area held by the LTTE in Puthukkudiyiruppu East with the 'no-fire zone'. The Tigers, most of them female fighters, resisted in a major effort to hold the area throughout the last few days, but the soldiers succeeded in gaining full control of the junction by Wednesday evening after fierce fighting. At the same time, other unit soldiers of the 58 Division and Task Force 8, which comes under the 53 Division, linked just south of the Pachchapulmudai junction in the evening of the same day completely isolating the LTTE cadres in Puthukkudiyiruppu east. LTTE radio transmissions confirmed that more than 200 LTTE cadres have been trapped in this area, which is less than one square kilometer in extent. Earlier, the LTTE used this area to collect food, transport weapons and ammunition and also forcibly recruit youth from the 'no-fire zone,' but with this latest military success the LTTE cadres trapped in the Puthukkudiyiruppu area will be unable to face the military. Knowing this situation the military through their radio communications have urged the trapped LTTE cadres to surrender to the government forces as there is no escape route left. However, in reply, the LTTE cadres had said that they would not surrender and will continue their fight to the end. The LTTE that earlier gave stiff resistance to the advancing troops, have now withdrawn from the area even leaving behind the bodies of cadres killed in the face of effective gunfire by troops. During the subsequent search operations conducted in the area, troops recovered 19 bodies of LTTE cadres killed during the fighting along with arms and equipment left behind by the LTTE. Nineteen T-56 assault rifles, two base station communication sets, two I-Com radio sets and two Cougar hand held sets are among the items found during the search operation soon after the capture of the area. On March 21 troops of the Task Force 8 captured the road linking Puthukkudiyiruppu east and the 'no-fire zone', which is the main road that linked the two areas. However, with the capture of this road, the Tigers have utilized a small by-road through the Pachchapulmudai junction and continued transporting supplies from the 'no fire zone'. Task Force 8, the 58 and also the 53 Divisions launched a massive artillery and mortar attack almost carpeting the small area covered by coconut trees during the last two days. Any further advance into the no-fire zone will be delayed as the military cannot use its heavy weapons to attack the Tigers, who are using their firepower by placing their heavy guns inside IDP settlements in the 'no-fire zone.' With the capture of Pachchapulmudai, the LTTE had reportedly increased the security around the 'no-fire zone,' in order to prevent any civilians from fleeing the area and also to contain the military advance. On Wednesday the number of people entering the cleared areas was less due to this situation, especially since the Tigers were indiscriminately firing at the fleeing civilians. Meanwhile, troops of the 55 Division led by Brigadier Prasanna Silva that had come some 65 kilometres from Muhamalai are now camped just one kilometre north of the 'no-fire zone'. Last week, the troop took control of two more earth bunds built by the LTTE causing heavy damage to the Tigers. During the capture of the last bund, the military which did not suffer any casualties, recovered fifteen LTTE bodies. The troops of the 55 Division have now come to the vicinity of the 'no fire zone'. Between the military and the 'no fire zone' there is a small jungle area. The main offensive divisions are presently waiting to launch an operation to rescue the civilians in the area as soon as possible. Civilians who have come to cleared areas revealed that the LTTE are using the Walayamadam School building to treat injured cadres. Accordingly, an operating theatre has also been set up inside the school building. A high security area has been declared by the LTTE in Wellamullavaikkala in Wattuwala, in order to safeguard the close relatives of senior LTTE leaders. But with the military making further advances even the LTTE top level leaders are reported to be taking shelter inside this special area. Aerial pictures taken by the air force Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) confirmed that the LTTE had placed several heavy guns inside this high security zone area and were directing the artillery fire at the troops from there. Meanwhile, the funerals of five senior LTTE leaders were held in this area recently according to civilian sources. Aerial pictures taken by the UAVs have also confirmed it. These pictures had shown that five coffins had been draped with the 'Eelam Flag' while the other bodies were just dropped into open graves. Meanwhile the troops captured an LTTE truck mounted with a 12.7mm anti aircraft machine gun during a counter terrorist operation carried out in the Iranapali area in Puthukkudiyiruppu East on March 30. The military believe that this gun might have been used for the protection of LTTE Leader Velupillai Prabhakaran. They also said that in the attack on the Sri Lanka Air Force aircraft last week in Puthukudiyrrippu from the 'no fire zone', the LTTE had used an anti-aircraft gun. Military sources said that the LTTE leader was believed to have been in the area at the time of the incident. Snipers deployed on March 30 in the forward areas of Iranapalai East reported successfully killing 21 LTTE cadres. This sniper gun had been captured from the LTTE and earlier the troops had killed at least 16 LTTE cadres using the same gun. The next day, an LTTE 130mm artillery gun was destroyed during a combined Air Force - Army precision strike launched in Northeast of Puthukkudiyirippu. The attack was launched based on ground and air surveillance information received by the troops. The artillery gun was engaged with precision in the aerial attack when it was being trailed by the LTTE using a tractor into a hideout with a thick canopy. Escape of self styled 'Lt Colonels' of the LTTE on the rise On Tuesday a self styled 'Lt. Colonel' of the Sea Tigers surrendered to the military after escaping the LTTE. He had told the military that on the previous day he was in the sea patrolling the area in order to prevent civilians fleeing. He is said to be one of senior leaders of the LTTE and had participated in several major sea battles in the recent past. He revealed that he had decided to escape the organization following the LTTE leadership ordering the cadres to open fire on the fleeing civilians killing a large number of women and children in the recent past. He also claimed that despite the LTTE leader's order, the ground level cadres were reluctant to fire at the innocent civilians. He had said that this type of action by the Tiger leadership had created disillusionment among many ground level cadres. So far more than eight self styled 'Lt Colonels' of the LTTE had surrendered to the military. All these leaders have been directed to rehabilitation centres. Shocking story of forcible recruitment A group of parents who came to the military on March 27 had revealed a shocking story about a priest, who was living among them in the 'no fire zone' in Puthumatalan, and helped the Tamil Tigers to forcibly recruit more than 550 underage children. According to a mother (whose name cannot be revealed due to security reasons) parents of some 600 children had sent their children to a church located in Walayarmadam, just south of Puthumatalan in order to protect them from the LTTE's continuing forcible recruitment of underage children and teenagers. A priest had promised the parents that he would not allow the *LTTE* to take their children and would take care of them. But on March 24, a large group of LTTE cadres, most of them female cadres had appeared in the area. Soon the parents, who were in the vicinity, had informed the priest about the LTTE's arrival. But,he had told the parents to let them come as he would not allow them to take the children away. However when the LTTE cadres entered the premises and ordered the children to go with them the priest had disappeared from the location, leaving the LTTE to do whatever they want. Several teenagers in the church had tried to attack the LTTE cadres, but some 550 children were forcibly taken away by the Tigers in vehicles. Some fifty teenagers had been able to run away and save their life. Most of the parents had started to attack the LTTE cadres, who in turn had brutally assaulted the parents. One of the grandmothers, who spoke to the Daily Mirror over the phone, said that she was able to save her 17-year-old grandson after she dragged away one of the female LTTE cadres who tried to capture her grandson. Using the opportunity, the grandson had run away and now the entire family had come to the cleared area. "The life in the area is like living in hell, the priest is openly helping the LTTE to recruit youth, in the night the priest in <u>LTTE</u> uniform used to go with other <u>LTTE</u> cadres to forcibly recruit youth," the grieving mother revealed. She also said that most of those parents are still at the church awaiting the return of their sons and daughters, though they had a chance to escape to the cleared areas. LTTE planning to evacuate injured senior leaders? The

#### Tiger fighting force surrounded

Navy is on high alert following reports that several top level LTTE leaders who were badly injured in the recent battles, were to be evacuated using the sea route to foreign countries. Informed ground sources confirmed that already rehearsals are being held in order to carry out this 'sea operation'. Among the leaders were LTTE senior leader Swarnam, LTTE Leader V. Prabhakaran's elder son Charles Anthony, special leader Lawrence and several others. Unconfirmed reports said that the LTTE Spy Chief Pottu Amman and another Intelligence Chief Kapil Amman had been injured in aerial strikes in Puthukuduirippu area recently. Both of them have reportedly received minor injuries. Twenty-three year- old Charles Anthony has been injured in his shoulder during the breaching of the forward defences of the 58 Division in the north of Iranapalai with some 500 LTTE cadres several weeks ago. During the same battle another leader Swarnam was also seriously injured and it is learnt that one of his legs had been amputated due to the seriousness of the injuries. Another leader Lawrence too was injured with Swarnam. During the battle Charles had been evacuated and was receiving treatment in Puthumatalan. However, due to the seriousness of injuries the LTTE chief had reportedly decided to send him overseas for treatment, a top LTTE cadre who was with the LTTE had revealed to the military. He also said that rehearsals are now being conducted on how they could avoid the navy and escape. The Military believe that the recent sea clash off Mullaitivu seas would have been one such rehearsal, where more than 25 LTTE cadres with four boats were destroyed. On Tuesday LTTE's technical wing Chief S. Kirupakaran alias Madivalahan was confirmed killed following a direct confrontation with the military in the Mullaittivu battlefront. After his death he had been given a self-styled 'Lt. Colonel' status. He was said to be the mastermind and chief coordinator of the LTTE's satellite cum radio communication network. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: April 4, 2009



## Guardian Weekly: Sri Lanka hides child victims of war on Tamil Tigers

Guardian Weekly May 29, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved

# *The* Guardian Weekly

Section: Pg. 5

Length: 471 words

Byline: Gethin Chamberlain, Colombo

#### **Body**

Lying howling on a torn mattress in a cot by a window overlooking the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo, the wounded toddler was a pitiful sight.

A <u>female</u> relative fretted, trying to calm the girl down as medics worked around her. The 18-month-old had been shot in the stomach in the final stages of the fighting in the north-east of the country and there was an ugly line of stitches across her abdomen where doctors had operated to remove the bullet.

The girl is one of thousands of casualties hidden away from public view in hospitals across Sri Lanka, guarded by soldiers and police. As soon as they are fit enough to be moved, the injured are returned to the grim internment camps that are home to approximately 300,000 people.

Health workers and human rights activists say that the country's medical services cannot handle the huge numbers of children and adults needing treatment for terrible injuries.

But the government appears determined to keep the true scale of the disaster out of the public eye, barring access to hospitals and arresting three doctors who worked inside the war zone, accusing them of fabricating casualty figures.

According to unofficial UN figures, more than 8,000 civilians were killed in the last four months of the war and more than 17,000 were wounded. The figures do not include those killed and injured in the final three days of the fighting. The Sri Lankan health ministry says that it does not have up-to-date numbers.

UN sources say that initial analysis suggests an abnormally high number of child casualties, up to 45% of the overall total; a figure closer to 33% would have been expected.

After the Sri Lankan president, Mahinda Rajapaksa, claimed last week that victory was achieved without spilling a drop of civilian blood, we gained access to the Lady Ridgeway hospital for children in Colombo.

The ward on the sixth floor, where some of the most seriously injured are being treated, was a depressing sight. Small children with amputated limbs, gunshot wounds and burns lay in cots around the ward. The matron said they

#### Guardian Weekly: Sri Lanka hides child victims of war on Tamil Tigers

had received many such cases, brought down from the war zone for treatment in the specialist children's hospital, but could not say how many.

According to those who have been into other hospitals around the country, the situation is the same everywhere. Wards are packed with the casualties of the war, with doctors struggling to cope.

The UN is understood to be concerned about the lack of medical facilities inside the camps and at the government's reluctance to make proper use of outside help.

During a visit last Saturday, the UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, met one young girl with wounds to both her legs. She told him that she had been hit by shrapnel but that there were no medical facilities in the camp where she could undergo surgery and no pain relief available.

Load-Date: May 29, 2009



# International: Women killed and children kidnapped as Tamil Tiger remnants suffer brutal revenge: Reports of bodies found in camp with throats cut: Paramilitaries abducting children, say observers

The Guardian - Final Edition
May 22, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved



Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 25

Length: 774 words

Byline: Gethin Chamberlain, Colombo

## **Body**

Reports are emerging from inside Sri Lanka's internment camps of brutal revenge being taken against Tamil Tiger fighters and the abduction of young children by paramilitary groups.

Detainees in one of the camps told the Guardian that a number of <u>female</u> <u>Tamil Tigers</u> have been murdered after giving themselves up to the authorities.

The bodies of 11 young <u>women</u> were allegedly found with their throats slashed outside the Menic Farm camp near the town of Vavuniya, according to people being held behind the razor wire perimeter. The <u>women</u>'s short haircuts are understood to have made them easily identifiable as former members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (<u>LTTE</u>). The bodies are said to have been discovered in the last two weeks, but there is no way of confirming the allegations because access to the camps is heavily restricted.

On Wednesday the defence ministry said many of the estimated 250,000 people now inside the camps might have to stay for up to two years. Yesterday the government changed tack and insisted it planned to return most of the civilians to their homes this year.

The allegations came as a coalition of humanitarian agencies claimed that paramilitary groups had gained access to the camps and were abducting children.

But aid workers say there is also a growing resentment among inmates in the camps against the <u>LTTE</u> over its treatment of the civilian population in the final months of the fighting and that many of the <u>female</u> cadres now shut inside are living in fear of reprisals. The government has categorically denied the allegations.

An official who has visited the camps recently - whose identity is known to the Guardian - said the <u>women</u>'s bodies had apparently been found close to zone II of the camp, where about 70,000 of the more recent arrivals are living under canvas.

International: Women killed and children kidnapped as Tamil Tiger remnants suffer brutal revenge: Reports of bodies found in camp with throats cut: Paramilitari....

"A couple of weeks ago, 11 bodies were discovered. All these <u>women</u> had short hair. This is a tell tale sign of <u>women</u> newly recruited to the <u>LTTE</u>. According to unconfirmed reports, these <u>women</u> had their throats slashed," the official said. "According to my sources, there are about 1,000 cadres currently in zone III and II of Menic Farm."

The official said no one was sure who was responsible, but other <u>female</u> residents now feared for their safety. "They have heard reports of **women** being killed . . . so now **women** have told me they feel afraid."

Speaking to the Guardian through a third party with access to the camps, a number of those detained said they had heard about the discovery of the bodies outside the perimeter.

One man pleaded with the government to let them leave. "I don't know how much longer we can live like this. There are too many people. I don't know why the government won't start releasing us," he said. "There so many people who very clearly have no connections to the *LTTE*, that can be cleared of any wrong doing so easily".

"For example, I have no <u>LTTE</u> connection. I am an honest man. I only want to do what is best for my family. Why can't they let me and my family go?"

But Sri Lanka's disaster management and human rights minister, Mahinda Samarasinghe, cast doubt on the reports.

"I don't think it is happening because we would have heard about it," he said. "If something like that was happening the UNHCR would be the first to come to me and say they were angry about it, but they have not done that."

Some residents also complained about the disappearance of children from the camps and yesterday the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers said it had verified reports that children as young as 12 were abducted from the camps and the nearby town of Vavuniya.

The "(Some) have been taken away for ransom and their release has been subsequently negotiated by the parents, either by offering jewellery or cash," said Charu Hogg, Asia manager for the coalition, which includes Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

Others had been abducted by paramilitaries and taken to army camps, presumably for questioning over ties to the rebel group, which frequently recruited child soldiers, she said.

The UN secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, is expected to arrive in Sri Lanka today to urge the government to ease access to the camps for the UN and other aid organisations.

Yesterday a British Euro MP called for a ban on sporting and tourist ties with Sri Lanka. Robert Evans, chair of the European parliament delegation for relations with South Asia, said the England and Wales Cricket Board should suspend bilateral arrangement with Sri Lanka in the same way that it had done with Zimbabwe.

250k

Number of people estimated to be held in Sri Lankan camps. It is unclear when they will be allowed to return home

Load-Date: May 22, 2009



# Sri Lanka army: 3 Tamil Tiger leaders killed

Associated Press Online

May 18, 2009 Monday 3:00 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 1148 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

# **Body**

Sri Lanka's military says special forces have killed the head of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>' political wing and two other top leaders in the northern war zone.

There has been no word yet on the whereabouts of the group's top leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran.

A senior military official says an attack Sunday night killed rebels' political wing leader Balasingham Nadesan, head of rebels' peace secretariat Seevaratnam Puleedevan and a top military leader known as Ramesh.

The official spoke Monday on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said he is still verifying the reports.

The military's claim could not be independently verified as the journalists and observers are barred from the war zone.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. Check back soon for further information. AP's earlier story is below.

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> admitted defeat Sunday in their fierce quarter-century war for a separate homeland as government forces raced to clear the last pockets of rebel resistance from the war zone in the north.

Far from the battlefield, thousands of Sri Lankans danced in the streets of Colombo, celebrating the stunning collapse of one of the world's most sophisticated insurgencies. But with rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran still at large, the threat of renewed guerrilla warfare remained.

Several rebel fighters committed suicide when they were surrounded, but it wasn't clear whether Prabhakaran or other leaders were among them.

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> once controlled a shadow state complete with courts, police and a tax system across a wide swath of the north. By Sunday, troops had surrounded the remaining rebels in a 0.4-square-mile (1-square-kilometer) patch of land and were fighting off suicide bombs and other attacks, the military said.

#### Sri Lanka army: 3 Tamil Tiger leaders killed

Huge clouds of black smoke rose over the battlefield as soldiers inspected the charred remains of rebel trucks and heavy artillery pieces, according to footage broadcast on state television. Civilians carrying backpacks and rolling suitcases were escorted from the area.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said the civilians who had been trapped in the war zone 63,000 in all fled to safety during the past 72 hours. But rebel official Selvarasa Pathmanathan said the bodies of thousands of wounded and slain civilians lay strewn across the war zone.

"This battle has reached its bitter end," Pathmanathan said in a statement e-mailed to The Associated Press. "It is our people who are dying now from bombs, shells, illness and hunger. We cannot permit any more harm to befall them. 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."

Media Minister Anura Yapa dismissed the appeal. "We want to free this country from the terrorist **LTTE**," he said, referring to the group by its formal name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The military spokesman denied the rebels had laid down their weapons. "Fighting is still going on in small pockets," Nanayakkara said.

Rights groups have accused the rebels of holding civilians as human shields, and blamed the government for shelling the densely populated area where they sought refuge. Both sides denied the accusations.

With most journalists and aid workers barred from the war zone, it was not possible to verify the accounts of either side. Health officials in the area have said thousands of civilians were killed in shelling since the beginning of the year.

The rebels have been fighting since 1983 for a separate state for Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil minority after years of marginalization at the hands of the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa has said that after defeating the rebels, his government will begin talks toward power sharing and political reconciliation between the two communities. But many Tamils are skeptical that the victorious government will be willing to make real concessions.

At their height, the rebels controlled 5,400 square miles (14,000 square kilometers), nearly one-fifth of this Indian Ocean island nation.

They had a conventional army complete with artillery batteries, a large navy and even a nascent air force, funded by an estimated \$200 million to \$300 million a year they made from smuggling, fraud and appeals to Tamil expatriates. They also carried out hundreds of suicide attacks including the 1991 assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and were listed as a terror group by the U.S., European Union and India.

A 2002 cease-fire briefly halted the fighting, but it broke down more than three years ago, and Rajapaksa vowed to destroy the rebels. With victory all but assured, Rajapaksa raced home from a trip abroad and was blessed at the airport Sunday morning by Buddhist, Catholic, Hindu and Muslim clerics. He scheduled a nationally televised news conference for Tuesday morning at Parliament.

Sri Lankans poured into the streets of the capital, Colombo, lighting firecrackers, dancing to the beat of traditional drums, waving the flag and hugging soldiers.

"We all will be able to live in peace in our motherland again," said Jinadasa Liyanage, 26.

Yet the fate of Prabhakaran, the founder and unquestioned leader of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, and his top deputies remained unclear.

A senior military official said troops found the bodies of several rebel fighters who had committed suicide Sunday when troops surrounded them. The bodies were suspected of being Prabhakaran and his deputies, but the military

#### Sri Lanka army: 3 Tamil Tiger leaders killed

was still trying to confirm their identities, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

In an interview with Britain's Channel 4 news to be aired Sunday night, Pathmanathan said he had spoken with Prabhakaran personally and the rebel leader remained inside the war zone.

The portly, mustachioed Prabhakaran led the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> for more than three decades, transforming it from little more than a street gang into a feared guerrilla group. He is seen as the heart and soul of the movement.

The rebels have said that if they lost the conventional war they would return to their querrilla roots.

The war zone was wracked by chaos Sunday, as troops sought to mop up the final pockets of resistance, Nanayakkara said. At least one suicide bomber attacked troops in the morning, the latest in a wave of rebel attacks on the advancing forces in recent days, he said. Troops killed at least 70 rebels trying to flee by boat, the military said.

Pope Benedict XVI said Sunday he was praying for peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka and called on aid groups to do everything possible to care for the fleeing civilians.

"There are thousands of children, <u>women</u>, old people for whom the war has taken years of their lives and hope," Benedict said.

Load-Date: May 18, 2009



# The final hours of Prabhakaran

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka) May 22, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1938 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, May 22 -- On May 18, 2009, the world's most ruthless terrorist Velupillai Prabhakaran - the leader of the Liberation Tigers Tamil Eelam (<u>LTTE</u>) - was found dead in Vellamullivaikal in Puthumatalan. The complete credit for the defeat of the <u>LTTE</u> belongs to the Sri Lanka Security Forces.

The Sri Lanka Army Commander General Sarath Fonseka made the announcement of the death of the world's famous terrorist Prabhakaran a day before the recovery of his body. This discovery cleared all doubts about the death as the National Television went on air on the same afternoon with visuals of the body of Prabhakaran with the rear of the head badly damaged. Doubts about the circumstances relating to his death may remain but these doubts will have no credible impact on the actual demise of Prabhakaran. The final days of the war commenced for Prabhakaran with the 59 Division, which was on the southern edge of 'New Safe Zone' and the 58 Division in the northern edge of the zone linked with each other on Thursday (15) after fierce fighting with the remaining Tamil Tigers. On May 15, about 7.30 pm, Lt. Colonel Kithsiri Ekanayake led the 11 Sri Lanka Light Infantry men of the 58 Division on their move towards Vellamullivaikkal, amidst three suicide attacks by underaged LTTE cadres. The Air-Mobile Brigade of the 53 Division had also been deployed along the side of the Nanthikandal lagoon just south to the causeway in Vellamullivaikkal. The 'Bravo' team of Captain Lalantha Kollurage, and the 'Chali' team of Lt. Col. Nihal Samarakoon also joined with the others on the advance movement. In the meantime, soldiers of the 11 Gemunu Watch 11 CLI of the 59 Division succeeded in capturing the entire coastal belt in the 'new safe zone' and linked up with the 58 Division. Thereafter the remaining troops of the 59 Division in Wadduvakkal moved north parallel to Nanthikandal lagoon in order to link with the 53 Division, which was advancing from the junction where the A-35 and Puthumatalan road was linked. The troops from all three directions, south, north and east of the 'new safe zone' were now moving to Walayarmadam and towards the Nanthikandal lagoon further reducing the LTTEheld area. By Saturday (16) the moving troops heard a loud explosion noise and saw huge clouds of smoke and it became obvious that the LTTE had set fire to their ammunition dumps and vehicles and other equipment. One Special Force unit led by Major Mahinda Ranasinghe and 2 SF Major Vipula Ihalage commenced operating in this area in order to battle and destroy the remaining LTTE cadres and leaders. By that time the troops had in their possession accurate details that Prabhakaran led LTTE leaders were in the area moving from location to location in the tiny stretch of land. Troops also had details about an LTTE plan to infiltrate into Mullaitivu jungle, through the Nanthikandal lagoon. While continuing with the operation, troops were on high alert to face a possible **LTTE** attack. By 2 am on Sunday, (17) the LTTE had launched more than six fast attack craft through an area between the 53 and 59 Divisions who were about to link with each other in Walayamadam on the east bank of the Nanthikandal lagoon. In a few minutes the fleet of boats stormed the 59 Division forward defence line and launched a massive suicide attack on the bunker line of the military, located on the bank of the lagoon. The defence line was held by the troops of the 19 Infantry led by Lt. Col. Ravindra Perera. In this attack using suicide cadres the LTTE overran the two main military bunkers. However, only a few soldiers were injured. Thereafter the LTTE communicated to the

others stating that the path had been cleared and requesting more boats to make a landing. However, a special security network to meet such emergency situations, set up by Brigadier Chagi Gallage was activated and by the time the remaining *LTTE* boats landed on the bank of the lagoon, a massive attack was launched by the 19 infantry, 4 Sinha and 4 infantry regiment soldiers, on the just arrived LTTE boats and cadres. This attack was totally unexpected by the LTTE. Troops after repulsing the pre-dawn attack on them, were able to recover more than 70 bodies of LTTE cadres. Commando regiment soldiers were immediately deployed in the area to hunt down the remaining *LTTE* cadres who had infiltrated the area. It was later revealed that the *LTTE*s main purpose had been to transport all the LTTE leaders into the Mullaitivu jungle after opening a route through the area. In another location troops were able to recover another 40 LTTE bodies. Three LTTE 'Colonels' Muttapan of the LTTE Intelligence wing, Pradeepan, and Balakumar were among the killed. Only eleven soldiers received injuries in this battle. Later it was revealed that the battle had been commanded by LTTE Sea Tiger Wing head Soosai and Intelligence Chief Pottu Amman. Intelligence reports later revealed that two LTTE leaders Ram and Umaram and their teams were waiting in an undisclosed location in the eastern Province to welcome Prabhakaran and his teams. With the failure of the attack and escape plan to the Mullaitivu jungle, the LTTE leaders with nearly 300 hardcore cadres changed their original direction and commenced moving towards the north of the 'new Safe zone' along the Nanthikandal lagoon bank which was at this time completely held by the military. The cadres however separated into two teams, one led by Prabhakaran's son Charles Anthony which had almost all the other senior leaders while the second was led by Pottu Amman. This second team had only Pottu Amman and Prabhakaran himself. On May 17 around 2 am, an ambulance taking two army casualties from Walayarmadam to Puthumatalan came under a sudden attack near the south of the causeway which was at the junction linking the A-35 main road and Puthumatalan road. No-one knew who had attacked the ambulance. Another ambulance following the first also came under attack but succeeded in fleeing the scene. Meanwhile the driver and the two casualties were able to escape from the attack as they fled the area leaving the ambulance behind. Special Forces and the Commando troops in the area had monitored that two females had set fire to the ambulance. Initially the Commandos thought that the two unidentified persons near the vehicle were from the military, but when the vehicle was set on fire they came to the conclusion that the unidentified persons were LTTE female cadres. When the Commandoes came to the scene, the two female cadres with two claymore mines strapped to their bodies tried to explode them, but troops were able to shoot and kill them before they activated the mines. Meanwhile the *LTTE* radio communications passed a message saying that their leader Prabhakaran had died when he was travelling in an ambulance that had come under military attack. The message had been widely circulated by the *LTTE* in the international level especially in the international media. However, troops who checked the ambulance later found nothing inside it as claimed by the LTTE. On the same day evening, a reputed news agency broke the news claiming that Prabhakaran had died inside an ambulance quoting a military official. However authorities did not officially state so as there were doubts about the claim. It was later revealed that the LTTE's main plan by circulating such news was to divert the attention of the military so that the security forces will give up the operations to find him. But the military was confident that he was there despite the rumours and continued with their operation to locate him. When the troops shot and killed the two female cadres, who set fire to the ambulance, more troops were called into the area, where the LTTE presence was high in comparison with other areas. Special Forces and Commandos were called into the area. Suddenly the troops heard the screaming of a large number of civilians going towards the lagoon area, where the Commandos were deployed. Troops cordoned the area and waited for the group to come, later some twenty odd civilians came out asking the troops not to fire at them. Troops immediately asked them to stay there till the morning and more troops were sent deep into the area. Soon heavy fire fighting erupted between the troops and a large number of LTTE cadres. The fighting had continued till dawn. By 8 or 9 am on May 18, troops collected a large number of bodies from the area. First, the troops identified a body similar to Prabhakaran's son Charles Anthony. Later military intelligence members and surrendered LTTE cadres were called who positively identified the body as belonging to Charles Anthony. Troops identified 18 more bodies of senior LTTE cadres including, Bhanu - LTTE military leader, Jeyam- LTTE military leader, B.Nadesan- LTTE political head, S.Pulidevan- Head of LTTE's Peace Secretariat, Ramesh- LTTE special military leader, Ilango- LTTE police chief, Charles Anthony- the eldest son of LTTE chief V. Prabhakaran, Sudharman - aide to LTTE leader's son, Thomas- senior intelligence leader, Luxman - LTTE military leader, Sri Ram- senior Sea Tiger cadre, Isei Aravi - LTTE female military leader, Kapil Amman - LTTE deputy intelligence leader, Ajanthi- female LTTE trainer in charge, Wardha - in charge of LTTE mortars, Pudiyawan-Secretary to LTTE leader and Jenarthan - Special military leader. Although the military thoroughly checked all the bodies, they could not find a body similar to the LTTE Leader. However, the military continued with their operation

#### The final hours of Prabhakaran

further north of where the senior LTTE leaders' bodies were found. On one occasion around midnight on Monday one Commando unit attacked a group of LTTE cadres who were on the southern causeway just few metres south of where Puthumatalan and A-35 road are linked. Later the Commandos handed over the area to 4 Vijayaba Regiment soldiers of the 53 Division to clear the area. By Tuesday morning, sporadic fighting was taking place in some isolated locations in the area. By 9 am on that day soldiers were busy collecting the LTTE bodies and since the previous day they were able to recover some 300 odd bodies from the area. A soldier suddenly identified a body similar to LTTE Leader Prabhakaran with head injuries on the bank of the causeway. He immediately reported to his seniors, who arrived on the scene and intelligence members were called to identify the body. At around 10 am, troops announced that they had identified the body of the most wanted criminal not only in Sri Lanka but also internationally ending the saga of the terrorist leader. The military believe that he could have been killed due to the previous day's attacks by the Commando personnel. Later in the day, Prabhakaran's former Eastern military leader Karuna Amman, who is now a Minister of the Sri Lankan government visited the place and identified the body. Later in the day, LTTE Sea Tiger leader Soosai's body was recovered from the same area. However, the troops have been unable to locate the body of Pottu Amman still, but confirmed that he would have been killed as there are a large number of dead bodies that are beyond recognition. With the discovery of the body of Prabhakaran the military officials at the location greeted each other as they had succeeded in the operation that started from Mavil Aru two years and ten months ago. In order to mark the official end of operation the troops fired the last shots at the Indian Ocean using Multi-Barrel Rocket Launchers with soldiers and officers celebrating its conclusion. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: May 22, 2009



# Tamil refugees flee to India to escape fighting in Sri Lanka

Guardian.com

April 23, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Unlimited All Rights Reserved



Length: 702 words

# **Body**

#### **ABSTRACT**

Aid workers say boats have sunk and children have been washed overboard

#### **FULL TEXT**

Desperate Tamil civilians are trying to flee to India in small boats to escape intensifying fighting between the Sri Lankan military and *Tamil Tigers*.

As Sri Lanka called yesterday for international help in dealing with tens of thousands fleeing fighting, the Guardian has learned that boat-loads of refugees have arrived in Tamil Nadu - and others have attempted the trip - to avoid internment in government-run camps. Aid workers say some boats have sunk and children have been washed overboard. Other fleeing the fighting have sailed along the coast to government-held areas.

Yesterday members of three families who made the perilous journey to India described their escape. In all, 13 of them slipped away in the middle of the night to avoid being spotted by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels, who were reportedly shooting those fleeing.

They climbed into a boat belonging to Sivachandran Sivasnanam, a fisherman from Jaffna, who had persuaded the rebels to let him to take it out fishing.

"Day by day the shelling was getting worse. We were living in a bunker we had dug in the sand. There was shelling coming from the army area and the <u>LTTE</u> was shelling from inside the zone and sometimes they would come to take the boys as recruits," said Sinnathamby Ampumani, 48, a teacher.He spoke to the fisherman and decided to try to make it to India. It was 3.30am when Ampumani reached the shore with his family.

"We didn't take anything with us except for a few jewels and some money because if we had been seen other people would have informed on us," he said.

As quietly as they could, they pushed off. "We kept close to the shore for as long as we could and then headed into the open sea and turned left."

#### Tamil refugees flee to India to escape fighting in Sri Lanka

Eventually they spotted an Indian fishing boat, which gave them food and water and pointed them in the direction of the sub continent. Three hours later, they met a trawler. By this time, they had been travelling for most of the day and were almost out of fuel, Ampumani said.

"The trawler said it would tow us for a few hours and finally we saw the beach. We were so happy that we were safe."

Siva Kumar, 26, the brother of the boat's owner, said they had been afraid of running into Sri Lankan naval vessels, but in the end they saw none.

"They were staying about 3km [1.8 miles] off the shore because I think they were afraid of the Tigers," he said.

His brother, he said, had never been to India. But he had been confident of finding his way in the dark, even without a compass. "We knew which side was India and which was China," he said. Eleven of the group have been given identity cards and refugee status, but two remain under lock and key, including a young woman whose hands had been blown off in an explosion. According to local staff, the police suspect the pair of being *LTTE* members.

India is separated from Sri Lanka by the Palk Strait, which is only 28 miles across at its narrowest point, and others have clearly had the same idea as Ampumani's group. Another boat arrived earlier this week. Others have sailed across from Mannar and Jaffna, areas previously held by the <u>LTTE</u> but now in government hands. The refugees have paid boatmen to make the crossing: one apparently handed over 20,000 Sri Lankan rupees (about £120).

According to aid workers, there are 117 camps in Tamil Nadu housing about 70,000 refugees.

Sooriya Kumary, from the group OFERR, which is working with Christian Aid, said the refugees were risking their lives to make the sea journey because they feared being arrested and harassed by the authorities in Sri Lanka or having their children forcibly recruited by the <u>LTTE</u>.

"They feel safer in India," she said. "The vast majority are coming by boat. They are coming in flimsy fishing boats and it's a very dangerous crossing. Sometimes the boats capsize. The sea is very rough and sometimes <u>women</u> are not able to hold onto their children. Sometimes they just take too many people in the boat and they sink.

Yesterday Sri Lanka called for international help in dealing with the tens of thousands of civilians fleeing the fighting in what it said was an emergency humanitarian situation.

Load-Date: April 23, 2009



# Sri Lanka's challenge: winning the peace

Colombo Times
May 29, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Colombo Times. All Rights Reserved Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company



Length: 1631 words

# **Body**

Colombo, May 29 -- The military defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (<u>Tamil Tigers</u> / <u>LTTE</u>) on 18 May 2009 has brought the twenty-six-year-old Sri Lankan conflict to an end. The immediate legacy is a huge humanitarian problem in parts of the north involving the care and resettlement of displaced people, their reintegration into local communities, and the provision Rohan Gunaratna is head of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, and professor of security studies, at the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Among his books is Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror (Columbia University Press, 2002) of resources for them to begin to reconstruct their lives. Rohan Gunaratna is head of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, and professor of security studies, at the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Among his books is Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror (Columbia University Press, 2002)

Beyond that, the victory over the <u>LTTE</u> poses a long-term political challenge to Sri Lanka's government. If it is to "win" the hard-won peace and rebuild the country, an essential requirement will be its willingness and ability to rebuild bridges with the Tamil community.

#### The *LTTE* legacy

It will not be easy, in part because of the nature of internal Tamil politics after long domination by the <u>LTTE</u>. This group under its now deceased leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran aspired to be the sole representative of the Tamil-speaking people, and sought as a result to eliminate any rivals or anyone thought to pose a potential threat. This included Tamil intellectuals and politicians including Prabhakaran's childhood friend and deputy Ajith Mahendrarajah (alias Mahattaya). The pursuit of a mono-ethnic Tamil state also led the group to ethnically cleanse Sri Lanka's northeast of Sinhalese and Muslims. But the war brought disaster to the Tamil people: over a million emigrated, 300,000 were internally displaced and nearly 70,000 people died in the fighting on all sides (including 15,000 Sri Lankan troops).

The <u>LTTE</u> fought both the Indian and the Sri Lankan militaries in the 1980s and graduated from a terrorist to a guerrilla and a semi-conventional force in the 1990s. The group's <u>female</u> and male suicide-bombers killed two heads of government - Rajiv Gandhi (former prime minister of India, in 1991) and Ranasinghe Premadasa (the president of Sri Lanka, 1989-93). It also wounded Chandrika Kumaratunga (president, 1994-2005), and killed a number of the country's politicians: either by suicide-bomb (Gamini Dissanayake, a presidential candidate) and Ranjan Wijeratne (deputy defence minister, in 1991) or gun (Lalith Athulathmudali, former minister and opposition politician, in 1993) and Lakshman Kadirgamar (foreign minister, in 2005). The fact that Kadiragamar was himself a

#### Sri Lanka 's challenge: winning the peace

Tamil made him a special target; the <u>LTTE</u> also killed over 200 other Tamil political leaders. No country had lost so many high-quality leaders in such a short period of time.

The <u>LTTE</u> became in these decades one of the most creative and innovative terrorist groups, introducing sea-borne suicide-operations and the suicide body-suit to the world. Today, both these technologies are adopted by a range of terrorist groups worldwide, including al-Qaida.

Moreover, by harnessing the presence of Sri Lankan Tamils overseas, the <u>LTTE</u> built a state-of-the-art propaganda machine. It infiltrated Tamil community organisations and made them instruments of its fundraising cause; used its influence to pressure western nations to stop selling weapons to Sri Lanka; campaigned against international aid, tourism and investment in Also in openDemocracy on Sri Lanka's war and politics:

At its peak the <u>LTTE</u> enjoyed a numerical strength of 15,000 members - comparable to the strength of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia / Farc) or the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the Philippines. Yet the Sri Lankan conflict is one of the few cases where such a powerful group with semi-conventional as well as guerrilla capabilities has been defeated.

The closing stages of the war in particular suggests that the <u>LTTE</u> in the end overestimated its own power and underestimated the resilience of the Sri Lankan state. It also missed the declining influence of the west in global politics; in this respect the Sri Lankan government's key partnerships - with Pakistan, China, Russia and India - were assets in prosecuting the war.

The road to defeat

Three further elements of the Colombo government's military and political strategy were important in its eventual victory.

The first was the moment when Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan (alias Karuna) - the former <u>LTTE</u> commander of the Eastern Province - was co-opted by the government in 2004. The <u>LTTE</u> as a result lost overnight 6,000 fighters, half of its fighting force. The east had been the principal recruitment- ground of the <u>LTTE</u>. Some northern Tamils considered the eastern Tamils second-class citizens, but the east provided the bulk of the resources - funds, paddy and other necessities - for the **LTTE** war-machine.

Karuna's defection was a direct result of his realisation that the <u>LTTE</u> had lost touch with everyday citizens. When the <u>LTTE</u> lost territory, it also lost its ability to replenish its fighters. Instead of seeking volunteers, the <u>LTTE</u> started to conscript members from each family - earning anger in return. In March 2009, Karuna was appointed Sri Lanka's minister of national integration.

