

# Lankan military fights to surround rebels

AP, Colombo

Sri Lankan forces battled yesterday to take complete control of the country's coastline and surround the reeling Tamil Tigers in a final push to destroy the rebel group and end the country's civil war, the military said.

As the fighting raged, hundreds of desperate war refugees escaped the war zone and a top UN official headed here on an urgent mission to safeguard the tens of thousands of civilians still trapped amid the heavy shelling.

The government has forced the rebels out of the shadow state they once controlled in the north and cornered them in a 1.5-square mile (four-square kilometre) strip of northeastern coastline.

On Friday, two army units were pushing ahead with a pincer movement, fighting their way down the coast from the north and up from the south in an effort to link up, severing the rebels' last remaining sea outlet and completely encircling them, military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said.

The two units were only 1.1 miles (1.8

kilometres) apart, he said.

Meanwhile, 1,000 more civilians managed to flee rebel-held territory Friday, joining more than 3,700 who waded across a lagoon to escape the day before, he said. The rebels fired on those leaving Thursday, killing four and wounding 14 others, he said.

About 200,000 civilians have escaped the war zone in recent months and are being held in overwhelmed displacement camps.

The rebels have denied accusations they were holding the civilians as human shields and shooting at those trying to flee. Reports of the fighting are difficult to verify because the government has barred journalists and most aid workers from the conflict zone.

International concern has grown for tens of thousands of civilians under threat from the heavy artillery bombardments shaking the war zone, and the Red Cross warned of "an unimaginable humanitarian catastrophe" for the hundreds of wounded trapped without treatment.

Hoping to end the bloodshed, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon sent his chief of staff, Vijay Nambiar, to Sri Lanka

for a second time to try to bring the conflict to a peaceful conclusion.

Nambiar is expected to meet with top government officials after he arrives Saturday and push for ways "to secure the safety of the 50,000 to 100,000 civilians remaining inside the combat zone," UN spokesman Gordon Weiss said.

Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said that in light of the ongoing war, the United States had raised questions about Sri Lanka's application for a \$1.9 billion IMF loan that the government desperately needs.

"We think that it is not an appropriate time to consider that until there is a resolution," she said in Washington.

The UN says 7,000 civilians were killed and 16,700 wounded in the fighting from Jan. 20 until May 7, according to a UN document given to The Associated Press by a senior diplomat. Since then, doctors in the war zone say more than 1,000 civilians were killed in a week of heavy shelling that rights groups and foreign governments have blamed on Sri Lankan forces. Sri Lanka denies firing heavy weapons into the war zone.



This handout picture released by the Sri Lankan Army yesterday shows civilians who managed to escape from the last remaining Tamil Tiger rebel-held patch of coastline in the northeastern district of Mullaitivu.



Supporters of the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) chant slogans during a protest against Nepalese President Ram Baran Yadav in Kathmandu yesterday.

## Nepali Maoists won't block govt formation: Prachanda

ANI, Kathmandu

Nepal caretaker Prime Minister and Maoist chairman Prachanda has said that his party would not pose obstructions in the new government formation and wanted the new government to take shape at the earliest.

Speaking at a book launch here on Thursday, Prachanda said the Maoists were in favour of a government with civilian supremacy that could stand up to foreign intervention.

Prachanda, who had resigned from his post slamming foreign intervention, said, "remote controlled government cannot safeguard democracy."

He further announced all the political parties to forge a broader political understanding in order to accomplish the tasks of writing new a Constitution and peace process.

"Let's sit together, review the situations and let's conclude the issues of Constitution drafting and peace process," Kantipur quoted him as saying.

Saying that conspiracies are being hatched to drag the country towards autocracy, Prachanda warned that the country could plunge into a disaster due to civil war.

Meanwhile, the Madhesi Janadhikar Fourm (MJF) leaders have finally projected itself as the party to lead the new government.

## Taliban wants 'new world order' Says Zardari

PTI, London

With the Taliban becoming emboldened in Pakistan, President Asif Ali Zardari has described them as the "biggest challenge" of 21st century and warned that they are trying to create a "new world order".

It is challenging our way of life, they are trying to create a new world order," Zardari, who is here on a two-day visit, said while referring to the threat from Taliban. "It (the Taliban) is the biggest challenge of the 21st century," the Pakistan President told newsmen here last night.

