



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN INFORMATION BULLETIN

SRI LANKA

13 OCTOBER 2009

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Preface

- i This Country of Origin Information Bulletin (COI Bulletin) has been produced by the Country of Origin Service (COIS), UK Border Agency (UKBA). It provides information on key security and human rights issues in Sri Lanka covering the period from 1 July 2009 to 24 September 2009. The Bulletin was issued on 13 October 2009.
- ii The Bulletin was prepared for background purposes for UKBA officials involved in the asylum/human rights determination process. It has been compiled from information obtained from a wide variety of recognised sources, which are referenced throughout. It does not contain any UKBA opinion or policy.
- iii The Bulletin is not intended to be a comprehensive survey. For a more detailed account, the relevant source documents should be examined directly. The Bulletin should be read in conjunction with the latest COI Report on Sri Lanka dated 26 June 2009 .
- iv The Bulletin and the accompanying source material are publicly disclosable. Where sources identified in the COI Bulletin are available in electronic form the relevant link has been included.

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INDEPENDENT ADVISORY GROUP ON COUNTRY INFORMATION

- v The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Chief Inspector of the UK Border Agency to make recommendations to him about the content of the UKBA's country of origin information material. The IAGCI welcomes feedback on UKBA's COI Reports, COI Key Documents and other country of origin information material. Information about the IAGCI's work can be found on the Chief Inspector's website at <http://www.ociukba.homeoffice.gov.uk>
- vi In the course of its work, the IAGCI reviews the content of selected UKBA COI documents and makes recommendations specific to those documents and of a more general nature. A list of the COI Reports and other documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI or the Advisory Panel on Country Information (the independent organisation which monitored UKBA's COI material from September 2003 to October 2008) is available at <http://www.ociukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/>
- vii Please note: it is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any UKBA material or procedures. Some of the material examined by the Group relates to countries designated or proposed for designation to the Non-Suspensive

Appeals (NSA) list. In such cases, the Group's work should not be taken to imply any endorsement of the decision or proposal to designate a particular country for NSA, nor of the NSA process itself.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.01 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Country Profile for Sri Lanka (last updated on 27 August 2009) noted that:

“The ethnic conflict between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) lasted over 25 years and appears to have come to an end with the military defeat of the LTTE in May 2009. Over 70,000 people are estimated to have been killed and some one million displaced.” [2a] **(The internal conflict)**

“Towards the end of the fighting high numbers of civilians are believed to have been killed and injured as a result of being caught in the middle of heavy fighting. There was no independent access to the conflict zone and international concern has been raised about the conduct of hostilities by both sides in the final months of the conflict. Hundreds of thousands of civilians were displaced as a result of the recent fighting and remain in IDP camps in northern Sri Lanka.” [2a] **(Recent developments)**

- 1.02 The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Armed Conflict Database, Political Trends (undated, website accessed on 16 September 2009) noted:

“On 19 May [2009], President Mahinda Rajapaksa formally announced the defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE or Tamil Tigers), drawing a line under 26 years of civil war in Sri Lanka. Tamil Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran lay dead, alongside most of the group’s leadership. But while the government’s military victory was decisive, it was mired in controversy over the treatment of civilians during the conflict – and concerns about how this would affect long-term relations between the majority Sinhalese population and Tamil minority. Of 10,300 fatalities reported by the New-Delhi based Institute for Conflict Management, 8,250 were civilians. The institute also estimated 1,682 Tamil Tigers and 368 security-force personnel killed. Because of a lack of independent observers, however, there were no definitive figures.” [14b]

- 1.03 The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), Sri Lanka 2009 Timeline (undated, website accessed on 24 September 2009) noted “[22 May 2009] About 280,000 ethnic Tamils have fled the fighting and are in camps. This includes the world’s most populated refugee camp at Manik Farm, which now houses almost 200,000 people.” [4a]

- 1.04 The FCO Travel Advice for Sri Lanka (last updated on 14 September 2009) observed:

“The conflict between the Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE, or ‘Tamil Tigers’) ended in May 2009. All territory in Sri Lanka is now under Government control. However, politically motivated violence, abductions and criminality persist throughout the country, particularly in the north and east. The Government maintains its State of Emergency, under which it has extensive anti-terrorism powers. Increased security measures including checkpoints remain throughout the country... Detentions do occur, particularly of people of Tamil ethnicity.

“There is a general threat from terrorism in Sri Lanka. Although the LTTE suffered a military defeat in May 2009, attacks cannot be ruled out and could be indiscriminate.” [2d]

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2. RECENT GENERAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Emergency Regulations (ERs)

2.01 On 6 August 2009, BBC Sinhala reported:

“Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickramanayaka told parliament that the government is determined to take tough action against underworld gangs. ‘Although the guns in the north were silenced there is still a need to silence the guns of the underworld’ said Prime Minister Wickramanayaka while proposing to parliament the extension of emergency regulations for a month. Emergency regulations were further extended with seventy one parliamentarians voting in favour.” [9e]

2.02 On 10 September 2009 the Official Government News Portal announced that the motion to extend the State of Emergency by a further month was passed in Parliament with a majority of 87 votes. “One hundred parliamentarians voted with the motion and 13 voted against. The JVP parliamentarians were not present in the Parliament at the time the vote was tabled.” [10a]

Extensive information on the ERs is available from the [International Commission of Jurists \(ICJ\) ‘Briefing Paper: Sri Lanka’s Emergency Laws’](#) dated March 2009 (accessed on 24 September 2009) [16a]

Arrests and detentions

2.03 The pro-LTTE website TamilNet reported the following incidents of arrests and detention of Tamils in Colombo during the months of July and August 2009. [5]

2.04 1 July 2009 – “Sri Lanka Terrorist Intelligence Division (TID) in Colombo took into custody Wednesday three Tamil civilians staying in a lodge located in Kotahena, sources in Colombo said. The arrested civilians are suspected to be escaped detainees from one of the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) internment camps in Vavuniyaa, the sources added. Police said they are investigating to find out how these three IDPs escaped from Vavuniyaa camp without informing the authorities there. They further said they suspect that these Tamils were supporters of LTTE. The arrestees are said to be making arrangements to leave the country, the sources added.” [5m]

20 July 2009 – “Two Tamil youths who were waiting to take a flight to Cairo, capital of Egypt Thursday morning and another Tamil youth who arrived in [sic] Friday morning from Dubai were taken into custody at [Colombo] Katunayake International Airport by the Katunayake police. Police said they are being detained and are suspected to be LTTE cadres, sources in Colombo said. Two Tamil youths arrested on Thursday morning were said to be staying in a lodge in Wellawatte and Kotahena for the last two months, according to inquires [sic] conducted by the police. Another person said to be the manager of a travel agency who helped these two Tamil youths to obtain visa and other travel documents go abroad was also arrested and is being subjected to interrogation by the Police Intelligence Unit...Katunayake police added, steps are being taken to hand over these three Tamils to the Criminal Investigation Department of the Police for further inquiry once the preliminary investigation is completed.” [5k]

25 July 2009 – “Seeduwa Police took into custody two Tamil youths Thursday on their arrival from Singapore. The vehicle in which they were travelling from

[Colombo] Katunayake International Airport (KIA) was stopped at a road block in Seeduwa area and checked. Police said the youths were taken in for questioning and have recovered several digital cameras and cell phones which were in their possession. The youths are detained for further questioning to find out whether they are involved in any terrorist activity, the police said.” [5j]

28 July 2009 – “Sri Lanka police took into custody eight Tamil youths Tuesday morning in a search conducted in Ettiawathe in Colombo. The arrested youths are from Jaffna, their relatives said. The youths are detained in Kotahena police station. The police have been conducting search operations in Ettiawathe area for the last two days.” [5i]

2.05 Similar incidents were reported by the pro-LTTE website TamilNet in August 2009.

1 August 2009 – “A 22 year-old Tamil youth was arrested by the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) of the Sri Lanka Police on his arrival from South Africa at the [Colombo] Katunayake International Airport (KIA) on Wednesday. Currently he is being detained in the Fourth Floor of the Criminal Investigation Department for further inquiry, relatives in their complaints to human rights organizations said...A foreign employment agency sent the youth to a European country via South Africa. But he got stranded in South Africa. There he was arrested by South African authorities and detained for the last two years. Last week he was deported to Sri Lanka...NIB officials at the site immediately took the Tamil youth into custody.” [5h]

8 August 2009 – “Sri Lanka police took two Tamil civilians from a house located along Arethusa lane in Wellawatte [Colombo] Thursday, and claimed that they seized two suicide jackets, a micro pistol, and five hand grenades during the search of the house. Police spokesman Ranjit Gunasekara said the Tamil civilians, residents of Jaffna were under interrogation by the Terrorism Unit of Police. Western Province Police Intelligence Unit and Wellawatte Police Intelligence Unit conducted a joint operation to uncover the safe house, Mr Gunasekara said.” [5g]

9 August 2009 – “Sri Lanka police took two Tamil civilians into custody in Colombo Thursday night in two separate incidents. One was arrested in Katunayake International Airport (KIA) area and the other along D. R. Wijewardene Mawatte in Colombo town, media spokesman Ranjit Gunasekara told media. He claimed both were suspected to be LTTE active members and were being subjected to interrogation by the Terrorist Intelligence Unit.” [5f]

31 August 2009 – “Four Tamil civilians arrested by the police while staying with their relatives and friends in Katunayake, a High Security Zone (HSZ) in Colombo district Saturday night are still being detained in the Katunayake police station and interrogated by the Terrorism Intelligence Department (TID). All the four are natives of north and east, sources said. The arrestees had not registered themselves with the police in the area about their stay in the location and failed to prove their identity. They were taken into custody on receipt of information from the public that some strangers were seen in the area, police sources added.” [5e]

2.06 On 5 July 2009 the pro-LTTE website TamilNet reported:

“Thirty-three Tamil political prisoners detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) in Welikada magazine prison [in Colombo] for the last thirteen years without any inquiry or charges against them in the courts of law have appealed to human rights organizations to take up their cases with authority concerned and obtain their early release. All of them, including some women, are residents of North, East and upcountry areas. Their appeals are said to have been forwarded to the relevant government authority for immediate consideration, sources said. Meanwhile, another seven Tamils serving jail sentences after being found guilty in court of law charged under the PTA also have requested their release on government pardon. They have also appealed to the HR organizations to take up their cases with the authority concerned on humanitarian basis, sources said.” [51]

2.07 On 20 September 2009, the same source reported that:

“135 Tamil political prisoners out of a total of 600 Tamil political prisoners in maximum security Central Jail in Welikada, Colombo, continued their fast unto death campaign demanding the state to expedite their cases, release the prisoners who have no charges filed against them, and to allow others charged with less serious offenses to undergo rehabilitation...Most of the Tamil political prisoners have been detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and Emergency Regulations (ER) for prolonged periods without charges being filed against them, and without due process of law.” [5a]

See also [Section 8: Treatment of former members of the LTTE](#)

Local elections – August 2009

2.08 The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Country Reports, Sri Lanka, September 2009 noted:

“The ruling United People’s Freedom Alliance (UPFA) recorded a comfortable victory at the Uva provincial council elections in early August, securing 80% of the votes in Moneragala district and 60% in Badulla district traditionally a stronghold of the main opposition United National Party (UNP)...The UPFA also won 13 seats out of 23 in the Jaffna municipal council elections, garnering 51% of the votes. The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) secured eight seats, while the Tamil United Liberation Front won one, as did another independent group...At the Vavuniya urban council election the TNA emerged victorious, securing five of the 11 seats. The UPFA gained two seats, with a Tamil party, the Democratic People’s Liberation Front, and the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress winning the remaining three. Although the UPFA did well in Jaffna, following a campaign marred by accusations of intimidation, the turnout was only 20.8%, according to the Department of Elections (the voter registry appears to have been inflated, contributing to the low turnout figure). In Vavuniya, where voter turnout was higher, at 49.9%, the UPFA’s poor performance surprised many observers. The Vavuniya result suggests that the UPFA may not be as popular in some Tamil dominated parts of the north as it appears to be in most of the island.” [8a] **(The political scene)**

2.09 The full official results of the August 2009 Provincial Council Elections for the Uva Provincial Council; the Jaffna Municipal Council and the Vavuniya Urban Council are available from the [website of the Sri Lanka Department of Elections \[17a\] \(Past Provincial Council Election Results\)](#)

- 2.10 Information on how such elections were conducted is available from the [PAFFREL \(People's Action For Free & Fair Elections\) Election Day report on the Provincial Council Elections for Uva Province and Local Government Elections for Jaffna Municipal Council and Vavuniya Urban Council.](#) [22a]

Amnesty for army and navy deserters

- 2.11 On 15 September 2009 the Sri Lanka *Daily Mirror* reported that:

“More than 18,400 army and navy personnel who had deserted ranks before May 31 this year, have applied to receive an honourable discharge from service, the military said. Military Spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said that some 15,400 soldiers had deserted their ranks during the amnesty period. ‘These deserters who came forward voluntarily during the amnesty period given by the army had been given an official discharge,’ he said. He further stated that the amnesty period, that will end on September 24, had been extended until the September 30 to give more time for these deserters to come forward. Meanwhile, Navy yesterday said that more than 3000 navy deserters had also come forward during the amnesty period given by the navy, which ended on September 10...Currently, Air Force too [is] carrying out a programme to discharge its deserters... Statistics show that there are around 60,000 deserters from the three services in the country. The three forces repeatedly called those deserters to surrender to their respective forces during the war period, but the response was very poor.” [11a]

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3. SECURITY SITUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Jaffna district

- 3.01 A letter from the British High Commission (BHC), Colombo, dated 17 September 2009 reported:

“The British High Commission routinely monitors conditions in the Jaffna District in order to assess the security and development. There are currently strict procedures for entering and leaving Jaffna. Foreign nationals must apply to the Ministry of Defence for written authority to travel there and there are also restrictions on where they can travel within Jaffna District. Sri Lankans in possession of a National Identity Card (NIC) do not need clearance to enter Jaffna, however to leave Jaffna they have to complete a form with the Grama Niladari (a local government official), which passes through several local government and military officials before a decision is made. A Humanitarian group has said that the requests can be refused, but more often than not it takes up to four weeks to approve and urgent or emergency requests cannot be processed any quicker. Another group said the requests are never refused, just delayed. Sri Lankans without a NIC or national passport must apply to the Ministry of Defence for authorisation to travel to Jaffna. Persons travelling by air between the military air bases at Rathmalana, Colombo (which is the only airport from where you can fly to Jaffna) and Palaly, Jaffna face lengthy security checks and searches. Persons not resident on the islands required clearance from the Sri Lankan navy in order to travel there.