The second element was that the Sri Lankan navy monitored, detected and intercepted the <u>LTTE</u> ships and disrupted the flow of weapons and other equipment to the <u>LTTE</u>'s land and maritime organs. The strategy adopted by Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda, a committed and creative navy chief, was to go after the <u>LTTE</u> fleet while replenishing his own side's material losses. Karannagoda, unlike any previous commander, took his fleet to international waters to sink the rogue fleet in 2006-07. The leadership qualities of Admiral Karannagoda and his ability to work together with international and domestic partners enabled him to develop the intelligence to destroy <u>LTTE</u> ships supplying the killing-machine in Sri Lanka.

The third element was that the Sri Lankan army expanded its numerical strength in 2006-07. General Sarath Fonseka (the army chief) and Gotabhaya Rajapaksa (defence secretary and a former frontline officer, as well as the brother of the president, Mahinda Rajapaksa) understood the need to fight on multiple fronts. The army, supported by the other branches of the military, gradually weakened the *LTTE*'s fighting strength, in part by using trained elite teams operating behind the frontlines.

The road to rebuild

The military victory leaves Sri Lanka facing three tasks of political reconstruction.

The first is that the government must develop an ambitious development-plan to rebuild a country that has suffered almost three decades of conflict - with an especial focus on the northeast. The fighting army should transform into a peace army dedicated to development. It should together with civilians work to rebuild the devastated northeast by building roads, schools, industry, farms and agricultural projects. The nations most concerned about Sri Lanka in

#### Sri Lanka 's challenge: winning the peace

the recent past (including Japan, Sri Lanka's largest donor) should be asked to provide assistance to rebuild the northeast. The expatriate community could also be a precious resources for reconstruction efforts.

The second task is good governance, especially the rule of law - the key to economic development, as well as the best weapon against extremism. Here, the state should prosecute the corrupt and sack the incompetent: ministers and officials should both be honest and appear honest in their conduct. The drive to eradicate corruption should start from the top.

The third task is if anything the hardest: to encourage the peoples of Sri Lanka - Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers - to think and act "Sri Lankan". Sri Lanka belongs to all its inhabitants. If a minority of the Sinhalese wrongly claim that Sri Lanka belongs to the Sinhalese, then the Tamils will claim the north and Muslims the east. If the government can (for example) invest in programmes to teach Tamil in the south and to teach Sinhalese in the north, the next generation will be Sri Lankans. As the majority, the Sinhalese must be more generous to its minorities. Today, any majority community will be respected by the way it treats its minorities. Sri Lanka lost a great opportunity before; now it should devolve power from the centre. The appointment as prime minister of the current social-services minister (and a Tamil), Douglas Devananda, would be a start.

Misguided nationalists, both Sinhalese and Tamils, came close to destroying the country. A lesson is that religion, language and caste should never again be used to build political strength. All Sri Lankans have an obligation to rebuild the broken bridges between the different communities, and resist ethnic and religious entrepreneurs who seek to divide people on the basis of their ethnicity or faith.

If the government gives way to ultra-Sinhala nationalists, who advocate treating the Tamils as second-class citizens, there will never be a united Sri Lanka. A government that has defeated the armed Tamil fanatics must now contain ultra-Sinhala nationalism and build a truly united and equal Sri Lanka. It will be tough, and call for different tools than war-fighting; but it is the only way to heal the terrible wounds of war.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from The Colombo Times.

Load-Date: May 30, 2009



# International: Thousands of trapped Sri Lankan civilians pour through breach in Tamil Tiger lines: Military smashes barrier holding 'human shields': UN says 35,000 on way to internment camps

The Guardian - Final Edition

April 21, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved



Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 14

Length: 869 words

Byline: Gethin Chamberlain, Colombo

#### **Body**

Tens of thousands of civilians trapped by fighting in Sri Lanka fled to safety yesterday after the military smashed through one of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>' last major defensive lines. Video footage released by the Sri Lankan defence ministry showed civilians pouring through a breach in an earth barrier which the rebels had been using to hold back the military onslaught.

The civilians waded through a lagoon towards the army's lines, some carrying possessions in bags on their heads.

The military clearly regards yesterday's events as a major breakthrough in its stand-off against the last remnants of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*), and is expected to step up its offensive after issuing a deadline of noon today for the rebels to surrender.

Last night a senior UN official told the Guardian that the UN had been briefed by the Sri Lankan government to expect thousands more people to come out of the area in coming days.

But the UN children's fund, Unicef, warned that the civilians still trapped faced grave danger.

"If fighting continues and if the <u>LTTE</u> refuses to allow people to leave the conflict zone, we face the intolerable inevitability of seeing many more children killed," said Unicef's regional director for south Asia, Daniel Toole. "With this latest surge in fighting, our greatest fear is that the worst is yet to come."

A Sri Lankan army spokesman said 17 people died and 200 were injured when suicide bombers among the fleeing crowds detonated devices. It was not possible to verify the claims, because independent reporters are barred from entering the area.

The military estimated that 25,000 people had made it out of the 6.5 square mile "no-fire zone", where they had been trapped after being told to gather there to escape the fighting. Mahinda Rajapaksa, the Sri Lankan president, put the figure higher, at 35,000.

International: Thousands of trapped Sri Lankan civilians pour through breach in Tamil Tiger lines: Military smashes barrier holding 'human shields': UN says 35,....

How many civilians are left inside the zone is also a matter of debate. The Sri Lankan government has maintained that only about 40,000 remained before yesterday's mass escape, while the UN estimated the figure at about 100,000.

Yesterday's breakthrough came only hours after the Sri Lankan defence secretary had said the conflict was entering its final days.

The Sri Lankan government has repeatedly claimed that the rebels are using the civilians as human shields, a claim supported by the UN and many other independent observers. There have been a number of credible reports of civilians being killed by the <u>LTTE</u> as they tried to escape from the no-fire zone.

But the government has also faced intense criticism over the way it has gone after the rebels, with the UN estimating that at least 4,500 civilians have been killed in the past three months.

Doctors have described scenes of carnage as shells and bullets fired from government positions have slammed into the tightly packed civilians. Many have tried to protect themselves by digging bunkers in the sand, but dozens are still reported to have been killed or injured every day.

Despite the success of yesterday's operation, there are estimated to be at least 300, and possibly as many as 500, well-armed <u>LTTE</u> cadres in the no-fire zone. Witnesses have told the Guardian they have seen the fighters manning earth embankments they have built across key access points and firing on government positions.

The Sri Lankan president set the <u>LTTE</u> leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, a deadline of noon today to surrender or face military action.

"The only thing Prabhakaran can now do is to surrender. I don't want him to take cyanide and commit suicide. He has to face charges for his actions," he said.

A Sri Lankan military spokesman, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, had previously warned that Prabhakaran would be taken dead or alive. He said the army would try to take the rebel leader alive, but "if he comes with a weapon and if he fights then we have to treat him as any other terrorist".

What now concerns the UN is how the military will seek to end the conflict. UN officials say that the government has been concerned about mounting pressure from some members of the UN security council over the civilian death toll, and had been making it clear during the last few days that a major push was being prepared.

Last night the UN said 35,000 civilians were now making their way to the internment camps set up by the government within a high security area around Vavuniya, south of the no-fire zone.

The Sri Lankan government has defended its decision to place those who have escaped the fighting behind barbed wire inside the camps. Its officials say that until they can be sure they have weeded out all <u>LTTE</u> members among the civilians in the camps, everyone will have to be detained. A small number of elderly people have been released, but the camps are still home to thousands of children, pregnant <u>women</u> and elderly people.

The UN has expressed concern about conditions in the camps, many of which are struggling to cope with the daily influx of new arrivals. Poor sanitation and shortages of water have raised concerns about the spread of disease and the government and aid agencies face a major challenge in getting enough food into the camps, with many of those arriving - particularly children - showing signs of malnourishment.

Load-Date: April 21, 2009



# Kill or be killed: 11-year-old girls forced to fight; INSIGHT

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

May 5, 2009 Tuesday

First Edition

Copyright 2009 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Pg. 1

Length: 861 words

Byline: Matt Wade

#### **Body**

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> are conscripting children to battle the advancing Sri Lankan Army. Matt Wade reports from Ambepussa.

IT IS hard to imagine Christine\* in combat. But the diminutive 14-year-old with a cheeky smile and dancing eyes knows how to handle a Kalashnikov and detonate grenades.

A Tamil speaker from northern Sri Lanka, Christine says she was abducted by Tamil Tiger cadres in March and forced to undergo military training. She performed drills using dummy weapons in preparation for battle and, as with many *female* recruits, her hair was cut short.

"I was full of fear when they came and took me," she said.

"I was crying every day."

Sri Lankan commanders on the battle front say they are encountering more and more children as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (<u>LTTE</u>) try desperately to stave off defeat. The rebels are trapped on a 4.5-kilometre strip of land on the north-eastern coast of the island.

Major-General Jagath Dias, the commander of the Sri Lankan Army's 57th Division, said his men had been fighting girls as young as 11.

"It's very difficult [to shoot at children] but when someone has a weapon and is firing it at you, it doesn't matter what age, you have to shoot."

His colleague, Brigadier Shavendra Silva, the commander of the army's 58th division fighting on the front line, said "most of" the Tiger cadres captured since April 23 were aged between 11 and 18.

"There were many young girls aged 13 and 14. All of them had short hair," the brigadier said.

"They don't have the numbers of fighters they need so they conscript civilians forcefully."

Sri Lankan officials involved in the rehabilitation of children affected by the war say they have identified about 400 child combatants from among the tens of thousands of civilians who have fled the fighting since April 20.

#### Kill or be killed: 11-year-old girls forced to fight INSIGHT

Officials from UNICEF, the UN's child welfare agency, are also deeply concerned about the apparent rise in the number of child combatants being recruited by the Tigers.

A UNICEF spokesman in Sri Lanka, James Elder, said child combatants bear deep psychological scars. Even those spared from combat lost precious years that cannot be replaced.

"Child soldiers in Sri Lanka live in a theatre of violence and suffering," he said.

"Many in this current conflict may be thrown into the front line at a time of fierce fighting where they can be killed or maimed. Instead of hope, fear defines their childhood. Their recruitment is intolerable."

The Tigers have a long tradition of recruiting child soldiers. Unicef has recorded more than 6000 cases of children recruited between 2003 and the end of last year.

Christine was saved from the front line by her mother, who managed to smuggle her out of the Tigers' camp about 17 days after she was forcibly conscripted.

But her ordeal wasn't over. She ended up in a refugee camp in the town of Vavuniya where her short hair raised suspicions that she had been with the <u>LTTE</u>. She confessed about her rebel training and was again separated from her family, this time by Sri Lankan authorities.

Christine is one of 58 child combatants who arrived at the Ambepussa protective accommodation and rehabilitation centre in the early hours of Friday morning. Here children and young <u>women</u> forced into combat by the <u>LTTE</u> undertake a rehabilitation program.

The arrival of this big group at the camp run by the Sri Lankan Government and Unicef supports the accounts that the *LTTE* has committed more children to the front line in recent months.

Soon after arriving at the centre 20 girls, aged between 14 and 18, sat around a large table speaking to a Unicef social worker about their experience. Some said they were given just seven days training before being sent into combat against well-equipped and battle-hardened Sri Lankan troops.

Many asked if they could be put in touch with their parents, now in crowded refugee camps across northern Sri Lanka. Deepa, dressed in a frayed olive shirt and skirt, had a heavy limp thanks to a leg injury sustained as she fled. Like Christine, she was also vetted because of her short hair.

"Please let my father know I am safe here," she asked the social worker.

Kala, 28, has been at the rehabilitation centre for three months. In 2007 <u>LTTE</u> cadres came to her home near Kilinochchi and demanded that her brother become a fighter. Kala said she would go instead so he could finish his schooling.

"If I didn't join, my family would have been punished," she said.

Kala was taught to use an AK47 and handle explosives during a month of combat training. The trainees were shown motivational videos and were instructed to commit suicide rather than face capture.

Last November Kala was sent into battle. She wore a blue checked shirt commonly worn by junior <u>LTTE</u> cadres and was given a machine-gun and grenades.

The inexperienced groups of fighters she was with were drawn into a fire fight with Sri Lankan soldiers. "They surrounded us." she said.

Kala sustained a serious shrapnel injury to her arm after a grenade exploded in her bunker. Two girls with Kala obeyed instructions and blew themselves up with grenades rather than be captured. But Kala decided to surrender. "I wanted to live," she said.

\*Names have been changed

# **Graphic**

PHOTO: No place for a child . . . a 14-year-old conscript at the Ambepussa centre. Photo: Matt Wade

Load-Date: May 4, 2009



# Sri Lanka at risk of `bloodbath'

The Australian

April 22, 2009 Wednesday

1 - All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Pg. 10

Length: 662 words

Byline: Correspondents in Colombo

#### **Body**

THE Sri Lankan army has seized more territory from the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> as the rebels ignored a government deadline to surrender, the Defence Ministry said.

Government forces sliced in two the last small strip of jungle held by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam yesterday, as tens of thousands of civilians fled the fighting in a record exodus.

"The <u>LTTE</u> has not responded to the Government's call to surrender, so we are keeping up our offensive to rescue the civilians," military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said.

The Government said its troops were poised to totally defeat the <u>LTTE</u>, a hardened guerilla group that has been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland on the ethnic Sinhalese-majority island since the 1970s.

The Defence Ministry said more than 39,000 men, <u>women</u> and children escaped after troops punctured rebel defences at Puttumatalan, inside the rebel-held area, on Monday. It said 17 civilians who tried to escape from rebel-held territory on Monday had been killed by the guerillas, while 373 had been wounded.

The pro-rebel Tamilnet website reported the area was littered with hundreds of bodies of civilians it said were killed in government shelling.

In a rare telephone interview, a Tigers spokesman said only 2000 civilians had fled, and warned of a bloodbath if government troops pushed further into the no-fire zone. ``Thousands of people will die -- this is a very congested area," said the spokesman, who identified himself by his nom de guerre, Thileepan. ``We'll never surrender because we're fighting for our people's freedom."

He said that he, like all Tigers, was wearing a cyanide capsule around his neck and would take it if he was about to be captured. He also said Velupillai Prabhakaran, 54, the Tigers' leader, was still inside the safety zone with his son, Charles Anthony, and other family members.

Thileepan said he was speaking via a satellite internet connection in Irrattai Vaaikkaal, in Mullaitivu district, inside the safety zone. There was no way to verify his whereabouts but there was no doubt he was a spokesman for the rebels. Journalists are barred from working in the north, making it impossible to verify the rival claims independently.

#### Sri Lanka at risk of 'bloodbath'

Government estimates show a further 30,000 civilians could be still held by the Tigers, but the US said the number could be twice as high and warned that an assault risked a bloodbath. ``If fighting continues and if the <u>LTTE</u> refuses to allow people to leave the conflict zone, then we face the intolerable inevitability of seeing many more children killed," said UNICEF's South Asia regional director Daniel Toole.

Sri Lanka's hawkish President, Mahinda Rajapakse, signalled he was unwilling to put his troops on pause with victory in sight.

He said the rebels were facing "complete defeat" and their reclusive leader, Prabhakaran, had finally run out of time.

"The only thing Prabhakaran can now do is to surrender," he said. "I don't want him to take cyanide and commit suicide. He has to face charges for his actions."

The only reaction from the Tigers has been to renew their call for an unconditional ceasefire -- a demand the Government has rejected.

The crisis has sparked protests in Europe and expressions of concern by UN and human rights groups.

In Paris, French police arrested 210 people when a rally by Tamils turned violent as demonstrators threw bottles at security forces and smashed windscreens.

In London, thousands of Tamils blocked some of the city's busiest streets, demonstrating outside parliament and calling for an immediate ceasefire.

New York-based Human Rights Watch warned that the world had only hours to prevent a potential `bloodbath" in Sri Lanka. Anna Neistat, a senior HRW researcher, said the international community had `to make it crystal clear to both sides of this conflict that they will not get away with it".

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the escape of the civilians, but was ``deeply concerned" about those still trapped.

Load-Date: April 21, 2009



# <u>Secretary of State Hillary Clinton Commends Congressman Michael E.</u> *McMahon's Proposals at Today's Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing*

#### **Targeted News Service**

April 22, 2009 Wednesday 9:44 AM EST

Copyright 2009 Targeted News Service LLC All Rights Reserved

Length: 583 words

Byline: Targeted News Service

**Dateline: WASHINGTON** 

# **Body**

Rep. Michael E. McMahon, D-N.Y.(13th CD), issued the following news release:

Today, Congressman Michael E. McMahon participated in the House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The hearing addressed foreign affairs policy and funding issues for the State Department, and was designed to allow Members to discuss issues of their own concern with Secretary Clinton.

At the hearing, Rep. McMahon posed two questions to Secretary Clinton, one of which involved oversight of USAID funding to Cyprus. The government of Cyprus has signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Development Agency, which allows for them to review any projects that the agency may conduct in Northern Cyprus. Currently, there is no such agreement with the State Department, which has led to particular issues that get in the way of future bi-zonal integration. The government of Cyprus does not necessarily want to mandate what can and cannot be built or pursued in Northern Cyprus, but they would like to have some degree of oversight to avoid complications to potential integration in the future. Rep. McMahon noted that the bi-zonal reintegration of the nation of Cyprus has been an issue that he has supported since his time in the New York City Council and questioned how the State Department could best work with the government of Cyprus to develop the proper infrastructure for the region without stalling integration. Rep. McMahon also referenced a power grid funded by USAID that is compatible with Turkey's standards but not with Cyprus' standards and stated that we could use the power grid to further reintegrate and not divide Cyprus. In response, Sec. Clinton said that was an "excellent suggestion."

"I was pleased that Sec. Clinton seemed to agree with my line of questioning and my suggestions, particularly in regard to Cyrus and Sri Lanka," said Rep. McMahon. "Unfortunately, we weren't granted enough time to address all of the foreign affairs issue which have been of importance to me since I took office, but I look forward to working with the Sec. of State on the matters which were discussed today, as well as other matter of national security."

Rep. McMahon also questioned the prospects of post-conflict resolution for the Sinhalese and Tamil people in Sri Lanka. The conflict, which began 25 years ago, has claimed about 70,000 lives with approximately 100 Tamil civilians dying in the conflict zone per day. On April 20, 2009, the terrorist group, the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> (a.k.a. <u>LTTE</u>), the first terrorist group to use <u>female</u> suicide bombers, was asked by the Sri Lankan government to surrender. Currently, the government is making more humanitarian progress by opening up a number of safe routes for trapped Tamil civilians to escape the conflict zone, but the government is still continuing its indiscriminant military campaign in the region, while forcing out aid agencies and journalists. The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> are also holding Tamil civilians in the region by force, according to numerous reports from groups such as Human Rights Campaign and

# Secretary of State Hillary Clinton Commends Congressman Michael E. McMahon's Proposals at Today's Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing

the International Red Cross. Sec. Clinton called the situation in Sri Lanka "tragic" and stated that the United States and several allies are working to end the conflict.

Many Sri Lankans from Staten Island and Brooklyn were in the audience today and expressed their desire for a speedy end to the current situation in their home country.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS MJ88-JF78-090809-2360966 StaffFurigay

Load-Date: August 11, 2009



# ROUNDUP: Sri Lankan rebels claim 1,000 civilians killed this week

#### Deutsche Presse-Agentur

April 21, 2009 Tuesday 11:55 AM EST

Copyright 2009 Deutsche Presse-Agentur All Rights Reserved

Section: POLITICS Length: 880 words

### **Body**

DPA POLITICS SriLanka Conflicts ROUNDUP: Sri Lankan rebels claim 1,000 civilians killed this week Eds: Adds Red Cross appeal; epa photos available =

Colombo (dpa)- Tamil rebels claimed Tuesday that as many as 1,000 civilians were killed and 2,300 injured in military operations carried out in northern Sri Lanka since Monday, prompting nearly 50,000 to flee the area.

The rebels made an urgent appeal to the United Nations and international organizations, saying civilian casualties were mounting due the Sri Lankan army's move to evacuate civilians from the war zone.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam  $(\underline{\textit{LTTE}})$  said it had made an appeal to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as well to evacuate the injured.

The ICRC urged both parties in the civil war to "prevent further mass casualties among civilians," and expressed its concern over the tens of thousands of civilians trapped in the rapidly shrinking area along the north-eastern coast that had been declared a "no-fire zone" by the government.

"The situation is nothing short of catastrophic. Ongoing fighting has killed or wounded hundreds of civilians who have only minimal access to medical care," a statement issued in Geneva said, adding that the final government offensive could lead to a dramatic increase in the number of civilian casualties.

Sri Lankan military officials denied rebel claims of casualties caused by army operations aimed at rescuing civilians.

Meanwhile, security forces moved further into the rebel-held areas, capturing some of the last <u>LTTE</u> strongholds, including a police station that had been run by the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>.

Government troops also captured a coastal area held by the rebels which was used to unload food sent by the government and

#### ROUNDUP: Sri Lankan rebels claim 1,000 civilians killed this week

international agencies under the ICRC flag.

The Defence Ministry said the army killed four rebels in a clash in the Puthumathalan area, 395 kilometres north-east of the capital.

The area was earlier designated a "no fire zone" by the government to protect civilians, but rebels and troops were now engaged in fighting the in area, the ministry said.

A medical doctor was among the civilians killed in the Puthumathalan area on Tuesday, Dr Thiyagaraja Sathiyamoorthy, another doctor based in the area, told the German Press Agency dpa by telephone.

He said that he himself was forced to flee the makeshift hospital where he had been treating patients as the army had entered the area and taken control of the place.

Earlier in the day large numbers of civilians fled Tamil rebel-held areas in north-eastern Sri Lanka for a second consecutive day, military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said.

He said the exact number of civilians who arrived from the rebel-held areas in Puthumathalan was not known but people were continuing to arrive in the military-controlled areas.

On Monday, a record 39,081 civilians fled the rebel-held area using land and sea routes and more than 10,000 came on Tuesday, he said.

Another 52 boats carrying civilians are heading towards a northern port, navy spokesman Commander DKP Dassanayaka 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.

Nanayakkara said irrespective of the deadline, troops were

continuing operations to rescue civilians and clear the area of  $\underline{\textit{LTTE}}$  rebels as soon as possible.

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

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 camps awaiting resettlement.

#### ROUNDUP: Sri Lankan rebels claim 1,000 civilians killed this week

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

It said three <u>women</u> 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  $\underline{\textit{LTTE}}$ , 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

 $\underline{\textit{LTTE}}$ , 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 2109 1155 GMT

Load-Date: April 22, 2009



# Government officially confirms Praba's death

#### Colombo Times

May 18, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 Colombo Times. All Rights Reserved Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company



Length: 1021 words

# **Body**

Colombo, May 18 -- The Sri Lanka Government now officially confirmed that <u>LTTE</u> leaders Prabhakaran, Pottu Amman and Soosai were shot and killed by the Armed Forces this morning when they attempted to flee in an ambulance, Army sources officially confirmed.

Crackers were lit all over the country when this was officially announced on National TV. People began dancing in the streets all over the country. The security forces said dead bodies of Police Chief of the <u>LTTE</u> Ilango Sundaram ,Deputy <u>LTTE</u> Intelligence Wing Chief Kapil Amman Pulidevan, Charles Anthony Ramesh and Nadesan have been identified and recovered by the Army, the Army spokesman Brigadier Nanayakkara confirmed this morning (18) dead bodies of <u>LTTE</u> leaders have been recovered and identified in Vellamullivaikkal by the Army this morning (18). They had died in the battle with the Army.

This was confirmed by Army spokesman Brigadier Nanayakkara. he body of Charles Anthony, eldest son of <u>LTTE</u> leader Prabhakaran was recovered by the 53rd Division troops at Vellamullivaikkal this morning (18), Army sources confirmed

To the Sri Lankan government, Velupillai Prabhakaran was the leader of one of the world's most ruthless organisations and was comparable to Pol Pot or Osama bin Laden. But to his supporters, he was an indefatigable fighter for Tamil rights.

For three decades, Prabhakaran, 54, who had a fascination with Napoleon Bonaparte and Alexander the Great, eluded death, assassination attempts and capture as he single-mindedly pursued the goal of a homeland for the minority Tamils.

That goal came tantalisingly close as the supreme commander of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) at one stage presided over what was in effect a rebel mini-state in northern Sri Lanka. The Tigers ran their own law courts, police force and Tamil Eelam banks and even their own time zone - half an hour behind the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo.

But after the breakdown of numerous truces and outside attempts by Norway to broker a political settlement, an allout army offensive this year has wiped out the Tigers as a fighting force.

The Sri Lankan military says its troops have killed the man they have been hunting for so long; that they shot him dead as he was trying to escape in an ambulance.

In previous rounds of fighting, Prabhakaran, who carried a cyanide capsule around his neck, reportedly told his bodyguards to kill him and burn his body beyond recognition rather than allow his capture.

#### Government officially confirms Praba's death

Although demonised by the Sri Lankan authorities, Prabhakaran became the symbol of militant Tamil nationalism, appearing on posters, calendars, watches and the placards waved by his supporters around the world, even if they had misgivings about some of the Tigers' tactics - the government accused the rebels of using civilians as human shields and shooting fleeing civilians as the rebels were cornered in their last refuge in north-eastern Sri Lanka.

Prabhakaran's supporters point out that at one stage he was willing to set aside the military struggle and fight for his goals through political means. In a rare press conference in 2002, when he shed his familiar green fatigues, the short and stout guerrilla leader said he wanted a negotiated political settlement and rejected the label of terrorist organisation, claiming that the Tigers were a liberation movement.

Still he looked distinctly uncomfortable when asked about the assassination of the former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, who was blown up by a <u>female LTTE</u> suicide bomber in 1991, describing it as a "tragic incident". Because of such actions, the Tigers found it hard to shake off their reputation for brazen terrorism.

The youngest of four children, Prabhakaran was born on 26 November 1954 in the northern coastal town of Velvettithurai, on the Jaffna peninsula. An average student, he said in an interview that he was fascinated by Napoleon and Alexander the Great. He was also influenced by the lives of two Indian leaders, Subhash Chandra Bose and Bhagat Singh, who fought for independence from Britain.

He became politically active as a teenager, radicalised by what he what he saw as discrimination by the Sinhalese majority against Tamils in politics, employment and education. In the early 1970s, Prabhakaran founded the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, and in 1975 he was accused of being responsible for the murder of the mayor of Jaffna, the first of many assassinations for which he is blamed.

In 1983, he launched a guerrilla war, setting the stage for one of Asia's longest conflicts. His death should bring the military conflict to a close for now, but Tamil demands - backed by a vocal diaspora - for better treatment from the Sinhalese are unlikely to be silenced.

Meanwhile the Government has requested the public to hoist the national flag for a period of one week, as a mark of victory achieved by Security Forces in defeating terrorism and as a tribute to heroic soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the nation.

The National Flag of Sri Lanka represents the country and her heritage as a rallying device that integrates the minorities with the majority race.

The vertical stripe of orange represents the minority Tamil race and the green vertical stripe the minority Muslim race.

Sri Lanka National Flag is an improvisation of the civil standard of the last king of Sri Lanka, Sri Wickrama Rajasingha. The civil standard had a passant royal lion with a sword in it's right fore paw at the center, and a bo-leaf on each of the four corners on a plain border.

When Sri Lanka gained her independence from Great Britain on February 04, 1948, it was the lion flag of the last king of Sri Lanka was hoisted once again.

The first Prime Minister of independent Sri Lanka, D.S.Senanayake, appointed a committee to advice the government on the design of a new national flag. The design approved by the committee in February 1950 retained the symbol of the lion with the sword and the bo-leaves from the civil standard of the last king of Sri Lanka, with the inclusion of two vertical stripes green and orange in color.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from The Colombo Times.

Load-Date: May 21, 2009



# Sri Lanka rebels offer to lay down arms

The New Zealand Herald May 18, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 The New Zealand Herald All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; World

Length: 989 words

# **Body**

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka - The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> have admitted defeat in their fierce quarter-century war for a separate homeland as government forces race to clear the last pockets of rebel resistance from the war zone in the north.

Far from the battlefield, thousands of Sri Lankans danced in the streets of Colombo, celebrating the stunning collapse of one of the world's most sophisticated insurgencies.

But with rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran still at large, the threat of renewed guerrilla warfare remained.

Several rebel fighters committed suicide when they were surrounded, but it wasn't clear whether .

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> once controlled a shadow state complete with courts, police and a tax system across a wide swath of the north.

By yesterday, government troops had surrounded the remaining rebels in a 1-square-kilometre patch of land and were fighting off suicide bombs and other attacks, the military said.

Huge clouds of black smoke rose over the battlefield as soldiers inspected the charred remains of rebel trucks and heavy artillery pieces, according to footage broadcast on state television.

Civilians carrying backpacks and rolling suitcases were escorted from the area.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said the civilians who had been trapped in the war zone - 63,000 in all - fled to safety during the past 72 hours.

But rebel official Selvarasa Pathmanathan said the bodies of thousands of wounded and slain civilians lay strewn across the war zone.

"This battle has reached its bitter end," Pathmanathan said in a statement emailed to The Associated Press.

"It is our people who are dying now from bombs, shells, illness and hunger. We cannot permit any more harm to befall them. 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."

Media Minister Anura Yapa dismissed the appeal.

"We want to free this country from the terrorist <u>LTTE</u>," he said, referring to the group by its formal name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

#### Sri Lanka rebels offer to lay down arms

The military spokesman denied the rebels had laid down their weapons.

"Fighting is still going on in small pockets," Nanayakkara said.

Rights groups have accused the rebels of holding civilians as human shields, and blamed the government for shelling the densely populated area where they sought refuge. Both sides denied the accusations.

With most journalists and aid workers barred from the war zone, it was not possible to verify the accounts of either side. Health officials in the area have said thousands of civilians were killed in shelling since the beginning of the year.

The rebels have been fighting since 1983 for a separate state for Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil minority after years of marginalisation at the hands of the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa has said that after defeating the rebels, his government will begin talks toward power sharing and political reconciliation between the two communities. But many Tamils are sceptical that the victorious government will be willing to make real concessions.

At their height, the rebels controlled 14,000 square kilometres, nearly one-fifth of this Indian Ocean island nation.

They had a conventional army complete with artillery batteries, a large navy and even a nascent air force, funded by an estimated \$200US million to \$300 million a year they made from smuggling, fraud and appeals to Tamil expatriates.

They also carried out hundreds of suicide attacks - including the 1991 assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi - and were listed as a terror group by the US, European Union and India.

A 2002 cease-fire briefly halted the fighting, but it broke down more than three years ago, and Rajapaksa vowed to destroy the rebels.

With victory all but assured, Rajapaksa raced home from a trip abroad and was blessed at the airport yesterday morning by Buddhist, Catholic, Hindu and Muslim clerics.

He scheduled a nationally televised news conference for Tuesday morning at Parliament.

Sri Lankans poured into the streets of the capital, Colombo, lighting firecrackers, dancing to the beat of traditional drums, waving the flag and hugging soldiers.

"We all will be able to live in peace in our motherland again," said Jinadasa Liyanage, 26.

Yet the fate of Prabhakaran, the founder and unquestioned leader of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, and his top deputies remained unclear.

A senior military official said troops found the bodies of several rebel fighters who had committed suicide Sunday when troops surrounded them. The bodies were suspected of being Prabhakaran and his deputies, but the military was still trying to confirm their identities, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to speak to the media.

In an interview with Britain's Channel 4 news, Pathmanathan said he had spoken with Prabhakaran personally and the rebel leader remained inside the war zone.

The portly, moustachioed Prabhakaran led the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> for more than three decades, transforming it from little more than a street gang into a feared guerrilla group. He is seen as the heart and soul of the movement.

The rebels have said that if they lost the conventional war they would return to their guerrilla roots.

#### Sri Lanka rebels offer to lay down arms

The war zone was wracked by chaos yesterday, as troops sought to mop up the final pockets of resistance, Nanayakkara said.

At least one suicide bomber attacked troops in the morning, the latest in a wave of rebel attacks on the advancing forces in recent days, he said.

Troops killed at least 70 rebels trying to flee by boat, the military said.

Pope Benedict XVI said yesterday he was praying for peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka and called on aid groups to do everything possible to care for the fleeing civilians.

"There are thousands of children, <u>women</u>, old people for whom the war has taken years of their lives and hope," Benedict said.

- AP

Load-Date: May 18, 2009



# Sri Lanka rebels concede defeat in civil war

#### Associated Press Online

May 17, 2009 Sunday 5:07 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 1000 words

Byline: By RAVI NESSMAN and BHARATHA MALLWARACHI, Associated Press Writers

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

# **Body**

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> admitted defeat Sunday in their fierce quarter-century war for a separate homeland as government forces raced to clear the last pockets of rebel resistance from the war zone in the north.

Far from the battlefield, thousands of Sri Lankans danced in the streets of Colombo, celebrating the stunning collapse of one of the world's most sophisticated insurgencies. But with rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran still at large, the threat of renewed guerrilla warfare remained.

Several rebel fighters committed suicide when they were surrounded, but it wasn't clear whether Prabhakaran or other leaders were among them.

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> once controlled a shadow state complete with courts, police and a tax system across a wide swath of the north. By Sunday, troops had surrounded the remaining rebels in a 0.4-square-mile (1-square-kilometer) patch of land and were fighting off suicide bombs and other attacks, the military said.

Huge clouds of black smoke rose over the battlefield as soldiers inspected the charred remains of rebel trucks and heavy artillery pieces, according to footage broadcast on state television. Civilians carrying backpacks and rolling suitcases were escorted from the area.

Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said the civilians who had been trapped in the war zone 63,000 in all fled to safety during the past 72 hours. But rebel official Selvarasa Pathmanathan said the bodies of thousands of wounded and slain civilians lay strewn across the war zone.

"This battle has reached its bitter end," Pathmanathan said in a statement e-mailed to The Associated Press. "It is our people who are dying now from bombs, shells, illness and hunger. We cannot permit any more harm to befall them. 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."

Media Minister Anura Yapa dismissed the appeal. "We want to free this country from the terrorist **LTTE**," he said, referring to the group by its formal name, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The military spokesman denied the rebels had laid down their weapons. "Fighting is still going on in small pockets," Nanayakkara said.

#### Sri Lanka rebels concede defeat in civil war

Rights groups have accused the rebels of holding civilians as human shields, and blamed the government for shelling the densely populated area where they sought refuge. Both sides denied the accusations.

With most journalists and aid workers barred from the war zone, it was not possible to verify the accounts of either side. Health officials in the area have said thousands of civilians were killed in shelling since the beginning of the year.

The rebels have been fighting since 1983 for a separate state for Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil minority after years of marginalization at the hands of the Sinhalese majority. More than 70,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa has said that after defeating the rebels, his government will begin talks toward power sharing and political reconciliation between the two communities. But many Tamils are skeptical that the victorious government will be willing to make real concessions.

At their height, the rebels controlled 5,400 square miles (14,000 square kilometers), nearly one-fifth of this Indian Ocean island nation.

They had a conventional army complete with artillery batteries, a large navy and even a nascent air force, funded by an estimated \$200 million to \$300 million a year they made from smuggling, fraud and appeals to Tamil expatriates. They also carried out hundreds of suicide attacks including the 1991 assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and were listed as a terror group by the U.S., European Union and India.

A 2002 cease-fire briefly halted the fighting, but it broke down more than three years ago, and Rajapaksa vowed to destroy the rebels. With victory all but assured, Rajapaksa raced home from a trip abroad and was blessed at the airport Sunday morning by Buddhist, Catholic, Hindu and Muslim clerics. He scheduled a nationally televised news conference for Tuesday morning at Parliament.

Sri Lankans poured into the streets of the capital, Colombo, lighting firecrackers, dancing to the beat of traditional drums, waving the flag and hugging soldiers.

"We all will be able to live in peace in our motherland again," said Jinadasa Liyanage, 26.

Yet the fate of Prabhakaran, the founder and unquestioned leader of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, and his top deputies remained unclear.

A senior military official said troops found the bodies of several rebel fighters who had committed suicide Sunday when troops surrounded them. The bodies were suspected of being Prabhakaran and his deputies, but the military was still trying to confirm their identities, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

In an interview with Britain's Channel 4 news to be aired Sunday night, Pathmanathan said he had spoken with Prabhakaran personally and the rebel leader remained inside the war zone.

The portly, mustachioed Prabhakaran led the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> for more than three decades, transforming it from little more than a street gang into a feared guerrilla group. He is seen as the heart and soul of the movement.

The rebels have said that if they lost the conventional war they would return to their guerrilla roots.

The war zone was wracked by chaos Sunday, as troops sought to mop up the final pockets of resistance, Nanayakkara said. At least one suicide bomber attacked troops in the morning, the latest in a wave of rebel attacks on the advancing forces in recent days, he said. Troops killed at least 70 rebels trying to flee by boat, the military said.

Pope Benedict XVI said Sunday he was praying for peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka and called on aid groups to do everything possible to care for the fleeing civilians.

#### Sri Lanka rebels concede defeat in civil war

"There are thousands of children, <u>women</u>, old people for whom the war has taken years of their lives and hope," Benedict said.

Load-Date: May 18, 2009



# Not only to crush Tigers but also to save civilians- BBC's Radio 4

Daily News (Sri Lanka)
May 13, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 784 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, May 13 -- Summing up his radio broadcast from Colombo the respected BBC Radio 4 reporter Andrew Hosken in Today program said Sri Lanka Army's determination is not only to put an end to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam but also to save the trapped Tamil civilians.

