

## Ethnic cleansing by Presidential decree

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# Sri Lanka rejects peace calls

## Block on envoys meeting LTTE leaders remains

SRI LANKA'S hardline government this week dismissed international calls for it to seek a peace process with the Tamil Tigers and as senior government ministers criticized international pressure, the military stepped up military operations against the LTTE.

In the wake of a meeting last week of the United States, European Union, Japan and Norway, the four donors backing the now drifting Oslo-led peace process, Sri Lankan and Indian media reported that President Mahinda Rajapakse's government had asked Norway to help resume direct talks with the Tigers.

Norway also reiterated its readiness to facilitate. Oslo's special envoy for Sri Lanka, Jon Hanssen-Bauer, telling Reuters: "We are ready to resume (mediation efforts) if the government wants us to. We are committed to our role as facilitator and we are ready to carry out that role as soon as the parties want us to do that."

But this week the Colombo government quashed the reports, saying there was no change in its stance and that it would not halt military operations and allow the LTTE, which it described as weakened, to regroup and rearm.

And the Norwegian embassy in Colombo also came out to deny rumours Oslo was about to resume facilitation.

"There is no such visit [to LTTE headquarters] planned for the near future, all these stories are speculation," Embassy spokesperson Erik Nurenberg told The Morning Leader.

The paper, quoting European diplomatic sources, reported Wednesday that the Norwegians however, also have no immediate plans to request the government for security clearance to visit Kil-



LTTE troops near the Jaffna frontline. Despite international concerns, Sri Lanka's government has vowed to continue the war.

inochchi. They said that a visit by Hanssen-Bauer could take place some time later if both sides show a willingness to accommodate.

Sri Lanka's Defence Spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella told the weekly defence briefing at the Media Centre for National Security that is no need to make a fresh initiative as the peace process stands as it is.

There is no shift in the government policy as far as the peace process is concerned and the government will not allow the Tigers make use of the Peace Process to re-arm and re-group and attack civilians and security forces, he said.

Government ministers also attacked the international community's pressure.

Minister Rambukwella singled out the UK and the US, saying these countries are trying to show the world that they are superior democracies, but actually they don't practice what they preach.

"They are talking about human rights violations here but ignoring what the LTTE has been doing for the last three decades, brutally massacring thousands of civilians and security forces personnel."

Highways Minister Jeyaraj Fernandopulle rejected the US government's call for the Army-backed paramilitary outfit, the Karuna Group, must be disarmed.

"Richard Boucher (Asst. Secretary of State for South Asia and the Middle East) has said the Sri

Lankan government must disarm the Karuna Faction. Why haven't they asked to disarm the LTTE? Both are terrorists groups," he asked.

Meanwhile the Sri Lankan government bar on visits by international diplomats, including Peace Envoys, to LTTE areas continues.

Two prior visits planned by Norwegian ambassador Hans Brattskar were cancelled due to the absence of security guarantees from the government. A similar visit by the deputy British High Commissioner too was cancelled for the same reason.

Despite the government's reluctance to give security clearance, the Tigers have said that they could guarantee the safety of visiting diplomats from beyond Om-

anthai. "We can look after them, there is no issue," Tiger military spokesperson Rasiah Illanthirayan said.

The absence of international shuttle diplomacy alone indicates a resumption of the peace process is not likely.

This week Minister Rambukwella told reporters: "If people like Jon- Hansen Bauer want to move to Kilinochchi to meet the Tigers, we have to caution them that they can't do it the way they did it in the past."

Meanwhile Sri Lanka Air Force jets on Wednesday carried out a second straight day of bombing raids against LTTE positions in jungles in the east of the island, the military said.

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## NEWS

# Former government strongman forms new party



Beaming UNP leader Ranil Wickremesinghe and SLFP (MW) leader Mangala Samaraweera shake hands as their parties agree to discuss an alliance. Also in the picture are MP Sripathi Sooriyarachchi and UNP General Secretary Tissa Attanayake.  
Photo Pradeep K. Pathirana / Daily Mirror

TWO former ministers of Sri Lanka's ruling party launched a new political party last week, and the main opposition is exploring the possibility of an alliance with them. Separately, the country's Sinhala nationalist Marxists called for the party to join with it.

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party-Mahajana Wing (SLFP(MW)) was formally launched last Friday, by ousted former ministers Mangala Samaraweera and Sripathi Sooriyarachchi.

They made the announcement after crossing over to sit in opposition benches last Tuesday, deepening divisions in the ruling coalition. Samaraweera invited former President Kumaratunga to return from "political retirement" and "guide" the SLFP (MW).

After talks, the main opposition United National Party (UNP) said it was exploring an alliance with the SLFP (MW) and that the next three months would be a decisive period for the country because of a series of politically significant events.

The two parties are to appoint a joint committee to study Samaraweera's policy statement 'Daring to dream towards a new Sri Lankan order.'

UNP General Secretary and parliamentarian Tissa Attanayake told a news conference the UNP was inviting all democratic politi-

cal parties to team up with it against the government.

The UNP said some government Ministers had already agreed to join forces with the opposition to form a broad political alliance against dictatorship.

Meanwhile the Marxists Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) was to invite the SLFP (MW) to join forces with it for a broad alliance against the government.

At the time of writing, the invitation was to be made at a meeting this week. In an interview with the Daily Mirror, JVP General Secretary Tilvin Silva said they planned to form a broad front by including disgruntled members from the government.

Mr. Silva said they would never opt for an alliance with the UNP, which he cited as a party without solutions to the problems confronting the country.

"We want to form a broad front. Even government members who are disappointed with the present system can join us. It is a front open to all progressive and patriotic forces. Mr. Samaraweera should also join it, but not the UNP," he said.

Samaraweera was a close ally of Kumaratunga, but was sacked by President Rajapakse, along with Sooriyarachchi and Anura Bandaranaike, but Bandaranaike rejoined the government.

## President threatens to dissolve parliament amid horsetrading

FACED with the prospect of more parliamentarians defecting to the breakaway Sri Lanka Freedom Party (Mahajana Wing) (SLFP (MW)) founded by sacked cabinet minister Mangala Samaraweera, President Mahinda Rajapaksa last Friday threatened to dissolve parliament and seek a fresh mandate.

According to media reports, Rajapaksa told a special meeting of ministers and senior SLFP leaders that the situation was "worsening day by day".

The threat came after Samaraweera said that 15 to 20 MPs from the government might join his new party.

Rajapaksa said that if the threat from the combined opposition mounted, he might have no option but to dissolve parliament and seek a fresh mandate.

That Rajapaksa cannot take his party men for granted was evident in the way SLFP MPs reacted to Samaraweera's vituperative

attack on the Rajapaksa regime and the "Rajapaksa Brothers" in parliament, the Hindustan Times reported.

"No SLFP MP rose to contradict Samaraweera or to defend the government," the paper said.

"This suggested the possibility that if Samaraweera's SLFP (MW) grew in influence, some SLFP MPs and even Ministers might be tempted to defect to it," the paper speculated.

The political atmosphere in Sri Lanka is becoming unfavourable for Rajapaksa with the opposition United National Party (UNP) making serious charges against the government and publicly proposing an alliance with the SLFP (MW).

UNP General Secretary and parliamentarian Tissa Attanayake told a news conference the UNP was inviting all democratic political parties to team up with it in the struggle against the govern-

ment.

The UNP and SLFP (MW) are studying the grounds for an alliance, he added.

Separately, the spiralling cost of living has alienated the urban population, and there is also unbridled high-level corruption and abductions for extortions in the capital Colombo, news reports said.

Rajapaksa hopes to pacify his critics by taking corrective economic measures.

The contours of these measures will be presented as a document to the SLFP's 17th General Convention on July 21, the Hindustan Times reported.

The state-owned Daily News quoted the General Secretary of the SLFP, Maithripala Sirisena, as saying that the new proposals would cover a wide range of national problems, with special reference to agriculture, the mainstay of the rural economy.

## Sri Lankan media sceptical about new party

MEDIA reactions to the formation of the new wing of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party have been cynical, with many papers suggesting the SLFP (MW) won't make a difference to the political scene. "But at the same time, it is acknowledged that President Mahinda Rajapaksa may be a worried man," the Hindustan Times reported.

The prospect of former President Chandrika Kumaratunga coming back to active politics through the SLFP (MW) and "leading a combined SLFP (MW)-opposition assault on the government, does disturb him," the paper said.

During his address to the parliament, Samaraweera made an appeal to the former president, and daughter of the SLFP's founder, to come back from "political

retirement" and join hands with the new party to usher a new era in Sri Lanka.

The Daily Mirror described Samaraweera's move as "disruptive" at a time, when the crying need was political unity to face the "multifaceted crisis" facing Sri Lanka. The split in the ruling party would only "push the country towards greater instability" the paper warned in an editorial.

Questioning the motives of the defecting duo, former Ministers Mangala Samaraweera and Sripathi Sooriyarachchi, the paper said that the "crux of the matter appears to revolve around ministerial positions and personal vendettas."

The Island daily said in its editorial that the defection and the emergence of a new political out-

fit would only help the LTTE.

"Their (the defectors') game plan is clear: While the LTTE is targeting the government on the war front, the dissidents and the UNP (the opposition United National Party) will engage it on the political front."

Noting that President Mahinda Rajapaksa is getting rattled these days, the paper advised him to stay cool, as any rash reaction would only help the detractors and the LTTE.

It asked him to concentrate on good governance, because the success or failure of SLFP (MW) would depend on his ability or inability to govern the country.

But as of now, The Island is not sanguine about the SLFP (MW)'s prospects. It would "lose its magic" after its ceremonial

launching on Friday, it predicted.

The Tamil daily Thinakkural went along with Samaraweera on his description of the sordid state of affairs in Sri Lanka, but it did not relish the prospect of former President Kumaratunga's leading the SLFP (MW).

In her 11 year rule, which ended in December 2005, Kumaratunga did not achieve anything concrete, Thinakkural said. She only confused issues to the detriment of Sri Lankans, it said.

However, Thinkkural notes that Rajapaksa is less wary and apprehensive about Ranil Wickremesinghe, the Leader of the Opposition and his formal rival, than he is about Kumaratunga, a retired politician. Many of Rajapaksa's actions betray apprehensions about a Kumaratunga come back,

the paper points out.

Political circles say that Rajapaksa feels Kumaratunga may be having her loyalists in parliament and the Council of Ministers, even now. They also say that disgruntlement is widespread in the SLFP and the government, the Hindustan Times noted.

They point out that during Samaraweera's vituperative speech in parliament last Wednesday, none from the ruling party ventured to challenge him. The stony silence was pregnant with meaning, they felt, the paper said.

However, several ministers told the media that the SLFP (MW) posed no danger to the government. Minister Jeyaraj Fernandopulle said that there was no likelihood of Kumaratunga's coming back to active politics.

## NEWS

# Only ceasefire agreement can save Sri Lanka - Tamilselvan

THE international community should "support the struggle for rights of the Tamil people and force the Sri Lankan Government to implement the ceasefire agreement in full" to bring peace and pave the way for talks, Mr. S. P. Tamilselvan, the head of the LTTE Political Division, said in an interview with TamilNet.

Characterizing the "efforts" to bring a united position among the southern parties as the "same old drama" that has gone on throughout the Tamil people's struggle for their rights, he said only the ceasefire agreement (CFA) can save the island from the disaster.

Welcoming the timely meeting by the Co-chairs in Oslo [early last week], Mr. Tamilselvan said Tamil people have become suspicious as to why there is no firm united stance even among the members of the co-chairs.

Some members are indirectly encouraging Colombo by giving military and economic aid while some others are attempting to implement practical steps to put pressure on the Sri Lankan Government, LTTE's political head said.

"The international community must gain a profound understanding of this long history [of prolonging and time buying tactics by Colombo] and act to end the ethnically biased efforts by the Sinhala leadership. I believe the constructive step by the international community is to accept and support the struggle for rights of the Tamil people and force the Sri Lankan Government to implement the ceasefire agreement 100% to pave the way for peace talks."

On the military situation in the east, Mr. Tamilselvan said, LTTE chooses military strategies to suit the "place, environment and time," and that Sri Lanka Army (SLA) will soon find out the "trap they have set for themselves."