“Every morning, those persons who have received authorisation to leave Jaffna and wish to go to Colombo by road, assemble at Jaffna’s old railway station. They are then processed (checking their clearance) and escorted onto government buses run by the Jaffna Transport Board and taken in convoy down the A9 to Vavuniya. Here they link with the 1.30pm train to Colombo. The Government Agent (GA) has informed us that between 900-1,000 people are travelling this route every day and that 24,000 have left since the service began. No one is able to confirm whether these people are returning, although the GA added that their travel permit allows them to return without further clearance. Humanitarian groups said that bus fares on this service from had [sic] increased significantly, from originally being Rs125 (£0.75) they had now risen to Rs2600 (£15). Government officials describe the scrutiny and monitoring of persons entering and leaving Jaffna District as necessary so as to not compromise security. Humanitarian agencies and groups describe the Jaffna peninsula as an open prison and Jaffna as a garrison town.” [2c]

- 3.02 The BHC letter further reported:

“The Government Agent informed us that it was the government’s intention to reintroduce rail services to Jaffna district. Unfortunately the civil conflict had totally destroyed the rail infrastructure north of Vavuniya. The rails and sleepers had been ripped up to build defences by both LTTE and government forces, and the stations, platforms and many bridges had been totally destroyed. The government has invited teams to the region to draw up plans for the rebuilding of the network. The GA pointed out however that the government had to be careful of the security situation regarding this rebuilding and ensure there was no infiltration [by the LTTE]. One humanitarian agency referred to the government’s ‘awakening of the north’ plan with regard to transport. They were

aware that a Chinese engineering group were already planning rebuilding the system, and added that people who had taken up residence on the former railway lines had been asked to move by the government. Another humanitarian group added that this step had been taken many times before however.

“The re-opening of the main A9 road into Jaffna is not only a welcome sign but is also an important political statement. The GA told us that the road would totally re-open within the next 3 months. The re-opening had enabled other forms of transport to come into the district. More motorbikes, three-wheelers and mini-buses are now available and are seen in increasing in numbers. The private mini-buses are a cheaper alternative to the government buses... There was quite a good bus network within the district; although one humanitarian group had pointed out that the timetables had not caught up with the relaxation in the hours of curfew resulting in persons being stranded.

“There were regular air services, four a day, between Colombo Rathmalana and Jaffna Palaly military airports. These are operated by the Sri Lankan Air Force, Deccan and Expo Air. Humanitarian groups commented that they were concerned over the safety standards of some of the aircraft.” [2c]

3.03 With regards to the issue of security, the same BHC letter noted:

“Both government and non-government organisations agree that since 5th August 2009 there has been a lighter presence at checkpoints and a reduction in some areas. The consensus is that although they are still highly visible, the officers manning them are less vigorous and in many cases just watch people pass them. This varies however and approaching checkpoints entering causeways or near to HSZs still requires persons to get out of a vehicle and present their identification or residence documents. One humanitarian group has told us that they considered the purpose of the checkpoints was just to harass the public and thought that officers profiled unmarried males between the ages of 18-30 years old. A police spokesman has stated that there are no permanent roadblocks anymore and that police checkpoints change location every week, although some in Jaffna town are permanent. He added that the Ministry of Defence controls entry into Jaffna District.

“There is also a consensus that there have been no cordon and search operations since the end of the conflict in May 2009. One humanitarian agency agreed that they had been relaxed saying that whereas there used to be house to house searches where all belongings would be searched, just a routine check of persons had been carried out.

“A police spokesman said that there had been no cordon and search operations, no reported abductions or disappearances, and no extra judicial killings at all in recent months. He expected security to be relaxed further in the coming months. Both government and non-government organisations said that there had not been any reported abduction or disappearances recently and no reported extra judicial killings. Several recalled some bodies being washed up on a beach recently which the authorities linked to some missing fishermen, however, one body was a headless female, which has yet to be identified or explained.

“On 5th August 2009 it was announced that the hours of curfew had been relaxed. Curfew hours are now between 11pm and 4.30am. This has coincided

with a 24-hour electricity supply and is a welcome return to normality after years of disrupted supply, especially throughout the curfew hours. The relaxation has also had favourable effect on the local fishing industry as it now allows many fishermen to go night fishing, as long as they depart and return from the same point, and do not depart and return during curfew hours. A police spokesman said that there was a more relaxed approach to the enforcement of the curfew by the military.” [2c]

3.04 The BHC letter of 17 September 2009 further noted:

“The police, government and non-government organisations agree that since the relaxation of the curfew, crime has shown a significant increase. These are mainly house robberies and theft, but also there have been cases of rape and murder linked to robberies. Recently a young couple was murdered in their home having disturbed burglars. The perpetrators were subsequently caught and have been charged. Everyone agrees that the police have responded to this well, have apprehended many suspects and are now showing an increased presence on the streets of Jaffna town. Since the partial re-opening on 27th July 2009 of the A9 (to commercial and military traffic but not to the general public) there has been an increase in traffic resulting in the introduction of traffic police to the streets. A police spokesman confirmed reports in the press that they were actively recruiting over 500 police officers from the Jaffna District, particularly from Tamil and Muslim communities. There had been a good response from the public and they were hoping to induct the new recruits on 28th & 29th September 2009. A recruitment leaflet has been widely distributed giving terms and conditions of police officers and showing the basic starting salary as 14,280 Rupees (£75) per month plus allowances. He recognised that there was often a language problem between the police and the local population but informed us there was now active language training for police officers through their headquarters.” [2c]

3.05 The same BHC letter also observed that:

“High Security Zones (HSZ) have been in existence since the early 1990s. The largest of these is Valikamam North, which includes the airport at Palaly. Others include the buffer zone towards Elephant Pass, part of the centre of Jaffna town near the fort, and several coastal areas. When these were initially created people were forcibly relocated to IDP camps within Jaffna District. The Jaffna Government Agent (GA) recently informed us that a committee has been appointed to help the resettlement of these persons, without compromising security. There were 21,000 families affected from the Valikamam North HSZ alone, with another 4,000 from other HSZs remaining in camps. They are shortly hoping to resettle 882 families in a buffer zone around the southern perimeter of the Valikamam North HSZ that has been demined.

“A police spokesman said there were no paramilitary groups operating within the Jaffna District. The Government Agent stated that there was not a serious problem with paramilitary groups now because they all now wanted to join the mainstream. In the past people knew who they were, and were aware of them trying to collect ransoms. The police had reported that investigations were carried out but there was no apparent action taken. Some government and non-government sources refused to name any specific groups, but some humanitarian groups said that the most visible, intimidating and powerful were the [pro-government] Eelam People’s Democratic Party (EPDP) who operated

with impunity, often with the military and openly carrying weapons. They were known to stand in the roads forcing people to buy their newsletters.” [2c]

3.06 On the issue of residency in Jaffna, the same BHC letter reported:

“The Government Agent has said that there is no restriction on anyone taking up residency in Jaffna. Once they have found somewhere to reside they must present themselves to the local police and produce their NIC. Persons are free to reside anywhere in the Jaffna District apart from the HSZ. A police spokesman also said there was no restriction and that anyone can come to Jaffna to live. He reiterated that some persons needed authorisation from the Ministry of Defence to travel to Jaffna, but if a Sri Lankan held a National Identity card there was no problem. Once they had found a place to reside, they must register with the local police. A humanitarian group told us that new arrivals into Jaffna District received a token and once they had found a place of residence they had to report to the local police, they thought within 28 days. They added that they knew of no-one who had come back to Jaffna to stay, however, IOM informed us that they have many voluntary returnees from the UK who have resettled in the district.

“We spoke to the Assistant Government Agent for Kuyts, the largest of the islands off Jaffna. He informed us that the government are working with IOM to resettle 16 or 17 families in the islands from India. These people had fled to India during the conflict and were now returning home.” [2c]

3.07 With regards to the issue of employment and investment the BHC letter observed:

“Fishing remains one of the largest occupations in Jaffna District. The Assistant Government Agent for Kuyts quoted that out of a population of 14,000 on his island, 918 families (3276 persons) rely on fishing to survive. The government has recently relaxed fishing restrictions allowing fishermen to return to their traditional fishing grounds for the first time in several years. Coupled with the relaxation in the hours of curfew allowing night fishing, this has been a welcome boost to the local fishing industry, although there have been problems with Indian trawlers and Sinhalese fishermen now encroaching into the waters. Projects are being implemented to develop a fish processing plant, and to repair/renovate 6 trawlers, but many people lack basic equipment such as boats, nets etc, which were lost during the conflict. Both government and non-government sources have referred to the palmeira tree industry, which could be developed a lot more.

“National companies from Colombo are already assessing the potential of improved communication and transport links with Jaffna and investing heavily... Coupled with a 24-hour electricity supply locals have told us that for the first time they have cheap, broadband internet access around the clock.” [2c]

3.08 The same source also reported on the issue of domestic violence:

“Both government and non-government sources agree that domestic violence is an issue in Jaffna. The Government Agent said it was particularly high amongst the IDP community, caused by unemployment, poverty and alcohol. All sources referred to ‘toddy tapping’ (an alcoholic fermented juice from palm trees) as a major cause of domestic violence as it provides cheap/free alcohol for men in

particular. There was one women's safe house in Jaffna, run by a local NGO with places for around 15 women. However, many sources highlighted the culture of the community did not support such action. Women and children were taught to suffer in silence and that issues must be dealt with within the family. Although the police and the Courts had taken action against some perpetrators, many actions go unpunished. The police have a Women and Children's Bureau based in Jaffna." [2c]

- 3.09 With regards to the availability of healthcare in the district, the BHC letter of 17 September 2009 reported:

"The Director of Regional Health in Jaffna told us that there are 38 government hospitals in the Jaffna District providing 950 beds. However, he said that there are acute staff shortages that need to be addressed. There should be 19 specialist consultants in the district but there are none at present, although he pointed to a 'house team' at Point Pedro Hospital which had 3 of their own specialists. There should be 110 doctors but currently there were only 14, and with regard to Registered Medical Officers (paramedics) there were currently only 20 when there should be 58 working within the district. He gave two reasons for the staff shortages, firstly access to Jaffna, but added that the recent partial re-opening of the A9 should improve matters. Secondly the security situation. Potential staff were concerned for their welfare although again he said that this was improving...With regard to nurses there was a problem with the falling standards, caused by years of conflict, which was hampering recruitment. There were currently only 82 registered nurses when the district had positions for 337...The Director added that an improvement in the conditions in Jaffna had also resulted in less people leaving [the district].

"With regard to the equipment in the hospital facilities, the Director said that there were two problems, one was obtaining the equipment, and the second was having persons to operate the equipment. The equipment in many hospitals was basic. Up until recently there was only one radiography plant in Point Pedro Hospital and no radiographer. Now there are 4 plants and 3 radiographers. There was also a shortage of lab technicians. The Ministry of health was providing more funding for equipment plus donors such as the Asia Development Bank under the World Bank project and the UN had purchased equipment. IOM had also recently donated two radiography plants.

"The Director stated that major surgery could be carried out at Point Pedro Hospital and at the Jaffna Teaching Hospital. However, a lack of specialists such as neurosurgeons meant that some patients were transferred to Colombo for surgery, and there were no facilities for heart surgery or some forms of cancer treatment in the district. Many patients requiring specialist treatment would travel to an appropriate hospital in Colombo. ICRC provided flights twice a week to transfer patients to Colombo, and emergency cases were flown down by the Sri Lankan Air Force. The district also had an emergency ambulance service that guaranteed a 10-minute response time." [2c]

- 3.10 On the availability of drugs the same source observed:

"With regard to the availability of drugs, the Director stated that generally the position met the required standards but depended on whatever was available at the Ministry of Health. All drugs were imported and sometimes there were quality problems, and whilst all were tested if one sample failed, the whole

batch had to be destroyed. There had been a shortage of insulin but the Hospital Development Society had stepped in to provide funding for procurement of extra supplies until the Ministry of Health was able to meet the demand. The World Health Organisation and the World Bank also assisted on occasion. Many drugs were also now available in pharmacies. The partial re-opening of the A9 has allowed the Ministry of Health to provide 3 lorries in Colombo and 2 in Jaffna to regularly carry drugs, equipment and nutritional food between the two areas.

“The Director informed us that Private Sector medical treatment was not at all developed in the Jaffna District due to reluctance to invest because of the security situation. There were less than 10 private hospitals with limited facilities for operations and intensive care units. Many do not have full-time doctors and rely on government doctors attending in their spare time.” [2c]

3.11 With regards to education the BHC letter reported:

“A group of UK voluntary returnees have told us that education levels in Jaffna district were good and that their children were receiving adequate schooling. Humanitarian groups described the Tamil population as being obsessed with education to almost pathological levels. Children constantly studied and because a lot of good teachers had left Jaffna, parents insisted they attend pre-school, school and then private tuition after school and at weekends. Prior to the conflict Jaffna schools were considered some of the best in the country, and students from all ethnic backgrounds from all over the country chose to study there. St. Anthony’s College and the many Roman Catholic schools were held up as being excellent establishments up to ‘A’ level. Jaffna University was still well respected, plus students had the option of continuing their studies at the many other universities within Sri Lanka, although they had to obtain clearance from the government to move out of the district...

“One humanitarian group said that Jaffna had been cut-off during the last few years and highlighted a shortage of teachers. This had been due to travel restrictions and security fears. The Jaffna Teaching Hospital had been an excellent establishment, the best in Sri Lanka, but had become run down.

“A humanitarian agency told us that in some of the older IDP camps in the district, children were allowed to attend government schools. In some of the new camps however, temporary learning spaces had been set-up within the camps.

