

Island, 1 January 2009

### **Overwhelmed by multi-pronged army offensive; Tigers face heavy defeat on Vanni front**

The army on the Vanni front was about to liberate Paranthan and isolate LTTE units fighting south and west of Kilinochchi, senior military officials said. They said that Task Force I (TF I) would cut off the A9 road north of Paranthan and push along the Paranthan-Mullaitivu road. This would increase pressure on LTTE units deployed on the neck of Jaffna peninsula to face 53 and 55 Divisions. With Tuesday's liberation of Thadduwankoddy and Komarikudakulam villages situated close to Paranthan, the army was in a position to overrun the town, a senior official told The Island. The villages are located about 2 km west of Paranthan

Hindu, 2 January 2009

### **Paranthan captured: Army**

COLOMBO: The Sri Lankan military on Thursday claimed to have captured Iranamadu junction and Paranthan town in Kilinochchi district amid air raids on 'identified' Tiger targets. The Defence Ministry said here troops had 'liberated' the Iranamadu junction after weeks of fierce battles on the Kilinochchi battlefield

Hindu, 3 January 2009

### **Kilinochchi captured in devastating blow to LTTE**

COLOMBO: In a major blow to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Sri Lankan troops on Friday captured the northern town of Kilinochchi, which has been the Tigers' administrative and political headquarters. The military victory came after a phase of intense fighting that lasted several weeks. Kilinochchi has been under Tiger control for over a decade. In a special address to the nation on state television hours after the troops smashed into the town through three different points, President Mahinda Rajapaksa described the action as a 'major victory in the world's battle against terrorism.'

Hindu, 4 January 2009

### **Troops close in on Elephant Pass**

COLOMBO: The Sri Lankan military on Saturday claimed that the fall of the strategically important Elephant Pass town, situated at the entrance of the Jaffna peninsula, was imminent. A statement from the Defence Ministry said troops of the Army Task Force 1 (TF 1) were marching into the town. Hours after the capture on Friday of Kilinochchi - administrative and political headquarters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam - Army chief Sarath Fonseka said the Elephant Pass was just two km beyond the TF 1 forward boundary

Island, 7 January 2009

### **Armed attack on Sirasa**

President orders probe  
By Norman Palihawadena  
The Management of the MTV network yesterday assured it would recommence its normal telecasts despite the devastation caused to its studios in yesterday's dawn attack by an armed gang. An unidentified armed gang of about fifteen men had arrived at the sprawling MTV complex in Depanama, Pannipitiya in a white van sans number plates around 2 a.m. and gone on the rampage damaging almost all the equipment in the main studio and setting it ablaze

Hindu, 7 January 2009

### **India for political solution in Sri Lanka**

NEW DELHI: Following the Sri Lankan army's capture of Kilinochchi, administrative

and political headquarters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, India has asked Colombo not to lose sight of a political solution. 'There are several aspects to the Sri Lanka problem. No one solution is sufficient to solve the problem. Military solution alone won't work, no matter how the military situation fluctuates,' Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon said here on Monday. 'Until there is a political understanding within the framework of a united Sri Lanka, we can't speak of a political solution.' Humanitarian crises were one direct result of the military conflict and the absence of a political solution. 'We have tried to get help to the civilian population and will continue to work with all those to help to civilians caught in the zone of conflict,' Mr. Menon said

Hindu, 7 January 2009

### **Army on the outskirts of Elephant Pass**

KILINNOCHCHI: The Sri Lankan military captured Kilinochchi, the administrative and political capital of the LTTE, after a 20-month-long arduous campaign; but, the fight is not over yet. The Army, which encircled Kilinochchi after neutralising LTTE bases along a 60-km route, has now set its sight on the remaining LTTE bases at Elephant Pass and Muhamalai at the mouth of the Jaffna peninsula and the Mullathivu jungles

Island, 11 January 2009

### **Will arrive this week; Top Indian delegation to review prevailing situation**

A senior Indian government delegation led by Foreign Secretary Shiv Shanker Menon is expected to arrive in Sri Lanka this week to review the prevailing situation in the country, authoritative sources said yesterday. Senior Presidential Advisor Basil Rajapaksa, MP, told The Sunday Island this was one of the regular visits undertaken on a reciprocal basis. "Secretary to the President Lalith Weeratunga and Defence Secretary Gothabaya Rajapaksa called on the Indian government recently", he noted. "Now, we are having an Indian delegation on the same lines".

