

'Appalling' propaganda

That the international media are functioning as hired guns of some western governments, hell bent on giving this country a bad name for the crime of having demonstrated to the world that terrorism could be neutralised militarily, is evident from yesterday's CNN report on UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon's visit to Sri Lanka.

The obfuscating UN Chief, however, does not refer to any 'slices' according to the original CNN video clip containing the relevant section of the interview, (the transcript of which we publish today). Instead, his reference is only to 'scenes' by which he apparently means the scenes of the war zone, especially that of the final battle in Mullativu, he saw from an Air Force chopper.

Moore, we are afraid, is not articulate enough and when he says something he does not make sure he has said it. Thus, his statements often-times leave room for spin doctoring. The CNN report at issue is extremely damaging to Sri Lanka in the context of today's Human Rights Council special session.

Interestingly, the UN Chief urged President Rajapaksa at their meeting to open roads, remove checkpoints and ensure people's freedom of movement. Neither Moon nor his Colombo office worthies could say boo to a goose while the LTTE was ruling the roost.

Freedom he is rightly advocating - though some roads cannot be reopened in a hurry for security reasons - is one of the dividends the war has paid in spite of the unfortunate short-term civilian suffering, without which no war has ever been or will ever be fought.

UNICEF could not save child combatants in the LTTE's clutches. Even if UNICEF had gone on campaigning for the release of those unfortunate children till kingdom come, the LTTE would not have budged an inch.

What has Moon got to say to that request? Will he at least tell CNN?



LTTE admits leader dead, opts for non-violence - BBC Story inside

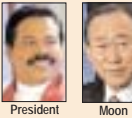
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President asks UN Chief to help arrest KP and others

... says opening roads may take some time

by Norman Palihawadana

President Mahinda Rajapaksa has told UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon that road blocks set up as part of the measures to counter LTTE threat couldn't be removed immediately, the President explained at a meeting with Moon that measures in place against LTTE attacks would have to be lowered gradually though major combat operations had come to an end.



President Mahinda Rajapaksa and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon

House in Kandy. Sources said that the President had also emphasised the urgent need to apprehend and deport to Sri Lanka LTTE frontliner KP believed to be operating in a South East Asian country and other LTTE leaders operating overseas. KP wanted by Interpol and India over the assassination of Congress I leader Rajiv Gandhi is required to face trial in Sri Lanka. He runs the LTTE's arms procurement ring and is reportedly making an effort to revive the LTTE.



Navy Commander Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda and senior officers participate in religious observances to invoke blessings on officers and men killed in war against terrorism. This was a scene at the strategic Trincomalee navy base on Sunday (May 24). Pic: SLN Media

Massive hunt for hidden Tiger arms

by Shamindra Ferdinando

With major combat operations coming to an end in the northern theatre, the armed forces spearheaded by the army and police would now go all out to recover arms and ammunition hidden by the LTTE, security officials said. They said that authorities would also have to track down LTTE cadres who had gone underground in the city and its suburbs. Responding to our queries, an intelligence official said that the recovery of weapons abandoned on the ground by retreating LTTE cadres would be easy. The difficult task would be to locate hidden armaments, he said.



A large cache of weapons and ammunition recovered by the army

The weekend were nine 40 mm grenade launchers, 289 T-56 assault rifles, 10 multi purpose machine guns, two 60 mm mortars, 13 communication sets, six 12.7 mm weapons and eight thermo-bionic weapons. The STF, conducting clearing operations in the Elmaruppalan in the East last Friday (May 22) evening recovered three assault rifles, 18 rounds of T-56 ammunition, 36 rounds of micro pistol ammunition, one hand grenade, ten rounds of 40 mm grenades, three electronic detonators, one tool kit of a 40 mm grenade launcher and two military fatigues.

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MOON says no clear evidence of heavy bombing in battle zone

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in an interview with the CNN on his return from the Vanni over the weekend said that there was no clear evidence of the use of heavy weapons on the scene of the final battle.

Moore: I have, I expect seen many cases that there were so many civilian populations who lost their dear lives and... was unacceptable situation. And even though they might not recognize and admit this one we have many such cases.



The SLAF said that the UN chief and his entourage had been flown in two helicopters over the area where the LTTE fought its last battle with the army last week. Meanwhile, the CNN in a story headlined 'Ban tells CNN: Sri Lanka sites for the displaced appalling' quoted Moon as saying: 'I was so sad and I was so humbled by what I have seen. I have travelled all around the world and visited similar places but this is by far the most appalling scenes I have seen.'

Moore: Yes. The military says that they can assure us that very few civilians died. Do you buy that?

Miliband on his way out

Gordon Brown is drawing up plans for a cabinet reshuffle next month that could see Peter Mandelson promoted to foreign secretary in a demotion-limitation exercise set for the June 4 local and European elections according to the Financial Times of May 21. PM Brown's allies say they expect Lord Mandelson, business secretary, to be given his dream job at the Foreign Office, taking the post once held by Herbert Morrison, his grandfather.



Gordon Brown

seen as a demotion for a man seen last year as a potential leadership challenger to Mr Brown. Business community would be disappointed if Lord Mandelson were moved less than a year after his return from Brussels. However, his departure would provide political cover for a government review of Lord Mandelson's plans to sell a stake

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Air Force to use LTTE runway

The SLAF would set up a small station at one of the two LTTE runways in the Inneswadi area east of the A9 road, SLAF spokesman Wing Commander Jarako Narayakura told The Island. He said that the SLAF would use the bigger one. We'll also take over the runway situated close to Mullativu, he said.



An LTTE air strip

UNHRC special session Lanka makes smart move

Sri Lanka is confident that it would be able to muster support of many friendly nations at a special session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva tomorrow, agency reports said yesterday. Over 17 countries including China and India had pledged their solidarity with Sri Lanka, reports said. They include Indonesia, China, Saudi Arabia, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Bahrain, the Philippines, Cuba, Egypt, Nicaragua and Bolivia. The special session, scheduled to take place May

26, is being convened at the request of 17 of the 47 members of the HRC, including Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Britain. It is hoped that the holding of this special session will contribute towards the cause of peace, HRC president Martin Roehrig from Thailand was quoted as saying by agency reports. Continued on page 2

Who would benefit from altered Kegalle road project?

A dispute over the undue delay in a road construction project to ease traffic congestion in the Kegalle district has taken a new turn with the revelation that the original plan had been changed to save valuable property owned by several influential persons, including politicians. We'll informed sources told The Island that contrary to allegations, Sabaragamuwa Chief Minister Mahipala Herath had been among the beneficiaries of the modified plan. Finance and Government Revenue Minister Ranjith Sityambapitaya on May 11 accused Herath of blocking the project to save some valuable property. Who... Continued on page 2



Ranjith Sityambapitaya and Mahipala Herath

MR to Moon: We'll implement 13 A

Close on the heels of an assurance given to India, President Mahinda Rajapaksa has reiterated his commitment to the implementation of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, according to a joint statement issued by the Sri Lankan government and the UN at the end of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's two day visit over the weekend. The President and UN Secretary General have agreed that addressing the aspirations and grievances of all communities and working towards a lasting political solution was fundamental to ensuring long term socio-economic development. They have also discussed other areas in which the UN will assist the ongoing efforts of Sri Lanka to address future challenges and opportunities. Full story see page 2

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