

**SRI
LANKA**

**SITUATION
REPORT**

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SITUATION REPORT

Come join us, says Army

"Come join us", says 3 large advertisements in the gov't. owned Daily News, inserted by the Sri Lanka army. 1. "The Sri Lanka Army seeks young gentlemen for appointment as Agricultural Officers. The ideal candidate should have a minimum of 2 years experience in a State/Corporation sector organisation or in a recognised private sector Agricultural or allied project, after obtaining a degree in Agriculture... Selected candidates would be granted a Commission in the Regular Force in the rank of Lieutenant..." 2. The Sri Lanka Army seeks young, technically qualified gentlemen for appointment as Officers in the Sri Lanka Electrical & Mechanical Engineers... 3. The Sri Lanka Army seeks young gentlemen for appointment as Garrison Engineers... (Daily News—28.2.86)

Soldier on bribe charge

A soldier of the Sri Lanka Army, Christopher Anthony Gabriel Kumaradasa, presently attached to the Trincomalee Army Camp who was on remand on a bribery charge was yesterday allowed cash bail in a sum of Rs.2,000 by the Chief Magistrate, Colombo. ...He was charged with soliciting and accepting a sum of Rs.5,000 from three persons in a bid to make way for the escape of terrorists suspects who are being detained at the army camp at Trincomalee... (The Island—29/2/86)

"Voice of Germany" is back

The Trincomalee relay station of Radio Deutsche Welle, the "voice of Germany" is on the air again, though on a limited scale. Deutsche Welle's Project Manager in Trincomalee, Mr. Reinard Geisman told "The

Island" yesterday that the relay station which suspended its operations in June last year following mounting terrorist violence in the area, resumed its operations on February 12 with 1-hour daily transmission of music... At present there is only one short wave transmitter in use at the relay station. One medium wave transmitter and two more short wave transmitters are expected to become operational in March... (The Island—21/2/86)

You can't win every round

"Mr. Athulathmudali said that the terrorists seek publicity in the world media and that we should not play into their hands by irresponsible speeches. He denied that any influence was used to release a number of estate Tamils arrested during the recent violence. The C.O. Nuwara Eliya, DIG Leo Perera had personally gone through the facts and released them as there was nothing against them. He said that one could not expect to win every round when fighting a war. The terrorists had in the Kantalai landmine attack concealed the wire of the mine under water. There had been no attacks along this road for four months and everybody thought it was safe... (The Island—21/2/86)

Sex near the temple

A couple charged with having sex in a lorry parked at the car park of the Kelani Raja Maha Viharaya were yesterday fined Rs.250/- each by Additional Magistrate, Colombo, Rohini Perera. The couple were released after pleading guilty to the charge... (The Island—22/2/86)

British tourists robbed

Three armed youths stopped a vehicle carrying tourists in the Yala Wild Life sanctuary at gunpoint and robbed articles and cash to the value of Rs.45,300/- from its occupants, Colombo Police Headquarters said yesterday... The armed youths had blocked the path of the vehicle by placing concrete slabs across the road. One man was armed with a gun and others with knives... (Sun—22/2/86)

State pays the expenses

Trincomalee: The bodies of 27 persons killed when terrorists set off a landmine on Wednesday at Seruwila, in the Trincomalee district were buried on Thursday in the RBI cemetery in Somapura in the Seruwila A.G.A's division. Religious rites were performed by the Seruwila Managala Raja Maha Viharadhipathi, Ven. Seruwila Saranakitti Maha Thera. Expenses of the funerals were borne by the State... Thirty nine persons including four security forces personnel and four Home Guards were killed in the landmine blast. The rest of the victims were residents of Dehiwatta, Neelapola and Serunuwara. (Sun—22/2/86)

Injured rushed by plane

An extensive rounding up operation has been launched in the north-east after Wednesday's landmine explosion at Seruwila which killed 39 people... Meanwhile, ten civilians who

The Voice of a Sinhala intellectual

The following letter was addressed to the Editor of the Jaffna-based SATURDAY REVIEW by Dr. Ediriwira Sarachchandra, and was published in the 15th February issue of the paper under the headline: "Don's Helplessness".