He said in his broadcast, the Army knows this is a fight not just to obliterate the *Tamil Tigers* but to save the lives of perhaps many thousands of innocent men, women and children caught up in the storm of war. He said, although over the last two decades Kilinochchi has changed hands several times, its fall on January 2 signalled the end of the Tigers - who now control just a small coastal strip, 40km from Kilinochchi. Excerpts from the broadcast; For years, the town of Kilinochchi was the headquarters of the Tamil Tiger rebels, which the Sri Lankan government describes as a brutal and ruthless terrorist organisation. Now it is the HQ for the Sri Lankan Army which says it is on the verge of finally destroying an organisation it has fought for more than 30 years. When Kilinochchi was finally captured by the Army earlier this year, there were widespread celebrations, particularly in the country's southern capital, Colombo. Although over the last two decades Kilinochchi has changed hands several times, its fall on January 2 signalled the end of the Tigers - who now control just a small coastal strip, 40km from Kilinochchi. Both the Sri Lankan government and its Army clearly want nothing to come between them and the total victory they expect. We arrived at the HQ of the two main infantry divisions that have now encircled the Tigers, the 57th and the 58th. Major General Jagath Dias, who commands the 57th, captured Kilinochchi for the government. "It was the proudest moment of my career," he said. But when the general finally raised the Sri Lankan flag in Kilinochchi, it fluttered over a ruined ghost town. Scarcely a building or piece of infrastructure remained intact. Even the vast jumbo jet sized concrete pipe that carried water to many people in the region is wrecked. "This was deliberately destroyed by the terrorists," the General said, shaking his head in vigorous disapproval. "Do you think we did it?" The general's defensive question perhaps reflects a view widespread in the Army and in Government circles - that the western media has given succour over the years to the *LTTE*. On the road between Kilinochchi and Paranthan, we travelled through several abandoned towns and villages that had been virtually obliterated The Army's press conference also made clear its view that what it sees as a gullible foreign media has been a part of the Tigers' weaponry since its violent campaign for a separate Tamil state in the North and East of Sri Lanka first took shape in the mid 1970s. Recently the Sri Lankan Navy destroyed three so-called "Sea Tiger" vessels, including two suicide boats. Twenty-three Tigers died. Heavy losses Eleven LTTE cadres have died for every soldier, the Army's commanders told us. The Army was keen to show the media some of the arms and other items captured from the Tigers in recent months - including a tank, heavy artillery, assault rifles and home made landmines. We were taken to the hamlet of Paranthan, the place closest to the "no fire zone", the small coastal area currently held by the last of the Tigers. Although we were only 2 to 3km from the area, mainly made up of paddy fields and smallholdings, we could hear no signs of fighting. Only later could we discern what sounded like mortar fire, but it was not clear whose mortars they were. In what by any standards has been a vicious conflict, there have been claims by the LTTE of

#### Not only to crush Tigers but also to save civilians- BBC 's Radio 4

alleged Army breaches of the government's no fire zone pledge. After our stay with the Army ended, we heard of an alleged artillery attack on a makeshift hospital in the no fire zone, killing more than 60 people. A pro-Tamil website accused the military of shelling the hospital. But military spokesman, Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara denied there had been any such attack. What was clear from our visit was the scale of the destruction. On the road between Kilinochchi and Paranthan, we travelled through several abandoned towns and villages that had been virtually obliterated. Everywhere there were smashed buildings and vehicles. We saw no civilians. Crops go untilled and livestock wander the fields untended. What is far from clear is the scale of the humanitarian crisis. Neither the true figure of the total number of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) is known nor the number of people allegedly held as LTTE hostages within the no fire zone itself. 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 <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: May 13, 2009



# India 'hopeful of positive outcome' in Sri Lanka (Second Lead)

Hindustan Times
April 24, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 353 words

Dateline: New Delhi/Colombo

# **Body**

New Delhi/Colombo, April. 24 -- India said Friday it was hopeful of a "positive outcome" in Sri Lanka after two of its envoys met President Mahinda Rajapaksa in Colombo and conveyed New Delhi's concerns over the rising casualties and the plight of more than 100,000 Tamil civilians who fled the war zone this week.

National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan and Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon met Rajapaksa at his residence Temple Trees in Colombo and conveyed India's concerns about the worsening humanitarian crisis in the island nation in the wake of the military offensive against the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>.

"We conveyed the concerns of the Government of India on the evolving situation in Northern Sri Lanka, especially at the casualties caused among Tamil civilians as a result of ongoing operations," Narayanan told journalists after returning to Delhi from a day-long visit to Colombo.

"We also expressed the Government of India's concerns about the humanitarian situation as a result of nearly hundred thousand Tamil civilians coming out of the conflict zone since early this week," he said.

"The president of Sri Lanka was receptive to our concerns. We are hopeful of a positive outcome," he said.

With the plight of Tamils in Sri Lanka becoming an electoral issue in Tamil Nadu and a state-wide shutdown called by the DMK, a key ally of the ruling UPA coalition, over the issue, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh sent Menon and Narayanan as his special emissaries to convey India's concerns.

The Sri Lankan military estimates that 106,000 Tamil civilians - men, <u>women</u> and children - have so far fled the *LTTE* zone and taken shelter in military-held areas.

The exodus of Tamil civilians from the war zone escalated into a grave humanitarian crisis even as the Sri Lankan government claimed that the Tamil Tiger rebels were about to be crushed.

In a strongly-worded statement Wednesday night, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee has asked Colombo to stop all hostilities immediately and ensure that that the killings of innocent civilians are stopped. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: August 4, 2009



# <u>The hidden human cost of Sri Lanka's final onslaught; Behind the</u> <u>celebrations of victory over the Tamil Tigers; lie thousands of injured</u> <u>civilians whose existence has been denied</u>

The Sunday Telegraph (London)
May 24, 2009

Copyright 2009 Telegraph Media Group Limited All Rights Reserved

# The Sunday Telegraph

Section: NEWS; International; Pg. 30

Length: 1083 words

Byline: DEAN NELSON in Trincomalee

#### **Body**

THE SRI LANKAN government has deliberately concealed official figures showing the number of civilians wounded in its final onslaught against the *Tamil Tigers*, according to documents seen by The Sunday Telegraph.

While Sri Lankan officials boasted last week that not a drop of civilian blood was spilt by the army as it drove the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> from their last remaining enclave, government files record that more than 3,000 people from the conflict zone were treated for serious injuries in a single town.

Of 10,191 patients evacuated to the north eastern port of Trincomalee from the "no-fire zone" in Mullaitivu between February and May 9, a total of 3,113 were recorded as "seriously wounded". Their injuries included deep abdominal wounds and the loss of hands, feet and limbs.

Aid workers familiar with events during the final army push before the separatist terror group surrendered have also told the Telegraph that these figures - recorded in government files, but publicly denied - themselves represent only a fraction of the true number of overall casualties. Up to 60 per cent of the more than 250,000 people who fled the fighting have injuries caused by army shelling, mortar fire and gunshots, it was claimed.

"They are major wounds - legs broken, open abdomens, head injuries and limbs removed. All from shelling and other flying objects," said one medical official who had worked with the wounded.

Another rescue official said that none of the patients was injured by Tamil Tiger landmines, which the government has claimed was the cause of civilian injuries.

The full extent of the humanitarian crisis unfolding in northern Sri Lanka emerged yesterday when Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations Secretary-General, visited squalid refugee camps in the north-east of the country.

He was the first senior world figure to visit the area since the government said it had ended the insurgency last week. After arriving in Colombo he flew by helicopter over the war zone. Below him lay the tiny strip of land where the Tigers made their last stand.

The hidden human cost of Sri Lanka 's final onslaught Behind the celebrations of victory over the Tamil Tigers lie thousands of injured civilians whose existenc....

Pockmarked with craters, it was dotted with the detritus of destruction: burnt-out vehicles, charred buildings and an abandoned tent city.

Mr Ban then toured Manik Farm, the main refugee camp where more than 200,000 people were sheltering in a crowded mishmash of corrugated iron shacks and tents. He also visited a field hospital, where 100 elderly patients, some with gaping wounds and clearly malnourished, lay on blankets exposed to the elements.

"I'm very moved after what I have seen; I've seen so many wounded," said Mr Ban.

He added that those who had fled the fighting between Tamil Tiger rebels and government forces were in urgent need of food, water and sanitation, and promised to press the Sri Lankan government to allow aid agencies access.

The camp, referred to by Sri Lankan authorities as a "welfare village," was surrounded by barbed wire and under heavy guard.

The government has been accused of holding civilians in order to flush out any remaining Tiger fighters who might be among them, but it has pledged to return them to their home districts by the end of the year.

Mr Ban accepted President Mahinda Rajapakse's commitment to help those caught up in the conflict.

"It is time for Sri Lankans to heal the wounds and unite," he said.

Critics of the Sri Lankan government are demanding war crimes prosecutions.

Mr Ban said: "Wherever there are serious violations of human rights as well as international humanitarian law, proper investigation should be instituted."

In Trincomalee, 50 miles south of the final battle ground, a medical aid worker described the condition of some of the victims of the fighting.

One woman had arrived after losing her husband, three children and both her legs in an army shell attack. "They were eating when suddenly a shell fell between them. She lost her legs. She is now alone and was crying out, 'Who will look after me?'," he said.

"I have seen people without arms, legs, crying about their children, husbands and families. It is a human disaster."

In Trincomalee, a sleepy tropical paradise town lined with bamboo-fenced bungalows and coconut palms, there were mixed feelings about the end of the war.

But behind the closed doors of the large number of Tamil homes, the strongest emotion was fear. "People are terrified, too scared to speak," said one official, who asked not to be named.

One aid worker said that many Tamil staff had been sent home as members of the majority Sinhalese population held street parties to celebrate what the government called a victory against terrorism, but which Tamils regarded as the defeat of the one group that stood up for them and offered them protection. One aid worker said that the local Sinhalese community had raised money to pay for the victory parties from Tamil families. Groups of boisterous government supporters had called at their homes demanding they give generously, and the Tamils had felt too afraid to refuse, it was claimed.

Similar celebrations were held across Sri Lanka last week.

Outside Lady Ridgeway Children's Hospital in Colombo, trucks and tuk-tuks flew the national flag as jubilant government supporters cheered their victory, forming conga lines in the streets and dancing to a Sinhalese drumbeat.

The hidden human cost of Sri Lanka 's final onslaught Behind the celebrations of victory over the Tamil Tigers lie thousands of injured civilians whose existenc....

Within the sprawling white hospital, where the wards were guarded by heavily armed soldiers and patrolled by stout <u>female</u> matrons in saris, Tamil children and their grieving parents could hear the sounds of a party being thrown at their expense.

The Telegraph was prevented from entering the hospital to ask the patients what conditions in the no-fire zone had been like, and was instead interrogated by police.

Only the defence secretary, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the president's brother, could grant the necessary permission for entry, and he refused to discuss any such requests.

Three senior doctors who treated patients in the "safe zone" throughout the relentless shelling were still in custody yesterday and were being treated as terrorist suspects for passing independent updates on casualties to the outside world, including information on the bombing of field hospitals.

Dr Thangamutha Sathiyamoorthy, the regional director of health services in Kilinochchi, Dr V. Shanmugarajah, a medical superintendent at the Mullivaaykkaal field hospital and Dr Thurairaja Varatharajah, the regional director in Mullaitivu, were believed to be undergoing interrogation at the feared Terrorist Investigation Division headquarters in Colombo.

Load-Date: May 24, 2009



# 'Sea of mud and misery' in Tamil camps as health disaster unfolds

#### Irish News

October 9, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 The Irish News Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: Pg. 25

Length: 609 words

#### **Body**

Human rights group Amnesty International yesterday called for Sri Lanka to release hundreds of thousands of Tamil war refugees being held prisoner in military-run camps, saying monsoon floods would create a health crisis.

Sri Lanka has come under intense pressure to free the nearly 300,000 minority Tamils who were forced into the camps after fleeing the final months of the government's war with the Tamil Tiger rebels earlier this year, in which more than 30,000 Tamils were killed.

The Sri Lankan government has said the internees are being held until they have been "screened" for links to the Tigers and has pledged to release 80 per cent of the camps' populations by the end of the year.

But since May only 10,000 refugees have been released. Sri Lanka's foreign secretary has publicly stated that he believes all Tamils are "with" the Tigers - "at least mentally".

Rights agencies have reported food, water and medicine shortages and resulting malnourishment among internees. Tamil sources have reported deaths from starvation in the camps.

There have also been allegations of rape and sexual abuse of Tamil <u>women</u> and children, and of beatings, disappearances and executions of Tamils suspected of supporting the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (<u>LTTE</u>).

"The international community and the government of Sri Lanka can no longer ignore the voices of camp detainees to be allowed to leave," Yolanda Foster, Amnesty International's Sri Lanka researcher, said.

"Freedom of movement is now critical."

The human rights group also fears that the monsoon rains expected in the coming weeks will flood the overcrowded, low-lying camps, creating a fertile breading ground for disease.

Amnesty said the government had failed to deliver vital services to the camps and they lacked basic sanitation facilities. Heavy rains last month sent rivers of water and sewage flowing through the tents, it said.

In the wake of the first rains that flooded the prison camps, which hit on 14 August, the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs news service IRIN described "a sea of mud and misery", with tents being inundated with water and toilets flooding waste throughout the camps.

Demanding the immediate release of the 285,000 civilians in July, Amnesty International's British director Kate Allen said: "The largest camp - Menik Farm - is horrendous. It holds 160,000 people in an area smaller than one square kilometre.

#### 'Sea of mud and misery' in Tamil camps as health disaster unfolds

"The people we are talking about here are doctors, teachers, farmers - ordinary people with ordinary lives. Yet, they are being held in horrendous conditions for no reason other than that they previously lived in areas held by the *Tamil Tigers*."

Following the heavy rains, international medical officers raised concerns with IRIN in Vavuniya in August over diarrhoea, dysentery and other waterborne diseases.

"From an epidemiological point of view, this is a public health disaster waiting to happen," one medical officer said.

"How are we supposed to sleep like this?" Menik Farm internee Ganeshan Sivasundram demanded from outside his flooded tent.

The government responded to the floods by deploying more troops to secure the camps from "unrest" by crushing the mounting resistance to the mass incarceration.

While these floods have caused huge hardship for the internees, they are only a taste of what is to come, with Sri Lanka's monsoon season due to begin this month.

More than 10,000 Tamils which the Government claims are members of the <u>LTTE</u> have been removed from the camps and imprisoned incommunicado in secret locations without any access to the outside world - or to the rights recognised under international law of prisoners of war.

Load-Date: October 9, 2009



# Global Issues Explored

Targeted News Service

October 20, 2009 Tuesday 12:38 PM EST

Copyright 2009 Targeted News Service LLC All Rights Reserved

Length: 639 words

Byline: Targeted News Service

Dateline: FLINT, Mich.

# **Body**

Kettering University issued the following news release:

The Eighth Annual Global Issues Film Festival sponsored by Mott Community College, Kettering University & UM-Flint will be Nov. 14 and 15, in the MCC Regional Technology Center Auditorium. All films are shown FREE of CHARGE.

The Global Issues Film Festival continues its tradition of bringing provocative films to Flint, and this year features filmmaker Michael Ramsdell, originally of Flint, at both the fall and winter showings, as well as the work of independent filmmakers from around the globe. Topics of the films represent a variety of voices and viewpoints. The festival is sponsored in part by the Greater Flint Arts Council, the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs, Mott Community College, Kettering University's Department of Liberal Studies and the University of Michigan-Flint.

The following films represent the first half of the 2009-10 Global Issues Film Festival. The second half of the festival will run Jan. 27-30, 2010 on the campus of Kettering University. For more information, call (810)762-9699.

This fall's line-up includes:

Garbage Warrior (2007) Saturday, Nov. 14, 1 p.m. (90 minutes, USA, English) directed by Oliver Hodge and architect Michael Reynolds

What do beer cans, car tires and water bottles have in common? Not much unless you're renegade architect Michael Reynolds, in which case they are tools of choice for producing thermal mass and energy-independent housing or "Earthship Biotecture." These experimental structures defy state standards and create conflict between Reynolds and the authorities. Reynolds and his crew seize the opportunity to lend their pioneering skills to those who need it most.

My Daughter the Terrorist (2007) Saturday, Nov. 14, 3 p.m. (58 minutes, Norway, Subtitled) a film by Beate Arnestad

This documentary is a rare, inside look at an organization that most of the world has blacklisted as a terrorist group - the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> (<u>LTTE</u>) of Sri Lanka. The film offers important insights into the recently re-ignited conflict. Twenty-four-year-olds Dharsika and Puhalchudar have been living and fighting side-by-side for seven years as part of <u>LTTE</u>'s elite force, the Black Tigers. Their story is told through cinema verit footage, newsreel footage, and interviews with the <u>women</u> and Dharsika's mother.

#### Global Issues Explored

Arusi Persian Wedding (2005) Saturday, Nov. 14, 5 p.m. (63 minutes, Iran and USA, English and subtitles) by filmmaker Marjan Tehrani

For filmmaker Marjan Tehrani and her brother Alex, growing up Iranian American meant that political tensions often impacted their personal lives. Alex and Marjan grew up interpreting the mostly negative images of Iran in the American media, a conflict that shaped their identities. When the Tehranis are finally granted their Iranian passports, Alex, and his American bride Heather decide to make a trip to Iran to have a Persian wedding. But traveling to Iran is complicated.

Anatomy of Hate (2008) Sunday, Nov. 15, 3 p.m. (86 minutes, International, English with subtitles) from filmmaker Michael Ramsdell, followed by a discussion with the filmmaker.

The Anatomy of Hate; A Dialogue to Hope reveals the shared narratives found in individual and collective ideologies of hate, and how we as a species can overcome them. For six years filmmaker and Flint native Michael Ramsdell, had unprecedented access to some of the most venomous ideologies and violent conflicts of our time. By juxtaposing this verite footage with interviews from leading sociological, psychological, and neurological experts, the film weaves a tapestry that reveals both the emotional and biological mechanisms which make all of us susceptible to hate, and how these very same traits make us equally capable of overcoming it.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS C-HarshVar 100110-MT93-2565333 61MarlizTagarum

Load-Date: January 13, 2010



# Pain of war always close for Tamil diaspora.

Canwest News Service

May 4, 2009 Monday 04:57 PM EST

Copyright 2009 Canwest News Service All Rights Reserved

Length: 982 words

Byline: Marian Scott

Dateline: MONTREAL

# **Body**

MONTREAL- The petite Sri Lankan refugee's voice is gentle, but her words unveil a world of suffering and brutality.

Denesta Davidlambert, 37, came to Montreal four years ago from Trincomalee, a port on Sri Lanka's east coast.

Travel guides extol the city's white beaches and deepwater harbour, which has attracted seafarers like Marco Polo since ancient times. But the images seared into Davidlambert's memory are far less picturesque. She sees the faces of her two brothers, Anton, 21, and George, 16, abducted 19 years ago by government soldiers.

"We are Catholic and Tamil," she says "They rounded up the boys in each and every house. They brought all the boys to a public place, a playground."

George's murdered body turned up later at a hospital. He had been tortured.

"His hands were tied so tight, they couldn't see the rope," she says.

No trace of Anton was ever found.

Davidlambert's painful memories are ever present these days as Sri Lanka reports it could be days away from crushing a 26-year-old insurgency by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*).

The war has bitterly divided Sri Lanka's Tamil minority, traditionally based in the country's north and east, from the Sinhalese majority in the rest of the country. The Buddhist Sinhalese make up 75 per cent of the nation of 21 million while mainly Hindu Sri Lankan Tamils represent four per cent and Tamils of Indian origin five per cent. The Tamils also include Christian and Muslim minorities.

The army has cornered rebel forces and more than 50,000 civilians on a tiny strip of beach.

Recently, President Mahinda Rajapaksa rejected appeals by Britain and France for a temporary truce after the British and French foreign ministers travelled to the warn-torn country. Sri Lanka denied entry to Sweden's foreign minister.

The Colombo government has also dismissed the rebels' offer of a unilateral ceasefire as "a joke." More than 6,400 civilians have been killed and 14,000 injured in the last three months, the United Nations reports.

### Pain of war always close for Tamil diaspora.

Worried sick about loved ones back home, members of Canada's 100,000-strong Sri Lankan Tamil community - the largest outside Sri Lanka - charge the world is sitting on its hands as innocents are slaughtered.

"Day by day, people are dying, my siblings and relatives," Davidlambert says. "This humanitarian suffering, people are watching like a sad movie. No one is even raising their voice."

In April, Canadian Tamils marched 33,000 strong on Parliament Hill. There were similar but smaller demonstrations in Montreal and Toronto. Tamils have through in cities around the world, including London.

Yet tainted by its loyalty to the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, listed as a terrorist organization by Canada and 31 other countries, the Tamil diaspora seems to have lost the public relations battle over the civil war that has wracked Sri Lanka since 1983.

"It's as much a media war as an actual war on the ground," says Jennifer Hyndman, an associate professor of geography at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, B.C.

The tragedy, says Hyndman, is that violent excesses on both sides of the conflict have overshadowed the suffering of Sri Lanka's Tamil minority and the legitimate grievances that gave rise to the **LTTE** in the first place.

Founded in 1972, the <u>LTTE</u> is infamous for having pioneered suicide bombing and the use of <u>women</u> in suicide attacks and for the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.

The rebels have a long history of recruiting child soldiers, according to Human Rights Watch, a non-government organization.

But few in Montreal's 10,000-member Tamil community seem prepared to believe reports of abuses by the Tigers.

"They are the only people who are fighting for us," says Sabapathy Sivasubramaniam, 67, a retired math teacher in suburban St. Laurent who came to Canada as a refugee in 1998.

"They are our only saviours." However, according to the International Crisis Group, an independent non-government organization, the <u>LTTE</u> stifled opposition and assassinated Tamil political rivals.

The government has also committed numerous atrocities, Human Rights Watch charges. Sri Lankan troops have repeatedly bombarded hospitals and government- declared "safe zones" crowded with civilians, the organization reports.

Colombo has barred media and independent observers from the war zone. "The government is determined to fight this war in the dark and they have succeeded, " says Brad Adams, Human Rights Watch Asia director, in a telephone interview from London.

But Daya Perera, Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to Canada, dismisses the rights organization's charges, noting that the armed forces recently stopped using aerial raids and heavy weaponry against the remaining rebels in the tiny war zone.

Tamils have long coexisted peacefully with the majority Sinhalese, says Perera, who was a well-known criminal lawyer in Sri Lanka. "When I was at the bar, the chief justice was a Tamil. The attorney general was a Tamil. The inspector general of police was a Tamil." "There is no discrimination. There is no bitterness in Sri Lanka. The bitterness is here (in Canada)," he says.

Sri Lanka is a heart-rending example of missed opportunities, says Liberal Foreign Affairs critic Bob Rae, who called Canada's failure to join Britain and France in pressing for a truce a disgrace.

Rae was active in peace talks in Sri Lanka during a lull in hostilities from 2002-2005 as founding chairman of the Forum of Federations, a non-profit organization to promote and improve federalism.

Pain of war always close for Tamil diaspora.

"Events moved in a tragic direction," he says. "The <u>LTTE</u> was not prepared to stop being a guerrilla army. The government was not prepared to make constitutional change." As government troops squeeze the rebels' last redoubt, Rae warns that a defeat for the Tigers is no guarantee of an end to Sri Lanka's troubles.

"The idea a military victory will solve the problem is a complete illusion," he says.

Montreal Gazette

Load-Date: May 5, 2009



# Sri Lanka president dismisses threat of war crimes charges

Agence France Presse -- English May 22, 2009 Friday 1:36 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 398 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 22 2009

# **Body**

Sri Lanka's President Mahinda Rajapakse on Friday brushed off calls for an investigation into alleged war crimes committed by government troops in their offensive against Tamil Tiger rebels.

"There are some who tried to stop our military campaign by threatening to haul us before war crimes tribunals," Rajapakse said in a speech to hundreds of thousands of supporters outside the national parliament.

"They are still trying to do that, but I am not afraid," the president said.

"The strength I have is your support. I am even ready to go to the gallows on your behalf."

Thousands of civilians are believed to have been killed during the offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*).

Rajapakse, who is also the commander in chief of the armed forces, said the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> had been completely crushed with no possibility of them staging another uprising.

"We had to overcome many obstacles in our battle against the Tigers. The international community was against us, but today they have begun supporting us," the president said in his address, also carried on national television.

His remarks came hours ahead of a visit to the island by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who has voiced concern that the 280,000 civilians who managed to escape the fighting were being held in prison-like conditions.

Both sides in the conflict have been accused of rights violations, with numerous aid agencies and rights groups alleging indiscriminate army shelling and condemning the Tigers for using civilians as a human shield.

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, <u>women</u> and children cowering in shallow dug-outs with little food or water for several months.

The UN estimated that over 7,000 civilians were killed in the first four months of this year alone.

The UN's main rights body is to hold a special session on Sri Lanka next week.

### Sri Lanka president dismisses threat of war crimes charges

The office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, has called for a war crimes probe, a call also backed by former colonial power Britain.

The Sri Lankan military declared final victory in the decades-old conflict on Monday after overrunning the rebels' last holdout in the northeast.

It has staunchly denied killing any civilians, accusing the defeated rebels of firing on their own people in order to blame the government.

Load-Date: May 23, 2009



# Sri Lanka: Stop Shelling 'No-Fire Zone'

Targeted News Service

April 9, 2009 Thursday 1:37 AM EST

Copyright 2009 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1282 words

Dateline: NEW YORK

### **Body**

Human Rights Watch issued the following news release:

The Sri Lankan government should stop firing heavy artillery into the "no-fire zone" in the northern Vanni area where some 100,000 civilians are trapped by the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, causing skyrocketing casualties, Human Rights Watch said today.

Human Rights Watch called upon the United Nations Security Council to take urgent measures, including by sending a special envoy to Sri Lanka, to bring an end to violations of international humanitarian law by government forces and the *LTTE*.

"Sri Lanka's so-called 'no-fire zone' is now one of the most dangerous places in the world," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "The Security Council has quibbled over protocol when it should be acting to bring an end to this ghastly loss of life."

People in the government-declared no-fire zone told Human Rights Watch that several areas have been subjected to heavy shelling since April 7, 2009, resulting in numerous civilian casualties. According to a doctor at the make-shift hospital in Putumattalan, on April 7 the hospital received 133 wounded civilians and 20 dead bodies. He said that all were the victims of a shelling in Pokkanai, a seaside area within the no-fire zone that is crowded with displaced persons.

Two other shelling attacks hit the same area on the morning of April 8. The doctor said the hospital received 296 wounded and 46 bodies on April 8, and 300 wounded and 62 bodies on April 9. Because of a lack of access to the conflict area, Human Rights Watch is unable to confirm these figures independently. On April 9 the International Committee of the Red Cross evacuated 230 injured civilians plus their relatives by ferry from Putumattalan.

A witness to the first attack on April 8 said that it took place at 7:30 a.m. near Pokkanai primary health center. Hundreds of civilians were waiting in line near a food distribution center when four or five artillery shells hit the area, killing at least 13 civilians immediately and wounding over 50 others. The doctor, who examined the site two hours after the attack, said that the shells were 120mm rounds and appeared to have been fired from Sri Lankan army positions to the south.

A 35-year-old man told Human Rights Watch that he was waiting in the food distribution line with his wife and 2-year-old child when the shelling started:

"There had been no distribution of milk powder for three months, and so when they announced that there would be distribution today [April 8], hundreds of people lined in queue. It was early in the morning. I heard the first shell, and

### Sri Lanka: Stop Shelling 'No-Fire Zone'

hit the ground. Then several more landed nearby, after three or four minutes. I survived by miracle, but my 45-year-old uncle died on the spot - he lost both legs.

"I tried to get him to the hospital by bike - there are no cars, and no ambulances, and there were so many people - women, and children - injured in that attack. Now I am staying in the hospital with my wife and child, because we have nowhere else to go and the hospital may be the safest place. But there is also no place to stay here - there are so many injured people, and the new injured are being brought here all the time as we speak."

Another attack followed several hours later. The doctor said the new patients continued to arrive by the minute.

Human Rights Watch called on the Sri Lankan government and the <u>LTTE</u> to urgently facilitate the safe evacuation of civilians from the conflict area. Approximately 100,000 civilians are believed to be trapped in the roughly 20-square-kilometer area under *LTTE* control.

Several people who recently managed to flee the no-fire zone reported that escape was becoming increasingly difficult because the <u>LTTE</u> had built an earth mound and posted sentries at regular intervals on the zone's perimeter. One woman who escaped in mid-March said that <u>LTTE</u> fighters had opened fire on her group as they tried to flee in the dark, but they kept running. A large number spent the night hiding in the Nanthikadal lagoon, which borders the no-fire zone, standing in water up to their necks. Only when it was light enough for government forces to see that they were civilians did the group emerge from the water toward the government side.

A 19-year-old youth who tried to escape with his family on April 1 said that the <u>LTTE</u> had forced his parents to turn back. He and his younger brother made a run for it, however, and eventually made it to the government side.

The Sri Lankan government continues to prevent the media and other independent observers from traveling to the war-affected Vanni region to report on the situation. The doctor told Human Rights Watch that he and other medical staff who have been providing information from inside the no-fire zone have been threatened by the authorities and ordered not to speak to the media.

"We decided that we are beyond the point where we can just complain to the authorities," the doctor said. "Because we told them a hundred times and they have failed to take any proper steps to stop the attack on civilians and did not send in the necessary amount of medications.

"We have been reporting every day, every day providing reports to relevant authorities and to the international community, and still there are no real steps taken to save these innocent civilians."

Under international humanitarian law applicable to the armed conflict in Sri Lanka, both the government armed forces and the <u>LTTE</u> are obligated to take all feasible precautions to minimize harm to civilian life and property. Since January, both sides have shown little regard for the safety of civilians in the Vanni, and more than 3000 civilians are believed to have died in the fighting. The <u>LTTE</u> has violated the laws of war by using civilians as "human shields," by preventing civilians from fleeing the combat zone and by deliberately deploying their forces close to densely populated civilian areas. The Sri Lankan armed forces have indiscriminately shelled densely populated areas, including hospitals, in violation of the laws of war.

Individuals who commit serious violations of international humanitarian law with criminal intent - that is, deliberately or recklessly - should be prosecuted for war crimes. War crimes include using human shields and deliberately attacking civilians. Evidence as to whether indiscriminate attacks on civilians were deliberate or reckless would include: information on the known number of civilians in the area under attack, attacks striking presumptively civilian objects such as hospitals, and a showing that such attacks occurred repeatedly. In addition to those who ordered or executed unlawful actions or attacks, commanders who knew or should have known of war crimes being committed and failed to take measures to stop them can be held responsible as a matter of command responsibility.

Sri Lanka has an obligation under international law to investigate credible allegations of war crimes, including by members of its own forces, and appropriately prosecuting those responsible.

Sri Lanka: Stop Shelling 'No-Fire Zone'

"War crimes by the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> don't give Sri Lankan commanders free rein to ignore civilian casualties," said Adams. "Accountability is a two-way street."

To read the February 2009 Human Rights Watch report, "War on the Displaced: Sri Lankan Army and <u>LTTE</u> Abuses against Civilians in the Vanni," please visit:

http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2009/02/19/war-displaced

To read the March 2009 Human Rights Watch press release, "Sri Lanka: No Let-Up in Army Shelling of Civilians," please visit:

http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/03/23/sri-lanka-no-let-army-shelling-civilians

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS uv88 -JF78-090410-2268736 18MASHMaryJane

Load-Date: June 4, 2009



# US Calls for End to Hostilities in Sri Lanka

RTT News (United States)
April 16, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 Noticias Financieras/Grupo de Diarios America All Rights Reserved

Length: 464 words

# **Body**

(RTTNews) - In a statement released Thursday, the US government called for an end to the hostilities in Sri Lanka.

The conflict in Sri Lanka revolves around the militant group Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, also known as the *Tamil Tigers*, who are fighting to create an independent Tamil state in the north and east of Sri Lanka.

Founded in 1976, the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> have engaged in an on-and-off civil war against the Sri Lankan government since 1983.

Over the course of the civil war, the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> have been responsible for the assassinations of both Sri Lankan and Indian politicians, committing atrocities against civilians and recruiting child soldiers.

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> have also carried out more suicide bombings than other high-profile terrorist groups like Hamas and al-Qaeda.

There have been attempts at peace talks over the course of the long war, but none have met with any lasting success.

An attack on Tamil Tiger forces by the Sri Lankan government in 2006 proved to be the most effective yet, severely reducing the area of the country under Tamil Tiger control.

Since the offensive, there has been growing international pressure for the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> to surrender for good, including a joint statement issued in February by the US, European Union, Japan and Norway, which stated that it was only a matter of time before the Sri Lankan government gained full control of the country.

In the statement released Thursday, the US said it 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."

The US said it calls "upon the government and military of Sri Lanka, and the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> to immediately stop hostilities until the more than 140,000 civilians in the conflict area are safely out."

It further stated that both sides must "immediately return to a humanitarian pause and both must respect the right of free movement of those civilian men, <u>women</u> and children trapped by the fighting."

The US said that Sri Lanka has "an opportunity to put an end to this lengthy conflict," and that the only way to create a lasting peace is through "a political solution that addresses the legitimate aspirations of all Sri Lankan communities."

"Further killing," the US added, "will not end the conflict and will stain any eventual peace."

### US Calls for End to Hostilities in Sri Lanka

The US said it urged the Sri Lankan government "to employ diplomacy to permit a peaceful outcome of this conflict," and also called on the 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 comments and feedback: contact editorial@rttnews.com

Copyright(c) 2009 RTTNews.com, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Load-Date: April 16, 2010



# Tamil Tiger chief trapped

Colombo Times

April 24, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Colombo Times. All Rights Reserved Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company



Length: 1200 words

# **Body**

Colombo, April 24 -- The leader of Sri Lanka's <u>Tamil Tigers</u> is trapped in a small strip of jungle in the northeast and intends to make a final stand with his surviving forces, according to an army commander.

The commander said a rebel spokesman who surrendered to government troops earlier in the week had reported that Velupillai Prabhakaran (54) was still in charge of his cornered and depleted separatist army.

The Tamil Tiger spokesperson "says that Prabhakaran was living inside and that he will be there until the last moment," Brigadier Shavendra Silva told reporters.

"But, even at the last minute, he will try to escape," said the commander, who is spearheading the offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*).

Prabhakaran has not been seen for 18 months, and speculation has been rife that he may have been killed or already fled the island.

Like his soldiers, the mustachioed warlord carries a cyanide pill to be used in the event of capture.

=Guerrillas want to surrender

Silva told reporters flown to the former Tiger capital of Kilinochchi, 330 kilometres north of Colombo, that there were many guerrillas who wanted to surrender.

The army says the remnants of the <u>LTTE</u> - who once controlled a third of the island - are confined to a 10 square kilometre strip of coastline.

Journalists were shown a large haul of mortars and small arms said to have been captured from the Tigers in recent battles.

Brigadier Silva said his unit had killed 5 953 Tiger fighters and wounded another 2 938 since September 2007, when a Norwegian-backed truce began to collapse. He did not give corresponding military casualties.

The <u>LTTE</u> have been widely accused of using civilians as human shields, and the island's hawkish government is also facing mounting international demands to call a truce and spare more civilian lives.

Aid agencies and human rights groups say thousands of non-combatants have died this year in the onslaught by government troops, many in indiscriminate shelling.

Tremendous international pressure

More than 100 000 men, <u>women</u> and children have managed to escape the area still under <u>LTTE</u> control in recent days, but the United Nations believes up to 50 000 still remain trapped.

### Tamil Tiger chief trapped

The government, however, has steadfastly resisted appeals to call a truce and has also turned down requests to send humanitarian teams into the area.

As well as blocking most aid agencies, the Sri Lankan authorities have herded escaping Tamil civilians into closelyguarded internment camps so they can weed out suspected rebels.

"It would not be sensible to let aid agencies into the conflict zone because there is already an army operation in progress to rescue civilians," Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse told the BBC.

However a Sri Lankan government official who declined to be named acknowledged Colombo was under "tremendous international pressure" - with nearby India also sending an emergency diplomatic mission.

Indian Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon and National Security Adviser M. K. Narayanan arrived in Colombo Friday to meet with President Mahinda Rajapakse, and New Delhi said the officials would stress the severity of the humanitarian crisis.

"These killings must stop. The Sri Lankan government has a responsibility to protect its own citizens and the <u>LTTE</u> must stop its barbaric attempt to hold civilians hostage," Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee said in a statement.

India is currently in the middle of a month-long general election and the government is under pressure to respond to the concerns of around 60 million Tamils in Tamil Nadu - a key swing state in the south - over the fate of their fellow Tamils in Sri Lanka.

The Govt. committed to resettle all IDPs as early as possible

With the experience gained in resettling 187,000 IDPs in the Eastern Province in the post - conflict period, the government is confident of resettling nearly 200,000 IDPs now living in welfare centers in the Wanni as early as possible. The government is committed comprehensively to ensure the well - being of the civilians who have been evacuated, said Mr. Mahinda Samarasinghe Minister of Disaster Management and Human Rights addressing a media briefing at the Presidential Secretariat today(24).

The total figure of IDPs as of today is 193,960. Last four days, 105,274 civilians have escaped the no fire zone. 75% of them have been handed over to the Government Agents. 10,880 have been evacuated by the ICRC, Out of them, 4,736 are patients, and 6,144 bystanders. There are 20 sites operating in Vavuniya, 17 sites in Jaffna and 03 in Mannar, the Hon. Minister added.

The government has requested United Nations Agencies, UNCHR the UNICEF NGOs and INGOs to provide tents to provide shelter to IDPs Mr. Basil Rajapakse, Senior Presidential Advisor too has made arrangements with authorities in Dubai and Jordan to provide tents.

Steps are being taken to provide education for the children of IDPs. Their basic health needs, and drinking water are provided to ensure sanitation. The government has requested the FAO to add variety to the conventional food parcel, the Hon. Minister said.

In view of the exodus of IDPs, the critical need in this crucial hour is to provide emergency aid to IDPs.

The government will not only resettle the IDPs as in the post - conflict eastern province, but restore their livelihoods, too Relief is forth coming via several channels in response to government appeals. United Nations have requested member countries to donate funds UK, Netherlands, Germany etc have provided aid directly. In addition, NGOs contribute significantly to relief operations. Meanwhile, the Treasury has allocated massive funds for the well - being of the IDPs, the Hon. Ministers revealed.

Today, the Army is playing the role of benefactor to IDPs. They care for the sick and look after the kids. The Army is acting in the best traditions of a disciplined force. We appreciate their professionalism and respect them for the on - going humanitarian mission of caring for the displaced civilians.

The officers and the rank and file of the Security Forces are educated in Human Rights as enshrined in UN Conventions and Treaties which Sri Lanka has endorsed, when ever participating in international symposia, he requests his counterparts to explore the possibility of exposing the members of Security Forces to human rights awareness programs, the Hon. Minister said.

Dr. Palitha Kohona, Foreign Secretary said the Security Forces are strictly instructed to avoid civilian casualties Presently, Security Forces have stopped using heavy weapons but only use small arms. Some of them who are hurt among the IDPs may be combatants, Dr. Kohona revealed. The combatants who have surrendered will be rehabilitated and trained in vocations. All combatants are Sri Lankan citizens Dr. Kohona asserted.

### Tamil Tiger chief trapped

Ishwara Kottegoda, Coordinator, Ministry of Disaster Management elaborated on the health facilities provided to IDPs. Padaviya hospital will be developed to accommodate more patients. A health Centre to cater to 10,000 IDPs has been set up. There are 40 doctors attached to welfare centers and 50 more will join them shortly.

Load-Date: May 5, 2009



# Sri Lanka war toll near 6,500, UN report says

Guardian.com
April 24, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Unlimited All Rights Reserved



Length: 709 words

# **Body**

#### **ABSTRACT**

At least 14,000 wounded over last three months, according to United Nations figures

### **FULL TEXT**

The United Nations says nearly 6,500 civilians have been killed and 14,000 wounded in fighting in Sri Lanka over the last three months, according to a UN document circulated among diplomatic missions.

Two UN officials privately confirmed the figures to the Guardian today. At least 2,000 people are understood to have been killed in the last month but the death toll does not include all of those killed in this week's intense fighting. The UN has declined to publicly release its casualty figures.

