
Sri Lanka's east returns to normalcy: commission report

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COLOMBO, June 16 (Xinhua) -- Sri Lanka's once troubled Eastern Province has reached near normalcy with a drastic drop of disappearances of people and fewer security road blocks, a one-man commission reported here Tuesday. The retired judge Mahanama Thilakaratna, who heads a one-man commission of Inquiry to look into disappearances, abductions and murders, told reporters that rights violations in the Eastern Province had recorded a drop of around 90 to 95 percent this year compared with Jan-May period of 2008.

"Armed groups joining democracy, closer co-operation between such groups have contributed to this situation," Thilakaratna said. There is general public view that law stands above all things else, Thilakaratna said. He said in Trincomalee district except for two road blocks, all others had been removed leading to near normalization. But in the Batticaloa district it had been difficult to remove the road blocks yet, Thilakaratna said. He said the general situation in the east had drastically improved since the provincial election of May last year. The militant group TMVP (Tamil Peoples Liberation Tiger) which broke away from the former Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) gained control of Eastern Province Council. The government troops evicted the LTTE from the east in 2007 which was the prelude to the Army gaining control of the entire Tamil Tiger held regions. The LTTE were completely crushed by the government troops last month with all their 15,000-sq-km territory being recaptured by the troops and almost all LTTE fighters being killed. Claiming discrimination at the hands of the majority Sinhalese dominated governments, the LTTE began to fight for an independent Tamil homeland in the north and east in the 1980s, resulting in the killing of around 100,000 people in one of the world's longest civil wars. courtesy: new.xinhuanet.com