Dr. Ediriwira Sarachchandra was one-time Professor of Sinhala language and Literature at the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya. He is also well-known as a playwright and producer. He was Sri Lanka's ambassador in Paris. His play "Maname" has come to remain as a major landmark in the evolution of Sinhala Drama.

Reading your journal, the arrival of which I look forward to eagerly, has made me a sadder but a wiser man. It is the misfortune of the human being that, although Truth is an ultimate Good, knowledge of the truth does not always bring him happiness. Ignorance is, often, bliss. I wonder how many people in the South realise the extent of the sufferings that our brethren, the Tamil people of this country, have been undergoing for so long and are undergoing at the present moment. People to whom I have spoken do not believe what I say. Or they do not want to. Their senses are dulled by the sound of the tamashas around them, the scores of the cricket matches the bailas broadcast by the State radio and the Nandana Vindana comedies on T.V. They will not realise anything until they are themselves touched by this Evil that is stalking the country.

But what I feel most difficult to cope with is a feeling of utter helplessness in the face of all this. My friend Dr. Sivathamby asked me to make an appeal. But to whom? And asking for what? Merely to say, "Stop this senseless killing is not going to be of any avail. How many people, more important than I am, have said this? There must be some formula for peace, and this can be evolved in an atmosphere of sanity. There is, obviously, no

sanity now. The Security Forces have lost their balance of mind. Fear of unknown death-traps like landmines and their own impotence before the unseen enemy have driven them to this state.

The psychology that has gripped them reminds us of the My-Lai incident in the Vietnam war where, in almost similar circumstances but on a larger scale, regular army units were fighting guerrillas. Your journal reminds us of the incident, in May last year, in which a soldier going berserk, shot seven Tamil people dead. Now it is Killinochchi, and you have adduced incontrovertible evidence to show that it is not fabricated: the testimony of a Tamil who was injured by the gun-shots, and of a Sinhalese who was an eye-witness.

I don't presume to be able to propose a solution. Either the militants must lay down their arms, as the President says, and he will withdraw the Security Forces, or the Security Forces must be withdrawn and the militants must agree to lay down their arms. Or, by agreement, these two events must take place simultaneously.

Of course, this is not easily done, as we saw from the fate of the Thimpu talks. While I write, the killing is taking place in the mid-country as well, and members of the Tamil community as well as Sinhalese are suffering, and the economy may be badly hit.

I am raising my feeble voice among thousands of others to say that the Sinhalese do not want this war. We want to live in peace and amity with the Tamils and all other communities. Therefore, let whoever has the power to stop this war, stop it.

Let him not waver, let him not procrastinate, let him take the bold step that is needed, and, in the end the forces of good and the forces of justice will be on his side.

Sincerely,

Ediriwira Sarachchandra.

DIARY OF EVENTS

and

Human Rights Violations & Ceasefire Violations

Events from January 1 - 16 were carried in Issue No. 5 of Situation Report

JANUARY 17

In Jaffna, for the third successive day, army attacks civilians after being compelled to retreat to their bases. 4 Tamil civilians killed by helicopter strafing and at least 12 others reported injured. Eye witness accounts state that an army detachment that left the Palaly army camp in the morning march on foot, covered by armoured cars and trucks via the airport road, across Kupplan and Kurumbacitty, and while nearing Erlalai, halt and consult a map, apparently to locate a militant base. At this point, they come under heavy attack by militants, and were seen opening fire at random and quickly withdrawing from the scene in the vehicles. Meanwhile, a helicopter that was giving air cover, was seen strafing the areas in the rear, killing and injuring civilians. Those killed were - V. Kumaravelu, (69), a government pensioner, Thurairajasivam (34) a cigar manufactory worker, K. Kanthavanam (68) of Erlalai, and Rathinam (60). The injured were later admitted to Tellippalai and Jaffna hospitals. Life comes to a standstill at Vasavilan, Kurumbacitty, Punnalaikadduvan and Chunnakam areas.

In the Eastern province armed forces meet with two reverses. At Dehiwatte, 3 army men, Dharmasiri, Wijeyeratne and Wickramasinghe from the Trincomalee Monkey Bridge army camp killed when the jeep in which they were travelling explodes on running into a buried landmine on the kantalai road. Four other soldiers who sustain major injuries despatched to Anuradhapura Hospital.

