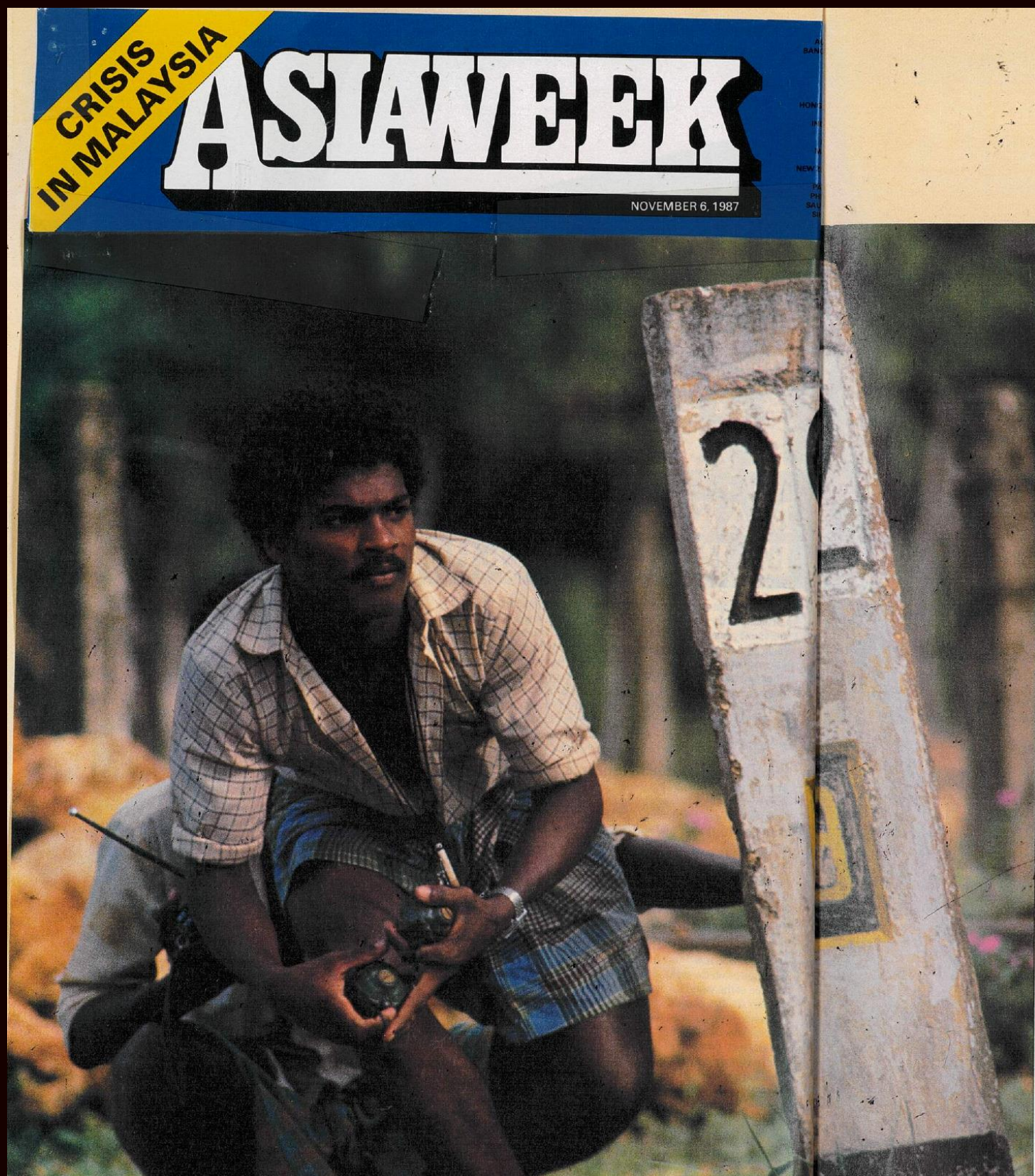
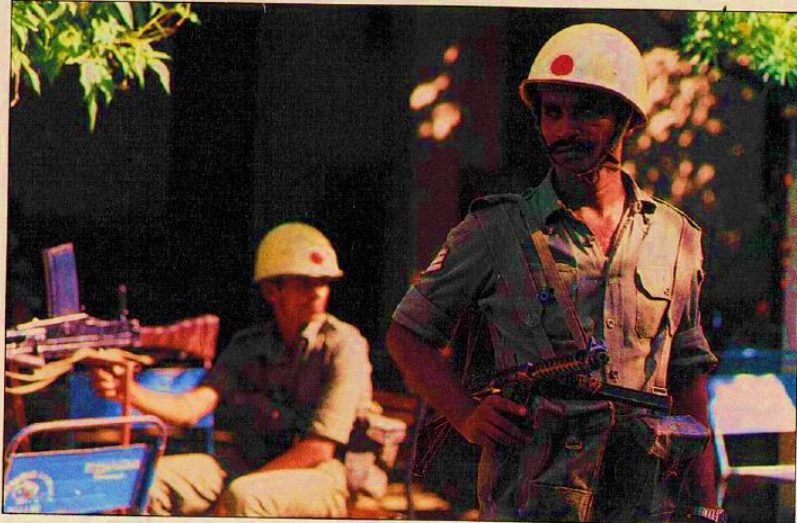