## The interview in full:

**Q:** What are your views on the co-chairs meeting in Oslo to discuss the current situation in Sri Lanka?

**A:** We welcome the co-chairs meeting to discuss issues relating to permanent peace and resolution to the ethnic conflict. The international community has reiterated the futility of the military option and the need for the two sides to return to the negotiating table.

While welcoming this, we point out that the Tamil people are deeply saddened that the international community has not taken any constructive and concrete measures to end the State-sponsored violence against the Tamil people. In particular, nothing has been done to bring an end to the ethnic cleansing, horrendous human rights violations, and the grave human misery that the Tamil people have been subjected to.

Indeed suspicions have arisen among the Tamil people as to why there is no firm united stance even among the co-chairs. The Tamil people are puzzled as to why some countries are indirectly encouraging the Government by giving military and economic aid while some other countries are pressuring the Government to seek a political solution.

**Q:** What shifts in policy, perception, and approach do you think the international community should adopt to create a climate conducive to permanent peace?

**A:** The ceasefire agreement brought at least a temporary reprieve to the high intensity war that went on for more than twenty years. This is important because it was the first agreement that came about after a long time with the assistance of the international community. The world supported this agreement unanimously.

This brought hope to the communities affected by the conflict. Yet, due to the competition for power among the Sinhala ruling class, the conducive environment that was created for peace was destroyed. By their actions the ruling class has created confusion about the position of the majority Sinhala people and has brought about a dire situation in this island.

They rejected the very first proposal put forward by the Tamil people for an interim government, and they also destroyed the agreement, after it was signed by the two sides, on a joint structure put forward by the international community, following the tsunami devastation for humanitarian work. Through these the Sinhala chauvinistic leadership has destroyed any remaining hope among the Tamil people.

International community must seriously view the long history of the Tamil struggle and act to end the ethnically biased efforts by the Sinhala leadership. I believe the constructive step by the international community is to accept and support the struggle for rights of the Tamil people and force the Sri Lankan Government to implement the ceasefire agreement 100% to pave the way for peace talks.

**Q:** The International community, in particular the USA, thinks that a common agreement must be reached among the Southern political parties and through this form the basis for negotiations with the LTTE. Is this possible? Is this the right strategy?

**A:** As far as the southern political parties are concerned there has never been the practice of following party policies. They jump from party to party to seek power and for financial benefits.

The current "efforts" to bring a united position among the southern parties is the same drama that has gone on through-

out the Tamil people's struggle for their rights. Finding a solution has never been the motive of these "efforts". The latest "efforts" too will not produce the desired outcome of a common agreement.

When decisions have to be made later, these parties will not cooperate towards it. Agreements or solutions will be reached only when those in power act with honesty to find that solution not otherwise.

In addition, whoever newly takes control of the Sri Lankan Government is always interested in a military solution and they are more bent on exploiting the international community for that end. This has always been the pattern.

A point must be emphasized. Sri Lankan Government will never agree to peace talks after strengthening it militarily.

On the contrary it will reject peace efforts and ceasefire agreements and will jump into a war saying it is going to bring a resolution through military means. Then after facing heavy losses from which it is unable to pull back it will agree for a peace talks.

I do believe that the international community would have understood this pattern of deceptive behaviour of the successive Sinhala Governments.

The latest ceasefire agreement, which the international community believed will deliver a solution, was the result of military and economic difficulties faced by the Sinhala Government. Therefore, hopes to find a solution by militarily strengthening the Sri Lankan Government and thus destroy the Tamil collective and thus their struggle for freedom will always remain a day-dream.

Firstly, there has never been a history where a Sri Lankan Government has come down and agreed for talks or peace efforts in such a situation. Secondly, a solution found through such a means will not be a just solution to an affected and oppressed people.

**Q:** Sections of Southern leadership and clergy are advancing the idea that peace can be brought about by militarily weakening the LTTE. What is your position on this?

**A:** Tamil people have been fighting for their rights for the last 60 years. Initially, Tamil people did not choose military means for their freedom struggle. They took forward their struggle through non-violence for thirty years. Sinhala leadership could have put forward a solution to the ethnic problem during these thirty years.

There was never an open minded humanitarian approach to this problem by the Sinhala leadership. On the contrary, ethnic cleansing and ethnic genocide were visited on the people. Many thousands of Tamil people were



Ceasefire Agreement only hope says Tamilselvan Photo TamilNet

killed and hundreds of thousands of Tamil were chased from their land, in effect a huge human misery was created.

It was in this environment that our freedom movement was born. Only when their struggle by peaceful and democratic means was broken and military violence was let loose to wipe out the people, the people took up armed struggle as self defense. People of Tamil Elam did not wish to create this situation. This was forced by the Sinhala violence.

If the issue of the rights of the Tamil people has captured the world attention, it is only because of the dedicated military strength of the Tamil people. Therefore, Tamil people will never allow the military strength that was built up step by step as self defense to be weakened. The Sinhala leadership knowing this well repeats this proposition again and again solely to buy time and opportunity from the international community to intensify their ethnic genocide and destroy the rights of Tamils.

It is only when the Sinhala leadership understands, the true aspirations of the Tamil people, that the military strength of the Tamil people is not against the Sinhala nation or the Sinhala people, that it was built as self defense to protect their homeland, and that only when Tamil people create the environment where they too can live with security, freedom and self respect, this island will become a violence free peaceful place.

**Q:** Certain countries that are rejecting a military solution and emphasizing a political solution, are also taking actions against representatives of Tamils and the LTTE. As the conflict now plays out on a domestic and international platform, how does this impact the issue of Tamil representation?

**A:** Hundreds of thousands of our people chased out from their home are living in several countries. They help their kith and kin in this island who have suffered immense misery. It is a real tragedy that humanitarian concern and the natural affinity between kith and kin are smeared with labels of assisting 'terrorism.'

Neither the Tamil people nor their representatives have broken the laws of the countries where they reside when carrying out their political or humanitarian work. They do their work to achieve their aspirations by respecting the people and their governments of these countries.

After the tsunami devastation, during the peace efforts, and when an ethnic violence is let loose on their people, expatriate Tamils worked tirelessly for their brethren in the Tamil homeland. Smearing this work they do to help their kith and kin with terrorism is not only distressing the Tamil people, it will also encourage the Sinhala chauvinists to intensify their violence.

**Q:** How accurate is the claim by the Sri Lankan Army that the LTTE has been evicted from the East, and this eviction translates into SLA military superiority?

**A:** As far as the LTTE is concerned we were never defeated. We adopt military strategies to suit the place, the environment and the time. In particular, in the east it is common for the Sinhala forces to advance and then withdraw when faced with heavy losses following our strong defense. This is the past history.

No people will accept the occupation of their land by a foreign force or a force that they detest. They will always seek their own security. Very soon the Sinhala forces will understand the trap they have set for themselves.



## NEWS

# Sri Lanka battles cash crunch

**PK Balachandran**  
Hindustan Times

DUE to inefficiency, corruption, fall in income and the mounting expenditure on war, the Sri Lankan government is facing a financial crunch. This is likely to get worse in the future due to a planned rise in defence expenditure.

At last Wednesday's cabinet meeting, President Mahinda Rajapaksa turned down requests from a number of ministers for more financial allocations, The Sunday Times reported.

A cash strapped Central government had slashed allocations to the Provincial Governments by as much as 60%, the paper said. This would affect on-going grass roots level projects.

In an economy which is highly dependent on tourism, a 23.4% fall in arrivals in the first five months of 2007, and a 40% fall in May, should cause great anxiety. According to the Central Bank, earnings from tourism had fallen by 14.8% in the first four months of this year. Contributing to the fall in arrivals were factors like travel advisories by Western governments and the closure of the Colombo airport at night in the last three months.

Export of garments has been another major source of income. But due to increased global competition and bad industry practices, 85 factories had to close in 2006 and about 16,000 workers were thrown out of job, Lakkima News reported.

Contributing to the stress in

the garment industry is a 35% increase in the Terminal Handling Charge at the Colombo port. Small garment factories, which have been the most vulnerable to hikes in rates and severe competition, have halved.

As regards the other major export commodity, tea, the Chairman of the Colombo Tea Traders' Association, Tybre Akbarrali, had this to say: "The prevailing situation has not only destroyed the country's image but has become a principal factor for rise of inflation which had a bad impact on the industry during the last year."

Due to the mismatch between the international and domestic oil prices, the state owned Ceylon Petroleum Corporation is running at a loss of LKR 1360 million.

Sri Lanka is the most militarised county in South Asia with the highest per capita expenditure on defence, according to a Mumbai based think tank. Expenditure on the non-productive defence sector has been growing by leaps and bounds and is set to grow faster. It will pinch the economy when repayment time comes.

According to Jane's Defence Weekly, Sri Lanka has signed a \$ 37.6 million deal with China's Poly Technologies. This company would have to be paid a 25% advance, and the balance in ten quarterly instalments. Sri Lanka already owes \$ 200 million to another Chinese arms company NORINCO.



Prof. Peiris (l) was in favour of peace when he participated in peace talks with the LTTE's theoretician Anton Balasingham (r) (pictured with Norwegian Foreign Minister Jan Peterson (c) in 2002) but has changed his mind since rejoining the governing party. File photo - TamilNet

## Military action need for Sinhala support - Peiris

TamilNet

SRI LANKA has to militarily defeat the Liberation Tigers to encourage the majority Sinhalese to accept a peace deal with the Tamils, Colombo's trade minister, Prof. G. L. Peiris said last Friday in an interview with Reuters.

Prof. Peiris, a former chief negotiator for the Sri Lankan government who was famously associated with a landmark agreement with the LTTE in 2002 to explore federalism as a solution to the island's ethnic conflict, said inter-

national criticism about his government's human rights record was undermining peace.

"There really has to be a military response to terrorism, but there's no contradiction between that stance and our clear acknowledgment of the fact that a political process is necessary," Peiris told Reuters in the interview from Washington.

He told Reuters the recent reversion to war taught the government that it needed to be tough militarily to win majority Sinhalese political support for political compromises with the Tamil community.

"There must be no lurking fear in their minds that they're vulnerable to attack by the (Tamil Tigers), and that feeling of security must be established in the minds of the people before any of this can really work on the ground," he said.

Speaking ahead of meetings with US State Department and trade officials, Peiris stopped short of criticizing the decision to trim some aid over human rights concerns.

But he said they made the job of seeking peace more difficult.

"A political solution is going to be made much, much more difficult than it needs to be if there is economic adversity and deprivation," he said.

"If the country's squeezed and if the resources are cut off, you are unwittingly creating conditions that are exactly what the extremists would like," Peiris added.

Echoing a lament heard from

US officials battling Islamic extremists Prof. Peiris said the Tamil Tigers are "not constrained by any norms or principles, but a government has to act in conformity with the rule of law."

Five years ago Prof. Peiris and the LTTE's chief negotiator, Anton Balasingham, struck a landmark agreement to explore federalism as a solution to resolve the island's long running ethnic conflict.

The December 2002 agreement, struck in the Norwegian capital during the third round of Norwegian facilitated talks between the government and the LTTE, came to be dubbed the 'Oslo Declaration.'

But in January this year Prof Peiris defected from the opposition United National Party (UNP) back to the ruling Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) which he had previously left for the UNP in 2001.

Following his return to the SLFP and his joining the hardline Sinhala-nationalist government of President Mahinda Rajapakse, Prof. Peiris publicly distanced himself from the Oslo Declaration, dismissing the notions of 'federalism', 'unitary' and 'united' as "mere words."

"Today the intellectuals and experts worldwide agree that terms such as federalism, unitary and united have no clear definition and are indistinct at best," Prof. Peiris said at the time.

"If you take the Indian model for instance, it is neither federal nor unitary in nature but a mixture of both," he explained.

What was required was a "practical solution" to the ethnic conflict, he added.

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## NEWS

# Two charged in UK over 'support for LTTE'

TWO Tamils in Britain were charged last Wednesday under the Terrorism Act 2000 with providing support to the Liberation Tigers, which is proscribed in UK.

