



This handout picture released by the Sri Lankan Defence Ministry yesterday shows civilians who managed to escape from the last remaining Tamil Tiger rebel-held patch of coastline in the northeastern district of Mullaitivu. Sri Lankan troops have captured the last patch of coastline held by the Tamil Tigers, leaving the rebels completely surrounded and cut off from any sea escape, the military said.

## British PM warns Lanka of 'consequences'

AFP, London

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown yesterday warned Sri Lanka there would be "consequences for its actions" if Colombo did not allow humanitarian agencies access to civilians and end the conflict with Tamil Tiger rebels. Brown also called for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to lay down its arms and allow trapped civilians to leave, and said he was backing United Nations efforts to end the conflict.

"Sri Lanka stands on the brink," Brown said in a statement. "We have called repeatedly for the violence to cease."

The humanitarian agencies must be granted access to civilians caught in the crossfire of a dreadful conflict. We are backing UN efforts to secure an orderly end to the conflict.

## Obama retains Bush-era military tribunals

AFP, Washington

President Barack Obama has revived Bush-era military tribunals for top Guantanamo Bay terror suspects that he once branded a "failure," but proposed new rules on evidence and detainee rights.

Rights campaigners reacted angrily, warning the move would prolong the "injustice" of the war on terror camp, days after Obama dismayed some backers by deciding to oppose the release of photos of Iraq and Afghan prison abuses.

"This is the best way to protect our country, while upholding our deeply-held values," Obama said in a written statement Friday, outlining his reasoning and a set of reforms to the military commissions.

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Tender Schedule may be collected from Computer Division from May 17, 2009 to May 20, 2009 (from 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM). Financial and Technical Offers are to be dropped separately in a larger Envelop in the Tender box placed in front of Computer Division (8th floor) from May 20, 2009 to May 21, 2009 (from 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM) & the Tender box will be opened on May 24, 2009 at 11:00 AM in presence of the bidders (if any). Tender submitted after the scheduled date shall not be received by the Bank.

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Obama extends sanctions against Myanmar

AFP, Washington

President Barack Obama on Friday formally extended US sanctions against Myanmar, keeping up pressure on the junta at the height of its new showdown with detained democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

"I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to Burma and maintain in force the sanctions against Burma to respond to this threat," Obama said in a message to Congress.

The move, which had been previewed last month by US officials and was merely a formality, comes despite an official US review of policy on Myanmar, also known as Burma.

Hundreds of thousands of desperate civilians have streamed down from the mountains of the Swat valley and two neighbouring districts since late April seeking safety with relatives or in government-run camps in an escalating humanitarian crisis.

"By Friday evening, 987,140 people were registered as displaced since May 2," UN refugee agency spokeswoman Ariane

## Pakistani troops close in on Swat capital

### Nearly million displaced

AFP, Peshawar

Pakistan said yesterday troops were closing in on a key Taliban-held town in the northwest as they pursued their anti-militant offensive, which the UN said displaced nearly a million people.

Hundreds of thousands of desperate civilians have streamed down from the mountains of the Swat valley and two neighbouring districts since late April seeking safety with relatives or in government-run camps in an escalating humanitarian crisis.

"The government should give us peace. We have no need for tents, for food or for money," said Hayat Ullah, a grandfather who came with his wife, daughters and children from Mingora.

"We didn't come here because of the

Taliban, we came here after the shelling and bombardment of the government," he said in the government-run camp Jalala in Mardan district where children queued for tea and rice for their parents.

In Peshawar, the capital of NWFP where thousands of people displaced by the conflict have sought refuge, a car bomb ripped through a packed street killing 11 people, including women and children, on Saturday, officials said.

The military says up to 15,000 troops were taking on about 4,000 well-armed fighters in Swat, where Islamabad has ordered a battle to "eliminate" Islamist militants, branded by Washington the greatest terror threat to the West.

## Kashmiris want peace with Pakistan

ANI, Rajouri

Scores of Muslims here prayed for improved relations with Pakistan.

Muslim devotees who gathered at the Shahdara Sharif shrine at Rajouri said they prayed for a government that would restart the stalled peace talks with Pakistan.

"We have prayed for peace and that the relations between India and Pakistan are strengthened. The misunderstandings between both the countries should be sorted out," said Mohammed Iqbal Chib, a resident.

He added that the people wanted the relations between the State and Central administrations to be strengthened for the good of the people.

"God gives better government in the Centre and the State's leadership under Omar Abdullah. We want that the God makes their coalition successful," he added.

