



TAMIL INFORMATION

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SRI LANKA: Talking peace means making War

The devolution proposals of the People's Alliance government were released by President Chandrika Kumaratunge on 3 August, initiating wide-ranging debate within and outside Sri Lanka.

Under the proposals regional councils will be elected for a period of five years for eight regions, including the North-East which will remain merged and administered by one council. However, the North-East region will be redefined excluding Sinhalese and Muslim majority areas.

The package also contains two lists—the Regional List and the Reserved List. The regional council will be able to make laws in respect of the subjects in the Regional List but will have no jurisdiction over the subjects in the Reserved List for the central government which includes defence, immigration and foreign affairs. Buddhism has been given a special place in the Reserved List.

The proposals also say that executive power will be vested in the board of ministers for the region appointed by the governor, with the advice of the chief minister. The governor will be the central government's representative in the region. The chief minister cannot, according to the peace package, be removed from office while enjoying the confidence of the regional council.

Because the present constitution contains ten entrenched articles, including those in respect of the unitary state, Buddhism and the Sinhala Language, it cannot be repealed by a simple majority in Parliament. Amendment of these provisions or the repeal of the consti-

tution requires a two-thirds majority in Parliament and approval by the people in a national referendum.

A map published in the newspapers along with the government proposals indicates that the North-West region will extend upto Kokkilai and include the Veli Oya area in the Mullaitivu District. The Northern region will be connected to the Eastern region only by a narrow strip of coastal area. This means the north will be effectively divided from the east. Successive governments have worked towards this end for several decades by extensive Sinhalese colonisation of the Manal Aru area which has now been renamed in Sinhala as Veli Oya. The division of the north from the east is important to the government in order to, in the words of many Sinhalese politicians, "destroy the concept of the Tamil Homeland". It would be recalled that the last Parliamentary Select Committee on the constitution decided, by a Sinhalese majority, that the North-East should be divided. The government published it as a consensus in the Select Committee, whereas all the Tamil parties opposed the decision and refused to participate in further deliberations.

The present proposals appear to be based on the deliberations of the Select Committee and reflects the position of the Sinhalese representatives in the Select Committee. It would also be recalled that the two major political parties, UNP and SLFP, did not submit any proposals to the Select Committee. These are some of the reasons for the Tamil parties not fully supporting the government proposals.

Similarly, according to the map, Amparai in the east will also be excised from the North-East region. Amaprai

has also been colonised for over four decades and a large number of Tamils and Muslims have been forcibly evicted, with the use of the armed forces, from their lands. Tamil parties have pledged to oppose the division of the North-East.

The government proposals, particularly that which states that "Sri Lanka shall be a union of regions" in place of the present "Sri Lanka shall be a unitary state" in the constitution (Article 2), have come under scathing attack by Sinhalese extremists. They say powers to the regional administration in the North-East will lead to a separate state. The PA constituent, the Democratic United National Front (DUNF) led by Transport Minister Srimani Athulathmudali, has stated in a memorandum that it will oppose any change in the unitary character of Sri Lanka. Other parties such as the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP) say that PA has no mandate to introduce a federal structure.

Newspaper reports say 25 MPs from the SLFP, which is the leading party in the PA, have expressed strong opposition to the proposals. Plantations Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake is said to be among the disputers. Over 100 academics and professionals, led by the Dean of the Kelaniya Medical Faculty, Prof. Carlo Fonseka have welcomed the proposals saying that they contain a number of positive features which can form a basis for ending the ethnic conflict. Another 159 Sinhalese academics led by Prof. Stanley Kalpage have opposed the peace package stating that the proposal will aggravate the conflict and lead to the establishment of a separate *Eelam*. Another group of intellectuals says the proposals are unambiguous and clear.

Sinhalese activists are campaigning among the Sinhalese people that they would be acting foolishly against the interests of their community by opposing the government proposals. They say that the country is already divided and administered separately and the only way to unite the Sinhalese people and perpetuate the unitary state would be to support the proposals.

A number of Sinhalese and Buddhist organisations including Gunadasa Amarasekera's Sri Lanka Ekiya Sanvidhanaya and the Young Men's Buddhist Association have rejected the peace plan. Thirty NGOs say in a joint statement that they support the package.

The most formidable opposition to the proposals comes from the Buddhist clergy. Buddhist organisations and the Buddhist clergy have played a major role in the denial of rights to the Tamils. Whenever attempts were made to grant legitimate rights to the Tamil people, Buddhist monks have been in the forefront to incite passions of the people leading to violence and death. The high priests or Mahanayake Theros of the two most important Buddhist orders in Sri Lanka, the Asgiriya and Malwatte chapters, in a joint letter to President Chandrika say that the proposals will cause serious harm to the country, the Sinhalese race and the Buddhist priesthood. The Mahanayakes contend that all rights to the Tamils have been granted under the present laws and have urged the government not to implement the proposals.

However, there are progressive Buddhist monks who have now begun to speak out openly about the need to recognise Tamil rights. These monks concede that they are a small minority and have no influence over the leading monks of the Buddhist Chapters and their chauvinistic aspirations. Tamils believe that the young progressive monks who have the courage to stand up to truth and justice should be encouraged. Tamils also feel that such monks currently have no opportunity to educate themselves and more fully understand Tamil aspirations and that such opportunity should be made available to them.

The main opposition United National Party's support in Parliament is vital to the government. But the UNP has not expressed any opinion thus far. UNP leader Ranil Wickremasinghe says the party will express its opinion to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Constitutional Reform. Both the UNP and SLFP have been responsible for shooting down of earlier peace proposals while in the opposition. Many UNP MPs seem to favour making use of the opportunity to oppose the proposals to regain the party's popularity and win the next elections.

Before independence in February 1948, Sinhalese leader and later Prime Minister D.S.Senanayake called on the Tamil leaders to join the demand for freedom. He said "no harm need to fear at our hands in a free Sri Lanka." The Tamil leaders believed the assurances given by the Sinhalese leaders and their ideas of self-rule and supported the establishment of a united Sri Lanka. Tamils say that now after 47 years President Chandrika is almost repeating what D.S.Senanayake said and is asking for Tamil support to the proposals.

The President and government ministers are saying to the Tamils that phrases such as "federal state" and "Tamil Homeland" would inflame the Sinhalese people and therefore these phrases are not being used, but the proposals contain these concepts and in the process of implementation they will be realised. But the Tamils have become wiser since the days of D.S.Senanayake and would not fall again for such falsehood.

The very same D.S.Senanayake, within months of independence, initiated the Citizenship Act and made a million Plantation Tamils stateless. The Sinhalese leaders did not stop with this Act, but continued to make use of the majority in Parliament to pass others laws and regulations which denied legitimate rights and ultimately resulted in the Tamil claim for the recognition of the right to self-determination. Successive governments have followed policies which are favourable to the Sinhalese and have introduced a large number of administrative orders which are blatantly discriminatory towards the minorities. The present

government's first task should have been, if it aimed to build confidence among Tamils, to investigate these laws, regulations and administrative orders. The government has appointed a large number of Commissions but no step has been taken towards eradicating discrimination.

Further, genocidal attacks on Tamils continue. In the North many civilians have been killed since the war resumed in April in shelling from camps and aerial bombing. In *Operation Leap Forward* alone 245 Tamil civilians, including 63 children were killed and 470 were wounded. Many died in Jaffna hospital because of lack of medicine and medical equipment as a result of the government's economic blockade. Jaffna hospital sources say 632 people died in the hospital in the first six months of 1995 mainly due to lack of medicine. In *Operation Dragonfire* in August a large number of civilians were killed by the security forces. Thirty two school children died when the Sri Lankan airforce bombed a school at Nagarkoil in September. In the east the Army and the STF have massacred many civilians. In Amparai the security forces shot dead two Tamils and burned 75 Tamil houses after the death of a Home Guard in August. Revenge killings have been brought to the notice of President Chandrika by the local MPs. But killings continue unabated.

The economic blockade imposed on the North by the government has had a devastating effect on the people. Reports indicate an acute shortage of food stocks and NGOs say if the situation continues starvation would claim more lives. The Government Agent usually stocks food before October to tide over the rainy season. This year all food stocks have been exhausted because food shipments have not arrived. The sea would become rough until January and food ships will not be able to travel to Point Pedro. Lack of wheat flour will completely end bread production. Further, in the recent operations the army has occupied or destroyed prime cultivated lands before harvest. Tamils believe that the government's conflict with the ICRC is also engineered in order to curtail the food supplies to the North. Although under pressure, government

permitted ICRC to take food, the ships used to transport essential food such as flour are currently being used for other purposes in Colombo harbour. It is important to realise that the immediate reaction of President Chandrika's PA government was to reimpose the economic blockade as soon as the fighting resumed. Tamils believe that the government is using the economic blockade as an important part of its war strategy to make the Tamil people submit, relent from their demands and weaken their struggle for self-determination.

In Colombo, the Hill Country and other southern areas Tamils are being arrested and harassed. A number of Tamils have disappeared. Death squad white vans have been seen in Colombo, abducting Tamils. Nearly 40 bodies have been found in lakes and rivers. Most of the victims have now been identified as Tamils. The death-squad killings continue even after the arrest of several STF officers. Reports say a special unit under Colombo police chief Kottakadeniya is responsible for the

killings. It is hard to believe that the government is unaware of the identity of those responsible.

The government has implied that the LTTE will have no part in the peace process. Justice Minister GL Peiris says the peace proposals will not be sent to the LTTE and has ruled out any contact with the Tigers. The government hopes to defeat the LTTE on the battle front and create a division between the Tigers and the people through the peace proposals. Observers say that the twin strategy has already failed by the massacre of hundreds of Tamils in the three military operations - *Leap Forward*, *Handshake II* and *Thunder Strike* - since 9 July. The LTTE has already rejected the proposals stating that the doors to peace have been closed by the government by the declaration of war on the Tamils.

While the security forces are massacring the Tamils in the North-East, President Chandrika says that the government is fighting the war to defeat the Tigers, save the Tamils and

achieve peace. But it is clear, from events throughout Sri Lanka, the war is definitely against the Tamils. Observers say that she must remember what even many Sinhalese people are saying: "You cannot achieve peace through war".

