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Suspect wanted for 1996 Central Bank bombing arrested



By Supun Dias

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on Sunday arrested one of the main suspects of the 1996 Central Bank suicide bombing by the LTTE, police media spokesman SSP I.M Karunaratne said today.

The suspect had produced a forged identity producing that he was born in the year 1946 as people who were more than 60 were released first from the IDP camps. The Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) confirmed that the suspect is 53 years old. The suspect was arrested in Chettikulam, he added

He was suspected of transporting the 440 pounds of high explosives, in a lorry from Vavuniya to Colombo, which was later used for the attack. In 2002, Colombo High Court judge sentenced Sellathamby Navaratnam in absentia to 200 years of rigorous imprisonment, SSP Karunaratne said.

N.B.

We recall how human rights activists and NGO's both local and foreign wanted the release of 60 year olds. This instance where Sallathamby Navaratnam who drove the explosive laden truck to Colombo from vavuniya used the amnesty given by the army for 60 year olds by forging an National Identity Card and escape, is a flagrant abuse of the goodwill demonstrated by the GoSL, and will be further detrimental to the granting of further concessions to IDP's who are yet to be screened. While acknowledging the need to expedite the screening of IDP's so that their resettlement is not unnecessarily delayed, it is to be noted that human rights activists and local and foreign NGO's are not exempt from their civic duty to protect and safeguard the security of a sovereign nation and must therefore, act responsibly in this regard.

The Sri Lanka Police and the Intelligence units are to be congratulated for apprehending a suspect who had eluded arrest for 13 years having been a key player, at the age of 40, in committing the dastardly attack by bombing the Central Bank in 1996.

There still remain many more hard core LTTE cadre disguised as civilians in IDP camps, and they too, must be rooted out in the national interests of Sri Lanka.