

Date: 30th July, 83.

TAMIL INFORMATION CENTRE

INCIDENTS FROM 21ST JULY, 1983.

1. SUMMARY OF EARLIER REPORTS

- 1.1 Sri Lanka is ruled under Emergency since 18th May, 1983 and there is complete press censorship, SATURDAY REVIEW an English Weekly and SUTHANTHIRAN a Tamil bi-Weekly which would have published news relating to Tamils are closed down by the government.
- 1.2 Communication has become extremely difficult and there is no communication to the Tamil areas particularly to Jaffna and Trincomalee since 26th July, 83.
- 1.3 In Jaffna after kidnapping of three Tamil girls by the Army and a consequential bombing of an army truck, the Army went on a rampage killing people at random. The killings included 6 children and an old man of 83 years of age.
- 1.4 From the 24th July, Tamils in Colombo were attacked. Their houses and business establishments were burnt. Every part of the City and its suburbs were affected and the attack was planned. The security forces did nothing to stop the violence which was freely carried out even during curfew hours.
- 1.5 The office of the Indian High Commission and the residence of some of the personnel of the Indian High Commission were also attacked.
- 1.6 Thirty Seven (37) prisoners were massacred in the prison which included Kuttimani.

2. COLOMBO

- 2.1 There have been attacks on Tamils by the Sinhalese People everyday in some part of the City. No one is able to give a fair estimate of deaths. The estimates vary from 50 to 150. The loss of property is very extensive estimated at several hundred millions of rupees.
- 2.2 The attackers were seen with lists of names presumably the names of Tamil people.
- 2.3 There was renewed intensive attacks in Colombo on 29th July, in which at least 33 persons killed and 4 of them were burnt alive. The violence was taking place in the heart of the City in close proximity to the Police Stations and Navy Barracks.

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LIST OF TAMIL POLITICAL PRISONERS MASSACRED IN PRISON ON 25th JULY 1983

1. Kuttimani.
2. N.Thangathurai.
3. Nadesathasan.
4. Jegan.
5. Alias Sivarasa.
6. Sivan - Anpalagan.
7. A.Balasubramaniam.
8. Surashkumar.
9. Aruntnavarajah.
10. Thanapalasingham.
11. Arafat.
12. P.Mahendran.
13. K.Thillainathan.
14. S.Kularajasekaram.
15. K.Uthaya Kumar.
16. Sivakumar.S
17. A.Rajan.
18. S.Alias Balachandran.
19. Yogachandran Killi.
20. S.Subramaniam.
21. Mylvaganam-Sinniah.
22. G.Mylvaganam.
23. Ch.Sivanantharajah.
24. T.Kandiah.
25. S.Sathiyaseelan.
26. Kathiravelpillai.
27. Easvaranathan..
28. K.Nagarajah.
29. Gunapalan Ganeshalingam.
30. Anpalagan sunduran.
31. Ramalingam Balachandram.
32. K.Thavarajasingham.
33. K.Krishnakumar.
34. R.Yoganathan.
35. A.Uthayakumar.
36. G.Amirthalingam.
37. V.Chandrakumar .
38. Sittampalam Chandrakulam.
39. Navaratnam Sivapatham (Master).

3. KANDY AND OTHER PLACES IN THE UP-COUNTRY

- 3.1 Violence broke out in Kandy on 26th July and it is reported that there was extensive damage to property of the Tamils. Several Tamils were killed but there is no confirmed report as to the number of persons killed.
- 3.2 There were also attacks in Gampola, Matala, Badulla and Bandarawela. It is believed that Dickoya was also under attack. The victims were all Tamil plantation workers. The exact details are not yet available.

4. JAFFNA

- 4.1 The government has reported that they had no news from Jaffna despite the fact that they have at least 5 different radio links (including high frequency radios) and the distance is just 250 miles.
- 4.2 We have received several reports of atrocities and since we are unable to confirm them we are not repeating them except the one which we have received repeatedly.
- 4.3 The army has attacked one whole village and virtually destroyed the village. There is conflicting report about the name of the village. The extent of casualty is not known.
- 4.4 There is tremendous shortage of food and kerosine oil in Jaffna. Unless kerosine is made available soon current crops may be destroyed due to the hot and dry season prevailing now. It is feared that the government is maintaining the shortage deliberately. It should be recalled that this government has been taking measures to cripple the farmers from the North even during normal times.