It is appropriate to quote from a note addressed to the government on the peace proposals by Tamil party Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF): "Your proposals only partially address the National question. The problems faced by the Tamil people in the North-East as a distinct nationality is entirely different from that faced by the Sinhala people in other regions. The Tamil people have a national problem in this country and not the Sinhala people. The non-violent as well as the armed struggle waged by the Tamil people for the past 50 years is directly linked to their political aspirations. Any proposal which seeks to resolve the national question cannot be reduced to that of resolving administrative problems through devolution."

REFUGEE STUDENTS DENIED EDUCATION

The Tamil Nadu government has breached international norms by denying higher education to Sri Lankan Tamils currently residing in the State.

In a letter dated 8 August, the Education Secretary to the Tamil Nadu government has ordered the Commissioner of Collegiate Education to issue necessary instructions that Sri Lankan refugees, students and Sri Lankan passport holders should not be admitted or permitted to study any course in colleges including professional colleges. Reports say that the government decision has forced Sri Lankan students already following lectures in the first and second year to leave their colleges.

These instructions are another step by the State government to force Tamil

refugees to return to Sri Lanka. There are currently 56,800 refugees in 120 camps distributed in 21 districts, including over 16,200 children.

Over the years, the Tamil Nadu government has introduced a number of restrictions. Refugees are not allowed to go out of camps early or return late thus preventing them obtaining daily-paid jobs. After the escape of 43 LTTE members from the maximum security Vellore jail in North Arcot Ambedkar District, refugees were confined to the camps. The British Refugee Council says that sealing of camps is threatening casual jobs supplementing refugee doles frozen at 1990 levels although the cost of living has risen by 200%.

Refugee workers say that over 100 camps are badly in need of repairs.

Leaking roofs and lack of toilet facilities have added to the hardship of the refugees who have to put up with continued harassment by camp officials.

The ban on entry for NGOs and the UNHCR into the camps continues. The UNHCR, which has the duty to check the voluntariness of repatriations to Sri Lanka is allowed to meet the refugees only at the point of departure. The UNHCR, despite the denial, has been primarily responsible for the return of over 50,000 Tamil refugees into a war zone. The war has now intensified in the North-East and the government has begun major military operations in the north. Reports say over 350,000 people have been displaced in the Jaffna peninsula alone in these operations. A large number of civilians have also been killed. In other areas death squads have become active targeting Tamils.

The South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre (SAHRDC) has severely criticised UNHCR's role in the repatriations. But these events seem to have no effect on UNHCR which continues to maintain that Tamils can return to Sri Lanka in

safety and dignity.

The Executive Committee meeting of the UNHCR is scheduled for 16 October. A pre-Executive Committee meeting with NGOs has been fixed for 12 and 13

October. Although NGOs will take a firm stand, the plight of poor Sri Lankan Tamil refugees is not expected to be high on the agenda of the Executive Committee of UNHCR.

ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION

Tamils are arrested and held without trial or charges in many parts of the country. The pattern is undoubtedly based on their ethnic origin and arrests have become a daily occurrence for Tamils irrespective of location and even age. The list of known arrests is endless and disappearances also multiply by the day. It is reported that in known cases of arrest ransoms had been demanded for the release of those without trial.

A sample of some of the arrests is given below:

a) K.Nandakumar and G.Ravitharan, both reading for their engineering degree at the Peradeniya University were arrested by the Kandy Police in early August. They are being held without charge or trial. Nandakumar had been arrested earlier and released.

b) Alagan Aiyathurai (61 yrs) was arrested on 02/06/95 by Kandy police from his residence in Kattaboola Estate and is being held in Kandy police station without trial.

c) Periyasamy Jeyakumar (23 yrs) was arrested on 15/05/95 by Nuwara Eliya police from Battalagala Estate in Dickoya and is being held at the Talawakelle police station. He had been earlier arrested by Hatton police on 25/10/94.

d) Ms. K. Sriskandarani (36 yrs) from Mount Lavinia was arrested on 03/05/95 and is being held on the 6th floor office of the Crime Detection Bureau in Colombo.

e) N.Raveendran (28 yrs) residing in Colombo for five years was arrested at Wattala on 08/03/95 by police and is detained at the Gregory's Road office of the Crime Detection Bureau. He had been a resident of Nanattan in Mannar District before moving to Colombo.

f) S.Kularajasingam (39 yrs) was arrested on 22/07/95 in Colombo. He had been employed at Lanka Cement Limited in Jaffna District which remains closed for several years.

g) N.Theivendran (22 yrs) was arrested on 27/06/95 at Layards Broadway in Colombo.

h) D.Francis (30 yrs) was arrested on 16/04/95 from Stamford Hill Estate in Dickoya. Presently he is held in Kalutara prison. He had been detained at Kandy police station until 02/08/95.

i) G.Garford (29 yrs) was arrested by Negombo police from Kudapadu on 24/07/95 and is being held at Negombo police station. He had been employed abroad and returned to the country on 12/06/95.

j) I.Shanmuganathan (26 yrs) had been arrested in Colombo in June reportedly by members of the Special Task Force. Amnesty International has appealed for information on his whereabouts.

k) K.Thuruparan (27 yrs) had been arrested in Colombo in June reportedly by members of the Special Task Force and Amnesty International has appealed

for information on his whereabouts.

l) Pichchaimuthu Chandran (20 yrs) was arrested on 29/10/94 at Watawala by the Nuwara Eliya police and is being held at Kalutara prison without trial.

m) Suppu Udayakumar (23 yrs) was arrested at Polonnaruwa on 02/12/94 and is being held at Kalutara prison without trial.

n) Arumugam Kalimuthu (27 yrs) was arrested at his residence in Strathden Estate, Hatton by the Nuwara Eliya police and is being held at Kalutara prison without trial.

o) T.Thevarajah (61 yrs) and son Thillaiampalam (24 yrs) were arrested on 7/06/95 from their residence at Wellawatte in Colombo by officers from the Crime Detection Bureau. They were handed over to the Criminal Investigation Department after seven days and are presently held at their 4th floor office without trial.

p) Jeyaratnam Ganga of Hamers' Avan in Colombo was abducted on 30 June by unidentified persons near the Advanced Level examination at Ramanathan College to which he was proceeding. He had been traced to be under detention at Rambukkana police station, over 45 miles from Colombo.

TIC ACCESSION LIST

A selection of documents received by the Centre in July/August/September 1995

SHR 3579

A bold political leadership needed to ensure the rights of all the people
Hongkong: Asian Human Rights Commission; 1 May 1995

2p.

DESCRIPTORS: Statement / Human Rights Violation / NGOs / Sri Lanka

SHR 3580

Situation Report for the period 01-07-1994 to 30-09-1994

Australia: Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation; January 1995

6p.

DESCRIPTORS: Displaced People / Medical Facilities / Rehabilitation / Development / Trauma / Orphans

SHR 3582

Pathways to peace: seminar held at the House of Commons on Thursday 23 May 1995, to discuss possible solutions to the "Ethnic Conflict" in Sri Lanka
London: Human Rights in Sri Lanka; 23 May 1995

18p.

DESCRIPTORS: Peace-Meetings / Peace Initiative / Sri Lanka / Ethnic Problem / Seminar

SHR 3583

The path to peace: a symposium on the Tamil National Question
London: International Tamil Foundation; 18 June 1995

12p.

DESCRIPTORS: Peace Initiative / Seminar / Ethnic Problem / Sri Lanka

SHR 3588

CAFOD calls for arms embargo in Sri Lanka

London: CAFOD; 18 July 1995

1p.

DESCRIPTORS: Appeal / Killing / Civilian / Bombing / Northern Province / Aid / Displaced Persons / Statistics

SHR 3589

Letter to President Chandrika Kumaratunga by Jaffna Citizens Committee

Jaffna: Jaffna Citizens Committee; 12

July 1995

1p.

DESCRIPTORS: Appeal / Bombing / Northern Province / Killing / Civilians / Medical Facilities

SHR 3590

Request to stop military operation on innocent Tamil civilians
London: Council for Advancement of Education of Tamils; 12 July 1995

1p.

DESCRIPTORS: Appeal / Bombing / Killing / Civilian / Statistics / Displaced Person / Destruction / Northern Province

SHR 3592

Sri Lanka: appeal for full implementation of commitment to human rights
London: Amnesty International; July 1995

7p.

DESCRIPTORS: Emergency Regulations / Arrest / War / Death Penalty / Disappearances / Killing / Sinhalese / Commission of Inquiries

SHR 3599

Refugee Council calls for improved access to asylum procedures for Sri Lankan Refugees.

London: Refugee Council; 18 July 1995

1p.

DESCRIPTORS: Refugees / Sri Lankan Tamils / United Kingdom / Statistics / Asylum / Appeal

SHR 3602

Sri Lanka: security measures violate human rights

London: Amnesty International; July 1995

25p.

DESCRIPTORS: Detention / Arrest / Prevention of Terrorism Act / Emergency Regulations / Human Rights Violation

SHR 3624

Sri Lanka: Amnesty International appeals against resumption of executions

London: Amnesty International; 22 June 1995

1p.

DESCRIPTORS: Death Penalty / Sri Lanka

SHR 3629

The failed peace process in Sri Lanka: the reason

New York: Tamil Infonet; August 1995

5p.

DESCRIPTORS: Peace Initiative / LTTE / Sri Lankan Government

SHR3630

War and peace in Sri Lanka, July, 1995 by Peter Schalk

London: World Peace Organisation; July 1995

8p.

DESCRIPTORS: Peace Initiative / Negotiation / LTTE / Sri Lankan Government

SHR 3632

Annual Report: Human Rights Task Force 10 August 1993 to 10 August 1994

Sri Lanka: Human Rights Task Force; 13 August 1994

36p.

DESCRIPTORS: Emergency Regulations / Arrest / Disappearance / Batticaloa District / Civilian / Statistics / Trial / Detention Camp / Recommendation / Amnesty International / Torture

SHR 3633

Resolution: encouraging the peace process in Sri Lanka

United States: House of Representatives; 29 June 1995

2p.