At Namalwatte, also in the Trincomalee district, 4 Police commandos on foot patrol, hit by a landmine and injured critically flown to Colombo for emergency operations.

In Mannar, a one-hour shoot-out between armed forces on a search operation and Tamil militants ends with bombing by a helicopter, resulting in a big civilian exodus from the jungle villages of Pappamoddi and Nayatraveli. Casualties not known.

At Vavuniya, a long convey of 36 armoured cars and light tanks, along with a fleet of buses carrying an estimated 1,500 soldiers, observed going in the direction of the north in a long procession, while all traffic in the same direction had been stopped earlier.

Jaffna lawyers led by a former Mayor R. Visuvanathan protest to Jaffna G.A. over the proposed declaration of the 1,000 metre security zone in Jaffna city. Meanwhile, Brigadier Rupasinghe invites heads of schools within the security zone for a conference.

President of the Thirukovil Citizens' Committee Mr. V. Meharajah, who was taken in

for questioning and released, again summoned and detained at the Kaluwanchikudy Commando Hqrs.

JANUARY 18

Courts of law in Jaffna closed indefinitely, following order in regard to security zone.

Secret terrorist cells in the city (Colombo) have begun a new propaganda war against the government, says Colombo newspaper SUN. They are rebutting govt. statements and reports, and feeding Colombo-based diplomatic missions with material bearing the letterhead of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), says the paper.

Colombo report says "nine terrorists were killed and 12 more arrested in two separate incidents in Mannar and Thirukovil".

Anthonipillai Mahendran (23) of Uppuveli, Trincomalee, a dealer in coconuts, was discovered dead near the 3rd mile post, with gunshot wounds and burn marks.

One Police Sergeant killed, and five other policemen and four army personnel injured, following a head-on collision between a police jeep and an army vehicle in Trincomalee town.

Army firing in the Point Pedro area from late evening until late in the night. The only reported victim is a man who was returning after delivering bread at the Point Pedro army camp - Thangarajah (40), a father of 9 children.

Charges filed against Thuraisingham Sri Ranganathan (23) of Point Pedro and Varathalingam Jeyakumaran of Kayts, a student in Engineering at the Moratuwa University campus, at the Colombo High Court. Sri Lanka news agency Lankapuwath reports that these two who are EROS members had conspired to bomb the President's official residence and other buildings in Colombo. Both have served several months in the remand jail.

Sinhala Ayurvedic physician Jayasekera of Iraperiyakulam, Vavuniya reported to have shot himself to death with a gun borrowed from a Home Guard of the area (Virakesari)

Armed police hold up Jaffna-Colombo afternoon Yal Devi train at Medawachchiya for an intensive search. Passengers later asked to board another train with fewer compartments, causing great inconvenience. Train reaches Colombo several hours late around 11 p.m.

JANUARY 19

Black Sunday at Iruthayapuram; Batticola. Sub Inspector M. Dharmasiri (49) and constable Samarawickrema Karunananda of

the Commando Unit killed in action when a cordon-and-search operation in the early hours of the morning by armed forces fails to come off. Having abandoned the search for the militants responsible for the killing of the police commandos, govt. forces retaliate with a brutal massacre of civilians in the area. 24 Tamils killed in a reign of terror which went on till the forenoon. Entering the church of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, commandos order the parish priest, Rev. Fr. Dekoning, a non-Tamil into the mission house, post a sentry to prevent him coming out, and having ordered Catechist Thambiappah Sahayanaathan, Michael Gnanadas (21) and George Anthony (23), church workers, who were preparing for early Sunday Mass to run out of the church, spray them with bullets killing them instantly in front of the church. Three watchers at the Timber Corporation Depot at kalliankadu, Muthulingam Navaratnam (29), Kumaraperumal Ravindrakumar (29) and S. Suriyakumar (24) were killed similarly. An employee of the Petroleum Corporation, a resident at the Corporation quarters, Vyramuttu Jeyakumar (21) was dragged out of the premises and shot. The commandos then entered houses in the area, destroying and damaging houses and household effects, assault inmates with butt ends of rifles, and beat them and kick them, while women and children wail and cry. Among other killed was a Post office employee, a 54-year old mason Sellathamby Thangarajah, a Municipal Council employee Kandiah Ketharam (33), a fish vendor, cultivators, labourers and students. Areas affected by State violence were Iruthayapuram, Jayanthipuram and Karuvappankerny.