“The Assistant Government Agent for Kuyts told us that the government had been forced to take action in the islands as there had been a large number of ‘drop-outs’ of the education system. This was due to a variety of reasons but more often than not, children were working and became the main breadwinner. The government had introduced rations for families identified as living below the poverty line. If the children from these families failed to attend school, their rations were reduced.” [2c]

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Eastern Province (Batticaloa and Trincomalee)

- 3.12 A letter from the British High Commission (BHC), Colombo, dated 5 August 2009 reported:

“Security restrictions in Trincomalee district have markedly relaxed in the first half of 2009. The number of checkpoints on the main road to Trincomalee from the adjoining North Central Province have been reduced from twelve to two and there are fewer military and police personnel stationed along the road and in Trincomalee town, both during the day and at night. The security situation in Batticaloa has also improved, although the town is not yet as calm as Trincomalee and there is still a high military presence. To emphasise this, in July 2009 a crowd of approximately 300 people gathered to watch a performance from the British Council forum theatre in a Batticaloa suburb with no military presence. This would not have been possible a few months ago.

“A major source of instability in the East has in recent months been the presence of armed paramilitary groups. The two main groups are Tamil Makkal Viduthalaip Puligal (TMVP) cadres loyal to the Eastern Province Chief Minister Sivanesathurai Chandrakanthan (aka Pillaiyan) and a group of former TMVP cadres loyal to Government Minister Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan (aka Karuna). A senior police officer in Batticaloa has stated that the disarmament of armed groups was progressing well and that the only reported criminal activity by these groups during the last three months was an abduction in early July. This improving picture has been confirmed by aid agencies, the Bishop of Batticaloa and others in the region. It is expected that the groups will be completely disarmed in the near future. Although Chandrakanthan's cadres have been disarmed to a great extent, progress on disarming Muralitharan's cadres appears to have been slower. There is currently no visible evidence of paramilitary groups carrying arms in either Trincomalee or Batticaloa.

“At the political level, tensions have been visible between politicians who remain loyal to Chandrakanthan and those who have switched their allegiance to Muralitharan. A senior local politician in Batticaloa recently left the TMVP to follow Muralitharan to the ruling Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) party. Their personal security has increased as a result. A number of former TMVP camps have been converted into SLFP party offices and there are billboards showing Muralitharan and the President shaking hands, a clear indication of the scale of the switch in allegiance.” [2b]

- 3.13 The same BHC letter further observed:

“It is apparent that recent security improvements in the Eastern Province are starting to make tangible improvements to the people living there. Civil society groups report that the recent easing of fishing restrictions following the end of the war has improved the local economy, although there is still scope for the restrictions to be simplified further. A senior Government official in Trincomalee has reported an increase in the number of processing centres to send fish to market and a significant increase in farmed paddy land.

“In Batticaloa district a factory was recently built by the garment manufacturer Brandix with significant Government support. The factory commenced operations seven months ago and has provided jobs for almost 300 young women, some of whom were former LTTE cadres. Staff have expressed

satisfaction at the recent improvements in the Eastern Province and to their own lives in the past year or so. The factory employs staff from eastern Tamil, Sinhala and Muslim communities, promoting coexistence and co-operation. Brandix hopes to expand this operation in the near future.

“Resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from both the war and the tsunami in the Eastern Province continues, but allegations of ethnic bias and attempts to re-engineer the ethnic demographic of parts of the Eastern Province persist. There have been complaints about forcible resettlement of people from Batticaloa district to Trincomalee district, although Government officials have dismissed them.” [2b]

3.14 The BHC letter concluded by stating that:

“In summary, the overall security situation in the Eastern Province is continuing to improve and had led to real improvements to the lives of ordinary people. People appear pleased with progress over the past couple of years and have no appetite for a return to conflict. The tensions between Chandrakanthan and Muralitharan, and between the Provincial Council and the central Government leave potential for future instability, but they are not currently having a serious impact on the overall security situation.” [2b]

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4. HUMAN RIGHTS

- 4.01 The UNHCR 'Note on the Applicability of the 2009 Sri Lanka Guidelines', dated July 2009, observed:

"The country of origin information that UNHCR has considered indicates that Tamils from the North of Sri Lanka continue to face a significant risk of suffering serious human rights violations in the region (and elsewhere in the country) because of their race (ethnicity) or (imputed) political opinion. Tamils in the North are still heavily targeted in the security and anti-terrorism measures described in the Guidelines. Wide scale detention and confinement of Tamils from the North remains a serious concern. Pro-Government paramilitary elements also continue to operate with impunity against Tamils in the North."
[6a] (p2)

Please refer to sections 5 – 8 for specific human rights issues.

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5. INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE (IDPs)/HUMANITARIAN ISSUES

- 5.01 The UNHCR 'Note on the Applicability of the 2009 Sri Lanka Guidelines', dated July 2009, observed:

"Notwithstanding the cessation of the hostilities, the current protection and humanitarian environment in Sri Lanka remains extremely challenging. In the North, nearly the entire population from the territory formerly held by the LTTE in the North (285,000 Tamils) has been confined in heavily militarized camps in the Northern region. Although the government has gradually reduced the military presence in the camps and has pledged to start the progressive return to their villages of origin of the majority of those in the camps, it is clear that this may take a considerable amount of time. The lack of freedom of movement remains the overriding concern for this population restricting its ability to reunite with family members outside the camps, access employment, attend regular schools, and ultimately choose their place of residence." [6a]

- 5.02 The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Armed Conflict Database, Sri Lanka, Latest Timelines (undated, website accessed on 24 September 2009) recorded:

"[9 July 2009] The Sri Lankan government asks the ICRC to scale down its operations in the country. Sri Lanka's Minister for Human Rights, Mahinda Samarasinghe, said foreign NGOs were no longer needed, following the cessation of active hostilities. The ICRC replied that it would close offices and withdraw expatriate staff from Sri Lanka's east, but would 'continue its dialogue with the Sri Lankan government on issues of humanitarian concern'." [14a]

- 5.03 A press release issued by Human Rights Watch (HRW) on 28 July 2009 observed that:

"The government, in violation of international law, has since March 2008 confined virtually all civilians displaced by the fighting between government forces and the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in detention camps, euphemistically called 'welfare centers' by the government. Only a small number of camp residents, mainly the elderly, have been released to host families and institutions for the elderly.

"In Kalimodai and Sirukandal camps in Mannar district, established more than a year ago, some residents have been granted permission to leave the camp for short periods during the day. In these camps, they have to register with the military twice a day. Human Rights Watch has received reports that if a person fails or is late to register, the military may apply punitive measures, such as forcing the person to stand still under the sun for a period of time or to perform manual labor.

"The situation of camp residents is aggravated by inadequate living conditions in the camps. Many are overcrowded, some holding twice the number recommended by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. According to the UN, there is a shortage of latrines and access to water is inconsistent, causing hygiene problems." [18a]

- 5.04 The HRW press release added:

“The government has effectively sealed off the detention camps from outside scrutiny. Human rights organizations, journalists, and other independent observers are not allowed inside, and humanitarian organizations with access have been forced to sign a statement that they will not disclose information about the conditions in the camps without government permission. On several occasions, the government expelled foreign journalists and aid workers who had collected and publicized information about camp conditions, or did not renew their visas.” [18a]

- 5.05 The Amnesty International (AI) briefing paper [‘Sri Lanka: Unlock the Camps in Sri Lanka: Safety and dignity for the displaced now’](#), released on 10 August 2009, reported:

“The majority [of displaced people who had fled fighting and were detained in some 40 camps spread across four districts] arrived in Vavuniya District where Manik Farm is the biggest complex of camps in April and May 2009. Manik Farm currently consists of 6 zones or sub camps (numbered 0- 5, and named after Tamil political leaders). Two more zones (6a and 6b) are planned and at least eight other potential emergency shelter sites have been identified in the Vavuniya area. The Manik Farm complex alone currently accommodates about 230,000 people. Most of the camps are designed to be temporary emergency facilities, whereas two of the new camps run by the government are described by UNHCR as ‘semi permanent,’ meaning the government has constructed shelters rather than erect tents. Sri Lanka’s internally displaced persons (IDP, displaced people) camps remain overcrowded and unsanitary despite reported improvements in conditions since the initial influx in April and May. Management of the camps is supervised by the military. Camps are guarded by armed personnel, camp managers are often retired military officers and the Ministry of Defence has been actively involved in determining who gets access. Displaced people are not permitted to leave – they are in fact detained without charge or trial.” [1a] (p5)

- 5.06 The AI briefing paper of August 2009 continued:

“The Sri Lankan government misrepresented the scale of the crisis. It was not adequately prepared to deal with food, water and shelter needs of this enormous newly displaced population alone, and refused to allow unrestricted access to NGOs and International agencies to assist with the crisis. Even as access restrictions were gradually loosened to allow for delivery of material relief, international agencies continued to be prevented from talking to displaced people and thus engaging in crucial human rights protection activities such as interviewing people about violations they may have suffered or assisting with family reunification. Without independent monitoring, human rights concerns persist, including reports of arbitrary arrest and detention, enforced disappearances, abductions, torture and other ill treatment. On 9 July, the government of Sri Lanka announced that it had directed aid agencies, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to ‘scale down’ their operations in Sri Lanka, starting with the east. The ICRC’s active presence in Sri Lanka remains very important to protecting human rights, although it too has faced difficulties carrying out some of its activities, such as monitoring the screening process by which the authorities attempt to identify people with LTTE links, and tracing family members separated by the conflict for reunification. It has played an essential role in coordinating relief for the displaced since the fighting ended and visiting detainees, including former combatants who have

been arrested or have surrendered to the authorities, and civilians detained on suspicion of ties to the LTTE, to monitor their conditions of detention and the manner in which they are treated.” [1a] (p5-6)

5.07 The AI briefing paper of August 2009 further noted that:

“Access to camps housing internally displaced people...remains restricted. Human rights investigators, opposition politicians and the press are in general not permitted access, although the situation is reportedly improving for aid workers. But even humanitarian organizations say that the criteria for gaining access to the camps change constantly at the whim of local military personnel and individual camp commanders. [1a] (p11)

“The government of Sri Lanka has placed severe restrictions displaced people from leaving the physical confines of the camps, which are surrounded by razor fencing and barbed wire and guarded by armed military personnel. Although the government calls these facilities ‘welfare villages,’ they are effectively detention camps, where an entire category of persons (in this case Tamil people displaced from areas formerly held by the LTTE) are being arbitrarily detained in violation of international law.” [1a] (p13)

5.08 The same AI paper added:

“There are persistent reports that people, including those with ties to the LTTE, have been able to buy their way out of the camps by bribing army personnel. Amnesty International was told by a contact in Jaffna whose brother-in-law is detained in an IDP camp in Vavuniya that at least 15 people with links to the LTTE were able to buy their way out of the camps for Rs.500,000 each. ‘The big fellows are going out; it is the poor fellows who have to suffer,’ the contact told AI. A group of Tamils in London with relatives in the camps shared stories in July 2009 of the release of relatives in Manik Farm by bribing paramilitaries.” [1a] (p13)

5.09 A MSN (Medicins sans Frontières) article dated 13 August 2009 observed:

“Any health system would have difficulties responding to the needs of over 260,000 people who recently came out of a war zone. And so, facilities in the Sri Lankan IDP camps are overstretched. People sometimes need to wait days before they can see a doctor for treatment and at night non-medical people decide who gets referred to a hospital and who does not.

“Even if the services are gradually expanding in the camps with Ministry of Health clinics in all the camps and the medical staff doing what they can, the needs are vast and the facilities are overstretched. Some doctors are seeing 200 to 300 patients a day, there is little capacity to carry out tests or follow up patients and only the most urgent cases get transferred to hospitals outside the camps.” [21a]

5.10 On 8 September 2009 BBC Sinhala reported that:

“Over 6000 internally displaced people (IDPs) from the east are still in camps, a latest study reveals. Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA) which carried out the study says these families are still living in transit camps in Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts. The government announced capturing all areas held by the LTTE in the east in July 2007. Meanwhile, a site in Sampur, Muttur east, is

selected by the government for a coal power plant. It has led to authorities establishing a high security zone (HSZ) in their ancestral lands, IDPs representatives say.” [9d]

5.11 On 11 September 2009 AI reported:

“The government finally agreed on Tuesday [8 September 2009] to allow displaced people wishing to leave the camps to stay with relatives who were willing to accommodate them, but families of the displaced told Amnesty International they had not been consulted by the government about the process for leaving and were sceptical of the government’s screening process. Monsoon rains due in October threaten to swamp tents and flood latrines. Pre-monsoon rains have already flooded some camps and forced people to relocate within the camps. However, the government of Sri Lanka, citing varying security concerns, has continued to prevent people from leaving. ...

“Nobody but the authorities really knows how the screening works or what criteria they use to determine if someone is a security threat – all that is known is that it takes time. By the end of August, the government said that it had registered about half of the newly displaced people. This means that there must be about 130,000 to go...

“Cabinet Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe told UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in early September that the government would re-settle displaced people in the North as soon as the de-mining process was completed and infrastructure and basic services were restored. However, true reconstruction and resettlement of areas devastated by war could take many months.” [1b]

5.12 On 14 September 2009 BBC Sinhala quoted the United Nations High Commissioner for human rights, Navi Pillay as saying that “...internally displaced persons in Sri Lanka are effectively detained under conditions of internment. Humanitarian agencies’ access to these camps remains restricted, and the mandates of relief agencies are increasingly coming under threat”. The BBC also reported that “In his speech to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on Monday [14 September 2009], Human Rights minister Mahinda Samarasinghe said the government had already released over fifteen thousand Internally displaced from the camps.” [9a]

5.13 The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Joint Humanitarian Update - Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Mannar, Vavuniya And Trincomalee Districts, Report 8 for the period 29 August – 11 September 2009, issued on 17 September 2009 recorded:

“264,583 persons are currently accommodated in camps and hospitals [246,992 in Vavuniya Camps; 1,3672 in Mannar Camps; 7,3783 in Jaffna Camps; 6,8624 in Trincomalee Camps]

“262,599 people are accommodated in temporary camps

“6,615 people have been released from temporary camps into host families and elders’ homes as of 9 September 2009. The majority of these people are elders, people with learning disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

“5,153 have been returned to Jaffna, Vavuniya, Mannar, Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Ampara districts between 5 August and 14 September 2009

“2,788 have been transferred to Jaffna, Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Ampara districts between 11 September and 15 September 2009.” [13a]

- 5.14 On 17 September 2009 Reuters reported that at least half the 10,000 refugees the Sri Lankan government said it had sent home last week were still being held in transfer camps in their home districts.