5. TRINCOMALEE

- 5.1 The government has here too reported that they had no news for several days! At last on the 28th it was reported that the Navy personnel went on a rampage. The nature and extent damage is not clearly given.
- 5.2 Again we have received several unconfirmed reports of atrocities. In one of the reports it is said that the armed forces had taken about 350 Tamils in trucks and their fate is not known yet. It is not clear whether the Tamils taken were the refugees who were victims in 1977 and 1981 racial violence who were Plantation Tamils. It is also reported that nearly 500 houses of Tamils were burnt.

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5.3 We are endeavouring to get first hand information to report and we hope that we would be able to do so soon.

6. OTHER AREAS

6.1 Violence was also reported from Kalutara, Galle and Matara. The details are not known.

7. MASSACRES IN PRISON

7.1 As reported earlier 37 prisoners held under Prevention of Terrorism Act were massacred on Monday the 25th July. About 70 prisoners were held in prison and no charges were framed against most of them even under the said law which sets out offences not known to the normal law.

7.2 It is claimed by the government that the fellow prisoners broke out and killed these prisoners. It has not been explained how the prisoners obtained iron rods and knives.

7.3 Again on the 29th July, the Sinhalese prisoners 'broke out' and massacred further 19 prisoners one of whom is Doctor Rajasunderam, the Secretary of Gandhyam Society, which has been assisting the victims of 1977 and 1981 racial violence.

7.3 It is noteworthy that Sinhalese prisoners have been discerning enough not to kill Christian priests who were in the same jail and select firstly the Tamil youths. The President Mr. Jayawardane has declared that he would "wipe out terrorism". Perhaps this is the contribution by the Sinhalese prisoners!

8. REFUGEES

8.1 In Colombo and suburbs there are nearly 100,000 persons displaced and most of them are in refugee camps. Govt. has done nothing to help them. Food did not reach them for nearly three days. Some foreign voluntary organisations have offered help and at least one of them has now started work.

8.2 Until the morning of 29th July, Red-Cross Society in Colombo has not requested help from the International body in Geneva or its sister organisations elsewhere. It will be recalled that their participation in refugee problem after the violence in 1977 was minimal and half hearted. Some of the officials were more concerned with suppressing the atrocities rather than alleviate the sufferings. The Red Cross Society is controlled by Sinhalese people who are unable to rise above their racial hatred or prejudices, even in the work of the Red Cross.

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- 8.3 In Kandy there were 25,000 refugees on 28th July and in Matale about 1,000 refugees. The estimate of refugees in the up-country is about 50,000. In 1977 too it was the experience that the help from any outside body and the government took considerable time to reach.
- 8.4 In 1958, 1977 and 1981 Tamil voluntary associations were able to function and they did their best to give assistance to the refugees. Now most of the Tamil organisations are unable to function due to the extensive violence and by the fact that most of the volunteers themselves are displaced and all food stores owned by the Tamils were destroyed.
- 8.5 It has been the experience that the Buddhist Organisations with rare exceptions do not get interested in helping the suffering Tamils. The refugees are thus heavily dependant on the Christian Organisations.

9. GENERAL

- 9.1 It is reported that the government is taking step to transport the refugees by ship (as has been the practice in 1958 and 1977). Since the numbers are large it will be necessary that some assistance for housing, food and clothing should be arranged even after they reach Tamil areas.
- 9.2 In 1977 the camps were maintained in the North. On 12th November, 1977 the government disbanded the camp almost at gun point.
- 9.3 It will be necessary to deal with the refugees more humanely.



INFORMATION OFFICER

30th July, 1983.

L A T E N E W S:

It has been lately reported that there was a large scale violence committed against the Plantation Tamils in the NuwaraEliya and Badulla areas and heavy casualties are expected.


I. O.

1. Muthukumar SRIKUMAR
2. Amirthanayagam PHILIP
3. Kulasingam KUMAR
4. Selachami KUMAR
5. Kandasamy SARVESWARAN
6. A. MARIANPILLAI
7. Sivapathan NEETHIRAJAH
8. Devanayagam PASKARAN
9. Ponnaiya THURAIRAJAH alias THANKATHURAI
10. Gnanamuthu NAVERATNASINGHAM
11. Kandiah RAJENDRAN alias ROBERT
12. Dr Somasunderam RAJASUNDERAM
13. Somasunderan MANORANJAN
14. Arumugam SEYAN alias APPU
15. Thamocharampillai JAGEMOCANANDAN
16. Sinnathambi SIVASUBRAMANIAM
17. Sella Rajeratnam
18. Kumarasamy GANESHALINGAM
19. Ponnampalam DEVAKUMAR - died in hospital morning of 29.7.83

Civil war in Sri Lanka?

