

## LTTE instigated violence condemned

The Sri Lanka government yesterday condemned the recent incidents of LTTE instigated violence which had threatened the security of UNHCR staff in Madhu.

A Foreign Ministry release said these incidents had compelled UNHCR to suspend temporarily its humanitarian activities in the Madhu Open Relief Centre (ORC) with effect from 9.11.93.

It said:

"The Madhu and Palampiddi ORC's have been in operation since November 1990 and September 1992 respectively, and provide humanitarian assistance to around 32,000 civilians displaced due to terrorist activity. Govern-

ment food supplies are transported and distributed through these centres with the logistical assistance of UNHCR.

The provision of humanitarian supplies to the displaced persons in the area, which resulted from the process of close co-operation between the Government and UNHCR, has now been disrupted due to the LTTE instigated violence.

According to UNHCR sources, this temporary suspension will affect the following components of their programme in Northern Sri Lanka.

(1). The Madhu and Palampiddi ORCs, an operation that UNHCR was carrying out since November 1990 at

Madhu and since September 1992 at Palampiddi. These operations benefitted an estimated 32,000 persons.

(2). Assistance provided to returnees from India who wish to proceed to uncleared areas and are allowed to do so. In this context, transportation of these persons to their districts of origin was arranged by UNHCR.

(3). Micro projects which aimed at improving living conditions of returnees and the local population in returnee impacted areas. These projects covered a wide range of sectors such as water supply, sanitation, health and education. A few of these projects had already been implemented and a larger number

were in the pipeline.

The immediate reason which led to the LTTE attempting to disrupt UNHCR activities results from their opposition to the government's attempt to accelerate resettlement of cleared areas in the North. An AFP report datelined 9 November from Colombo states that "Aid workers have privately said that Tigers were preventing the refugees from returning to their homes".

The government of Sri Lanka deeply regrets the security threats posed to UNHCR personnel and that the well being of the innocent civilians will be affected by the disruption of the joint humanitarian assistance programme.