The quarter-century civil war has flared in recent months as government forces pushed to crush the Tamil Tiger rebels in their remaining territory in the north.

According to the UN figures, 6,432 civilians have been killed in the fighting since 20 January and another 13,946 have been wounded.

The government denies allegations - supported by credible witness evidence from aid agencies as well as Tamil civilians - that hundreds of innocent people have been killed by the army in heavy shelling, saying soldiers are only lightly armed and are trying to rescue trapped people. In the propaganda war that has accompanied the crisis, the *Tamil Tigers* have also denied credible allegations that they were holding civilians hostage as human shields.

The UN spokesman Gordon Weiss said today that fighting was now expected to intensify.

"The government is saying publicly that there will be no more breaks in the fighting so that suggests that there will be another push in the next few days," he said.

The UN estimates that between 50,000 and 100,000 civilians remain trapped.

The UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, announced the dispatch of a humanitarian team at a news conference in Brussels yesterday. It believes there are still 50,000 trapped in the last war zone in the north - a sliver of coastal land from where more than 100,000 civilians have fled in the past week.

### Sri Lanka war toll near 6,500, UN report says

"So many lives have been sacrificed. There is no time to lose," Ban said. He added that the new team would monitor the situation and the UN would do "whatever we can to protect the civilian population who are caught in the war zone".

The mission will coincide with an influx to Colombo of ministers from concerned countries around the world. A British minister will arrive this weekend and senior ministers from India are on their way.

India's foreign minister, Pranab Mukherjee, called for an end to "the continued killing of innocent Tamil civilians in Sri Lanka".

"The Sri Lankan government has a responsibility to protect its own citizens and the <u>LTTE</u> must stop its barbaric attempt to hold civilians hostage," he said. "There is no military solution to this ongoing humanitarian crisis, and all concerned should recognise this fact."

The Sri Lankan defence secretary, Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, rejected a UN appeal to allow more aid agencies into the war zone.

"It's not a sensible thing at the moment," he told the BBC. "There is a civilian rescue operation going on in the area and allowing aid agencies inside the conflict zone is not matching with ground realities."

While the government has allowed aid agencies to help those fleeing the conflict, Sri Lanka's UN ambassador said only the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Catholic charity Caritas had been permitted to enter the war zone.

The ICRC said it evacuated 530 people on Thursday and 350 the day before, including families and sick and wounded people.

On Wednesday, the UN security council, which had been accused of inaction, called on the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> to lay down their arms and urged the Sri Lankan government to uphold international humanitarian laws and allow international aid agencies into areas of need.

The UN and other western nations, including the US and the UK, have pressed for an immediate halt to the fighting to allow time for civilians to leave the war zone safely.

The UN's humanitarian coordinator, Neil Buhne, said tens of thousands of people were living in camps in the northern town of Vavuniya.

"I saw infants with dysentery, malnourished children and <u>women</u>, untended wounds, and people dressed in the ragged clothing they've been wearing for months," the Associated Press quoted him as saying.

Load-Date: April 24, 2009



# Tigers admit defeat as the army stalks remaining rebels of 26-year conflict

The Times (London)
May 18, 2009 Monday
Edition 1

Copyright 2009 Times Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved



Section: NEWS; Pg. 6,7

Length: 1466 words

Byline: Robert Bosleigh; Jeremy Page

# **Body**

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> admitted defeat yesterday in their separatist struggle as hundreds of Sri Lankan government troops closed in on a diminishing patch of coconut grove where the last of the rebels - and possibly their elusive leader - were surrounded.

Selvarasa Pathmanathan, the Tigers' chief of international relations, announced that the rebels were laying down their weapons after 26 years of fighting for an ethnic Tamil homeland. "This battle has reached its bitter end," Mr Pathmanathan, who is in hiding, said in a statement published on the pro-rebel Tamilnet website.

The statement came one day after President Rajapaksa had declared victory over the Tigers, ending what has been Asia's longest-running civil war.

Mr Pathmanathan said: "We have decided to silence our guns. Our only regrets are for the lives lost and that we could not hold out for longer." He added that there were fewer than 2,000 Tigers in the conflict zone - reduced to a few hundred square metres on the northeastern coast - and that more than 3,000 people had died there in the previous 24 hours. The Government denied the claim.

He also said that Velupillai Prabhakaran, the <u>Tamil Tigers'</u> leader, was still on the front line and wanted the international community to help to broker a ceasefire. The Government appeared determined, however, to finish off the Tigers, despite repeated international appeals for a ceasefire and threats of war crimes investigations and other sanctions.

The army said that its troops had found the bodies of 70 Tigers, including two senior leaders. It said it had yet to find Prabhakaran, who has vowed not to be taken alive and is said to carry a vial of cyanide around his neck. There were rumours that he and his son, Charles Anthony, had blown themselves up.

In Sri Lanka there were muted celebrations over the apparent death of the Tigers as a fighting force, but fears that a military victory would not mark the end of the violence. Mano Ganesan, a prominent Tamil MP and human rights activist, said: "The war is won but the political conditions [underpinning] Tamil militancy remain undefeated."

### Tigers admit defeat as the army stalks remaining rebels of 26-year conflict

Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, a military spokesman, told The Times last night that the army had avoided a civilian bloodbath by rescuing 62,000 people held by the Tigers as human shields.

A few hundred troops were conducting a "mop-up operation" for the final handful of rebels in an area of just 800 square metres after surrounding them and cutting them off from the sea for the first time on Saturday, he added.

A satellite image of the area released by the military showed the mangled wreckage of several vehicles on fire, billowing thick black smoke and a row of tents. "They were actually defeated some time ago, but they have formally accepted defeat only now," said Brigadier Nanayakkara.

"They fought for an Eelam [separate state] that they could never win. It was only a waste of lives. They have caused massive death and destruction over the years. Finally they themselves have realised that it is all over."

Across the country there were sharply contrasting reactions to the bloody climax of a conflict that has cost at least 70,000 lives and crippled Sri Lanka's economy since 1983.

Among some Sinhalese in Colombo, the capital, where government workers had spent the morning decking the streets in bunting and national flags, the mood was jubilant.

"It is a great day for our President," said W. S. C. Bandula, 40, a driver. "The war is over. We can look forward to better lives, better security, a better economy."

Others were less sure. "Some of my friends believe the suffering is worth it to beat the terrorists. But I can't feel any happiness when there has been so much bloodshed," said Marisa, 27, a Sinhalese office worker.

Even in subdued Tamil areas in the north, government troops cajoled people into setting off firecrackers to celebrate.

Many Sri Lankans are anxious, however, that Tiger terrorist cells are waiting to unleash suicide bombing attacks - a tactic pioneered by the group - in the south of the country. Some also fear that the violence of the past few days has driven a new wedge between the Sinhalese majority and Tamil minority.

Raj, 24, a Tamil law student in the northern region of Jaffna, previously a Tiger stronghold, said: "Among young Tamils, views have become much more polarised and radicalised. We will see how this plays out in the next few months."

Mangala Samaraweera, a former Foreign Minister, now an opposition MP, said: "The carnage of the past few days has fostered calls among formerly moderate Tamils to calls for a separate state. I fear hundreds of Prabhakarans have been created."

Aid organisations said last night that the humanitarian situation was set to deteriorate, despite the army's boast that it had conducted the "world's largest hostage rescue". A UN spokesman said that the organisation was scrambling to supply aid for an estimated 300,000 civilians displaced in recent weeks.

Citing the poor physical condition of 130,000 people who escaped the conflict zone in mid-April, UN officials said that many of those who fled at the weekend would require urgent medical attention for battlefield injuries and malnutrition. The army says that only a few need hospital care.

The United Nations has not heard from the conflict zone since the end of last week, except for government statements. The International Committee of the Red Cross has a handful of workers still in the battle area but was unable to give any update on their condition.

Journalists are not being allowed close to the conflict to report firsthand. No medical supplies or food have reached the region for more than a week.

### Tigers admit defeat as the army stalks remaining rebels of 26-year conflict

Mahinda Samarasinghe, the Sri Lankan Human Rights Minister, dismissed international warnings of a humanitarian catastrophe. "There was no bloodbath as some people feared," he told reporters. "Everybody has come out safely and they are being looked after by the Government."

However, the UN and Britain have called for an investigation into allegations that Sri Lankan forces committed war crimes by shelling civilian targets, including hospitals.

Washington has said that it is blocking Sri Lanka's application for a \$1.9 billion emergency International Monetary Fund loan because of its conduct of the war.

President Rajapaksa has dismissed appeals and threats as Western hypocrisy. He was apparently emboldened by support from China, which has provided him with crucial arms, aid and diplomatic support since the war began again in 2006.

Beijing's support appears to be linked to a \$1 billion port that China is building on Sri Lanka's southern coast as a commercial venture and a potential refuelling and docking station for the Chinese Navy as it protects oil supplies from Saudi Arabia.

History of violence

1972 Velupillai Prabhakaran founds the Tamil New Tigers, later to become the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*), to fight for a separate Tamil state in reaction to alleged widespread anti-Tamil discrimination 1983 A Tamil Tiger attack in northern Sri Lanka kills 13 soldiers, triggering anti-Tamil riots in the capital, Colombo, in which hundreds die. This, in effect, marks the start of the civil war

1987 India brokers truce and sends troops to enforce it but the Tigers renege and begin three years of fighting in which 1,000 Indian soldiers are killed. In 1990 India withdraws, leaving the Tigers in control of Jaffna, in the north 1991 A *female* suicide bomber, believed to have been sent by the *Tamil Tigers*, kills Rajiv Gandhi, the former Indian Prime Minister, along with 14 others at a rally in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. A year later the *LTTE* is outlawed in India

1993 A suspected Tiger suicide bomber kills Ranasinghe Premadasa, the Sri Lankan President, at a rally. The following year Chandrika Kumaratunga comes to power and starts peace talks but heavy fighting continues over the next six years

2002 Norway negotiates a ceasefire and peace talks begin. The Government lifts its ban on the Tigers and the rebels drop demands for an independent state 2004 Colonel Karuna, eastern commander of the Tigers, defects to the Government

2005 State of emergency declared after Lakshman Kadirgamar, the Foreign Minister, is killed by a suspected Tiger assassin in August. In November Mahinda Rajapaksa, the Prime Minister, wins presidential elections on a vow to reject demands for Tamil autonomy. Most Tamils in Tiger-controlled areas do not vote, helping him to win. New peace talks fail in Geneva

2007-09 Government forces begin to drive the Tigers from eastern Sri Lanka. A year later they launch an offensive. In 2009 they seize the Tigers' de facto capital, Kilinochchi

Source: Times archive

Online

Photo gallery: the civil war in pictures timesonline.co.uk/asia

'I fear hundreds of new Prabhakarans have been created by the carnage'

# **Graphic**

The joy at the end of hostilities was plain to see in Colombo yesterday as photographs of President Rajapaksa were carried through the streets, although celebrations were muted because of fears that the violence was not over

Load-Date: May 18, 2009



# 'People are sick and dying. There is no food, no water'

The Independent (London)

April 16, 2009 Thursday

First Edition

Copyright 2009 Independent Print Ltd All Rights Reserved



Section: Pg. 2

Length: 1430 words

Byline: SinhaRaja Tammita-Delgoda

### **Body**

From Paranthan, the road to Vallipuram is rich and green. Great expanses of paddy stretch out before you, clumps of palmyrah dot the land and little streams of water trickle by. As we near the fighting, paddyfields give way to broken buildings and blasted vehicles. Twisted trees and uprooted trunks line the way. Here, in an area formerly controlled by the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> but now in the hands of the Sri Lankan army as they besiege the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (<u>LTTE</u>) in a last assault to end a 25-year-old civil war, everything is covered with a layer of brown dust. An occasional boat lies stranded on either side of the road, reminders of a last desperate attempt by the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> to hold back the tide. Blasting a reservoir in the path of the advancing Sri Lankan army, Tiger cadres counterattacked in boats, riding upon a wall of water. The water however, has receded and the Tigers have retreated.

As you enter the Kanishta High School, Vallipuram, the first thing you see is a brightly coloured board. Written at the top in vivid blue letters, is an inscription in Tamil.

"Our students (Our Lifeblood), Those who Sacrificed their Lives

For the Freedom of this Land"

Listed across the board are the names of the students of Kanishta High School who have died in the fighting. We are told where each student was from, what his *LTTE* code name was, when he died, where and in what operation.

The school is now occupied by the 58th Division of the Sri Lankan army. It is the first stop for those fleeing the conflict and they are brought here straight from the line.

A huge compound lies before us, lined on three sides by ramshackle buildings. In the middle is a vast empty space, a small open tent at its centre. Nearby stands an ambulance, a Land Rover without wheels and two red buses. There is a roar of engines. The buses start up and trundle away.

At 8.45 am they roll back in again. Out stumble a ragged line of people, mostly <u>women</u>, children and old people. Tense and fearful, they look drawn and dehydrated. Nearly everybody is clutching bags and sacks loaded with

### 'People are sick and dying. There is no food, no water'

goods. Their clothes are filthy, stained and spattered. Nearly all the children have sores and rashes. Strangely enough, barely a handful out of 128 who arrive are young people.

<u>Women</u> soldiers lead the civilians towards a long thatched arc. They distribute biscuits, fruit drinks, bags of dates and sachets of glucose.

Snatching at the biscuits, the hungry people tear at the wrapping, spooning the glucose into their mouths with their hands. A man in a yellow T-shirt begins an address in Tamil. There is hardly a murmur, even the children are quiet. Craning their necks to listen, they pause only to dip into their bags of food and guzzle water, slowly nodding their heads.

Once the address is over, we begin to hear their stories. Maria Kumari, a young woman of 29, had come all the way from Mannar, the north-western tip of the island and ended up at Pudumathalan. She has her three-year-old son Dinesh Kumar and baby girl Thireeshika with her. At first her eyes are closed and she just leans back against the chair. Gradually she begins to speak. As she talks, a smile lights up her fine features. For three days she had had no food, only gruel.

"I was starving, my children were starving. Every day people are falling sick and people are dying. No food, no medicines, no water."

She fled at night with her husband, wading across the Pudumathalan lagoon, the water chest high. Hearing their noises, the Tigers had fired. So they stayed in the water till dawn. She stops talking to pour glucose down her throat. "All I want now is to go home, to lead a normal life without fear."

By her side, an aged woman, gazes adoringly at a picture that she has been clutching from the moment she got off the bus. It is a framed picture of the Baby Jesus. "It has saved me," she says. Her name is Maria Poomani.

"They [the Tigers] wouldn't let us come," she said. "They shot at us." As she remembers she keeps touching the Baby Jesus with her fingers. "The rest turned back but we threw ourselves onto the sand and crawled on our bellies."

An old man sat staring into space, a shawl over his head. Another, heavier and burlier, nods in agreement.

In adjoining partitions the army screening process has begun. A man behind a desk asks questions. Each individual and every family is registered and photographed. When the screening is over, everybody moves into the tent in the middle.

Soldiers drag in cauldrons of dhal, rice and soya and there is a rush towards the food. The children are first in line, holding out their plastic plates to the <u>women</u> soldiers. Food eaten, they board the bus again for the next stage of their odyssey.

They will travel down the A-9 road to Omanthai, two-and-a-half hours away. Omanthai is the last checkpoint controlled by the army, from here the people are handed over to the Sri Lankan government.

"They always come at first light," Private Saman Kumari, one of three women soldiers, says of the fleeing civilians.

"We give them water and search them and check their bags. They are frightened and so are we."

"There was one woman, she was about thirty. We hadn't searched her body. She told us that she had lost her gold jewellry. She started crying and everyone gathered around to help. I left the other <u>women</u> soldiers with her and went to eat. Then we heard the sound. All we could see was smoke. People were screaming and there were pieces of flesh everywhere. She had strapped the bomb to her stomach."

From Vallipuram the buses speed through the rolling savannah of Sri Lanka's Vanni region. Once the heartland of Tamil Eelam, now it is an empty landscape dotted with army posts. At 3.30 in the afternoon we arrive at Omanthai,

### 'People are sick and dying. There is no food, no water'

the last checkpoint in the army controlled zone. Here all the bags are searched again and their contents itemised. They are questioned, their identities checked and they are registered and issued with cards.

Everyone is seated on the ground. As the shadows begin to lengthen, a young man in a T-shirt and a baseball cap begins to speak. His tone is reassuring.

"We know that the Voice of Tigers Radio have told you that your men will be killed and your <u>women</u> raped. No one will be taken away. None of you will be sent to prison. Our war is with your leaders, not you. You have been taken by force and kept by force. If you have any connections with the <u>LTTE</u> come forward and tell us now.

"Nothing will happen to you. But tell us now before somebody else does. When you go to the camps, there will be people who know you. Tell us now, so that we can trust you. If you don't we will suspect you."

When he finishes speaking, almost everybody gets up and moves to another spot. A small knot seats themselves in another group: five men and two girls. They sit on their own with strained, intense expressions. All are young and in good physical shape, better dressed than the others.

One by one, they are questioned under the trees. As they answer they begin to relax; the tautness gradually leaving their faces. We are not allowed to ask the names or take \_pictures of the people in this group. One girl is wearing brightly gilded earrings, a long brown dress and her hair is tied up. She is 24 years old, a member of the Sodhiya regiment, one of the crack <u>female</u> fighting brigades. Why did she join, we ask her? "I joined because I left school early and stayed at home. My mother was angry with me and used to beat me. I joined to make her angry."

She had left her husband behind. As she spoke, tears welled in her eyes. "He was seized by the *LTTE*. I am very worried for him." Her leaders told her that she must kill all Sinhalese, she said.

A thin, wiry young man with buffed hair and shaved sideburns sat nearby. He told us that he was a member of the computer wing and had signed up straight after leaving school "for the salary". The group are photographed against a tree. Eventually they pick up their bags and walk towards their families.

In the sheds on the other side queues are forming. Every item is checked and rechecked. By 5.45 as the sun begins to set, the last bus starts up. It will be the fourth and final stage of the journey, down the A-9 to Vavuniya. The final destination is the refugee camps run by the government.

As the engines rumble, an old woman is doing her best to clamber on to the running board. Hauling herself up, she turns to berate a brawny soldier struggling with her numerous bags. Everybody grins and looks away.

SinhaRaja Tammita Delgoda is a Sri Lankan writer and historian who travelled with government forces to the conflict zone

Load-Date: April 15, 2009



# **UPI NewsTrack TopNews**

UPI

May 18, 2009 Monday 8:44 AM EST

Copyright 2009 U.P.I. All Rights Reserved



Length: 1181 words

# **Body**

Obama, Netanyahu to discuss Iran, peace

WASHINGTON, May 18 (UPI) -- U.S. President Barack Obama begins a series of crucial talks with Mideast leaders, starting with Israel's conservative prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu.

Netanyahu and Obama were to meet Monday to discuss a variety of matters, headed by Iran and its nuclear aspirations and Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, The Jerusalem Post reported.

"The way things are planned, the focus of Netanyahu's words will be the Iranian nuclear issue," Uzi Arad, Netanyahu's national security adviser, told the Post. "This is clear not only because this is an existential issue as far as the security of Israel is concerned, but because Iran is progressing all the time toward nuclear military capability."

The two world leaders also were expected to discuss the idea of a two-state peace solution that includes recognition of a Palestinian state, the Los Angeles Times reported. Netanyahu has stop short of accepting the idea of a Palestinian state, the goal of Obama, his predecessors and other world leaders.

Arad said "many hurdles" must be overcome to achieve Palestinians and Israelis living side by side peacefully.

Netanyahu is scheduled to meet with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, and congressional leaders and Jewish lawmakers during his visit.

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt is scheduled to visit Washington May 26 and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas will be in Washington May 28.

Quake hits LA area; minor damage reported

LOS ANGELES, May 18 (UPI) -- Only minor property damage was reported following a 4.7-magnitude earthquake that rocked a stretch of Southern California, officials said.

#### **UPI NewsTrack TopNews**

The earthquake struck Sunday and was centered near Lennox, a community east of the Los Angeles International Airport, the Los Angeles Times reported Monday.

The earthquake, originating 8.4 miles below the earth's surface, was "a bit deep," U.S. Geological Survey seismologist Susan Hough told the Times.

"That tends to make it less sharp -- less of a jerky, abrupt motion," Hough said.

Residents in the affected area reported broken windows, broken dishes and a damaged light pole, the Times said.

"It was pretty strong but over in about 10 seconds," said Lt. Kent Wegener of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Lennox station. "There are no (immediate) reports of damage. At this point, we are checking all the critical facilities and getting our ducks in a row."

Los Angeles city and county fire officials said they did not receive reports of significant damage in residential or industrial areas.

Automatic sensors initially logged the quake as a 5-magnitude temblor, but seismologists downgraded it to 4.7. An aftershock, registering 3.1, followed the quake Sunday and was centered in the Lennox area.

Military says Tamil leader, son killed

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, May 18 (UPI) -- The leader of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> rebels has died in battle along with his son and several key rebel leaders, the Sri Lankan military said Monday.

The announcement on state television came shortly after the military said it surrounded rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran in the jungle in the northeast part of the country, the BBC reported.

Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka, leader of the Sri Lankan army, said the military defeated the rebels and "liberated the entire country."

"Today we finished the work handed to us by the president to liberate the country from the <u>LTTE</u> (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam)," Fonseka said in the broadcast.

The government information department sent news of Prabhakaran's death to cell phones across the country, the British broadcaster reported.

The Sri Lankan broadcast quoted military officials as saying Prabhakaran and two of his commanders were killed in an ambush in the Mullivaikal district as they tried to escape the war zone in an ambulance. At least three senior rebel leaders, including Prabhakaran's oldest son, Charles Anthony, were killed, the military said.

Military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara also confirmed Prabhakaran's death, saying 250 <u>Tamil Tigers</u> were killed in an overnight battle.

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> have waged a bloody 25-year insurgency for an independent Tamil state that has left more than 70,000 dead in the south Asian country. Prabhakaran founded the group, declared a terrorist organization in 32 countries, which was behind the assassination of two world leaders and pioneered the use of <u>women</u> in suicide attacks, FBI information indicates.

Kurdish-Arab tensions rise in Iraq's north

MOSUL, Iraq, May 18 (UPI) -- Iraqi Kurds say they might resort to military force to oppose the elected Sunni Arab governor of Nineveh province as ethnic tensions build.

#### **UPI NewsTrack TopNews**

The province, which includes the restive city of Mosul, had a power shift in this year's regional elections when Atheel al-Nujaifi, a Sunni Arab, was elected governor. This month he was blocked by Kurdish forces from entering the Kurdish-controlled town of Bashiqa, The New York Times reported.

The episode illustrates how in recent day Kurds have blocked Arabs from carrying out their governmental duties, pressuring their districts to boycott Nujaifi and threatening military action if they aren't given more positions in his provincial government, the newspaper said.

Such a clash would confirm the fears of the United States, which the Times says has long feared an armed ethnic fight in Iraq's north. The tension is also reportedly fueling insurgent activity in Nineveh, with Sunni militants such as al-Qaida in Mesopotamia taking advantage of a chance to back an Arab cause.

A car bomb detonated Sunday near the governor's residence in Mosul, killing a police officer. Officials told the newspaper it was unclear who was behind the bombing.

Sudanese rebel leader goes to The Hague

THE HAGUE, Netherlands, May 18 (UPI) -- A Sudanese rebel accused of killing peacekeepers in Darfur said he was going before an international court because he believed in justice, his spokesman said.

Bahr Idriss Abu Garda was to appear Monday before the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands, to answer charges for his role in the September 2007 attack on an African Union peacekeeping base where 12 AU peacekeepers died and eight were wounded, CNN said.

Garda is charged with murder, directing attacks on peacekeepers and pillaging.

"We know how innocent he is. After the court, he will be freed. He will return to Darfur to continue his struggle," Tadjadine Bechirniam, Garda's communications director, said.

Garda believes in the court's independence and his voluntary appearance demonstrates his commitment to justice, Bechirniam said.

"There should be no immunity for anyone. We show our commitment to justice, to support justice for people in Darfur and Sudan," Bechirniam said.

Three suspects, including Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, were summoned, but were at large CNN said.

"The voluntary appearance of Abu Garda might serve to encourage other suspects currently at large to come before the court to be heard with all guarantees of a fair trial," said Silvana Arbia, the international court registrar.

Load-Date: May 19, 2009



# 20,000 Tamils killed in final days

Weekend Australian

May 30, 2009 Saturday

3 - All-round Metro Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Pg. 13

Length: 817 words

Byline: Michael Evans, Catherine Philp

### **Body**

#### Colombo

MORE than 20,000 Tamil civilians were killed in the final throes of the Sri Lankan civil war, most as a result of government shelling, an investigation by The Times has revealed.

The number of casualties is three times the official figure.

The Sri Lankan authorities have insisted their forces stopped using heavy weapons on April 27 and observed the no-fire zone where 100,000 Tamil men, <u>women</u> and children were trying to find shelter.

They have blamed all civilian casualties on Tamil Tiger rebels concealed among the civilians.

Aerial photographs, official documents, witness accounts and expert testimony tell a different story.

With the world's media and aid organisations kept well away from the fighting, the army launched a barrage that began at the end of April and lasted about three weeks. The offensive ended Sri Lanka's 26-year civil war with the *Tamil Tigers*, but innocent civilians paid the price.

Confidential UN documents acquired by The Times record nearly 7000 civilian deaths in the no-fire zone up to the end of last month.

UN sources said the toll then surged, with an average of 1000 civilians killed each day until May 19, the day after Tigers leader Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed.

That figure concurs with the estimate of Father Amalraj, a Roman Catholic priest who fled the no-fire zone on May 16 and is now interned with 200,000 survivors in Manik Farm refugee camp. It would take the final toll above 20,000.

Intended as a haven for civilians, the no-fire zone became a killing field instead for the thousands trapped between the rebels and the army.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Higher," a UN source said. "Keep going."

### 20,000 Tamils killed in final days

Some of the victims could be seen in photographs showing the destruction of the flimsy refugee camp. Sand mounds showed makeshift burial grounds.

Other pictures show a more orderly military cemetery, believed to be for hundreds of rebel fighters. One photograph shows rebel gun emplacements next to the refugee camp.

Independent defence experts who analysed dozens of aerial photographs taken by The Times said the arrangement of the army and rebel firing positions and the narrowness of the no-fire zone made it unlikely that Tiger mortar fire or artillery caused a significant number of deaths.

"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," said Charles Heyman, editor of the magazine Armed Forces of Britain.

One humanitarian worker said makeshift hospitals had been repeated targets for the Government, which claimed that rebels were hiding in them. In some cases, he said, the medical posts were bombed within hours of doctors telephoning their co-ordinates to the International Committee of the Red Cross so that the military could avoid bombing them.

UN sources accused the Government of waging "a war without witnesses".

"They didn't want anyone left to say what had happened," one said.

Three Sri Lankan doctors who reported on civilian casualties within the no-fire zone are being held on charges of spreading false information.

UN sources said their workers were trying to discover the fates of thousands more who were missing. The task is complicated by the internment of Tamil civilians in military-run camps that are beyond the reach of humanitarian organisations.

No independent observers have been given access to the war zone. The Times was able to photograph the no-fire zone while travelling with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

On Wednesday, Sri Lanka was cleared of any wrongdoing by the UN Human Rights Council after winning the backing of countries including China, Egypt, India and Cuba.

A spokesman for the Sri Lankan High Commission in London said: "We reject all these allegations. Civilians have not been killed by government shelling at all.

``If civilians have been killed, then that is because of the actions of the <u>LTTE</u> (rebels) who were shooting and killing people when they tried to escape."

With the backing of China, there appears little prospect that the Government will be investigated for alleged war crimes. All of the Tiger leadership have been killed, leaving only middle-ranking cadres to face justice.

Common Article Three of the Geneva Convention prohibits the use of indiscriminate fire against civilian areas, even if a military force is using them as a shield, as the Tigers can be seen to have been doing in the photographs.

The Government's restriction of humanitarian law may constitute a war crime.

Sri Lanka's 2006 Geneva Conventions Act purports to enshrine the conventions in its law but, according to the Rule of Law in Armed Conflict Project at the Geneva Academy of Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, it specifically excluded internal conflicts.

Legal experts said, however, that the loophole, designed to exclude the war with the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, did not exclude Sri Lankan commanders from international prosecution.

Load-Date: May 30, 2009



Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

May 30, 2009 Saturday

First Edition

Copyright 2009 John Fairfax Publications Pty Ltd All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; News Review; Pg. 4

Length: 2001 words

Byline: Hamish McDonald

# **Body**

The chief Tamil Tiger deserves much of the blame for the downfall of his people's cause, writes Hamish McDonald.

It was a nervous crossing of no-man's land. The hire car zig-zagged around road blocks, past nervous Sri Lankan soldiers peering from an earthen and corrugated iron bunker into deserted farmland.

A kilometre later, as we slowed for a crater in the road, four teenage boys in camouflage and rubber thongs emerged from nowhere, assault rifles pointed at us. Stern-faced <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, they checked our identities, and relaxed. "America?" one asks. "Bruce Lee?"

For much of the past two decades, this flat, hot land north of Vavuniya was ruled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, while prowling government jets ruled the air. The damaged road led through a neglected wildlife park, littered with droppings of wild elephants, until we reached the Jaffna lagoon at midnight and joined a shuttle of boats taking supplies into the Tiger-held city.

In the early 1990s, Jaffna was in ruins from government bombardment; the blockaded largely Tamil population lived on meagre food and medical supplies, the electricity was dead, petrol sold for \$US30 a litre. Yet the underpinnings of a nationalist movement that came close to building its own state were apparent.

There was the polished argument of the Tigers' London-educated spokesman, Anton Balasingham, and his Australian wife, Adele, who came to tell us how reasonable and conciliatory was their side, how intransigent the Colombo government. This was the brainy side of the Tigers, who made the world's first cyber attack in 1997, and built an effective secret financing network through the million-strong Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora.

The teenage fighters with their AK-47s were another side: rural children recruited with dreams of guns and glory, fed on action videos. Across in the Indian city of Chennai, S.C.Chandrahasan, a lawyer helping Jaffna refugees, told me: "They are beyond parental control, insensitive to death and violence. They know nothing about the country, but they're experts in every kind of firearm."

Among them were girls and young <u>women</u>, too eager to escape the traditional menial role of Tamil <u>females</u>. Among them were victims of rape by soldiers, orphans and the bereaved, and those anxious to spare their families the burden of dowry: a rich source for recruits for the Black Tigers, killing themselves and others with belt-bombs pioneered by the Tigers.

Go forward 16 years. The Parramatta Town Hall overflows with Sydney's prosperous Tamils. Watched by widely acknowledged ASIO officers, hundreds queue to put marigolds of mourning around a picture of the Tiger political chief S.P Tamelsilvan, just killed in an air raid.

Years of conflict - in which the Tigers ruthlessly eliminated rivals and government forces frequently abused civilians - convinced expatriate Tamils there was no defence for their people back home. As the Sri Lankan army cordon tightened on the last strip of the Tiger Eelam this month, the diaspora's concern and support for Tigers and entrapped civilians became more desperate.

Now, with confirmation the movement's charismatic founding leader Velupillai Prabhakaran indeed died in a hail of army gunfire 12 days ago, Tamils face a sad reappraisal of their support for him. "The realisation of the complete debacle and defeat is slowly sinking in," says Ana Pararajasingham, a peace activist now in Sydney.

Even after Prabhakaran's corpse had been shown on television and identified by former senior colleagues now cooperating with the Sri Lankan Government, Tamil settlers in Australia refused for days to accept Colombo's word. Victor Rajakulendran, a spokesman for Australian Tamils, insisted the images had been Photoshopped. "The only question is: when the man is going to resurface," he told me.

Initially, reports of Prabhakaran's death were fragmentary, and there were previous false reports. A reconstruction of his frantic last days has come now from a well-informed Sri Lankan analyst, D.B.S Jeyaraj, writing in Colombo's Daily Mirror.

As the army's grip on the remaining Tiger territory near Mullaitivu strengthened, Prabhakaran authorised the elusive foreign-based controller of his external finances and arms procurement, Selvarasa Pathmanathan, known as KP, to put out feelers for surrender to a third party. KP put in calls to diplomats, United Nations officials and trusted journalists.

The plan was for the Tigers to surrender to the UN with Western countries supervising, possibly with foreign troops. The top Tiger leadership - no more than 50, with their families - would be given safe passage to a secret destination (Tigers recently sounded out former liberation movements now in government, including East Timor). Middle-level Tiger cadres would be tried in Sri Lanka, given light sentences and rehabilitated. Rank-and-file members and new conscripts would be given amnesties.

But surrender proved too much for Prabhakaran. "Do you also not have faith that the struggle will succeed," he reportedly asked KP on an intercepted satellite phone call. In any case, the Sri Lankan President, Mahinda Rajapaksa, and the army chief, Sarath Fonseka, rejected surrender. The Tigers would have to give themselves up individually.

Prabhakaran and his remaining aides then hatched a desperate three-pronged scheme to break the army cordon. One group under political commissar Nadesan and peace secretariat director Pulidevan called Tamil politicians in Colombo and other intermediaries, signalling their wish for surrender talks. Seven captured Sri Lankan soldiers and sailors were sent out with the same message.

A second group under Prabhakaran's eldest son, Charles Anthony, would fight to the last. In a third manoeuvre, Prabhakaran, his wife, daughter, youngest son and guards would try to break through army lines to the west into the jungles of the Vanni region, to fight again.

It all went badly wrong. Pulidevan, Nadesan and Nadesan's wife, Vijitha, advanced towards the army's 58th Division lines waving white flags. All three were shot dead, along with 35 other Tigers. Government officials claim they were shot from behind by their own side; the bodies were cremated before this could be tested.

The group which stayed behind died under a barrage of fire. Early on May 18, the breakout group split into three parties, and attacked army lines across the Nandhikkadal lagoon parallel to the coast. Prabhakaran, his family and 47 other Tigers got through the front lines, and messaged the hold-out force: "We've broken through and gone."

This was relayed to KP, thought to be somewhere in Europe. Hearing nothing else, he subsequently kept insisting the leader was still alive.

What followed is not clear. About 3 am on Tuesday, May 19, Sri Lankan soldiers found Prabhakaran's body on the banks of the lagoon, with the top of his head blown off by a close-range shot. The bodies of his family were found about 600 metres away, according to some reports. This week, KP confirmed the death of "our incomparable leader".

Prabhakaran's last days recall Adolf Hitler's in Berlin - the fall of a trapped dictator, impervious to sound advice to the last.

Many lessons are being drawn from Tiger defeat. To some, it shows regular armies can beat insurgencies. But it is a false lesson. Prabhakaran abandoned guerilla struggle years ago, and tried to take on the government by holding territory with conventional military tactics. He might have succeeded had his foe been the ill-trained and inexperienced army of 20 years back. This time, he faced 180,000 Sri Lankan soldiers generously equipped, some foreign trained, and backed by a government willing to go to bankruptcy if necessary. Prabhakaran counted on keeping open Tiger sea lines of supply. While these were cut with help from Indian and US navies, purse strings were tightened by police in Western countries cracking down on Tiger fund-raising in the diaspora.

In the last two years of intensifying conflict, Prabhakaran could have switched strategy and gone back to the jungles. He refused, banking on Rajapaksa being forced into a ceasefire by rising concern in the West and in India's Tamil Nadu state about civilian casualties. There was international dismay at the huge civilian toll, but no one wanted to save the Tigers.

"The terrible moral of what happened to the <u>LTTE</u> is that any organisation, whether would-be liberation organisation or government, needs to follow the norms and principles of international human rights if it is to gain both international sympathy and tangible support," says Jehan Perera, of Sri Lanka's non-government National Peace Council. "Due to its abominable human rights track record, which included political assassination [including Rajiv Gandhi], child recruitment and finally the use of human shields, the <u>LTTE</u> failed to attract any international support when it finally counted."

Prabhakaran might have used the December 2004 tsunami to forge an autonomy agreement for the then large swathe of territory he controlled in Sri Lanka's north and east, as happened in Indonesia's Aceh province. Instead, he pushed a fragile Norwegian-brokered truce towards collapse, helped Rajapaksa gain office by ordering Tamils not to vote in elections, and sent suicide bombers against the new president and General Fonseka.

The over-reach perhaps derives from megalomania fed by Prabhakaran's personality cult inside the Tigers' Eelam (homeland). Relentless assassinations against leaders of alternative Tamil organisations, and purges of suspected Tiger dissidents - like his former deputy Mahathaya, tortured and executed in 1994 - left him without the criticism and frank advice a more collegiate leadership would have provided.

"Prabhakaran, who commenced his militant career with a single pistol, had over the years built up the <u>LTTE</u> into a powerful movement running a shadow state and acquired the status of being Tamil national leader," Debaraj summed him up. "Yet his inability or unwillingness to be flexible had resulted in Prabhakaran losing his movement, family and above all his life in a pathetic manner."

The Government is vague about applying long-stalled devolution and bilingual policies to reconcile reasonable Tamil grievances. Fonseka told a Canadian magazine recently that Sri Lanka belonged to the majority Sinhalese, and well-treated minorities should not "demand undue things".

Indeed, observers such as J.C. Weliamuna, a Colombo human rights lawyer visiting Australia, worry about signs the Government is planning a demographic re-engineering of the north by moving Sinhalese settlers into lands whose Tamil people were forced to flee during conflict.

Fonseka is talking of expanding the army to 300,000 to station big garrisons across the north and east.

Years of emergency have fostered a political culture of murder, intimidation and extortion, often involving police, and against Sinhalese critics of the government, as well as Tamils. A dozen journalists have been killed. A grenade was thrown at Weliamuna's house last September, without injury to his family. "There were no satisfactory inquiries," he said. "One can reasonably assume there is no will to solve these crimes."

Heading the Sri Lanka branch of the anti-corruption watchdog Transparency International, Weliamuna sees the country's poor corruption record - ranking 97th of 180 nations for honesty - under bigger threat from the peace. "Postwar reconstruction has been proved to be corrupt globally," he says. "Sri Lanka is not an exception. There are no safeguards, a lot of opportunities, a lot of vultures stick together."

In Colombo, visitors report President Rajapaksa as the focus of a cult likening him to a god-king, and he is expected to capitalise soon on victory by calling early elections. "They have already identified the second common enemy after the <u>LTTE</u>: the West," says Weliamuna. "Some people say this Government is a mirror image of the <u>LTTE</u>. They did exactly what they [the <u>LTTE</u>] did, but they were successful."

# **Graphic**

PHOTO: Deadly cult of personality . . . the body of Velupillai Prabhakaran, the charismatic founding head of the *Tamil Tigers*, who died in a hail of army gunfire. Photo: Reuters

Load-Date: May 29, 2009



# Cause remains for Tiger in our midst

Weekend Australian
May 23, 2009 Saturday
2 - All-round First Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: LOCAL; Pg. 1

Length: 728 words

Byline: Drew Warne-Smith

# **Body**

THE guns have been silenced and peace has returned to her homeland, but the celebrations have been muted this week for Sri Lankan expatriate Niromi de Soyza.