DESCRIPTORS: Resolution / United States / Sri Lanka / Ethnic Problem

SHR 3706

Urgent Action: "Disappearance" / Fear of Extrajudicial Execution

London: Amnesty International; 20 July 1995

2p.

DESCRIPTORS: Disappearance / Arrest / Killing / Civilian / Colombo District / Recommendation

JULY DIARY

JULY 01

TAMIL VILLAGERS EVICTED BY SOLDIERS: Security force personnel at Iluppadichchenai army camp evicted Tamils from the villages of Veppavettuvan and Puththumpuri in Batticaloa District.

JULY 02

TAMIL ARRESTED FOR POSSESSING VIDEO TAPE: Christian Fellowship Worker Letchumanan from Walakele Estate in Nuwara Eliya District was arrested by police for having a video tape of a CNN report on the LTTE.

JULY 03

TROOPS KILL TAMIL CIVILIANS: In indiscriminate shooting resorted to by troops at Arumugathankudiyiruppu in Batticaloa District N.Rajendram and K.Puvanendran were killed.

JULY 04

TAMIL DOCTORS ARRESTED: Two doctors serving in Jaffna and present in Colombo for their MD examination were arrested by police outside the examination hall.

AERIAL BOMBING: Air force planes dropped bombs at Eluthumadduwal, Palai and south of Elephant Pass army camp in Kilinochchi District. Four civilians were injured at Eluthumadduwal and a house was damaged.

JULY 05

TAMIL ARRESTS IN EAST: After a search of the villages of Thalavai, Iyankerni and Kaluvankerni in Batticaloa District the security forces arrested 10 persons on suspicion.

SKELETAL REMAINS FOUND: A skeleton recovered near Valaichchenai in Batticaloa District remained unidentified.

JULY 06

STARVED BEFORE BEING KILLED: At the inquest held over bodies found floating in the Bolgoda

lake, the Panadura Magistrate held that four persons had been drowned with hands and feet tied. The Judicial Medical Officer reported that no food had been consumed for 48 hours prior to death.

JULY 07

FLOATING CORPSES: Panadura Magistrate held at an inquest that two persons whose bodies were found in Bolgoda lake had been strangled before being thrown into the water.

UNIVERSITY'S CONSIGNMENT EMBARGOED: The Defence Ministry disallowed the clearance in Colombo of a consignment for the University of Jaffna which included materials for the medical faculty.

JULY 08

CIVILIANS KILLED IN SHELL FIRE: Four civilians were killed in Kilinochchi town by a shell fired from the Elephant Pass army camp. Two of them were identified as Kirupa (30 yrs) from Mandan and Thamilchelvan (19 yrs) from Vavuniya.

RANDOM KILLING BY TROOPS: R.Sinnarasa, a father of a child, of Meeravodai was killed by troops in a random shooting on the road at Sunkankerni in Batticaloa District.

JULY 09

TERROR GRIPS SITHTHANDY: Soldiers placed the severed head of a youth found near the Siththandy Murugan temple, Batticaloa District on the parapet wall of a nearby house and villagers vacated the area in fear.

WAR CRIMES IN JAFFNA: Hundreds of civilians including women and children died in military operations launched from Palaly in Jaffna by the combined services backed by aerial bombing and artillery fire. ICRC was requested by the government at 8 a.m. to convey a message to Jaffna announcing the imposition of a curfew from 6 a.m.

JULY 10

DAWN RAID: An LTTE attack on Mavilachchiya police station in Anuradhapura District at dawn claimed the lives of 5 policemen, a soldier and a Home Guard.

JULY 11

ARSON ATTACKS: An armed gang numbering nearly 50 arriving in three vehicles brandishing T56 rifles threatened residents and set fire to their huts at Kumbukkan Andaramandiya village in Moneragala District.

JULY 12

TAMIL ARRESTS IN KANDY: Three Tamil youths arrested by policemen from a hardware shop in Kandy town in the night were taken to Colombo for interrogation.

JULY 13

MINE VICTIMS: Six soldiers including an officer were killed in a pressure mine blast at Sangaraththai in Jaffna District.

JULY 14

LTTE COUNTERATTACK: The armed forces lost 50 soldiers and a Puckara attack aircraft with its pilot when the LTTE mounted a counterattack around Palaly in Jaffna District.

TAMIL ARREST IN COLOMBO:

R.Thiruchelvan (25 yrs) residing at Galpote, Kotahena in Colombo for nearly 20 years was arrested on suspicion.

JULY 15

SHELLFIRE & BOMBING: One civilian was killed at Chunnakam in shellfire directed from Palaly and several shops were damaged by bombs dropped by aircraft.

JULY 16

NAVAL ENCOUNTER: Naval command ship "Edithara" berthed at Kankesanthurai harbour was blown up with three seamen aboard in a LTTE attack. Four LTTE boats with 18 occupants were destroyed in the incident according to security sources.

JULY DIARY

EDUCATIONIST ARRESTED:

Eminent Tamil educationist Kanagaratnam (62 yrs) well known as "Archivist" was arrested from his residence at Sudumpola in Kandy District and several of his documents were impounded by police.

JULY 17

LTTE DEATH TOLL: The LTTE announced that 80 of its cadres were killed in repulsing the security forces offensive begun on 9 July.

REPRISAL KILLINGS:

V.Vanikala(3 yrs), K.Ganeshamurthy(28 yrs-father of 2)and A.Nanthini(12 yrs) were killed when troops retaliated by firing mortars and guns till 11 p.m. following a troop patrol coming under LTTE fire at Kinnayady at 7 p.m.in Batticaloa District. Ten others were injured.

TROOP CASUALTIES: Security forces spokesman Brig. Munasinghe reported the killing of 33 soldiers and injuries to 205 in the offensive begun on 9 July from Palaly in Jaffna.

JULY 18

TAMIL YOUTH ABDUCTED: P.Ajanthan, a student of Royal College in Colombo was abducted by unidentified persons in a van opposite the Fort rail station.

JULY 19

TERROR FOLLOWS FALSE ALARM: Troops fired mortars and guns from their camp at Valaichchenai in Batticaloa District from 4.30 to 6 p.m. on a false alarm. V.Sellathamby (65 yrs) died from gunshot wounds and S.Jesumary (45 yrs, mother of 7) died of shellblast wounds. A house was set ablaze at Kurinjinar by a shell.

JULY 20

CIVILIAN LEFT TO DIE: S.Kumarasamy (24 yrs) from the Vinayagapuram refugee camp in Batticaloa District injured in indiscriminate shelling the previous day and taken over by troops while being taken to hospital by relatives had been left to die near the Peithalai cemetery.

JULY 21

HILL COUNTRY TAMILS ARRESTED: K.Saththiyamoorthy (22 yrs), A.Rajah (25 yrs) and M.Raman (30 yrs) visiting a patient in hospital were arrested at Layards Broadway in Colombo.

AMERICAN CITIZEN AR-

RESTED: American peace and christian activist Rev.Mulder from the National Christian Council was arrested by police for alleged links with the LTTE.

JULY 22

SWISS DEPORTEE ARRESTED ON ARRIVAL: S.Thava deported from Switzerland was arrested on entering Colombo city limits at Grandpass.

JULY 23

SEARCHES IN BATTICALOA: Security forces personnel searched Kaluvankerni, Mavadivembu and Siththandy villages till 4 p.m. and arrested one person on suspicion.

JULY 24

TROOPS AMBUSH: Three LTTE cadres were ambushed by troops at Kanjikudichcharu in Amparai District.

JULY 25

EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLING: The body of K.Naguleswaran (20 yrs) of Peithalai in Batticaloa District was recovered with gunshot wounds near the old police station at Kalkudah.

CIVILIANS INJURED: Eleven people including two children sustained serious shell blast injuries following continuous shelling from the Mandaithivu army camp of the area around Gurunagar flats and church in Jaffna District.

JULY 26

EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLING: Father of four S.Satchithanatham (34 yrs) from Kumaraveliyar, Eravur in Batticaloa District was killed at his residence in the night by unidentified armed men.

CHILD VICTIM OF SHELLFIRE:

T.Kalaivani (13 yrs) was killed and three others were injured when the house in which they were asleep in the night was hit by shells fired from the Sithandy army camp in Batticaloa District.

JULY 27

TAMIL ARRESTS IN COLOMBO: Twelve Tamil youths were arrested by Police from a lodging house at Messenger Street. Another three were picked up from their house at Bandaranayake Mawatha also in Colombo.

JULY 28

LTTE'S HEAVY LOSS: An abortive attack by land and sea on the military complex at Manal Aru in Mullaitivu District cost the LTTE 180 cadres including 128 females. Security forces lost 2 men in repulsing the attack.

EXTRA JUDICIAL KILLING:

S.Pulendiran (16) of Sittandy Batticaloa District was killed by unidentified armed men while working in his paddy field.

JULY 29

ARMY CAMPS ATTACKED: Four soldiers were killed and five injured in an LTTE assault on the Mukkarai camp in Batticaloa District. LTTE also lost four men in this encounter. Five LTTE cadres were killed and one body was recovered by troops at Elephant Pass in Kilinochchi District. One soldier was killed and six were injured at Alavetty in Jaffna District. Ten LTTE cadres also died in this operation.

JULY 30

LANDMINE VICTIMS: Eastern Commander Brig. Angamma and three soldiers lost their lives when their vehicle hit a mine near Mukkarai army camp in Batticaloa District. Ten soldiers were injured.

AUGUST DIARY

AUGUST 01

TROOPS KILL CIVILIANS:

Artillery shells fired from Palaly army camp in Jaffna District killed a civilian at Kopay and another was injured. Several houses at Uduvil were damaged. K.Selliah(45 yrs) collecting firewood with wife at Vakafieri in Batticaloa was shot dead by troops.

AUGUST 02

NAVAL BARRAGE: A naval fleet of 15 including gunboat "Weeraya" directed canon fire along Vadamradchy coast from 7am to 8.15am injuring seven civilians. Three temples, a school, a hospital and several houses were damaged.

