

## NEWS

## Violence continues...

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abducted, allegedly by paramilitary Karuna Group cadres, on 16 July. A note claiming that the two men were "traitors" who were being "punished" by the "sons of soil" was found beside the dead bodies. At an inquest into the deaths, the magistrate ruled that both deaths were murders.

Unidentified men shot dead a Tamil civilian, Mr. Gunarasa Thevan, 34, at Puthukudiruppu in Allessgarden, Trincomalee. Initial reports said two persons on a motorbike had called the deceased outside his house and had talked to him. Thereafter they shot him in the head and fled from the scene.

LTTE cadres thwarted an attempt by a Deep Penetration Unit (DPU) of the SLA to enter into the LTTE held area through its FDL in Eachchilampathu division, Trincomalee district. The soldiers fled from the area leaving a live claymore mine and other weapons at. They also took back injured soldiers. The number of casualties was unknown. One LTTE cadre Lieutenant Kuilan (Thevananthan Vino of Anpuvallipuram), was killed in the encounter.

## 18 July

A saloon owner standing outside his business was killed in blast shock and 4 SLA soldiers were injured when their tractor was hit by a road side claymore at Kodikamam, Jaffna. Two SLA soldiers and a 70-years old civilian inside the saloon were seriously wounded. A saloon worker was also wounded. The blast occurred on the road to Pt. Pedro, about 400 metres from the Kodikamam junction. The saloon owner who died on the spot was identified as Sinnathamby Nagarasa, 55, from Kudamiyan, Varani.

Batticaloa Police recovered the bodies of two youths with gun shot wounds from shrub jungles in Swiss village in Sathurukondan, Batticaloa. Murugupillai Mahadevan, 26, and Chinniah Somasunderam, 31, were abducted from their relatives house Monday night by unknown gunmen. The gunmen allegedly shot dead the men using a T-56 type rifle, dumped their bodies and escaped.

Eight civilians, all Tamil women, were injured in an explosion that took place in Anpuva-llipuram, Trincomalee. The women were engaged in a shramadana - voluntary work- campaign, cleaning the side walks along the road, when the explosion occurred. Police claimed a bomb hidden in the refuse had accidentally detonated during the cleanup activity.

## 17 July

A SLA soldier riding a bicycle was killed and two SLA troopers seriously injured, when a claymore attached to a parked bicycle exploded in Jaffna town. The soldiers were on their way to supply meals to SLA checkpoints when they came under attack. Four civilians were also injured, one seri-

ously, by the explosion and when the soldiers fired indiscriminately after the attack. The injured civilians were identified as Joseph Sasiraj, 23, S. Sangilithevar, 53, Sivam Indrakumar, 50, and Kumaran, 27, all from Jaffna.

Five SLN troopers were seriously injured when a route clearing patrol of the SLN hit a claymore placed along the road in Sampaltivu village, Trincomalee. One of the five later succumbed to injuries after being admitted in the Colombo general hospital. Security forces immediately launched a cordon and search operation in the village following the claymore explosion. Several civilians were detained and questioned during the search operation.

A civilian was injured when shells fired by SLA soldiers from Punani camp hit Vakaneri, Batticaloa. More than 50 shells hit the village, Mr. P. Daya Mohan, Batticaloa district LTTE political head, told TamilNet. The shelling continued for 30 minutes from 10 a.m., he said. The wounded civilian was identified as Kanapathipillai Krishnapillai.

At least 12 residential homes were set ablaze in Iyankerni Saspuram, Batticaloa, before nightfall on Monday, during factional fighting amongst the villagers. The hacking to death of a local mason, Savuntharan Chandrakumar, 23, outside the village grocery shop by unidentified persons Friday night, is suspected to be the likely cause of the violence. Although several homes have been destroyed only one resident registered complaint to the police.

## 16 July

Two gunmen riding a motorbike opened fire at auto-rickshaw vehicles, killing two drivers, both brothers, on the spot in Point Pedro, Jaffna. The attack, marking a renewed terror campaign against auto-rickshaw drivers and owners in Jaffna district, took place opposite the main entrance of the SLA 52-4 Brigade quarters in Vadamaradchi. Vaseekaran Navartnam, 25, and Paheerathan Navartnam, 20, were waiting for passengers at the auto-rickshaw park at the old Point-Pedro Central Bus Stand.

Three men were hacked to death by a gang armed with knives and machetes Ariyalai, Jaffna, around 3 p.m., Sunday. The dead men were identified as Joseph Judeson, 21, and Pakyaraj Arulraj, 23, of Collumbuththurai and Anton Densil, 22, of Koyathoddam. The body of Joseph was found at Arulampalam Road and the other two were found nearby.

Sivalingam Varatharajah, 17, a GCE(O/L) student at Jaffna Central College, has been reported missing after attend private tuition class Sunday morning. His mother registered a complaint with the Human Rights Commission office.