The Sydney mother of two was once a member of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, the feared guerilla insurgency that has finally been crushed after a bloody 37-year campaign to create an independent Tamil state.

Trained in combat and armed with a rifle and cyanide capsules, de Soyza took the fight to Sri Lanka's military for a year in the jungles of Vanni and the Jaffna Peninsula.

It was, she maintains, a ``quest for equality"; the defence of the Tamil minority against an oppressive Sinhalese government that had discriminated against them for too long.

But while she still believes in the cause, de Soyza now disavows the violence and suicide bombings that resulted in 70,000 deaths since the civil war began.

"I am relieved the fighting is over. Violence resolves nothing, I know that now. But nothing has changed for the Tamils," de Soyza, 39, told The Weekend Australian yesterday.

"We don't have independence. Look at the way the Tamils are treated in the (refugee) camps. The cause is not over."

Having migrated to Australia in 1990, she says she was horrified to see the violence reach these shores last Sunday when Tamil and Sinhalese supporters clashed in Sydney's west, a conflict that culminated with two Sinhalese students being stabbed and burnt with acid. "It's so sad. It's so futile. It solves nothing -- and it's not the Australian way," said de Soyza, who recounts her year with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in today's Inquirer.

Now living in an affluent Sydney suburb with her husband and their two daughters, such attacks have also made her fear for her own safety.

The former guerilla has assumed the nom de plume Niromi de Soyza for the purposes of

Continued -- Page 2

From Page 1

### Cause remains for Tiger in our midst

publication. The choice is no accident: she is honouring Sri Lankan journalist and newsreader Richard de Soyza who was murdered in 1990, allegedly by a government death squad.

With the UN confirming the <u>LTTE</u> has forcibly recruited child-soldiers in recent times, de Soyza is insistent such tactics weren't used when she signed up.

Born into an educated, middle-class family in the Sinhalese city of Kandy, she is of mixed Sinhalese-Tamil heritage and from the age of nine she lived in the northern Tamil town of Jaffna. By 1987, with the civil war raging, she says she was swept up in the ideals of the struggle.

"I was 17, idealistic, and I thought if I was going to be killed anyway (in the civil war) I may as well fight," she explained. She told her mother in a note she was running away to join the Tigers.

**LTTE** leaders were so sceptical about recruiting a petite, pretty and intelligent girl that they tried to convince her not to join.

She was accommodated in an uncomfortable fisherman's hut, away from the regular barracks, to dissuade her. De Soyza's mother was even allowed to visit to beg her to return. Neither tactic worked.

After being sent to the Tigers' <u>female</u> political wing, The Freedom Birds, she was selected in the first intake of <u>female</u> cadres to receive military training.

In combat operations she would witness many of her friends being killed; their blood even soaked her fatigues.

With such sacrifices bringing sovereignty no closer, de Soyza decided to walk away after one year. She says she was let go without acrimony. ``I think I'd dehumanised the enemy. Unfortunately it was only when I saw my own friends being killed that I realised how wrong I'd been."

Having been trained to shoot only in the "general direction" of the enemy, not at individuals, she does not know whether her bullets ever claimed a life.

She came on a student visa in 1990, aged 20, to Sydney, where several relatives already lived. Her parents and sister have since joined her.

De Soyza says she never associated with the local Tamil community, and her husband is not Sri Lankan. She has only returned to her homeland once, in 1996, using her married name.

"The Tamil cause is associated with the Tigers, and it shouldn't be. Unfortunately those who support the Tigers have the loudest voice. So I have kept my distance," she said.

But her dream for an independent Tamil state remains. She wants her two daughters ``to be strong and stay true to their beliefs, but also to know violence and destruction doesn't work."

**Load-Date:** May 22, 2009



# Doctor: 64 die in attack on Sri Lanka hospital

The Salt Lake Tribune May 2, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 The Salt Lake Tribune All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; National; World

Length: 361 words

Byline: By Bharatha Mallawarachi The Associated Press

# **Body**

Colombo, Sri Lanka » Sri Lankan forces shelled a makeshift hospital in the war zone Saturday, killing 64 civilians despite a pledge to stop using heavy weapons in its battle with the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, a rebel-linked Web site said.

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

Sri Lanka has come under increasing international pressure to halt its offensive against the rebels to safeguard the estimated 50,000 ethnic Tamil civilians trapped by the fighting.

The government, which has cornered the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> in a 3-mile-long coastal strip, has refused, but it did promise to stop launching artillery and airstrikes into the area.

The TamilNet Web site said the government hit the makeshift hospital at Mullivaaykkaal twice on Saturday morning.

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

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

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

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

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

Bogollagama spoke after meeting with Japanese peace envoy Yasushi Akashi, the latest high-profile diplomat to arrive in Sri Lanka in the past week.

Akashi met with President Mahinda Rajapaksa during his visit and also traveled to displacement camps where more than 100.000 civilians who fled the war zone in recent weeks have been held.

**Tamil Tigers** fighting since '83

Doctor: 64 die in attack on Sri Lanka hospital

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, listed as a terrorist group by many Western nations, have been fighting since 1983 for an ethnic Tamil state in the north and east after decades of marginalization by governments dominated by the Sinhalese majority.

# **Graphic**

Japanese special envoy Yasushi Akashi, left, speaks as Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama looks on during a media briefing in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Saturday, May 2, 2009. (AP Photo/Eranga Jayawardena)

In this handout photograph made available by Tamil Net, a pro-Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam website, dead bodies are seen lying inside a ward in a make-shift hospital after it was shelled in Mullivaaykkaal, Sri Lanka, Saturday, May 2, 2009. (AP Photo/Tamil Net website, HO)

Load-Date: May 7, 2009



## Sri Lankan military fights to surround rebels

Associated Press International
May 15, 2009 Friday 3:58 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 812 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

#### **Body**

Sri Lankan forces battled Friday to take complete control of the country's coastline and surround the reeling <u>Tamil</u> <u>Tigers</u> in a final push to destroy the rebel group and end the country's civil war, the military said.

As the fighting raged, hundreds of desperate war refugees escaped the conflict zone and a top U.N. official headed here on an urgent mission to safeguard the tens of thousands of civilians still trapped amid the heavy shelling.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa vowed to quickly free all of the civilians still in the war zone with the rebels, formally known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

"The freedom of the Tamil civilians held hostage by the <u>LTTE</u> is near at hand and the rescue of all civilians in the small patch of land held by the <u>LTTE</u> will be done in 48 hours," Rajapaksa told migrant workers in Jordan on Thursday.

The government has forced the rebels out of the de facto state they once controlled in the north and cornered them in a 1.5-square mile (four-square kilometer) strip of northeastern coastline.

On Friday, two army units were fighting their way down the coast from the north and up from the south in an effort to link up, severing the rebels' last remaining sea outlet and completely encircling them, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

The two units were only 1.1 miles (1.8 kilometers) apart, he said.

Also Friday, the navy stopped a suspicious boat off the northeastern coast and arrested the wife, son and daughter of the rebels' sea wing leader, who were among 11 people on board, Nanayakkara said.

At least 1,800 more civilians managed to flee rebel-held territory Friday, joining more than 3,700 who waded across a lagoon to escape the day before, Nanayakkara said. The rebels fired on those leaving Thursday, killing four and wounding 14 others, he said.

Families packed onto inner tubes floated across the water, past rows of coiled razor wire, according to photos released by the army.

Mothers climbed out of the water clutching children, and elderly <u>women</u> carried their belongings in handbags. In one photo, dozens of people climbed out of a small speed boat.

#### Sri Lankan military fights to surround rebels

About 200,000 civilians have escaped the war zone in recent months and are being held in overwhelmed displacement camps.

The rebels have denied accusations they were holding the civilians as human shields and were shooting at those trying to flee. Reports of the fighting are difficult to verify because the government has barred most journalists and aid workers from the conflict zone.

International concern has grown for tens of thousands of civilians under threat from the heavy artillery bombardments shaking the war zone, and the Red Cross warned of "an unimaginable humanitarian catastrophe" for the hundreds of wounded trapped without treatment.

Hoping to end the bloodshed, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon sent his chief of staff, Vijay Nambiar, to Sri Lanka for a second time to try to bring the conflict to a peaceful conclusion.

Nambiar is expected to meet with top government officials after he arrives Saturday and push for ways "to secure the safety of the 50,000 to 100,000 civilians remaining inside the combat zone," U.N. spokesman Gordon Weiss said.

Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said in light of the ongoing war, the United States had raised questions about Sri Lanka's application for a \$1.9 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund that the government desperately needs.

"We think that it is not an appropriate time to consider that until there is a resolution," she said in Washington.

The U.N. says 7,000 civilians were killed and 16,700 wounded in the fighting from Jan. 20 until May 7, according to a U.N. document given to The Associated Press by a senior diplomat. Since then, doctors in the war zone say more than 1,000 civilians were killed in a week of heavy shelling that rights groups and foreign governments have blamed on Sri Lankan forces. Sri Lanka denies firing heavy weapons into the war zone.

Health workers in the conflict zone remained in their bunkers for a second day Friday because of heavy shelling and gunfire in the area, leaving hundreds of wounded patients untreated in the area's only medical facility, according to a health official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

A Red Cross ferry attempting to deliver desperately needed food aid and evacuate the wounded had to turn back for a third day Thursday because of the violence.

The Red Cross said the trapped civilians inside the war zone were taking cover in bunkers they had dug in the ground and were finding it even more difficult to get scarce drinking water and food.

"We need security and unimpeded access now in order to save hundreds of lives," Pierre Krahenbuhl, the International Committee of the Red Cross' director of operations, said in a statement from Geneva.

Load-Date: May 16, 2009



## Indian military doctors save lives in Sri Lanka

Hindustan Times
April 19, 2009 Sunday

Copyright 2009 HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 552 words

Dateline: New Delhi

#### **Body**

New Delhi, April. 19 -- As Sri Lankan troops battle the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> in their very last bastion, a small group of Indian doctors are quietly treating scores of maimed and wounded Tamil civilians pouring out of the war zone.

The medical personnel, drawn from the military, have already treated more than 1,600 men, <u>women</u> and children since setting up a full-fledged field hospital in Trincomalee in the island's east about a month ago.

The doctors and the medical staff are expected to stay on in the coastal strip of Pulmoddai for another month, coinciding with a time when the fighting has led to large-scale civilian suffering and has the international community worried.

"The Indian doctors have really done good work," Sri Lankan Health Minister Nimal Sripala de Silva told IANS over the telephone from Colombo. "They are working well, they are functioning well."

This is the biggest deployment of Indian military personnel, albeit doctors, in Sri Lanka since the tsunami of December 2004. Earlier, Indian troops fought the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) in the northeast for over two years before returning home in March 1990.

There has been some criticism of the Indian medical deployment in Sri Lanka but officials in both countries say the intervention has been immensely useful to civilians mauled by the unending war.

It all began in mid-March when New Delhi flew 52 doctors and support staff from the Armed Forces Medical Services to Pulmoddai to treat badly injured civilians, ferried every third day by ship by the international Red Cross from neighbouring Mullaitivu district where Tamil guerrillas are still holding out.

Most Tamil civilians land with serious injures, blamed mostly on exploding bombs and artillery shells. Many require immediate surgical intervention. Some come on stretchers, unable to even sit or stand up.

Each time a group arrives, the doctors as well as nurses and paramedical staff get to work furiously. The hospital has a trauma centre, a blood bank, labs to test blood and urine, x-ray facilities and more. Medicines are never in short supply. Only ambulances have been provided by the Sri Lankans.

The hospital began with 40 to 50 beds. This has now gone up to 120 beds.

Those with relatively minor injures are moved to other hospitals, to make way for new arrivals, while the more serious cases are kept in the hospital for a day or more. Like in any hospital, the patients are attended to day and night.

#### Indian military doctors save lives in Sri Lanka

"The doctors are working under tremendous strain, considering the numbers involved," said an official overseeing the hospital. "It will not be wrong to say that the doctors are doing an excellent job."

The Indian government has since increased the number of medical personnel at the hospital by 10, taking the total number to 62.

"Some of the patients are traumatised when they reach the hospital," explained the official. "These people are victims of war."

The Indian team includes some Tamil speakers. Others manage with the help of interpreters who are outside of the medical delegation.

Sri Lankan minister de Silva said the Indians had offered to extend their work. "I said okay. We have no problems. It is a joint effort," he said.

(M.R. Narayan Swamy can be contacted at <u>narayan.swamy@ians.in</u>) Published by HT Syndication with permission from Indo-Asian News Service.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: August 3, 2009



## Inhuman slaughter of villagers by LTTE

Daily News (Sri Lanka)
June 9, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 642 words

Dateline: Colombo

## **Body**

Colombo, June 9 -- The people of remote village Maha Divulvewa a small farming village in the Trincomalee District were in deep sleep. It was well past midnight on Sunday May 25, 1986, when the villagers were suddenly awakened by unfamiliar noises.

Guns Little Nilanthi and eight year old school girl was also woken up but just then she saw two men enter the bedroom of her house and point their guns at her mother who was breast feeding her little brother. Two shots were fired the mother and the infant fell in a pool of blood. Nilanthi begged of one of the men who was pointing the gun at her chest not to shoot her and he took the gun awy but the other man while leaving fired a shot that hit Nilanthi on her arm. Dark She crept out of the house it was still dark though the dawn would break in another half hour or so. By the time the terrorists had completed their devilish job 26 villagers were dead, among them women and children. Two people including Nilanthi escaped death miraculously. When the Tiger terrorists entered the village they set fire to 20 houses and five people burnt inside the houses. The people were harassed and tortured mentally before they were finally gunned down by the terrorists who demonstrated they had had descended to the lowest depths of perversity and ruthlessness only moral bankruptcy could have brought about. The terrorists like during the Kent and Dollar farm massacres ordered the villagers to come out of the houses and line up. Execution Next they asked them to kneel and pointed their guns at them - in a mock execution. Now the terrorists ordered the kneeling villagers to stand up and marched them along a village path and again they were asked to kneel down. The inhuman terrorists repeated this mental torture on the villages many times before they were gunned down in cold blood. Among some of the unfortunate victims were some people in the vicinity of the village who had seen houses ablaze in the night and had come t help to put out the flames. The year 1986 was to see more and more killings of civilians yet the terrorists always showed they were cowards. They always chose the night to hide in darkness so that they could not be seen. They chose most remote villages or isolated places with the most helpless people always the unarmed - to attack and children, pregnant women, the old and the feeble were simply killed either hacked to death or shot. Hunters The terrorists did not spare even infants like the suckling brother of Nilanthi who was shot while feeding at the breast of his mother in a country a tradition that hunters still practice when a deer or any wild animal is not killed if it was feeding, but killing an infant sucking the breast of his mother, only the Tiger terrorists had done in this country. On the same day at Viduthalathivu, Mannar the body of a senior citizen, a village leader and a former chairman of the village committee Augustine Rajendram who was 87 years was killed and his body was found tied to a pillar box. A few days before he was killed some young men - the terrorists were called 'our boys' or simply 'the boys' by most sympathizers of the terrorists of the north and east - and in this case young men who had taken Rajendram away were the boys. Terrorists There was explanation why he was killed after detaining him for so many days. Like Sinhalese villagers that were being killed by the scores by the various terrorist groups they were also killing Tamil civilians or law officers one by one but but the pattern followed by the terrorists was always the method of cowards as the terrorists of all brands of Tigers including their bosses were nothing but

#### Inhuman slaughter of villagers by LTTE

cowards who feared the strong and the armed choosing to kill only the unarmed and feeble like an 87 year village elder. 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 <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: June 9, 2009



## 'More than 1,000 civilians killed' in attacks on Sri Lanka safe zone

Guardian.com

May 11, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Unlimited All Rights Reserved



Length: 740 words

## **Body**

#### **ABSTRACT**

Doctor reports hundreds of bodies being brought to hospital as UN says feared bloodbath has now become reality

#### **FULL TEXT**

A doctor working inside the no-fire zone in Sri Lanka today told the Guardian that more than 1,430 people were believed to have been killed in two days of air and artillery attacks.

Dr V Shanmugarajah said 381 bodies brought in to the temporary hospital inside the government safe zone yesterday, with another 49 brought in by 1.30pm today. He warned that reports from survivors led him to believe that as many as 1,000 more people could have been killed.

"Shells are falling into the new safety zone," he said. "Today there was more shelling in the safety zone."

Shanmugarajah said most of the deaths had been caused by shelling, but added that there had also been an attack by a Sri Lankan air force Kfir jet.

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

UN officials estimate that between 50,000 and 100,000 civilians may still be packed into a tiny 3km sq pocket of land.

The Sri Lankan government says no more than 20,000 are left.

Pictures released by medical staff working inside the no-fire zone show the dead and wounded being moved on flat bed trucks and on the back of motorbikes.

The Sri Lankan government has denied using artillery or aircraft, and accused the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> of using mortars to fire on civilians for propaganda purposes.

There is no way of verifying any of the claims, because independent journalists are denied access to the area where the fighting is taking place.

The UN has been critical of the Sri Lankan use of artillery and air power in such a small area.

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

Diplomats and officials said the UN security council was due to have another informal meeting on Sri Lanka in New York today, with the foreign ministers of Britain and France - who had a <u>stormy visit to Sri Lanka</u> at the end of April - both due to attend.

The council is split over whether to move discussion to a formal level at which it could act.

Both the US and Britain are pushing to secure a ceasefire, while Russia and China have opposed such a move.

The assault on the no-fire zone started as the Sri Lankan government ordered the tens of thousands of civilians still trapped by the fighting to move into a restricted area to enable it to flush out the remaining Tamil rebels.

The shrinking of the safe zone meant some families had to abandon the bunkers they had dug to find shelter in the new area designated by the government.

According to a UN source, most of the people killed were inside the new no-fire zone. The official said many were believed to have died in an air strike yesterday morning.

Medical staff working in makeshift facilities inside the zone said shells started falling on Saturday evening.

One doctor said shelling started at 5pm and continued through until 9am. It appeared the shells were fired from government positions in Mullaitivu.

The doctor said the dead included a man who worked as a nurse at the hospital and seven members of his family, who were killed when a shell hit the bunker in which they were sheltering.

"The shells were landing about 300 metres from the hospital," he said. "All the time, we have casualties coming in. We don't have time to think."

He said the dead were being buried in large pits, with 30 or 40 bodies in each pit.

The pro-LTTE TamilNet website claimed about 2,000 people had died.

The difficulties in reporting the situation in the north of the country were highlighted by the <u>deportation of three</u> <u>members of a Channel 4 news team</u> who were arrested in Trincomalee, south of the no-fire zone, on Saturday.

The government accused them of fabricating a report in which it was alleged that <u>women</u> were being subjected to sexual abuse in the internment camps set up to hold civilians fleeing the fighting.

Lakshman Hulugalle, the head of the government security information centre, said the journalists had admitted they had "done something wrong" and would not be allowed to return to the country.

Nick Paton Walsh, the channel's Asia correspondent, said the government claims were "complete rubbish".

Load-Date: May 11, 2009



## Elimination of LTTE - all can breathe a sigh of relief - Sports Minister

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka) May 25, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 2650 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, May 25 -- SPORTS TO PROSPER: A jubilant Minister of Sports and Recreation Gamini Lokuge said that with the elimination of terrorists, all could breathe a sigh of relief, and each and everyone, may be sportsmen or ordinary citizens could now walk on the street without fear.

"We should be thankful to President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa and the Armed Forces for their indefatigable combine effort in eradicating terrorism in Sri Lanka. An year ago, Minister Jeyaraj Fernandopulle was a victim of a suicide bomber at Weliveriya while attending a Sinhala Avurudu Festival. Among the others who sacrificed their lives were former national athletic coach Lakshman de Alwis and marathon specialist K.A.Karunaratne. Minister Lokuge emphasised that in the near future sports activities in the North and East could be brought back to normalcy. Sri Lanka, which has been in the throes of terrorism for the past three-decades, heaved a sigh of relief early this week, when the gallant security forces under the steadfast leadership of Commander-in-Chief President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, the three forces Commanders (General Sarath Fonseka, Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda, Air Chief Marshall Roshan Gunathilake and IGP Jayantha Wickremarathne), liberated the North from the claws of the now vanquished LTTE terrorists. Thus, the eradication of terrorism from the face of this land, no doubt signals the commencement of an era free from terror and fear in every imaginable strata of the society. The field of sports, was well and truly gripped by the terrorists for well-nigh 30-years, with the rest of the world blacklisting Sri Lanka as a `no go zone' in lieu of the raging North-East conflict in this country. Going down memory lane, we could recall that the very first-time or the instance, of a sports team being rattled by the North-East separatist war, was when in 1987 the New Zealand Cricket team, prematurely ended their tour of the island, as a result of the LTTE exploding a bomb in the heart of the metropolis in Pettah. The Kiwis without hesitation packed up their luggage and headed home, curtailing their three Test series after the completion of the first-Test match. That only Test-match of the tour was memorable for then wicket-keeper opening batsman Brendon Kuruppu (currently Sri Lanka team manager) scoring the maiden double-hundred for his country, in Test cricket, but the euphoric celebrations lasted for only mere days, as the LTTE terrorists had other ideas of getting the spotlight for their cause by setting a bomb off in the capital. Nine-years later, with the North-East war raging, security fears in the country prompted Australia and West Indies to withdraw from playing their World Cup games in Sri Lanka even after being guaranteed VVIP security, and again it further highlighted the country, as a unsafe part of the world in the Indian sub-continent. However, it must be recorded that both neighbouring giants India and Pakistan were prompt in extending their solidarity by travelling here to feature in an exhibition match, and it was a true morale-booster for the host-nation. Being boosted by that gesture of goodwill of both India and Pakistan, the islanders who were rank outsiders for the sport's showpiece tournament at the start of it, cocked a snook at their detractors going on to lift the most prestigious title in cricketing history under the astute and no-nonsense leadership of Arjuna Ranatunga. Despite winning the World Cup as one of the least-fancied teams in the tournament, the rest of the world sporting wise, refused outright to either brand or look at Sri Lanka as

a safe place to indulge in any kind of sport, and the country continued to be blighted by the scourge of terrorism from a sports perspective till the year 2006. The most recent draw-back took place in year 2006, when South Africa pulled out mid-way through a cricket tour here, due to a terrorist attack in downtown Colombo (Kollupitiya). That bomb blast well and truly disrupted a tri-series Sri Lanka was hosting with the participation of India, and the latter agreed to remain in Sri Lanka, notwithstanding the blast, but fickle weather prevailing at the time, put paid to any chances of a bi-lateral series between Sri Lanka and India. It must also be mentioned that when South Africa attempted to leave the country upon the news reaching them of the blast, even after the Government and Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) assured the tourists of VVIP and Presidential level security, the Daily News' carried a banner headline 'Proteas Chickens Out' in its main sports page, written by our veteran colleague Elmo Rodrigopulle. Numerous have been the times and occasions, the country has lost opportunities of hosting several sporting events due to terrorists calling the shots in this country, as most visiting teams did not want to take a chance, with widespread acts of terror taking place even in the often-perceived safe South of the country. Then in 2007, Sri Lanka had to experience many disappointments before securing the Rugby Asiad, but yet most top-ranked countries such as Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and Chinese Taipei expressed their fear in travelling to the country. They all point-blank refused to be here, saying it was unsafe to include in rugby in Sri Lanka while bombs kept on exploding every now and then in Colombo and its suburbs, but to the credit of the Sri Lanka Rugby Football Union the sport's main controlling body managed to stage the tournament, in which the hosts emerged runners-up to eventual champs Kazakhstan. Even, the local rugby calendar's most popular International Sevens Tournament - the Singer SriLankan Rugby Sevens staged in Nittawela, Kandy was constantly dogged by the security fears in the country, during the tournament's 11-year unbroken run. Most countries conveniently pointed to terror attacks in the island, as reasons for failing to take part, even when assured of the highest possible security in the land, but to the credit of the organisers it must be stated that they have done a creditable job in hosting the popular tournament, by enticing several other foreign countries unhindered upto now. Looking at the brighter side of things, sky would be the limit for Sri Lanka, if officials and players market the country as a safe heaven for international sports events in the wake of the liberation of the North from the clutches of the terrorists. It would also without doubt pave the way for our skilled sportsmen and women in many disciplines to pit their talents against international opposition in their own backyard, sans the fear of terror hanging over them like the Sword of Damocles. It is also high-time, that local sports officials put their differences aside and draw future plans and attract sponsors for all sports without any segregation so that all sports could derive the best use of the elimination of terrorism from this land. Market Sri Lanka An onerous task facing many sports bodies, namely cricket and rugby in particular, would be to market Sri Lanka, as a country free to tour for international sports teams once more with the end of the 30-year war for good last week. Especially, cricket being the country's most popular team sport, by a long yardstick, Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), will have to speed up its efforts to invite more in-bound tours to the country, from other ICC Test-nations, if the eradication of terrorism, is to have any kind of meaning, as far as sports is concerned. The SLRFU which governs the country's second most popular team sport, Rugby Football, too, has to make diligent efforts in trying to procure more tours to the country from the region, and allay the fears of Asian giants Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan to name a few. Hence the SLC and SLRFU has a real challenge ahead of them in liaising closely with their two world bodies ICC and IRB to promote Sri Lanka as a free destination, devoid of terrorism for all future sporting activities. The Ministry of Sports under the stewardship of Minister of Sports Gamini Lokuge must soon discuss with the respective NSA's and draw a masterplan for sports to be spread throughout the country. That should also be done with the consultation of the National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka (NOC). The time has come for the country, to make the best use of the latest developments to invest on the future of Sri Lanka, in a terrorism free atmosphere and environment. On behalf of all sportsmen and women, officials, coaches and fans countrywide, 'Sunday Observer' takes this opportunity at this moment of national freedom, to express our gratitude and humbly thank one and all who made the ultimate sacrifices to eradicate the scourge of terrorism from the face of this historic land. We also salute President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, the three armed forces commanders and IG for the courageous and valiant steps taken during the gruelling journey to wipe out this threat from our shores for once and for all and all sports and its countless followers in this country and outside, will forever be indebted to all those personalities who were actively involved in bringing peace back to the country. Major General Palitha Fernando: President of Sri Lanka AAA, said that the future for athletics is bright and larger participation could be expected. Earlier the parents were reluctant to send their children to participate due to terrorist activities. Now there is no war and it's a plus point. Road running, marathons which were very popular during the past could now be revived in the North and East without any worry. Janaka Bogollagama: the President of the Sri Lanka Tennis Association said that tennis was played in the North and East from the old days in Jaffna and Batticaloa. Even during the recent past, with the turmoil going on SLTA helped Jaffna once it was liberated to continue tennis in the schools and also Batticaloa with the assistance of the SLTA. Rohan Fernando: President Amateur Rowing Association of Sri Lanka, said that we have much better chance to propagate the sport with the assistance of Service personnel. We have already discussed the blue print for the intake of quality rowers for the national squad and also to set rowing facilities all over the country specially in Sri Lanka waterways. Sri Lanka Navy could play a big role for the promotion of rowing now that the war has ended. Kiran Atapattu: The Secretary Interim Committee of Sri Lanka Aquatic Sports Union said that It's fantastic as President Mahinda Rajapaksa has wiped out terrorism from our country after 30 long years. We will start developing aquatic sports, swimming, synchronised swimming, diving, waterpolo in the North and East in a big way as one of our developing projects. Dian Gomes (former President ABA): With the dawning of peace in Sri Lanka, the ABA is perfectly placed to expand its development initiatives to a wider base across the country. One major area of focus will be within the armed forces which has traditionally been the breeding ground for Sri Lanka's boxing talent over the years. We also expect an influx of new talent coming through from the North and East and steps are already under way to promote the sport and drive development initiatives within these regions. In addition, the current Vice President of the ABA, Maj. Gen. Jagath Jayasuriya the security forces commander who spearheaded the Wanni offensive will take his place at the helm as President of the ABA next year. His leadership will augment our strategic plan for the 2012 London Olympics. Hemasiri Fernando: President, National Olympic Committee of Sri Lanka, said that we have been talking of national sports bodies. Are they responsible for developing the sport not only in Colombo or North and East, for the last 25 years. Now it is the time for the Ministry of Sports, Sport Development Department and Education Department to combine and embark on proper designed project on talent identification in the North and East. Cricket in a Big way D. Somachandra de Silva former Sri Lanka Test allrounder and now the Chairman of the Interim Committee of Sri Lanka Cricket said that thanks to President Mahinda Rajapaksa terrorist activity has been wiped out and the North and East has been liberated. Cricket will be re-introduced in a big way from now onwards in the North and East. The parents of young cricketers were not prepared to send their young ones for participation in cricket due to security reasons. The new scenario would result in a new influx of talent and higher participation at junior level from the ages of under-12. There was no representation to national cricket teams from the North and East for the last 30 years. New scenario will produce new players in the same manner the national team representation had enlarged to other provinces during the past few years with lesser concentration from around Colombo and suburbs. Cricket is a spectator game. In the past, many foreign players were not happy to visit Sri Lanka due to security constraints and now more foreign teams would visit Sri Lanka in future. Olympic Medallist and famed athlete Susanthika Jayasinghe said that she is confident that we could find future medal winning athletes from the North and East very soon. If the Sri Lanka Athletic Association who can follow our forces who fought bravely and wiped out terrorism, must now concentrate fully to send out qualified coaches to North and East and find the hidden talent and give proper training and guidance. Surely then stars will emerge from those areas who will one-day bring honour to Sri Lanka. Chrysantha Perera: Chief Executive Officer of Football Federation of Sri Lanka said that Football is a common man's game, caste, creed are not taken into account. The FFSL will make every endeavour to popularise the game of football in the North and East. Dilan Perera Minister of Ports Development: President of the Sri Lanka Volleyball Federation said that it is an ideal time for all sports bodies to rally round and promote and develop sports in the North and East. I think through sports we can bring communal harmony. Through sports unity could be strengthened. Even the Volleyball Federation of Sri Lanka Motto is Unity through Sports. "I am proud to state that even before this victory, Sri Lanka Volleyball Federation made several attempts and took steps to promote volleyball in the North and East. It should be mentioned at the last Volleyball National Championships there were well over 60 teams from the North and East.It is planned to have volleyball academies in the North and East in the near future. Rugby gains Chairman of the Sri Lanka Rugby Football Union (SLRFU) Interim Committee Dr. Maiya Gunasekera hailed the liberation of the North from the LTTE terrorists by the astounding commitment of the security forces along with the unwavering leadership of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, `unprecedented' in the annals of this country since gaining independence from Britain in 1948. He said the closely-knit family of President Rajapaksa and his government, combatting the LTTE terrorists that the latter had found it difficult to buy any of them with the kind of money they had amassed over the years. Dr. Gunasekera added that from a rugby perspective, the end of terrorism will stand in good stead as sponsors and various other firms and companies will come forward to invest in sports in a big way. He noted that with the country being devoid of terrorism, the SLRFU will be able to bid for more international tournaments and even invite countries like Japan,

#### Elimination of LTTE - all can breathe a sigh of relief - Sports Minister

Korea and Hong Kong to travel to Sri Lanka so that they could freely engage in world class sports events sans the fear of terror hovering around them. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka).

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: May 25, 2009



The Australian

May 20, 2009 Wednesday

1 - All-round Country Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: FEATURES; Pg. 11

Length: 1952 words

Byline: Amanda Hodge

## **Body**

Sri Lanka's army has won the war, but it may not have won peace, writes South Asia correspondent Amanda Hodge

BY the military's account, it was a humiliating end for one of the world's most enduring rebel soldiers. Huddled in the back of an ambulance with two senior aides, Tamil Tiger founder and commander Velupillai Prabhakaran did not die by his own hand, as he so instructed many thousands of recruits to his Tamil separatist movement.

Instead he was felled by a military commando's bullet as he attempted to escape Sri Lanka's northern battlefield, a small jungle strip bloodied by the deaths of thousands of civilians and combatants in recent months.

As with all stories out of Sri Lanka's conflict zone, there were conflicting accounts. One had the chubby 54-year-old and his closest aides driving an armoured van headlong towards the military's frontlines in a final act of defiance. Later, the Tigers announced their leader was alive and safe, and that the army had fabricated his death to crow about their victory. But as speculation grew last night, the army produced his body.

Whatever its circumstances -- in a conflict so quarantined from observation that the truth may never emerge -- Prabhakaran's death marks the end of one Asia's most protracted and bitter civil wars, which pitted Sri Lanka's Sinhalese-dominated military against the country's minority Tamil population in pursuit of an ethnic homeland. Whether it marks the end of violence, however -- by either the Tamil separatists or the military that has long sought to crush them -- is less certain.

With the entire Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam leadership said to have been slain by military forces in recent days, including Prabhakaran's son Charles Anthony, the country's army chief confidently declared the country free of terrorism. ``Today we finished the work handed to us by the president to liberate the country from the <u>LTTE</u>," Lieutenant General Sarath Fonseka announced in a broadcast late on Monday. ``Now the entire country is declared rid of terrorism," he said, adding that ``over 250 dead bodies of terrorists are scattered over the last ditch".

Gruesome pictures released by the military, showing the bearded and bloodied face of the rebel leader's dead son, have flashed repeatedly across television screens in Sri Lanka and India in the past 24 hours.

On Monday military officials reported they had also recovered the bodies of the Tigers' political spokesman Balasingham Nadesan, secretariat chief Seevaratnam Puleedevan and another senior military leader, Ramesh.

By mid-afternoon the rebels' naval wing commander, Soosai, and its feared intelligence chief Pottu Amman were said to have been killed alongside their elusive leader.

The pro-rebel Tamilnet website said the <u>LTTE</u> leadership had appealed to the Red Cross to be evacuated, and that ``initial reports indicate a determined massacre by the Sri Lanka army". The army denied the claims.

But in a war shielded from the view of journalists -- who are barred, along with aid workers, from the conflict zone -- claims of atrocity on both sides will continue to hang unsubstantiated. Politically, at least, the wall of secrecy thrown up by the army may have been just as much to the advantage of its enemy.

After months of intense fighting, and with the once powerful <u>LTTE</u> forces reduced to just a few hundred desperate fighters, Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse used a visit to Jordan at the weekend to declare victory in the war against the rebels.

But authorities knew that victory could never be assured until Prabhakaran was either captured or killed, for fear his escape would lead to an attempt to rebuild the *LTTE* and usher in a new cycle of violence.

Yesterday, in a triumphant nationally televised address from the nation's parliament in Colombo, Rajapakse announced the ``complete defeat" of the rebels.

"The writ of the state now runs across every inch of our territory," he said. "We have completely defeated terrorism."

But he stressed the crushing of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> was a victory for the entire nation and should not be seen as a defeat for the minority Tamil community.

Rajapakse has promised a political settlement for the Tamils, who have been left demoralised by the annihilation of the Tigers, the self-appointed dominant voice of the country's minority Tamil population.

Yesterday in Colombo, a lovely harbour city that has been under siege from the threat of terrorism for the past 26 years, many Sri Lankans celebrated the Government's triumph with dancing and firecrackers.

"This is a victory against terrorism. I am very proud of our forces, of what they have done," said Colombo student Ashani de Silva.

Businessman Lal Hettige also celebrated with friends at Colombo's outdoor market.

"Myself and most of my friends gathered here have narrowly escaped bombs set off by the Tigers. Some of our friends were not lucky," he said. "We are happy today to see the end of that ruthless terrorist organisation and its heartless leader. We can live in peace after this."

Sri Lanka's stock exchange welcomed the war's end, with the main index jumping 6.45 per cent.

But among longtime political observers there is less optimism that a settlement can be struck that satisfies the legitimate concerns of the Tamils, a group that represents more than 20 per cent of the population but which has been discriminated against since the British granted independence in 1948.

National Centre for Peace executive director Jehan Perera told The Australian any settlement must observe the rights of Tamils, which are enshrined in the Sri Lankan constitution, but are yet to be implemented.

That includes recognition of the 13th amendment, which provides for provincial autonomous governments, and the restoration of the 17th amendment, which calls for all top officials such as police chiefs and chief justices to be appointed by a multi-party committee, and not just the president as is now the case.

"[This Government] has used the excuse of war to set aside the constitution. Now that the war has ended there will be less reason for them to act as an authoritarian government," Perera said.

"If the Government fails to provide a solution then there will be continued unrest and possibly acts of terrorism.

"International pressure will be very important because there are paramilitary and armed groups, there are military intelligence which can eliminate any opposition to the Government, especially Tamils suspected of being sympathetic to the *LTTE*.

"The Tamils have very limited bargaining strength so they need support."

Rajapakse and his Government will certainly face pressure from Western allies such as Britain and the US to grant political autonomy for the Tamils and avoid further violence. Rajapakse has consistently expressed support for a deal to give the Tamil minority more power, even though it was his Government that rolled back a previous undertaking to grant Tamils administrative control of the north and east.

He points to the eastern province, which fell to the Government in 2007 and is now administered by an elected breakaway Tamil faction. He claims the Government has poured hundreds of millions of dollars into development projects in the east and has promised to do the same for the north.

But Perera said many Tamils still suffer serious discrimination, despite the passage of laws over recent decades to address their ill-treatment. Although many of the old discriminatory laws have been removed, there is ``little political will to implement equal rights provisions".

"Tamils for many years did not have citizenship rights. Now they all have those rights but many of them don't have ID cards and are still disadvantaged," he said.

For all the legitimacy of the <u>LTTE</u>s cause, Prabhakaran's final legacy is a dubious one. The <u>LTTE</u> will be most remembered for pioneering the suicide bomb, for the forced recruitment of child soldiers and for a brutal last stand fought from behind a frightened mass of civilians trapped on an ever-shrinking patch of Tamil-held territory.

Prabhakaran founded the <u>LTTE</u> in 1976 and attracted wide support among disenchanted Tamil youth who carried out low-key attacks against government targets until 1983, when full war broke out following the rebels' slaying of 13 soldiers. The killings sparked anti-Tamil riots that human rights groups say killed more than 2000 people. At the height of his power, Prabhakaran controlled a state within a state in north and east Sri Lanka that boasted its own infantry, naval, air and police forces, tax system and law school.

Over a 26-year armed struggle for independence the Tigers carried out a series of political assassinations and suicide bomb attacks.

But Prabhakaran also made a series of fatal errors, most notably the assassination of Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi by a *female* suicide bomber in 1991, a decision that alienated the Tigers' previously sympathetic northern neighbour. The group's penchant for suicide attacks led the US, European Union and India to outlaw it as a terror organisation.

Prabhakaran's stubborn line during peace negotiations eventually convinced the Sri Lankan government it could never reach a peace deal and a Tamil boycott of the 2005 election ensured victory for the hardline Rajapakse. He wasted no time in tearing up a Norwegian-brokered cease-fire. His campaign since then to crush the rebel movement has been ruthlessly effective.

In just two years the <u>LTTE</u>-controlled territory has been whittled down from nearly a third of the island nation to what at the weekend amounted to little more than three football fields lying side by side.