THE TIMES



SATURDAY JULY 30 1983

THE

During the last outbreak of serious communal violence in Sri Lanka, in 1981, I met a 74-year-old Tamil doctor standing in the blackened ruins of his house on Main Street, Jaffna. It had been fire-bombed by Sinhalese police officers a few nights earlier. The doctor told me that he had lived in the Sinhalese-dominated town of Kandy until 1977, but then his house there had been burnt down. "I had a good practice in Kandy," he said, "but I moved here because it was the only place where I felt safe, where I could be among other Tamil people. Now my house here has been burnt down, so it seems I'm not even safe in Jaffna. Where can I go now?"

It is a question which more and more Tamils have been asking. Some have answered it by emigrating, most commonly to Britain, West Germany or the United States. Those who have stayed, however, have come to believe that there is only one way to protect themselves from the increasingly frequent Sinhalese attacks: the creation of a separate Tamil state - referred to as Eelam - in the traditional Tamil areas in the north and east of the island.

To the outsider, such a suggestion may seem wildly impractical - and ill-omened, if one reflects on the success rate of other partitioned islands, such as Cyprus or Ireland. But the Tamils argue that this is an unfair comparison. Elsewhere, they say, partition has created artificial edifices with no cultural or historical foundations; Tamil Eelam, on the other hand, would be a recreation of the Tamil kingdoms that existed in pre-colonial days.

If one remains unconvinced, the Tamils produce their clincher: "What is the alternative?"

It is difficult to think of one. Ever since Ceylon became independent in 1948, the Tamils have been a persecuted minority. Their language and culture have been downgraded; they have been discriminated against in employment and education; and they have been subjected to violent physical attack. Genocide is a word that must be used with care; but how else is one to describe the impulse which guided the Sinhalese lynch-mobs this week? Alarming numbers of Sinhalese now wish to see the Tamils driven off the face of Sri Lanka, and are more than willing to carry out the task themselves.

The Sri Lankan government must take its share of the blame for this. In recent years, President Jayewardene has from time to time tried to sound conciliatory, admitting that some Tamil complaints might be justified. However, his action - or lack of it - has belied these soothing words, and in a television broadcast this week, he said that since the Tamils had so annoyed the majority community by advocating partition, he and his government had decided

to calm things by making it illegal to urge the separation.

The government, when presented with evidence that the army or the police have committed atrocities against defenceless Tamils, has usually reacted with a shrug of the shoulders. Sometimes, indeed, police misconduct has actually been rewarded. In two separate cases recently, the Supreme Court found that police officers had acted illegally; in both cases, the officers concerned were promoted soon after the judgment.

The security forces have interpreted this as a licence to do as they please with impunity, and President Jayewardene has not seemed eager to disabuse them. Early last month he introduced a regulation which allows the police to cremate or bury dead bodies, if they think it "necessary", without any inquest or post mortem taking place.

Under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which has been used almost exclusively against Tamils, suspects can be held without trial for up to 18 months. Three weeks ago Amnesty International published a report which suggested that Tamils detained under the Act had been tortured, both in army camps and by the police. President Jayewardene dismissed the allegations as soon as the report appeared, denouncing Amnesty as "communists".

This reaction was consistent with his normal approach to the bearers of bad tidings. One month ago he ordered the closure of two leading Tamil newspapers, *Suthanthiran* and the *Saturday Review*, which had printed accounts of attacks on Tamils in Trincomalee. At the same time he confirmed that in future all candidates for Parliament would have to swear in an affidavit that they would not support the Tamils' demand for a separate state.

All this was done in the name of "eliminating terrorism" - a reference to the Tamil Tigers, who have been held responsible for attacks on troops and police. It is a queer sort of logic which holds that the best way of eliminating Tamil terrorism is to ban all Tamil political parties and proscribe the main Tamil newspapers. But President Jayewardene, like many of his compatriots, seems to use the words "terrorist" and "Tamil" as if they were interchangeable these days. He told an interviewer this month: "I am not worried about the opinion of the Jaffna people now. Now we can't think of them; not about their lives or of their opinion of us."

Given this hardening of attitude, it is hard to see how Sri Lanka's drift into civil war can be stopped. The government is determined that the Tamils' demand for Eelam must be silenced; yet each bout of communal violence merely strengthens the Tamils' conviction that a separate state is the only solution.