“Last week the government said it had sent home nearly 10,000 war refugees from Menik Farm, located near the town of Vavuniya, to their homes in the eastern districts of Batticaloa and Trincomalee and the northern district of Jaffna... A government official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said about 45 percent of the 10,000 moved from Menik Farm last week had been sent home. Human Rights and Disaster Management Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe confirmed some of them were still in transfer camps... Transferred refugees complained of a lack of services in the camps, which has been a steady refrain from refugees, rights groups and Tamil activists... The government has said it has released 15,000 refugees since the end of the war in mid-May. United Nations data says nearly 12,000 have been sent home, about half of them elderly refugees released either to rest homes or the care of relatives. Sri Lanka has pledged to resettle 80 percent of the people by the end of the year, but says it must clear thousands of landmines and weed out Tamil Tiger fighters hiding among the civilians before it can do so.” [3a]

- 5.15 On 18 September 2009 the UN News Service reported:

“Internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in Government-run camps in Sri Lanka lack basic rights of freedom of movement, and the country is not making the expected progress towards a lasting peace in the wake of the end earlier this year to fighting between military forces and Tamil rebels, the United Nations political chief said today. B. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, told a press conference in Colombo at the end of his visit to Sri Lanka that the UN had not observed the progress expected after the world body and the Government issued a joint statement following the conclusion of fighting with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in May... ‘People are not free to come or go and they are understandably upset,’ he said. ‘We picked up great frustration on this point in the camps that we visited yesterday. I was told by many – and quite emphatically – that they just want to go home. We understand there are security concerns to be addressed. At the same time, this kind of closed regime goes directly against the principles under which we work in assisting IDPs all around the world.’ Mr. Pascoe urged the Government to allow those IDPs who have completed the screening process to leave the camps as they choose, and for those people remaining to be able to exit the camps during the day and to freely meet with family and friends in other sites.” [6b]

- 5.16 On the same day the Official Website of the Government of Sri Lanka announced:

“The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has initiated a program to provide important legal documents the displaced people lost due to the ethnic conflict or the tsunami. The program, as a part of UNDP's Equal Access to Justice Project, conducts mobile clinics where the displaced can come and

obtain all their lost documents such as identification cards, birth certificates, and land deeds etc. from one place within a day. The lack of identification cards and other legal documents severely hampers the resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in original homes and family reunification. Mobile clinic offers a one-stop shop to get all the documents in one day and the displaced are spared a costly trip to city offices.” [15a]

5.17 In a statement issued on 22 September 2009 HRW noted:

“Poor conditions, overcrowding, and inadequate medical care increases the risk of serious health problems during the coming monsoon season. Human Rights Watch also said that the authorities are not being open and honest with camp residents about when they may go home, keeping them in a state of uncertainty and anxiety.

“Human Rights Watch said that recent government claims that a large number of camp residents had been released were false. A statement published on the website of the Ministry of Defence on September 12, claimed that the government released nearly 10,000 persons from the camps to their hometowns the previous day. However, it later emerged that they had been transferred to camps in their home districts, where they are undergoing further screening by the authorities. The Sri Lankan armed forces have indicated that the additional screening could take from several days to up to six months, even though each individual had already been registered and screened several times and cleared for release.

“Sri Lanka has repeatedly promised to release the displaced persons from the camps as early as possible, including in a joint statement on May 23 by the UN secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, and President Mahinda Rajapaksa. But four months after the end of the fighting, there has been little progress.” [18b]

5.18 HRW further reported:

“The military camp administration is preventing humanitarian organizations, including the UN and the ICRC, from undertaking effective monitoring and protection in the camps. In most cases, the military insists on being present during conversations with camp residents, preventing confidential exchanges of information about camp conditions. Even the Sri Lankan Human Rights Commission, a government entity, can only gain access to the camps with military permission.” [18b]

Additional information and updates on the situation of IDP are available from the website of [IRIN News Sri Lanka](#). [12]

See also [Section 8: Treatment of former members of the LTTE](#) and [Section 6: Freedom of movement](#)

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6. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

- 6.01 The FCO Travel Advice for Sri Lanka (last updated on 14 September 2009) observed that “Although the conflict is over, the LTTE are believed to retain some capability to mount terrorist attacks. The Government has extended the State of Emergency, under which it has extensive anti-terrorism powers and heightened levels of security (e.g. checkpoints, road blocks) that are likely to be maintained for the foreseeable future.

“Security checkpoints and roadblocks are common throughout Sri Lanka...There have been cases where security forces have opened fire on vehicles that do not stop when asked. Roads around Government and military sites in Colombo are regularly closed for security reasons (e.g. for VIP convoys)...” [2d]

A9 highway

- 6.02 The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Country Reports, Sri Lanka, August 2009 noted:

“After a lapse of several years, the A9 Jaffna-Kandy highway was reopened to general traffic on July 22nd. The A9 is the only land route that connects Sri Lanka’s capital, Colombo, and the northernmost part of the country in the Jaffna peninsula. The highway, which is almost 200 miles long, was closed in August 2006 after an army camp in Jaffna came under attack from the LTTE. The road was open in 2003-06 in the wake of a ceasefire in 2001 between the government and the Tigers, but it was under the control of the rebels, who imposed heavy taxes on those who used it. The liberation of Kilinochchi and the Elephant Pass brought the entire highway under state control in early 2009. Following operations to ensure security, the government reopened it for military traffic in March and for commercial traffic in July.” [8b]

See also [Section 3: Security and development, Jaffna district](#)

Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)

- 6.03 The OCHA Humanitarian Portal Sri Lanka section on Mine Action (undated) recorded that:

“Humanitarian demining and the removal of UXO are pre-requisites for humanitarian assistance delivery, early recovery and development in conflict affected areas. Mine/UXO clearance enables the resettlement of IDPs; infrastructure reconstruction and the resumption of social services and livelihoods. Ten districts located in the North and East of Sri Lanka were contaminated with landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO): Ampara, Anuradhapura, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullativu, Polonnaruwa, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya. According to the Information Management System on Mine Action (IMSMA), Sri Lanka, between August 1st 2002 and June 30th 2009, approximately 10.21 million sq. meters have been demined and 350 million sq. meters subject to Battle Area Clearance.

“The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Support to Mine Action Project assists the Government of Sri Lanka to coordinate and manage mine action, notably mine and UXO clearance in the country.” [13b]

Maps accessible from the [OCHA Humanitarian Portal Sri Lanka, Mine Action](#) show the mine action progress in the Jaffna, Mannar, Kilinochchi and Vavuniya districts as of 31 July 2009. [13b]

The latest available updates on mine action are available from [the ReliefWeb website](#). [20a]

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7. TREATMENT OF JOURNALISTS

- 7.01 'An Open Letter to His Excellency President Mahinda Rajapaksa' from the International Press Freedom Mission to Sri Lanka, posted on the website of Reporters Without Borders, on 16 July 2009, stated that:

"The International Press Freedom Mission to Sri Lanka, which is comprised of representatives from the world's media community, including Reporters Without Borders, is extremely concerned over the ongoing spate of violent attacks against the media. However, in spite of the military victory over the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the deterioration of the press freedom situation in the country has continued." [19a]

- 7.02 On 1 September 2009 Amnesty International (AI) reported:

"A High Court in Sri Lanka sentenced journalist Jayaprakash Sittampalam (JS) Tissainayagam to 20 years rigorous imprisonment on Monday, for writing and publishing articles that criticized the government's treatment of Sri Lankan Tamil civilians affected by the war. The court said the articles caused 'racial hatred' and promoted terrorism. Amnesty International said that it considers JS Tissainayagam to be a prisoner of conscience, jailed solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression in carrying out his profession. JS Tissainayagam was the first Sri Lankan journalist to be formally charged (and now convicted) under the country's draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) for his writing." [1c]

- 7.03 AI added that:

"JS Tissainayagam was arrested in March 2008 and detained in police custody for five months before he was charged with an offence...The prosecution also put forth as evidence an alleged confession made by Tissainayagam while in police custody. Tissainayagam maintains that he was tortured by the police and that the confession was forced. The Court ruled that the evidence was admissible. Sri Lanka has a long history of torture and ill treatment of prisoners. Under the PTA, the burden of proof rests with the accused to prove that the confession was made under duress or torture." [1c]

- 7.04 In a press release issued on 31 August 2009, Reporters Without Borders stated it was appalled by the 'shameful' 20-year jail sentence passed on J.S. Tissainayagam and observed that "The imposition of this extremely severe sentence on Tissainayagam suggests that some Sri Lanka judges confuse justice with revenge...With the help of confessions extracted by force and information that was false or distorted, the court has used an anti-terrorism law that was intended for terrorists, not for journalists and human rights activists." [19b]

- 7.05 On 15 September 2009 BBC Sinhala reported that the United Nations High Commissioner for human rights, Navanethem Pillay, addressing the 12th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, said that Tissainayagam's conviction "...raises serious concerns about respect for the right to freedom of expression'." BBC Sinhala added that:

"The publisher of the North Eastern Monthly magazine V. Jaseeharan who was arrested [sic] with Tissainayagam under the PTA, denied [he] voluntarily gave

a confession to the Terrorist Investigation Department (TID). He claimed he had been tortured by the TID since his arrest on the 6th of March 2009 [actually 2008]. He said he was tortured again after making a complaint to the Magistrate that he was tortured by the officers. Jaseeharan who is an ethnic Tamil, denied giving a confession and said he was forced to sign the documents in sinhala.” [9d]

Additional information on the situation of journalists in Sri Lanka can be obtained from the [website of the Committee to Protect Journalists \(CPJ\)](#). [7a]

See also [Section 2: Recent general and political developments, Emergency Regulations \(ERs\) and Arrests and detentions](#)

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8. TREATMENT OF FORMER MEMBERS OF THE LTTE

- 8.01 A press release issued by Human Rights Watch (HRW) on 28 July 2009 observed that:

“The military has reportedly removed several thousand camp residents for alleged membership or support of the LTTE, and transferred them to rehabilitation centers for LTTE fighters or to Colombo, the capital, for further interrogation. In many cases, the authorities have failed to inform relatives remaining in the camps about the fate and whereabouts of those removed, raising concerns of possible ill-treatment or enforced disappearance...

“While the Sri Lankan authorities are entitled to screen persons leaving the war zone to identify Tamil Tiger combatants, international law prohibits arbitrary detention and unnecessary restrictions on the right to freedom of movement. This means that anyone taken into custody must be promptly brought before a judge and charged with a criminal offense or released. Although human rights law permits restrictions on movement for security reasons, the restrictions must have a clear legal basis, be limited to what is necessary, and be proportionate to the threat.” [18a]

- 8.02 The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Armed Conflict Database, Sri Lanka, Latest Timelines (undated, website accessed on 24 September 2009) noted “[30 July 2009] Sri Lanka’s Commissioner General for Rehabilitation, Major General Daya Ratnayake, announces that 9,797 former LTTE are detained at so called rehabilitation centres, a number that would be doubled in the near future. In these camps the militants are supposed to be categorized and be charged according to their involvement in the civil war.” [14a]

- 8.03 A few days earlier, on 25 July 2009 the Official Government News Portal of Sri Lanka had reported that:

“The programme to rehabilitate LTTE suspects to bring them back to society is being successfully implemented, opined Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe while visiting the LTTE cadres who are being rehabilitated under the full protection of the Government and inquired into their well being.

“The program is mooted with the mediation of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights and the involvement of the International Labour Organisation and special attention has been drawn to them under the national plan of bringing into society those who had been involved in conflict.” [10b]

- 8.04 On 5 August 2009 BBC Sinhala reported that a court in Colombo had allowed the police to further detain and question the leader of Tamil Tiger women’s political wing Subramaniam Sivagami, widely known as Thamilini. “Thamilini who has fled the ‘No Fire Zone’ (NFZ) in the north and surrendered to the authorities in May, is since detained by the police. Police told the magistrate that she is being investigated for being a member of a banned organisation, LTTE.” [9f]

- 8.05 The Amnesty International (AI) briefing paper “[Sri Lanka: Unlock the Camps in Sri Lanka: Safety and dignity for the displaced now](#)”, released on 10 August 2009 reported:

“Arrests have been reported from the camps and Sri Lankan human rights defenders have alleged that enforced disappearances have also occurred. Since March 2009, Sri Lankan human rights organizations have reported that former LTTE members and members of other armed political factions aligned with the government were present in IDP camps. These unconfirmed reports indicate that they may have been used by the government to identify suspected LTTE members, who were then arrested or abducted and disappeared. Their presence is also reported in specialized detention facilities where former LTTE members are detained. Some arrests of persons with alleged connections to the LTTE have been acknowledged by Sri Lankan authorities and carried in the press. The whereabouts of others is unknown. Without independent access to the displaced people, including the ability to speak confidentially to those detained in the camps and to conduct private, one-on-one interviews, it is impossible for humanitarian organizations to fulfil their protection duties or for independent human rights organizations to determine the scale of this violation.” [1a] (p23-24)

- 8.06 The SATP Sri Lanka 2009 Timeline (undated, website accessed on 24 September 2009) recorded:

“[16 August 2009] The Commissioner General of Rehabilitation, Major General Daya Ratnayake, has said measures have been taken to rehabilitate over 10,000 ex-LTTE cadres in the North by the Government. In an interview with Sunday Observer, he said, ‘The process to classify the ex-cadres into different groups considering their age, gender and involvement in the outfit has already been completed and the ground work to move them into new rehabilitation centres is nearing completion.’...The children between the ages of 12 to 18 years have already been separated from the group. There are over 455 children, the majority of whom the LTTE had forcefully recruited at its last stage of the battle. Former female LTTE cadres numbering 1,700 have also been separated and housed separately. The authorities have taken steps to separate male ex-LTTE cadres over 45 years of age and they will be given training according to their professions, skills, and their liking to undergo a vocational training.”

“[28 August 2009] The Supreme Court in Sri Lanka has ordered authorities to file charges or release the LTTE suspects in custody.” [4a]

- 8.07 A press release issued by the British High Commission, Colombo, on 4 September 2009, stated:

“On Friday 4 September 2009, The British High Commissioner Dr. Peter Hayes and the Head of International Organisation for Migration Mr. Mohammed Abdiker signed an agreement for approximately Rs.17 million of UK's support towards the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Ex-combatants in the presence of the Minister of Justice, Hon. Milinda Moragoda.