Arunachalam Chrishanthakumar, (also known as 'AC Shanthan'), 50, and Goldan Lambert, 29 appeared at City of Westminster Magistrates Court last Thursday.

According to details released by the British Police, Mr. Chrishanthakumar is charged with five counts.

Two of the charges are linked to his alleged role in organising a mass rally last July to mark the 1983 anti-Tamil pogrom in Sri Lanka.

The single charge against Mr. Lambert is that he was also involved in organising the event.

The rally on July 25, 2006 was attended by 15,000 Tamils in UK.

The pair are due to appear again at Westminster Magistrates' Court on 9 August when their pleas will be entered.

At the end of the court appearance last Thursday Mr. Chrishanthakumar was remanded in custody, while Mr. Lambert was released on bail.

The charges against Mr. Chrishanthakumar are:

"1. For that you between the 1st day of June 2006 and the 26th day of July 2006 within the Greater London area assisted in the arrangement of a meeting which you knew was to support a proscribed organisation namely the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam Contrary to Section 12(2)a and (6) of the Terrorism Act 2000

"2. For that you on the 25th day of July 2006 in a public place, namely Hyde Park London, addressed a meeting and the purpose of the address was to encourage support for a proscribed organisation, namely the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam Contrary to Section 12(3) and (6) of the Terrorism Act 2000

"3. For that you on or about the 24th day of January 2005 within the Greater London Area received £1500 intending that it be used or having reasonable cause to suspect that it may be used for the purposes of terrorism Contrary to Section 15(2) and Section 22 of the Terrorism Act 2000

"4. For that you between the 17th day of January 2006 and the

22nd June 2007 within the Greater London Area received a quantity of literature and manuals including Underwater Warfare Systems, Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Naval Weapons Systems, six trenching spades, thirty nine compasses and a piece of ballistic body armour intending that they be used or having reasonable cause to suspect that they may be used for the purposes of terrorism Contrary to Section 15(2) and Section 22 of the Terrorism Act 2000

"5. For that you between the 23rd day of January 2005 and the 22nd day of June 2007 within the Greater London Area belonged or professed to belong to a proscribed organisation, namely the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam Contrary to Section 11(1) and (3) of the Terrorism Act 2000"

The charge against Mr. Lambert is: "you on the 25th day of July 2006 at Hyde Park London assisted in managing a meeting which you knew was to support a proscribed organisation, namely the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam Contrary to Section 12(2)a and (6) of the Terrorism Act 2000."

The arrests were made late on Thursday two weeks ago, from two different locations in London, the BBC reported, adding the men were being held under British anti-terror laws which meant they could be held for 14 days without charge.

"Two men, aged 29 and 50, were arrested on 21 June - one in west London and the other in south-west London," Metropolitan Police spokesman Alastair Campbell told the BBC

"They were arrested on suspicion of providing support to a proscribed organisation... and taken to a central London police station, where they remain in custody," he said.

"Some addresses in various locations in London are being searched in connection with the enquiry."

This is the first time that people of Tamil origin have been detained and charged in the UK under the Terrorism Act.

But the move comes after the arrests in separate incidents of Tamils in France, Australia and the United States on charges of supporting the LTTE.



15,000 Tamils in London attended the demonstration in Hyde Park to protest against Sri Lanka.

## Co-chairs refuse to take action against Sri Lanka

SRI LANKA'S main foreign donors last week declined to issue a statement, but also decided against sanctioning Sri Lanka for its human rights abuses.

Top diplomats from Japan, Norway, the United States and European Union - known collectively as the Co-Chairs - met in Oslo Tuesday last week at a time when Sri Lanka's relations with the international community are increasingly strained.

Among the items discussed at the June 25 meeting was the possibility of sanctions against Sri Lanka, diplomatic sources said.

However, Japan and the United States had argued strongly against such a move. And as a result, the co-chairs agreed to give Sri Lanka more time, political columnists from Colombo quoted diplomatic sources as saying.

This latest phase of the war has been marked by widespread human rights abuses, for which most blame has been laid at the government's doors.

"Human rights and humanitarian affairs are definitely the issues of the day," Reuters quoted a foreign diplomat as saying on condition of anonymity.

"It's fair to say that some of the Co-Chairs are still very much concerned about the situation in those fields today and will be focusing on that in the time to come."

For the first time, the co-chairs did not issue any public statement after their consultations, which were described as a 'working meeting' to exchange notes in the wake of several recent high profile visits to Sri Lanka.

"The Co-Chairs will explore ways and means in which the group, as a whole or as individual countries, can continue helping the parties to cease violence and return to the negotiating table," Eric Solheim, Norwegian Minister for International Development and the host, said in a statement prior to the meeting.

Observers said one reason

donors did not comment publicly after the meeting is that they could not agree among themselves on how far to openly pressure the government, Reuters reported.

The co-chairs also agreed to ask the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers to return to peace talks, stressing that they did not support a military solution to the conflict.

At the same time, the US, Japan, the European Union and Norway decided that it was time for Norwegian diplomats to resume playing the role of active peace facilitator in the seemingly never ending conflict, IANS reported.

This decision follows a statement by Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa last week that while the Norwegians were encouraged to get the LTTE to agree to talks, they should not think about making a trip to the Vanni to meet then directly.

"President Rajapaksa was of the view that Norway should make contact with the LTTE leadership from Oslo since a visit at this juncture would not be opportune," the Sunday Times reported last week, of a meeting between Mr. Rajapaksa and Mr. Solheim.

However, the last edition of the Sunday Times suggests that the government has reversed this stance and will now allow Norway's Special Envoy Jon Hanssen Bauer to visit Kilinochchi.

The co-chairs will also privately call for an end to human rights abuses and access to the northeast for humanitarian workers, IANS reported.

The co-chairs feel that even if the Tigers are pushed out of the east completely, there can never be a military solution to the conflict and that both parties will have to return to talks to arrest the rapidly deteriorating situation, the IANS agency said.

"At the same time, Sri Lanka seems to have no system or plan in place for talks. The military is also gung ho about its victories

and strongly feels there should be no let up in the pressure being put on the LTTE," the newsagency reported.

Another factor the co-chairs called for is the formulation of a "credible" Political Package to end the conflict, the Sunday Times reported.

"The Co-chairs have expressed the view that parties can be brought to the negotiation table by them provided the commitment to peaceful negotiations first comes from the Government," the Sri Lankan weekly reported.

"They are of the opinion that proposals formulated by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party which incorporates devolution at district level will only move the peace process backwards rather than moving forward," the paper said.

Though Indian officials from New Delhi were invited, their envoy in Oslo attended the meeting as an observer.

Besides Solheim, those who took part in the talks included US Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher, Special Representative Yasushi Akashi of Japan, Andreas Michaelis from the European Union presidency and Acting Deputy Director General James Morran of the European Commission.

Diplomats and analysts say Sri Lanka is increasingly at risk of isolation over human rights abuses, Reuters reported.

The government was forced into an embarrassing U-turn earlier this month after authorities forcibly evicted nearly 400 Tamils from the capital citing security concerns - prompting international outrage and a Supreme Court ruling blocking such evictions.

Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the President's brother, openly accused Western countries of bullying the government on human rights. He also accused UN agencies who expressed concerns of being infiltrated by the LTTE.



## EDITORIAL &amp; OPINION

## TAMIL GUARDIAN

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WEDNESDAY JULY 04, 2007 No. 352

## Revealing Silence

## International inaction stems from divergent interests.

The much anticipated meeting last week of the quartet overseeing the 'peace process' in Sri Lanka has, unsurprisingly, delivered little substance. There wasn't even a joint statement from the US, EU, Japan and Norway afterwards. There have been vague suggestions of demands for a resumption of peace efforts. The Sunday Times says the Co-Chairs representatives had been 'very critical' of the state of affairs in Sri Lanka. But, tellingly, no concrete action was agreed on. Little wonder - given the diverse and utterly contradictory approaches of the quartet. It is clear that some European countries are dismayed by Sri Lanka's inexorable decline anew into nasty conflict - marked prominently again by indiscriminate and vicious violence against civilians. But other powers are more concerned with their own economic interests or the coherence of the '(global) war on terror.' The demonstrable contempt with which the Sri Lankan government has responded to the Co-Chairs' calls for peace efforts says it all: the international community is, collectively, going to do absolutely nothing to restrain the state's violence.

It has been a while since the Co-Chairs last came together. There was that ambassadorial level event earlier in the year. But what stands out now is the thundering statement that came out after the high-level meeting in November last year. The Co-Chairs then viewed "with alarm the rising level of violence in Sri Lanka that has led to significant loss of life and widespread human rights violations." There was a specific call, too: "We call on both sides to seize the historic opportunity created by the 2002 Cease-Fire Agreement to resolve the country's conflict peacefully. Only by committing to sustained and substantive negotiations can the downward spiral of hostilities and human rights violations be reversed."

But at the same time, the US representative, Under Secretary for Political Affairs R. Nicholas Burns observed: "I'd just say on behalf of the United States that we have faith in the government and faith in the President [Mahinda Rajapakse] of Sri Lanka. They do want to make peace. We also believe that the LTTE is a terrorist group responsible for massive bloodshed in the country and we hold the Tamil Tigers responsible for much of what has gone wrong in the country." If there was any doubt, he also declared: "We are not neutral in this respect. We support the

government."

Those statements outline the context in which the international community's commitment to promoting peace or to restraining Sri Lanka's racially motivated violence ought to be viewed. It should be recalled that at the time of that Co-Chairs meet last November, the Sri Lankan military was continuing a massive onslaught against Tamil Tigers, one which killed and wounded hundreds of Tamil civilians and drove hundreds of thousands from their homes. There was absolute confidence amongst a great many international observers the LTTE could be wiped out. It is also worth keeping in mind that this year the US has increased arms sales from \$2m to \$60m while Britain has sold as much in arms as London donated in post-tsunami aid. Japan's Peace Envoy Yasushi Akashi last month emphatically ruled out cutting aid to Colombo.

The Co-Chairs dissatisfaction with the Sri Lankan government has more to do with clumsy execution of the 'war on terror' than with any principled commitment to resolving Tamil grievances. The confidence that President Rajapakse's military solution inspired has dissipated somewhat - the armed forces are unable to breach the Vanni, despite relentless bombardment and the east remains volatile despite being 'captured' (or to use the parlance the Co-Chairs also adopted last year, being 'cleared') and, meanwhile, the emergence of a Sinhala nationalist emerging not as a viewpoint but the overarching order of things in which Tamils, Muslims and foreigners know their place.

The Tamils know some countries are making a principled commitment to human rights and humanitarian law. But the overarching logic of international engagement in Sri Lanka is self-interest and real politik driven. This is not a howl of moral protest, but acknowledgement of why Tamil suffering continues after so many decades. International interests are achieved through relationships with the state - that means with the Sinhala leadership. As long as Sri Lanka's leaders can convince international community of the efficacy of a military solution, they will receive the financial, military and political support to pursue it. In contrast, in the absence of violent rebellion against the state, why would any of the international community's diverse interests be furthered by standing up against the Sinhala leaders on behalf of the rights of Tamils?

## What the Co-Chairs discussed

Iqbal Athas  
 Sunday Times

EVEN if Norway did not issue a formal statement at the end of the two day meeting of the Donor Co-chairs in Oslo, Norway's International Development Minister Erik Solheim, the key player in the Sri Lankan peace process was quoted in the Norwegian media as saying that the Co-chairs remain worried. He had said that they had resolved to push forward for the resumption of the peace process.

The Sunday Times learnt that participants made a very critical assessment on a number of issues.

They had included the political situation, the security situation, human rights, the plight of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), kidnappings, killings, abductions in addition to the deteriorating law and order situation.

Many were deeply critical of the way the Government handled the issues and felt the need for immediate action. Similarly, there was also strong criticism of the LTTE for resorting to violence, violating human rights and for deploying children in conflict.

The Donor Co-chairs, it is learnt, had decided that both the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE should be given a detailed debrief of the deliberations and decisions at their Oslo meeting.

The Government is to be debriefed by Ambassador for Germany in Sri Lanka, the controversial Juergen Weerth. He is doing so representing the European Union, of which Germany remains president.

