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THE TIMES OF INDIA

Lanka's ruling party chief assassinated

COLOMBO, Dec. 23 (PTI).

THE chairman of Sri Lanka's ruling United National Party (UNP) Mr. Harsha Abeywardene, along with three of his associates was assassinated today in a stunning day-light shoot-out here.

The lone gunman, believed to be a southern 'subversive', also killed Mr. Pathirana, the driver of the vehicle in which Mr. Abeywardene was travelling, police sergeant Gunasekera, the personal security officer of the UNP chairman, and one of his domestic servants.

Mr. Abeywardene, in his early 40s, was re-elected the chairman of the party on Saturday at the party's annual convention here.

At the convention President J. R. Jayewardene had blasted out in the southern subversives, communally identified as the proscribed pro-Sinhala

extremist political group 'Janatha Vimukthi Peremuna' (JVP) and described them as 'brutes', who were killing innocent people, ruling party office-bearers and government officials.

The police said the assassin was understood to have fired from a machine gun, which was inside a box on a cycle carrier, camouflaged as a fish-vendor's container.

As soon as the UNP chairman and his three associates got into the car, the gunman standing behind the box on the cycle, fired from the machine gun from point blank range, killing all the four.

The incident took place near Mr. Abeywardene's residence at Hammond Lane around 1015 hours under Wellawatte police station in Colombo.

They were all removed to hospital where they were declared dead.

The assassination of Mr. Abeywardene was on the same lines as that of police superintendent Terrence Perera, head of the government's counter-subversive unit, who was killed in the city outskirts by two suspected JVP hit-men on December 2.

The assailants had escaped without

leaving any trace. The UNP chief's death sent shock waves through the ruling party circles in the city. The fact that JVP could strike at the top UNP leader despite the tight security arrangements in the city, since early this month was a matter of concern for party leaders and supporters.

The attack came less than three days after Mr. Jayewardene publicly declared that the government would crush "southern terrorism" in two weeks unless the "terrorists" came forward and "begged for mercy." The JVP, which is opposed to the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement, has killed more than 150 UNP leaders and supporters since the signing of the accord, according to party official.

All police stations in the city have been put on maximum alert following today's incident. The police have also intensified checking of vehicles entering and leaving the city.

Police dogs were taken to the scene of the attack and a team of 15 crack detectives had been pressed into service to trace the assassins.

13 Tigers, 5 IPKF Agnivesh, others jawans killed held at Chomu

NEW DELHI, Dec. 23 (PTI).

THIRTEEN LTTE members and five IPKF jawans were killed in separate incidents in northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka in the last 24 hours as 'demoralised' cadres of the Tamil militant organisation began 'deserting' the group.

Ten LTTE members were killed in a major clash with IPKF at Urumparai in Jaffna, the external affairs ministry spokesman told reporters. The IPKF did not suffer any casualty in this incident, he added.

Three other LTTE members were killed in two incidents at Arukulam and Kokkivil, he said.

The spokesman said three IPKF jawans were killed and four wounded when a patrol was ambushed by the LTTE at Chavakachcheri in Jaffna. In the eastern Batticaloa an IPKF

boat carrying 12 personnel capsized in the Kiran Lagoon and two jawans drowned. Army divers are carrying out the search.

The spokesman said according to information received here there has been 'extensive demoralisation' in the LTTE cadres and they had 'begun to desert' their leadership.

In view of this, the LTTE leadership was trying to get reinforcement

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Times & Success

appears on Page 5.

from the eastern province, he added. Meanwhile Sri Lanka's transport



Mr. Peter Ruhe, founder of the Gandhi information centre. Berlin, West Germany, who is leading a ten-member group touring Gujarat, addressing a press conference in Ahmedabad on Wednesday. (Report on Page 3)

It's a let-down by diplomats in Wash

By BRIJ KHINDARIA

The Times of India News Service

GENEVA, Dec. 23.

IT is time for heads to roll at the Indian embassy in Washington and the external affairs ministry cells dealing with India's relations with the United States.

An informal telephone poll by this correspondent of at least 24 Indian senators, congressional aides and White House officials, who preferred to remain

and reflects a glaring policy failure on an issue which has been a prime concern both in India and Pakistan for decades.

An amendment approved by the sub-committee makes it mandatory on India to conclude a "bilateral agreement to reduce tension" with Pakistan. Delhi has been periodically negotiating peace or "no-war" pacts with Pakistan for decades but may not be able to speed up the process of national interests but because of a U.S. legislative decision.

Zahir Shah may India crash get back throne to defeat

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (PTI).

FORMER King of Afghanistan Zahir Shah is to be brought back from exile to a restored throne in Afghanistan as part of the UN peace plan, according to 'The Washington Times.'

The plan has reportedly drafted by Mr. Diego Gonsalves, the UN secretary general's representative for the talks on Afghanistan, Afghan and Pakistan.

The paper quoted Gonsalves as saying that the UN would guarantee Soviet

Zahir Shah in Rome - two weeks ago, and then travelled to Moscow for talks with Soviet officials. The 73-year-old former King, who went into exile after a palace coup in Afghanistan, has become a pivotal figure in the discussions. He has been receiving a steady stream of foreign visitors, including U.S. and Soviet diplomats, in his 2,000-dollar flat in Rome.

He must straightaway be said that the Nehru Stadium track was no easy to bat on. It was extremely slow paced. The ball tended to stop and seldom rose above knee height. On a track strokemarking is always a proposition. All the same conditions have served

INDIA have fallen on evil days. Batting is no longer their strength. They were unable to chase a modest target of 188 against the West Indies in the second Charninar challenge international here today. The margin of their defeat, 52 runs, provides a telling commentary.

It must straightaway be said that the Nehru Stadium track was no easy to bat on. It was extremely slow paced. The ball tended to stop and seldom rose above knee height. On a track strokemarking is always a proposition. All the same conditions have served

'W. Germans receptive to Gandhian ideals'

AHMEDABAD, December 23. MR. PETER RÜHE, founder of the Gandhi information centre, today said that the West German public is receptive to Gandhian ideals of non-violence and truth.

Mr. Ruhe is leading a ten-member historical group which will visit India as part of their six-week study tour called "On the traces of Mahatma Gandhi" in Gujarat. The group has already visited the Sarvodaya Ashram in south Gujarat and met Sarvodaya leaders and workers, including Desai.

Mr. Ruhe told reporters that they would write a book on the Gandhian philosophy in Israel to spread the message of peace in the strife-torn areas of Israel and Palestine. The distinct feature of the exhibition was that it was jointly prepared by Israelis and bureaucrats.

They are ignoring the most noticeable fact of current political life in the U.S. - obvious even to the casual observer - that unlike in Delhi, where the government can twist the arms of parliamentarians, the U.S. administration has little influence over Capitol Hill.

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you said it
by Laxman