“The Minister of Justice welcomed the support provided by the British High Commission to the Government of Sri Lanka. The Ministry of Justice and in particular the Commissioner General for Rehabilitation has been working closely with the International Organization for Migration to develop a community oriented demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration programme. The programme focuses on strengthening capacity, support to receptor communities

and an active involvement of the private sector to build sustainable solutions.”
[2e]

8.08 On 11 September 2009 AI reported:

“The government has also said that it has detained about 10,000 people suspected of ties to the Tamil Tigers – the real numbers could be higher. These detainees are held without charge or trial, in what are described by the government as ‘rehabilitation camps’. Their whereabouts and conditions of detention in many cases are unknown.

“The International Red Cross (ICRC) said Friday that it is being denied access to these detainees. Incommunicado detention has been shown to greatly increase the risk of torture and extrajudicial killing. There is a long history of both in Sri Lanka.” [1b]

8.09 On the same day BBC News reported:

“A court in Sri Lanka has granted bail to two former Tamil Tiger civilian officials who have been in government custody for more than four months. The former rebel spokesman, Daya Master, and an interpreter for the group's political wing, George Master, surrendered to troops in April... The pair were released by a court in Colombo on a bail of \$22,000 (£13,200) each and were told to report to the police every month. ‘The court has said that they cannot leave the country until the investigations are over,’ Sri Lankan military spokesperson Brig Udaya Nanayakkara told the BBC. The two have not been formally charged, but have been held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Both men played prominent roles presenting rebel views to the international media and visiting foreign diplomats during the failed peace process.” [9b]

8.10 On 16 September 2009 the Sri Lanka *Daily Mirror* reported that four suspects alleged to have links with the LTTE had been further remanded by the Colombo Chief Magistrate.

“Producing the suspects before court the CID said that the suspects had immigrated to the Fiji Islands for employment and the Fiji Islands authority had banished them. CID had apprehended them at the Katunayake airport allegedly for connections with the LTTE. CID further submitted that a letter regarding these suspects is to be received from the Fiji Islands authority and a move to not to grant bail to the suspects as investigations were proceeding. They were detained for ninety days following the Defence Secretary’s detention order.” [11b]

8.11 On 19 September 2009 the pro-LTTE website TamilNet reported:

“Colombo Chief Magistrate Nishantha Hapuarachchi Friday [18 September 2009] directed the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to expedite the investigation into the cases against twenty-seven Tamil civilians arrested in connection with alleged terrorist activities and to report to the court on the progress made so far, on September 29. The order was made following Defence Counsel claiming that the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) was acting unfairly in its investigations. Senior Defence Counsel Mr. K. V. Thavarasa told court that the TID had moved to release Daya Master and George Master within four months of arrest, claiming that they had not been

involved in any terrorist activities. He further said other suspects, who were also arrested under Emergency Regulations, were unnecessarily kept in remand without a proper trial for more than a year... The counsel questioned why the TID who were able to release Daya Master and George within four months, could not finish investigations and charge these suspects or grant them bail.” [5b]

- 8.12 The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Country Reports, Sri Lanka, September 2009, noted:

“Efforts to reunite the vestiges of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE, Tamil Tigers) received a blow in August, with the arrest of the group’s arms procurement master, Kumaran Padmanadan (also known as K P) in Malaysia and his subsequent deportation to Sri Lanka. Soon after the death in May of the LTTE’s leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, Mr Padmanadan had attempted to take over leadership of the group, and his arrest will be seen as a setback by those who hope to revive the Tigers. In August the Sri Lankan government called on foreign countries to hand over other Tamil Tiger rebels, as well as their assets, which reportedly amount to millions of dollars.” [8a] (The political scene)

- 8.13 On 21 September 2009 the pro-LTTE website Tamilnet reported that the Sri Lanka’s State Intelligence Service (SIS) had arrested a Tamil engineer – identified as a resident of Point Pedro in Jaffna district – who arrived in Katunayake International Airport (KIA) from Singapore.

“He told the police during preliminary investigation that he had come to visit one of his relatives in Colombo. However, the SIS sources told media said it had arrested the engineer on information that he had been a close associate of Kumaran Pathmanathan alias KP and been working in a private ship owned by KP who is now in military custody. The engineer is detained by Sri Lanka Army for the further questioning.” [5c]

- 8.14 A statement issued by HRW on 22 September 2009 noted:

“Human Rights Watch said it was concerned about a lack of protection mechanisms in the camps and the secret, incommunicado detention – and possible enforced disappearance – of suspected combatants...

“The government has announced that it has detained more than 10,000 displaced persons on suspicion of having been involved with the LTTE. The government has separated them from their families and transferred them to separate camps and regular prisons. Human Rights Watch documented several cases in which individuals were taken into custody without regard to the protections provided under Sri Lankan law. In many cases, the authorities have not informed family members about the whereabouts of the detained, leaving them in secret, incommunicado detention or possible enforced disappearance, and, as a result, especially vulnerable to abuse.” [18b]

- 8.15 On 24 September 2009 AI reported that a detainee had been seriously injured and had to be hospitalised as a clash broke out between the Sri Lankan Army (SLA) and detainees being held at Poonthotham Teachers Training College, which – AI noted – serves as an unofficial detention centre in north-eastern Sri Lanka. AI further reported that:

“The danger of serious human rights violations, including torture, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings increases substantially when detainees are held in locations that are not officially acknowledged places of detention and lack proper legal procedures and safeguards’, said Sam Zarifi, Amnesty International's Asia Director. Detention centres such as the Poonthotham Teachers Training College are irregular places of detention. Since May 2009, an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 individuals suspected of ties to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE or Tamil Tigers) have been detained in irregular detention facilities operated by the Sri Lankan security forces and affiliated paramilitary groups.

“Several such groups are active in Vavuniya and have been implicated in human rights violations, including People’s Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO), Eelam People’s Democratic Party (EPDP) and both factions of the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP).” [1d]

8.16 AI further reported:

“On 25 May, just a week after the Sri Lankan government declared victory over the Tamil Tigers, Army Commander General Sarath Fonseka announced that 9,000 Tamil Tigers cadres had surrendered to the army. Since then, there have been regular reports of arrests. Some have been officially acknowledged and reported in the Sri Lankan press and others reported by relatives of detainees in displacement camps.

“Many of these detainees are being held incommunicado, meaning they have not had access to family members or legal counsel and have not appeared in court.

“Amnesty International has confirmed the location of at least 10 such facilities in school buildings and hostels originally designated as displacement camps in the north. There have also been frequent reports of other unofficial places of detention elsewhere in the country.

“The International Committee of the Red Cross has no access to these detainees and there is no transparency about their registration and treatment.” [1d]

See also [Section 2: Recent general and political developments, Emergency Regulations \(ERs\) and Arrests and detentions](#)

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Annexes

ANNEX A: TIMELINE

SATP (SOUTH ASIA TERRORISM PORTAL) SRI LANKA TIMELINE FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY – 13 SEPTEMBER 2009

The section of the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) Sri Lanka timeline reproduced below covers the period 1 July – 13 September 2009 [4a] for incidents and events prior to July 2009 go to the [SATP website, Timelines \[4\]](#)

- July 1 Sri Lanka's Defence Ministry extended the deadline given to Muslim militant outfits in the East to surrender their weapons to the SFs, by two more days on July 4. The deadline issued earlier was to expire on July 2. The deadline has been extended following requests made by the concerned parties, Police sources said. Police said a special committee has been formed to accept firearms and other weapons from these Muslim armed groups within the stipulated period. These groups could surrender their weapons to this committee through Mosque Federations in the area before 3 p.m. (SST) on July 4, the Eastern Regional Deputy Inspector General of Police, Edison Gunatilake, said in Batticaloa. According to a Police report, there are 18 Muslim militant outfits in Kaaththankudi area alone, in Batticaloa District.
- July 2 Another large stock of jewellery deposited by civilians at the LTTE's "Eelam Bank" was recovered by troops in the Puthukudirippu area of Mullaitivu District, the military said.
- July 4 One soldier was killed when he attempted to arrest a former LTTE leader for Batticaloa District, identified as Nallarathnam Mohan, overboard a boat in the Kirankulam seas. The death of the soldier is the first military loss of life since troops on May 19 announced the killing of the top leadership of the LTTE, including its chief Velupillai Prabhakaran.
- In response to the Government's appeal, Islamic militants surrendered their weapons to the Police in the evening of July 4 at a ceremony held at Meera Jumma Mosque in the Kattankudi area of Batticaloa District. The former militants surrendered their weapons through the Association of Muslim Mosques. The period granted for armed groups in the Eastern Province to hand over their weapons ended at 3:00pm on July 4. Receiving the weapons, Deputy Inspector General of Police (Eastern Province) Edison Gunatilake described the event as "historic" and called for the surrender of all such weapons. Quoting Gunathilake, the English weekly Lakkbima said a joint military operation would be launched to track down arms and ammunition in the hands of the "jihadist groups in the East, after the extended deadline given for the hand over of the weapons lapsed". It quoted Gunathilake as saying the response from the Muslim armed

groups to the Government's call to hand over weapons was poor. The weekly further quoted him as saying that intelligence reports reveal Islamist militants possess 250 T-56 assault rifles, a fraction of which had been handed over on July 4. 18 armed groups have been identified in the Eastern Province and these groups are reported to be holding more than 400 firearms.

July 5 As a measure to return normalcy to the war-affected North, Sri Lanka Government has eased several security restrictions in the Vavuniya city limits. As a first step in this process, the Security Forces have allowed parking of vehicles in the city and reopened all the sub-roads that had been closed for several years. The Government recently also lifted all restrictions on fishing in the country. With the lifting of fishing restrictions and opening of Kandy-Jaffna (A-9) highway for commercial traffic, the Government expects to stimulate the economy in the North and considerably reduce prices of fish and other seafood in the South.

July 6 New Indian Express reported on July 6 that only a few of the armed Muslim groups in Eastern Sri Lanka are jihadis. Most of the armed Muslim men are reportedly political henchmen or persons enjoying the protection of mainstream Muslim political leaders, informed sources in the Eastern town of Batticaloa told the newspaper. "The jihadis among the Muslim armed men may be just about 30 or so," one source said.

President Mahinda Rajapakse has said that a political solution to the ethnic conflict will come after the presidential elections. Asked about the political solution - the "13th Amendment Plus" - he had in mind, President Rajapakse in an interview with The Hindu said "even tomorrow I can give that - but I want to get that from the people." "I am waiting but it will be after my [re] election [as President]," he said. He insisted that all parties and especially the Tamil National Alliance representatives should participate in the discussions on the political solution.

July 7 Security has been intensified in the Moneragala District to arrest two hardcore LTTE militants, Ram and Nagulan, along with several other cadres who are believed to be roaming in Moneragala. The Moneragala Division Senior Superintendent of Police, Amarasiri Senaratne, said intelligence reports have revealed that Ram and his team have gone to the East. Security sources said Ram led the LTTE unit in the Eastern Part a few years ago and is believed that he and his deputy Nagulan are roaming in the area without surrendering to Security Forces.

July 8 Five doctors who were serving in the NFZ during the last few days of the final battle in Mullaivaikkal admitted that the figures they were dispatching to certain media groups about civilian casualties were false and exaggerated, due to pressure exerted by the LTTE and regretted their errors. The doctors revealed that the number of civilians deaths were between 300-350 from January to May 2009 and the estimated civilian casualties may be around 600 to 650.

- The Sri Lanka Parliament extended the State of Emergency for another month. The Tamil National Alliance parliamentarians voted against it while the main opposition United National Party abstained.
- July 9 The ICRC in Sri Lanka decided to scale down its operations in the country following a Government request based on the cessation of active hostilities between the military and the LTTE. Earlier in the day, the Minister of Disaster Management and Human Rights, Mahinda Samarasinghe, told Reuters that the Government has asked aid agencies to scale down operations as the country's "challenges are now different" with the end of a 25-year war.
- July 10 The Government said that no date had been fixed for the re-opening of the Kandy to Jaffna stretch of the A-9 Road for civilian traffic as de-mining was continuing. "The A-9 Road will be opened to the public soon but it will only be done once de-mining is complete and special security measures are in place," Media Centre for National Security Director General Laxman Hulugalle said adding that from June 17 convoys carrying relief supplies to the refugee camps were traveling along the A-9 Road after a lapse of several years.
- July 12 Minister Vinayagamoothi Muralitharan alias 'Colonel' Karuna Amman told BBC Sandeshaya that two senior LTTE leaders, Daya Mohan and Colonel Ram, who had lived in the Ampara jungles, had escaped. He added that Daya Mohan, the most senior LTTE leader to survive the military onslaught has left Sri Lanka and "escaped to Malaysia".
- Army Commander General Sarath Fonseka said that the deaths reported within the Sri Lanka Army is much lower during its victorious march to eliminate terrorism from the country compared to the number of deaths reported during 2000 when the Sri Lanka Army was losing ground to the LTTE. "Therefore, the victory achieved by the Sri Lanka Army sacrificing 5,200 lives is a great victory as it could achieve it minimising the number of deaths and casualties and could completely eliminate the LTTE without leaving any trace of it," the Army Commander said. He also said that about 26,000 Army personnel sustained injuries during the operation. The Commander also praised the political leadership of the country and said he was able to conduct the war successfully because of President Mahinda Rajapakse's leadership. "I did my part militarily and President Mahinda Rajapakse played his role as the political leader," he said.
- July 14 A presidential probe into the massacre of 17 local aid workers of the French aid agency Action against Hunger or Action Contre la Faim (ACF) exonerated the Sri Lanka military saying that the military was not operating in the area when the crime took place in August 2006. The chairman of the presidential Commission of Inquiry (COI), former Supreme Court Judge Nissanka Udalgama, has said in a report that the deaths occurred on the morning of the August 4, 2006 and until the night of that day the town of Mutur and the surrounding areas were under the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The Transport Minister Dullas Allahapperuma reportedly said that Sinhalese will not be settled in the earlier Tamil dominated areas when displaced persons are resettled in the North. Addressing a press briefing at the Mahaweli Centre in Colombo on July 14, the Minister emphasised that no Sinhala colonies will be established in the areas where only Tamil people were living during the resettlement process. Denying a Parliamentarian's comment to Times UK Online that the Government is trying to settle Sinhalese in Tamil villages under the cover of resettling displaced in the north, the Minister said not a single family other than original dwellers were resettled in the villages in the Musali Division in Mannar.