AUGUST 03

SECURITY THE PRIORITY: The road from Vavunathivu to Kokkaddicholai was closed for the safety of the Vavunathivu army camp in Batticaloa District thus affecting 10,000 families that use the road.

AUGUST 04

POLICE TAKEN TO TASK: Policemen at Mahakachcaikody in Vavuniya District were transferred out following their arrest, blindfolding and assault on Siripala, a Sinhalese civilian.

AUGUST 05

NAVY KILLS FISHERMAN: Naval fire killed a fisherman off Katkivalam in Jaffna District when his boat was set alight.

AUGUST 06

EXPLOSION IN POLONNARUWA: One officer was killed and 5 soldiers were injured in an explosion at Janakapura in Polonnaruwa District.

AUGUST 07

EXPLOSION IN COLOMBO: An explosion near the office of the Chief Minister of Western Province killed 25 civilians. Over 45 persons were injured.

TAMIL ARRESTS: Due to the explosion in Colombo 11 Tamils arriving by train from the capital were arrested in Vavuniya.

POLICE TURN ON PUBLIC: All nearby residents were taken out and assaulted by Valaichchenai police in Batticaloa District after a grenade attack on a patrol which injured two policemen and four civilians. Eight persons were injured and one was critical as a result of the police retaliation.

AUGUST 08

BOMB IN MARKET: Four people were killed and 18 injured when a bomb exploded at the Batticaloa market which has police posts at its 4 corners.

AUGUST 09

AERIAL BOMBING: V.Nagathevan was killed and A.Asokan injured when airforce planes bombed Vakarai in Batticaloa District.

TAMIL ARRESTS IN COLOMBO:

Eight Tamils from Narahenpita and 6 from Wellawatte were arrested in a police swoop in the capital.

AUGUST 10

INTENSE SHELLFIRE: Troops fired shells continuously from dawn to dusk from camps at Palaly, Mathagal and Karainagar in Jaffna District resulting in several persons from Moolai, Vadaliadaippu, and Piranpatru being admitted to Jaffna hospital with serious injuries. In Pandaththarippu the Meditation Centre was hit and three elders including a 70 year old nun Sr. De Selles(70 yrs) were injured.

POLICE REPRISAL: Four houses at Senaikkudiyiruppu were burnt and 20 looted by policemen from Central Camp following the killing of two Home Guards. Residents of the village and the surrounding Tamil villages fled the area in fear.

AIR ATTACKS: Aerial bombing of the Verugal river in Batticaloa District instantly killed one fisherman and injured two others.

AUGUST 11

TROOPS IN REVENGE KILLINGS: S.Thavarajah (43 yrs) and P.Suppiramanyam (55 yrs) were shot

dead after being called out of their homes by troops at Senaiyoor in

Trincomalee District. Two soldiers of a foot patrol had been injured earlier near their residences.

AUGUST 12

POLICE IN ARSON ATTACKS:

Jacob Cruz was killed, seven shops, six boats and a sub post office were set on fire by rampaging policemen at Pesalai in Mannar District following the killing of two Reserve Policemen by the LTTE.

AUGUST 13

CIVILIANS KILLED IN RE-

PRISAL: Following the killing of a Home Guard at 4th Colony in Amparai District security force personnel shot dead civilians K.Thangeswaran (26) and M.Tharumaratnam. Seventeen Tamils disappeared, 75 houses were set on fire, three shops were destroyed with grenades, paddy mounds and bags were set alight and villagers were displaced.

TAMIL ARREST IN KANDY:

K.Valitharan (26) was arrested by police for being present within the Peradeniya campus in Kandy District.

AUGUST 14

STARVATION IMMINENT: ICRC's Colombo representative Marco Alder reported that starvation was imminent in Jaffna if no food convoy reached the peninsula soon.

FLOATING BODIES BESIDE

PARLIAMENT: Three floating bodies wighed down with iron rods were recovered from the Diyawanna Oya lake lying within the high security zone covering the Parliament premises.

AUGUST 15

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION:

Hindu Priests Balasarma, Satheeswara Sarma and drummer Sivakanthan were arrested by police from the Mutwal Amman Temple in Colombo.

AUGUST 16

TROOP ADVANCE IN EAST:

Troops advanced towards Vakarai in Batticaloa District amid sporadic

AUGUST DIARY

shellfire and K.Sathiyaseelan (28 yrs) fishing in Naasivanthivu river fell victim to a shell.

AUGUST 17

EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLING: The body of a youth was recovered at Vairavapuliyankulam in Vavuniya District.

SOLDIERS IN CRIME: Two soldiers were being hunted by police following a daylight robbery at the residence of a Tamil at Kalubowila on the outskirts of Colombo.

AUGUST 18

BODY BURNT ON ROAD: Police reported the recovery of a burnt body at Himpa junction on the Horana-Ratnapura road in Kalutara District.

LANDMINE VICTIMS: Eight soldiers were killed when their armoured personnel carrier hit a mine at Pemaduwa in Anuradhapura District.

AUGUST 19

INTRUDERS KILLED: Operations Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence reported the killing of 2 LTTE cadres infiltrating the Mallakam area in Jaffna District.

AUGUST 20

UNDERGRADUATE IN CUSTODY: S.Suthakaran (21 yrs), an undergraduate was arrested by police who surrounded Batticaloa town limits in the morning.

AUGUST 21

TROOPS KILL CIVILIANS: Troops engaged in *Operation Dragon Fire* around Palaly in Jaffna District killed 13 civilians including three children aged 4, 6 and 7. Those identified are S.Thurairajah (47 yrs), K.Gunaratnam, S.Arunthavam (35 yrs), S.Murugiah (45 yrs), K.Nimalakumaran (16 yrs), S.Sivamalar and Rukmani from the same family, M.Sujenthini (6 yrs) with sister M.Suventhini (4 yrs) and M.Anusha (7 yrs). Nineteen were injured and thousands were displaced.

EXTRA JUDICIAL KILLINGS: Bodies of Subramaniyam, a fish monger, Sivarupan (24 yrs) and

S.Thavaseelan were recovered with gunshot wounds at Mandur, Ayithyamalai and Mahiladithivu in Batticaloa District.

TAMIL ARRESTS IN COLOMBO: Peliyagoda police arrested five Tamil youths on suspicion.

CLASHES IN NORTH-EAST: Four LTTE cadres and a soldier were killed in a confrontation at Salippiyaru in Trincomalee District. One soldier was killed and 15 injured at Chankanai in Jaffna District. Bodies of four LTTE cadres were also recovered by troops in Jaffna.

AUGUST 22

ABDUCTED AND KILLED: The body of S.Maharasa (40 yrs), Vice President of Chenkalady local council was found tied to a lamp post at Siththandy in Batticaloa District. He had been abducted on 12 July.

SKIRMISH IN JAFFNA: Defence Ministry reported the killing of two soldiers and injuries to two in a clash at Pandaththarippu in Jaffna District. The body of a LTTE cadre was recovered in the area according to the report.

AUGUST 23

EN MASSE ARREST OF TAMILS: Over 40 Tamils including 10 women at Suddhananda Hindu Society Hall in Vavuniya were arrested by police.

AUGUST 24

STF FALL VICTIMS: In an attack on Special Task Force personnel at Anbilanthurai in Batticaloa District the LTTE killed 28 and lost one of their men.

AUGUST 25

TAMIL ARRESTS IN COLOMBO: A police search of Grandpass at night led to the arrest of 14 Tamil females. Twenty Tamil youths were picked up by police at Vihara Maha Devi Park in the evening.

AUGUST 26

UN OFFICIAL IN JAFFNA: Roland Hodson, Advisor on Humanitarian Assistance to the UNDP toured Jaffna meeting government officials, LTTE

representatives and church leaders. After the visit he told reporters that the Jaffna people are "angry and hungry".

AUGUST 27

LTTE LOSSES: LTTE reported the killing of three of their cadres at Punnalaikkadduwan in Jaffna District and four at Kanjikudichcharu in Amparai District.

AUGUST 28

ANOTHER FLOATING BODY: Police recovered a floating body from Bolgoda lake at Piliyandala in Colombo District.

FORCES LOSE MEN: Nine policemen were killed and six injured at 6th Mile Post, Nilaveli in Trincomalee District. Two soldiers were killed at Karichchattippalam in Mannar District.

SHIP HIJACKED: Passenger ship *Iris Moana* with 138 on board was hijacked by LTTE cadres off Salli coast in Mullaitivu District.

AUGUST 29

NAVAL BOATS SUNK: Two Dvora naval gunboats with 26 sailors on board were sunk by the LTTE off Salli coast in Mullaitivu District.

LANDMINE VICTIMS: Eight policemen were killed and 26 injured when their truck hit a landmine at Nilaveli in Trincomalee District.

CLASH IN MANNAR: Army sentry post at Thallady bridge in Mannar District came under LTTE fire and one soldier was killed and five were injured.

AUGUST 30

STF MURDERS: Police chief P.Rajaguru disclosed that 13 persons had been murdered in an unused toilet at the Colombo headquarters of the Special Task Force.

AUGUST 31

ANOTHER FLOATING BODY: Police recovered a body floating in the Narahenpita canal in Colombo.

SEPTEMBER DIARY

SEPTEMBER 01

NEGOTIATE SAYS THE US: US Under Secretary for State Secretary Robin Raphael urged in Colombo that a political settlement should be reached through negotiations by ending confrontations.

BODY OF YOUTH WASHED

ASHORE: Police recovered the body of a youth aged between 25 and 35 on the beach at the end of Sagara Road, Bambalapitiya in Colombo.

SEPTEMBER 02

PLANTATION TAMILS SUFFER: Plantation workers at Nehinna estate, Neboda in Kalutara District were subjected to assaults by outsiders and one person was killed.

SEPTEMBER 03

TAMIL SHOPS BURNT: Four shops owned by Tamils were set on fire at Hewaheta in Kandy District and victims of assault were arrested by police.

CHILDREN SUFFER: Three ten-year old children watching television at their home near the security post at Arumugathankudiyiruppu in Batticaloa were seriously injured when they were shot at close range.

