



Click to enable Adobe Flash Player

Friday, 8 May 2009

NEWS BAR » 3M ...

Business: Stocks hit six-month highs ...

Sports: Trinity bounce b

- HOME
- DAILYNEWS ONLINE
- News
- Editorial
- Business
- Features
- Political
- Security
- Sport
- World
- Letters
- Obituaries

| SHARE MARKET | EXCHANGE RATE | TRADING | PICTURE GALLERY | ARCHIVES | Google

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

OTHER LINKS



PRESIDENT TELLS INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY:

Understand ground realities

Local Govt elections in Jaffna, Vavuniya soon

Pressurize LTTE to lay down arms and surrender

The urgent need of the hour is the sensitivity and understanding of the international community on ground realities, said President Mahinda Rajapaksa addressing the Diplomatic Community in Colombo on current developments in Sri Lanka at the Presidential Secretariat yesterday.

"As members of the international community, friends of Sri Lanka need to bring pressure to bear on the LTTE to lay down arms and surrender. Punitive action could be taken on its front organizations spread globally. Your Governments also need to bring pressure on the leadership of the LTTE to free the civilians who are being held against their will as human shields. In fact, these civilians could be relatives of those Sri Lankans who are in your countries," he added.

The President told the Diplomats that the war with the LTTE is rapidly nearing its conclusion and that he hoped it will create the space for democracy to flourish in the North again.

He also said that steps are being taken to call for nomination for the Local Government elections in Jaffna and Vavuniya very soon.

He reminded the Diplomats how the LTTE made a mockery of negotiations and left the negotiating table and used all ceasefires to rearm and resort to military action.

"Therefore the Government was compelled to take military action against the LTTE only as a last resort," the President said.

The military has now confined LTTE to an area less than six sq kms in the safe zone created for the civilians. "On my instructions, due to the priority given to the policy of zero civilian casualties the security forces are limiting themselves to rescue operations of the entrapped civilians held hostage as a human shield by the LTTE. My primary and only concern is the well being and safety of the civilian population presently in the No Fire Zone and those displaced persons in the cleared areas," he said.

Excerpts from the address:

"Nearly 180,000 fleeing from the clutches of the LTTE to the cleared areas clearly serve to demonstrate a feeling of security and confidence in our security forces. The LTTE has progressively proved that they have never been interested in negotiating for the aspirations of the Tamil community whom they have claimed to be their sole representatives.

"I wish to take this opportunity to thank your Governments, the United Nations and its Agencies as well as the ICRC for the humanitarian assistance extended in our hour of need. The Government of Sri Lanka is fully engaged in delivering all the basic needs to the people in the welfare centres. The international humanitarian organizations have been given maximum access that is possible at present.

We are in the process of assessing the ground situation and will work towards providing enhanced access in the future. I wish to bring to your notice that at

present there are 52 NGOs working in the IDP welfare villages. The media has also been given unhindered access.

“The North has not seen any development for the past 30 years due to the subjugation and autocratic dominance of the LTTE. The Government is giving top priority to developing these areas. The implementation of long-term development programs for the North and the welfare programs for the displaced persons and their resettlement will be considered our duty and responsibility.

“The international community could join the Government of Sri Lanka in these challenging tasks ahead We are also very keen to ensure the rehabilitation of the surrendered LTTE cadres and bring them into the society. We are also giving emphasis to vocational training to provide life skills to these surrendered cadres.

“While eliminating terrorism militarily and freeing the remaining hostages from the LTTE, a sustainable political solution based on a Sri Lankan agenda is in the process of being worked out.”

Ven. Athuraliye Ratana Thera MP, Ministers Rohitha Bogollagama, Mahinda Samarasinghe, Nimal Siripala de Silva, G. L. Peiris, Douglas Devananda, D. E. W. Gunasekare and Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan, Presidential Senior Advisor Basil Rajapaksa MP, Presidential Secretary Lalith Weeratunge, Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa and Foreign Secretary Dr. Palitha Kohona were also present on the occasion.

 [EMAIL](#) |  [PRINTABLE VIEW](#) |  [FEEDBACK](#)