Months ago, Mr. Weerth earned the wrath of the Government for his alleged unprofessional conduct. He was on the verge of being declared persona non grata. However, the envoy was on home leave at that time and no action followed.

The Donor Co-chairs resolved on four major issues. They are:

\* There is no military solution for the ethnic conflict. A lasting political solution is possible for the current conflict between the Government and the LTTE. Concerns were expressed on (a) Military operations of the Karuna group in the east. (b) Developments in the east that may lead to an alteration of the

ethnic balance. (These concerns are based on the declaration of Muttur-Sampur area as High Security Zones and making Tamil speaking people to leave the area. Added to this was concern over the re-settlement of IDPs by the Government in this area).

\* Human rights violations both by the Government and the LTTE must be stopped. Disappearances and abductions committed by all parties, forced recruitment by the LTTE etc. in the long term will not lead to resolving the current problem. The Government of Sri Lanka being party to all major human rights conventions and as a democratically elected Government has more responsibility and a legal obligation to safeguard human rights. The Government should send clear instructions to Police and the Security Forces on the need to maintain human rights. Access to IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) by the INGOs (International Non Governmental Organisations) for delivery of assistance should be provided by the Government in the relevant areas including Wanni.

\* If the Government of Sri Lanka accepts Norway as peace facilitator, in order to assist the two parties to come back to the peace process/negotiation table, Oslo should be allowed to meet LTTE hierarchy in Kilinochchi.

\* A credible Political Package to address the genuine grievances of the Tamils should be tabled by the Government. The current proposals by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, it was argued, could not be considered "credible." Devolution at the district level will only move the process backwards. If the support of the international community is to be mustered, it was felt that the proposals should be seen to be "credible." Co-chairs hold the view that the parties can be brought to the negotiation table by them provided the commitment to peaceful negotiation comes from the Government. (Edited)

*Mr. Iqbal Athas is the Defence correspondent of the Sunday Times. His analysis appears in the 'Situation Report' column.*

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## EDITORIAL &amp; OPINION

# Ethnic cleansing by decree

**Dharman Dharmaratnam**  
Tamil Guardian

THE international community is silent as the permanent eviction of tens of thousands more Tamils proceeds in Trincomalee.

The Rajapakse administration issued an Extraordinary Gazette notification on May 30 that Mutur East and Sampur are now declared a High Security Zone.

It announced a Special Economic Zone in the area under the Board of Investment Law. This covers a land area of 675 square kilometers (260 square miles).

Many of the 51,450 Tamils who fled Mutur East and Sampur late last year would thus not be allowed to return.

Tamil MPs had briefed the diplomatic community in Colombo that at least 15,646 Tamils would be affected by the new Government ruling. 88 irrigation tanks, 2,000 hectares of grazing land, 27 temples and 19 schools fall within the declared Zone.

The Government has taken steps to appropriate all private land in the area in an attempt to change the ethnic character of the Trincomalee district.

No international wire service nor the BBC covered this news.

The contrast with the earlier coverage of the eviction of Tamils from the Colombo district could not be more stark, especially as the latest gazette notification has grave consequences for the future of the Tamil community as a whole in Sri Lanka.

The UNHCR document published on April 16, 2007 on internal displacement in Sri Lanka speaks volumes.

The UNHCR document reveals that 51,450 persons were displaced from Mutur as at April 2007.

Of this amount, 35,422 had fled to Batticaloa late last year. 9,653 had fled to Amparai. 6,375 moved to the urban precincts of Trincomalee.

These IDPs (internally displaced persons) were all Tamil who fled the incessant aerial bombardment and multi-barrel rocket launches of the advancing Sri Lankan armed forces in late 2006.

The majority of the 20,000 refugees who escaped to India last year were also from the Trincomalee district.

The Muslims who were displaced by the LTTE's temporary occupation of Mutur town in the western part of that division were forcibly returned by the Sri Lankan military authorities and are hence not included in the UNHCR list of IDPs.

Mutur East has been a Tamil area of habitation since early times.

During the Chola interlude in the 10th century, Mutur, Kin-niya and Ichchilampattu were known as Rajaraja Valanadu and Vikrama Chola Valanadu.

With the invasions of Magha of Kalinga in 1215 AD, matrilineal Mukkuvar principalities emerged in this area.

But now an old Tamil Hindu civilizational presence in the region is now being swept away by Government decree.

Defence Secretary Gothabhaya Rajapakse, the brother to the President is effectively responsible for the scheme.

It was Gothabhaya, an American citizen, who authorised the

**The Government has taken steps to appropriate all private land in the area in an attempt to change the ethnic character of the Trincomalee district.**

eviction of thousands of Tamils in Colombo, a step which would have been carried through beyond the first few hundred if not for the international outcry.

But the international community is now silent as the permanent eviction of tens of thousands more Tamils proceeds in Trincomalee.

The Government's Gazette notification is a measure in a long series of steps to change the ethnic character of the East and the Trincomalee district in particular.

The Don Stephen Senanayake administration initiated the Gal Oya colonization scheme in what was then known as South Batticaloa in the early 1950s.

This area is now referred to as either Amparai or Digamadulla.

He sponsored the settlement of thousands of Sinhalese in the area through a process of demographic re-engineering.

He also paved the way for the large scale settlement of Sinhalese in the interior divisions of the Trincomalee district.

This included Kantalai, Mora-



veva (Mudalikulam), Goma-ran-kadavela (Kumaresan Kadavai) and Padavi Siripura (Padavikulam).

The Junius Jayewardene administration carried this further with the eviction of Tamils from Manal Aru (Weli Oya) in 1987 by similar Gazette notification.

The then Government issued an Extraordinary Gazette on April 16, 1988 ordering 13,288 Tamil families to vacate their lands in 42 villages in this strategic piece of real estate that divided the North and the East.

The Weli Oya scheme was brought under the Mahaweli Authority and 9,289 Sinhalese families were brought in. However, many Sinhalese have since left given the fluid military situation.

One needs to place things in perspective.

By an Extraordinary Gazette notification, the Sri Lankan government is now attempting to further alter the demographic character of the Trincomalee district.

It is to this end it has expelled the Tamil residents of the area.

While Weli Oya served to interrupt the territorial contiguity of the North and the East, this latest attempt to de-Tamilize Mutur is intended to disrupt the territorial contiguity between Trincomalee and Batticaloa through a proposed Sinhalese enclave.

The brazen move is an outrageous effort to expel the centuries old Tamil Hindu presence there.

But international precedents for ethnic cleansing do exist and we need to be mindful of these as we fight this latest injustice of the Rajapakse administration.

Indeed it seems that the Rajapakse administration's action has strong antecedents.

In the aftermath of World War 2, between 13.5 and 16.5 million Germans were evicted from Pol-

and, the Czech republic, Kaliningrad in Russia, Slovakia and Hungary.

They were evicted from what were old German villages and provinces with a history that went

**US ambassador, Robert O'Blake is clearly in the loop on matters such as the eviction of Tamils from Trincomalee and no gazette notification of this nature would have been promulgated without his prior knowledge.**

back to the Middle Ages. This was the old Prussia, Pomerania, Silesia, Danzig and Konigsberg.

The ethnic cleansing was underwritten by the victorious allied powers where no less than Winston Churchill stated in the House of Commons in 1944: "expulsion is the method which, in so far as we have been able to see, will be the most satisfactory and lasting. There will be no mixture of populations to cause endless trouble. ... A clean sweep will be made. I am not alarmed by these transferences, which are more possible in modern conditions."

Internationally supported ethnic cleansing has occurred in

more recent times too.

For example, Serbs constituted 24% of Kosovo in 1961. They had been in that territory for centuries. Faced with an upsurge of attacks by the Albanian majority, the Serbs began to leave.

The Serb population in Kosovo declined to 10% in 1991 and is currently 5%.

Once again, a 'nuisance minority' had been evicted with the United States and West Europe now calling for Kosovan independence given the changed demographic reality. It is fait accompli.

We need to be mindful of international precedents when we consider international action in Sri Lanka.

The US ambassador in Colombo, Robert O' Blake has been a regular visitor to the island's east.

He sits in on the Government committee that decides on the distribution of food and medicine to LTTE-held areas of the Northeast.

Ambassador Blake is clearly in the loop on matters such as the eviction of Tamils from Trincomalee and no gazette notification of this nature would have been promulgated without his prior knowledge.

Indeed, the US Pacific Command had advised back in 2002 that the southern perimeter of the Trincomalee harbor i.e. Mutur needed to be secured and made safe to ensure the Sri Lankan government's hold on the East.

The Gazette notification driving out the Tamils from the area needs to be viewed in this context also.

Meanwhile, there are reports the Chinese are planning to invest in Mutur, including the setting up of a coal fired power plant.

The Tamils need to be mindful of such geopolitical ambitions as they struggle for their rights. International silence is not just unawareness.



# “New security zone in East discriminates against Tamils”

CALLING it a "blatant violation of the fundamental human rights of the Tamil people", the leader of the Tamil National Alliance condemned a Sri Lankan government move to establish a new high security zone in Muthur East and Sampur in Trincomalee.

Mr. R. Sampanthan, a Tamil MP for Trincomalee, charged that the new security restrictions would deny Tamils "their fundamental right to resettle on the lands owned and possessed by them" and urged Colombo to rescind the regulations in a speech delivered in parliament on July 20.

An edited version of the text of his speech follows:

The President has promulgated regulations which state that there shall be a Zone, to be called "Muthur (East) / Sampur High Security Zone."

A great deal of uncertainty and confusion prevails in regard to the regulations.

The regulations constitute a blatant violation of the fundamental human rights of the Tamil people, who have historically inhabited these areas, and are deliberately discriminatory against them on grounds of race.

The implementation of the regulations could result in several thousands of Tamil families, who have been historical inhabitants of several ancient Tamil villages in the areas, and who were displaced by the indiscriminate aerial bombardment and multi barrel rocket launcher fire in the course of military operations in the areas by the Sri Lankan State, being denied their fundamental right to resettle on the lands owned and possessed by them, to carry on their livelihood, and pursue their economic social and cultural aspirations in the villages.

This is their birthright and cannot be denied to them.

This action has been capriciously taken by the Sri Lankan State without any form of consultation with the Tamil people or their democratically elected representatives.

This action if pursued will inflict immeasurable and irreparable harm to the lives of these thousands of Tamil families and their descendants.

We therefore call upon the Government:

(I) to refrain from taking any steps to implement the said regulations and

(II) to take steps to rescind the said regulations.

So that these thousands of Tamil families can resettle on their lands possessed and owned by them in the villages, and

recommence their lives.

This Gazette notification seems quite vague and quite confusing in regard to several matters.

Be that as it may, it would appear that the area covered by the Gazette notification, which has been declared a high security zone, would cover approximately 50 percent of the present Muthur Divisional Secretary's Division.

The present Muthur Divisional Secretary's Division is 179.4 square kilometers in territory, and if it would cover 50 percent of that territory, it would appear that this high security zone would encompass about 90 square kilometers of territory, which is a very substantial extent of land.

That is the extent of land which apparently is covered by these regulations and which has been declared a high security zone, if these regulations are implemented in the way in which it is proposed.

There are within this territory 12 Grama Sevaka Divisions. There are 28 villages comprising of 4249 families and making a total population of 15648 people. I will not read out the names of the Grama Sevaka Divisions nor the names of the villages.

In these villages there are 19 schools, and one of them is Chenaiyoor Central College which is the most leading educational institution in the entire Muthur area.

In these 19 schools, several thousands of children, according to my information approximately 5000 to 6000 children, are being educated.

In this area, which is supposed to be declared as a high security zone, 18 Hindu Temples and one Methodist Church are situated.

This area has 88 minor tanks under which people cultivate. It has grazing lands meant for the livestock owned by the people in the area, which is approximately 2000 hectares in extent.

Farming, fishing and livestock breeding are the main occupation and source of income of these people. There are several fishing villages in this area comprising of a large number of families who depend upon fishing.

There are two hospitals in the area. One is the Sampoor Hospital and the other one is the Paddalipuram Hospital.

If this high security zone concept or proposal is to be implemented in this area, I would earnestly request the House to visualize the havoc, the utter havoc, that would be created in the lives of these large number of people living in that area.