SEPTEMBER 04

DEATH THREAT: Lalini Kobbekaduwa giving evidence before the Commission of Inquiry into the death of her husband Gen. Denzil Kobbekaduwa in 1992 claimed that she had been threatened with death for her testimony.

SEPTEMBER 05

PLANTATION TAMILS TARGETED: A gang that entered Geekiyanakande Estate in Kalutara District by night attacked residents injuring several.

SEPTEMBER 06

PASSENGERS RELEASED: LTTE released 121 passengers from the ship *Iris Moana* to the ICRC in Jaffna. Eight including the crew were not released.

SEPTEMBER 07

MASS KILLING: Leader of the Opposition, Ranil Wickremasinghe told Parliament that the military manoeuvre *Operation Leap Forward* in Jaffna had claimed the lives of 170 civilians, seriously injured 420 and displaced 178,335 persons.

TAMIL PARTIES APPROVE

EMERGENCY: The State of Emergency was extended in Parliament by 120 to 79 votes with no Tamil party opposing it.

MASS ARREST OF TAMILS: Over 50 Tamils were arrested in a night-raid by police in Colombo.

SEPTEMBER 08

STUDENT VICTIMS: Five students including three girls were seriously injured by a grenade explosion within their class room at Vivekananda Vidyalayam, Eravur in Batticaloa District. The class room abutted a police guard post.

SEPTEMBER 09

FLOATING BODY: Police recovered a body floating in the Dalu oya stream at Ja Ela in Gampaha District and reported the youth to be between 25 and 35 years of age.

SEPTEMBER 10

TROOPS AMBUSHED: Seven soldiers were killed and four injured in a LTTE ambush at Punanai in Batticaloa District.

SEPTEMBER 11

PROMINENT TAMIL DETAINED: Leader of the Tamil Congress and prominent lawyer G.G.Ponnambalam Jr. was detained by troops near Fort rail station in Colombo for not being in possession of a national identity card.

SEPTEMBER 12

CIVILIANS KILLED: Eleven civilians were killed by shellfire and bombing when troops from Palaly camp in Jaffna District tried to advance towards Atchuvely with artillery and air cover.

TROOPS KILL CIVILIANS:

K.Rajendran (35 yrs), S.Jeevanithy (23 yrs) and an unidentified elder were shot dead by troops lying in ambush for LTTE cadres at Koththiyapula in Batticaloa District.

ARMY CAMP ATTACKED: Security sources reported the killing of four soldiers when the army camp at Pulmoddai in Trincomalee District came under LTTE attack.

SEPTEMBER 13

MORE CIVILIANS KILLED:

M.Iankainathan (45 yrs) and M.Maheswaran (35 yrs) were killed at Valikamam and six others including five from the same family were seriously injured by shellfire directed from the Palaly army camp in Jaffna District.

TROOPS DROWN: Seventy five security force personnel being ferried to the north in a Russian built AN 32 transport plane were killed when it crashed into the Indian Ocean off the Ja Ela coast in Gampaha District.

ABDUCTION IN COLOMBO:

Tamil businessman Kirupanantha was abducted from his residence at Pamankada Lane at night by persons who arrived in vehicle number 16-3007.

SEPTEMBER 14

MILITARY PUSH: Operational Headquarters of the Defence Ministry reported that three bodies of LTTE cadres were recovered by troops engaged in *Operation Handshake-1* at Palaly in Jaffna District. One soldier was also killed according to the report.

SEPTEMBER 15

FOOT PATROL ATTACKED:

Soldiers from the Pulkkanava army camp in Batticaloa District on a foot patrol were ambushed by the LTTE. Seven soldiers were killed and two were injured in the incident.

SEPTEMBER DIARY

SEPTEMBER 16

MINOR SKIRMISH: Security sources reported the killing of a LTTE cadre in a confrontation at Elephant Pass army camp in Kilinochchi District.

SEPTEMBER 17

TROOPS ON RAMPAGE: A child sustained serious burn injuries when troops set fire to the boutiques near the Eastern University at Vantharumoolai in Batticaloa District following an attack on a foot patrol.

SEPTEMBER 18

TAMIL ARRESTS IN COLOMBO: N.Rajendran (26 yrs) and S.Sivakumar (32 yrs) were arrested by Kollupitiya police from a lodging house. The owner of a house being built at Kotahena and the builders at the site were arrested by police. They were all from Valvettiturai in Jaffna District.

WAR ENDS IN TWO MONTHS:

Addressing a gathering at a public function in Hataraliyadde, Kandy, Deputy Defence Minister Col. A.Ratwatte assured that the war in the country would be brought to an end within two months as Rs. 116 billion had been spent on defence.

SEPTEMBER 19

BURNT IN REPRISAL: Troops destroyed a lorry and a shop by setting them on fire following an attack directed from the lorry. One policeman was killed in this attack at the Pammiyadi checkpoint in Batticaloa District. Thirteen Tamils in the vicinity were arrested by the police.

SEPTEMBER 20

ENCOUNTER AT SEA: Defence Ministry reported the killing of 13 Sea Tigers together with three sailors of the navy in a sea encounter off Kankeanthurai in Jaffna District.

INFORMANT KILLED: M.Asok Kumar, a member of Tamil group TELO assisting troops at Kommathurai army camp in Batticaloa District was shot dead near the camp allegedly by the LTTE.

TAMIL YOUTH KILLED: Troops shot dead a Tamil youth at Senaikudiyiruppu in Batticaloa District. The unidentified youth was claimed as a LTTE member by troops.

SEPTEMBER 21

ANOTHER FLOATING CORPSE: Police recovered a body floating in the Torrington lake in Colombo and reported the person to be between 30 and 35 years of age.

ATTACK ON BUS: One policeman was killed and two passengers were injured when a bus came under LTTE attack at Pesalai in Mannar District.

SEPTEMBER 22

CENSORSHIP IMPOSED: The government imposed a censorship on all news relating to military matters.

AIR RAID KILLS STUDENTS:

Forty persons including 25 students were killed when a Puckara plane dropped bombs at 12.50 pm. on the Nagarkoil Maha Vidyalayam school in Jaffna District. Over 100 were injured as it was lunch break children were out in the schoolyard. A military spokesman denied the bombing.

ANOTHER AIR RAID: In a bombing of Manalkadu and Katkovalam in the morning six civilians were killed. The military spokesman denied the bombing.

CIVILIANS KILLED IN SHELL-FIRE:

Shellfire directed from Palaly army camp between 3 and 7 am. towards Vadamaradchi claimed seven lives from the same family and included four children. The military spokesman denied the killings.

SEPTEMBER 23

DISAPPEARANCE IN EAST: S.Sivakumar (25 yrs) from Vantharumoolai and I.Thevarajah from Meeravodai who proceeded to nearby Ottumavadi in Batticaloa District have disappeared and the Government Agent has appealed for information on their whereabouts.

SEPTEMBER 24

DEFENCE NEWS: The Defence Ministry announced that a soldier was killed in an incident at Elephant Pass army camp in Kilinochchi District.

SEPTEMBER 25

SUBSIDY TRIMMED: The subsidy on wheat flour and bread was trimmed when the government raised the price by 90 cents per kg for the former and by 30 cents for the latter.

MINISTRY NEWS: The Defence Ministry announced that 10 LTTE cadres, one soldier and a civilian were killed in two separate incidents at Welikande-Batticaloa road and Thikkodai in Batticaloa District.

SEPTEMBER 26

DECAPITATED BODY IN SEA: Police recovered a decapitated body from the shallow waters beside the Korakurup coconut estate in Amparai District.

SEPTEMBER 27

YOUTH KILLED: A.Manimaran, a member of the TELO Group was shot dead at Chenkalady in Batticaloa District by unidentified persons alleged to be from the LTTE.

SEPTEMBER 28

POLICE STATION ATTACKED: In an attack on the Kalkudah police station in Batticaloa District 22 policemen lost their lives and 12 were injured according to the Defence Ministry.

SEPTEMBER 29

TAMIL ARRESTS IN COLOMBO: Several Tamils youths including women were arrested by troops and police in a joint search of Chetty Street and Chekkaditheru at 8.30 am.

SEPTEMBER 30

INCIDENT IN THE EAST: Defence Ministry announced the killing of a soldier at Kinnayady in Batticaloa District in a minor confrontation.

Situation Report

MILITARISATION DRAINS THE TREASURY

The People's Alliance government that promised an end to the ethnic war at the elections in August 1994 has failed to make any headway towards peace during the 11 months in office. In fact, it has plunged deeper in the military quagmire. The previous government was also committed to militarisation of the country and spent stupendous amounts of money on purchase of arms and the war without any constructive effort towards reconciliation and peace. The military camps that numbered 111 in the North-East during 1986 have proliferated to 205 in 1995.

The defence budget for 1996 is estimated at 33.9 billion rupees (\$680 million). This is more than 17% of the total expenditure of 199 billion rupees. The figure for education is a paltry 9.2 billion rupees (4.6%).

In its quest to win the war the government has been forced to constantly boost military expenditure even at the expense of vital welfare measures. In July the Ministry of Finance directed all ministries, departments and corporations to cut down expenditure by 10%. Sources close to the Ministry have indicated that this pruning was aimed at saving money to fund the war effort. The national defence levy, introduced as a temporary measure, has become an annually rising permanent tax on the people, including Tamils whose kith and kin are targeted by the security forces.

President Kumaratunge under whom the Finance Ministry functions has convinced an Asian Development Bank delegation in Colombo on the need to increase assistance for developing agriculture, power, energy sectors and infrastructure.

While international banks and foreign nations were handing out enormous amounts as development assistance, Deputy Minister of Defence, Col. A.Ratwatte noticed Parliament on 26 July that Rs.462 million additional funds would be spent on the security forces during the current financial year. The breakdown of the amount to be spent over and above the budget allocation of Rs.23,000 (\$460 million) million is as follows-

Sri Lanka army - Rs.255 million
Sri Lanka navy - Rs.152 million
Sri Lanka airforce - Rs.25 million
Sri Lanka police - Rs.30 million

Sri Lanka has a chequered history of receiving enormous amounts in aid and spending enormous amounts for defence thus indirectly (and some observers say directly) diverting foreign/development assistance funds to finance the military pursuit to solve the ethnic crisis. The People's Alliance government is now treading the path followed by the previous regimes.