Reporting the same incident under the headline - FIERCE BATTLE - MANY CASUALTIES, Colombo newspaper SUN says in its front page lead news item:- "Two Policemen and nearly 50 terrorists lay dead in the wake of a 10-hour face-to-face confrontation between the security forces and Tamil separatists near Batticaloa town yesterday (20/1).... The security forces then called in reinforcements and Air Force helicopters joined the battle. Amidst the raging battle there were conflicting accounts of the number of terrorists dead... Batticaloa Police confirmed the deaths of 30 terrorists, but the Defence Ministry in Colombo could only confirm the death of 21 terrorists... The Defence Ministry added that of the 21 terrorists who had died, 14 died of gunfire and other seven committed suicide by taking cyanide capsules....."

In Colombo, CWC General Secretary Sellasamy makes direct representations to President Jayawardene protesting against attempt to expel estate workers from Charing Cross Division of Harrington tea estate in

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Kotagala and replace them with outsiders.

The time is not far off when Tamils will be able to live with dignity in the country, says CWC President Thondaman at a function at St. Benedict's College, Kotahena.

A Sri Lankan Navy boat used for operations in the northern surveillance zone is believed to have been stolen by Tamil terrorists, says Colombo newspaper SUN.

JANUARY 20

7 persons out of those killed in yesterday's Iruthayapuram-Jayanthipuram massacre identified by women relatives, but army authorities refuse to hand over bodies. Women relatives tell Batticaloa Citizens' Committee that they were admitted into Kallady Commando camp in batches of three, and shown a truck in which 23 dead bodies were heaped. They discover one victim, still alive, asking for water in a feeble voice. He was promptly pulled out of the heap and taken away by commandos. (Virakesari).

Combined Police, army and air force search of persons and passing vehicles at Vavuniya town.

122 persons taken in by army personnel on the 19th in the Sammanthurai district not released yet.

Two foreigners seen taking photographs of the Jaffna Dutch Fort according to Govt. sources, provoking army fire, followed by militants firing back. One soldier believed injured. Public and bank officials do not report for work.

4,000 residents of Eralai, Kuppilan, Punnalaikadduvan do a protest march in the area and hand over petition to Asst. Govt. Agency Gopalaratnam demanding withdrawal of army.

Army men cordon off Mamoolai, Kanukerni areas in Mullaitivu district and take away about 200 youths for questioning, and release some of them subsequently.

Jaffna General Hospital doctors and staff tell military authorities that since the hospital comes within the security zone, there should be a protection zone around the hospital too.

Army chief Major Gen. Nalin Seneviratne tells "Virakesari" that only permanent residents will be permitted to stay and move within the 1,000 metre security zones, and no outsiders would be permitted.

Report from Thirukovil in Eastern Province says 3 Special Task Force men on foot patrol were injured by a land mine at Thamarai-kulam, yesterday, and one of them in a critical condition was flown to Colombo.

There were 218 sudden deaths recorded during the year 1985 in one A.G.A.'s Division in Killinochchi alone, according to official figures.

JANUARY 21

Public agitation mounts in Jaffna over the 1,000 metre security zone declaration. About 5,000 Muslim Tamils in the city take out a protest demonstration starting from Osmania

College and submit their objection of Jaffna G.A. Meanwhile, Mothers' Front announces a continuous satyagraha outside Jaffna Secretariat, until the Army is removed from the Dutch Fort. There will be no question of a security zone once the Army is withdrawn from the Dutch Fort, Mothers' Front Secretary Mrs. Nirmala Balaratnam tells the Jaffna Press. She also announces that hospital doctors, nurses, hospital staff, school principals, teachers, traders, government officials, and students have all pledged their support to the non-violent protest.

Brigadier Rupasinghe, the Jaffna military commander issues public statement that there was no need for panic on the part of Jaffna City residents, that there will be no need to shift offices or establishments outside the security zone. The order was yet to be officially promulgated anyway and the army will not use mortar fire unless they themselves were attacked by mortar fire. This followed a meeting of the Brigadier with a delegation from the Citizens' Committee led by Prof. K. Sivathamby.

Payment of pensions to retired government employees at Durayappa Stadium suspended.