Sensing imminent victory, the Government ignored repeated calls from the international community and aid organisations for a permanent ceasefire, to allow the safe evacuation of hundreds of thousands of civilians trapped in the conflict zone.

Finally, on Sunday, after months of bitter fighting, in which the guerillas were accused of using Tamil civilians as human shields, the <u>LTTE</u> announced its war for a Tamil homeland had reached a ``bitter end".

"We have decided to silence our guns," Tigers international relations chief Selvarasa Pathmanathan said in a statement. "Our only regrets are for the lives lost and that we could not hold out for longer."

The Tigers' long last stand, and the Sri Lankan Government's stunning victory, has come at the cost of tens of thousands of innocent lives lost in indiscriminate shelling.

In his speech yesterday, Rajapakse said he would seek international aid to rebuild the devastated northeast but he struck a defiant note. "What we need from the international community is not advice, but material help to carry out our reconstruction effort," he said.

More than 70,000 Sri Lankans are said to have died during the 26-year war. UN officials say more than 7000 Tamil civilians have died since the start of the year, the final days being a ``bloodbath on the beaches".

Human Rights Watch says satellite imagery and witness accounts contradict government claims that heavy weapons were not used in the no-fire zones. It accuses both sides of using civilians as "cannon fodder".

The UN's human rights office is now demanding a war crimes probe, but the humanitarian disaster is far from played out.

With as many as 250,000 people now forcibly interned in refugee camps while the Government ruthlessly weeds out Tiger infiltrators and suspected rebel sympathisers, many aid organisations fear the potential for far greater human cost.

"There has to be accountability for what has gone on in Sri Lanka," said Rupert Colville of the UN High Commission for Human Rights this week. "There has to be clarity and there cannot be impunity."

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2009



## U.S. Faults Sri Lanka on Civilian Woes

The New York Times
April 23, 2009 Thursday
Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2009 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 9

Length: 714 words

Byline: By SOMINI SENGUPTA; Mark McDonald contributed reporting from Hong Kong, and Sharon Otterman

from New York.

Dateline: NEW DELHI

#### **Body**

The United States accused Sri Lanka on Wednesday of causing "untold suffering" among civilians in its push to win a 25-year-old conflict with Tamil separatists. People continued to pour out of the war zone, and the government announced the surrender of two prominent rebels.

"I think that the Sri Lankan government knows that the entire world is very disappointed that in its efforts to end what it sees as 25 years of conflict, it is causing such untold suffering," Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Wednesday.

The United States has repeatedly urged Sri Lanka to halt the fighting long enough to negotiate the evacuation of tens of thousands of civilians trapped in the war zone. Washington has also called on the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, which it considers a terrorist organization, to release civilians stuck in the five-square-mile area along the coast under its control.

Late Wednesday, the United Nations Security Council called on the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> to allow civilians to leave the battle zone and said the government should permit aid to reach refugees.

India condemned the treatment of civilians. "We are very unhappy at the continued killing of innocent Tamil civilians in Sri Lanka," Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee said in a statement late Wednesday. "These killings must stop. The Sri Lankan government has a responsibility to protect its own citizens. And the L.T.T.E. must stop its barbaric attempt to hold civilians hostage."

According to Sri Lanka's government, nearly 85,000 civilians have fled the area since Monday, when government forces destroyed a huge rebel-built earthen wall that had prevented civilians from leaving. The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> said Tuesday that the government killed 1,000 civilians as it advanced this week.

How many civilians have left the area and how many remain are unclear because the government has sealed off the conflict area to journalists and many aid agencies. Government-recorded videos showed <u>women</u> carrying infants and wading through waist-deep water to get to safety while thousands waited for food in government-run camps.

#### U.S. Faults Sri Lanka on Civilian Woes

"It is 60,000-plus and counting, and we have heard various reports of up to 110,000 coming out," said Gordon Weiss, a United Nations spokesman in Colombo, Sri Lanka's capital, according to Reuters. He said the reports were preliminary and unconfirmed.

Those arriving from the war zone were placed in crowded government-run camps in Vavuniya, in the government-controlled area of northern Sri Lanka near the rebel-held territory. More than 400 wounded patients have been admitted to the hospital there in recent days, Doctors Without Borders said in a statement. Most have wounds from shrapnel and land mines, it said.

There is no freedom of movement between the camps, and only a minority of the refugees have been able to get information about family members who may be in other camps, Doctors Without Borders said.

Sri Lanka announced more gains in the conflict as its military said Wednesday in a statement that Daya Master, the former media coordinator for the separatists, had surrendered along with his family. The military also reported the surrender of Kumar Pancharathnam, better known as George, a former English-language translator for S. P. Thamilselvan, the leader of the group's political wing, who was killed in 2007.

The men were among the most prominent representatives of the rebels who regularly spoke to correspondents visiting the rebel headquarters of Kilinochchi before it was seized by the government. Mr. Master coordinated a rare news conference by the rebel founder and leader, Vellupillai Prabhakaran, in a jungle redoubt in the spring of 2002.

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> did not confirm the surrender or capture of the two men. A dictate issued by Mr. Prabhakaran urges followers to wear vials filled with cyanide to be taken in case of capture, a recourse followed by many captured fighters in the past.

It is not known if Mr. Prabhakaran, 54, remains in the last bit of territory held by the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, or even if he is alive. Even when the conventional war ends between his forces and the Sri Lankan military, the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> are expected to continue a guerrilla war.

Sri Lanka has ruled out giving rebel cadres amnesty.

http://www.nytimes.com

## **Graphic**

PHOTO: Ethnic Tamil civilians fleeing Sri Lanka's war zone waited Wednesday to be registered at a transit camp in Vavuniya. Many civilians remain trapped in a shrinking area under rebel control.(PHOTOGRAPH BY SANATH PRIYANTHA/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

Load-Date: April 23, 2009



## India seeks scientific confirmation of Tiger leader's death

Agence France Presse -- English
May 18, 2009 Monday 1:32 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 202 words

Dateline: NEW DELHI, May 18 2009

## **Body**

India is to ask Sri Lanka for scientific confirmation of the death of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> leader so it can close a case connected to the murder of former premier Rajiv Gandhi, police said Monday.

Tamil Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, his intelligence chief Pottu Amman and rebel <u>women</u>'s wing leader Akila were wanted in India for planning the 1991 assassination of Gandhi in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

Akila's name was dropped after she was killed by the Sri Lankan army in 1995, while on Monday defence officials announced Prabhakaran and Ammam were killed while trying to escape advancing government troops.

"The agency will contact the Sri Lankan authorities, through the Indian foreign ministry, for authentication of Prabhakaran's death," a senior official from India's Central Bureau of Investigations (CBI).

"We also want an authentication of Pottu Amman's death," the official added.

"If we get official authentication then the cases against Amman and Prabhakaran will also be closed," said the official.

India says the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> assassinated Gandhi in retaliation for his decision to send troops into Sri Lanka in 1987 in a peace-keeping operation that ended up in all-out war with the rebels.

Load-Date: May 19, 2009



## We still haven't defeated LTTE's global terror network

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka) October 9, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 2061 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

#### **Body**

Sri Lanka, Oct. 9 -- Maintains the pressures before the country are not difficult to be overcome and claims the government will only respond to concerns of governments and not individuals following closely with the retraction issued by the US State Department on the claims made by Secretary of State Hilary Clinton on the use of rape as a tactic of war by the Sri Lankan government recently.

Q: Despite admitting that it had no evidence of rape used as a weapon of war as claimed by Secretary Clinton, the State Department claims that the US government and international human rights groups over the years had detailed "numerous cases of rape and sexual violence in Sri Lanka, particularly acts committed against <u>women</u> held in detention by the government.' How does the govt. respond to this allegation?

What we saw was the correction she made to the statement made at the Security Council, and that was very precise and targeted and our protest too was meant for that. When I called the US ambassador I highlighted the need for this correction to be made. The Ambassador had different views and she tried to explain so but we stood well in terms of facts. Statements must contain facts; more so when they're concerned with countries unlike with individuals.

In the history of Sri Lanka's conflict there has not been the use of rape as a tactic of war. And then she wanted to cite the State Department report on human rights and my recollection of that was that there was no such naming in those reports either and therefore wanted a retraction. I must appreciate the retraction came within 24 hours.

But again even in that statement certain extraneous factors have been brought in. I've been maintaining our protest on those wordings because what the government was interested in was a total retraction. These are again issues we can still respond to. We can respond to extra judicial killings, but we have to know what these instances are. If there are any other concerns of human rights violations everything is an incident relating to a violation. So we can only go by those violations. But what is to be welcome is the US's engagement of Sri Lanka in terms of its democratic rights. I don't therefore think that there are any other contentious areas.

Q: But what is the justification for making these claims if there is no basis for them?

This is why I say that we totally deny these claims. Because in the absence of any evidence cited all one can say is that we totally deny any space for such accusations. Beyond that the government of Sri Lanka is ready to respond to each one of these but whether we're going to enter in to any such debate is a matter we like to leave because they have issued a retraction and have conceded that this was a wrong statement. On the other hand as and when they cite such instances of violations we are ready to meet them as and when they are directed.

Q: Where does all this leave the relations between Sri Lanka and the US? Is there any strain put on the relation by these actions of individuals?

Not at all. If you read the concluding paragraph of that letter, engagement in terms of a lasting solution to the conflict which the President has also spoken of. We couldn't have spoken of such a thing and sustainable peace in the absence of power countering terrorism. Countering terrorism made the way for us to go forward in terms of addressing the political process. Whether it is the US, UK or any other country suggesting the prioritisation of that as a means of sustainable peace is something we will always welcome. We would take this in the right spirit. We are aware that these governments wouldn't be suggesting these things if we hadn't defeated terrorism. Such acceptance means that we have achieved the ability to take this process forward. We now have enough space to address these issues.

Q:The letter says that Washington remains concerned about extrajudicial killings, disappearances and detainee abuse in Sri Lanka and that Secretary Clinton 'believes that Sri Lanka must focus to the future and move forward on the promotion of peace and the protection of human rights.' Would you say this was not a priority with the government right now?

Isn't it an advocacy of every one of us wanting to go forward? The APRC is trying to work out a formula for sustainable peace to be achieved through a political process. The TNA is now talking to the President in terms of reconciliation and greater empowerment. There are political parties being formed and getting new political identities in the North. All these are part of both a local and international common agenda to see that the political path is most vibrant. We have to be part of that. The path we have chosen is a mature one. Both US and SL are democracies; this has fashioned our countries for reconciliation. There's no need to see this situation as a hiccup in the relations.

Q: There has been concern that there was a clear change in the position of certain individuals in the US administration as opposed to the policy of the State. Is this a concern for the government?

I think individuals bring their weight on the policy of an established administration like that of the US. They merely bring their view points in policy formulations. I would always like to see it as the widest possible exchange of view points as much as having a dialogue on an individual basis. President Obama was to bring about a change to their own thinking. We have to look at it as a means of an administration looking at certain issues differently.

Q: Are you at all concerned that the initial appreciation that was extended towards the victory over terror by the government may have taken a different path due to changes in Sri Lanka's own policy in dealing with these issues? The same countries that approved of a military solution seem to be levelling serious charges of war crimes against the administration.

Now this instance we saw an allegation of using rape as a tactic of war but within 24 hours a retraction was issued and I'm sure that whatever grey area may occur allegation by them are not sustainable to prove a point. We'll await any development in that area before making any comment on that without prejudging the situation. Let's see what is going to appear by way of core material supporting such allegations. I'm sure we'll be in a position easily to react in a meaningful manner to disprove such allegations.

Q: Why do you think there are individuals still pushing such charges forward despite even a UN resolution to the effect being defeated?

I don't think we should be undermining the <u>LTTE</u> in terms of their networking capacity. That network still exists because we have not defeated it outside. When it comes to such networks, one way to defeat it is to go on the international propaganda schemes. All these schemes are developed to both attack and discredit governments. This is where such networks are able to substantiate these accusations against the government beyond the comprehension of the government by the use of groups like the Human Rights Watch etc. But as a government we need not react to every such superficial means to activate various organs of the international body. When there are governments involved we will react but not otherwise. We don't have to prejudge and react.

Q: But isn't there a danger in waiting to react to such allegations and go on the defence when the damage is already done?

But defend against what? Myths, lies? We can only defend against a position. It's not a case of defending like what happened with the charges of rape. There's no defending when there are only charges, but disprove them as we did. Speculation is something that can always come on a continuous process, but accusations come differently and we're always ready to dislodge them.

Q: How does the government view the UK Development Minister Mike Foster's claims that UK funding could not support people 'simply being transferred from existing 'closed' camps to new closed camps' and that UK would only fund life-saving emergency interventions in the existing 'closed' camps. He says that many IDPs have friends and relatives to whom they should be allowed to go to, as an interim measure.

He was here just a while ago and he expressed his concerns and I invited the UK to share with us the resources for resettlement. They are willing to assist in demining so we asked about resettlement including shelter as well. Approximately 47,000 people are ready to go back to the North but there is need for shelter. There is no issue of demining in Jaffna but there are no roofs above their heads. That is where the issue is. I have called for assistance in the most meaningful and productive manner in this regard. If they want to see efficient resettlement they have to help us with shelter. If we can get 47,000 out of the way the numbers in the camps will drop significantly.

With the numbers that are ready to go to Jaffna, Mannar and the East we are talking about 75000 people. This is exactly what we are trying to achieve. The moment that happens the balance 150,000 can be easily addressed. And this will ease the congestion in the camps. The camps are not confined or closed. They are open to the extent that people can go about. They just misinterpret some of the security measures we have to take. Can you ever take ever keep anything safe without some kind of protection? But don't forget that all these places are administered by civilians. They are open to NGOs and aid. It's a very transparent arrangement.

Q: UN Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes says the United Nations was "extremely frustrated" with the lack of progress in various areas since the end of the conflict in Sri Lanka, particularly with regards to what has been happening to the internally displaced persons.

I think we have to go by what Lyn Pascoe said recently. I understand the word frustrating to mean that they're expecting more rapid results. At the same time it has to be appreciated that the task undertaken by the government is an enormous one. The exodus that came has to be looked after and screened against <u>LTTE</u> infiltration and resettlement needs met. This is why everyone including Pascoe commented that the government has done well in terms of the camps. We all agree that nowhere in the world are IDP camps happy places. But the necessity for them to be confined to camps is beyond the control of the government. Who buried land mines and who took them as a human shelter and made them IDPs? It was the <u>LTTE</u>. There's nothing hidden to the international community nor the IDPs.

Q: But what about the conditions of the camps? There has been much concern over this.

Conditions are improving. I won't say we're 100% satisfied. It is because we're concerned that we're appealing to the international community to assist us. India has responded very positively to this. These IDPs are not going to serve any agenda. The government is not concerned about keeping an IDP society.

Q: You are very confident that Sri Lanka will obtain the GSP Plus Trade concession in January next year as the political climate in the country has changed and maintain that Sri Lanka would comply with the various requirements of the EU but would not submit to the investigations urged by the EU. Is this a realistic approach given the bleak picture being painted by various elements against the country?

There were certain conditions that the European Commission was trying to place on Sri Lanka. They could've been addressed bilaterally. But here the EC tried to stretch it though Article 18 in the form of a more structured approach. Usually we have submitted to a more formal approach but when it came to the extension and the manner we had to approach was viewed by the government as an erosion of the good relations that previously existed. Now we had to

#### We still haven't defeated LTTE's global terror network

weigh how we were going to approach it. You can't have a dialogue and be part of an investigative process. Our answer was a clear no to an investigation for these reasons. We're appealing to the EC to be more considerate towards Sri Lanka in its post conflict scenario. I'm confident that they will look at Sri Lanka in a positive manner. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at <a href="https://disable.com/html.news

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: October 9, 2009



## Tigers lose leaders, weapons

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

April 6, 2009 Monday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 519 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, April 6 -- The Army yesterday confined the <u>LTTE</u> to a 20 square kilometre 'no-fire zone', after killing more than 400 Tiger cadres including six senior leaders after capturing the entire Puthukkudiyiruppu area.

"The only uncleared area left for the remaining LTTE cadres and leaders are the no-fire zone," military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said. He said several top ranking LTTE leaders were confirmed killed during the fierce battle that lasted three days. The troops recovered 420 LTTE bodies in this area. Among the senior LTTE rankers killed were Theepan LTTE's former Northern region chief who was involved in capturing the Elephant Pass military base in 2002, Ruben, Nagesh, Gadhafi former body guard of Prabhakaran who also held the position of **LTTE** weapons instructor, Vidusha 'Malathi' female brigade wing head, Durga 'Soothiya' female regiment head, and Kamalini LTTE women political leader. "This was the first time that troops were able to kill such a large number of LTTE leaders in one occasion," the spokesman said. LTTE's 'artillery wing' head Manniwannan was killed in the fighting yesterday hours after troops claimed total control of Puthukkudiyiruppu. He said the 53 Division, Task Force 8 and 58 Division have marched into the remaining LTTE resistance positions killing a large number of LTTE cadres and seizing a large haul of LTTE weaponry. Among the items were three 130mm Artillery guns, one 85 mm Artillery guns, one 30mm Pedal gun, more than 600 small arms and a huge stock of 12.7 weapons. The spokesman also said troops were preparing to rescue thousands of civilians trapped in the safe zone. "Troops are now positioned to make further tactical moves into the remaining territory to free hundreds of civilians held hostage by LTTE," he said. Meanwhile, the Defence Ministry said LTTEs intelligence wing leader Pottu Amman, Theepan and Bhanu have led the LTTE fighting formations. It also said military-intercepted LTTE communication revealed that Adithyan, LTTEs former person in-charge of Welioya was also among the dead LTTE cadres. Tigers lose leaders, weapons Lawrence and Bhanu, were also reported injured while the latter, over-all in-charge of LTTEs artillery and mortar unit had sustained severe injuries, military said citing intercepted LTTE communication. The reports said the LTTE was still attacking the troops from the 'no-fire zone' from south and north. "The LTTE cadres mingling with the civilians continue to carry out attacks against the military," a ground military official said. "But we can't retaliate as there are more than 61,000 civilians in the area." Prabha's family album, BC found Troops in Puthukkudiyiruppu found personal documents of LTTE Leader Prabhakaran from a well fortified bunker in the area. Among the documents, the birth certificate (BC), some applications for the Moratuwa University believed to be for his son Charles Anthony and the family album of Prabhakaran were found from a location, where the Tiger leaders used as an operation control room. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: April 7, 2009



# <u>CORRECTED: Calls grow for war crimes probe into Sri Lanka conflict -</u> Correction Appended

Agence France Presse -- English
May 20, 2009 Wednesday 7:21 AM GMT

# Correction Appended

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 591 words

Dateline: NEW DELHI, May 20 2009

## **Body**

The prospect of war crimes charges following Sri Lanka's military victory over Tamil Tiger rebels loomed larger 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 (*LTTE*).

Both sides in the conflict have been accused of rights violations, with numerous aid agencies and rights groups alleging indiscriminate army shelling and condemning the Tigers for using civilians as a human shield.

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," Ban added.

The UN's main 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 Uhomoibhi.

"The international community must strive to deliver justice to victims of human rights violations," he added.

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.

#### CORRECTED: Calls grow for war crimes probe into Sri Lanka conflict

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, <u>women</u> 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.

Pillay said in March that both sides may be guilty of war crimes.

"Nothing we've seen since then has caused us to change our minds, quite the contrary," Colville said, adding that an independent inquiry of some form "is now essential."

Former colonial power Britain also wants a probe, citing the "truly shocking and appalling" numbers of civilian dead.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown had warned the Sri Lankan government that there would be "consequences for its actions."

UN officials say more than 6,500 Tamil civilians have died in the conflict since the start of the year, with the final days of the battle described as a "bloodbath on the beaches."

According to the campaign group Human Rights Watch, satellite imagery and witness accounts contradict government claims that heavy weapons have not been used. It said both sides in the war were using civilians as "cannon fodder."

Amnesty International has also demanded that "the mounting evidence of serious violations of international law" be investigated.

The hawkish government of President Mahinda Rajapakse described its military operation against the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> 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.

"They are trying to preach to us about civilians," Rajapakse said at a recent public rally after meeting British and French ministers. "I tell them to go and see what they are doing in Iraq and Afghanistan."

#### Correction

By Stefan SmithATTENTION - CORRECTION: Please read name of UNHRC president in para seven as xxx Uhomoibhi xxx sted as sent. Herewith corrected repetition ///

Load-Date: May 21, 2009



## Fugitive rebels shot as Sri Lanka celebrates victory

Agence France Presse -- English
May 20, 2009 Wednesday 4:17 PM GMT

Copyright 2009 Agence France Presse All Rights Reserved



Length: 597 words

Byline: Amal Jayasinghe

Dateline: COLOMBO, May 20 2009

#### **Body**

Sri Lanka celebrated victory over the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> with a national holiday on Wednesday as the army hunted down fugitive rebels, shooting dead eight thought to have escaped from the final battle.

Hundreds of troops were deployed in the Muliyawaikal area where the corpse of Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran was found after the fighting ended with a showdown in the jungle on Monday, officials said.

"They are doing clearing operations," defence spokesman Lakshman Hulugalle said as more bodies were gathered for identification.

The eight rebels were shot in two incidents more than 130 kilometres (80 miles) south of where the Tigers made their last stand in the far northeast, the army said.

The killings were the first since the government claimed victory over the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*), and police stepped up security across the island to guard against revenge attacks from surviving guerrillas.

In a symbolic gesture, the army fired heavy guns into the air to mark the official end of their operations, the military said. Soldiers observed two minutes' silence to show respect to their fallen colleagues.

More than 400 dead rebels, including several <u>female</u> fighters, have been recovered from the battlefield where Prabhakaran died, according to military officials.

Prabhakaran's eldest son, Charles Anthony, was among those killed in the area, but the military had no information about the leader's wife, Madiwadani, or their other two children.

"The process of identifying the other Tiger dead bodies is now going on and we want to see if any other close relatives or associates of Prabhakaran are among the dead," a military official said.

The defence ministry said seven more dead Tiger leaders had been identified on Wednesday.

Sri Lankan television repeatedly broadcast images of what it said was the body of Prabhakaran, showing the upper section of a corpse which was dressed in camouflage fatigues.

#### Fugitive rebels shot as Sri Lanka celebrates victory

The face was intact, with the eyes wide open, and bore a clear resemblance to the stocky rebel leader.

As many Sri Lankans celebrated the national holiday, the United Nations announced that it estimated 80,000 to 100,000 people had been killed in the war over nearly 30 years.

The UN and human rights groups have blamed indiscriminate shelling by the military for causing many civilian casualties in the push for victory, while accusing the rebels of using tens of thousands of people as a "human shield."

Relief agencies have also become increasingly frustrated at the lack of access to anyone wounded in the war zone or to tens of thousands of displaced Tamil civilians detained in the overcrowded government-run camps.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon is to visit Sri Lanka on Friday and Saturday to lobby for long-term reconciliation on the mainly Sinhalese island.

He told reporters in Geneva he was concerned about the welfare and safety of civilians, and said that any serious allegations of war crimes "should be properly investigated."

Under international pressure to reach out to the Tamil minority, President Mahinda Rajapakse vowed on Tuesday that the island's deep-rooted ethnic divisions would be tackled.

"All should live with equal rights. They should live without any fear or doubt," he told parliament. "Let us all be united."

Rajapakse joined in the street celebrations in the capital Colombo and visited temples after his soldiers' victory.

Ban's chief of staff, Vijay Nambiar, who is in Sri Lanka, was forced to turn back from a visit to war-displaced civilians in the island's north on Wednesday when his helicopter ran into bad weather, officials said.

Load-Date: May 21, 2009



Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka) September 13, 2009 Sunday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1950 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

#### **Body**

Sri Lanka, Sept. 13 -- The fall of Sampoor on September 4, 2006 became a severe blow for the <u>LTTE</u> as it never thought of such a situation even in their wildest dream. However, the <u>LTTE</u> continued to maintain the position that it was a tactical withdrawal from the area.

But they could not hide their complete confusion following the fall of Sampoor as <u>LTTE</u>, declared that the 2002 Ceasefire Agreement which was in effect during the fall of Sampoor was ended. However, there was no official intimation from the <u>LTTE</u> about their position of the Ceasefire during <u>LTTE</u> Political leader S.P. Tahmilselvan's meeting with the Norwegian Ambassador Brattskar on September 06, 2006.

However, the just confine their statement The regarding the Ceasefire to media.

As Special Forces headed by Colonel Prasanna de Silva and the Infantry troops were consolidating their positions in the Sampoor and adjoining areas covering the Kodyar bay which is a vital terrain to maintain the security in the Trincomalee harbour the Government took initiative to take set of journalists including the foreign media to Sampoor on September 09, 2006.

Since the military operation was conducted by the Special Forces and the Infantry troops under the command of Special Forces Brigade Commander Colonel Prasanna de Silva, the details of the operation were not known to many. Therefore, it created confusing situation in the media about the military victory.

The guided media tour enabled the journalists to have a clear picture about the situation in Sampoor and in Muttur area too since it was the day the people in Muttur too were returning to their villages after Security Forces ensure their safety with the capture of Sampoor.

That was the first opportunity made available to the media to visit the conflict affected areas after the Mavil Aru operation and the Special Forces troops were first exposed to the media. The photographs of the SF troops in Sampoor, therefore, became one of the landmark photographs in the fourth Eelam War.

Although Sampur was captured by the troops the long range artillery guns which were based in the Sampur area posing a strategic threat to the movement of Sri Lanka naval ships from Trincomalee harbour across the Koddyar Bay could not be captured during this operation. The <u>LTTE</u> had managed to pull out the bulk of its artillery to safer areas to further southeast around Eechchalmpattu.

Thus, <u>LTTE</u> still retains to a certain extent the capability to use its long-range artillery from positions in depth to interfere with shipping in and out of Trincomalee. So the Security Forces had to continue their operation to make the entire Muttur East cleared of <u>LTTE</u> threats.

Therefore, troops started focusing their attention towards Verugal in the South of Sampoor and the coastal belt between Trincomalee and Batticaloa.

Since the troops could take the upper hand of the battle in Sampoor and capture this strategic township the <u>LTTE</u> too took their time to reconsider launch of any offensive operation against the Security Forces. By this time the <u>LTTE</u> had faced three humiliating defeats in a row and they were not ready to take any risk at this juncture.

It was under these circumstances, the <u>LTTE</u> started pushing the Tamil civilian population displaced from Sampur and Muttur West into Verugal and Vakarai areas in preparation to face the next step of the battle.

Their intention was not to lose further territory to the Security Forces under any circumstances.

After their Muttur and Sampur experience the <u>LTTE</u> had taken advantage of the presence of civilian population to launch attacks in Vakarai and Kathirveli. The <u>LTTE</u> held more than 20,000 people who had moved into the Vakarai area from Sampur apart from the original population living in the area.

It was with the noble objective of liberating the civilian population from the clutches of the **LTTE** the Security Forces planned out an operation in October 2006.

The man behind the Sampur operation Colonel Prasanna de Silva was entrusted with this task too. The Security Forces had to face many challenges when commencing and continuing this operation.

The <u>LTTE</u> made use of the civilian population trapped inside this territory to tarnish the image of the Security Forces having located their long range artillery guns in thickly populated areas in the Vakarai and Kathirveli area.

So it became one of the challenging tasks for the Security Forces and the term humanitarian operation was matched with this operation since the main task of the operation was to liberate the civilian population from the clutches of the *LTTE*.

Having realised the human tragedy caused by the <u>LTTE</u> acts the Government in a message sent to <u>LTTE</u> through Norwegian Special Envoy Jon Hansen Bauer requested the <u>LTTE</u> to create a safe haven for the civilians, allowing them to move towards safer areas.

But the <u>LTTE</u> flatly rejected the Government request totally disregarding the plight of these civilians.

Instead they used the human shield they were having in Kathirveli and Vakarai to evict the Sinhala villagers in Mahindapura, Kallar, Agbopura, Serunuwara, Arippu and other Sinhala settlements extending their artillery and mortar fires towards these Sinhala villages commencing December 07, 2006.

Due to the artillery fire directed towards Somadevi Vidyalaya in Serunuwara and another round of artillery shells fell into the village resulting in the deaths of five civilians.

This prompted the civilian population living there to leave their villages and move towards Kanthale and take refuge at schools and temples in the area.

The Security Forces noticed that the <u>LTTE</u> had moved their guns towards Echchlampattu in the North of Vakarai and towards and Thonithandamadu area in the West of Vakarai.

The Infantry battalions in the general area of Mahindapura on December 09 in order to neutralise the <u>LTTE</u> gun positions in Echchalampattu, moved physically towards the area confronting a large number of <u>LTTE</u> cadres.

During this battle Security Forces were able to push the <u>LTTE</u> cadres further south of Mahindapura killing more than 30 of them. In this battle two Security Forces personnel were also killed and four others reported missing during this limited operation aimed at neutralizing <u>LTTE</u> gun positions directed towards the villages of Mahindapura, Kallar, Serunuwara and Alioluwa areas.

On the same date <u>LTTE</u> intensified its artillery and mortar fires towards Kajuwatta and Mankerni Forward Defences using their 120 mm mortar launchers and 122 mm canons from Kathirveli and Vakarai areas.

On December 10 the infantry troops physically moved ahead of the Kajuwatta Forward Defence line and towards Thonithandamadu to neutralise the 120 mm mortar position of the <u>LTTE</u>. The Security Forces successfully destroyed the <u>LTTE</u> 120 mm mortar launcher killing nearly 40 <u>LTTE</u> cadres wounding a large number in the process.

Six soldiers were also killed and 19 sustained injuries in this confrontation.

Meanwhile, the Security Forces at Kajuwatta FDL also went ahead and took control over the first and second Defence Lines of the <u>LTTE</u> inflicting heavy casualties to <u>LTTE</u> cadres. During this confrontation Security Forces confirmed that 47 **LTTE** cadres had been killed.

Two Army Officers and 16 soldiers were killed during this clash while two officers and 47 other rankers were injured.

The Security Forces had to suffer due to the continuous artillery fire directed from the <u>LTTE</u> in Vakarai and Kathirveli using 120 mm mortar launchers, 122 mm artillery guns located in densely populated areas of Vakarai and Kathirveli and the 152 mm gun located in the Palchena area.

The Security Forces were very careful not to be provoked by the artillery attacks directed from these populated areas since such a reaction would have had brought detrimental consequences on the civilians forcibly kept at schools and other public places by the <u>LTTE</u>. If the Security Forces were able to neutralize these artillery guns they would have easily faced <u>LTTE</u> cadres on the ground compelling them to retreat towards the Thoppigala jungles. The Security Forces moved ahead of Kajuwatta FDL and discovered how the <u>LTTE</u> was keeping buffer food stocks from the food convoys sent by the Government for the use of civilians living in the Vakarai area.

The Security Forces made those observations amid a situation where <u>LTTE</u> through various international organizations were putting the blame on the Government for not sending enough food stocks and medicine for the people living there As the Security Forces taking the upper hand of the battle, the <u>LTTE</u> kept the Panichchankerni bridge as a reserve for demolition by setting explosives in each part of the bridge to explode the bridge at any given time using a remote control devise.

The Security Forces acted very humanely when conducting this operation to salvage 30,000 people from the clutches of terrorism. The Security Forces unlike the <u>LTTE</u> allowed the ICRC to bring the civilian casualties to Valachchena hospitals.

The Security Forces detected that the <u>LTTE</u> is using two 122 mm artillery guns, two 120 mm mortar launchers and 152 high calibre artillery guns to launch their assaults on Security Forces. The <u>LTTE</u> also used 'Mon gun' manufactured by the outfit, in the Vakarai area.

The Security Forces having conducted operations in the area west of Panichchankerni lagoon for few weeks also killed 296 *LTTE* cadres in different confrontations. They also learnt through communication intercepts that more than 133 *LTTE* cadres had sustained injuries during these confrontations.

As these efforts by the Security Forces were going on the civilian population trapped inside Vakarai realized the fact that <u>LTTE</u> is no longer strong enough to control them. The civilians under seige of the <u>LTTE</u> had strongly challenged the Tiger leadership.

By December 15, 2006 the civilian population amounting to 40,000 were aware that the <u>LTTE</u> was in a weaker position and they can easily escape from the <u>LTTE</u> open prison as they were running out of cadres to keep them under their control.

They started to crawl into cleared areas since last Friday through jungles, crossing the lagoon risking their lives. They even braved the guns pointed at their heads by the <u>LTTE</u> cadres who tried to prevent them from escaping to cleared areas.

A group of <u>women</u> challenged one <u>LTTE</u> cadre to shoot them if he wants and started to flee towards the Government held areas.

By December 19 nearly 30,000 internally displaced people arrived mainly to Rideetenna on the Batticaloa - Polonnaruwa main supply route after crossing the Upparu lagoon and through thick jungles to avert heavily mined areas between Vakarai and Kajuwatta. While these civilians reach the cleared areas in Batticaloa a section of civilians from North of Vakarai too reached Selvanagar in Trincomalee after a three-day long hazardous journey across jungle paths. The Security Forces made arrangement to receive those civilians at Rideetenna transit camp.

That was the first occasion such an exodus of civilian arrived in Government controlled areas. The Security Forces along with the INGOs and NGOs operating in the Batticaloa district helped them with food and shelter.

After this huge influx only a few people, a majority of them from the Mahaveer families from the Sampur were living in Vakarai and Kathirveli areas and they too are expected to arrive in cleared areas.

Since the Security Forces faced the first challenge of safely liberating the civilian population at the next step they were ready to launch the next step of the operation to enter Vakarai. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at <a href="https://dication@hindustantimes.com">https://dication@hindustantimes.com</a>

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: September 14, 2009



## Doctor: 64 die in shelling of Sri Lanka hospital

Associated Press International
May 3, 2009 Sunday 12:05 AM GMT

Copyright 2009 Associated Press All Rights Reserved

Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Length: 419 words

Byline: By BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI, Associated Press Writer

Dateline: COLOMBO Sri Lanka

## **Body**

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

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

Sri Lanka has come under increasing international pressure to halt its offensive against the rebels to safeguard the estimated 50,000 ethnic Tamil civilians trapped by the fighting.

The government, which has cornered the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> in a 3-mile-long (5-kilometer-long) coastal strip, has refused, but it did promise to stop launching artillery and airstrikes into the area.

The TamilNet Web site said the government hit the makeshift hospital at Mullivaaykkaal twice on Saturday morning.

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

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

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

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

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

Japanese peace envoy Yasushi Akashi, the latest high-profile diplomat to arrive in Sri Lanka in the past week, said he had heard recent reports of the renewed artillery attacks in the war zone, but he had no way to confirm them. The government has barred journalists and aid workers from the war zone.

The government and rights groups, meanwhile, accused the rebels of holding the civilians as human shields.

Doctor: 64 die in shelling of Sri Lanka hospital

The government air-dropped leaflets on the region Friday, appealing to trapped civilians to flee across the front lines and promising to ensure their safety.

Government forces have ousted the rebels from their northern strongholds in recent months and appear on the verge of ending the nation's quarter-century-old civil war.

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, listed as a terrorist group by many Western nations, have been fighting since 1983 for an ethnic Tamil state in the north and east after decades of marginalization by governments dominated by the Sinhalese majority.

Load-Date: May 3, 2009



## India's Silence on Sri Lankan Bloodshed

Korea Times June 2, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 The Korea Times All Rights Reserved

Length: 645 words

#### **Body**

India, the world's largest democracy, refrained from interfering in the Sri Lankan bloodshed and turned a deaf ear by keeping out of the conflict. Usually, India states it is the regional power, and has declared its position to protect the South Asia region.

But, here is testimony to its ineptitude. The India government didn't take any concrete steps and didn't put any pressure on the Sri Lankan government.

Even India's media rarely posted news about this bloodshed conflict. Even though smoke was rising next to her home, at the bottom of its map, in a neighboring country, India was "kow-towing" and keeping silent.

The conflict in Sri Lanka escalated terribly over the last several weeks before the government declared an end to the long civil war against the separatist <u>Tamil Tigers</u>.

Thousands of lives were lost and thousands of people are suffering in the conflict zone. According to a U.N. press statement on May 13, at least 188,000 people were internally displaced in Vavuniya alone.

Some 1,700 have been wounded and some 50,000 or more are still trapped in the conflict zone. The news from Agence France-Presse (AFP) is that 70,000 people are dead and 250,000 had fled the war zone as internally displaced persons to date.

Due to the lack of free access for rights workers, aid groups and journalists it is difficult to collect accurate casualty figures and it is assumes that actual numbers will be higher.

The pictures, circulated online by Arundhathi Roy (Booker prize winner), show the headless body of a boy and the dead body of a pregnant woman with her baby spilling out of her womb.

Many body parts were scattered here and there among dead bodies and spilled blood. Children and <u>women</u> are the biggest victims of this tragedy - a cruel and inhumane act. Probably it is the biggest "holocaust" in Sri Lanka's civil war.

When democracy in Sri Lanka was hijacked by an extremist group among the majority Sinhalese, the result was the marginalization of small communities and minority groups on the island nation.

Sri Lanka is dominated by Buddhist Sinhalese as a majority, while Hindu/Christian Tamils are an ethnic minority in the country.

The country is led former movie star, Mahinda Rajapaksa, who won the presidential election through populist votes. But his actions against the Tamil ethnic group were totally unfair and heartless.

#### India 's Silence on Sri Lankan Bloodshed

It is true that Sri Lanka has the right to defend its country. However, the government deliberately chose violence instead of a peaceful political solution.

In the case of a peaceful political solution, Sri Lanka's government must provide the Tamil ethnic minority with political rights, such as a self-autonomous administration system preserving its language and culture.

Such a provision and mutual agreement would be fair and acceptable as it is a reflection of the democratic spirit.

The Sri Lankan government's action was a cruel and inhumane act, and it should immediately stop deliberate attacks upon innocent people.

On other side, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) must not use innocent people as human shields, and should quickly return to the negotiating table with the government.

Furthermore regional involvement is necessary to prevent additional bloodshed. Here in South Asia, India is the most appropriate nation to do this, as the international community will be likely to join and support the end of bloodshed.

Of course, India also had committed similar human rights violations in the past - the genocide of the Muslim minority in Gujarat and the Christian minority in Orissa. So it is uncertain what the Indian reaction to bloodshed within its own sphere of interest would be.

Undoubtedly, it is a man-made disaster - a crime against humanity.

In conclusion, the most urgent thing is to provide emergency humanitarian aid to people victimized by the civil war. They are tormented and dying due to its effects.

Load-Date: June 3, 2009



## Fed:Search goes on for Australians lost following Sri Lanka conflict

#### **AAP Newsfeed**

June 17, 2009 Wednesday 2:27 PM AEST

Copyright 2009 Australian Associated Press Pty. Ltd.