An unidentified youth, estimated to be 20 years old, was shot dead by gunmen in Alaiyadiwempu, Akkaraipattu, Batticaloa.

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## Tigers warn after bloody clash



Villagers watch as bodies of SLA soldiers are collected for handover to ICRC. Photo still from NTT video

HOSTILE forays by Sri Lanka Army (SLA) into Liberation Tigers controlled territory in Batticaloa district are serious acts of military aggression and have the potential to trigger a major destructive war, the LTTE warned international truce monitors, after a bloody clash that left 16 dead.

The LTTE warning came after at least 12 Sri Lankan troopers were killed when the Tigers confronted a SLA unit comprising at least 100 soldiers that had moved 5 km inside their controlled areas in the Batticaloa district.

Four LTTE cadres were killed and six wounded in the fighting in Vakaneri.

The Tigers recovered the bodies of twelve SLA soldiers, the LTTE's Batticaloa Political Head, Mr. P. Daya Mohan, told TamilNet. One Lance Corporal, identified as R. M. Karunaratne, 24, from Monaragala, was captured alive.

"SLA soldiers have been firing mortar and artillery rounds indiscriminately from Thursday night into residential areas of Vadamunai and Vakeneri inside the areas of LTTE control," Mr. Daya Mohan wrote to the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) on Saturday 15 July.

"A group of SLA soldiers Thursday night clandestinely entered into villages past Vakaneri further towards Kulathumadu into LTTE controlled areas and mounted attacks. Residents have fled these villages due to fears of further violence."

"We regard the hostile action by the SLA not only as a serious violation of the Cease Fire Agreement, but more critically as an act of provocation to trigger a major war. This incident exposes Sri Lanka's President's reliance on advancing his military agenda while initiating a duplicitous All

Party Talks on power sharing to placate the International community. "We urge the SLMM to take immediate and urgent efforts to prevent the SLA from entering Tamil homelands in future and to work towards bringing normalcy to peoples lives in affected areas."

The bodies of the dead SLA soldiers were handed over to the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) on Saturday, 15 July, at Black Bridge, Chenkalady.

SLMM officials met with captured Lance Corporal Karunaratne last Wednesday at the LTTE's Thenaham building in Karadiyanaaru. The Head of SLMM for Batticaloa district, Sari Rask, and his deputy attended the meeting. Mr. Mohan represented the LTTE.

Mr Karunaratne told the SLMM members that an SLA group entered the LTTE-held area under the orders of SLA commanders, and that LTTE fighters attacked them first when their group advanced towards Vakaneri.

SLA reports from Colombo initially claimed that a group of soldiers on a search and clear operation had gone missing in Vakaneri.

Mr. Daya Mohan said Sri Lankan troops based at a camp in the Valaichenai Paper Factory north of Batticaloa had moved into the LTTE territory at Kulathumadu in Vakaneri on the night of 13 July.

The Tigers confronted them around 6:00 a.m. the next day. The fighting lasted one hour before the troops withdrew, leaving the bodies of their comrades, he said.

SLA camps located in Miyanukulam, Karadikkulam and Valaichenai Paper Factory provided support mortar and artillery fire when the SLA troopers were withdrawing, Mr. Daya Mohan said.

Regular soldiers of the SLA's 23-2 Brigade conducted the raid,

he told TamilNet. Initial reports of the raid being carried by Deep Penetration Units (DPUs) were incorrect, he said.

A statement issued by the Sri Lanka Army in its website said that troops who were on a search and clear operation in "Vakaneri area, Welikanda came under LTTE mortar and small arms fire."

Leaders of LTTE in Batticaloa district handed over the bodies of the 12 soldiers the Saturday following the attack, and they were taken to Valaichchenai government hospital by the ICRC team.

An SLA officer identified the bodies at the hospital, before a SLA team transferred the bodies to Pollonaruwa general hospital with the facilitation of the ICRC for post-mortem examination.

Civilians were displaced to Pendukalsenai by the fighting.

There have been several raids against the LTTE in the area in the past few months, many involving Army-backed paramilitaries. SLA artillery and mortars have often covered the retreat of these DPUs, Mr. Daya Mohan said.

However the incursion at Vakaneri, involving a large number of regular Sri Lankan troops with artillery support, marks a degree of escalation in the long-running 'low intensity, war' between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan military, reports said.

The Batticaloa LTTE office released the following names of the LTTE fighters killed in the attack as being Captain Navalogan (Nagarajah Kugan) from Murippu, Mulliyavalai, 2nd Lt. Veera (Masilamani Maheswaran) from Kulathumadu, Vahaneri, Batticaloa, Captain Puvathanan (Ganesh Pirabhakaran) from Thihiliveddai, Santhiveli, Batticaloa, and 2nd Lt. Ilaveeran (Kandiah Kones) from College Road, Santhiveli, Batticaloa.