ISOLATION OF THE NORTH

The situation in northern Sri Lanka where the Government's economic embargo and military siege are in force, is one of isolation from the rest of the country.

In a statement on 5 July the ICRC said it will double emergency medical supplies to the Jaffna peninsula and send extra staff to the Jaffna hospital. It was extremely concerned about the growing isolation of the northern region's civilian population because of the restrictions on the movement of goods and people.

According to a report only one experienced surgeon is currently working in Jaffna's 1,000 bed University hospital. There are also no surgical facilities in Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu and Mannar districts.

After inspecting on 5 July the damage to the roof of the Jaffna hospital caused by shells fired from the Mandaitivu army camp, the resident representative of the ICRC took up this matter with the military authorities. The government has refused to allow ICRC doctors to the Jaffna hospital.

Situation Report

TAMILS TARGETED

Two articles in a Sunday newspaper published in July in Colombo reflected on the security situation prevailing in the country. The first one in lead headlines bemoaned the lack of security in capital Colombo amidst police reports of LTTE threats. Two reporters had been sent by the newspaper with fake bombs in satchels and innocuous wire contraptions around their bodies. They had moved in and out of Police Headquarters, the Supreme Court, Bank of Ceylon and hotels without being spotted with the fake bombs. These institutions had often been referred to as LTTE targets by the media.

The apparent ease with which the reporters returned undetected was proof that security lapses were rampant in the capital, the newspaper claimed. This was ideal ground for LTTE operations and threatened national security was its conclusion.

In the second article the newspaper claimed that security forces unduly harassed journalists covering areas of military conflict. One of its reporters in this case had ventured beyond the northern-most security checkpoint at Thandikulam in Vavuniya and had made a quick turnaround due to fighting erupting near Omanthai, 20 km. from the checkpoint. This reporter was locked up in a cell as a LTTE member. The release of the reporter was made possible only after intervention at the highest level, the President of the country.

The assertion over the second incident was that the security forces and the government sought to blackout the security situation beyond Vavuniya by this vindictive act of locking up a journalist as a LTTE member. This action also amounted to an infringement of the press freedom, the newspaper alleged.

So much for the concern of this section of the press for public security in Colombo and journalistic freedom of a reporter.

What the newspaper deliberately left out, in fact, are most revealing. The fake human bombs who roamed sensitive blocks in central Colombo were Asgar Hussein and Ruwanthi Ariyaratne, both non - Tamils. The reporter nabbed at Vavuniya was Pearl Thevanayagam, a Tamil. These Two incidents clearly demonstrate what it is to be a Tamil person in Colombo, Vavuniya or for that matter anywhere

BRITAIN TO INTRODUCE FURTHER ASYLUM CONTROLS

A church delegation led by Bishop of Liverpool Rev. David Sheppard urged British Home Secretary Michael Howard in late August, not to introduce internal controls which will mainly affect the black people in Great Britain. The Home Secretary intends to introduce rules which will enable health, education and welfare officers to ask for identification to prove their immigration status. Under the proposed rules employers may be required to ask for such proof from employees.

Rev. Sheppard says it is clear that black people who are resident legitimately will be the first target of such questions and the number of innocent people who could be harassed greatly outnumber any illegal immigrants who may be discovered. The delegation also raised the possible loss

of appeal rights and the threat to benefits of asylum seekers who appeal against refusal of refugee status.

The delegation also urged the Home Secretary to provide asylum detainees with written reasons for detentions and create an independent review system.

BROADCASTING DISINFORMATION

State-run Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation in its radio report of 26 July claimed that the Government Agent in Jaffna had confirmed that food stocks to last two months were available in the district.

This report was officially refuted by the Government Agent in Jaffna who said that no one from Colombo had contacted him on this matter and maintained that this reporting was false.

Further emphasising the untruth of the broadcast was a memorandum submitted to President Chandrika Kumaratunge on the very day of the broadcast by the Nava Sama Samaja Party, a constituent of the People's Alliance government. The NSSP said that there was a severe shortage of food in the north and urged urgent despatch food ships.

The food situation in the north, in fact, became precarious with the Government Food Store and Multi Purpose Co-operatives becoming empty in the last week of August.

THE SINS OF KENNETH MULDER

American national Kenneth Mulder from the Global Ministries Division of the United Methodist Church in the USA serving in Colombo with the Commission for Justice and Peace under the auspices of the National Christian Council was arrested on 21 July.

A computer drawn diagram depicting a bleeding white lotus with some facts on the government's military offensives, suffering of the civilians and questioning the Church's stand caused immense displeasure to the government which deported him from Sri Lanka within 10 days of arrest.

The words that caused his deportation are-

The people who have suffered the most are currently being bombed and shelled.

Civilians are dying, NOT the LTTE!!!

As many as 400,000 people have moved from their homes. This means a refugee crisis of great magnitude is imminent!

Yet, the Government will not halt its offensive on humanitarian grounds.

WHERE IS THE CHURCH? WHAT WILL BE OUR RESPONSE AS CHRISTIANS?

CAN THE BODY OF CHRIST TRULY SIT QUIET WHILE THE PEOPLE OF CHRIST ARE BEING KILLED?

Subsequent events have proved beyond any doubt that the concerns of this Methodist worker had been prophetic. That Tamil civilians had outnumbered the LTTE cadres among the dead is now clearly evident. The magnitude of the displacement of people is also history now.

President Chandrika's White Lotus peace programme is a stark contrast to the death and misery, particularly among the Tamil civilians that prevails in the country today, was the message that Kenneth Mulder sought to portray by depicting a bleeding lotus above his note. But the treatment meted out to him is no different from that of the ordinary Tamils.

Kenneth Mulder's deportation was a sure portent for the censorship that came into force in September. But this danger signal was not grasped by the media which sought to capitalise on the incident orchestrating false propaganda over his arrest. When the crunch of censorship finally came the media is able only to whimper.

TAMIL ARRESTS IN UPCOUNTRY

A posse of 60 policemen in 13 vehicles from the Avissawella Police Station surrounded a funeral house at Kosgama and conducted a search of the Tamils gathered there. Six males and two women relatives of the deceased who had arrived for the funeral from the Matugama State Plantations in Kalutara District were arrested by police for being visitors at Kosgama.

Six G.C.E (Advanced Level) students of Saraswathy National College in Badulla who arrived from Kandy after attending a school function were arrested by police on 16 July at the public bus station in Badulla.

S. Vigneswara Rajah (32 yrs), a teacher and his brother S. Sayeswara Rajah (19 yrs) were arrested by police on 29 August at Matale.

TORTURED TAMIL YOUTH COMPENSATED

The Supreme Court ruled in early September that 22 year old Vanniasingham Suvendiran from Palugamam in Batticaloa District should be awarded Rs.20,000 for the torture that he underwent at the hands of government troops in March 1994. The court also awarded costs amounting to Rs. 3,000 for the Habeas Corpus application entered in respect of him.

The application followed Suvendiran being held without trial at Magazine Prison in Colombo. He had been arrested on 26 March 1994 while cycling opposite the Palugamam army camp and had been tortured there. The report of the Judicial Medical Officer Dr. L.P.L.D. Alwis confirmed 55 injuries on his body and detailed the possible causes for them. Suvendiran also had two fractures in his hand.

A confession had been obtained after torturing him for which the government must bear responsibility according to the ruling of the Court.

TAMILS EXTERMINATED

Arunagiri Thurairajah, Sellathamby Siva and Albert Sinnathamby from Sandively in Batticaloa District were taken out of their residences in the night by men in military fatigues and shot dead on 28 June.

BATTICALOA: An open Prison

The security situation in the Batticaloa District has deteriorated very rapidly in the recent months with large parts becoming contested territory between the security forces and the LTTE. The Batticaloa municipal limits too has become unsafe for the general public. Even tight security around the market at the centre of the town failed to prevent the loss of civilian lives as was demonstrated in the incident on 08 August. Four civilians were killed and 18 injured when a bomb exploded in a meat stall under the noses of the heavy security presence in the market. Many questions remain unanswered over this security link or lapse as it happened just a day after a bomb in Colombo killed 25 people. Involvement of the security personnel is reported to be a

strong possibility and this is borne out by the frequent reprisal attacks on civilians following any losses suffered by them.

Harassment of the Tamil public is well illustrated by the security precautions adopted by the forces on the stretch of road 200 metres in length between Vammiyadi junction and the Eravur police station. The first checkpoint is opposite Paththirakali Amman Temple. Seventy five metres from there near the new market is the second checkpoint. The third checkpoint is fifty metres ahead opposite the local council secretariat. A further 75 metres takes one to the fourth checkpoint near the Eravur police station. Passengers and pedestrians are compelled to stop or dismount at all four points within

the 200 metres and are subjected to lengthy checks, more in the nature of harassment than security precautions.

The heat on the public has been turned on in such a manner that even NGOs have decided that it is not safe for some of their employees to be based in Batticaloa any more. Some NGOs have recalled their overseas staff to Colombo. The arrest and deportation in late July of Kenneth Mulder of the US who sought to highlight the excesses of the security forces have served to carry the right signal and this has not been lost on the NGOs who have now caved in to government intimidation.

THE TRUE FACE OF OPERATION LEAP FORWARD

Leader of the Opposition Ranil Wickremasinghe's disclosures in Parliament on 07 September as to the achievements of the military operation code-named *Leap Forward* in Jaffna District exposed the government so much that drastic action became inevitable. Ranil Wickremasinghe gave the lie to the government contention that sizeable areas around the military foothold at Palaly in the Jaffna peninsula were liberated from the clutches of the LTTE.

According to him 170 people had died at the Jaffna hospital and 420 lie seriously injured as a direct result of *Operation Leap Forward*. Detailing the mass displacement of Tamils around the Palaly base he also brought to light that places of religious worship have been damaged in this military operation.

The figures read as follows-

| | Total residents | Displaced |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Sandilippay | 62,400 | 62,000 |
| Chankanay | 62,335 | 61,335 |
| Thehlippalai | 27,000 | 20,000 |
| Uduvil | -- | 35,000 |

He also said that reports indicated that houses in these areas had been damaged.

