

NEWS

Remembering Vanni...

Continued from p9

civilians within 7 hours

SLA fired artillery shells fitted with cluster munitions and fire-bombs into civilian 'safety zone' killing at least 129 civilians between 2:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday. Around 200 civilians were wounded. 300 tarpaulin huts burned down to ashes in MBRL fired rockets. The medical store at Valaignarnadam has sustained damage and the son of a doctor was reported killed there, according to initial reports. A local NGO official, who was coordinating the rescue of the wounded described the carnage as "Colombo's show of open mockery at international concern. ... The attack was criminally deliberate as it was timed for the aftermath of a mini cyclone and floods, at the stranded civilians," the NGO official said.

Wednesday, 11 March 2009: SLA shelling kills 133 civilians including 49 children

More than 49 of 133 civilians killed inside 'safe zone' in SLA shelling on Tuesday were children and 16 of them were children below 3 years of age. The SLA deployed internationally banned cluster munitions and fire-bombs against civilians who were stranded without shelter inside the 'safe zone' which has become a killing field. 273 civilians, including a GS (village officer) and an ICRC worker, were wounded on Tuesday. 47 of the civilians succumbed to their injuries on the way to hospital or after their admittance.

Thursday, 12 March 2009: SLA shelling kills 82 civilians inside 'safe zone'

Mullaiththeevu Medical Superintendent V. Shanmugarajah narrowly escaped Wednesday from Sri Lanka Army fired MBRL shells that hit Mullivaaykkaal inside the 'safe zone', and a 7-year-old child was killed in long distance gunfire near the inland waters in Maaththalan. Totally, 82 civilians were killed and more than 130 wounded. Civilians who were waiting in queue to receive humanitarian supplies were hit by the MBRL and artillery fire. More than 500 patients were struggling without shelters and medical treatment amidst heavy rains.

Friday, 13 March 2009: SLA shelling targets humanitarian supplies in 'safe zone'

A pregnant mother delivered dead twins Thursday and her husband was wounded when Sri Lanka Army fired bullets reached their hut in Maaththalan, across the lagoon. Meanwhile, SLA-fired shells hit the ground 300 meters away from the spot where the humanitarian supplies were being unloaded. Five civilians were killed and 20 sustained injuries in the attack that occurred

around 8:20 a.m. Later in the evening, another shell attack targeted the ground where the supplies were being stored. 62 civilians were killed and more than 129 wounded throughout the day and the night inside the safe zone.

Tuesday, 17 March 2009: 'Safe zone' under encircling fire, 137 killed in 3 days, ICRC worker wounded

137 people have died and more than 200 injured since Saturday night in Sri Lanka Army shelling and gunfire inside the 'safe zone' of Vanni. At least 18 of them have died hit by long-range gunfire coming from SLA attacking the civilian zone. Meanwhile, massive bunker buster bombs numbering around 50 dropped by the SLAF on the fringes of the 'safe zone' on Tuesday caused untold panic among the civilians. 58 civilians were killed on Sunday in SLA shelling. 12 civilians succumbed to injuries caused by long-range gunfire. On Monday, 29 were killed in shelling and 6 in the gunfire by the SLA, which reaches the safe-zone from all the directions. 73 civilians were wounded on Monday. 32 civilians were killed Tuesday morning in shelling. The casualty details of SLAF bombardment is yet to emerge.

Tuesday, 17 March 2009: 84 killed, 182 wounded in SLAF attacks, shelling

SLAF bombardment and Sri Lanka Army shelling that targeted Pachchaipulmoaddai, Valaignarnadam areas within the so-called safety zone announced by the Sri Lankan government on Tuesday killed 52, causing injuries to 182, according to initial reports by the Voice of Tigers (VoT) evening broadcast. Earlier, in the morning, 32 civilians were killed in the shelling in other areas of the 'safe zone', according to independent sources. Bombs were dropped more than 12 times by the SLAF. Heavy bombs, each with the weight of 1,000 kg was dropped in the areas under 'safe zone' and in the bordering areas of it.

Saturday, 21 March 2009: SLA shelling kills 102 civilians in 3 days inside 'safety zone'

SLA artillery shelling killed 46 civilians Friday inside the safety zone in the besieged pocket in Mullaiththeevu. SLA-fired shells hit 6 tarpaulin shelters of the IDPs in Maaththalan Friday, killing 16 civilians. Meanwhile 4 civilians were killed around 11:00 a.m., 300 meters near the coastal spot, where the ICRC was transporting wounded civilians. On Thursday, 39 civilians including 11 children were killed and at least 17 civilians were reported killed inside the safety zone on Wednesday.

Sunday, 22 March 2009: 42 civilians killed, 80 wounded in



Vanni

SLA fired artillery shells into the 'safe zone', also on Saturday, killing 42 civilians and causing injuries to around 80 civilians, including a GS (Village officer), initial reports from Vanni said Saturday. Meanwhile, the SLA and SLAF were using heavy explosives in their clashes with the LTTE defensive units in Puthukkudiyiruppu (PTK) area. At least 7 civilians who ventured into Iranaippalai to collect coconuts were reported killed in SLAF air strike.