Jaffna's Anguish. (1987, November 6). *Asiaweek*.





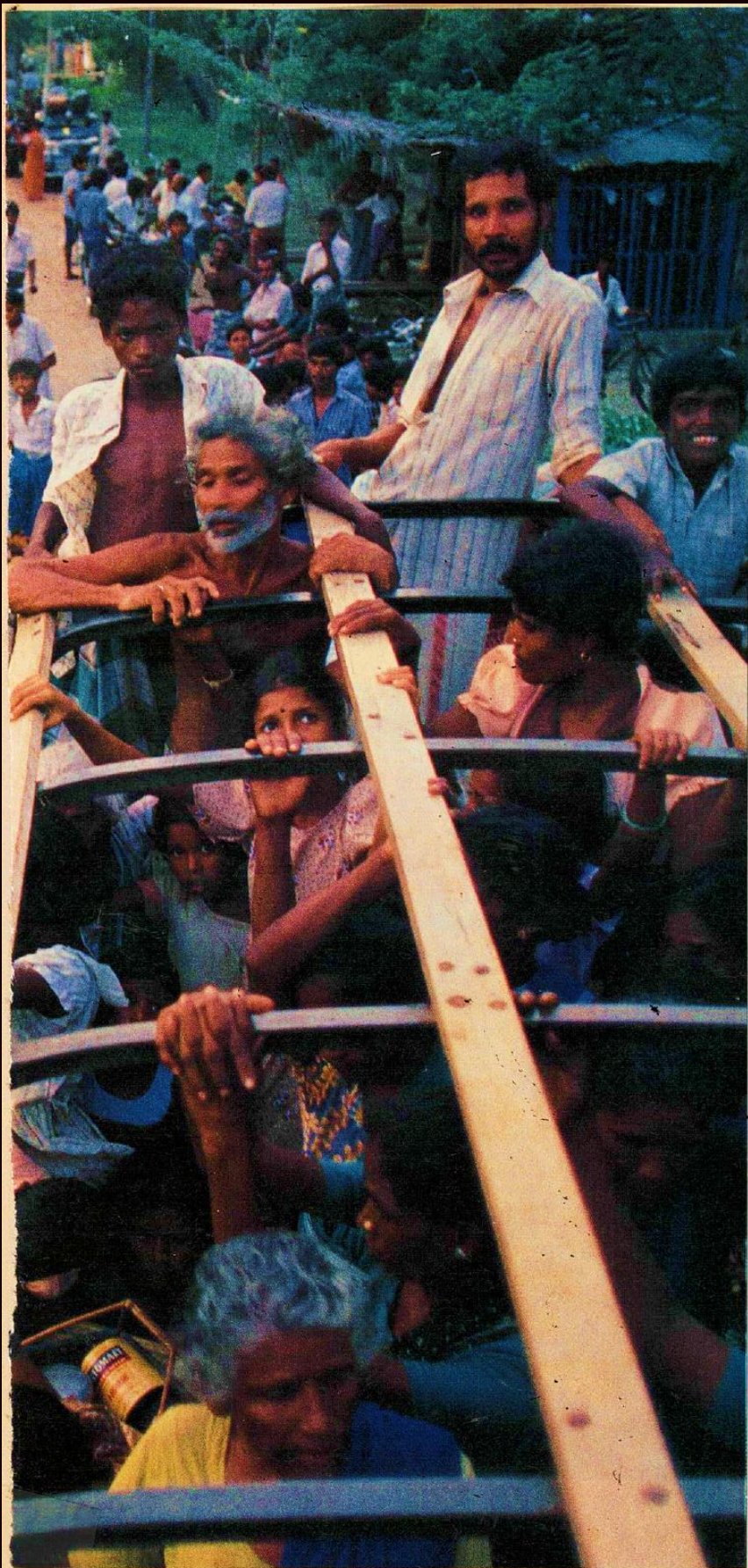
Photos: Greg Girard

EYEWITNESS

Jaffna's Anguish

Slipping out from the bush near Mirusuvil on the Jaffna peninsula, a grenade-toting Tamil Tiger guerilla gets ready to ambush an Indian convoy. Some 12,000 soldiers of the Indian peacekeeping force (*above*) have swarmed over the area in their all-out offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, strongest of the insurgent groups demanding a Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka's Northern and Eastern provinces. The July 29