The author is on the staff of *New Statesman*.

THE TIMES THURSDAY JULY 28 1983

Colombo rioting wrecks 20,000 Tamil businesses

From Michael Hamlyn, Colombo

Smoke from hundreds of shops, offices, warehouses and homes blew idly over Colombo yesterday. Any business, any house belonging to, or occupied by, a Tamil has been attacked by gangs of *gondars* (hooligans) and the resulting destruction looks like London after a heavy night's attention from the Lufthansa.

The sharp smell of destruction fills the nostrils and the roads beneath the feet crunch with broken glass. Cars and lorries lie at ungainly angles across the footways.

In Pettah, the old commercial heart of the city, row after row of saree boutiques, electronic

dealers, rice sellers, car parts stores, lie shattered and scarred. The ashes and effluents of racial hatred spill far into the roadway.

Last night, to prevent a further recurrence of the three nights of mayhem, a curfew was enforced with rigorous discipline. In the town centre every street corner was manned with steel-helmeted troops.

Further out, enforcement of the curfew was more difficult and young curfew-breakers puffed across the road and in and out of alleyways like quicksilver. Those who were caught were made to put their hands on their heads and spin round in circles for five or 10 minutes until they fell and were allowed to stagger off.

Government officials yesterday estimated that 20,000 businesses had been attacked in the city and declared that there was a pattern of organization and planning in the rioting and looting. They also admitted that the disturbances had spread to the central hill town of Kandy, and to a smaller town closer to Colombo called Compote.

The violence got under way late on Sunday after news spread of the deaths of 13 soldiers in a terrorist attack in the north. Plans to bury the victims in a mass grave in the main cemetery of Colombo caused a crowd to gather.

The crowd became hostile. The first Tamil shops and

premises attacked were near the cemetery.

The following morning the terror reached a peak. Families left on their own while their menfolk were at work were invaded by hostile gangs demanding money and stealing.

People who had lived happily with their neighbours for years and whose only crime was that they spoke a different language and worshipped a Hindu god were suddenly dispossessed. Their homes and furnishings were burnt and tossed into the street.

The imposition of the curfew at 2 pm that day brought a little relief, but not much. The curfew was supposed to be in full effect all day on Tuesday but that did not prevent further homes and businesses suffering.

By yesterday it seemed that the crowd's fury had been slaked. The curfew was relaxed from 5 am but reimposed at 4 pm.

According to an announcement yesterday the curfew will be lifted between 5 am and 2 pm today and tomorrow but on Saturday and Sunday it will remain in force all day.

Tamil families have taken refuge in six refugee camps around the city, mainly in school buildings, where they are protected by armed guards.

Unofficial estimates put the number of dead in three days' rioting at more than 100.

One of the principal reasons for Britain's delay in granting independence to its former

colony was because of fears that the majority would tyrannize the minority Tamils.

But the majority Sinhalese speakers feel that they are threatened by 40 million Tamil speakers in India. They feel it is their language and their civilization which is under potential attack.

Holidays hit: The Association of British Travel Agents is advising its members to postpone package holiday flights to Sri Lanka.

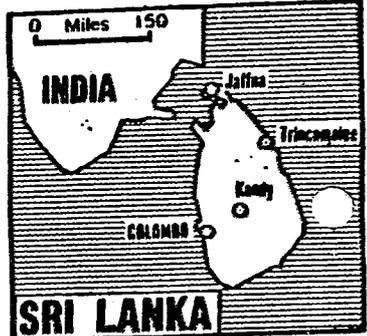
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CRISIS ON PARADISE ISLAND

Britons flee as army goes berserk

200 killed as rioters set fire to cities



AS bloody rioting spread in the island paradise of Sri Lanka yesterday British tourists queued at airline offices for a plane out.

They had only a few hours to act—for a new curfew was imposed over a long and tense weekend.

Though holiday hotels were not hit, the British High Commission in Colombo said, "a lot of British tourists want to leave."

Trigger-happy troops — the army has gone berserk" according to an Indian source — patrolled burning and ruined streets.

Unofficial reports say that up to 200 people have died in attacks by the Buddhist Sinhalese majority on Tamils, who are Hindus of Indian origin.

Other incidents:

- In a Colombo jail where 25 Tamil prisoners were clubbed or knifed to death by other prisoners on Tuesday 17 more were killed yesterday. Troops quelled the riot with batons and tear gas.
- In a jail at Jaffna, in Tamil territory, three prisoners were killed in a clash with warders.

set fire to cities

From Express Reporter in Colombo

soners were killed in a clash with warders.