Section: DOMESTIC NEWS

Length: 217 words

Dateline: CANBERRA June 17

## **Body**

Authorities are continuing the search for three Australians believed to be among 300,000 people stuck in refugee camps in northern Sri Lanka in the wake of the end of the civil war.

Foreign Minister Stephen Smith told reporters there was nothing to suggest that the three people - two women aged 26 and 29 and a 62-year-old man - were not safe.

"We currently have officials in the north of Sri Lanka to seek to locate the whereabouts of three Australian citizens who we believe are in one of the displaced persons camps," he said.

Mr Smith has raised the matter with his Sri Lankan counterpart.

"We don't have any information that would cause us to believe that the three aren't safe," he said.

"It's just we haven't been able to locate them, either through the UNHCR ... who are working in the displaced camps, nor have we been able to locate them through Sri Lankan authorities, but we are working very hard to do that."

Around 300,000 people are being held in Sri Lankan government camps following Colombo's successful defeat of the *Tamil Tigers*.

The government is using the camps to see if detainees are members of the Tamil Tigers.

Mr Smith again called on Sri Lanka to let the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Red Cross have full access to the camps.

Load-Date: June 18, 2009



## UN may seek Sri Lanka 'war crimes' probe

#### Colombo Times

May 20, 2009 Wednesday

Copyright 2009 Colombo Times. All Rights Reserved Provided by Syndigate.info, an Albawaba.com company



Length: 601 words

## **Body**

Colombo, May 20 -- UN chief Ban Ki-moon says any allegations of war crimes during Sri Lanka's military victory over Tamil Tiger rebels need to be fully investigated.

Thousands of civilians are believed to have been killed during the offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*).

Both sides in the conflict have been accused of rights violations, with numerous aid agencies and rights groups alleging indiscriminate army shelling and condemning the Tigers for using civilians as a human shield.

The UN secretary general, who is due to visit Sri Lanka at the end of the week, told reporters in Geneva that any serious allegations of war crimes "should be properly investigated."

"I remain concerned about the welfare and safety of the civilian population," Ban added on Tuesday.

The UN's main 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 Uhomoibhi.

"The international community must strive to deliver justice to victims of human rights violations," he added.

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, <u>women</u> 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. Pillay said in March that both sides may be guilty of war crimes.

"Nothing we've seen since then has caused us to change our minds, quite the contrary," Colville said, adding that an independent inquiry of some form "is now essential."

Former colonial power Britain also wants a probe, citing the "truly shocking and appalling" numbers of civilian dead. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown had warned the Sri Lankan government that there would be "consequences for its actions."

#### UN may seek Sri Lanka 'war crimes' probe

UN officials say more than 6,500 Tamil civilians have died in the conflict since the start of the year, with the final days of the battle described as a "bloodbath on the beaches."

According to the campaign group Human Rights Watch, satellite imagery and witness accounts contradict government claims that heavy weapons have not been used. It said both sides in the war were using civilians as "cannon fodder."

Amnesty International has also demanded that "the mounting evidence of serious violations of international law" be investigated.

The hawkish government of President Mahinda Rajapakse described its military operation against the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> 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.

"They are trying to preach to us about civilians," Rajapakse said at a recent public rally after meeting British and French ministers.

"I tell them to go and see what they are doing in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Published by HT Syndication with permission from The Colombo Times.

Load-Date: May 21, 2009



#### Prabha killed

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka) May 19, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1141 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, May 19 -- The Military declared yesterday that the entire country had been liberated from terrorism after more than three decades of war with the death of *LTTE* leader Velupilai Prabhakaran.

"We have defeated the <u>LTTE</u> led by Prabhakaran and have liberated the entire country. It is now freed from <u>LTTE</u> terrorism," Army Commander Sarath Fonseka announced on state television. He said the body of Prabhakaran's eldest son Charles Anthony was found beside the bodies of several senior <u>LTTE</u> leaders. "We have also found bodies of several other <u>LTTE</u> leaders, and are carrying out checks to confirm whether one of the bodies is that of the <u>LTTE</u> leader," the Army Chief said.

According to those on the ground a fierce battle had erupted since early yesterday, while the Special Forces and Commandos continued to make inroads into LTTE-held areas in the Karayamullavaikkal area. Close quarter clashes erupted with each side trading in small arms fire at a location close to the Nanthikandal Lagoon. At about 5:00 a.m. yesterday the LTTE captured a military ambulance, which was transporting two critically injured soldiers towards Puthukudiyirruppu. A group of nearly 100 LTTE cadres believed to include LTTE leader Prabhakaran and senior leaders including LTTE intelligence chief Pottu Amman and Sea Tiger leader Soosai managed to infiltrate the army's forward defence line and reportedly attacked the ambulance. The driver and two critically injured soldiers however managed to escape the attack and jumped into the nearby lagoon. Later some of the LTTE leaders had reportedly got into the ambulance and proceeded towards Puthukudiyirruppu. But the Special Forces personnel launched an attack on the fleeing LTTE cadres causing the ambulance to catch fire. A fierce gun battle ensued between the two parties for more than an hour and resulted with more than 250 bodies of LTTE cadres lying scattered in the area. The bodies were recovered and were subjected to identification. The military later said they believed Prabakaran was among the dead while the Defence Ministry said "all top LTTE leaders were believed to be killed during their abortive attempt to flee from advancing troops yesterday morning." "Troops have found a charred body suspected to be that of LTTE supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran. But, sources say a positive identification is yet to be made," the ministry said. Sources in an unconfirmed report revealed that LTTE's intelligence wing chief Pottu Amman and Sea Tiger wing leader Soosai were killed in yesterday's battle. With this attack the LTTE has lost its top leaders while the body of Charles Anthony and the bodies of nine other LTTE cadres were recovered during mop-up operations in the area. The bodies were found a few metres away from the ambulance. Later the bodies of more senior leaders including those of LTTE's Intelligence Wing Leader Pottu Amman, LTTE military leader Bhanu, LTTE military leader Jeyam, Political Chief B. Nadesan, Head of LTTEs Peace Secretariat S.Pulidevan, <u>LTTE</u> special military leader Ramesh, <u>LTTE</u> police chief llango, aide to <u>LTTE</u> leader's son Sudharman, senior intelligence leader Thomas, <u>LTTE</u> military leader Luxman, senior sea tiger cadre Sri Ram, LTTE female military leader Iseiaravi, LTTE deputy intelligence leader Kapil Amman, female LTTE training in charge, Ajanthi, LTTE mortar in charge Wardha, Secretary to LTTE leader Pudiyawan, Special military leader Jenarthan were also found in the vicinity. Meanwhile, history was made at the Temple Trees yesterday when

#### Prabha killed

the Secretary Defence, Chief of Defence Staff, Service Commanders, Police Chief and Civil Defence Force Commander formally informed the Head of State, Commander in Chief, President Mahinda Rajapaksa that the 30vear-war against LTTE terrorism was successfully concluded and the country is totally free of terrorist acts. The monumental event, a first in Sri Lanka's history took place at the Temple Trees last afternoon at a simple ceremony. After President Rajapaksa took his place at the red carpeted podium, Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa walked to him and informed in a solemned voice that the war against terrorism has been successfully concluded, trapped civilians have been rescued and the entire country is free from the scourge of terrorism. President acknowledging the intimation according to the tradition shook hands of his brother with a broad smile. Afterwards, Chief of Defence Staff Air Chief Marshal Donald Perera, Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka, Navy Commander Vice Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda, Air Force Commander Air Marshal Roshan Goonathilaka, Police Chief Jayantha Wickremaratne and Commander Civil Defence Force Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekara followed suit. President later had an informal discussion with them and went down the memory lane recollecting the mayhem caused not only to Sri Lanka but beyond its boarders and in India in particular by Velupillai Prbhakaran and his fellow travellers of mayhem and carnage in the last 30 years. "The LTTE terrorism has destroyed billions of rupees worth of state and private properties, thousands of innocent lives including toddlers, expectant mothers, old and sick in its trail of destruction. Two heads of state, Presidential candidates, a long list of ministers, political leaders, dignitaries and religious leaders were not spared by the LTTE." President recalled. Meanwhile, the ICRC, yesterday, called on the authorities to give wounded displaced people immediate treatment. In a statement, the ICRC said that, for nine consecutive days, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had been pursuing efforts to reach the area of north-eastern Sri Lanka hard hit by fighting in recent weeks. The ICRC has therefore been unable to obtain first-hand information about the needs of civilians and wounded people in the area. Although thousands of civilians have fled the conflict zone in the past days and weeks, the ICRC remains concerned about the wounded needing urgent medical care. "Under international humanitarian law, the lives of all those who are not, or are no longer, fighting must be spared. Wounded and sick people must be collected and cared for immediately, and detainees must be treated humanely," said the ICRC's director of operations, Pierre Krahenbuhl, from the ICRC's headquarters in Geneva today. "This is all the more urgent since no humanitarian aid has reached those who need it for over a week." The ICRC has proposed to the authorities that it help evacuate any remaining civilians from the area where fighting has been taking place, care for the sick and wounded, and provide emergency assistance for the displaced. The ICRC will seize any opportunity that presents itself to enter the area and assess the situation. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2009



## 'Black july' 1983 marks the start of full-scale civil war in Sri Lanka

The Gazette (Montreal)
May 2, 2009 Saturday
Final Edition

Copyright 2009 The Gazette, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publication Inc. All Rights Reserved

Section: SATURDAY EXTRA; Pg. B4

Length: 789 words

Byline: Marian Scott, The Gazette

#### **Body**

1796-1948 Under British colonial rule, educated Tamils enjoy favour.

1948 Ceylon gains independence, ending 152 years of British rule.

1956 Sinhala is declared the sole official language.

Peaceful protest by Tamil leaders sparks widespread anti-Tamil rioting.

1958 Anti-Tamil riots kill hundreds and displace thousands.

1971 The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, a leftist Sinhalese youth movement, seizes power in the south in a two-week insurrection.

1972 Ceylon becomes the republic of Sri Lanka. Tamils are excluded from the constitutional process.

The Tamil New Tigers (TNT), a militant nationalist group, form.

1976 The TNT becomes the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and calls for a separate Tamil state.

1981 Police burn down the Jaffna Public Library, destroying its priceless collection of Tamil works, including ancient manuscripts inscribed on palm leaves.

1983 <u>LTTE</u> attack kills 13 soldiers, sparking anti-Tamil pogroms beginning on July 23. Thousands are killed or chased from their homes and businesses are looted. "Black July" marks the start of full-scale civil war.

1985 First peace talks with *LTTE* end in failure.

1987 Having earlier armed the <u>LTTE</u>, India deploys a peacekeeping force to enforce a truce. However, the <u>LTTE</u> refuses to lay down arms and the situation degenerates into open conflict in which 1,000 Indian troops die over three years.

1991 A female LTTE suicide bomber kills former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

A separate suicide attack kills Sri Lanka's defence minister.

1993 Sri Lanka President Ranasinghe Premadasa dies in a bomb attack.

1996 Suicide attack on Central Bank building in Colombo kills more than 100 and injures 1,400

1998 <u>LTTE</u> captures Kilinochchi army camp, killing more than 1,000 government soldiers.

2001 <u>LTTE</u> blows up half of Sri Lankan Airline's fleet in a suicide attack on Bandaranaike Airport that damages the country's economy.

2002 Norway mediates a ceasefire between the *LTTE* and government forces.

2003 <u>LTTE</u> pulls out of peace talks, citing insufficient efforts to reconstruct the war-ravaged north. The ceasefire holds.

2004 Renegade <u>LTTE</u> commander Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan, known as Karuna Amman, splits from the Tigers.

Tsunami devastates coastal communities, killing more than 30,000. Disputes over disaster relief further ignite tensions.

2005 Snipers kill Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar.

**LTTE** attacks government troops in north.

Mahinda Rajapaksa is elected president after Tamils in *LTTE*-controlled areas boycott the election.

2006 <u>LTTE</u> and government forces clash in the northeast in the worst fighting since the 2002 ceasefire. Government begins driving the *LTTE* out of its eastern strongholds.

2007 LTTE stages an air strike during the Cricket World Cup Final.

Police expel hundreds of Tamils from Colombo. A court order halts the expulsions.

Government troops capture the last <u>LTTE</u> stronghold in the east, winning back the entire eastern province from the Tigers.

Jan. 2008 Sri Lanka officially withdraws from the 2002 ceasefire; however, the LTTE does not.

Sept. 2008 Government orders aid agencies in <u>LTTE</u>-controlled Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts to relocate to Vavuniya.

Jan. 2009 Government troops capture Kilinochchi, de-facto capital of the *LTTE*, after 10 years. President Rajapaksa urges the rebels to surrender.

Feb. 2009 Government declares a 12-kilometre "no-fire zone" along Mullaitivu coast and calls on civilians to move there for their safety.

Government rejects international calls for a temporary ceasefire, saying it is on the verge of destroying the LTTE.

**LTTE** stages suicide air attack in Colombo.

March 2009 Former rebel leader Karuna is sworn in as minister of national integration and reconciliation.

Government troops launch offensive to regain areas in the Vanni region.

April 20 Thousands of civilians trapped in the no-fire zone cross into government-controlled areas, where they are placed in camps. Government orders the **LTTE** to surrender.

April 22 Two senior <u>LTTE</u> officials, former media co-ordinator Velayutham Dayanidhi, better known as Daya Master, and translator Kumar Pancharathnam, alias George, surrender to government troops.

April 26 <u>LTTE</u> declares a unilateral ceasefire but the government rejects the move as "a joke." The UN estimates 50,000 civilians remain trapped in the no-fire zone.

April 27 Sri Lanka announces it will no longer use heavy weaponry and aerial raids against the remaining rebels in the no-fire zone.

Sources: IRIN, the humanitarian news and analysis service of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; International Centre for Ethnic Studies; Burning Books and Leveling Libraries: Extremist Violence and Cultural Destruction by Rebecca Knuth (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006); Reuters

## **Graphic**

Photo: REUTERS; A Sri Lankan government soldier rides in an armoured vehicle near the "no-fire zone" in northern Sri Lanka last month.;

Photo: REUTERS; Police officers stand near the site of a suicide bomb attack in Habarana, Sri Lanka. A truck loaded with explosives had rammed into a Sri Lankan naval convoy, killing at least 92 people, on Oct. 16, 2006. ;

**Load-Date:** May 4, 2009



# National: Sri Lanka war: Nearly 6,500 Tamil civilians killed, says UN: 14,000 also injured since January, figures indicate: Toll greater than that of recent Israel-Gaza conflict

The Guardian - Final Edition
April 25, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 Guardian Newspapers Limited All Rights Reserved



Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 21

Length: 632 words

Byline: Gethin Chamberlain and David Pallister

## **Body**

Sri Lanka's civil war is killing civilians in greater numbers than the Gaza conflict earlier this year, according to UN figures released yesterday which indicated that almost 6,500 ethnic Tamils had been killed in the last three months.

Two UN officials privately confirmed to the Guardian that 6,432 civilians had died, with 14,000 injured, since the end of January. At least 2,000 people are understood to have been killed in the last month but the death toll does not include those killed in this week's intense fighting.

The UN has declined to publicly release its casualty figures, but the numbers indicate that, with 500 dying every week, the toll is heavier than it was in Gaza, where a three-week conflict left 1,400 dead. The Sri Lankan government has faced far weaker international censure for its offensive against the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> than Israel did for its war in Gaza.

Colombo denies allegations - supported by credible witness evidence from aid agencies and Tamil civilians - that hundreds of innocent people have been killed by the army in heavy shelling.

The government insists soldiers are only lightly armed and are trying to rescue trapped people. In the propaganda war that has accompanied the crisis the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> have also denied allegations that they were holding civilians hostage as human shields.

A UN spokesman, Gordon Weiss, warned yesterday that fighting was now expected to intensify. quot;The government is saying publicly that there will be no more breaks in the fighting so that suggests that there will be another push in the next few days,quot; he said.

The Sri Lankan government has indicated it is determined to settle the 25-year-old civil war once and for all by seizing the final war zone, a coastal sliver of land in which the Tamil rebel leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, is believed to be holding out.

National: Sri Lanka war: Nearly 6,500 Tamil civilians killed, says UN: 14,000 also injured since January, figures indicate: Toll greater than that of recent Is....

Diplomatic moves to apply pressure on the Sri Lankan government have accelerated in recent days, but with little apparent impact. Indian envoys pushing for a truce met Sri Lanka's president, Mahinda Rajapaksa, in Colombo yesterday, but returned to India with no breakthroughs.

The UN secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, has said he is sending a humanitarian team to the stricken north-eastern region. The Sri Lankan government gave conflicting signals yesterday about whether it would welcome a mission.

It argues that there may be no need for a visit because as many as 100,000 civilians have fled the region in the past week. The UN believes 50,000 civilians are still trapped in the war zone.

While the government has allowed aid agencies to help those fleeing the conflict, Sri Lanka's ambassador to the UN said only the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Catholic charity Caritas had been permitted to enter the conflict area.

The ICRC said it evacuated 530 people on Thursday and 350 the day before, including families and sick and wounded people.

On Wednesday the UN security council, which had been accused of inaction, called on the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> to lay down their arms and urged the Sri Lankan government to uphold international humanitarian laws and allow international aid agencies into areas of need.

The UN and western nations, including the US and the UK, have pressed for an immediate halt to the fighting to allow time for civilians to leave the war zone safely.

The UN's humanitarian coordinator, Neil Buhne, said tens of thousands of people were living in camps in the northern town of Vavuniya.

quot;I saw infants with dysentery, malnourished children and <u>women</u>, untended wounds, and people dressed in the ragged clothing they've been wearing for months, quot; the Associated Press quoted him as saying.

25

The number of years the civil war has been going on. The Sri Lankan government says it is close to crushing the *Tamil Tigers* 

Load-Date: April 25, 2009



## The man who destroyed Eelam - Part 2:

Daily News (Sri Lanka)
July 3, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 3122 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, July 3 -- Indoctrination of youth

Prabhakaran had everything: territory, international support and committed fighters. Senior journalist SHYAM TEKWANI, who has covered the <u>LTTE</u> 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 (It is another story that while every instance of a cadre biting into the vial during the course of assorted battles captured headlines, there was barely any mention of the many more who threw the vial away for safety). While Prabhakaran majestically posed for the camera with his 'cubs' (as he called the children he recruited), there were a few restrictions: He did not like being photographed while satiating his enormous appetite for food. No photographs of his <u>female</u> cadres and none of his dead and dying. These sanctions were lifted after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. Prabhakaran quickly developed a media unit - photographers and videographers - which documented every battle and assassination that the group conducted.

This served two purposes - as a teaching aid, it came closest to the real thing next to classroom simulations. Besides, it provided archival material for the history books that would be written once Eelam became a reality. This obsession for a visual record proved disastrous for the LTTE - it led the investigators of Rajiv Gandhi's murder right to its doorstep. Visiting the group's training camps in the peninsula after Rajiv Gandhi's murder, the first thing I noticed were the baby-faced boys, some not even in their teens. Their field training began with an oath on their leader: "To achieve Tamil Eelam, my life and soul, all this, I sacrifice. We'll be very faithful and trustworthy to our elder brother, Mr Prabhakaran, the leader of our revolutionary organisation. I now begin my training. The thirst of Tigers is Tamil Eelam." This was also repeated at the end of the day when their flag was lowered down the mast. Their history lessons were an endless litany of hatred against the enemy - only comprising rapists, butchers and racists - and the glories of ancient Tamil kingdoms and kings. Classic indoctrination. The classroom instructions centred around battlefield strategies (on a blackboard with a piece of chalk and some war movies), case studies (reconstructed with videos and photographs) from their previous battles and assassinations and finally a film from an extraordinary video collection of B-grade Hollywood action movies. Rambo was the popular choice. Adventure In the prevailing environment of anxiety and hopelessness, Prabhakaran was crafty enough to whip up hatred and give a machine gun to his potential recruits among the boys and girls. The romance of the gun, for a teenager fed on a limitless diet of action movies, hatred for the identified enemy, a sense of purpose and an assurance of immortality, is an aphrodisiac far more potent than the promise of seventy-two virgins in paradise. The thrill of adventure for a 12-year old Rambo-in-the-making is a mesmerising experience. It invests in him power he could never dream of. The only occasion when I accepted their offer of testing a Kalashnikov was instructive. I fired into the horizon across the sea. As we sauntered away feeling like real men after a few rounds, I suddenly froze in horror. I became aware of my posture and swagger, feeling invincible and indestructible - and realized that, despite

the stiffness in my shoulder caused by the weapon's recoil - my arms and legs moved exactly like Rambo, like in the movie I had watched with them in their classroom. If I, a 30-something man of the world, could feel this magical glow of indestructibility shield me from death, it was not difficult to imagine the effect on a 12-year old who knows no other life than the one under Prabhakaran's incantations. The added incentive was that as a cadre, bed and board were provided for on a priority basis in any hamlet that one walked into, brandishing the gun. If this was not motivation enough, there was then the promise of immortality. Poems and shrines were built in the memory of those who submitted their lives for the cause. BEHIND LINES One of the essential experiences of embedding yourself with the LTTE was the interaction with the wild-looking boys, bare-footed and ragged. They were your mates, guides and guardians during the tour of the frontlines and combat zones. When you lived alongside them, shared food and experiences under fire, you tended to bond with them. Survival often depended upon this sense of comradeship. Camaraderie, which relaxed their adherence to the strict code of discipline they were sworn to as they pulled out a deck of cards to kill time between attacks, could lead to bias - however much one guarded oneself against it - especially when in skirmishes in the jungle your camera kit and their Kalashnikovs got entangled. But you never met the same lot ever again. They were either killed before your next trip or rotated to another location. It was rare to learn anything about them through querying the new batch - since each of them operated under a nom de guerre. One looked for a familiar face on the sea of posters and cutouts of martyrs scattered across the peninsula. Likewise, the innumerable shrines that kept multiplying between visits - shrines in honour of the valorous and where people went to pray with their incense sticks and flowers. There would be an odd sighting or two or a rare letter from some family member sharing their grief of their dead son. Occasionally, a smartly dressed, well fed stranger would approach you on the street in New York, a wedding in London, a restaurant in Paris or in the shadows of a temple corridor in Thanjavur and identify himself as being a member of the party you accompanied on such and such a trip. Or you would recognise a face in the papers - making the wrong kind of news in a country which had granted him citizenship. ADELE AND FREEDOM BIRDS On guard LTTE cadre guarding the waterfront from the ramparts of the destroyed Dutch fort Civil control Cadre at their checkpost controlling civilian movements in their territory in Kilinochchi Killing time Cadre with a deck of cards- a rare anomaly in a group famed for its iron discipline Taking stock Prabakaran in his safari-suit with the BalasinghamsThe Freedom Birds - as the girls were now called - were the ace up Prabhakaran's sleeve. With the IPKF steadily depleting his manpower among the rank and file, Prabhakaran had to turn even more to the girls and children to replenish his forces. The task of inducting the girls was assigned to "Auntie" Adele Balasingham. Girls, at this point, were banded together as the Students Organisation of Liberation Tigers (SOLT) and were used in peripheral roles as befitted their status in Jaffna society - in servitude, ushering in crowds at an event, distributing pamphlets, reciting poems extolling the greatness of their National Leader or singing paeans in honour of a recent suicide bomber. Adele's task was made easy by the prevailing oppressive caste and class system and the alleged atrocities of the IPKF. She offered the guarantee of emancipating the girls from the traditional role of Tamil women by fighting shoulder to shoulder with the boys in pursuit of their freedom. A few months after the murder of Rajiv Gandhi, during a conversation in Jaffna, she would proudly claim: "The most historic development for the Jaffna woman in recent years is her confidence." Following the death, by cancer in 2007, of her husband Anton Balasingham, the self-described theoretician, chief negotiator and political advisor to Prabhakaran, Adele continues to actively work for her leader quietly and away from the media glare from her base in London. THE DEPUTIES Gopalaswamy Mahendraraja, better known by his nom de guerre Mahathaya, Prabhakaran's extremely popular deputy, could have easily been mistaken for Prabhakaran by anyone whose only awareness of the LTTE leaders was based on a perfunctory glance at media photographs. They were built alike and sprouted thick moustaches. In Prabhakaran's presence, Mahathaya was almost hunched in servility, respectful and barely uttering a word until spoken to. His transformation on the battlefield, however, was amazing. Mahathaya's silence was compensated by Yogi's loud voice. It was with Yogi that Prabhakaran seemed to share an easy relationship. Laughing and joking over a Chinese lunch, the two seemed to be best buddies. Yogi strutted with his convent-educated English - much in the manner of a subordinate who wants to appear as an equal in the presence of people he seeks to impress; Mahathaya was diffident and respectful in the presence of authority, his leader. On the battlefield, as I joined the motley bunch Mahathaya led against the advancing army, I could barely associate him with the deputy who almost scraped in servility in the presence of his boss. Yogi was the wellscrubbed, smooth and oily politician, Mahathaya the dutiful and popular army commander. When Mahathaya marched into Trincomalee at the head of a big army of freshly uniformed cadres along with Yogi to watch the back of the last IPKF soldier disappear from view in March 1990, they took to the podium to thank the big crowds the LTTE had corralled at the town's stadium. Yogi included the media in his thanksgiving and singled out a couple of

us by name as those who had fought as much as they for their struggle. Barely over a year later, with Rajiv murdered and the investigation clearly pointing to the LTTE as his killers, Yogi's first reaction upon greeting me in Jaffna was a bitter utterance of "yellow journalist" accompanied by a ferocious mouthful of spit at me, while Balasingham and Adele watched in grim silence. World opinion was beginning to weigh heavily against them. Their nerves were clearly on edge. Prabhakaran denied any role in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and instead set into motion an elaborate exercise to disprove Dhanu's (Rajiv Gandhi's killer) link with the LTTE. Meetings were set up with her 'parents', neighbours, and 'friends' all over the peninsula. At the end of the long day, after a snack of hot vadas at their thatched roof headquarters near Jaffna town, when my increasing skepticism of their charade began to get the better of their gentle persuasiveness, Balasingham and Yogi pushed back their chairs and declared the meeting over. The parting shot was as astounding as it was petty - pay for the vadas you just ate. When I awoke the next morning, the bicycle I depended on to traverse the peninsula was gone. Their fabled public relations machinery was beginning to crack and yet unknown to the world, trouble was brewing within. A year later, in a move that stunned his followers, Prabhakaran struck against Mahathaya who he had anointed as his deputy during the war against the IPKF in 1987. Accusing him of treachery and collaborating with the Indians against him, Prabhakaran placed Mahathaya in custody, liquidated most of Mahathaya's troops and decisively crushed a potential rival to his supremacy as leader. Mahathaya was executed after a prolonged period of torture in December 1994. Yogi, whose loyalty too came under suspicion, was consigned to the doghouse to expect a similar fate. After years in anxious oblivion, he reappeared as head of the LTTE's History Division on Black Tigers Day, the commemoration of suicide bombers, in July 2006. He spoke on the occasion and asked, "Weren't bombs made to blow up and kill men? So why is there such a cry when only a man becomes a human bomb?" He was subsequently rehabilitated to his current position as military advisor in the Vanni. Balasingham and his wife Adele rose even more higher in their leader's estimate. The Balasinghams - who posed no threat of any sort to their master - became the face of the organisation across Western capitals and were an essential part of all negotiating teams at various times. THE TAMIL 'STATE' Prabakaran's moment of triumph in ejecting the IPKF (March 1990) out of his domain, powered him with greater confidence. He felt vindicated in his belief that Eelam was a reality within his grasp. His surviving boys had gained invaluable experience during the thirty months of 'vanquishing the fourth-largest army in the world'; the girls had proved their worth and were now battle-hardened; recruiting was never easier, his stock with his donors, the Tamil diaspora, was at its peak; and the media doted on him as their new darling. It was at this point that he tightened the security around him and set about the task of constructing a state within a state. He reintroduced taxation on his population, decreed the *LTTE* flag as the Tamil national flag, set up courts, police stations and 'ministries' that oversaw agriculture, education, rehabilitation and economic development. But his main preoccupation was in developing a conventional armed force. Military traditions - a formal ranking system, uniforms, gun salutes, parades, ceremonial funerals of flag draped cadres killed in action became the norm. Sarongs and flip-flops gave way to smartly pressed uniforms and spit-and-polish boots. Twenty years before he acquired the half-a-dozen ZLIN-143 aircraft to boast of being the only terrorist group in the world to possess an air wing, I was led to the LTTE's "ordnance factory" in Manipay in 1985 to witness and photograph the aircraft his "aeronautical engineers" were assembling. The fact that it had a 200cc motorcycle engine to power it did not mask his intent to attempt building a conventional Armed Force, with its land, air and sea wings. "Geographically", he stressed at the very beginning, "the security of Tamil Eelam is interlinked with that of its seas." He then turned against his benefactor, the Sri Lankan president, Ranasinghe. Premadasa, who had colluded with him to evict the IPKF and kept him on his toes until Prabhakaran had him killed by a suicide bomber three years later in1993. DIASPORA Martyrs gallery Civilians paying homage to suicide bombers on Black Tigers' Day Female squad Black Tigers at a parade in Mullaitivuln his annual Heroes Day speech - that he delivers a day after his birthday - Prabhakaran, in November 2006 made his first direct appeal to the diaspora in funding the 'Final War' he had launched in July after the European Union joined a growing list of countries that had proscribed the group. Funds were drying up. "We express our gratitude to the Tamil Diaspora, our displaced brethren living all around the world, for their contribution to our struggle and ask them to maintain their unwavering participation and support." This was in marked contrast to rebuking them for being "quitters" and "losers" in the late 1980s. Donations, however, have not always been voluntary. Following the crackdown on the LTTE by Canada and The European Union in 2006, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police released a report on their 4-year investigation (Operation Osaluki) into the Canadian fundraising efforts of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>. The report revealed that the <u>LTTE</u> subjects Sri Lankan Tamils living in Canada and other Western countries to intimidation, extortion and even violence to ensure a steady flow of funds for its operations. COSTLY MISTAKE When Rajiv Gandhi was on the political comeback trail in

#### The man who destroyed Eelam - Part 2:

May 1991, Prabhakaran wasted no time in executing a pre-emptive strike. He dispatched his homegrown poet, Kasi Anandan - who had only a year ago thrilled the victorious LTTE cadres at a gathering in Trincomalee with his description of the IPKF as the Italian-Parsi Killing Force - to lull any apprehensions that anyone might have about the former Prime Minister's security. The ruse, clearly, worked. Except that Prabakaran's fool-proof plan did not count on having his photographer killed with the evidence against him intact on his body. The murder of Rajiv Gandhi by the world's first woman suicide bomber set in motion a process that has finally come to destroy his ambition. India proscribed the group and though it took the United States six years to follow the lead and the 9/11 attacks to give the proscription some teeth, the new security climate induced other passive supporters of the LTTE in Western capitals to ban the outfit in their countries. With international opinion against him, Prabhakaran retreated into his hideouts, eased himself out of the media spotlight, only granting even rarer access to international media to lamely deny any hand in his dastardly act. He now began wearing the black thread of his cyanide vial outside his shirt in an ostentatious display of his commitment to the cause. The holster with his pistol now found place outside his camouflage shirt signaling that he was no more 'Thambi' (younger brother) or 'Anna' (elder brother) to his followers nor merely the National Leader of Tamil Eelam but the Supreme Commander of the LTTE. The recently released photographs from the treasure trove of albums that the Sri Lankan troops found in the fleeing Prabhakaran's house are very instructive. The black string holding the vial of cyanide has disappeared in a number of images where he is with his family. Neither is his son, equally portly, seen to be wearing one even with his combat fatigues. HUMAN SHIELDS From the very beginning it was apparent that he would make 'people' his buzz word. First, declare he was on the path he had chosen for their sake, to liberate them. Second, attack the enemy over the shoulders of civilians to provoke an enraged counterattack that would kill innocents and garner him publicity at low cost. Finally, shield himself from attacks by closing all their exits at the point of his guns. The bulk of LTTE's attacks against the IPKF were initiated around the core strategy of using civilians as shields. The IPKF helicopter gunship attack in Chavakachcheri was one such classic example. The LTTE positioned its gunmen in the most crowded part of the town - the market - to fire provocatively in the directions of the choppers that were flying at a safe distance from ground fire. At the Chavakachcheri morgue where families of victims were hurling anti-Indian abuses at me, a middle-aged woman took me aside. Apologising for the hostility of the mourners, she muttered, "Hitler killed not his own people, but Jews. But Prabhakaran is killing Tamil people." Civilians as human shields clearly appears to be a central part of Prabhakaran's strategy to escape from his present entrapment. 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

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: July 3, 2009



Resource News International

November 4, 2009 Wednesday 9:19 AM EST

Copyright 2009 Comtex News Network, Inc. All Rights Reserved Copyright 2009 Resource News International



This content is provided to LexisNexis by Comtex News Network, Inc.

Length: 1426 words

Byline: Resource News International

Dateline: WINNIPEG, MB

## **Body**

The following is a quick glimpse of the news making the headlines in Canada.

CANADA'S H1N1 VACCINE SURPLUS BEING SENT ABROAD

Even while Canadians line up for hours for scarce supplies of H1N1 vaccine, Canada's chief public health officer is sayingthat our pandemic vaccine manufacturer has shipped bulkquantities of parts of the vaccine out of the country.

In remarks to reporters Tuesday in British Columbia, Dr.David Butler-Jones said GlaxoSmithKline has shipped bulkquantities of the antigen, the main ingredient of the vaccine, toother nations that need it.

Butler-Jones explained that GSK has made more antigen thancan be bottled and since enough has been produced for Canada'sneeds, the surplus went overseas.

This comes as Canadians are being told that there is solittle vaccine being sent to the provinces this week, some flushot clinics have had to be closed.

Alberta had to cancel clinics over the weekend. Otherprovinces are restricting access to the vaccine to just youngchildren under five years of age and pregnant <u>women</u>, while adultswith chronic illnesses are being told to wait.

The slowdown in getting vaccine out to the flu clinicsappears to lie in the processes that come after vaccine antigenis produced at GSK's plant in Ste-Foy, Que.

After production, it is bottled into vials and then passedthrough a "fill line" for quality control and distribution. Butit appears the antigen is being produced faster than the vialscan be filled, so the excess is being exported.

A spokesperson for GlaxoSmithKline explained to a number ofnews outlets Tuesday that enough of the antigen had been produced to meet Canada's target of making available 50.4 million doses of vaccine. Because they had an excess, they are now exporting the excess for filling for international markets, including the WorldHealth Organization.

The spokesperson did not indicate how much excess antigenwas produced, nor did she say when or where it was shipped.

Butler-Jones assured Canadians that the bulk exports won'tslow down the country's swine flu vaccination campaign and won'timpact how long Canadians wait to be immunized.

"There has been bulk vaccine that we're not able to actually fill here so that has been exported," he said. "But all of the vaccine that we can fill in Canada has stayed and will stay in Canada until our immunization is complete."

But at flu shot clinics across the country, supplies remainlow and lineups continue.

The shortage problem worsened this week when GSK shifted itsfocus to preparing and shipping vaccine without adjuvant forpregnant <u>women</u>.

GSK said Tuesday it has now finished producing that version of the vaccine and is again focusing efforts on the vaccine intended for the majority of Canadians. (CTV News)

```
TORIES PROPOSE PARENTAL BENEFITS FOR SELF-EMPLOYED
```

Ottawa - Farmers, hairdressers, real-estate agents and otherself-employed workers will have access to parental, sickness and compassionate-care benefits as early as January 2011 underlegislation proposed Tuesday by the federal Conservativegovernment.

The voluntary plan for collecting special employmentinsurance benefits was applauded by representatives of smallbusiness owners, as well as the federal NDP, as a long-overduebreak for self-employed people.

Catherine Swift, president of the Canadian Federation ofIndependent Businesses, said the initiative fills a "glaring gap" for people running their own business, especially **women**.

"We have a lot of <u>women</u> members. They'd like to have a childand yet abandoning your business is not (an option)," Swift saidin an interview.

Swift said the most important aspect of the plan is thatit's voluntary.

"If you are roping in every self-employed person to coverthis off, then we don't think that would be right," she said.

Under the proposal, self-employed people will be eligible tocollect special EI benefits after they have paid into the systemfor one full year, and earned a minimum of \$6,000 during that year. Premium payments could begin as early as Jan. 1, 2010.

Once someone collects benefits, they would have to continuepaying premiums as long as they are self-employed. They can optout of the plan at the end of any tax year as long as they havenot claimed any benefits.

```
In Quebec, self-employed residents — who already received maternity and parental benefits under a provincial plan — would have the option of buying into the federal plan for sick and compassionate-care benefits.
```

Human Resources Minister Diane Finley promoted thelegislation, called the Fairness for the Self-Employed Act, as a"family friendly policy" that should assist people who havelittle or no income protection to cope with such major lifeevents as adopting a child or caring for a dying loved one.

Although the Tories promised to extend maternity andparental benefits to the self-employed in the 2006 electioncampaign, the proposal unveiled Tuesday expands the list tosickness and compassionate-care benefits.

There are an estimated 2.6 million self-employed workers in Canada and Finley says the initiative is expected to be largely self-financing.

Self-employed individuals who sign on will pay \$1.73 forevery \$100 of self-employment income up to the maximum insurableearnings ceiling of \$42,300. It is the same premium as regular Elcontributors pay. The payment does not, however, give theself-employed access to jobless benefits if their businessesclose.

The legislation would provide the self-employed withmaternity benefits for up to 15 weeks, parental and adoptivebenefits for up to 35 weeks, and compassionate care benefits forup to six weeks. They are the same benefits available toemployees.

The legislation stands a good chance of winning approval in the minority Conservative Parliament.

New Democrat Yvon Godin, his party's El critic, called theplan a "good start," and suggested the NDP would support it.

The New Brunswick MP said he's particularly pleased itincludes sick benefits because so many self-employed people livein fear of destitution if something happens to their health.

The Liberal EI critic, Michael Savage, said the partyfavours extending special benefits to the self-employed, butwants to take closer look at the fine print before committing to supporting the legislation. (Canwest News Service)

```
TAMIL TIGERS LOOK TO REGROUP IN CANADA: EXPERT
```

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> organization hopes to use Canada as astrategic base to continue the fight against the government of Sri Lanka, according to an authority on the alleged terroristgroup.

"I cannot think of any other country that is more importantfor the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> as Canada, to regroup and continue theircampaign against Sri Lanka," said Prof. Rohan Gunaratna, head ofthe International Centre for Political Violence and TerrorismResearch, a Singapore-based think-tank.

Gunaratna is advising the Canadian government as itinvestigates the 75 Tamil migrants currently in immigration custody in Vancouver. The men were found aboard a ship seized offthe coast of British Columbia on Oct. 17.

Lawyers for the men have said they are not *Tamil Tigers*, butGunaratna disagreed.

"There are many members of the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> on board thatvessel," Gunaratna said in an interview from Singapore. The Tigers banned in Canada as a terrorist organization were defeated in May 2009 after a 23-year insurgency.

```
Gunaratna also alleged that a Canadian Ravi Shankar
Kanagaraja was the mastermind behind the ship's arrival.
```

"He arranged for this ship to come to Canada, and right now the Canadian authorities are hunting for him," Gunaratna said.

