

Press release. (1995, November 03) *The High commission of Sri Lanka.*

The Sri Lanka Government will send additional medical and food supplies to the Jaffna Peninsula in view of the current situation resulting from the movement of civilians away from the operational areas. Military Spokesman Brig. Sarath Munasinghe told Journalists today (03.11.1995) that the Defence Ministry had authorized the urgent supply of food and essential items including medicine and that they will be transported to the Peninsula soon.

The following food shipments have been arranged by the Commissioner General of Essential Services to be sent to Point Pedro.

MV Habarana - Flour 1000 MT - Loading 3rd November 1995 at Trincomalee for Point Pedro. This vessel will continue to ship 1500 MT until further notice every 10 days.

MV Kumana - Flour 1700 MT and Rice 1500 MT - Loading 6th November 1995 in Colombo to Point Pedro.

MV Kalyani - Expected to arrive in Colombo on 8th November from Kankasanthurai and will be loading Rice, Flour and Dhal amounting to 2200 MT in Colombo to Point Pedro.

* Questioned on as to why the troops were taking so long to move in on Jaffna City Brigadier Munasinghe refused to speculate on whether and when Jaffna would be taken. He confirmed that troops were about 4 1/2 k.m. from the Jaffna City limits adding that they were moving very slowly as the Government was mindful of the need to avoid civilian casualties. Munasinghe said this had paid dividends in that in spite of over two weeks of fighting during operation 'Riviresa'. The reported figure of civilian casualties was considerably low, a fact that had been commented on by even the ICRC. He said there were unconfirmed reports that 10 civilians had been killed but denied suggestions made that the Security Forces had engaged in aerial bombing of the Jaffna Hospital area and Chavakachcheri. He insisted that only known LTTE targets lying immediately ahead of the advancing troops in Urumpilai and Kopai had

been killed and more than 3,000 including Balaraj, the LTTE's second senior most Military Leader next to Prabhakaran had been injured. The Army had lost 07 Officers and 214 Soldiers while 24 Officers and 510 Soldiers had been injured. 03 LTTEs had also surrendered to the Security Forces. Emphasizing that the LTTE was facing serious logistical problems in view of the troop advance, Munasinghe said the LTTE imposed curfew in the Peninsula was aimed at enabling forcible conscription of civilians to bolster their depleting ranks and also to suppress any possible uprising that may emerge from the people.

* Meanwhile interviewed on National Television on Wednesday (01.11.1995) President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga has assured the people that the Government will soon successfully complete the war against the LTTE. However, she emphasized that military victory alone would not be a solution to the ethnic problem and said the Government was committed to finding a lasting political settlement to this problem. The President expressed the belief that the Government's proposals which have been placed before the country provided a sound basis to resolve the problem. Referring to her recent interaction with World Leaders during the New York visit, President Kumaratunga said the International Community is convinced about the sincerity of her Government's commitment to resolve the ethnic problem and added that they are fully supportive of the Government's fight against terrorism.

* The British High Commissioner in Sri Lanka John Field questioned on the BBC's South Asia Survey Wednesday night (01.11.1995) on whether the Sri Lanka Government merely wanted military victory or whether it would pursue with a political settlement has said 'There is a very Definite Political Agenda'. High Commissioner Field also confirmed that the Sri Lanka Government enjoyed international support at the present moment as many people including the Tamils he had met feel that it was the LTTE that had unilaterally abandoned the peace process initiated by the Kumaratunga Administration.