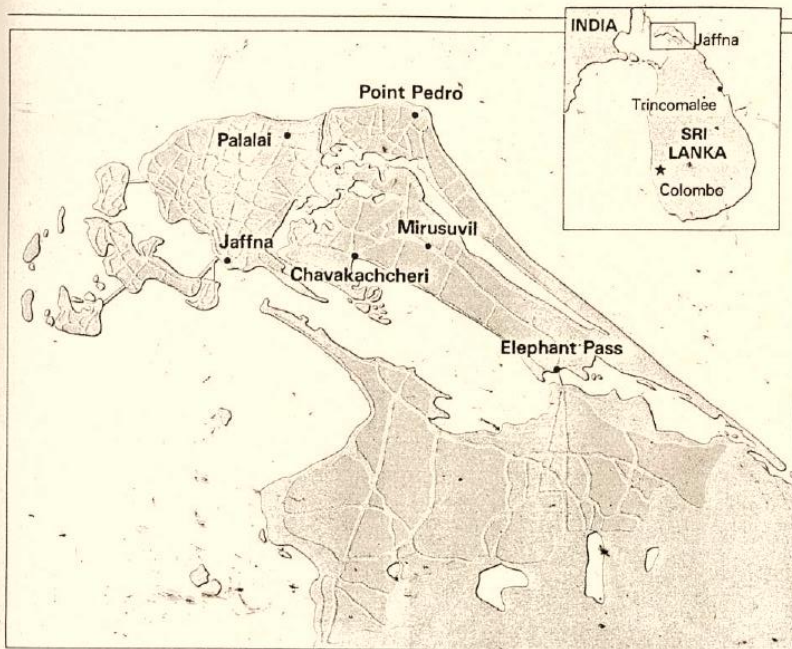
Indo-Lankan accord drew Indian troops into the ethnic conflict. Last week Indian generals claimed victory after driving the Tigers out of Jaffna City. The price: 175 Indian dead and 619 wounded, and 650 Tigers claimed killed. Jaffna sources reckoned that up to 700-1,000 civilians died in the 17-day battle. Tens of thousands more fled, choking roads and makeshift camps. But while Jaffna City cooled, few expected the fighting in Sri Lanka to stop. ►