We are also very concerned

because of the impression that is sought to be created by certain very highly placed Government persons that this Sampoor area was indeed a Sinhalese village in ancient times.

In fact I do not mind mentioning on the Floor of this House, that some diplomats have inquired from me, and asked me about the correct position on the basis of some statements made to them by persons in high Government positions.

This has become a matter of grave concern to us and I therefore want to put the record straight, and put the matter beyond doubt, for these are not matters which can be allowed to be left in the realm of doubt, and in the realm of myth, for people to play around with.

I have with me the Gazette of the Census of Ceylon 1881 where it is stated that there were in 1881 four Wannivar Divisions- Assistant Government Agent's Divisions - in the Trincomalee District.

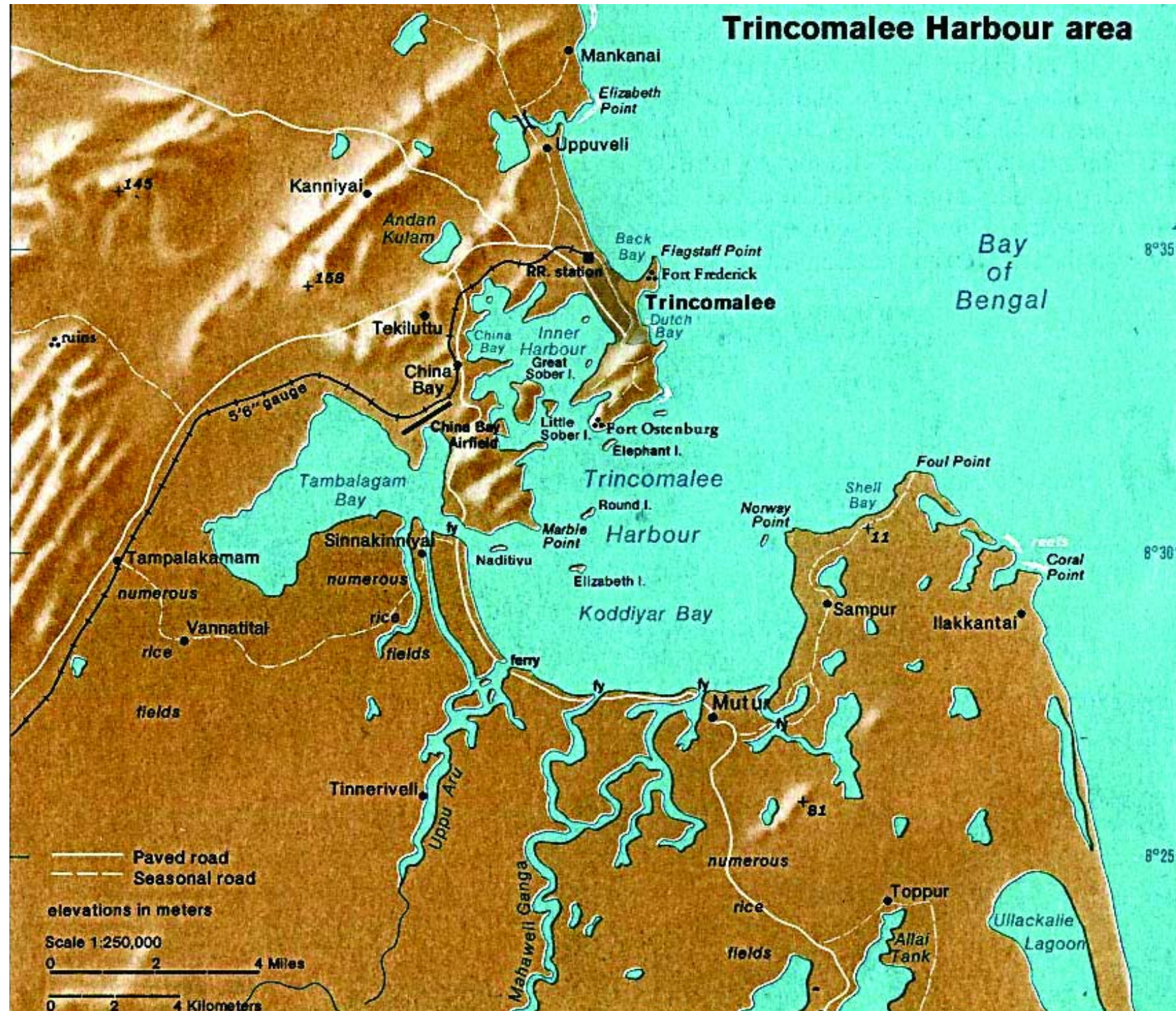
The first was Trincomalee Town, the second is Kaddukulampattu the third is Kottiarputtu and the fourth is Thampalakamampattu, and this entire area Sampoor and Muthur East area comes within the Kottiarputtu Wannivar's Division or the Kottiarputtu AGA's Division.

According to the Census of 1881, the population breakdown ethnic-wise in the Kottiarputtu Division is as follows: Europeans - 01, Eurasians and Burghers - 13 (Males - 07, Females -06), Sinhalese -11 (Males - 11, Females - none), Tamils - 3027, (Males - 1646, Females - 1381), Moormen Muslims 1673 (Males - 881, Females - 792), Veddas - 38, (Males - 21, Females - 17).

I have with me the Census of 1827, based upon religion and according to that, the Hindus were 14,182, the Buddhists were 250, the Moors were 3245 and the Christians were 1481, in the whole of the Trincomalee District. Most of the Christians would have been Tamils. What is important is that the Hindus all of whom would have been Tamils were 14,182, and the Buddhists all of whom would have been Sinhalese were 250.

I am only mentioning these figures because as I said before, there is the need for this confusion and these myths that were growing in the minds of these people to be dispelled, and they should realize that they have been seriously mistaken in expressing this point of view to some diplomats and others with whom they have discussed this matter.

We are concerned also because



The establishment of a Security Zone around Trincomalee harbour will deny several thousand Tamil families the right to settle on their ancestral lands

se the Government thinks that there are certain security considerations which need to be addressed. It is our view that such Security considerations can be addressed without a severe and total denial of the fundamental human rights of the long standing Tamil Civilian residents of these areas.

The Government action is indicative of a total lack of sensitivity to the rights of the Tamil Civilian population and is strongly reflective of anti-Tamil racial discrimination.

The Government is insensitive to such severe and total denial and deprivation of civilian rights, because the civilians are Tamils.

The Government has not and will not on grounds of security, inflict such denial and deprivation on the Sinhala civilian population.

This leads me to the more fundamental question of why this distinction exists in the mind of the Government, between the Sinhalese and the Tamils relating to security.

Is it not, for the simple reason, that you have not accommodated diversity, and pluralism, and recognised the most fundamental human right of the Tamil people, the right to internal self determination in the areas of their historical habitation?

It is this failure on your part that compels the Tamil people to disaffect and rebel, more particularly the Tamil Youth to rebel.

Have you honestly and meaningfully addressed the cause of such disaffection? Is not the solution, the granting of substantial self-rule to the Tamil speaking people, in the territories in which they have historically lived and are in a majority?

Your lack of will, or ability, to do the correct thing drives you to confiscate and expropriate the land, the property, which belongs to these Tamil people and which they have historically inhabited. You will not stop at that, indeed with such thinking, you cannot stop at that.

Your task, in accordance with your thinking, will be fully accomplished only when this land, this property, of the Tamil people, is occupied by Sinhala people of your choice.

The Tamil people see this move of your's as yet another step to spread your tentacles into the Tamil speaking historical habitation.

It is my duty to state, that such diabolical action on your part cannot and will not achieve either of your objectives; neither the security you seek, nor the Sinhalisation of Tamil speaking territory, both of which you

believe can be achieved through military aggression.

But in the process, the Tamil civilian population is being grievously victimised. Such action on the part of the State can only be described as heinous.

It is also my duty to state, that security can be achieved only through a just and honourable peace and this is not achievable by mere words - by empty rhetoric, it is achievable only through action, primarily by the Sri Lankan State that demonstrates a strong commitment to a just and honourable peaceful resolution of the conflict.

We call upon the Government to facilitate the resettlement of the displaced Tamil civilians on the lands from which they were displaced. Nothing less would be acceptable.

[The people] have been evicted as a result of military action, and now you are contemplating to keep them out completely, by declaring this area, 90 square kilometers of territory, 50 per cent of the Muthur AGA's Division, as a High Security Zone, so as to ensure that these people will not be able to return and live in those territories.

And thus these people will be denied the right to lead a decent life



(top) President Mahinda Rajapaksa addresses the Maha Sangha at the memorial services to mark the fourth death anniversary of a former prelate. Photo Sudath Silva / Daily Mirror (middle) Twenty-five new officers received their commission at the Sri Lanka Military Academy after saluting Army Chief Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka. Photo The Island (above) Sri Lanka's Field Commanders discuss their plans for the Thoppigala battlefield . Photo Rukmal Gamage Daily News



## NEWS

# Sri Lanka exaggerating casualties, running recruitment drive - paper

WHILE war preparations are widening, the ongoing undeclared war in between the government and the LTTE is taking an increasingly heavy toll on the truth, as casualty figures become part of the war effort, a Sri Lankan defence columnist reported last week.

"Adding statistics of claimed guerrilla deaths as well as injuries in the recent months would have surpassed the numbers military top brass give as the total strength of the LTTE," Sri Lanka's leading defence columnist said in his weekly column.

Writing in the Situation Report column of the Sunday Times newspaper, Iqbal Athas notes that the military was also tight lipped about their own casualties.

The columnist notes that the Sri Lankan military is intensifying its actions in the northeast.

"The focus of such action in the North in the recent weeks is the Wanni region, areas ahead of the defended localities of the Security Forces west of the Omanthai entry-exit point. [The Sri Lankan military] had in fact re-adjusted their Forward Defence Lines (FDL) further to the front from their original position," his column reported.

"On June 2, the 56 Division (four battalions) and 57 Division (seven battalions) launched a limited pre-dawn operation to seize more terrain. The general areas of Villattikulam, North and North West of the village of Kalmadu (already under Security Forces control) were the scenes of fierce battles," the Situation Report stated, citing an example of an actual clash in the north.

"By 8 a.m. that day, Tiger guerrillas launched a counter attack. Groups of guerrillas confronted the troops almost head on. Heavy fighting continued for over seven hours. Troops were forced to make a tactical withdrawal," the column reported.

"Later that evening, the guerrillas fired 130 mm artillery. More than 800 of the Army's own 130 mm artillery shells were destroyed after one of them fell at a storage area south east of Pompeimadu. It led to deafening explosions and a massive bonfire," the column noted.

"The Sunday Times has learnt from highly placed Army sources that five officers and 67 soldiers were killed. A further two officers and 24 soldiers are declared missing in action. Twenty officers and 298 soldiers were wounded in action," the defence columnist reported.

"These sources claimed that 800 guerrillas were killed and a further 700 were wounded. The claims of guerrilla casualties, no doubt, are on the higher side," he noted in the column.

Moving to clashes in the east, Mr Athas states: "Another operation to seize areas in and around Baroni's Cap or Thoppigala - Narakamulla began on June 8. Before the crack of dawn that day, commandos ventured into guerrilla-held area to launch attacks on their camps. Some of the camps were captured and later destroyed. By 7.30 a.m. ahead of the villages of Panjimarathadi and Narakamulla, the guerrillas launched fierce counter attacks. By evening troops were forced to make a tactical withdrawal to their original positions north of Rugam."

"The next day troops fired artillery at guerrilla positions. It drew retaliatory fire. In the days that followed, they gradually advanced to encompass the area. Bitter fighting continues," he wrote.

"In the fighting 15 soldiers have been killed. Six officers and 142 soldiers have been wounded, according to highly placed Army sources," the column noted.

"These sources claimed 400 guerrillas were killed and 100 more were wounded. Here again the number is on the higher side. If past guerrilla casualties in the East were added to these figures, it would have exceeded the [military estimates of] guerrilla strength there," the Situation Report column noted.