Devotees also said that they hoped that the Congress Party would be successful in forming a new government, as it would benefit them in a big way.

## Israeli govt not a good peace partner: Syria

AP, Damascus

These reforms will begin to restore the commissions as a legitimate forum for prosecution, while bringing them in line with the rule of law," Obama said.

Obama halted the Guantanamo tribunals pending a review after taking office in January, saying the system did not work, but did not rule out the use of a modified system in future.

Last year however, then-candidate Obama had called the military commissions "an enormous failure."

The president said the Department of Defence would ask for extension of the suspension of military commissions to permit time for reforms.

Commissions were "appropriate for trying enemies who violate the laws of war, provided that they are properly structured and administered," Obama said.

"Syria is keen about peace

as much as it is keen about the return of its occupied territories," Syrian President Bashar Assad said during a joint press conference with Turkish President Abdullah Gul in the Syrian capital, Damascus.

"When we have a specific vision and when there is a partner, then we can speak about a date to resume peace talks," Assad said.

Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, who also opposes ceding all of the Golan Heights, has said he would be willing to resume indirect peace talks with Syria only if there were no preconditions.

Ershad urged

erly, he said.

Presided over by SPOMBS chairman HM Ibrahim Bhuiyan, the meeting was also addressed by JP leader Abu Hossain Babla, former inspector general of police Ashraf Huda, SPOMBS leaders Mosharrif Hossain Chowdhury and Sheikh Tofael Hossain Liton.

Ershad said the politicians of the country should change their mindset so that the public welfare deeds of the previous governments can be upheld when a new government assumes power.

"When I was the President of the country, we carried out a lot of welfare services including the Pathakali Trust for the countrymen. We had launched the Pathakali Trust for the economic and educational benefit of orphans. But the BNP government after assuming power envously suspended the project. Now the street children of the country are deprived of those facilities," he said.

He alleged that fabricated confessional statements are being recorded under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code and innocent people are being punished. Thus their human rights are being violated.

He added that human rights would continue to be violated until the judiciary is fully independent.

JP Chairman said weaknesses in social, financial and educational systems are responsible for human rights violation.

Media has an important role in establishing human rights, he said urging the media to play its role in this regard.

Lawmaker and editor of the daily Jugantor Salma Islam alleged that the last caretaker government had manipulated democracy and human rights during its regime.

Ashraf Huda said police performs a vital duty in establishing law and order, but the force functions under 150 years old guideline and is paid so little. If police rules are not updated, they would not be able to discharge their duties properly.