Photos: Greg Girard

EYEWITNESS

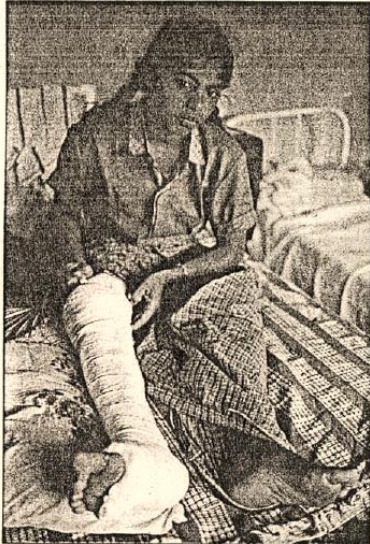
Protected only by white flags, Tamil refugees flee the Indian advance on the peninsula. People grabbed what they could as they sought shelter from raining Indian artillery and Tiger mortars. In Jaffna City safe havens were scarce. Thousands squeezed into the huge Nallur Kandaswamy Hindu temple complex. At the Church of Our Lady of Refuge, Pathma Seelan, news editor of the Tamil daily *Udayan*, said his family had not had a meal for over a week. He pleaded: "They say tons of food relief have been sent to Jaffna. Why can't they airlift in some food?" Indian officials later began doing just that. ▶



EYEWITNESS

Sinhalese refugees arrive at a camp in Trincomalee. Not only Tamils have been uprooted by the war. Many Sinhalese in Eastern Province have fled attacks by Tamils. The Sinhalese, the country's majority group, claim the Tamils are trying to force them out of Eastern Province before a planned vote on autonomy next year, called for by the Indo-Lankan accord. ▶





Photos: Greg Girard

EYEWITNESS

Moaning in pain, this Tamil farmer was hit, say the Tigers, by Indian artillery. Claims of Indian atrocities are rife. Arunanthi Kamaleswaran, 14, said he saw three friends shot dead by Indian soldiers for trying to stop the rape of three Tamil girls. He said the Indians set fire to six other bodies — four of them women of about 18, naked. Denying the accusations, India blames an effective Tiger propaganda machine. Wounded Tigress "Keema" (*above*), 18, claims to have killed six Indian soldiers. Defiantly sporting the trademark double braids of a female Tiger, Keema said she was among 100 girls fighting the Indians at the height of the Jaffna offensive. ►