He also dismissed as incorrect a BBC survey which suggested that only 38 per cent of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province is under government control. Zardari's comments came after his meetings with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Foreign Secretary David Miliband, opposition Conservative party leader David Cameron and Shadow Foreign Secretary William Hague.

## 22 Taliban killed in south Afghanistan

AP, Kandahar

At least 22 Taliban militants, including three regional commanders, were killed overnight in fighting in southern Afghanistan, a provincial official said yesterday.

A band of Taliban fighters attacked two police checkpoints in Nawzad district Thursday, taking control of the stations and forcing the officers to flee, said Dawood Ahmadi, a spokesman for the governor of Helmand province.

The police launched a counterattack with the help of an airstrike, killing 22 insurgents, Ahmadi said. Three Taliban chiefs in Nawzad and surrounding districts were among the dead, he said, adding that no Afghan forces died in the fighting.

The attack came on the same day that Taliban militants attacked a prison in the east and that a Nato service member was killed by a bomb blast in the south.

## Lanka captures family of top Tiger commander

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's navy on Friday captured the wife and two children of a top Tamil Tiger military commander while they tried to escape the island by boat, a navy spokesman said.

The family of the head of the rebels' naval unit -- T. Sivanesan, better known as Colonel Soosai -- were seized as they tried to leave in a boat from the coast of Mullaitivu, navy spokesman D. K. P. Dassanayake said.

"We have captured Sea Tiger leader Soosai's wife, two children and two other close family members this morning," the spokesman said.

## Red Cross barred from civilians caught in Lankan fighting

AFP, London

A British minister said yesterday he was "utterly appalled" that the Red Cross was unable to reach civilians caught by fighting in Sri Lanka, urging Colombo and Tamil rebels to allow immediate access.

Aid minister Douglas Alexander's remarks came after the International Committee of the Red Cross said it had been unable to reach people in desperate need for three days as heavy fighting makes the mission too dangerous.

"I am utterly appalled that the ICRC is no longer able to

continue its operations in northern Sri Lanka," he said in a statement.

"Since September last year, the ICRC has been the only humanitarian agency allowed to work in the conflict zone, and now even this lifeline has been denied to more than 50,000 people," he added.

He noted that the ICRC had evacuated over 14,000 people by ship over the last four months, adding: "Denying this life-saving evacuation and medical treatment is a fundamental violation of international humanitarian law."

## Myanmar under pressure to free Suu Kyi

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar faced intense international pressure yesterday to free pro-democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi after she was imprisoned ahead of a new trial next week for breaching the terms of her house arrest.

The United States led Western calls for the immediate release of the Nobel Peace laureate while rights groups urged the UN Security Council to help the 63-year-old, whose trial is due to start in jail on Monday.

The ruling military junta took Aung San Suu Kyi from her home on Thursday to Yangon's

notorious Insein prison, where she was charged over a bizarre incident in which an American man swam to her lakeside residence.

There was no comment from Myanmar's secretive regime, which has kept the frail opposition leader in detention for most of the last 19 years and now looks set to do so past controversial elections that are due next year.

New York-based Human Rights Watch called on UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to press the authorities for her release, accusing the junta of taking advantage of the US man's "bizarre stunt" to keep Aung San Suu Kyi detained.



**Bangladesh Mahila Parishad**  
10/B/1, Segunbagicha, Dhaka-1000

### CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP), a non-government, mass women's organization is looking for suitable personnel for the following positions for its central office in Dhaka.

#### Program Director Advocacy: 1 Post

**Qualification:**  
Master degree in M.S.S or MBA

**Experience:**  
Minimum 8 years experience in a reputed development organization having been responsible for planning independently of organizations various programs and Preparing advocacy guidelines.

#### Main Responsibilities:

He/She will be responsible for planning independently of organization's various programs, such as meeting seminar, workshop, discussion forum, human chain and exchange views. Establish and maintain good working relations with relevant Government Departments as well as other high level stakeholder groups. Preparation of advocacy guideline, plan, scheduled and develop advocacy materials. Support advocacy activities of co-organizations as per advocacy plan.