Monday, 23 March 2009: SLA attacks kill 128 civilians in 48 hours

Sri Lanka Army short-range mortar shelling, RPG attacks and gunfire killed 96 civilians, including 19 children within the 'safety zone' Monday. 32 civilians, including 7 children were killed Sunday, according to local aid workers and medical authorities. Around 160 civilians sustained injuries on Monday when Sri Lanka Army stepped up mortar fire, RPG attacks and opened fire from the other side of the lagoon into Puthumaaththalan within the 'safety zone'. Increased and systematic attacks on civilians during the day time was targeting to evict civilians from the so-called safety zone.

Tuesday, 24 March 2009: 62 civilians killed, SLA, SLAF step up attacks on safety zone

SLA stepped up shelling on all areas within the so-called safety zone from 12:30 a.m. Tuesday, killing 62 civilians and causing injuries to many. Artillery and mortar shells hit the safety zone killing 27 civilians during the night. Artillery-fitted cluster munitions exploded between Valaignarnadam and Ampalavanpokkanai causing heavy casualties. The SLA deployed RPG shells, short range mortars and long distance gunfire on the safety zone during the daytime on Tuesday in addition to 12 air strikes in the settlements surrounding the Pachchaip-pulmoaddai junction within the safety zone. More than 70 bombs were dropped by the SLAF bombers that flew at low altitude killing at least 17 civilians.

Wednesday, 25 March 2009:

Carnage continues, 131 civilians including 32 children killed

131 civilians, including 32 children were killed in various types of attacks carried out by the SLA and the SLAF inside the safety zone throughout the day on Thursday, according to data collected from various local NGO workers and medical authorities within the civilian pocket besieged by the SLA. 49 of 252 wounded were children. SLA fired RPG shells, deployed long-range gunfire and mortar shells targeting the 4 km stretch from Puthumaaththalan to Valaignarnadam. 7 members of a family, including 4 children below the age of 10, were killed in RPG attack by the SLA in Maaththalan. 31 travellers were killed in gunfire and mortar attacks on Wednesday. Meanwhile SLAF bombardment claimed the lives of 27 civilians.

Thursday, 26 March 2009: SLA attacks hospital, 5 patients killed, 11 wounded

SLA attacked the makeshift hospital at Puthumaaththalan with RPG in the early hours of Thursday between 4:00 and 4:30 a.m., killing five patients who were being treated at the Intensive Care Unit and causing injuries to 11 including two medical staff. Six patients who were already being treated for their injuries from shell attacks and 3 relatives of the patients were wounded in the RPG attack. The attack also destroyed part of the medicines recently brought to the hospital.

Saturday, 28 March 2009: 179 civilians including 76 children killed within 3 days inside 'safety zone'

SLA attacks have claimed the lives of 179 civilians within the three days of Thursday, Friday and Saturday, according to the casualty figures collected by TamilNet correspondent in Vanni. At least 76 of the slain victims were children below the age of 15. At least 16 pregnant mothers were among the slain. More than 109 children below the age of 15 have sustained injuries. Around 45% of the thousands of shells fired by the SLA have hit the safety zone. Meanwhile, a foreign staff of the ICRC, who came in the ship on Saturday to transport the wounded civilian had a nar-

row escape when the ship was hit by long distance gunfire by the SLA damaging a window of the ship. On Friday, a local ICRC worker, P. Satheeskumar, was reportedly injured in SLA shelling.

Monday, 30 March 2009: SLA attacks kill 53 civilians inside 'safety zone'

SLA continued artillery, mortar and long-distance gunfire throughout Sunday killing at least 53 civilians and causing injuries to around 119. At least 17 civilians were killed in Maaththalan, 18 in Pokkanai, 15 in Valaignarnadam and 3 in Pachchaip-pulmoaddai. Meanwhile, around 1,192 civilians including 275 children, belonging to 298 families have lost their shelters within last 5 days as their tarpaulin huts were completely destroyed in SLA attacks.

Tuesday, 31 March 2009: SLA attacks kill 88 Tamils, including 21 children

SLA shelling on Monday claimed the lives of 70 civilians as Fifty Calibre gunfire from the SLA positions across the lagoon also killed 18 civilians on the road, which links the makeshift hospital with IDP settlements. 21 of the slain victims and 31 of 156 wounded civilians were children. 63 tarpaulin huts were destroyed in SLA attacks. TamilNet correspondent witnessed that four children were orphaned as they lost both their parents and siblings. The civilians were struggling to take their wounded to the hospital as the entire stretch of the road has come under 50 Caliber machine gun fire. Four civilians, including a worker of the fishing union that arranges boats to transport the patients from the coastal point Thidal to the ICRC ship, were wounded in SLA gunfire. **SLA fires cluster shells, 45 civilians killed, 120 wounded**

SLA shelling killed 43 civilians throughout the day on Tuesday. 13 civilians, including 9 members of 2 families, were slain in Ampalavanpokkanai and Valaignarnadam area in the morning. 3 of the killed were children. Four civilians were killed hit by gunfire. 120 civilians were wounded throughout the day, according to medical and aid workers in the safety zone.