

TIC

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Date: 12th April 1984.

TAMIL INFORMATION CENTRE

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS & TAMILS OF SRI LANKA.

1.0 FOCUS

1.1 We reported last week, in our Special Focus, datelined 4th April, 1984 that

- there were renewed killings of Tamil civilians by Sri Lankan armed forces
- following 'unbridgeable gap' at amity talks
- and failure of Sri Lankan Government to offer any solution
- other than a planned build up of the Sinhala army in Tamil areas
- and a high profile United States association
- coupled with an expensive legitimising propaganda effort
- which labelled the Tamil struggle as 'leftist inspired'
- in the hope that the world may listen
- because 'the world had not believed the Government before'.....
- and the stage was set
- for the massacre of the 28th of April 1984
- to be explained away as the act of an 'indisciplined army'.....
- but facts and President Jayawardene's own admission falsified this explanation
- and suggested a 'Biafara' style operation in Tamil areas
- as President Jayawardene's final solution to the Tamil National question
- and we hoped that the Sri Lankan Government would prove us wrong

1.2 It would seem, however, that the Government of Sri Lanka is determined to prove us right and that it is set on a continuing path of murder and arson, in violation of its obligation under the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights - a covenant

CONTD. /2

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1.2 (Continued.)

which it has ratified.

We now detail the information that we have received since our Last Report.

EVENTS SINCE LAST REPORT

2.0 JAFFNA

- 2.1 We have now received information that the attack on the civilians on 28th March 1984, at Chunnakam market was without any provocation contrary to the claims by the Government that there was an ambush. We have not yet received information relating to details of attacks at Mallakam and Tellipalai on 28th March 1984.
- 2.2 No inquest was ordered on the killings by the Airforce on 28th March. Inquest was ordered on the killing of two Excise Officials by unknown persons on the 29th March 1984.
- 2.3 Army and Navy personnel went on the rampage again on 9th April 1984, (believed to be in retaliation to a bomb thrown at an Army truck) between 1.30 and 4.30 P.M. and killed at least 10 civilians and injured over 50 others. They have also burnt the Jaffna Co-operative Stores. (The largest departmental stores in Tamil areas) and several other shops and vehicles.
- 2.4 The Church of Our Lady of Refugee was selected for attack by shells from heavy "equipment" and it was damaged badly. The Parsonage too was fired at. The houses in the vicinity too were indiscriminately fired at by the Security personnel.
- 2.5 9th/10th night the Security Forces have set fire to a garage, burning two workers alive. At least six cars were burnt.
- 2.6 On the 10th morning people, believed to be from the congregation of the damaged Church, have burnt the 'Sinhala Maha Vidyalala' (a Sinhalese School), a pilgrims rest and damaged a Buddhist Temple and some shops belonging to Sinhalese. A curfew was imposed at 12 Noon. Firing by the Security personnel were heard during curfew time.

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28TH.MARCH 1984 - 'SUN'

Stringent new anti-terrorism laws MORE POWERS TO THE ARMED FORCES

BY LALITH ALAHAKOON.

Government is to introduce series of amendments to the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act to give more teeth to the anti-terrorist operations in the country.

The amendments, SUN learns are to be introduced in the wake of the increasing incidence of terrorism.

According to the proposed provisions, a person arrested under the act by a commissioned officer in the armed forces, should be handed over to the police within 24 hours or the arrest. Such person however, will not have the right of access to a lawyer until the conclusion of the investigations.

This provision, a government spokesman told SUN, is to be introduced in a bid to prevent terrorists being produced in courts and interviewed by lawyers on habeas corpus applications which the government considers as an unnecessary exercise.

Police powers are also to be given to the armed forces involved in anti-terrorist activities in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. This amendment will enable armed forces to arrest any person within a war-rant, and enter and search any premises, vehicle, train, vessel or aircraft and take into custody any document from any institution or bank.

The members of the armed forces will also have powers under the Prison Ordinance to escort prisoners or terrorists, guard any place and assist to quell any disturbance in prisons. If any person dies during an arrest or the prevention of a commission of an offence, by the armed forces or police, an inquest into the death of persons will not be held as stipulated in the Code of Criminal Procedure. However, the magistrate of the area will direct the Judicial Medical Officer to hold a post-mortem and submit a report to the Attorney-General. Then the Attorney-General, if necessary, will direct the magistrate concerned to hold an inquest.

Meanwhile, SUN learns that the government is considering some relaxation on press curbs imposed under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.