Hindu temples damaged in the military operation are

- Selva Sannithy Temple, Thondaimanaru
- Paththirakali Amman Temple, Sankaraththai
- Sivan Temple, Valvettiturai

While disclosing the above, he also urged the Minister of Shipping to despatch food, medicines and other essentials including roofing sheets to assist the displaced population.

Sensing the damage that this speech in Parliament had caused both nationally and internationally, the govern-

ment took the easy option of blacking out any such adverse reports on the pursuit of war by imposing a strict censorship. There is no possibility now of anyone questioning about even the aerial bombing of the Church at Navaly on 09 July which caused 120 deaths. The President's announcement immediately after the news was released by the ICRC that it would be investigated now goes into limbo, as expected.

Foreign governments which expressed concern at the loss of lives following the aerial bombing were placated by the assurance of an investigation. In fact, this was specifically referred to by British Prime Minister John Major to whom concerns were conveyed.

TAMILS MASSCRED IN MILITARY OPERATIONS

Over 300 Tamils including 13 children were killed in shelling and bombing as the Sri Lankan army advanced west and south west from the Palaly airbase on 9 July in *Operation Leap Forward*. Over 200,000 civilians in the area of the offensive fled before the advancing troops. St. Peter and Paul Church and a school in Navaly were bombed by a *Puckara* aircraft at 4.30 p.m. killing over 120 people including 13 children. The fact that the bombing was away from the area of army advance is accepted by the government.

Hundreds of injured people were rushed to the Jaffna hospital. Many died on the way to the hospital. Many others died because of lack of medicine and medical facilities in the hospital resulting from the five-year economic blockade of the North by the Sri Lankan government. The ICRC was the first agency to publicise the attack on defenceless civilians.

It has to be noted that this offensive was well coordinated with the armed forces under the Ministry of Defence. In fact Maj. Gen. A.M.U. Seneviratne who refused to head the offensive in a heavily populated area as Jaffna was removed as Overall Forces Commander on 21 June and Gen. R. Daluwatte was given the job. Deputy Defence Minister A. Ratwatte was personally present at Palaly directing the assault of the combined forces.

Observers say the government is well aware that Tamil civilians would be most affected if an offensive commenced from Palaly around

which are populated areas. The other two army bases at Elephant Pass and Poonahari have no civilian populations in the vicinity and have open terrain around them.

The timing of the offensive is also important. The government was up against the wall with its election pledge to abolish the executive presidency by 15 July. With no steps towards the abolition of the executive presidency, a military offensive would divert the attention of the Sinhalese public.

Apart from planning this strategy, the reaction when the crime was exposed by the ICRC proves that the government was attempting a cover up. At first the Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar questioned the propriety of ICRC's report. President Kumaratunge repeated the army's contention that the church was three miles away from where the troops were at 4.30p.m. but said the army had been asked to investigate. Mr. Kadirgamar was even ready to throw the ICRC out of the country.

If the government is guilty of war crimes against the Tamils in the North it bears the responsibility of liquidating Tamils in the South. Over 30 bodies have been recovered floating in canals and in culverts. Most bodies have been positively identified as those of Tamils. The security forces now adopt sophisticated methods to disfigure faces without using firearms. Post mortem examinations have revealed that in most cases the persons had been starved. Limbs had been tied sug-

gesting that some victims were thrown into the water alive.

Investigations have revealed that the killings were carried out in an unused toilet in the Colombo headquarters of the police Special Task Force (STF). The victims were strangled using plastic handcuffs issued to the police. Around 20 STF personnel have been arrested. But no one believes that they will be prosecuted.

The dreaded white vans, which the government death squads use to abduct people have appeared in Colombo. Lodge and hotel owners say at least 15 Tamils have been taken away in white vans. Three Tamil boys who were being forced into a white van in front of a tutory in Wellawatte in August were saved when a woman raised the alarm. A man resident in a hostel was saved when the owner misdirected the abductors. But others have not been so lucky.

The government has hardly taken any serious measures to prevent Tamils being indiscriminately arrested for the sole reason that they are Tamils. As the journal *Counterpoint* published in Colombo says, the first question posed by security personnel is "Are you Sinhala or Tamil?". If the answer is Tamil, then the person is likely to be arrested, tortured and disappeared.

New Emergency Regulations: restrict freedom of movement of Tamils

The government introduced Emergency regulations on 21 September which in effect erode the freedom of movement of Tamils in Colombo and Gampaha districts:

"(20A) Every householder within the Municipal Limits of Colombo, the Municipal Limits of Dehiwala-Mt.Lavinia, the Divisional Secretaries' Division of the Gampaha District, shall furnish the Officer-in-Charge of the Police Station of his area when required so to do by a Police Officer not below the rank of Assistant Superintendent of Police, with a list of all the inmates of his house, distinguishing the members of his family from the servants or other residents therein; and he shall also if it shall be so directed in the order of the aforesaid Police Officer report any increase or diminution or change in the same; and he shall not, having received such notice under such Order, harbour a stranger without giving such notice thereof to the Officer-in-Charge of the Police Station of his area, and every person failing in any duty imposed upon him by this regulation shall be guilty of an offence".

Earlier in the month (4 September) the government gazetted the following Emergency regulation:

(2A) Where any person is detained under the provisions of paragraph 2 of regulation 19 no order for the detention of such person shall be made unless the fact of the arrest of such person has been notified to the Officer-in - Charge of the nearest Police Station forthwith or in any event not later than 24 hours of such arrest. Any person who fails to inform of the fact of such arrest shall be guilty of an offence and upon conviction after trial before the High Court be liable to a term of imprisonment extending upto 2 years and a fine".

Tamil MPs say that this regulation is not being observed by the security

forces as are many other regulations relating to arrests. A number of Tamils have been arrested, without proper notification. Regulation 19 says as follows:

19(1) The provisions of sections 36,37 and 38 of the Code of Criminal Procedure Act.No 15 of 1979, shall not apply to and in relation to any person arrested under Regulation 18.

(2) Any person taken into custody in pursuance of the provisions of Regulation 18 may for the purpose of investigation of the offence in relation to which such person was arrested be kept in detention upon an order made by a police officer not below the rank of a Deputy Inspector-General of Police or if the person had been taken into custody by a member of the armed forces in any Administrative District within the Northern Eastern Provinces, upon an order made by an officer not below the rank of Brigadier, Commodore or Wing Commander of the Army, Navy or Air Force, as the case may be in a place authorised by the Secretary for a period not exceeding sixty days reckoned from the date of his arrest under that regulation, and should at the end of the period be released unless such person is detained under the provisions of Regulation 17, or is produced before a court of competent jurisdiction. Where such person is detained in a prison established under the Prisons Ordinances, the provisions of Regulation 17 (3) shall, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to, and in relation to, such person.

Provided, however, that when any person is arrested, in pursuance of the Provisions of Regulation 18 in any area or area outside the Northern and Eastern Provinces in respect of which a Proclamation under Section 2 of the Public Security Ordinance is applicable in respect of any offence committed in any such area, he shall not be detained under these provisions for a period in

excess of seven days and unless detained under the provisions of Regulation 17, shall be produced before a Magistrate before the expiry of such period of detention as is hereinafter provided or released from custody.

(3) Where no reasonable cause exists for the further detention of any person arrested under the provisions of Regulation 18, such person shall, within forty-eight hours of his arrest if such arrest was made in any area outside the Northern or Eastern Provinces in respect of which a Proclamation under Section 2 of the Public Security Ordinance is applicable, or within seven days if such arrest was made in any area within the Northern and Eastern Provinces, be released from custody upon production of such person before a magistrate.

(4) The Secretary shall cause to be published in the Gazette a list, with the addressees of all places authorised by him as places of detention for the purposes of Regulations 17 and 19, and shall also notify the existence and the address of such places of detention to the Magistrate within whose jurisdiction such places of detention are located.

(5) The officer-in - charge of any place authorised by the Secretary as a place authorised for detention for purposes of Regulation 17 or 19 shall furnish once every fourteen days to the magistrate within whose local limits of jurisdiction such place of detention is located a list containing the names of all persons detained at such place. The Magistrate shall cause such list to be displayed on the notice board of the court.

(6) The Magistrate within whose jurisdiction any such authorised place of detention is situated, shall visit such place of detention at least once in every month and it shall be the duty of the officer-in-charge of that place, to

place of detention at least once in every month and it shall be the duty of the officer-in-charge of that place, to secure that every person detained therein, otherwise than by an order of a Magistrate, is produced before such visiting Magistrate.

(7) The production of any person in conformity with the provisions of Regulation 19(6) shall not affect the detention of any person.

(8) No person shall be detained at any place other than a place of detention authorised by the Security and where any person had been detained contrary to this regulation the person or persons responsible for such deten-

tion shall be guilty of an offence and upon conviction after trial before the High Court be liable to imprisonment for a period not less than six months and not exceeding five years and to a fine.

(9) Where a person who has been arrested under the provisions of regulation 18 or detained in pursuance of the provisions or regulation 19, or has surrendered in terms of the provisions of regulation 22 is produced before a court of competent jurisdiction, such court shall order that such person be remanded in the custody of the Fiscal in a prison established under the Prisons Ordinance.

(10) The provisions of section 115 of the Criminal Procedure Act, No.15 of 1979, shall not apply to, and in relation to, any person who is produced before a magistrate under the provisions of paragraph(9), or appears before a Magistrate in any other manner and is detained or remanded in the custody of the Fiscal in any prison for reason of being suspected or accused of any offence under any emergency regulation. Such person shall remain in such custody for a continuous period of three months and shall be released at any time prior to the expiry of such period, except in accordance with the provisions of regulation 54.

OCCUPATION OF TAMIL LANDS IN BATTICALOA

The provisions on land in the government peace proposals are as follows:

“Land will be a devolved subject and State land within a region will be vested in the regional councils. State land within a region required for the purposes of the centre in respect of a reserved subject may be utilised by the centre in consultation with the relevant regional Council in accordance with such procedures as may be established by law”.