Jaffna Blood Bank makes appeal for blood donations.

The dead body of a man named Premasiri was found on the Oorani Road with gunshot injuries. A placard placed beside the body said - He gave information about Iruthayapuram.

Army authorities in Batticaloa knock down house compound walls and break down fences along main roads for reasons of "security" they say.

Jaffna Central College Principal tells Brigadier Rupasinghe that there was no way he could guarantee the non-entry of outsiders into his school premises. If there was any commotion outside or danger to life, outsiders might naturally run into the nearest building and that could not be prevented.

EROS announces that they have detained a 50-year old British woman claiming to be a journalist - Mrs. Penelope Willis - who had driven to Mullaitivu despite a government ban on all foreigners visiting the north and east. She is reported to have driven up to St. Peter's Church in a Fiat car and asked for accommodation.

JANUARY 22

Public agitation against declaration of security zone continues in Jaffna. Satyagraha and "sit-in" organised by Mothers' Front opposite Jaffna Secretariat paralyse administration. Jaffna traders and Hospital doctors and staff take out protest processions, demanding withdrawal of army from Dutch Fort. Shops, schools close and a mass signature campaign also launched. Brigadier Rupasinghe says he would like to meet members of the Mothers' Front and allay public fears. Agitations in other peninsular areas also.

Army 2nd Lieutenant Jegath Perera shot and killed at Mullaitivu while supervising the repair of a road bridge about a mile from army camp, which was blasted earlier, apparently by Tamil militants.

48 Sinhala families at Jayanthipuram evacuated by Police to a Buddhist vihare in Batticaloa. Tamil families nervous as to whether it could be a prelude to an attack on them.

Tamil army officer Ratnam Selvaratnam of the Gajabahu Regiment who was taken into custody by military police at Army Hqrs. in Colombo on May 26 last year, ordered to be produced in court on Feb. 6, following Habeas Corpus application by his wife Vimaladevi of Eralai.

A party of armed youths take away a Hiace van and a motorcycle from the house of a resident at Wyman Road, Nallur, Jaffna, promising to return the motorbike within a few hours.

Colombo newspaper SUN quoting "security sources" say that "51 hardcore terrorists belonging to PLOTE" out of 251 suspects rounded up in Batticaloa had been identified.

A Buddhist monk arrested at Maradana in Colombo for possessing around 10,000 grains of cannabis (ganja). (SUN)

Another Buddhist monk arrested in connection with the kidnapping of a 14-year old boy in the Agalawatte area. (SUN)

In Colombo a British High Commission spokesman says they are unable to confirm whether the British woman Mrs. Penelope Willis detained by EROS at Mullaitivu was a journalist, as she had not registered herself with the High Commission.

JANUARY 23

In the Jaffna peninsula, 8 Tamil civilians and one Army Corporal were killed, 18 civilians and 4 army men injured in a 5-hour confrontation with gov. forces and Tamil militants at Tellipallai in the morning. One newly acquired Avro turbo prop 40-seater aircraft and a Bell 212 helicopter were both hit and damaged by militant fire when they were on the point of descending at Palaly military airport. The Air Force Flight Lieutenant in command of the helicopter and an airman passenger in the Avro were both injured. (Virakesari, Eelamurasu, Sun) Govt. newspaper Daily News says: "Seven bullets drilled the Avro injuring three soldiers and slightly damaging the aircraft. In the second aircraft incident, a soldier was killed and the pilot suffered a foot injury when terrorists attempted to shoot down their helicopter... The dead soldier has been identified as Lance Corporal Karunaratne of the Armoured Corps." Among the 8 Tamil civilians killed were the Headmaster of the Thayidya Ganesha Vidyalayam Mr. Varadarajaperumal (48) who was cycling on his way to the school, a farmer from Kadduvan Vallipuram Namasivayam (40), a

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carpenter from Varuthalaivilan M. Rajendram (58) and his kinsman M. Mahalingam (35) who were both travelling on the same bicycle, a farmer from Varuthalaivilan Sinnady Raman (35) and a student of Tellippalai Mithradeva Balendra (16). The sequence of events began when around 5.30 a.m. army units from Palaly army camp and the Harbour View Hotel army camp supported by armoured cars and helicopters tried to converge at Tellippalai and cordon the area before launching an attack on a suspected militant base. But before they could do so, hand grenades were flung at some soldiers passing a rail track and simultaneously loud bomb explosions were heard, which made the soldiers fire in a frenzy in all directions.