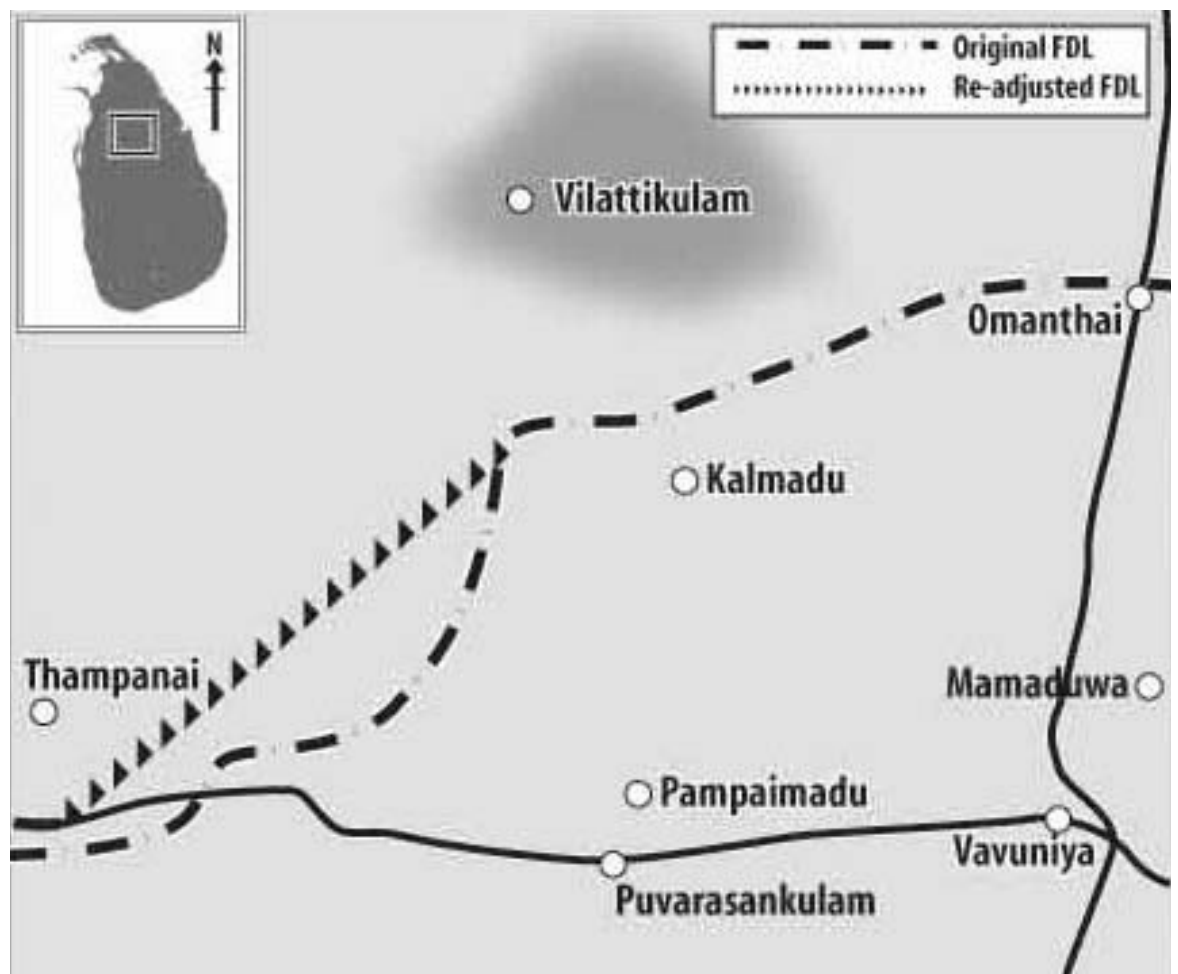
The defence columnist also noted that the armed forces "have embarked on a programme to enhance their strength by 50,000."

"The Army will recruit 25,000 more whilst the Navy will recruit 15,000 and the Air Force 10,000," he wrote.

"The Sri Lanka Army now has an approved cadre of over 100,000. That strength, at least on paper, exceeds the strength of the British Army. However, Since January 1, 2005 until April 20, 2007, Army records reveal that a total of 93 officers and 10,060 other ranks have deserted their posts," he notes.

"Some availed themselves of periodic general amnesties. The last general amnesty from January 20 to February 12 this year saw a total of 3979 (2758 regulars and 1221 volunteers) return to service. Added to these are the vacancies caused by troops killed or left out of battle due to injuries," the defence column said.

"Enhancing the strength of the



The Sri Lankan military has advanced its FDL, encroaching on LTTE held land. Graphic Sunday Times

Army has drawn mixed reactions from serving senior officers," the columnist said.

"Some are of the view that existing battalions, with some exceptions, are under strength. Whilst the ideal strength was 855 troops per battalion, there were some with a strength of 400 to 500 troops. Hence, they were of the view that depleted battalions should be merged and made full strength to ensure the maximum utilisation of resources," the column said.

"But others held a different view," the defence columnist noted. "Though depleted, allowing the battalions to remain that way, they argue, enabled them (though small in number) to obtain their entitlements. More importantly, it also means an increase in the number of officer cadres thus throwing open the doors for rapid promotions," he wrote.

"When the new recruitment drive is over, the total military strength - Army, Navy, Air Force, Police, Special Task Force, Home Guards would be over 300,000," the column reported.

Mr. Athas also focused on the increased focus by the military on their propaganda.

"Whilst stepping up the military offensives in the North and the East, the defence establishment is now devising new ways and means of heightening their publicity drives," he wrote.

"This is particularly in the light of political developments that have generated adverse publicity and thus given them a poor public image. Top rungers in the defence establishment believe fresh initiatives to project the 'vast military gains' would reverse this situation," he notes.

"One such measure is to brief members of the clergy representing important temples in the country. Military top brass are to give them a full briefing next

week on successes in the North and East and the plans that have gone in so far to "defeat" the LTTE. The idea is to get them to go back to their towns and villages and tell the public there of what they have learnt," he wrote.

The defence columnist also reported that even as the military steps up its action in the northeast, Sri Lanka's President, Mahinda Rajapaksa, has continued to state his opposition to a military solution.

"I do not want to pursue a military solution. I want to talk with the LTTE without any pre-conditions. Velupillai Prabhakaran must convey his moves and not others," the column quoted President Mahinda Rajapaksa as having told the Norwegian facilitators.

In response to a question on what the government of Sri Lanka wanted from the Norwegian government, Mr Rajapaksa "made clear if there was an assurance from the LTTE leader that guerrilla attacks would cease, the Government would follow suit," the Sunday Times column said.

The Situation Report column said the President had urged Norway to continue its efforts to bring the LTTE to the negotiation table.

But the President also did not favour an immediate visit to Sri Lanka by Special Envoy Jon Hanssen Bauer, the paper said.

"President Rajapaksa was of the view that Norway should make contact with the LTTE leadership from Oslo since a visit at this juncture would not be opportune," the column said.

"Even if he did not say so, the Government would have found it difficult to facilitate such a visit in the coming weeks," the paper noted, adding "there was heightened military activity in southern parts of the Wanni, particularly west of the A-9 highway. It would have necessitated the suspension

of such activity, a move that would have drawn protests from military commanders."

"In his first dialogue with Norway's peace facilitators after a break of over a year, President Rajapaksa, has made it unequivocally clear the war on the LTTE will continue. This is not withstanding his assertion that he was not committed to a military solution," the paper noted.

This stance leaves Norway with only "remote control diplomacy" Mr. Athas noted, adding "the peace facilitator has heard the Government of Sri Lanka in Geneva and not in Colombo. And the President has told them they could hear the LTTE by making contacts from Norway. A visit to Sri Lanka has thus been stalled."

"In reality, Norway's peace facilitator role has been, at least for now, temporarily confined to outside the shores of Sri Lanka," the Sunday Times column said.

"Added to that, the second arm of the peace facilitator mechanism, the role of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) has also become curtailed," the Mr. Athas noted in his Situation Report column.

Citing the fact that the SLMM has declared it would no longer issue rulings, the defence columnist notes: "The [SLMM] spokesperson insisted that the decision not to issue rulings was made by the SLMM and not at the instance of anyone in the Government."

"This is mainly because of the extended number of incidents. We cannot pretend to know every one of them," Thorfinnur Omarsson, media spokesperson for the SLMM told The Sunday Times.

"This temporary move, however, did not mean the SLMM will not monitor the ceasefire. We will cover the incidents, have them in our database and issue our own reports," he was quoted as adding.



## NEWS

# Sri Lankan Attorney General said 'indiscreet'

THE war of words between the man presiding over the international panel overseeing probes into rights abuses in Sri Lanka and the Sri Lankan government took another turn this week, with the former Indian chief justice took strong exception to an attack on him.

P. N. Bhagwati said that Sri Lankan Attorney General C.R. de Silva made 'very indiscreet observations' while criticising reports by the International Independent Group of Eminent Persons (IIGEP), which the Indian heads.

De Silva "should not have made the very indiscreet observations," Bhagwati told IANS.

"He has every right to make his own submission or even to give a different opinion. As a judge, I have always welcomed dissent because dissent helps to discover the truth."

"But such criticism should be in proper language, respectful language. If it extends to abuse, it is wrong," added Bhagwati, 84, who headed India's Supreme Court in 1985-86.

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse set up the IIGEP in February to oversee the investigations carried out by the Presidential Commission of Inquiry, which was set up in November 2006 to look into several high-profile human rights violations.

This month, IIGEP, which also has eminent jurists from other countries, said the Presidential Commission had not made noticeable progress in investigating rights abuses and that its independence, timeliness and witness protection did not meet international standards.

It also sought an international human rights monitoring mechanism to be set up in Sri Lanka or be invited to the war-torn country.

Bhagwati also found fault with de Silva's language. "I don't mind the attorney general criticising IIGEP, after all I represent the committee. It is not a personal thing. If he thinks we are wrong, he should say so in proper, dignified language." Bhagwati also questioned the 'conflict of interest' by the Attorney General being involved in the investigations.

In response, de Silva alleged that Bhagwati's remarks were based on ignorance, were not in good faith and that it would have been far more prudent if Bhagwati had personally observed the proceedings of the Presidential Commission. De Silva also issued a sternly-worded response accusing the IIGEP of interfering with the legal system of Sri Lanka and making

a specific charge of the IIGEP visiting the Kantalai Magistrate and making inquiries on the ongoing murder case of the 17 aid workers of a French-based NGO.

However, the President's office weighed into the argument last Friday, sending an urgent letter to Bhagwati "clarifying the Government's position".

The President's Office informed Bhagwati that the Attorney General's position was not necessarily that of the government, and requested him to continue with his work in Sri Lanka, the Sunday Times reported.

This came in the wake of a meeting between Sri Lanka's Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe and 84-year-old Bhagwati in New Delhi where the former Chief Justice of the Indian Supreme Court had expressed his concern over the Attorney General's allegations and conveyed his unwillingness to continue as Chairman of the IIGEP in such circumstances, the paper said.

Soon after he was offered the job of heading a body of jurists from various countries to oversee investigations into growing human rights violations in the island nation, Bhagwati had told IANS in November last year that he would throw it off if there was interference in his work.

Bhagwati maintained that he had not studied the rights situation in Sri Lanka thoroughly. "I have not really studied the situation, yet. It is just the beginning. The Presidential Commission of Inquiry has just started work."

But he made it clear that the job of international jurists was only to see if the investigations were being done properly and not to do any probing themselves. "Ours is a supervisory body."

Bhagwati explained that he had gone to Sri Lanka "twice or thrice, but every time only to organize the things" related to IIGEP whose members, he told IANS, were people of "high standing, independent and fair-minded."

The public exchange of accusations has also been discussed when European Union officials met Sri Lanka embassy officials in Brussels, where it was held that it would have been prudent if these issues were resolved through a dialogue rather than issuing public statements, the Sunday Times reported.

EU officials told the Sri Lankans that a person of the calibre of Bhagwati would have made the statement he made only if he had good reasons to do so, the paper said.



Security searches continue in Sri Lanka, including this scrap lorry that was completely emptied and searched by the police as it attempted to drive into Colombo. Photo Pradeep Pathirana / Daily Mirror

## Security Council condemns Sri Lanka's abuse of rights

SRI LANKA was placed in the same league as Darfur, Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia at a UN session last month, with members calling on the International Criminal Court to play a more prominent role.