In taking over lands in the regions the centre needs only to consult with the regional Council and “law” referred to in the proposal is “law of Parliament” where the Sinhalese always have a majority. Tamil parties insist that the phrase “in consultation with” should be changed to “with the consent of”. Historical reasons lie behind the apprehension of the Tamils. Government planned Sinhalese colonisation of Tamil areas is the most important aspect in the Sri Lankan conflict, Tamil observers say. Even before independence, the then Land and Agriculture Minister D.S.Senanayake inaugurated a major colonisation scheme in 1941 on the banks of the Pattapalai river in Batticaloa

District. The plan was named Gal Oya Valley Scheme and a Gal Oya Development Authority was created to develop and irrigate 50,000 acres of land. Sinhalese from the south were settled in 35 villages established under the scheme.

Amparai District was created in 1995 as a result of Sinhalese colonisation. Earlier the Verugal river in the north and Kumbukkan Oya in the south were the borders of Batticaloa District. Tamils and Muslims were engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry in these areas for many generations. In 1941 the jungles in the Gal Oya area which were a natural resource for the local people were completely destroyed for the colonisation villages. Eight villages (6th, 7th, 11th, 14th, 17th and 25th) were allocated to Tamils and two (12th, 13th) to the Muslims. All the other villages were allocated to the Sinhalese. While most Tamil leaders opposed the Gal Oya colonisation, UNP’s Paddiruppu MP Ethirmanasingham supported government plans. But in the 1952 elections Paddiruppu people elected independent candidate Rasamanickam who vehemently opposed Sinhalese colonisation and settled Tamils in the

35th, 37th, 38th, 39th and 40th villages without government approval.

The government implemented irrigation schemes in the area. The tank Senanayake Samudra was created by dams and for another tank called Navakiri, 600 acres belonging to Tamils in Kodaripottamadu, Nallambai and Nellukuthinakalai were acquired. The owners were never paid any compensation.

Villages to settle Tamils were created by the government in sandy and rocky lands where agriculture is difficult. These villages were not provided sufficient irrigation facilities and the irrigation tanks have always been under the control of the Sinhalese. The Sinhalese villages were provided electricity, school, medical, library, transport and other infrastructural facilities while the Tamil villages were left to fend for themselves. Tamil leaders pointed out at the time, that the treatment of the Tamils was part of the racial discriminatory policy of the government.

It was in these circumstances that the well planned genocidal massacre

against the Tamils was unleashed in 1958. Tamils were driven out of their traditional lands in the south, west and south-west areas of Batticaloa. Sinhala mobs raided properties of Tamils with the support and assistance of the security forces. Thus over 15,000 acres of land belonging to Tamils in Athuvawattai, Karadithalavai, Thetkuvadakuwattai, Pithalawattai, Pallathalavai, Kattumupattai, Konakollai, Kilakathuwattai, Iranamadu, Atchiraveli, Poochikoodu, Thendamkoduthawattai, Manalvatharattai, Kulanthyanwattai, Pulitadvai, Sinnawaththai, Muthettukinaru, Kinatradiwattai, Kattarawattai and Pavuruwattai. These paddy areas belonged to Tamils resident in Mahipoor, Eruval, Kurumanveli, Mandur, Thambalavaththai, Navithanveli, Vellaveli, Palukamam, Kottaikallaru, Onthachchimadam, Kaluvanchikudy, Kaluthavalai and Porativu. Paddy lands in Aladawattai, Eesadawattai and Vitpanaikadu belonging to Muslims in Maruthamunai were also raided by the Sinhalese.

These lands were brought under the administration of the Amparai Kachcheri (government secretariat) and titles were granted to the Sinhalese colonists illegally. During the 1958 violence, Tamils from the 16th, 17th and 25th colonisation villages were driven out and now they have become Sinhalese villages. Muslims in the 13th village left for other areas in fear.

While forcible occupation of lands belonging to the minorities continued, the government took a major step in 1955. It created a new district named Amparai District by exising the south and south-west areas of Batticaloa District. Later Amparai administrative district also became an electoral district with a new Sinhala name Digamadulla.

Later it was said that the district was linked historically to the Digavavi Buddhist temple. The area was declared a sacred area and after 1968 large tracts of land belonging to Tamils and Muslims were acquired by the

government.

As a result of the Gal Oya colonisation scheme, the Sinhalese population of Amparai District dramatically increased. Before the scheme the Sinhalese in the area numbered only 3,000. Following settlement of people from Sinhalese areas in southern Sri Lanka the population has increased to over 150,000. In the 1981 census it was found that the Sinhalese formed a massive 37.6% of the population of the district. By Sinhalese colonisation successive governments also achieved another major aim. Representation for Tamils in Parliament became progressively less. In the 1994 general election no Tamil was elected from Amparai District.

Before the Gal Oya scheme, Tamils were involved in animal husbandry and large tracts of land in south-west Amparai were used for grazing. As the scheme progressed jungles were destroyed and lands were occupied and the Tamils were left virtually without any grazing land. MP Rasamanickam's request to the government to allocate 4,000 acres of land for grazing was rejected. The colonisation scheme thus brought economic ruin to many Tamils.

In the last ten years many Tamils have fled to safer areas. Tamils have been driven out of colonisation villages under the Gal Oya scheme such as the 6th, 7th, 11th, 35th, 38th, 39th and 40th villages, after 1990. Tamil lands are currently being forcibly cultivated by Sinhalese people with the protection and assistance of the security forces.

There is a possibility that these lands will also be permanently occupied by the Sinhalese in the future. In order to facilitate this, the government brought the 33rd, 37th, 38th, 39th and 40th villages together with other Batticaloa border villages such as Kakachiwattai, Palayadiwattai, Vakiellai and Vellaveli under the Army administration of Amparai District. In time to come, there is no doubt that the government will permanently link these villages with Amparai District.

Several Sinhalese politicians and religious leaders played major roles in the forcible occupation of Tamil lands in eastern Sri Lanka. Former minister Cyril Mathew personally led gangs of Sinhalese to the east to occupy the Veeramunai area. The most prominent personality among religious leaders, who regarded colonisation as life's crusade, was the Buddhist priest Dimbulagala Thero.

Dimbulagala Thero was instrumental in colonising many areas in Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa particularly under the Mahaweli B and C schemes. He advised Polonnaruwa Government Agents such as C P de Silva, Bradman Weerakoon (who later became international affairs advisor to President Premadasa), Ridgeway Tillekeratne, Amaradasa Gunawardene and Upali Silva on colonisation. People say that he left no stone unturned in his quest to drive the Tamils out of their traditional lands. He campaigned among Sinhalese people that it was the Tamils who were invaders and all land belonged to the Sinhalese.

Dimbulagala Thero maintained close links with military officers such as Lt. Gen. Denzil Kobbekaduwa, particularly for the purpose of arming civilians. He received funding for colonisation schemes from all the major Buddhist orders. Observers say he was also supported by development agencies such as Sarvodaya and Navalanka.

Many organisations and governments have welcomed the peace proposals. But, it is certain that they would never have considered the problems faced by the Tamils such as colonisation which continues to this day. For this reason Tamils demand clarification and details of the proposals.

PERSECUTION PURE AND SIMPLE: Says US Judge

A United States District Court ruled on 26 June that Mrs. Balaranjini Ratnam from Sri Lanka was entitled to political asylum in the United States due to her being persecuted by the Sri Lankan government.

District Judge Dickinson R Debevoise held that Tamils were being persecuted on account of their ethnicity. Reports of the US State Department submitted as evidence for rejecting the asylum claim of Mrs. Ratnam were characterised by the Judge as a "superficial six page document" that "barely touched upon the long history of political, racial and human rights abuses by the Sri Lankan government and its agents".

The ruling also states, "A review of the documents in their entirety discloses what transpired in Sri Lanka from the date of British withdrawal in 1948 until the present. When events of this extended period are juxtaposed against the 1988-1994 persecution of petitioner and her husband, the conclusion is inescapable that the petitioner was arrested, tortured and confined because of her husband's suspected political activity and because she and her husband were Tamils".

Referring to the incarceration of Mrs. Ratnam in Colombo, the Judge held that "The 21 months of detention which commenced three days after petitioner arrived in Colombo cannot be found to be part of an investigative process.... no charges were brought against them, they were never taken before a judge or magistrate. They were simply held until August 1994 when once again a bribe secured their release".

"What happened to petitioner and husband was not violence occasioned by LTTE's war against the government. It was not part of a government investigation. It was persecution pure and simple."

-Judge Debevoise

The position of the Board of Immigration Appeals that "the government of Sri Lanka does not persecute Tamils on account of their ethnicity and the violence in Sri Lanka was begun by terrorist Tamil forces and continues because of those forces", was commented upon by the Judge thus, "These conclusions are unsupported and, in fact, are patently wrong... nothing could be further from the truth".

The Judge continued as, "It is true that the LTTE, an extremist Tamil faction has become an armed insurrection against the Sri Lankan government.... Violence, however, did not originate with Tamil terrorists. As recorded in the administrative record set forth above, the terrorists themselves were the product of decades of Sinhalese majority efforts to reduce the Tamils to a state of second class citizenship (or no citizenship at all). The armed rebellion burst forth after massive Sinhalese attacks on Tamil citizens, homes and businesses, killing thousands and displacing tens of thousands of Tamils".

CLERGY'S DISAPPROVAL

The Jaffna Diocesan Justice, Peace & Development Commission in a letter to President Chandrika has conveyed on 13 July its concern over the sufferings and grievances caused to the people by the "Leap Forward" operation. After highlighting - indiscriminate shelling/aerial bombing, mass massacre of civilians, lack of medicine and personnel at the General Hospital Jaffna, lack of food and shelter- the 68 priests present submitted the following proposals to President Chandrika for prompt action:

* Kindly stop forthwith indiscriminate shelling, and bombing. Since the areas considered relatively safe are densely populated and any bomb or shell dropped will cause mass killing of many civilians.

* Kindly despatch the necessary life saving medicine, equipment and personnel to the General Hospital.

* Until such time people return to places from where they are displaced, provide them with temporary shelter, food & clothing.



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