National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali says in Parliament that there was no question of removing the Army camp from the Jaffna Fort, "despite protests in the last few days by some people". That would be a victory to the terrorists, and he questioned the bona fides of the "citizens" who wanted the removal.

For the second day, govt. administration in Jaffna paralysed by Satyagraha campaign staged by Mothers' Front.

At Cheddikulam, at Tantrimalai junction a series of five landmine explosions go off leaving huge craters on the road, and severely damaging at least one armoured car. Army casualties if any, not known. Only a few miles away at Vavuniya, "senior officers of the Army from Colombo, Panagoda, Mannar and Kilinochchi were conferring at that time, says SUN, in an on-the-spot report by Iqbal Athas and Sinha Ratnatunga. SUN report says ground troops escaped unhurt by the landmine explosions, because they were moving by foot.

Nedunkerni residents live in fear following the induction of more armed forces into the area the past three days.

British High Commission in Colombo appeals to EROS for the release of Mrs. Willis.

SLFP M.P. for Attanagalla Lakshman Jayakody in an angry outburst in Parliament, says Indian High Commissioner Dixit and Minister Thondaman have now become the "backroom decision makers" in the country.

JANUARY 24

Number of civilians killed in yesterday's army firing goes up to 13, with 5 others succumbing to injuries.

Jaffna govt. offices paralysed for the third day by Mothers' Front-led satyagraha.

Militants engage army unit that came out from Navatkuli army camp on patrolling, forcing it back into the camp. This was followed by helicopter strafing at Ariyalai, injuring several residents and damaging many houses. Fear and tension in adjoining areas of Kaithady, Columbuthurai and Chundikul.

A low-flying helicopter again strafes

Tellippalai and Kadduvan areas, the scene of yesterday's battle. The owner of a "Cool-Bar" at Victoria Road, Jaffna, V.V. Balasingam (40) and his companion Kandiah Subramaniam (42) who had gone there to attend the funeral of a student victim of yesterday's shooting, both sustain injuries and admitted to Tellippalai hospital. Eye witnesses say that the helicopter withdrew when challenged by rocket fire by militants.

A northern fisherman Sinnakili of Periamalai, Thondamanaru shot and killed while he was on a boat close to the coast, by a party of armed men in civis. Three others in the boat injured.

All motor traffic passing Poonagari army camp banned between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. according to army notification.

Ar Eravur, army men take away the bodies of two unidentified persons whom they had shot and killed. An earlier report says the homes of two Sinhala residents, both by the name Silva, were robbed of nearly Rs. 65,000/- worth goods by armed youths.

Two members of the Special Task Force believed critically injured in the course of patrolling in an isolated area called Vinayagapuram in Thirukovil district in the East, when hand grenades were thrown at them.

"My husband when beckoned by army men to come to the road, went forward with our child which he was carrying in his arms. They ordered him to leave the child and come. He handed the child to me and went with his arms raised. They promptly shot him dead and wanted to run over him with the armoured car, but I wailed out loud asking them to run me over too. Thereupon they left my husband in a pool of blood and left". So said 32-year old widow Krishnaveni, giving evidence at an inquiry into the killing of her husband Thurairajah Sivakumar, a cigar workshop employee on the 17th of this month, at Kurumbaciddy.

JANUARY 25

Brigadier Rupasinghe, Jaffna's military commander flies to Colombo and holds urgent consultations with Defence Ministry officials. The widespread public agitation in Jaffna against the Security Zone is believed to have figured largely in the talks.

While the Brigadier was having talks in Colombo, a party of about 50 soldiers surround the Kilinochchi Railway Station, and aim their machine guns at the 40-odd persons at the platform waiting to board the afternoon Yal Devi train to Colombo, killing 10 of them on the spot and wounding 12-15 others. Women and children among those killed or injured. A 58-year old farmer of Arumugam Road, Vattakachchi, Kilinochchi P. Somaiyan, who survived with a bullet injury has said in a sworn affidavit that a short while later Army personnel came and removed the dead and the injured, and while removing them in separate trucks to

the Kilinochchi hospital "informed us that we had been shot by Terrorists". (Saturday Review - 1.2.86).