One of the lawyers for the men has accused Gunaratna of bias because of his past association with Sri Lanka's government.

"If they are going to make allegations that people are connected to the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, they'd better have evidence and, from my point of view, Mr. Gunaratna is not credible," said Lorne Waldeman.

In Ottawa, Immigration Minister Jason Kenney suggested Tuesday he was heeding the advice of the government's expert for now.

"It's our view [the migrants] constitute a flight risk and we are not entirely satisfied about their backgrounds," Kenney said.

An immigration hearing Monday for one of the migrants was told that residue of two chemicals used in explosives was found on clothing owned by two of the men aboard the vessel.

Monday's hearing was also told that the identity of the ship was hidden on its voyage to Canada because it was known to have been used to ship arms for the *Tamil Tigers*.

Lawyers representing the men are seeking to have them accepted as refugees in Canada, and say the men lives would be in danger if they were forced to return to Sri Lanka. (CBC News)

Load-Date: November 5, 2009



## SRI LANKA \; DOCTOR: 64 DIE IN SHELLING OF HOSPITAL

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

May 3, 2009 Sunday

TWO STAR EDITION

Copyright 2009 P.G. Publishing Co.

Section: WORLD; THE WORLD AT A GLANCE; Pg. A-4

Length: 243 words

Byline: The Associated Press

#### **Body**

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

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

Sri Lanka has come under increasing international pressure to halt its offensive against the rebels to safeguard the estimated 50,000 ethnic Tamil civilians trapped by the fighting.

The government, which has cornered the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> in a 3-mile-long coastal strip, has refused, but it did promise to stop launching artillery and airstrikes into the area.

The TamilNet Web site said the government hit the makeshift hospital at Mullivaaykkaal twice yesterday morning.

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

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

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

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

Load-Date: May 5, 2009



## Govt. continues rehabilitation

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka) November 19, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 208 words

Dateline: Sri Lanka

#### **Body**

Sri Lanka, Nov. 19 -- Ex-LTTE combatants

The government has sought the assistance of UN , International donors and local business community to rehabilitate over 11,000 ex-<u>LTTE</u> cadres, Commissioner General of Rehabilitation Major General Daya Ratnayake stated.

The government rehabilitated a large number of ex-<u>LTTE</u> cadres who had surrendered themselves over past two years and most of them were sent abroad for employment after successful completion of vocational training programmes. Meanwhile, the government collaborating with the Ministry of Justice, admitted 273 children who were forcefully recruited and deployed in <u>LTTE</u> defences as child combatants, to Hindu College Ratmalana to continue their studies.

In the aim of making the ex-<u>LTTE</u> child combatant as worthy citizens of the country, 293 more ex-<u>LTTE</u> child soldiers were given vocational training at the Punthottam Rehabilitation Centre in Vavuniya.

The Commissioner, Major General Daya Ratnayake further said that over 1,854 ex-<u>LTTE women</u> cadres were also receiving formal education at the rehabilitation centres. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka. For more information on news feed please contact Sarabjit Jagirdar at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: November 19, 2009



## STF ambush Tigers in Lahugala

Daily News (Sri Lanka) April 4, 2009 Saturday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 300 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, April 4 -- At least 13 <u>LTTE</u> cadres, including an explosive expert were killed, when Police commandos of the Special Task Force ambushed them yesterday morning at Kongahahela, Lahugala in the Ampara district.

The STF said that the attack on the <u>LTTE</u> infiltrators had taken place close to the 10th Milepost in Lahugala, around 9.30 am. The area belongs to the northern part of the Yala Sanctuary. This terrorist unit is believed to be behind a spate of killings carried out by the <u>LTTE</u> in Buttala and Moneragala areas in the recent past with the intention of destabilising the civilian life. The STF yesterday said that they had identified the leader of the unit, who was killed during the attack as Kandaiah Sarawanandam alias Paramanadam master, believed to be an explosives expert and an area leader of the <u>LTTE</u>. Paramanandam master, hailing from Malwatte, Ampara had joined the <u>LTTE</u> in 1995 and is believed to be the mastermind of several bomb attacks and a spate of civilian killings carried out in the area recently, as an attempt to divert attention of the security forces. The STF yesterday said that they had found bodies of two <u>female LTTE</u> cadres as well among the 13 dead. They had also recovered a large haul of weapons and explosives during the operation. The STF said they had been able to track down this terrorist unit following a long vigil in an operation launched in the jungle area several days ago. The STF is continuing their operations in the area in search of other possible <u>LTTE</u> infiltrators. February 22: <u>LTTE</u> claymore attack kills three civilians in Nerukulama, Ampara. February 22: <u>LTTE</u> massacres 21 villagers in Kirimetiya, Ampara. March 24: Four farmers gunned down in Welikanda, PolonnaruwaPublished 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 <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: April 6, 2009



## Hospital attack kills 64

The Courier Mail (Australia)

May 4, 2009 Monday

1 - First with the news Edition

Copyright 2009 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: WORLD; Pg. 17

Length: 297 words

Byline: Bharatha Mallawarachi IN COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

## **Body**

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

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

Sri Lanka has come under increasing international pressure to halt its offensive against the rebels to safeguard the estimated 50,000 ethnic Tamil civilians trapped by the fighting.

The Sri Lankan Government, which has cornered the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> in a 5km-long coastal strip, has refused, but it did promise to stop launching artillery and airstrikes into the area.

The TamilNet website said the Government hit the makeshift hospital at Mullivaaykkaal twice on Saturday morning.

The attacks killed at least 64 patients and bystanders and wounded another 87, according to a government health official.

The attack killed a <u>female</u> volunteer doctor and wounded three medical workers, the website said. Although the hospital is inside rebel-held territory, it is run by government doctors.

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

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

Mr Bogollagama spoke after meeting Japanese peace envoy Yasushi Akashi, the latest high-profile diplomat to arrive in Sri Lanka in the past week.

Mr Akashi met President Mahinda Rajapaksa during his visit, and also travelled to displacement camps where more than 100,000 civilians who fled the war zone have been held.

"I hope the Government is adhering to its positions," he said.

Load-Date: May 4, 2009



## Army teams hunt for Prabha and Pottu

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka) April 24, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1187 words

Dateline: Colombo

## **Body**

Colombo, April 24 -- The world's largest 'hostage rescue operation' has almost come to a successful end as its main objective is being achieved. With the Sri Lanka army's daring operation the security forces have been able to rescue over 120,000 civilians since Monday morning, which has put the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) into a complete no-win situation.

At present, the civilians who were forcibly detained by the Tigers in the government declared 'safe zone' are on the move towards the cleared areas despite the LTTE's action to prevent them. Indiscriminate firing at the fleeing civilians by the LTTE killed a considerable number men, women and children. Many of these incidents had been recorded by the Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) of the Sri Lanka Air Force. The much-awaited rescue operation was launched just before midnight on Sunday after hours long planning on the day, under the special direction of 58 Division Commander Brigadier Shavindra Silva and his senior officers. First day It was around 11.45 pm when a Special Forces (1-SF) team and another team from 2 Commando Unit led by Colonels Athula Kodippili and Ralph Nugera commenced the rescue operation. Their main purpose was to capture the 12 kilomtres long earth bund that was the last earth bund built by the LTTE. The bund had been built to prevent troops entering the safe zone from Puthukuduyirrippu east is in an area just past the lagoon between the mainland and the small stretch in the coastal belt. The first task was to cross the lagoon without being seen by the LTTE. The SF and Commandos had been separated into small groups, consisting eight men and twelve men, who are experts in unconventional guerrilla tactics. First the 58 Division soldiers launched a barrage of heavy artillery and mortars shells at the earth bund, just directly on to the bund in order to clear the bund of LTTE cadres. Due to this attack a large number of cadres were reportedly killed. Immediately thereafter the SF and Commando soldiers crossed the lagoon utilizing barrels and using their swimming skills in the ice cool water. Their main purpose was to capture some 3 kilomtres of the bund, between Amplavanpokerni and Puthumatalan. Several teams were scheduled to enter the enemy line of some 500 metres area and then later other groups were assigned to capture the entire three kilometre bund. By the time the troops succeeded in entering the earth bund, the LTTE had vacated their bunker lines just behind the bund. Within an hour the troops were able to cross the earth bund after crossing the lagoon. During this period, the LTTE carried out random attacks on the military, but these attacks did not prevent the troops' forward movement. The troops then commenced the removal of booby traps and anti-personnel mines that were laid on the earth bund. They moved slowly and steadily to remove the mines one by one. After more than an hour, troops were able to remove nearly thousand mines. Troops had to cross an eight feet deep ditch that had been filled with water. Several soldiers had been killed in these deep ditches during earlier operations. After crossing it the SF and commando personnel reached the bunker line over the earth bund and stopped their movements just few yards away from the bunker lines. Just before dawn, the SF and Commandos stormed several bunkers simultaneously and attacked the large number of <u>LTTE</u> cadre who were inside these bunkers killing them instantaneously. The <u>LTTE</u> cadres had no time to react as the soldiers rapidly stormed the bunker lines. SF soldiers were also able to destroy a mortar launcher that the *LTTE* was using to cause heavy damages to the military. Knowing that the military had secretly entered the earth bund, several LTTE cadres, who were just behind the bunker lines fled further south along the coastal belt. Soon more soldiers entered the area in order to support the SF and Commandos. In a short period of time troops succeeded in clearing the entire three kilomtre earth bund. The troops also repulsed an *LTTE* attack to re capture the earth bund by the using artillery and mortars. Thereafter the teams cleared a stretch of 3km between Puthumathalan and Valaimadam. The troops however, did not fire a single bullet beyond these LTTE bunkers as there was heavy presence of civilians. After seeing that the army had come to rescue them, civilians started to run towards the earth bund despite the LTTE gunfire. The Special Forces and Commandos who were advancing further towards the LTTE held areas had to temporarily halt their movement due to the unexpected movement of thousands of civilians towards them. Allowing the civilians to come, soldiers of the 58 Division, who were operating in the cleared areas started to move forward to show the mine free path to facilitate safe civilian movement. The LTTE being unable to stop the civilian movement started to fire directly at the civilians killing and wounding a large number of them. The LTTE had sent three suicide female cadres with the civilians. Three cadres blew themselves killing at least seventeen civilians including two children and wounding more than 200. Later the civilians started coming by crossing the lagoon. In Colombo, President Mahinda Rajapaksa and the Air Force Commander were watching the live visuals of the civilian movement through the Unmanned Aerial Vehicles at the Air Force Operations Room. At the end of the day, about fifteen soldiers of the Special Forces including a Captain were killed and several injured during the battle. The LTTE radio communications confirmed that more than 50 LTTE cadres were killed and a large number of cadres injured. Troops were able to rescue a total of 41,000 civilians during the day. Second day The Special Forces and Commandos continued to take the lead in the hostage rescue operation as they continued to advance towards the LTTE held area. In the second phase of the operation, the military objective was to separate the safe zone from Puthumatalan and link it with the sea front. On the second day, troops were able to advance smoothly as there was less resistance from the LTTE. Troops succeeded in establishing a link with the sea by the Tuesday evening, encircling less than fifty LTTE cadres and at least 5000 civilians in the north of safe zone. A video footage, captured from the UAV clearly showed the LTTE directly firing and killing those fleeing civilians who later found refuge with the 55 Division in north of Puthumatalan. Some of them carried three bodies of persons just killed by the LTTE. During the day at least 36,000 civilians sought refuge with the military. Third day Soldiers of the 58 Division advanced towards the north of the safe zone from the separated area. Their main purpose was to link with the 55 Division soldiers in the north of Puthumatalan. After killing more than fifty LTTE cadres, the two divisions were able to link up. The 55 Division however did not advance their defences. At the end of the day 22,000 civilians were rescued by the troops. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: April 24, 2009



## PROVIDE A HUMANE INCENTIVE FOR ALL PEOPLE TO MOVE

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)

March 31, 2009 Tuesday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1108 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, March 31 -- For the second time in as many months, Sri Lanka was discussed in the highest international forum, the Security Council of the United Nations. As on the last occasion, Sri Lanka was discussed without being on the formal agenda of the meeting. If the government had expected its allies on the Security Council to block the discussion, this would have been a disappointment. There seems to be a limit beyond which countries find it difficult to support each other in international forums. The plight of Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir who has been indicted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court despite being a close ally of China is an example that cannot be ignored.

The discussion on Sri Lanka at the UN Security Council is reported to have revolved around the humanitarian crisis involving the trapped civilian population in the north of the country. The United States and United Kingdom had backed a Security Council call for a humanitarian pause to enable humanitarian supplies to be sent into the area and to permit the evacuation of civilians. The usage of the term humanitarian pause rather than the more direct term humanitarian ceasefire was probably in deference to the Sri Lankan government's antipathy to any ceasefire that could be extended to enable the LTTE to rearm and regroup. The government appears to be rethinking its position on the humanitarian crisis in the north of the country. In the face of the mounting international pressure on the government, its defence spokesperson Keheliya Rambukwella has said that the government is prepared to consider a humanitarian pause as called for by the UN. However, he also added that such a humanitarian pause would be subject to yet unspecified conditions that would depend on the prevailing ground situation. He also made an assertion that indicates that the government's resolve to defeat the LTTE on the military battlefield remains unchanged. In the course of his statement to the media, the defence spokesperson is reported to have said that the safe zone for civilians, which is the last remaining territory under LTTE control, had turned out to be a killing field for the security forces who were suffering casualties because they could not retaliate with their heavy weapons for fear of hitting the civilian population. He had added that once the civilians were evacuated the security forces would eliminate the LTTE, as they would have unfettered use of air power and heavy weapons. The problem with this reasoning is that it will be resisted by the LTTE in order to deny to the government that military advantage. International sympathy The LTTE's conduct in firing at the government forces from the midst of the civilian population and preventing them from leaving is clearly unacceptable. This is also why there is so little international sympathy for the LTTE at this time. International sympathy is with the civilian population who are trapped and suffering immensely. When the international community asks for a ceasefire it is not because they want to give the LTTE another lease of life. The public statements issued by a variety of international actors suggests there is a consensus within the international community, barring some minor political parties in Tamil Nadu, that the LTTE must not be revived as a military force. Unfortunately sections within the government appear unconvinced that the international community is genuine in their motivation to save civilian lives and suspect that the international community is still trying to save the LTTE to fight on for another day. Speaking to the Bar Association of Sri Lanka,

#### PROVIDE A HUMANE INCENTIVE FOR ALL PEOPLE TO MOVE

President Mahinda Rajapaksa is reported to have said that a ceasefire would give the *LTTE* an opportunity to drag out the war for another 25 years. Likewise the LTTE and its supporters, especially sections of the Tamil diaspora, appear to be hoping against hope that the international community will force a ceasefire on Sri Lanka that would give the LTTE another chance to fight on. More forthright statements by the international community and greater discernment by the government and LTTE leaderships are necessary if a humanitarian catastrophe is to be averted. There are precedents in world history where those at the losing end of wars have fought to the end, leaving no one alive on their side. One is the siege of Masada by the Roman army in the first century. After three months of siege, when the Romans entered the fortress inhabited by members of a Jewish sect, they discovered that its nearly one thousand inhabitants, including women and children, were dead. They had set fire to all the buildings and committed mass suicide rather than face certain capture and defeat by their enemies. Masada has been interpreted as symbolising the determination of the Jewish people to be free in their own land. Averting catastrophe It is common knowledge in Sri Lanka that LTTE cadres wear cyanide capsules around their neck that they have pledged to swallow so that they will not be captured alive. It is not impossible to envisage a situation in which the last LTTE cadre who are corered within the safety zone with the civilian population will fight to the very end to ensure that there are a maximum number of casualties. If such a scenario should materialize the consequences to the country could be very serious, quite apart from the tragedy of the people who become the direct victims. There is however a more favourable scenario that could be fashioned by the government if it is serious about a humanitarian pause. The government has demonstrated its flexibility in accommodating and not prosecuting members of Tamil militant organizations, including those of the *LTTE*, who are prepared to join the mainstream. Douglas Devananda and more recently Karuna are two former Tamil militants who are now ministers of the government. The government needs to offer other LTTE leaders, administrators and cadre an opportunity to come out without their weapons and to be guaranteed similar protection of the government and the law. .In offering such an opportunity to the people still remaining in the LTTE controlled territory, it must also be noted that until recently the LTTE ran a parallel administration. There could be thousands of people who were a part of this administrative apparatus, who might not have wielded weapons, but had a relationship with the LTTE. They may have simply been doing a job and not subscribed to the LTTE's methods of violence. They need to be given an assurance of their safety once they cross over. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: April 1, 2009



## <u>Tamils find liberators are now captors; Hundreds of thousands freed by</u> <u>government troops still held in camps</u>

The International Herald Tribune
July 10, 2009 Friday

Copyright 2009 International Herald Tribune All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 1438 words

Byline: Lydia Polgreen - The New York Times

Dateline: CHEDIKKULUM, Sri Lanka

## **Body**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Tamils find liberators are now captors Hundreds of thousands freed by government troops still held in camps

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

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

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

But that has done little to tamp down the impatience of those living here. The screening process has lasted far longer than most people had imagined it would. Mr. Rajapaksa said he had ordered that 80 percent be resettled by the end of the year. But government officials say that this goal may be tough to meet because of extensive land mines across much of north.

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. Rajapaksa, who was elected in 2005 after promising to end the war, has cast the struggle against the <u>Tamil</u> <u>Tigers</u> as part of the war against terror.

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

But that victory has come at a heavy cost, according to human rights organizations here and abroad. The government has clamped down hard on dissent. Journalists have been mysteriously killed, arrested and chased from the country. Thousands of Tamils have disappeared, presumably arrested by the state on suspicion of being Tamil Tiger fighters, according to Mano Ganesan, a Tamil member of Parliament who has been tracking disappearances for years.

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

Tamils find liberators are now captors Hundreds of thousands freed by government troops still held in camps

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

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

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

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

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

"Perversely, if we keep helping, we become the jailer of these people," said one diplomat from a country that is helping pay for the relief effort. Aid organizations that had initially been barred from working in the camps have largely stayed silent to maintain their ability to help the displaced. But many have reservations about their role. "The longer it goes on, the more it looks like internment," said one aid official, who asked not to be identified to protect the charity's work.

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

"The citizens' security is number one. You must remember that we have just defeated the most ruthless terrorist group," he said. "We are very careful. I can't let this become like Baghdad."

\*\*

#### CAPTION:

Tamils held in government camps in Sri Lanka fear their continued imprisonment means a solution to the ethnic clashes that have torn the country apart are still a long way off.

Photo Credit:

KEITH BEDFORD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

\*\*

#### CAPTION:

Mahinda Rajapaksa, president of Sri Lanka, says camps are needed for security.

Photo Credit: Keith Bradford for The New York Times

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2009



## Tigers cannot raise head again despite KP's overtures

Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka) July 26, 2009 Sunday

Copyright 2009 The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1976 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, July 26 -- As major changes were taking place in the high command of the defence hierarchy in Sri Lanka to fit into the post war scenario, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*) which is now operating in exile following their military defeat on Sri Lankan soil, is facing a domestic battle following the appointment of Selvarasa Pathmanathan alias KP as its leader.

The statement issued by Suresh (Amuthan) and Ram on behalf of the terror outfit states that Selvarasa Pathmanathan, who had been appointed as head of international relations by Prabhakaran, will lead the LTTE. The well-known propaganda arm of the LTTE, the TamilNet itself sniffs doubts about the credibility of this statement issued from an unknown location. The TamilNet warned the Tamil Diaspora about the new development reporting that 'LTTE watchers said that the new formation has the burden to prove its credibility with the grass roots at home and among the diaspora that aspire not incumbencies, but a strong mass organization to address the national cause.' 'TamilNet, while reiterating its stand as an independent media, committed to the cause of Eezham Tamil nationalism, requests readers not to take cues from it on the organisational matters of the present. Political steering of the Eezham Tamil cause is entirely a prerogative of the masses concerned, who have hitherto shown solidarity with a movement that did not surrender either the aim or the struggle. Obviously, the Tamil Diaspora is disapproving Selvarasa Pathmanathan becoming the leader of the organization as he had not shown his credibility in any of the matters he had engaged on behalf of the LTTE. However, KP following the total military defeat of the LTTE and the death of its leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, had made an attempt to impress the Tamil Diaspora that he was the rightful person to lead the Tamil community after Velupillai Prabhakaran. For this he had laid solid foundation after initiating his own blog in the cyber space to promote himself as the rightful heir to become the leader of the LTTE. Making use of the ltteir.org to present his past links with the LTTE leader as the best-man at Velupillai Prabhakaran's marriage with Madhivadanee, KP has tried to say that he had close contacts with the Tiger leader until the last moment. Three of his articles narrating his close links with the LTTE has appeared, but failed to give a detailed account about the decision taken by the LTTE leader during his last few days. Through these web articles on Pathmanathan, first published on July 08, 2009 and followed by two other articles, Options left during the last phase of war (July 15, 2009) and 'Why do we need a political and diplomatic path?' published on July 22, 2009, he had failed to give a correct picture about the LTTE at the last stages of the war and the decisions taken by its leadership. However, he admits the fact that he had failed in his dealings with the international community after his appointment as the chief international negotiator of the LTTE in January 2009 to strike a deal to get the Sri Lankan Government on a ceasefire agreement which was the prime hope of the LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran by appointing him to the post after they lost their stronghold Kilinochchi to the Security Forces. Even though Selvarasa Pathmanathan claims that he had direct contacts with the LTTE leader till his last moment, he himself admits the fact that his last conversation was with the LTTE Sea Tiger leader Soosai, but not Tiger leader Prabhakaran. Going through this information it is very clear that it was he who dropped the information to the media on May 18, 2009 midnight when the entire media and the whole of the Security Forces were in ambiguity about the death of the LTTE leader, that the Tiger leader was alive in a safe place. On May 18 night the TamilNet website carried the following news item following an interview with KP. 'Stating that the leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (*LTTE*). V. Pirapaharan is alive and well, Selvarasa Pathmanathan, the head of *LTTE*s international relations, told TamilNet Monday that it was very unfortunate that many of its senior members and leaders have either given up their lives or have been treacherously killed. Following is the way KP responded to the question posed by the TamilNet website. TamilNet: The Sri Lankan Government has declared the war won and has claimed that Pirapaharan, the leader of LTTE has been killed. Has Colombo really won the war? Pathmanathan: The Sri Lankan government makes unverified claims. I am only able to ascertain that our national leader is alive and well. It is true that many of our senior members and leaders have either given up their lives or been treacherously killed. This is very unfortunate, but it is important to realize that our struggle will continue until the aspirations of our people are realized. Those were the exact words that tipped off the Sri Lankan Security Forces that the Tiger leader was alive by that time though newspapers and the whole media carried out headline stories telling that the Tiger leader was killed on May 18. It was after this information appeared in the TamilNet that the Security Forces intensified their search operation in the banks of the Nanthikadal lagoon after deploying the 4 Vijabha Infatry Regiment troops under the command of Lt. Colonel Rohith Aluvihare in the early hours of May 19 which finally resulted in the death of Prabhakaran along with the inner ring of Tiger leaders. Therefore, KP shares the responsible for the death of the Tiger leader and the entire **LTTE** leadership, as he had failed to keep his word to his leader and finally informing the military indirectly that Tiger leader was alive. It was KP in an e-mail interview on June 25 who had admitted the fact that Tiger leader's daughter Duaraka and Madhivadanee were also among the dead and the LTTE Intelligence Wing leader Pottu Amman was killed on May 17. The facts created big puzzles in the security circles. Following his declaration, Tiger cadre who had been living closer to Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran has identified the body of Duaraka among those who were killed on May 18 in Mullaivaikkal area. It has been confirmed that the young female Tiger cadres body found among the bodies collected by the 7 Sinha Regiment troops under the command of Lt. Colonel Kithsiri Liyanage was the body of Tiger leader Prabhakaran's daughter's body. According to ground troops, Duaraka was among the first group of cadres who breached the Security Forces defenses and reached closer to the transit camp of the civilians where she was shot dead by the troops during the confrontation in the early hours of May 18. Troops had recovered her personal weapon, a pistol from her body, meaning she was among senior level leaders of the LTTE. It has been confirmed that Prabhakaran's wife Madhivadanee was also among the dead and Prabhakaran's younger son Balachandran has also been killed closer to the location where Prabhakaran was killed. Therefore, it is now clear that not a single family member of Prabhakaran's exists among the living except for his parents, now living under detention having crossed into Government controlled areas along with other civilians. It might be the reason for KP to declare himself as the leader of the LTTE at a time two months have passed since the total defeat of the LTTE. However, the stories behind the defeat of the LTTE are yet to emerge in the coming weeks as Security Forces and intelligence sleuths are making steady progress in the process of interrogating the IDPs to identify the Tiger cadres still mingling with the civilians living in welfare villages to correctly identify the Tiger leaders who had been killed during fighting and those who are in hiding among the civilians. It was only this week a Tiger cadre under detention divulged to the Security Forces that Tiger leader Bhanu was almost under arrest of the LTTE at the last stages of the battle as he had escaped from Iranapalai battle leaving more than 800 cadres there which resulted in the death of more than 500 cadres according to KP including more than 500 elite Special Commandoes of the LTTE which had resulted in a drastic drop in well trained cadres to accomplice the terror plan the Tiger leader had in his mind for his survival. The most important aspect is that many of the Tiger cadres now in detention are revealing more information about the cache of weapons they had concealed in Puthumathalan, Puthukuduyiruppu and Vellamullivaikkal areas during the last stages of the battle. The recovery of the LTTE second submarine was due to a revelation made by a diver attached to the LTTE Sea Tiger wing. It was following the intelligence unit attached to the 56 Division now under the command of Brigadier Priyantha Napagoda, the former Artillery Brigade Commander, the 19 Sinha Regiment troops attached to the Task Force 8 under the command of Colonel G.V. Ravipriya salvaged this submarine from the sea 500 metres away from the shore. According to LTTE diver Seelan, the LTTE had submerged the two submersible vehicles whilst they were under air attack, fearing they would be destroyed by Air Force jets. Although the Security Forces were in possession of information that they had two submersible vehicles, it was on June 15 that the troops attached to the Task Force 8 troops, recovered one from the sea closer to the wreckage of the Jordanian ship Farah III. It was Seelan, the LTTE diver who located the submarine from 30 feet deep sea some 500 metres away from the shore

#### Tigers cannot raise head again despite KP's overtures

after throwing a fishing net into the location. He had identified the location after the fishing net was entangled with the submarine in the deep sea and taken it to the shore with the help of the troops. Likewise, more and more armouries and other vital hardware including their heavy calibre weapons buried inside are now being recovered by the troops. The 573 troops engaged in search and clear operations came across a Tiger cadre in the border of the Puthukuduyiruppu and Visuamadu three days back. The Tiger cadre, who was in hiding for the past two months depending on fruits and barks of trees, gave up his mission and surrendered to the troops. Identified as Kathirgamar Thambi, a Tiger cadre from the East, he had joined the LTTE in 1984 and worked with Karuna Amman, the then Eastern leader. Following the defection of Karuna Amman from the LTTE, Kathirgamar Thambi had been arrested by the LTTE and taken to Vanni along with his family. He had escaped the LTTE areas towards the jungle on May 15, 2009. Security Forces are interrogating him further about his mission. However this is clear indication to say that LTTE ghosts, not in large numbers are still in hiding in the jungles although they have no capability to create problems to the Security Forces. Therefore, intense search and clear operations are a must on the part of the Security Forces before the resettlement of civilians in the North. The Security Forces, therefore, have intensified their operations in search of LTTE weapons and armouries to expedite the process of resettling the people as Government has already announced that 3,000 civilians are to be resettled in the villages where demining process has been completed by the Army. Accordingly, 3,000 families in 35 villages in the Vavuniya District are to be resettled on August 7. This will undoubtedly speed up the process of bringing normality to the North as Government has already taken A-9 road for civilian transportation. However, this will happen under greater restriction until the de-mining process is completed in the North.Published by HT Syndication with permission from Sunday Observer (Sri Lanka). For more information on news feed please contact Surit Das at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: July 27, 2009



## Sri Lanka Says Rebels Continue to Fight

The New York Times April 24, 2009 Friday

The New York Times on the Web

Copyright 2009 The New York Times Company

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

Length: 953 words

Byline: By SOMINI SENGUPTA and MARK McDONALD; Mark McDonald reported from Hong Kong, and Sharon

Otterman contributed from New York.

**Dateline: NEW DELHI** 

#### **Body**

Sri Lanka said Thursday that its soldiers were running into "dwindling but constant resistance" from Tamil Tiger rebels, one day after the United States accused the government of causing "untold suffering" among civilians in its final push to win a 25-year-old conflict with Tamil separatists.

People continued to pour out of the war zone, and the government announced the surrender of two prominent leaders of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or L.T.T.E.

"I think that the Sri Lankan government knows that the entire world is very disappointed that in its efforts to end what it sees as 25 years of conflict, it is causing such untold suffering," Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Wednesday.

The United States has repeatedly urged Sri Lanka to halt the fighting long enough to negotiate the evacuation of tens of thousands of civilians trapped alongside rebel fighters in the so-called no-fire zone. Sri Lanka has rejected most of these appeals, saying cease-fires allow the rebels to rearm.

Sri Lanka has consistently denied reports that it has shelled the zone, but a Catholic priest working there was seriously wounded during a government artillery barrage that hit St. Antony's Church in Valaignarmadam on Thursday morning.

The artillery attack and the injury to the Rev. T. R. Vasanthaseelan, 34, were confirmed by an official with the Catholic charity Caritas who asked to remain anonymous for fear of reprisals by the military. In a telephone interview, the official said the priest, a social worker, had been washing up at an outdoor well when he was struck in the left leg by artillery shrapnel. His leg was amputated Thursday afternoon and he was awaiting possible evacuation on a Red Cross ship.

"He has had lots of chances to come out of there and come to safety, but he wanted to stay and help the people," the official said, speaking of Father Vasanthaseelan, who has worked with Caritas in northern Sri Lanka for the past six years.

"The L.T.T.E. was allowing priests to come out and our bishop gave them the option to leave, but he stayed. He is absolutely heroic. He has no agenda. He was only there for the people."

Washington has also called on the L.T.T.E., which it considers a terrorist organization, to release civilians stuck in the five-square-mile area along the coast under its control.

Late Wednesday, the United Nations Security Council called on the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> to allow civilians to leave the battle zone and said the government should permit aid to reach refugees.

India condemned the treatment of civilians. "We are very unhappy at the continued killing of innocent Tamil civilians in Sri Lanka," Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee said in a statement late Wednesday. "These killings must stop. The Sri Lankan government has a responsibility to protect its own citizens. And the L.T.T.E. must stop its barbaric attempt to hold civilians hostage."

According to Sri Lanka's government, nearly 85,000 civilians have fled the area since Monday, when government forces destroyed a huge rebel-built earthen wall that had prevented civilians from leaving. The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> said Tuesday that the government killed 1,000 civilians as it advanced this week.

How many civilians have left the area and how many remain are unclear because the government has sealed off the conflict area to journalists and many aid agencies. Government-recorded videos showed <u>women</u> carrying infants and wading through waist-deep water to get to safety while thousands waited for food in government-run camps.

"It is 60,000-plus and counting, and we have heard various reports of up to 110,000 coming out," said Gordon Weiss, a United Nations spokesman in Colombo, Sri Lanka's capital, according to Reuters. He said the reports were preliminary and unconfirmed.

Those arriving from the war zone were placed in crowded government-run camps in Vavuniya, in the government-controlled area of northern Sri Lanka near the rebel-held territory. More than 400 wounded patients have been admitted to the hospital there in recent days, Doctors Without Borders said in a statement. Most have wounds from shrapnel and land mines, it said.

There is no freedom of movement between the camps, and only a minority of the refugees have been able to get information about family members who may be in other camps, Doctors Without Borders said.

Sri Lanka announced more gains in the conflict as its military said Wednesday in a statement that Daya Master, the former media coordinator for the separatists, had surrendered along with his family. The military also reported the surrender of Kumar Pancharathnam, better known as George, a former English-language translator for S. P. Thamilselvan, the leader of the group's political wing, who was killed in 2007.

The men were among the most prominent representatives of the rebels who regularly spoke to correspondents visiting the rebel headquarters of Kilinochchi before it was seized by the government. Mr. Master coordinated a rare news conference by the rebel founder and leader, Vellupillai Prabhakaran, in a jungle redoubt in the spring of 2002.

The <u>Tamil Tigers</u> did not confirm the surrender or capture of the two men. A dictate issued by Mr. Prabhakaran urges followers to wear vials filled with cyanide to be taken in case of capture, a recourse followed by many captured fighters in the past.

It is not known if Mr. Prabhakaran, 54, remains in the last bit of territory held by the <u>Tamil Tigers</u>, or even if he is alive. Even when the conventional war ends between his forces and the Sri Lankan military, the <u>Tamil Tigers</u> are expected to continue a guerrilla war.

Sri Lanka has ruled out giving rebel cadres amnesty.

Load-Date: April 24, 2009



## **UK Tamil Demonstrators drain Met Police Budget**

Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka) May 21, 2009 Thursday

Copyright 2009 Wijeya Newspaper Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Length: 1233 words

Dateline: Colombo

#### **Body**

Colombo, May 21 -- The ongoing demonstration outside the UK Parliament in Westminster has since its inception 43 days ago cost the country's largest police force almost 8 million pound revealed Met Police Commissioner Sir Paul Stephenson. Speaking to a Home Affairs Committee he said that the demonstration meant the police force was extraordinarily stretched. He added that "we have to provide such a level of resources that it is reducing policing on the streets of London"

During the last 43 days these Tamil demonstrators supporting the LTTE have been there around the clock. Waving flags with the tiger insignia which is in violation of the UK Anti Terrorism laws. In addition they have been creating a cacophony of noise beating drums and also taking over the streets by taking over the roads surrounding Big Ben an Parliament. These actions have caused traffic chaos, crippled the transport system and caused untold suffering to the general British taxpaying public. Initially these demonstrations were held without permission but with the alleged intervention of LTTE supporting British MP's permission has been given for only 50 demonstrators to be there, however on most days this number is exceeded. The only time I saw less than ten demonstrators was at 4am on last Saturday morning when I drove past them to see how many were there braving the early morning cold weather and drizzle. These demonstrators initially called for a ceasefire however since the war has been concluded and victory over the *Tamil Tigers* declared the demonstrators are still there. Now they have claimed that they will even continue this demonstration for a year, their reason to demonstrate they say, is to highlight the human rights abuses by the Sri Lankan government. On a couple of occasions the demonstrators had made their way to the Indian High Commission in Holborn and protested there. On the first occasion they had pelted stones and other missiles and managed to break the bullet proof windows of the Indian High commission. They have also staged demonstrations outside the Sri Lankan embassy several times and have pelted stones at the embassy. During the last 43 days when this illegal demonstration was taking place British MP3's sympathetic to the Eelam cause did not bat an eyelid, in fact they kept going to the demonstration and gave them words of encouragement. When sections of the Sri Lankan Diaspora spoke to the British Police to complain about the public display of the Tiger flag they were told that they flag could not be taken down as it was their democratic right to fly the flag, when it was pointed out that the flag was in violation of the terror laws, the law enforcement agencies said that if they removed the flags there would be violence and as their were women and children at the demo they did not want to create a violent and confrontational situation. When they plan to take over the streets they bring their women and children and station them at the front. This prevents the police from being able to move them back to the parliament square. These tactics of using women and children as shields appear to have been directly imported from the Wanni battlefields. In confirmation of this tactic, Commander Bob Broadhurst who also addressed the Home Affairs Committee meeting said that the demonstrators had the ability to mobilise hundreds and thousands in a very short space of time which overwhelms police resources. He added: "when that happened they tend to put their women, children and babies at the forefront which makes it difficult for us to use force" Articles in the British press on the

demonstrations encouraged a flurry of reader responses where British people expressed their anger that the Tamils were holding their capital to ransom. Many had made comments that this was not a problem for the British to get involved in. What little sympathy the Londoners especially had for the Tamil cause totally evaporated when they saw the high handed antics of the demonstrators. Several protestors jumped in to the river Thames. This prompted one British person to write in lamenting that there were no sharks in the Thames! Other readers urged the police to bring in water canons and flush the protesting Tamils down the Thames. Such was the ire these demonstrators evoked. In an act of total disregard for religion four Tamils scaled the Westminster Abbey and unfurled a banner from the roof of the hallowed abbey. This act of wanton disrespect against the religion of their host country earned them condemnation with some readers asking why they did not climb on top of a Hindu Kovil instead of the Abbey. Londoners are getting weary of this protest and they feel it has nothing to do with them and are angry that in a time of deep recession and job cuts taxpayer's money is being used to police a demonstration of terrorist sympathisers. Many also openly question if the British Government and Police would show the same level of sympathy had the demonstration been by an Islamic group. While the British Government and law enforcement agencies have been treating these Tamil protestors with kid gloves and relative sympathy allowing them to cause disruption, pelt stones at High Commissions and cause mayhem in London, over in Sri Lanka such feelings of tolerance are not displayed by the British High Commission in Colombo. After yesterday protests orchestrated by the JVP outside the British High Commission in Colombo, the spokesperson of the mission in Colombo has seen it fit to express their "outrage" over Mondays demonstration. What is baffling is why the British Government maintained a stoic silence when the Sri Lankan embassy in London was attacked. Why didn't the mandarins in the foreign and commonwealth office in London express outrage that the Tamils had attacked the Sri Lankan High commission in London. After all they have good relations and work closely with the Sri Lankan mission in London. Some wonder if staff at the FCO were too busy entertaining the demonstrating Tamils and advising them on the next attention seeking gimmicks or were they coaching the young Tamil students what to do next in the international area to espouse their cause. At least now that Sri Lanka has finally defeated terrorism the British Government should put a stop to these vile and degrading protests. These protestors have tarnished the image of Tamils and their reputation lies in ruins. The greatest service these misguided Tamil demonstrators could do for the Tamil community at large is to stop spitting anti Sri Lankan vitriol and take a long hard look at their racist and despotic minds. They should look to the future and try to move forward forging relationships with the fragmented Sinhala, Muslim and Burgher communities not forgetting their own Tamil people who were opposed to the LTTE. The quicker these demonstrators realise that they should stop breathing venom, contempt and hatered and not let themselves be caged by the past but instead look to the future to develop the country and help the people of Sri Lanka will the Diaspora wounds really begin to heal. If that is not done and these tamil demonstrators continue to wallow and be confined to the dark deep abyss of war and hate - it is them that will tarnish the image and stymie the aspirations of the Tamils. Published by HT Syndication with permission from Daily Mirror Sri Lanka.

For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at <a href="httsyndication@hindustantimes.com">httsyndication@hindustantimes.com</a>

Load-Date: May 21, 2009