• In the naval port of Trincomalee 130 sailors on the rampage burned the Tamil quarter, killing one person and injuring 10. Many sailors are under arrest.

• At Colombo's main railway station seven Tamil young men suspected of carrying arms were killed by commuters and thrown on the tracks.

• Rioting was also reported in the towns of Kandy and Gampola.

Last night President Junius Jayewardene made his first television appearance since the troubles began last weekend with an attack on troops by Tamil guerrillas demanding a separate state in the north of the island.

'United'

The people of Sri Lanka — it was known as Ceylon until becoming Independent of Britain in 1948 — will never agree to division of a country that has been a united nation for 2,500 years," the president declared.

So the Government will not outline all "separatists." They will be denied seats in Parliament, barred from all professions, and not allowed to belong to any organisation.

The move was aimed at the main opposition party in Parliament, the Tamil United Liberation Front, which has campaigned for a separate state but desires any link with the guerrillas.

The guerrillas themselves are already outlawed.

At a cabinet meeting earlier the Government was faced with the devastating effects of the week-long rioting, apart from the deaths and injuries.

Hundreds of offices and homes, particularly in the capital, have been gutted and looted; factories employing 4,000 people have been wrecked; and more than 20,000 in 11 camps, mostly in makeshift refugee camps. The cost runs to millions of pounds.

Switching

IN DELHI Indian Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi sent her Foreign Minister, Mr Navasinha Rao, to Sri Lanka in response to demands by MRs and public.

There are demands from the Tamil South India for direct, even armed, intervention.

IN LONDON tour operators were trying to find alternative holidays for people booked to fly to Sri Lanka this weekend. Kenya and Thailand were favourites.

Mr David Hammet, Speedbird Holidays reservations manager, said: "Flights out of Colombo were unaffected by the rioting and tourists were leaving on the scheduled services without problems."

I saw mob burn twenty to death

A TOURIST told yesterday how she watched in horror as a Sinhalese mob deliberately burned alive a bus load of Tamils.

And she said she had heard other tourists describe seeing children murdered in the same way.

Mrs ER Skarstein, book home in Stavanger, Norway, said she and her 15-year-old daughter, Kristin, witnessed one massacre.

"A mini-bus full of Tamils was forced to stop in front of us in Colombo," she said.

A Sinhalese mob pushed petrol over the bus and set it on fire. They blocked the doors and prevented the Tamils from leaving the vehicle.

"Hundreds of spectators watched as about 20 Tamils were burned to death."

Woman tells of minibus horror

Express Foreign News Service

driver who took them to the capital's airport on Monday.

Their scheduled flight was postponed until Tuesday as they stayed overnight at a hotel outside Colombo.

"Colombo was burning when we left, the drive to the airport was a six-mile

burning inferno," she said.

"Gangs of youths stopped all cars and set those belonging to Tamils on fire. While foreigners were not threatened or hurt, however, a group of Swedes we met told us they had also seen people being petrol-bombed and set them on fire. Women, children and old people were slaughtered. Police and soldiers did nothing to stop the gangsters."

Casualties

Mrs Skarstein added: "We can't believe the official casualty figure of about 50 people killed."

"Hundreds, maybe thousands, must have died already. Homes, shops and factories owned by Tamils were burned by mobs."

The police force — 85 per cent Sinhalese — did nothing to stop the mobs or the murders of women and children reported by other holidaymakers.

Mrs Skarstein said she and her daughter managed to rent a car with a local

UNTIL Sri Lanka became independent in 1948, British rule gave the island's two million Tamils and 13 million Sinhalese equal status.

But since then violence between the Hindu Tamils and Buddhist Sinhalese has been simmering.

The Sinhalese, conscious of the 30 million Tamils across the sea in southern India, began using their electoral strength to dominate Sri Lanka.

First the Tamils saw their grip on the island's top jobs vanish. Then, in

How years of anger came to erupt

1975, Tamil was removed as one of the island's two official languages.

Even moderate Tamils began stepping up demands for regional autonomy and a small group called the Tamil Liberation Front called for independence for the northern and Eastern provinces.

TLP terrorists shot a pro-government Tamil Mayor in Jaffna in 1975 and in 1981 Tamils killed five policemen whose comrades then burned Tamil settlements and shot several people.

Then last Saturday 12 soldiers were massacred by the Tamil Liberation Tigers.