July 15

The Island reports that the Security Forces have commenced dismantling protective measures like bunkers and fences built around border villages since the defeat of the LTTE. On the instructions of the Ministry of Defence, such security measures that were in place in Tekkawatte, Muntrumurippu, Vairavapuliyankulam, Katkuli and Thavasikulam are being dismantled. Several roads in the vicinity of Vavuniya were kept permanently closed with barriers built across and deep trenches dug during the last eight years to prevent LTTE militants having free access to places of strategic importance. On the completion of the demolition of these barriers, public will be allowed free access along these roads. Furthermore, the Vavuniya-Kebitigollewa road that was closed for traffic, too, would be reopened soon, security sources said.

Malaysia has pledged to cooperate with the Sri Lankan Government in preventing LTTE remnants from carrying out operations from countries in the region. Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama was given this assurance when his Malaysian counterpart Anifah Aman called on him on the sidelines of the 15th Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Meeting in Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt.

President Mahinda Rajapakse has rejected the idea of ethnicity-based separate provinces in an interview to the latest edition of the American magazine Time. Asked if he believed in some kind of self-governance for the Tamils, Rajapakse said, "Don't say Tamils. In this country you can't give separate areas on an ethnic basis, you can't have this." But provinces could certainly have powers, to enable them to handle local matters, he stated. While rejecting the idea of changing the demography of Tamil-majority areas, the President pointed out that demographic changes were happening in the Sinhalese-majority Colombo. Ruling out any special devolution for the wholly Tamil-speaking Northern Province, Rajapakse said the North could not have a model of its own. He noted that there were differences among the Tamils as to what they should ask for, now that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has been defeated and its leader Velupillai Prabhakaran is dead.

Sri Lanka cancelled plans to purchase weapons and ammunition worth \$ 200 million from China and Pakistan after the war against the LTTE ended, the newly appointed Chief of Defense Staff (CDS), former Army Commander General Sarath Fonseka said. Addressing

the media after assuming duties as the new CDS, Fonseka said the Government cancelled the orders for weapons since the LTTE is completely defeated and its leader was dead.

July 16 President Mahinda Rajapakse has told the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that his Government remains committed to the resettling and rehabilitating the nearly 300000 war displaced in the north of the country in the shortest possible time. The issue of the war displaced, conditions in the relief centres and the need for reconciliation among all communities were discussed at the bilateral meeting between Rajapakse and Ban on the sidelines of the 15th Non-Aligned Movement Summit at Sharm-El-Sheikh in Egypt.

July 17 Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation reported that the Army has expanded de-mining activities in the north. Chief of Defence Staff, General Sarath Fonseka, said all Army teams with experience in de-mining have been deployed in this regard. With the coordination of the army engineers' corps, de-mining in the area to the north of Vavuniya is now being conducted. General Fonseka said a team of 500 personnel from the Indian army will arrive in Sri Lanka in the coming days to assist in the de-mining activities in the north.

Sri Lanka's Defence budget is to reach SLR 200 billion (USD 1.74 billion) in 2009. This is about 17 per cent of overall Government spending for the year. In 2008, the defence spending stood at SLR 166 billion (USD 1.4 billion). Earlier in 2009, the Defence Ministry had requested a raise to SLR 177 billion rupees (USD 1.54 billion) to pay for the war against the LTTE.

Sri Lanka has requested a USD 1.9 billion International Monetary Fund loan to bolster foreign exchange reserves and solve a balance-of-payments problem.

July 18 President Mahinda Rajapakse re-assured the country that his Government will resettle the Tamil civilians displaced due to the war with the LTTE in the North as soon as possible. He said that he will not let the IDPs to remain in the welfare centers for long.

The Government has said that child soldiers recruited by the LTTE would not be prosecuted and instead made to go to schools. The decision was announced by President Mahinda Rajapakse who said, "Our hearts are not vicious. We will not prosecute children who are 12, 13 and 14 years of age and were forced to take up arms. We need to integrate them into society after rehabilitation." The President also said his Government has released all people above 60-years from the temporary camps for the war-displaced while 40000 children are being given education, adds The Hindu. Nearly 15000 people above 60 had reported in the camps. Rajapakse said at least 80 per cent of the internally displaced persons would be resettled prior to the December-end deadline. He said his Government had given a new life to child soldiers by rehabilitating them in vocations of their choice at the rehabilitation camps.

- July 19 Sunday Times reported that personal files belonging to the slain LTTE chief Velupillai Prabhakaran – with details about arms deals and arms shipments, intended targets, suicide cadres and other key information – were unearthed last week. Equipment to monitor the movements of Air Force jets and UAVs, as well as weapons and weapon parts, were among the assorted items found. The items were found at the end of a six-day search operation conducted by a Police team led by Colombo Crime Division (CCD) Director, Superintendent of Police Vass Gunawardena. Anura Senanayaka, the Deputy Inspector General of Police in CCD, said files with more than 270 personal documents belonging to Prabhakaran were found in three large plastic containers. According to Gunawardena, the search party also found communication equipment used by the LTTE to monitor the movements of Sri Lanka Air Force jets and transmissions from UAVs. Satellite phones, laptops, fax machines, antennas, cables and other items were also recovered. In separate searches in the vicinity, Police found anti-aircraft missiles, parts of 120 mm, 130-mm and 152 mm artillery guns, chemicals and 33 LTTE suicide kits, as well as photographs of LTTE suicide cadres.
- July 20 The Sri Lankan Police arrested the mastermind of an attack by the LTTE on the Sri Lanka Air Force base in Anuradhapura on October 22, 2007. Senior Superintendent of Police Ranjith Gunasekara confirmed that the suspect, identified as Thabo Ruban, has been arrested from a welfare center in Vavuniya a few days ago. The suspect has revealed that the light aircraft of the LTTE reached the area based on the information given by him to attack the Air Force Base. Police believe Thabo Ruban, from Kilinochchi area, reached the welfare centers in Vavuniya after the Government declared victory over the LTTE on May 18.
- The ICRC in Sri Lanka closed down its offices in the Eastern province.
- The Government has decided to conduct elections in other local Government institutes in the North soon after the conclusion of Jaffna Municipal Council polls.
- Canada was one of the top sources of funding for the LTTE, providing up to \$12-million a year, said a secret intelligence report obtained by the National Post.
- The Sri Lanka Police arrested the chief of the LTTE "Eelam Bank", Colin Ruban, in capital Colombo. Colombo Page reported that Colin was arrested from a lodge on information revealed by intelligence units. According to sources, he was a resident of Puthukuddiyiruppu and had reached the welfare centers in Vavuniya during the last stages of the war. However, he later arrived in Colombo by paying SLR 250000 to a person who helped him to reach the capital.
- During search and clear operations in the Puthukuddiyiruppu area of Mullaitivu District, the Task Force-VIII troops uncovered a large stock of jewelry left hidden by the LTTE militants in Wannai, according to a Sri Lanka Army report. The latest recovery of gold jewelry to the

weight of 37.5 kilograms confirmed speculation that the LTTE had collected jewelry of civilians who could have been in dire need of money due to maladministration of the LTTE before they were expelled from their fortresses by the SFs. The jewelry had been placed in tin containers and buried under the soil. According to reports, the LTTE was in the practice of exploiting the wealth of civilians in those areas in various ways, by way of ransom, 'tax' and transactions through the "Eelam Banks".

July 21

Addressed as originating from the headquarters of the LTTE, an Executive Committee announced restructure of the organization and the leadership of Selvarasa Pathmanathan in taking up the future course of the movement, reports pro-LTTE Website Tamil Net. "We have set up a head office for our liberation movement and formulated various sector-based working groups and an executive committee," a press release on behalf of the Executive Committee said adding that the details will be shared in due course. The press release claimed the announcement is a collective decision arrived at after consultations "among our members, including our cadres who bravely fought their way out of the battlefield and our representatives abroad and in the Diaspora." "The Eelam Tamil people are in the midst of a critical and sorrowful period in the history of the struggle for freedom of our nation, Tamil Eelam. No one can deny the fact that we have experienced massive and irreparable losses, losses we would not accept even in our worst dreams," the LTTE's statement said, adds Express Buzz. It was the Tamils' 'historic duty' to rise up and fight for their 'legitimate' rights, it said. But like all liberation struggles, the LTTE had decided to 'modify' the form and strategies of the struggle according to the times and the exigencies of the situation. However, the 'Honorable Mr Velupillai Prabhakaran shall remain forever, the leader of Tamil Nation hood', the statement added further.

The statement said the LTTE had set up a headquarters, but did not disclose the location. It had also set up sector-based working groups and an executive committee to take the struggle forward 'vigorously'. The LTTE, it stated, was also looking for 'wise counsel' from the general Tamil public. In conclusion, the statement said, "If the Sinhala nation and those countries which support it consider that the Tamil peoples' freedom struggle has been defeated through the capture of the historical homeland areas of the Tamil people and the massacre of thousands of Tamil civilians, we shall consider that an illusion. Let us demonstrate to the world through our actions, that the fire of freedom awakened by our great leader V Pirabakaran continues to burn in the hearts of all Tamils, and only a free Tamil nation has the power to extinguish it."

Although the amnesty period announced by the Sri Lankan Government to hand over illegal weapons expired a few weeks ago, more armed factions handed over their weapons to authorities on July 21. An armed Muslim group in Eravur in the Batticaloa District is reported to have handed over their illegal weapons to the chief priest of the mosque at Michchinagar in the morning. The weapons were subsequently handed over to the Deputy Inspector General of Police in the area by the chief priest. Seven guns and several hand

grenades were among the weapons that had been surrendered, the Police said. An amnesty period to hand over the illegal weapons in the Eastern Province announced by the Sri Lankan Government ended on July 4. There are reportedly 18 armed groups in the Eastern Province with nearly 400 firearms in their possession.

The SFs have opened the Vavuniya-Horowpathana (A-29) road for civil traffic after a lapse of three years. Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said, "The A29 road was opened after three years which was closed due to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) threat." He noted that the LTTE had carried out a series of attacks on this important road, adding, "Therefore, people had to make a detour to Trincomalee after reaching Medawachchiya which was a long way for them."

The Sri Lanka Government announced that they have taken steps to resettle more IDPs, sheltered in the welfare villages in Wannai at the beginning of next month under the Government's 180-day resettlement program. Addressing a special meeting at Vavuniya District Secretariat, the senior advisor to the President, parliamentarian Basil Rajapakse said that all the arrangements are now in place to resettle the displaced persons. According to Rajapakse, the Government plans to resettle 3,000 persons in 35 cleared villages in Wannai region beginning August 7. The Government has completed the de-mining activities of these villages with the assistance of international de-mining groups and the United Nations.

President Mahinda Rajapakse said that he is prepared to face any court to defend Sri Lankan military commanders on charges of human rights violations during the recently concluded war with the LTTE, reports Hindustan Times. "The President emphatically stated that he was prepared to appear before any court on behalf of the military leaders," an official release said.

July 22

The Jaffna-Kandy (A-9) main highway was reopened for passenger transport in the morning of July 22 after a gap of three years. The nearly 200 mile- long A-9 Road was closed for passenger transportation in August 2006 after the army camp in Muhamalai in Jaffna came under attack from the LTTE. The road was open during the cease-fire period of 2003- 2006 but was under the control of the LTTE who imposed heavy taxes on the passengers. With the liberation of Kilinochchi and Elephant Pass, the Sri Lankan Army brought the entire highway under its control on January 9, 2009. The LTTE had mined the highway heavily to prevent the Sri Lankan Army offensive against them. The A-9 is the only land route which connects Sri Lanka's capital Colombo and the northernmost point of the country in the Jaffna peninsula. During the time it was closed the passengers had to travel between Colombo and Jaffna taking either the sea route or the air route. The Government opened the A-9 for military traffic in March and earlier this month for commercial traffic.

The Government has set a six-month timeline for rehabilitating Tamils displaced by the recently ended conflict with the LTTE. Asked when

the time limit for resettling the internally displaced persons began, the Minister for Foreign Affairs Rohitha Bogollagama said, "a month has gone" and wanted the global community to appreciate that the war had ended less than two months back.

- July 24 The Government is scheduled to start resettlement process in the Vavuniya District on August 7. According to Resettlement and Relief Services Minister Rishad Bathiudeen, the resettlement of people in 35 Grama Niladhari (village-level official) divisions in the Vavuniya District is expected to begin on August 7. The Minister said these villages are being cleared of mines and all infrastructure facilities are provided to these villages before the displaced people are resettled in their original houses. "The Government has decided to set up examinations centres for the students who are sitting for the G.C.E. (A/L) examination within the welfare camps", he added. The Minister refuted recent media reports that over 100 people die in the welfare centers a week. He said one or two persons die in camps per week due to natural causes.
- July 27 The mastermind behind the attack on the Anuradhapura Air Force Base in 2007 was arrested on an unspecified date by the officers of the Central Province Intelligence Unit (CPIU) on information given by the LTTE suspects in custody. Rasalingam Thaboruban, 26, of Kankasanthurai was among the displaced civilians in the Mannar District when the arrest was made by a special team of officials attached to the CPIU. Rasalingam in his confession to the Security Forces said a team of 25 LTTE cadres was assigned to launch an attack on the Anuradhapura Air Base and they had to gather information on how to access the Air Base for days.
- July 30 The newly appointed LTTE chief Kumaran Pathmanathan alias KP claimed that the outfit's decision to give up armed struggle and take recourse to "political and diplomatic moves" was taken by its former chief Velupillai Prabhakaran along with other commanders at Mullivaikkal in the Mullaitivu District days before his death during Eelam War IV. In a statement posted on his website, KP, supposedly operating out of South-East Asia and wanted by the Interpol, dealt at length on his earlier statement about the LTTE's decision to achieve the goal of Tamil Eelam.
- The Government said 9,797 former LTTE members were now detained at rehabilitation centers in island wide. Speaking to the media, the newly appointed Commissioner General of Rehabilitation, Major General Daya Ratnayake, said the number would increase up to 20,000 in the near future. He said that those former LTTE cadres need to be categorized and several of them should be produced in Courts as they had deeply been involved in terrorist activities. According to Major General Ratnayake, there are LTTE cadres in the rehabilitation centers who have surrendered to the Security Forces as well as who were arrested. He also said the former LTTE cadres will be directed to employment opportunities after they are rehabilitated completely. The Government is to review the rehabilitation process after a year.