#### Manager Program & Networking : 1 Post

**Qualification:**  
Master degree in M.S.S or MBA

**Experience:**  
Minimum 5 years experience in a reputed development organization having been responsible to execute and monitor program activities.

#### Main Responsibilities:

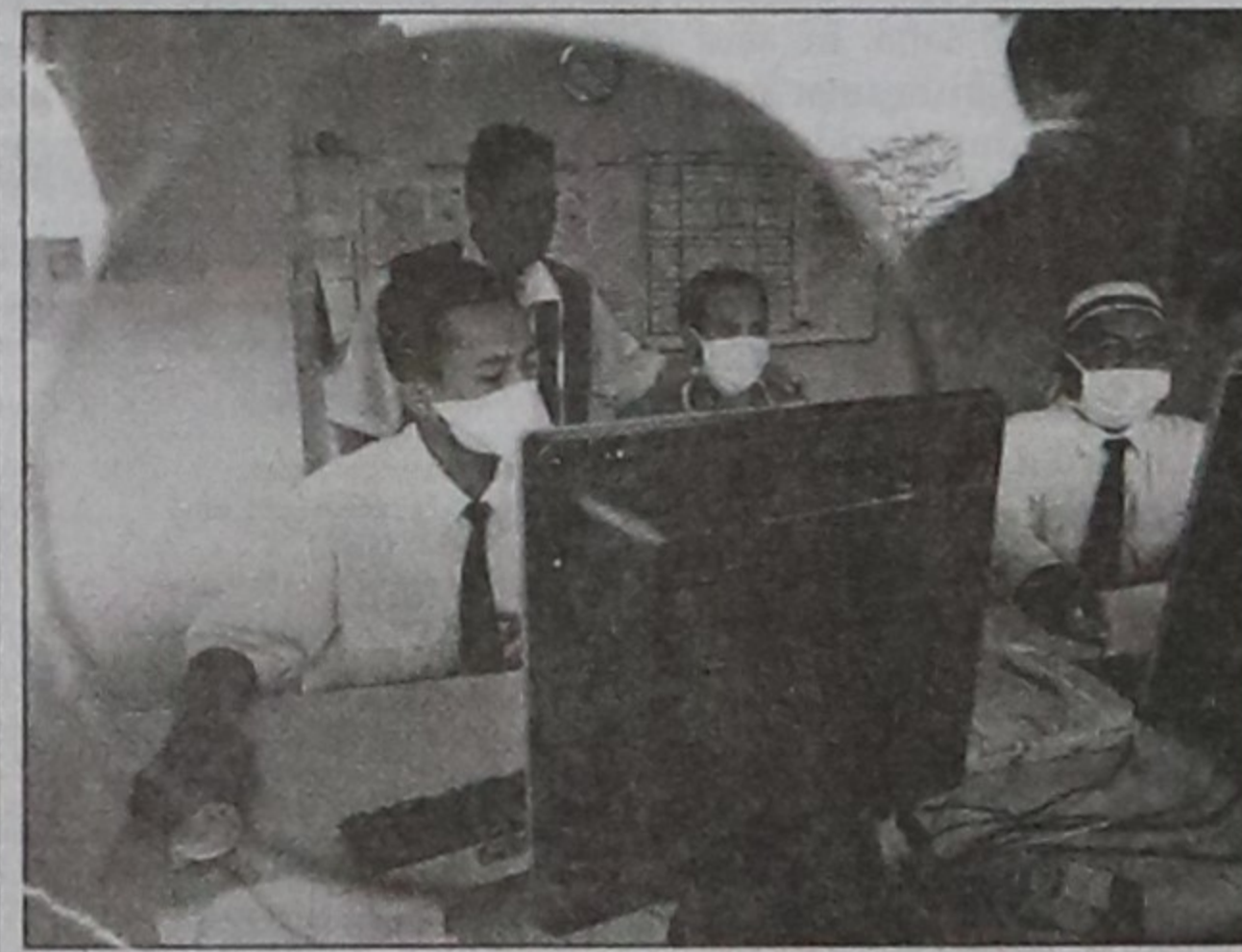
He/She will be responsible to execute and monitor the program activities of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad. Preparation of program schedule and program progress report. Develop the relationship with branch members and help them to strengthen their program activities. Help liaison with sub-committee of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad

#### Requirements:

- Age not above 45 years, flexible for experienced person.
- Conceptual clarity in gender equality and movement
- Field visit as and when required
- Efficiency in written and verbal communication both in English and Bengali.
- Proficiency in MS Word, MS Excel and MS PowerPoint.