For the third day, helicopters strafe Tellippalai, Kadduvan areas, but since many residents had left the areas temporarily, no casualties known.

Armed forces surround the village of Pandiruppu in Kalmunai early morning, round up nearly 300 males of varying ages, and take them away for questioning to the Kaluwanchkudu Commando camp.

By arming one section of the population against another in the name of protection, peace cannot be achieved in the country, says Buddhist prelate in Vavuniya, Ven. Siyambalagaswewa Vimalasara Thero, in a Press statement.

Vellaveli Police Station in Trincomalee district attacked by militants. Some damage to the building reported.

JANUARY 26

Two Policemen - Sergeant Fernando and Constable Premkumar, killed in a grenade attack by Tamil militants at Oddusuddan, and two other policemen injured. In a reprisal, police commandos who came on the scene shoot down and kill 5 civilians who had come to the market, having failed to apprehend the militants responsible for the grenade attack.

Total number of civilians killed by army fire at Kilinochchi yesterday now reported to be 17, including 11 who were shot at the railway station. 6 others, including 2 women were killed near the market when a shell struck them. These deaths are reported to have occurred by indiscriminate firing immediately prior to the railway station incident.

Because of the incidents at Kilinochchi, members of Jaffna Citizens' Committee and Mothers' Front who were to travel to Colombo to lodge a personal protest to Defence Ministry yesterday, call off their trip.

Following a landmine explosion at Satturukondan near Batticaloa when 2 members of the Special Task Force were injured, Commandos open fire, but no casualties reported.

97 persons rounded up at Nilaveli area and detained in Trincomalee sent to-Boossa military camp.

16-year old Murugesu Jayaledchumy of Marambaikulam Vavuniya, killed on the spot when armed forces open fire on suspicion at a group of people who had gathered to see an all-night video show. 15 others, including two govt. employees were taken into custody.

Catholics gather Iruthayapuram and hold special prayers in memory of those massacred by armed forces on the 19th.

National Security Minister makes a surprise visit to some army camps in the north. He is also reported to have visited some islets off Jaffna and inaugurates launch service from Karainagar to kachchativu.

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Two women at Thirunagar, Lourdes Mary Sebastian and Arasaratnam Mallika sustain injuries by army fire. At Kanagapuram and Ambankulam, a 15-year old girl Sinniah Kamala were among those taken away by the army.

A helicopter was again flying low over Tellippalai and quickly ascended on the militants opening fire. A heart patient at Tellippalai hospital reported to have collapsed and died while this happened.

A 15-hour curfew clamped at Takawakelle and environs in the plantation area yesterday has been extended. A police constable attached to the Agrapatana Police was killed by unknown persons. In yesterday's incidents, several shops burnt and nearly 500 Sinhalese and Tamils seek refuge in temples.

A security alert in Colombo. Vehicles entering the city come under police check.

JANUARY 27

For the 4th day, Jaffna administration paralysed. Chundikuli unit of Mothers' front, and upper form students of Vembadi Girls' High School join in Satyagraha.

Referring to the Kilinochchi incident in which several Tamils were killed and injured, a govt. communique in Colombo says "a demented soldier went berserk and fired his personal weapon in a frenzy at the railway station killing ten persons including some women and children. The other soldiers immediately overpowered the demented soldier and took his weapon away..."

A married youth of 24 was killed and another youth is reported to have taken cyanide and died when armed forces cordon off 3 villages, Malvaththai, Mallikaitivu and Puthunagaram in Sammanthurai district and do a house-to-house search. The incidents happened yesterday. It is stated that the govt. forces which had been specifically asking for the local TULF leader V. Thangathurai could not find him, and thereupon tortured his wife Thangamani (33) by tying her to a tree and hung her 9-year old son upside down on the tree, demanding to know his whereabouts.

150 Sinhala families settled at Kokkilai fishing village in Mullaitivu district with heavy Army protection. Helicopters doing frequent patrolling from the air.

Following the conversion of the Akkaraipattu medical centre into a commando centre, huts and small dwellings of poor peasants in the vicinity are being destroyed; it is not known whether they will be paid any kind of compensation.

Tamil estate workers go on strike following violent incidents in Talawakelle area.