- July 31 A top LTTE militant, who is believed to have fixed the bomb in a vehicle that exploded at Digampathana in October 16, 2006 killing more than 100 naval ratings, was arrested in Vavuniya on an unspecified date. Police said a special team from the Central Province had arrested the yet to be named militant when he was getting ready to escape from the area.
- The Sri Lanka Police announced that except the Security Forces and Police, no other party will be allowed to carry weapons in the Eastern Province. The Deputy Inspector General of Police in the East, Edison Gunathilaka, said several main Tamil political parties who bore weapons in the past are also not allowed to carry weapons any more. According to the new rule, the political parties Thamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal, Ealam People's Democratic Party, People's Liberation Organization of Tamil, Ealam People's Revolution Liberation Front are also not allowed to hold weapons. Following the conclusion of the earlier announced amnesty period the Police have reportedly commenced raids to arrest people who continue to possess weapons.
- The Government closed its SCOPP according to the instructions of the Presidential Secretariat. Prof. Rajiva Wijesinha, Secretary-General of the SCOPP, confirmed that the Government has taken this decision after conducting extensive discussions on the necessity of a peace secretariat following the military victory over the LTTE. The SCOPP had commenced its activities on February 6, 2002 when the United National Party Government led by the former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe had attempted to resolve the ethnic conflict in North through peace talks with the LTTE. The Secretariat was headed by Bernard Goonetilleke (2002-2004), Jayantha Dhanapala (2004-2005) and Dr. Palitha Kohona (2006 - 2007) previously.
- August 1 The Government established its sixth Police station in Wannai in the Kanagarayankulam area. The Inspector General of Police Jayantha Wickramarathna on August 1 opened the Police station and the new office of the Superintendent of Police. The Government opened Police stations in Madhu, Veditaletivu, Vakara, Silawatura, and Omathai in Wannai following the LTTE defeat in the region.
- August 1-2 Two persons were killed and a woman injured in a bomb blast at Baduraliya in the Kalutara District in the night of August 1, Police said on August 2. The explosion occurred in a jungle patch in the rural part of Baduraliya.
- August 2 A senior civil administration official was arrested for alleged links with the LTTE, Police said on August 2. Nagalingam Vethanayagam, the Government agent of Kilinochchi District, was arrested on July 31 following information from an arrested LTTE cadre. Vethanayagam held the post in the former LTTE political headquarters until January 2009 when Kilinochchi was recaptured by the Government troops. The Government agent is the senior most civil service administrative officer of a District in Sri Lanka.

Police arrested the wife and a daughter of a former LTTE leader who attempted to leave the country. Police confirmed that the two suspects from Kilinochchi had attempted to leave for Budapest in Hungary. During questioning at the Katunayake International airport in Colombo, both failed to provide their identification, Police said.

August 3

The LTTE could be attempting to revive the organisation amid efforts by the outfit to rescue hardcore cadres housed in Government-run refugees camps for Tamil civilians in the Vavuniya District, said Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse. In an interview with Sunday Island, he said an organised campaign had been launched to free terrorists from refugee camps before Army and Police investigators, now engaged in a systematic screening process, closed in on them. Gotabhaya stated that the Government would not allow the LTTE to reverse the military victory achieved at a huge cost to the nation. He pointed out that ordinary civilians would never make an attempt to flee refugee camps as the Government, with the support of some international agencies, had provided adequate facilities for them.

A TNA Member of Parliament (MP), Sivanathan Kishore, has said that the IDPs in the northern part of Sri Lanka are being smuggled out from their camps by organised groups. He stated that "smuggling of people from these camps is going on for some time." People in the camps have been paying huge money to get themselves out of the camps and some of them have even been escorted till the airport and have gone abroad, according to the MP.

The Vavuniya District Secretary P.S.M. Charles said that the Government's 180 day resettlement programme is in progress with another batch of 1,500 civilians from the Manik Farm relief village being re-settled in the Omanthai, Nochchimotai, Piramanalamkulam, Pirappumadu areas on August 5.

TMVP members who had weapons in their possession before they entered into mainstream politics handed over a stock of arms and ammunition to the Army troops at Kudumbimalai in the Thoppigala area of Batticaloa District. The stock handed over included one Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) weapon, four RPG bombs, one Light Machine Gun (LMG) weapon, one LMG drum, one T-81 weapon, four T-81 magazines, two T-56 MK II weapons, 10 T-56 magazines, one T-56 MK I weapon and 220 rounds of T-56 ammunition.

August 4

Police arrested a multi millionaire businessman engaged in fishing industry and another LTTE militant along with a vehicle used for transporting LTTE weapons and explosives to the South. Police confirmed the duo was arrested at Parayanakulam in Mannar and the truck, which was specially made with several secret compartments to transport weapons and explosives, was seized. According to disclosed details, the two suspects have transported LTTE weapons and explosives for nearly five years.

- August 5 The Government resettled another batch of IDPs who lived in welfare camps in Vavuniya. The Government Information Department said that 1,094 IDPs belonging to 439 families were transported to their own villages in Trincomalee, Jaffna, Batticaloa, Ampara and Kanthale. This is the first phase of the resettlement scheme of the displaced who were temporarily housed in welfare villages of Vavuniya. In addition, the Government took steps to resettle 3,112 persons of 1,051 families, who were originally residents of Jaffna and occupied various places in Vavuniya temporarily, back in their homes in the peninsula.
- August 6 The newly appointed LTTE chief, Kumaran Pathmanathan alias Shanmugam Kumaran Tharmalingam alias Selvarajah Pathmanathan alias KP, was arrested from Bangkok in Thailand. "He has been arrested in Bangkok. That is all we know at the moment," military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said. Kumaran Pathmanathan was brought to Colombo and is now being interrogated, The Island reported. Kumaran Pathmanathan, who had been the LTTE's international relations chief till he claimed the LTTE leadership after the Army killed Velupillai Prabhakaran in May 2009, previously functioned as the group's main arms procurer.
- The Parliament passed the State of Emergency for another month.
- August 7 The newly appointed LTTE chief Kumaran Pathmanathan alias KP, who was arrested from Bangkok in the night of August 6, was brought to Colombo the next morning, said Defence Affairs spokesman Minister Keheliya Rambukwella. Addressing the media in Colombo, the Minister disclosed that Kumaran Pathmanathan is in the custody of defence authorities and will be dealt with according to the law of the land following investigations. "KP who was posing as a national of several countries and carrying out multi-faceted activities was capable of convincing some of them even though the LTTE was defeated. This led some people to believe the LTTE might re-emerge again," he remarked. The Minister observed that the arrest sends a strong message that the Government has the support of the International Community in combating LTTE operations in foreign countries. Replying to a question whether Kumaran Pathmanathan will be extradited to India to face charges in connection with the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, Rambukwella said there has been no such request so far and if such a request is made, the Government will deal with it according to International norms, treaties and conventions.
- Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse said that the victory against the LTTE was now complete with the arrest of Kumaran Pathmanathan.
- August 8 The ruling UPFA party secured a comfortable victory in the elections for the Uva Provincial Council (PC) held on August 8, 2009 winning both the Badulla and Moneragala Districts. The UPFA received over 80% of votes in the Moneragala District and over 60% in Badulla which was a traditional stronghold for the main opposition United National Party (UNP). The UNP received the highest number of votes

in Badulla polling division securing 34.40 percent. Around 80% of postal votes were cast in favour of the ruling party.

Voters in Jaffna elected the ruling party to govern the Jaffna Municipal Council (MC). The UPFA secured 13 seats of the 23-member MC and the Tamil National Alliance-affiliated Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kadchchi (ITAK) secured eight seats. An independent group and Tamil United Liberation Front led by V. Anandasangaree won one seat each.

In Vavuniya, the ITAK won a majority of five seats in the 11-member Urban Council (UC) while the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam-affiliated Democratic People's Liberation Front secured three seats. The UPFA came in third with two seats while the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress won one seat.

In both the Northern elections, the main opposition UNP was defeated and failed to secure more than two percent of the votes. Colombo Page, August 9, 2009.

August 9 The LTTE asked the international community to intervene and investigate how their new leader Kumaran Pathmanathan alias Selvarasa Pathmanathan alias KP was detained in Malaysia and later flown to Sri Lanka for questioning, and ensure his safety and security. If the Government of Malaysia from where Kumaran Pathmanathan was reportedly arrested does not have any information on the matter, we demand an inquiry into the whole episode, a statement from the LTTE said. If he has been brought to Colombo as claimed by the Government of Sri Lanka, we call upon the international community to become involved in this matter in order to assure the safety and security of Kumaran Pathmanathan according to international standards and to facilitate access to legal representation, it added.

August 10 The Government is exploring the possibility of arranging for LTTE cadres, taking refuge in Colombo and suburbs, to surrender to the authorities, Defence sources said. A senior officer of the Defence Ministry said intelligence sources were well aware that key LTTE cadres and others who infiltrated Colombo and other areas on suicide missions targeting VIPs and top military personnel are now mingling with the public pretending to be ordinary citizens. "The security forces have launched an operation to apprehend them but the Government may provide them an opportunity to surrender to the security forces or the Police," he said.

The Government has said displaced people living in the relief camps in the country's north would be allowed to leave only when the LTTE cadres hiding in these centres are identified. The Attorney General, in a written submission to the Supreme Court, said on August 10 that officials are in the process of identifying the LTTE militants. His submission came in response to a complaint filed by the Centre for Policy Alternatives, a rights group, urging the release of displaced people from the relief camps run by the Government in the northern Districts of Jaffna and Vavuniya.

- August 11 Unidentified assailants shot dead a Muslim armed group leader, identified as Abdul Samath, in the Eravur area of Batticaloa District. According to Senior Superintendent of Police Ranjith Gunasekara, the victim, who was also the chairman of the fisheries association in the area, was shot dead at his residence at about 10:30pm (SLST). It was reported that he had handed over several illegal weapons to the Police few weeks ago during the special amnesty granted by the Sri Lanka Government.
- President Mahinda Rajapakse urged the international community to help the nation crackdown the international financing arm of the LTTE. He said the LTTE was still active in some countries, especially in South-East Asia and Europe. In an interview to an Indian television channel, Rajapakse said the arrest of Kumaran Pathmanathan alias KP last week was very important because he claimed to be the new LTTE chief after the death of Vellupilai Prabhakaran.
- August 12 A plot to carry out a suicide attack on President Mahinda Rajapakse in his hometown Madamulana with the involvement of a suspect arrested in connection with the killing of Southern Provincial Councillor, Danny Hiththetiyaage, came to light at the Mount Lavinia Magistrates court on August 12.
- The TNA has nominated S. N. G. Nathan for the post of Chairman of the Vavuniya Urban Council. General Secretary of the Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kadchchi (ITAK) and TNA parliamentarian Maavai Senathirajah said that he would inform the Elections Commissioner the decision in writing on August 13. The ITAK, a constituent of the TNA, got five seats in the recently held election to the Vavuniya Urban Council. Nathan obtained 1099 preferential votes at the election. Though he was nominated as the leading candidate of the TNA, he came third in the preferential votes list. Meanwhile, the party has also decided to appoint N. S. Muguntharathan who topped the list with 2551 votes as the deputy chairman. Other members representing the ITAK in the council are E. Sivakumar (1105), S. Surenthiran (858) and I. Kanagiah (791).
- Media Minister Lakshman Yapa Abeywardne revealed that LTTE chief Kumaran Pathmanathan alias KP was trying to build up connections with the US State Department. He told a news conference that KP had got involved with the group 'Tamils for Obama' in USA for this reason.
- August 13 The Government of Sri Lanka is planning to resettle 75,000 IDPs to their original areas of residence, according to a recent report released by the USAID. Sri Lankan Government authorities plan to return 75,000 IDPs in four phases during the month of August, including 15,000 IDPs to villages in the Vavuniya District, and 25,000 IDPs to locations in the Kilinochchi District, the USAID report on current situation released on August 10 said. The Government plans to provide the returnees with care packages consisting of shelter materials, cash grants equivalent to \$220 with additional subsidies for farmers, and a six-month food supply, including USAID/FFP commodities distributed by the UN World Food Program (WFP).

However, according to the USAID fact sheet, the Government has not provided a comprehensive framework to date, for the implementation of the proposed returns plan and enhanced coordination with humanitarian agencies.

According to the International Organization for Migration, the Office of the President National Data Center which continues to register IDPs in Manik Farms camp had registered 125,260 IDPs and issued 90,000 IDP identity cards by the end of July. The registration process represents ongoing Government efforts to record the number of IDPs in a national database in order to improve IDP services.

Detained LTTE chief Kumaran Pathmanathan alias KP has reportedly revealed the presence of a large cache of arms and ammunition hidden by the outfit in capital Colombo for carrying out attacks, Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake said.

Media Minister Lakshman Yapa Abeywardne said Sri Lanka had not violated any international laws by arresting Kumaran Pathmanathan and had proved that it had the capacity to neutralize the international network of the LTTE.

August 16

The Government is reportedly in the process of establishing the authenticity of various details that the detained LTTE chief Kumaran Pathmanathan alias KP has revealed to the Sri Lankan authorities about several local individuals and organisations that have reportedly supported the LTTE and their terrorist movement, Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said.

The Commissioner General of Rehabilitation, Major General Daya Ratnayake, has said measures have been taken to rehabilitate over 10,000 ex-LTTE cadres in the North by the Government. In an interview with Sunday Observer, he said, "The process to classify the ex-cadres into different groups considering their age, gender and involvement in the outfit has already been completed and the ground work to move them into new rehabilitation centres is nearing completion." Informing that over 80 percent of these ex-cadres are now temporarily sheltered in Government schools, he stated, "We want to hand over these government schools and five new centres are under construction at the moment. They will be moved to the new centres before the end of this month." The children between the ages of 12 to 18 years have already been separated from the group. There are over 455 children, the majority of whom the LTTE had forcefully recruited at its last stage of the battle. Former female LTTE cadres numbering 1,700 have also been separated and housed separately. The authorities have taken steps to separate male ex-LTTE cadres over 45 years of age and they will be given training according to their professions, skills, and their liking to undergo a vocational training.

