

LTTE's female fighters emerge as macabre warriors. (1999, September 26). *The Island*.



Deputy Defence Minister Gen. Anuruddha Ratwatte and his wife with Defence Secretary Chandrananda de Silva and the country's military top brass viewing the spectacular army tattoo at the Khettarama stadium last Friday night. It was held to mark the golden jubilee of the army. With Gen. Ratwatte are Gen. Rohan Daluwatte, General Officer Commanding Joint Operations Headquarters, Army Commander, Lt. Gen. Srilal Weerasinghe, Navy Commander, Vice Admiral Cecil Tissera, Air Force Commander, Air Marshal Jayalath Weerakkody and IGP Lucky Kodituwakku. (Picture by Jude Denzil Pathiraja)

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LTTE's female fighters emerge as macabre warriors

by Amal Jayasinghe

COLOMBO, (AFP) — When almost entire hamlet was massacred in Sri Lanka it was not only the images of children chopped to death that shocked people but also the knowledge that the butchery was led by women.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was asked to deplore the September 18 massacre of 54 villagers and said it had witness accounts of separatist Tamil Tiger guerrillas carrying out the massacre.

The worst carnage was inside the home of a farmer, M. M. Premasiri, who miraculously escaped as the attackers failed to break down the room he was sleeping while elsewhere in the house 14 members of his family were cut to death.

"I heard voices in Tamil," Premasiri said. "I could hear women saying something in Tamil. Then I heard them smashing the furniture, then the screams.

"After a while, the screaming

died down and I heard the Tamil women laughing as if they had gone mad. I came out only after I heard Sinhalese voices several hours later".

The victims were members of the majority Sinhalese community and authorities believe the massacre was a retaliatory attack for an Air Force bombing raid that killed 22 Tamil civilians elsewhere three days earlier.

The Defence Ministry has denied targeting Tamil civilians but has ordered an investigation

and admitted civilians may have been hit accidentally.

International aid officials described horrific scenes after the bombing with many people, including women and children, killed.

Western diplomats here said they were horrified that Saturday's attackers could have meticulously planned the carnage. Long knives and swords were the preferred weapons. The use of women to cut open women and

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