



# COTANZ

Consortium of Tamil Associations in New Zealand

Auckland • Wellington • Christchurch • Palmerston North

9<sup>th</sup> June 2006

## Media Release

### Civilians Killing in Batticaloa

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2006 near the eastern Sri Lankan city of Batticaloa ten civilians, including three children, were killed and fourteen, including two infants aged 3 and 8 months, were wounded by a Sri Lanka Army pressure mine. Nine of the wounded were admitted to the Batticaloa hospital. The explosion occurred inside a LTTE controlled border village.



Source: BBC



Doctors travelling with an International Committee of the Red Cross evacuated some of the injured from rebel-held territory. Dr S Dakshinamoorthy, senior health officer in Batticaloa district, told the BBC they had received nine of the injured, two of whom had later died en route to hospital. The others were taken for treatment in Batticaloa. The doctor said villagers had told him a three-month-old girl had escaped with minor injuries in the blast, but her mother had been killed.

The people of the locality where the blast took place are forced to travel some 28km to purchase their grocery items. This is a result of the blockage of travel by the Sri Lankan Army. Normally the people travel in small groups, weekly, in tractors. According to the LTTE, recent penetration attacks by the Sri Lankan Army have targeted civilian movement in LTTE-controlled areas with a motive to force the civilians to flee the LTTE-controlled border areas.

Two boys aged 12 and 15 years were killed in Thikiliveddai, an LTTE controlled border area, on May 27, when Sri Lankan Army soldiers ambushed a tractor with farmers.

Following from these two incidents statement, COTANZ (Consortium of Tamil Association in New Zealand) humbly requests the Government and Ministers of New Zealand to:

- To request the Sri Lankan government to investigate both these incidents and make freely available the methods and findings of the investigations.

In the opinion of COTANZ, while the Sri Lankan armed forces continue to operate in Tamil dominated electorates, violence against Tamil civilians and institutions will not only continue but in all likelihood increase in frequency and severity.

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