August 17

The Government said that over 15,000 Internally Displaced Families (IDFs) from the Jaffna District will be resettled in their original homes soon. According to the Resettlement and Relief Services Minister Rishad Badiudeen, authorities have already identified over 15,000 IDFs who claim to be residents of Jaffna and their details have been

forwarded to authorities in the Jaffna District. The Minister stressed that they would be resettled in their original homes in Jaffna District after the Government officials gave an assurance that they are permanent residents of the Jaffna. These families are now living in welfare centres in the Vavuniya and Mannar Districts. The Minister added that the Presidential Task Force on Northern Development is committed to resettle as many displaced civilians as possible within the time frame of 180 days.

Chief of Defence Staff General Sarath Fonseka said that displaced persons in welfare centres cannot be haphazardly resettled in their former villages on outside pressures or compulsions because terrorist remnants hiding behind displaced civilians may take the opportunity to resort to terrorism once again. He said five to six LTTE cadres were falling into Security Forces custody every week from welfare camps and those pressuring the Government to expedite re-settlement process should understand this reality. He also said that de-mining had not been fully completed for the re-settlement process to begin.

August 19

The APRC Chairman Minister Tissa Vitharana said he handed over to President Mahinda Rajapakse on August 14 a document which was a summarised report of the recommendations of more than three years of deliberations of the APRC. "We expect a feed back from President Rajapakse before our next move. He will go through the summary before he gives instructions to the APRC on the next step," Vitharana told Daily Mirror. The APRC, during the last three years or so, had come to a consensus on a number of key proposals expected to be incorporated in a new Constitution which is aimed at resolving the ethnic problem. They included a new Constitution, reverting to the Westminster System pruning of Executive Presidential powers, a Constitutional Court, a second chamber of Parliament, a national Land and Water Commission and reviving the Village Committee system. The APRC was appointed by President Rajapakse on July 20, 2006 and has held 178 sessions so far. However, only 13 political parties took part in the APRC deliberations. The main opposition United National Party, Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, Tamil National Alliance and Jathika Hela Urumaya abstained from taking part in the deliberations.

The United States announced that it is contributing an additional USD six million for de-mining activities in northern Sri Lanka to help expedite the resettlement of the Internally Displaced persons in their original homes.

August 20

Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse has reportedly called on foreign countries to hand over to Sri Lanka the LTTE cadres and their assets worth millions of dollars. "He (KP) is a seasoned man, so he's coming out with information very slowly during interrogation. He was the person who ran a massive network to purchase arms and ammunition for the LTTE for nearly 30 years," Rajapakse told BBC. The estimates about the LTTE's assets and investments range from USD 300 million (£182m) to USD 1 billion. "Once it is proved that these assets belong to the LTTE, then concerned countries should

hand over the assets as well as the remaining LTTE members to Sri Lanka," added Rajapakse.

The Re-settlement and Disaster Relief Services Minister Rishad Bathiudeen told Parliament on August 20 that the Government has re-settled 59,608 displaced families in Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Mannar, Ampara and Jaffna Divisional Secretariat (DS) divisions during the past few months. According to figures, 35766 families have been re-settled in Batticaloa DS division while 22068 families have been re-settled in Trincomalee DS division. The Government has re-settled 669 families in Mannar, 51 families in Ampara and 1,054 families in Jaffna DS divisions. The Minister also said the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in 2009 is 288938.

August 21

A Sri Lankan minister has said that the LTTE had funded the production of Tamil films as part of its international business ventures. The Resettlement and Disaster Relief Services Minister, Abdul Risath Bathiyutheen, reportedly said films thus tainted by 'LTTE blood money' included those of Rajnikanth, a popular Tamil actor in Tamil Nadu in southern India. Bathiyutheen made this charge in an interview to www.asiantribune.com, which quoted him as saying, "Millions and millions of US dollars were given to a London-based Tamilian. He was asked to produce Tamil films in Chennai [capital of Tamil Nadu] with top stars like Rajnikanth." The interview also reportedly had a mention of pro-LTTE Tamil Nadu politicians like S Ramadoss, V. Gopalsamy a.k.a. Vaiko, Thol Thirumavalavan and P Nedumaran as the other alleged beneficiaries. When contacted, Rajnikanth's office, however, said the actor refused to comment on the issue. An unnamed police official said such charges had been heard of in terms of logistical support or hospitality extended to film units abroad, but he had not come across a single case to prove it. "Rajnikanth is busy shooting for his film Endiran (Robot) and cannot be reached till late tonight," sources at the actor's residence in Chennai told Hindustan Times. Vaiko denied the allegation saying, "This is sheer nonsense and political mischief."

The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Sarath Fonseka said that the secret behind the success of the Sri Lankan military in its war against the LTTE was its transformation from a conventional to a guerrilla force. "From our side, we changed our tactics and started acting like guerrillas, making incursions into their territories in small groups and carrying out daring attacks when the LTTE challenged us in the jungles," said General Fonseka. He added that the decision to wage a war was political and the Army together with the other forces fought the war according to the political will.

August 23

The arrested LTTE chief Kumaran Pathmanathan alias KP has told investigators that the outfit had tried to acquire nuclear weapons and know-how to be used against the Sri Lankan army. A media report stated that Pathmanathan, who was arrested in a South East Asian country on August 6, has told interrogators that the LTTE had tried to acquire nuclear weapons and technology from western countries. "KP has revealed that the arms purchased with the money collected were

shipped to the LTTE. How he purchased anti-aircraft missiles from arms dealers in the USA has been disclosed", The Nation stated.

- August 24 The NIB uncovered a plan to assassinate Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse with the recovery of a suicide kit, arms and ammunition from a house in Mutwal, a suburb in the capital Colombo. According to the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Nimal Mediwaka, the NIB officials found a cache of arms and ammunition, including a suicide kit weighing over five kilograms, a machine gun and 13 Cyanide capsules, concealed in a cupboard in a housing unit at Mutwal under the directive of a LTTE leader in Colombo. The unnamed LTTE leader had reportedly planned to launch a well coordinated attack on the Defence Secretary. "It is believed that they had planned to hurl hand grenades at Rajapakse's motorcade as a part of the massive assassination bid. The terrorists had planned to launch this attack using a explosive laden motor bike. Officials are combing the island to trace the explosive laden bike and the suicide cadre who were directed to crash into the motorcade of the Defence Secretary," Mediwaka said. The Defence Secretary had earlier in 2006 survived a LTTE suicide attempt in Colombo escaping with minor injuries although eight of his security guards were killed.
- August 25 Police personnel serving at Thirimunai in the Kalmunai area of Ampara District encountered an isolated group of LTTE militants and killed two of them. During subsequent search in the lagoon area where the incident occurred, Police found the dead bodies of the slain militants along with one T - 56 weapon, one magazine and 25 rounds of ammunition.
- President Mahinda Rajapakse said that the displaced people in the North will be resettled in their original homes soon after the mines were cleared in the respective areas to integrate them into the national development process.
- The Federal Appeals Court in San Francisco in US has ruled against an appeal to de-list the LTTE by the Humanitarian Law Project, which had challenged an executive order issued by the then US President George W. Bush in 2001, Sri Lanka Presidential Secretariat website reported on August 25. Under the order, the LTTE remains listed as a terrorist organisation by the US.
- August 26 A LTTE militant disguised as trooper committed suicide in Police custody on an unspecified date. Trooper Siddiqui with the voluntary armoured corp was cooking for the CDS General Sarath Fonseka since 2002 in Jaffna and was his main chef at his official residence in Colombo where he moved in 2004. According to the report he was a LTTE cadre given the job of ensuring access for LTTE suicide cadres to enter the Army headquarters and target Fonseka.
- August 27 The Sri Lankan Supreme Court said that war-displaced persons in Government-run camps should be allowed to go if they are non-combatants and have a place to go.

Sri Lanka Muslim Congress chief Rauf Hakeem, at a news conference in Colombo, charged that 70 Muslim families re-settled in Verugal in the East had been chased away while 450 Muslim persons in Musali in the North had not been allowed to get on with their livelihood. "The Government is carrying out showpieces just to show the world that it is re-settling the displaced people but the essential thing should be a proper programme of re-settlement," he said.

The Government announced that it is making arrangements to re-settle at least another 50,000 IDPs now housed in relief camps at Vavuniya, in the next two weeks.

August 28 The Minister of Disaster Management and Human Rights, Mahinda Samarasinghe, revealed that the Government has reliable information that the LTTE cadres have infiltrated the welfare camps in the North for the IDPs.

The Supreme Court in Sri Lanka has ordered authorities to file charges or release the LTTE suspects in custody.

August 31 The JVP has reportedly opposed giving land, Police and finance powers to Provincial Councils.

Intelligence sources have reportedly told the Defence Ministry that LTTE militants, including women cadres, masquerading as civilians are making an attempt to control civilians held at welfare camps in the Vavuniya region, especially the Manik camp, and have suggested that the internally displaced persons of the camp should be re-located to smaller camps.

A survey conducted by the Government Agent (GA) of Vavuniya District has revealed that at least 10,000 refugees have escaped from the camps located there.

Reports indicated that it was the LTTE that attempted to assassinate Bashir Wali Mohmand when he was Pakistan's High Commissioner in Sri Lanka three years ago. Interrogation of an arrested LTTE militant in recent weeks revealed that the outfit had set off the blast at Kolpitty junction in capital Colombo on August 14, 2006, and that Mohmand was not a deliberately chosen target, Police said. The LTTE's plan had been to attack any VVIP convoy taking that route at that time. The LTTE cadre came to know that the VVIP he had struck was the Pakistani envoy only after the blast, which killed seven Sri Lankan Security Force personnel. On return to Pakistan after completing his term, Mohmand, however, charged that India's external intelligence agency, RAW, was behind the attempt on his life in Colombo. In Sri Lanka, however, Defence spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella had said that the Pakistani envoy was attacked because the LTTE was angry that Pakistan was arming the Sri Lankan Security Forces, when most other major powers, including India, had refused to sell arms to the island nation.

September 1 At least one child was killed and two more were wounded during an explosion in the Achchaweli area of Jaffna District. Jaffna Police said

the three children found the explosive device while they were playing in the area.

The JVP said there would be no free and fair election without the implementation of the 17th Amendment to the 1978 Constitution. Speaking at a function in Matara on September 1, JVP leader Somawansa Amarasinghe said the Government should take action to implement the 17th amendment right now. He pointed out that the country needs an independent Elections Commission and an independent Police Commission urgently as the presidential election will follow the upcoming Southern Provincial Council elections. The 17th Amendment requires establishment of independent commissions to administer the Police, Judiciary, Public Service and Elections.

President Mahinda Rajapakse said he wants to achieve reconciliation with Tamil communities in the north and east since the civil war is over and the LTTE was defeated. "I don't want to just be the liberator, I want to be the leader who brings permanent peace and development to this country and reconciliation with Tamil communities in the North and the East," Rajapakse said in an interview with Forbes. "The war is over. Now we have no excuses. We have to start working and develop this country," he added.

- September 3 A racket carried out in the IDPs camps in Vavuniya to help the LTTE militants still hiding there to escape using false NICs had come to light recently, Police sources said. These false NICs had been produced by some persons within the IDP camps with the help of several outsiders as well and had been sold at very high prices to yet to be detected LTTE militants in the IDPs camps. The Police source said that the racket came to light after the arrest of a suspect, identified as 46-year-old Subramaniam Rachchandran, who had tried to escape following treatment at the Vavuniya hospital.
- September 5 The SLA said that the report published by The Island on September 4 has no whatever proof or any other evidence to affirm any involvement of Japanese experts for clandestine LTTE operations, said to have occurred during and after the Tsunami disaster in 2004. The Army categorically denied having any knowledge on such Japanese involvement in the said report titled "Japanese experts helped LTTE launch submersibles". Neither the 58 Division has had found any evidence to ascertain launch of such submersibles with Japanese help, the SLA said.
- September 7 The TNA stressing the importance of jointly working for the wellbeing of the country and its people emphasised that they are ready to cooperate with the Government to restore peace and prosperity in the country. The TNA made this assurance following a meeting with President Mahinda Rajapakse held at Temple Tress. A media communique issued by the President's Media Unit stated that the Government has given its priority to re-settle the people displaced due to terrorism and expedite de-mining activities. President Rajapakse said, "The re-settlement activities will be completed very soon under the program implemented by the Government. This would

provide an opportunity for the TNA and other political parties to engage in their political activities freely and democratically. The Government will not allow any room for the LTTE or any other terrorist organization to hold the people to ransom and take them in to a trap again."

September 8 A former employee of a Sri Lankan NGO has reportedly brought to the notice of the Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse the alleged involvement of the group in smuggling LTTE operatives to Colombo over a period of time. According to him, the LTTE suspects held at welfare centres in the Vavuniya District, too, have reached Colombo with the help of the NGO.

September 10 The Ministry of Defence said that 30,000 people are expected to be resettled in newly cleared areas under the Uthuru Wasanthaya' (Northern Spring) 180-day development programme.

The Parliament passed the State of Emergency for another month with a majority of 87 votes. The bill received 100 votes for it and 13 against it. For the first time, Sri Lanka's Marxist party, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, which supported the bill since August 2005, abstained from voting and walked out of the Parliament.

September 11 A Colombo Court released two LTTE leaders, former media spokesman Velayudan Dayanidhi alias Daya Master and interpreter Velayudan Kumaru Pancharatnam alias George Master, following several months of remand custody.

The Government re-settled another group of IDPs in their own villages in the country's North and East. According to current statistics, the Government has resettled nearly 29,280 IDPs after the conclusion of war between Government forces and the LTTE.

September 12 Police raided an establishment in the Sea Street area of Colombo, said to be involved in sending escapees from the Vavuniya Welfare Centres abroad, and arrested six persons along with a number of forged passports, visas and other documents.

September 13 Pakistani Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani is reported to have said that the Sri Lankan President, Mahinda Rajapakse, had told him in Libya recently, that elements in Sri Lanka were linked with terrorist events in Pakistan, including the terrorist attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore on March 3, 2009.

The Sri Lankan Government is planning to re-settle as many of the remaining nearly 250000 war displaced as possible in the area west of the Jaffna-Kandy (A9) road before tackling resettlement in the Wanni east.

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