Speaking at the June 22 briefing of the UN Security Council, Jean-Marc de la Sabliere of France said that his country was extremely concerned that civilians were increasingly targeted and that "humanitarian space" was no longer a sanctuary.

He invited States that had not yet ratified the two Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions to do so as soon as possible and said that impunity must be ended.

"In addition, from Darfur to Iraq and Sri Lanka, millions of displaced people needed protection. He expressed great concern over attacks against humanitarian personnel and journalists, who must be protected using relevant Security Council resolutions," the Security Council said quoting Sabliere.

Sabliere added that unimpeded access should be provided to vulnerable populations and that the Council must be informed of obstacles to humanitarian assistance.

Karen Pierce, the United

Kingdom representative, aligning her statement with the one made by Germany on behalf of the European Union, said ensuring the protection of civilians was central to the Council's work.

She added that gender based violence was rampant and millions were displaced while humanitarian workers and journalists were being attacked. She also expressed concern over the impact on civilians in Burma, Sri Lanka and Somalia.

German representative Michael Von Ungern-Sternberg noted that while the number of conflicts had gone down, the number of civilians suffering due to armed conflict was on the rise. He also said parties to conflicts were increasingly disregarding respect for basic humanitarian law.

"The growing number of journalists being killed was also extremely disturbing, as was the number of humanitarian personnel being killed and attacked while on mission to help people in need," he said.

"In that regard, he strongly condemned the recent killing of two workers of the Lebanese Red Cross, two Red Cross workers in Sri Lanka, two United Nations workers in Gaza, a member of Médecins sans Frontières in the

Central African Republic, a member of Caritas International in Darfur and all other killings of humanitarian personnel," the Security Council quoted Ungern-Sternberg as saying.

International human rights law continued to be applicable to everyone within the jurisdiction of the State concerned in time of armed conflict Ungern-Sternberg said, adding that Council resolution 1612 set an enhanced framework for the protection of children in armed conflict.

International humanitarian law urged all parties to allow full, unimpeded access by humanitarian personnel to civilians in need of assistance.

Canadian representative John Mcnee, who also spoke on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, said the protection of civilians was not a theoretical debate and that men, women and children were being deliberately targeted by warring parties.

"Men, women and children continued to be the deliberate targets of warring parties and terrorist entities in Darfur, Afghanistan, Northern Uganda, Lebanon, Somalia and Sri Lanka, among other areas. The Council has given much laudable attention to the topic, but words must continue to be turned into deeds," he said.



## NEWS

# Journalists in increasing danger say media watchdogs

INTERNATIONAL media watchdogs expressed their growing concern for the safety of journalists and the sanctity of media freedom in Sri Lanka.

"Pressures on the media have multiplied over the recent months with increasing fears for the safety of journalists, especially those operating in the embattled North and East", the International Media Group (IMG) said in a press statement.

The group visited Sri Lanka between June 17 and 23 to discuss issues related to media freedom in the country.

"There appears to be complete lack of progress in the investigation of cases of murdered and attacked journalists, and no suspect in such attacks has been taken to court since the current president came to office," the IMG report notes.

The media group statement also notes that since August 2005, eleven media workers have been killed, including Subash Chandra Boas of the Tamil monthly, Nilram, and Selvarajah Rajivarman, of the Tamil language Uthayan newspaper.

Both men were murdered in Sri Lanka government-controlled areas.

The increasing hostility of the authorities towards the media and the willingness of the individual ministers to verbally attack for the perceived failings are encouraging a climate of self-censorship, the IMG report also notes.

"In Jaffna the government has restricted the passage of newsprint and ink to the city's Tamil media", the report notes.

The majority of the Jaffna population lack access to internet and most people depend on daily newspapers for their local information, residents said.

The Centre for Policy Alternatives submitted a report to the International Media Group stating that "cabinet minister Champika Ramawaka had publicly advocated the brutal suppression of dissent, even through extrajudicial means," the Hindustan Times newspaper reported.

"Newspaper offices in Tamil-speaking Jaffna had been attacked with guns and bombs by pro-government Tamil armed groups," the paper said.

Within the past week, a Tamil journalist working for Thinakkural daily was assaulted by a group of airmen after being taken into a Buddhist temple in the High Security Zone in Fort in Colombo, TamilNet reported.

He was on his way to cover an event at the nearby Presidential Secretariat.

The safety of media workers was also highlighted by other watchdogs.

"Of most concern to the mission is the continued targeted killing of media workers," Jacqueline Park, director of the International Federation of Journalists, was quoted by Reuters as saying.

"What's most worrying is the impunity, the fact that none of these cases are being investigated and being brought to court," she said.

"We were given assurances that the cases would be investigated," she added.

"Eleven journalists and media workers have been killed since August 2005."

The "[Sri Lanka] Army-held northern Jaffna peninsula [is] among the most dangerous places in the world to cover," Reuters quoted the international press freedom mission that included Reporters Without Borders and the International Federation of Journalists as saying.

The mission called on President Mahinda Rajapaksa's government, under mounting pressure from the international community on human rights amid mushrooming abuses, to safeguard media workers during a raging propaganda war.

The government has already ruled out one of the group's demands - that a United Nations human rights monitoring mission be brought to the island.

"There is still an attempt by all groups to intimidate and harass the media, and that is having a very real effect - a chilling effect - on press freedom," Park added.

"Our message is very clear. The responsibility for creating a secure working environment lies with the government and it needs to do this by not tolerating any attacks or killings of journalists and media workers."

"What we found is in the government-controlled areas there is



Journalist K. P. Mohan of the Thinakkural was hospitalised after an attack .

Photo TamilNet

a general feeling of fear and it has a huge impact on the way the people living in the Jaffna region can get access to information," said Vincent Brossel of Reporters Without Borders.

"There is no political will to investigate such crimes and that is perpetrating a feeling of fear among the Jaffna journalists," he added, referring to killings.

Reporters Without Borders also called on the government to stop censoring the TamilNet website, local access to which has been blocked for days.

Though Sri Lanka's government and military both denied they had ordered internet service providers to block www.tamilnet.com, Sri Lanka's leading mobile operator Dialog Telekom, which also offers internet services, told Reuters that it had blocked access to the site on the orders of the government.

"Tamilnet is a source of news and information that is known throughout the world and for the past 10 years its coverage of Sri Lanka's civil war has proved essential," Reporters Without Borders said.

"The government must put a stop to this censorship and restore access to the site at once."

TamilNet's editor, Dharmaretnam Sivaram, was murdered in 2005.

He was one of six Tamil journalists and five other Tamil media workers killed since 2004, according to the Free Media Movement.

The government denied any wrongdoing.

"The government has nothing to do with this," Media Minister Anura Priyadarshana Yapa said.

Another minister joked he wished he could hire some hackers to block TamilNet.

IMG recommended the government amend or revoke various pieces of legislation that it said failed to meet international standards on press freedom of expression.

The recent visit by the IMG was a follow up session to the initial mission that began in October 2006 to assess the impact of the conflict on the media.

## Evidence in aid workers' murders questioned

THERE may have been evidence tampering in the investigation into the murder of seventeen aid workers killed in Sri Lanka, an international body observed last week.

Seventeen workers of Action Contre La Faim (Action Against Hunger) were murdered in Muttur in August last year, in the midst of heavy fighting between the Sri Lankan military and the Liberation Tigers.

While the government initially blamed the Tigers, international monitors accused government soldiers, and government officials too have in recent months begun to accept 'some soldiers' may have been responsible.

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), the body of lawyers observing the government inquiry into the murders, raised concerns over the evidence in the murder investigation via an "addendum" to their original report on the investigation.

Their concerns centered on reports by two pathologists into the caliber of bullets found in the bodies. A government pathologist said eight bullets found in seven bodies were 7.62 calibre, which contradicted a report from an Australian pathologist that one of the eight bullets was 5.56 calibre.

Consequently, the ICJ report concluded, "there is therefore evidence to indicate that the 5.56 calibre bullet was removed from the evidence submitted as exhibits to the Kantale Magistrate, and that another bullet of a different type was substituted".

"5.56 calibre bullets are used in M-16 rifles and that Sri Lankan Special Task Force and some Special Forces within the army and navy are known to use such weapons, and also the members of a naval special force

armed with M-16s were reportedly in Muttur in early August of 2006," the report also notes.

The ICJ report has reinforced a perception that aid workers operating in the Northeast are increasingly more threatened, with a rising number of attacks against them, and a lack of basic protection and support.

Local press reports suggest many aid workers are leaving the northeast for their own safety.

Just last month another aid worker was shot dead in the east. A Sri Lankan guard in Trincomalee shot a Filipino man from the US charity Mercy Corps as he was walking along the beach. This followed the abduction of two local Red Cross staff earlier in the month.

Further, press reports suggest members of the Sri Lanka Armed Forces and unidentified armed persons continue to intimidate and threaten other local humanitarian staff, especially employees from Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission (SLHRC) based in Tamil areas.

Police officers at Jaffna University stopped a SLHRC official vehicle and harassed the officials inside, according to press reports last week. Similarly, Sri Lanka Army soldiers manning a check post in Panai, Jaffna stopped a SLHRC vehicle and carried out a thorough checking, lasting for about half an hour, claiming they suspected explosives hidden in the vehicle.

Though SLHRC staff have complained to senior army officials, no disciplinary action has been taken, the press reports said.

This has resulted in many SLHRC officers in Jaffna leaving or contemplating relocation as they fear for their lives if they continue to serve in the north.



## NEWS

# Violence round up - week ending 1 July

Summary of incidents - apart from major clashes - since 25 June

## 1 July

■ Four Tamil civilians, all residents of upcountry towns, were arrested by the Sri Lanka forces and police in Kandy and Gampaha in two separate cordon and search operations. The arrested were handed over to police stations and are being subjected to interrogation by the Terrorist Intelligence Division. Two Tamils arrested in Gampaha were taken into custody as they failed to provide satisfactory reason for their stay in the location, Police said. Two more Tamil civilians at Peradeniya in Kandy district were arrested as they were walking along the road close to Peradeniya depot of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation in suspicious manner, Police said. Both youths are residents of Nuwara Eliya.

## 30 June

■ Gunmen shot dead Vallipuram Satgunarajah alias Nithiyantahan, 57, a father of four at Nelliyadi, Jaffna. The killers gunned down Satgunarajah, a former co-operative employee originally from Karaveddi and presently a trader in Thenmaraadchi, as he was returning with his wife after worshipping at a temple.

■ Rajaratnam Satheesh, 24, from Puttur was shot dead at Kalladi junction, Jaffna. He was followed whilst riding his bicycle along Kaladdi Raamanaathan road and shot in his head and chest before the gunmen escaped from the site. There was speculation that SLA Military Intelligence was behind the killing.

■ Four bodies were recovered in Mavilaru jungle area, Trincomalee, on information provided by local residents.

■ A young fisherman from Navanthurai, Jaffna, has been missing since going to Jaffna hospital for treatment, according to complaints by his family to the SLHRC and ICRC in Jaffna. The fate of Arulnesan Jeftin, 20, remains unknown, his family said.

■ Mr. Samarasinghe, head of the Kandy office of SLHRC stated that he has received several complaints of abductions and disappearances of civilians in Kandy.

■ Four civilians were found shot dead in eastern Sri Lanka, the military said. The bodies of the four farmers were found in a jungle in eastern Trincomalee district, an official at the Defense Ministry information center said on customary condition of anonymity citing policy. While the last two weeks have seen combat between Sri Lankan Armed Forces and the LTTE, it is Tamil and



The cycle of killings and abductions in government controlled areas continues, despite international concern. Photo AFP/Getty Images

Muslim civilians who have been the main victims of attacks.

■ The SLN said they found 1,000 kilograms (2,200 pounds) of explosives in a truck in Colombo.

## 29 June

■ Four Muslim villagers shot dead by Special Forces of the SLA in Maavilaaru, Serunuwara, were mistaken for LTTE cadres, two villagers who escaped the slaying told the media. The SLA has been conducting search operations in Maavilaaru to prevent LTTE cadre movement in the Thoppigala jungles. "We pleaded with the SLA soldiers not to kill us and that we were not members of the LTTE. But they fired at us killing four of us," the escaped fishermen told the media. Relatives who went to collect the bodies were told by military officials that the LTTE had killed them. The National Security Media center had claimed the LTTE cadres "escaping from Thoppigala," shot and killed the civilians.