Hindu, 15 January 2009

### **Growing concern over civilians' fate in Sri Lanka**

COLOMBO: The Sri Lankan Air Force on Tuesday claimed it had carried out 10 raids targeting 'observed LTTE gathering places and defence line' in Mullathivu district. The Air Force stepped up its offensive in Mullathivu, the last remaining stronghold of the Tigers in the Wannu region, to flush out LTTE leaders and cadre from their hideouts in the thick jungles

Island, 16 January 2009

### **The murder of an editor by Dayan Jayatilleka**

I have a particular problem with the murder of journalists, especially editors of newspapers. The Editor's Guild and Publishers Society of Sri Lanka annually host an awards ceremony at which the final presentation of the evening, the pinnacle prize (distinguished by a different hue from the others), is for Journalist of the Year. That award is named after my father, Mervyn de Silva. It was not donated by me or any member of his family. It was instituted by the premier organizations of the profession to which he dedicated his life. Lasantha Wickrematunge was an Editor of a mainstream English language newspaper. He was thus a member of that tribe of which my father was a renowned elder

Island, 17 January 2009

### **Indo-Lanka relations at an unprecedented level of depth and quality**

Visiting Indian Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon yesterday expressed his appreciation of the proactive role played by Sri Lanka both multilaterally and

regionally in the context of combating terrorism. He said India extended her unstinted support for that exercise, a communiqué issued by the Foreign Ministry said. Mr. Menon expressed his views at a meeting with Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama yesterday

Hindu, 18 January 2009

### **We're committed to political solution, says Rajapaksa**

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa on Saturday asserted that while his government was committed to a political solution to the problem of ethnic relations in the island nation, it would deal with terrorism firmly and militarily. Mr. Rajapaksa made the observations when Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon called on him in Kandy and exchanged views on a wide range of issues of concern to India and Sri Lanka in general and the current situation in the island nation in particular, in the context of the ongoing war between the military and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

Hindu, 18 January 2009

### **'LTTE using Tamils as shield in the war'**

CHENNAI: Accusing the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam of using the Tamils as a shield in the war against the Sri Lankan army, AIADMK general secretary Jayalalithaa rejected the argument that the outfit was the sole representative of the Tamils. 'The killing of the innocent Tamils can be avoided if the LTTE allows them safe passage,' she told reporters at the party headquarters here on Saturday. She argued that the Sri Lankan army's intention was not to kill the Tamils. 'But the killing of innocents is inevitable in a war. No country is an exception.'

Asian Age, 19 January 2009

### **LTTE chief might have fled Lanka: Top general**

Colombo, Jan. 18: With troops closing in on the LTTE's last bastion of Mullaittivu, Sri Lanka said the war against the rebels was coming to an end with only 1,000 trained guerrilla fighters left, but was unsure if the elusive Tiger supremo was still on the island. "I am not sure whether he (LTTE chief Velupillai Prabhakaran) is in Sri Lanka. There are ways to escape," Sri Lankan Army Chief Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka told reporters Saturday evening. "But it is not possible for Prabhakaran to have gone to India. He will not be permitted there," said Gen. Fonseka. He had earlier insisted the 54-year-old guerrilla chieftain was hiding in Mullaittivu town

Island, 19 January 2009

### **Army facilitates opening of new sea route to Jaffna**

With the army taking the upper hand in the Jaffna and Vanni theatres after the liberation of two overland supply routes to the Jaffna peninsula, the government is now in a position to terminate a costly naval operation to move supplies, security forces and civilians to the Jaffna peninsula. Authoritative sources said that the naval operation involved about ten cargo and passenger ships including Jetliner, Lanka Muditha, SLNS Shakthi, 543 and Green Ocean

Hindu, 24 January 2009

### **'Take steps to stop war in Sri Lanka today itself'**

CHENNAI: The Tamil Nadu Assembly on Friday made a 'final appeal' to the Centre, urging it to take steps to stop the war in Sri Lanka 'today itself.' Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, who moved the resolution, said the ceasefire should be followed by a political solution to the ethnic conflict and permanent peace in the land of the Buddha. 'I am moving the resolution expecting a positive outcome. If it fails to

produce the desired effect, the DMK's executive committee or general council will discuss the issue and take a decision,' he said

Asian Age, 25 January 2009

### **Desperate Tiger chief sends women to the front**

Jan. 24: The only sound that breaks the eerie silence in Kilinochchi today is the intermittent artillery fire by Sri Lankan troops, which can be heard from a distance, and the generator sets that light up what remains of houses in the former LTTE territory. What was once the de facto political capital of the LTTE resembles a ghost town, wiped clean before the last LTTE cadres retreated into the jungles of Mullaittivu. Houses without roofs or electrical fittings and a hospital without the ubiquitous smell of phenol, which stand in stark contrast to the well-appointed headquarters of the LTTE but with not a shred of paper littering the floor, all lend Kilinochchi a desolate air

Hindu, 26 January 2009

### **LTTE loses Mullaittivu**

COLOMBO: The Sri Lankan military on Sunday announced the capture of Mullaittivu town, the last major settlement of the LTTE in the only district still under its control. With this loss, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam are now confined to Puthukkudiyiruppu and Vishwamadu areas of the district. There was no word from the Tigers on the military announcement. The fall of Mullaittivu came three weeks after the military marched into Kilinochchi - the administrative and political headquarters of the Tigers. After Kilinochchi, the Tigers lost control of their strategic base at Elephant Pass at the mouth of the Jaffna peninsula and the government gained total control of the A 9 highway for the first time since the departure of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in 1990