

LTTE's lamp-post killings resurface. (1995, August 27). *Sunday times.*

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Sunday Times 27. 8. 95

By Leon Berenger

The dreaded lamp post killings of persons regarded by the LTTE as traitors or informants, have started again with two such gruesome executions in the East during the week.

The LTTE executions occurred at Batticaloa and in the Eastern port district of Trincomalee. Notices found next to the bodies stated that the men had been put to death since they were traitors to the separatist Tamil cause and therefore had to be punished.

One of the victims was a former member of the Pradeshiya Sabha in the Batticaloa district, police said.

The latest lamp post killings in the East have also brought a chilling reminder of the horrific past where an

undisclosed number of persons were executed in a similar style by the JVP in the South.

Meanwhile police probing the mystery bodies which surfaced in canals and other waterways in the city and outstations, have arrested at least 15 persons including Army and STF personnel.

According to sources the service personnel were picked up from various camps which they were attached to. The motive for the killings is however yet to be established. The sources said more arrests were likely soon.

At least 30 highly decomposed bodies have already been fished out from the Bolgoda lake in Moratuwa, the Hamilton Canal in Wattala and from a waterway in Alawwa close to Kurunegala over the past eight weeks.

The victims are all believed to be Tamils from the North and East who took up residence in the metropolis.

Medical autopsies on most of the bodies indicated that the victims had been starved to death before being dumped into the water with weights tied onto their waists. The unsolved mystery bodies also prompted President Chandrika Kumaratunga to order a top level police investigation with the aim of bringing the killers to justice as early as possible.

At least 10 special police teams led by the CID are currently probing the killings. The floating bodies also caused some embarrassment to the People's Alliance (PA) administration which has vowed among other issues to bring a halt to human right abuses including arbitrary executions of this nature.