■ Gunmen triggered a claymore device targeting a Sri Lanka Transport Board bus in Cheddikulam, Jaffna, injuring a SLA trooper and four civilians. The police claimed the LTTE was responsible for the attack.

■ Mohammed Hussein Mohammed, 34, a Muslim trader from Kandy visiting Colombo for pur-

chases of goods for resale, is missing, according to a report with the Colombo-based rights group, Civilian Monitoring Committee.

■ Sellan Nalliah, 53, and T. Velmurugan, 47, were seriously wounded in indiscriminate gunfire by SLA soldiers in Maasiyappiddi, Jaffna, after a claymore attack in which two soldiers were wounded.

■ Gunmen on two motor cycles, following Singaravel Logenthira, 29, and Subramaniam Ambihaipahan, 39, both residents of Aanai-kkoaddai, Jaffna, as they rode their motor cycles, shot them dead in front of the former TRO office. The location is close to UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, ICRC offices in Temple Road, in the heart of the SLA HSZ in Jaffna. SLA troopers are present 24 hours guarding several international organization offices. Three other youths from the area have been shot at the same location in the last three weeks.

■ SLA soldiers launched artillery, MBRL and motor attacks targeting the Puliyaikulam-Omanthai checkpoint, the entry point to the LTTE administered Vanni region. The attacks disrupted passenger traffic to and from LTTE controlled area through the checkpoint. SLA stationed at Vavuniya, Mannar and Manalaru fronts have been carrying out sporadic shelling towards Vanni region since

the first week of June. The LTTE's Puliyaikulam checkpoint also has come under attack several times.

■ Kodithuwakku Pannasiri, 46, a SLA soldier, shot himself dead within the SLA camp at Polikandi coastal village in Vadamaradchi north, Jaffna. The Officer-in-charge of the camp said in his statement to Point Pedro police that the trooper was distraught over not being granted leave. The magistrate said the body had suspicious injuries and directed the police to transfer the body to the Colombo for medical examinations.

## 28 June

■ Gunmen shot and killed P. Nishanthan, a 16-year-old Tamil boy, at Siththaandi in Eravur. The painter had gone out to attend a festival at Maariamman temple.

■ Attackers triggered a claymore mine in Navanthurai, Jaffna, killing two SLA soldiers riding bicycles on the outskirts of Jaffna city. A SLA road patrol unit on bicycles was on its way to Kakkai-thevu from Navanthurai area when the claymore device was triggered by the attackers from an abandoned house near the Mosque in the area, Police said. Recently, 3 SLA troopers were killed and one seriously injured in a similar claymore attack at

Echamoddai, within Jaffna Municipality limits.

■ The SLAF bombed Nedunkeni but casualty details were not known.

■ Gunmen armed with pistols shot dead Sangarapillai Sivakanthan 29, a pavement fancy-goods seller in front of Poobalasingham Book Shop, at the entrance to Jaffna Central Bus Terminus and next to Jaffna Teaching Hospital, in the SLA HSZ. The killers left the site of crime, in close proximity to several SLA sentry points, without showing any great haste, raising suspicion of SLA complicity in the killing.

■ Thillainathan Uthayakumar, 35, the chairman of the TNA Thirukovil Pradeshya Sabah in Amparai was assassinated outside his residence at Vinaayakapuram, Akkaraippattu. Gunmen took him away from his house and killed him by lobbing a grenade at him 100 meters away from his house. The assassination of the TNA politician comes after press reports in Colombo that the Government was planning for a new election in the East.

■ SLAF fighter jets bombed two Tamil Tiger camps in the island's far north, the military said, the second batch of air strikes in three days, but there were no immediate details of any casualties.

Continued on page 15



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## NEWS



Tamil man weeps over the bullet-riddled body of a relative shot dead on 13 June 2007, in the Sri Lankan government controlled eastern district of Ampara. Photo AFP/Getty Images

## Violence - w/e 24 June

### Summary of incidents since 18 June

#### 24 June

■ An armed person on a motorbike following Noor Mohamed Kabool, 26, a Muslim civilian riding his motorbike, shot him dead at Oddamavadi, Valaichennai, Batticaloa. Mohamed Kabool had been involved in criminal activities and had been released on bail eight days previously after being arrested. He was shot dead along Oaddamaavadi Railway Station road.

#### 23 June

■ The bodies of a male and female were recovered in Nilaveli, Trincomalee, by SLN personnel. Both bodies had gunshot injuries.

#### 22 June

■ Gunmen fired at a group of SLN personnel on road patrol duty at Pesalai in Mannar, killing one sailor, Bandara, 29. Hundreds of Tamils in Kaddaspaththiri and Ward 8 of Pesalai, Mannar, fled from their houses due to fear following the shooting incident, and sought refuge in Pesalai Our Lady of Victory's Church.

■ An unidentified attacker forced entry into a house at Mavadichennai, Valaichennai, Batticaloa, knifed to death a young Muslim family woman, Aabdeen Hilmiya, 25, and escaped from the site. Hilmiya was asleep alone at her house with her child when the killer broke in. Her husband, a

fish trader by profession, was away in Colombo on business. The attacker appeared to have knowledge that Hilmiya was alone.

■ SLA troopers shot dead 2 youths at Katkoavalam area in Point Pedro, Vadamaradchi, Jaffna. The SLA claimed the two youths were trying to escape on encountering their patrol unit and that they were LTTE combatants. ICRC officials visited Manthikai government hospital where the two bodies were being held.

■ Armed men shot and killed Sellathamby Anantharajah, 43, in Karunkalicholai, Kalkuda, Batticaloa. The men forcibly took the victim from the welfare centre where he was staying, shot him and escaped from the site after dumping his body in Karunkalicholai.

#### 21 June

■ The SLN recovered four bodies of youths washed ashore along Vadamaradchi coast, Jaffna. A SLN spokesperson said the bodies belonged to Sea Tigers who were killed during a sea battle in Vettalaikeni, Kaddaikadu seas two days earlier. The bodies were handed to KKS police, who transferred the bodies to Jaffna Teaching Hospital for post mortem examinations.

■ Attackers triggered a claymore device killing three SLA troopers and seriously wounding one at Eechamodai coastal road area, in

a HSZ close to Jaffna city.

■ A policeman was seriously injured when six gunmen ambushed the Sri Lankan Police station in Pesalai, Mannar. Tension prevailed in the area as SLN troopers and the police launched a cordon and search operation. The gunmen took cover inside the cemetery, opposite the police station and clashed with police commandos for at least 15 minutes before vanishing from. The attackers armed with automatic rifles entered the area in a three-wheeler.

■ A SLA spokesman claimed about 30 LTTE cadres were killed in clashes in the east. The spokesman expressed "hope" that the Tamil Tigers last stronghold in the east would fall soon, BBC reported.

■ After weeks of fighting, the SLN said it had destroyed five Tiger boats and killed 40 cadres in the north of the country. There was no comment from the LTTE, but reports said they disputed claims by the navy in relation to fighting at sea off the Jaffna Peninsula.

#### 20 June

■ A group of men in a white van entered the Colombo apartment building of N. Vidyadaran, the editor of the Colombo-based Tamil daily Sudar Oli, and harassed the security guard at reception upon being told that Mr

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## NEWS

## Violence - w/e 1 July

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## 27 June

■ A SLS FDL post between SLA controlled Thalliadi and LTTE controlled territory in Mannar was attacked by the LTTE. Five SLA troopers were killed in the pre-dawn attack, the LTTE claimed, adding that the FDL post, 500 meters from the Thallaadi SLA base, was destroyed.

■ The SLN shot dead a youth during a cordon and search operation at Pesalai, Mannar. The SLN claimed they shot dead the unidentified youth in retaliation when he and another man opened fire on the SLN troops. The other youth fled from the scene. The SLA claimed to have recovered a T-56 rifle was recovered from the site.

## 26 June

■ Four men, Vadivel Raveendra, 32, Sinnathamby Sivanathan, 27, Nadarasa Jegatheeswaran, 24, and Navarathinarasa Ketheeswaran, 21, all daily wage earners, have been reported missing from Meesalai, Kodikamam and Inuvil areas, officials at the SLHRC in Jaffna, said citing complaints by relatives. Raveendra and Sivanathan, both residents of Chola-yamman Koyiladi in Meesalai south, had been reporting to the SLA civil administration office in Chavakachcheri since May 23 on SLA orders. Raveendra was not seen after June 23 and Sivanathan disappeared on June 16, both after signing the SLA registers. Jegatheeswaran was reported missing after he left for work on June 21 from his home at Inuvil. Kethees-

waran from Manthuvil, Kodikamam, was detained by the SLA and interrogated on June 16, and ordered to report and sign the register at the Kodikamam SLA civil administration office. He has not been seen after he went to the Kodikamam office to record his signature.

■ P. Suthirthan, 23, a resident of Railway Station Road, Kokkuvil, Jaffna, is missing, feared abducted, after he left home in the morning to visit his relatives, according to a complaint by his family at the Jaffna office of the SLHRC.

## 25 June

■ The SLA and police conducted a cordon and search operation in Pallimunai and Uppukulam villages in Mannar. Every house was searched during the operation and all vehicles passing through the areas were stopped and searched.

## Violence - w/e 24 June

Continued from page 14

Vidyadaran was not in his apartment. The security guard requested the men to document their identity and reason for the visit, which the men refused to do, instead threatening the guard. A complaint was lodged with the Presidential Committee to investigate disappearances. The men inspected the editor's car, threatened the guard, and left the building. Mr Vidyadaran is also the General Manager and Deputy Editor of the Jaffna based daily, Uthayan.

## 19 June

■ The SLA handed over the body of a Tamil youth with gunshot injuries to the Muthur hospital. The troopers shot the youth when he attempted to fire at them at

Irakuli, a Tamil village in Muthur, the SLA said. SLA officials told Muthur police that troops recovered a T-56 weapon from the youth.

■ The SLN in Colombo said its soldiers attacked more than 20 Sea Tiger vessels on the seas between SLN controlled area between Point Pedro Munai in Vadamaradchi and Vettalaikerni, Kaddaikkaadu area held by the LTTE. Local fishermen stated that more than 20 Sea Tiger vessels stayed on during the night on the seas of SLN controlled Point Pedro Munai as SLN boats sought safety at SLN KKS base. At the time of the incident the Sea Tigers were engaged in sea patrols between Vettalaikerni and Paruththikkaadu, when SLN vessels tried to enter the LTTE controlled seas, and drew heavy fire from the Sea Tigers, local reports said. During the sea skirmish, the

SLA launched heavy MBRL fire towards Point Pedro Munai from its artillery bases in Varani and Pallappai.

■ Anton Sanjeevan, 30, the driver of a three-wheeler, was abducted in Mannar. His three-wheeler was found abandoned near Siththivinaayakar Hindu College.

## 18 June

■ Sivarasa Vimalarasa, 20, a local staffer of the Danish Humanitarian De-mining Organization in Jaffna, was abducted on his way to work. Danish NGO officials complained to the Government Agent, SLMM and SLHRC in Jaffna. Unidentified men waylaid and abducted the staffer as he was riding his motor cycle, in broad daylight in the presence of other onlookers at Kuppilan, near a SLA HSZ.

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## NEWS



A Sri Lankan talks on his mobile phone as he walks past a poster protesting against the partial sale of Sri Lanka Telecom shares to Malaysia's top mobile operator, Maxis Communication on the basis that Maxis owner, tycoon Ananda Krishnan has links with the Tamil Tigers. Photo Lakruwan Wanniarachchi/AFP/Getty Images

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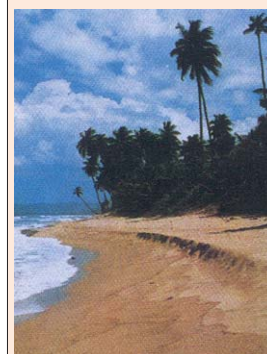
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