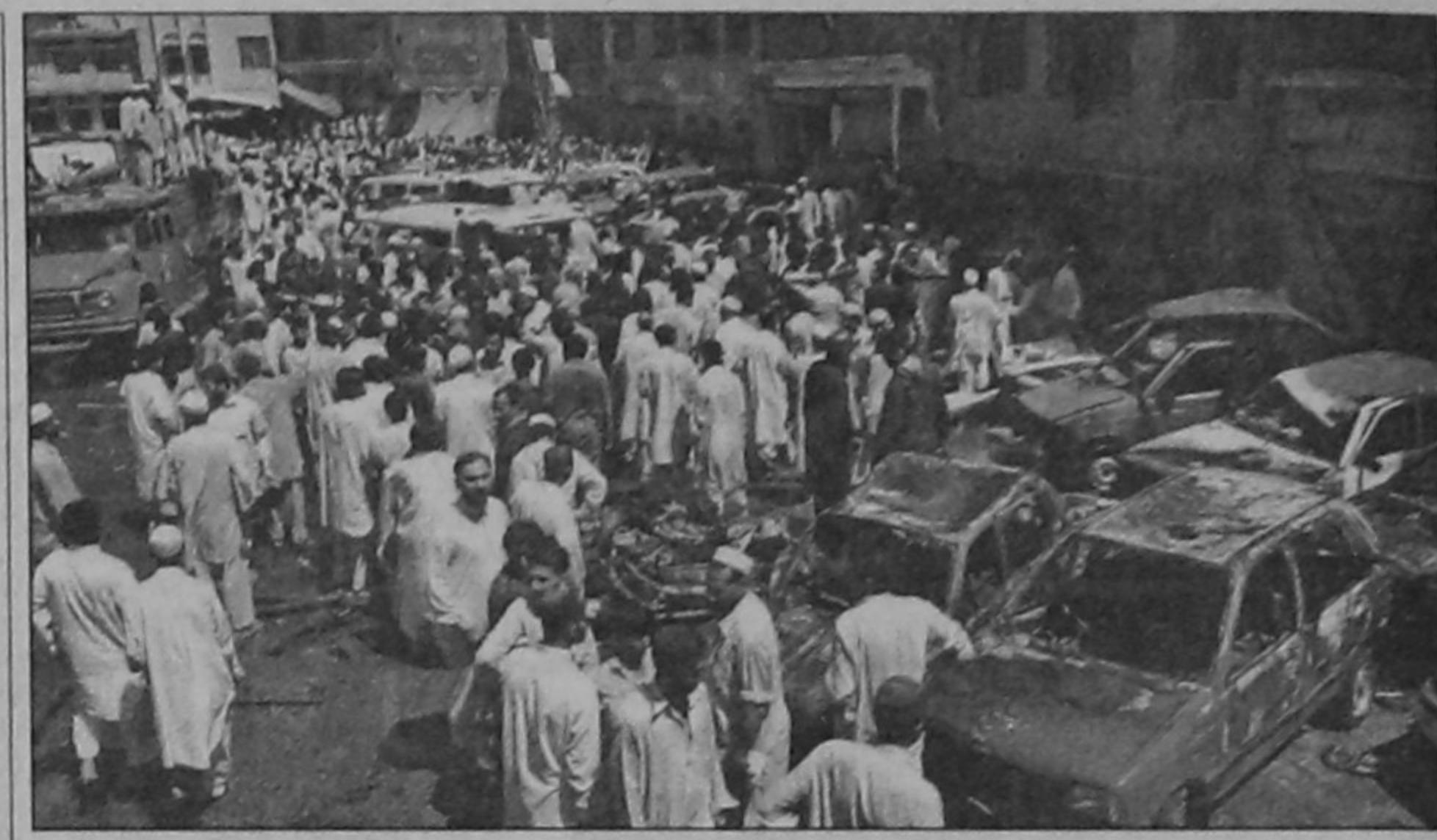
Rumsey told AFP.

"There may be thousands more, who fled Swat but have not been registered as yet" at camps set up in North West Frontier Province (NWFP), Rumsey said.

Exhausted and living under canvas in camps that offer little protection from the searing heat of the Pakistani plains, far from the cool mountain air to which they are accustomed, the displaced lashed out at the army offensive.

"The government should give us peace. We have no need for tents, for food or for money," said Hayat Ullah, a grandfather who came with his wife, daughters and children from Mingora.

"We didn't come here because of the



Pakistani people gather at the sight of a bomb blast at a market in Peshawar yesterday. A car bomb ripped through a packed street in Pakistan's northern city and killed 11 people, including women and children, near an ice cream shop and Internet cafe, officials said.

## Myanmar bars lawyer from Suu Kyi trial

AP, Yangon

Myanmar's military rulers disbanded a prominent lawyer who applied to defend pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi in her upcoming trial, the attorney said Saturday.

Suu Kyi, who was taken from her home Thursday by police, faces a possible five-year prison term for allegedly violating terms of her house arrest by sheltering an American man who swam across a lake to her home.

Her latest arrest has sparked a storm of international appeals to Myanmar's junta to free the 63-year-old Nobel Peace Prize winner and to restore democracy in the country, which has been under military rule since 1962.

Despite mounting international protests, the junta appears ready to begin the trial Monday at Insein Prison, where Suu Kyi is being held along with two assistants who have lived with her.

Lawyer Aung Thein said Saturday that he was dismissed from the country's Bar Council

on Friday, a day after he applied to represent Suu Kyi. He has defended political activists in the past and was earlier jailed for four months for contempt of court.

Suu Kyi was charged Thursday with violating the terms of her house arrest after being visited by American John William Yettaw, 53, who also faces trial.

Suu Kyi has already spent 13 of the last 19 years in detention without trial for her nonviolent promotion of democracy. She had been scheduled to be freed May 27 after six consecutive years of house arrest but now faces up to five years in prison if convicted, according to one of her lawyers, Hla Myo Myint.

He and another lawyer represented her at the arraignment, but Suu Kyi had asked for three other defence lawyers, including Aung Thein.

President Barack Obama extended for another year a state of emergency regarding Myanmar that maintains sanctions against the military-run country.

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Financial and Technical Offers in sealed envelopes are hereby invited from reputed and bonafide Software Development Firms for integrated Human Resource Management Software.

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