Interested candidates are requested to apply with their complete CV, a recent photograph and experience certificate (relevant) to The General Secretary, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad by May 31, 2009. Mention the position applied for at the top of the envelope.

**General Secretary**  
Bangladesh Mahila Parishad



Medical officers wear protective masks as a precaution against swine flu at Sungai Buloh hospital where a patient was confirmed infected with swine flu, or the A (H1N1) virus, outside Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

## Swine flu will probably spread to new regions: WHO

AFP, Geneva

The World Health Organisation said Friday research suggests the A(H1N1) swine flu virus is so contagious it will probably spread to new, so far unaffected regions.

Acting WHO Assistant Director-General Keiji Fukuda said studies by experts indicate a "significant number of people" had been infected but remained undetected or unconfirmed by laboratory tests.

"Their work also suggests that the virus is transmissible enough that we will expect to see continued community level outbreaks and regional spread," he told a WHO meeting in Geneva on pandemic preparedness.

Latest WHO data showed 7,520 people in 34 countries were confirmed to have caught the influenza A(H1N1) virus. Some 65 people have died in the outbreak.

"It is still reasonable to expect that at this pace, we have a long-term activity going on.... There will probably be periods of intense activity," said Fukuda.

He said the behaviour of the virus would also change depending on "whether it is winter period in one part of the world or another."

The virus had "a very different pattern" from normal, seasonal flu with half of those dying being young and otherwise healthy adults, he said.

The two-day WHO meeting, which began Friday, was scheduled long before the outbreak of swine flu was uncovered in Mexico, to discuss influenza vaccines and iron out a long running dispute over the sharing of bird flu virus samples.



Australian Government

AusAID

## Vacancy for Assistant Program Officer (Finance and Administration) Bangladesh

The Australian Government, through the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), is seeking to fill in the position of Assistant Program Officer - Finance and Administration (APO - Finance & Admin), based at the Australian High Commission, Dhaka, Bangladesh. The APO will support the finance and administration officer to undertake all aspects of financial management, record management, including systematic maintenance of hard filing system, asset management, including procurement, maintenance, disposal, reporting and travel arrangements.

AusAID works in health, education, extreme poverty and humanitarian emergencies. The Assistant Program Officer will also have the opportunity to be involved in these sectors and other emerging aid priorities.

#### Essential Selection Criteria

1. Minimum graduate level educational qualifications in finance / social science from a reputable University;
2. Three or more years of professional experience in the development related work;
3. Demonstrated skills in financial management and office administration;
4. Ability to work with minimum supervision and exercise a high level of judgment, maturity, initiative, organizational capacity and flexibility;
5. Excellent written and oral communication skills in English and Bangla;
6. Demonstrated teamwork skills;
7. Experience with MS word, Excel, using e-mail and the Internet.

#### Desirable Selection Criteria

1. Experience of working in finance and/or administration section a of development organization
2. Familiarity with accounting packages
3. Knowledge of Bangladesh's development, economic and political situation;
4. Knowledge of the Australian Government's aid policy and programs.

#### Applications

- Interested applicants should submit their CV and a statement, outlining their suitability for the position, by 4:00 pm on Saturday, May 30, 2009.
- Statements should not exceed two pages AND MUST DIRECTLY ADDRESS THE 'ESSENTIAL SELECTION CRITERIA' ABOVE. Statements not addressing the selection criteria will not be considered.
- Please address applications to [hr.ausaid@dfat.gov.au](mailto:hr.ausaid@dfat.gov.au) and clearly mention 'Assistant Program Officer' in the subject line.
- All applications will be treated on merit and in strict confidence.
- Only short listed candidates will be contacted.

Please visit the following website for the Duty Statement for the position:  
[http://www.bangladesh.embassy.gov.au/daca/development\\_cooperat.html](http://www.bangladesh.embassy.gov.au/daca/development_cooperat.html)