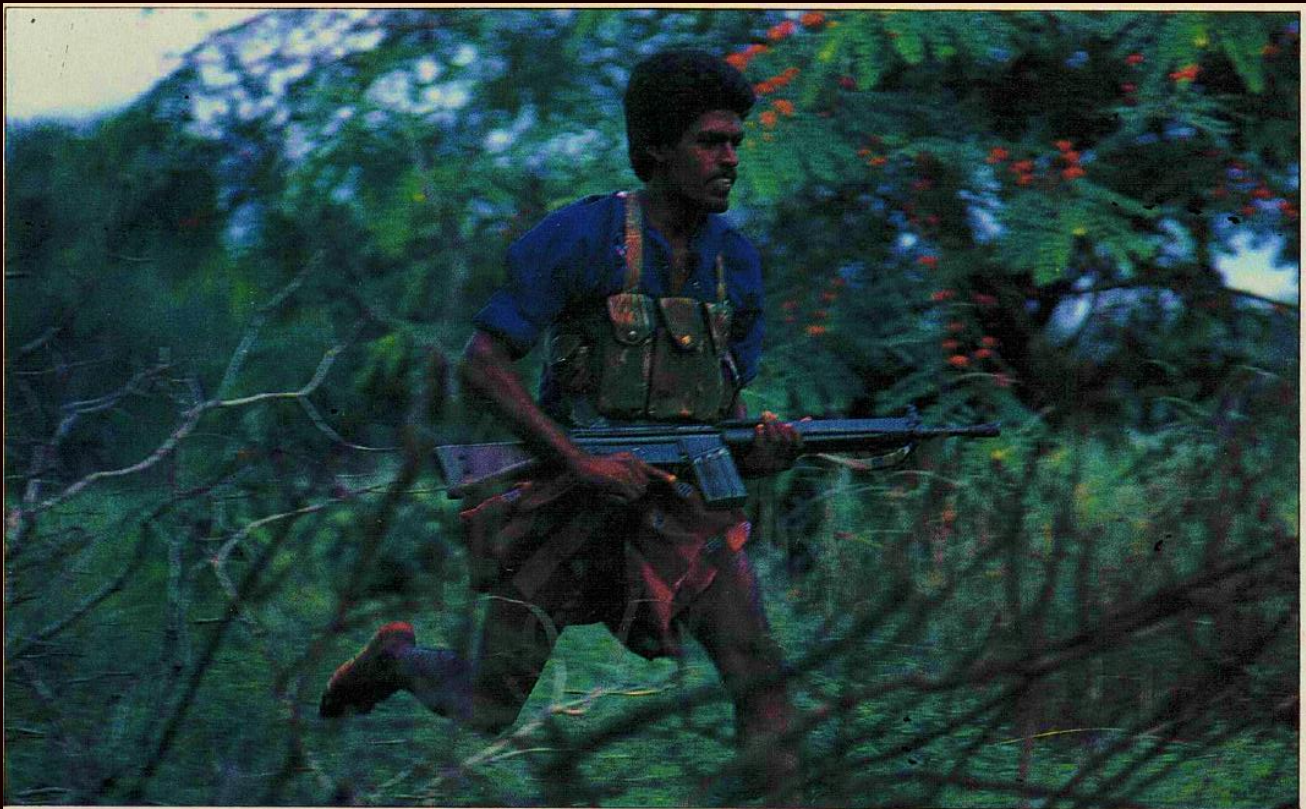


EYEWITNESS

Resting briefly, a Tiger takes cover amid fighting at Mirusuvil. As India's army closed in on Jaffna City, its navy moved to cut off the Tigers' seaward supply and escape routes. Even so, some 1,200 of the estimated 2,000 Tigers based in the city have evaporated into the jungle. An Indian officer says the army now faces a "classic



counter-insurgency operation." The Indians captured no Tiger leaders, though one deputy was reportedly killed. Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran slipped away. A symbol of the guerillas' determination is the cyanide capsule carried by every fighter (*above*). The group's theoretician, Anton Balasingham, says 200 Tigers have swallowed cyanide to avoid interrogation since 1975. Indeed, it was Tiger violence after the mass suicide of thirteen captured comrades that prompted the Indian offensive. ▶



Photos: Greg Girard



EYEWITNESS

A Tiger sprints to safety near Mirusuvil as an Indian convoy approaches, while an alert comrade keeps watch for advancing Indian troops. Though the Indians control Jaffna City and the main roads, the Tigers carry on their shoot-and-run tactics. Most Indian casualties have been from mines. Boasts Balasingham: "Every lane and every road is landmined." Others are killed when they switch on booby-trapped radios or TVs. Predicts a Sri Lankan military intelligence source: "The next phase will be urban terrorism." ▶



Greg Girard

EYEWITNESS

A child in Point Pedro suffers the tragedy of war. India denied shelling civilian targets, and blamed Tiger mortars for the agony of the innocent. Said

Lt.-Gen. Depinder Singh: "We are not using the air force to bomb or strafe them." Tamils, however, ran for cover with every helicopter pass. ►

EYEWITNESS

Camera-shy Indian troops patrol Trincomalee. The Indian assault has predictably alienated people in Jaffna. Now, after feeding and treating the refugees, New Delhi plans to send civil servants to help govern the area. Sri Lankan President Junius Jayewardene has postponed provincial elections, due this year under the peace accord, until the rebels lay down their arms. Parliament has extended emergency rule by another month. The peace is tenuous at best. Last week two Tiger grenades rocked the Indian consular office in the central hill city of Kandy, hitherto little touched by the war. Warned a Sri Lankan military official: "Next will be targets in Colombo and probably Madras. It's the birth of another IRA you're seeing." For those caught in the crossfire, that can only mean more suffering. ■



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