Armed youths rob a van carrying Rs. 18,000/- belonging to the Kattankudi Multi Purpose Co-op Society at Kallady.

Armed youths rob two guns off the security guards at the Vavuniya People's Bank, and the bank remains closed.

3 Tamil employees of the Trincomalee

naval base who had put in over 10 years' service and who were detained by the army on their way to work and sent to Boossa camp - Nagsrasah Yogarasah, Poopalapillai Varatharasah and Mariadas - are now released by deprived of their jobs. Representations had been made to Trincomalee Citizens' Committee.

Public scare in Vavuniya over activities of 3 masked men in a grey-white vehicle who go about identifying persons for purposes of detention.

National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali takes Jaffna-based "Saturday Review" to the Press Council over the publication of an article by David Selbourne which he says is "false and distorted and defamatory" of him.

JANUARY 28

Tension continues in the plantation areas. Sporadic violence in Talawakelle, Lindula and Hatton. 40,000 estate workers on strike. Tamil-owned shops set on fire. Several passengers injured when the Colombo-bound "Uda Rata Menike" train from Bandarawela was stoned at Radella.

In Batticaloa at Putur, nearly a hundred persons were rounded up and taken for questioning.

At Kilinochchi, traders and public avoid the new market and the area is deserted. At other places, small-time traders who had put up temporary stalls are terrorised by armed forces, forcing them to flee from there as well.

Vavuniya continues to be under tension with masked men being taken by the forces to identify "terrorists".

Mothers' Front Secretary Nirmala Balaratnam announces temporary lifting of the Satyagraha campaign with public welfare in mind; but the campaign against the security zone and army presence will be continued in other ways.

At Mullaitivu, shoot-out between army and Tamil militants when army men tried to demolish high walls, and structures surrounding army camp. Residents of the area who were trying to flee from their homes are being restrained by the army.

Residents of Kayts stage a 5-mile long protest procession demanding the withdrawal of the army and the security zone order. Shops and schools in the area remain closed. Another protest procession from Inuvil to Chunnakam.

In Colombo, National Security Ministry says that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam had blasted an important bridge at Karadipokku Junction in Kilinochchi, cutting off all traffic beyond that point.

JANUARY 29

Jaffna sees an unprecedented display of public feeling. An estimated 15,000 persons

participate in processions and demonstrations demanding the withdrawal of the army. Several processions from various directions converge outside Jaffna Secretariat. Men, women and children, Trade Unionists, Muslim Tamils, teachers, traders, and people of all categories participate. Two European journalists (who had entered the north despite govt. ban on foreigners) were seen photographing the scenes. (Under Emergency rule, processions and demonstrations are banned).

Batticaloa observes total hartal also in protest against the security zone order in Jaffna and the Iruhayapuram massacre. Shops and schools close and govt. depts. and offices put up shutters and bus and train services come to a halt.

Curfew continues in certain areas in plantations leading to stoppage of work on the estates.

Jaffna Mothers' Front declines an invitation to meet National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali in Colombo, in the context of the prevailing situation in the plantations.

Watagoda railway station in the plantations set on fire, and huge boulders have been pushed on to the rail track between Kotagala and Nanu Oya.

A prominent Sinhala businessman and owner of a cinema in Kalmunai, Wimalaratne, and his son, taken in for questioning by army commandos to Kaluwanchikudy and later released.

Aerial bombing in Mannar. LTTE guerrillas confront army units at Parappukadathan, and force them to withdraw to camp. It is believed that there were several army casualties, but Defence Ministry sources in Colombo do not refer to the incident.

At Mullaitivu, a minor skirmish in which the army and militants were involved, leads to army firing and injuries to 4 persons - K. Yogasundaram (47) a clerk of the Mullaitivu Kachcheri from Eralalai, A. Robert (20) of Mullaitivu, S. Sebastianpillai (23) and S. Chandrakutty (53) of Mannar.

Arumugam Devendra who was taken on suspicion and detained at Amparai army camp and later transferred to Boossa camp dies. A post-mortem inquiry was held but the report was not made known.

"Terrorists are now using powerful Rocket Propeller Grenades", reports Colombo newspaper, "The Island".

Govt. doctors go on strike in various parts of the country.

JANUARY 30

Tension continues in the plantations. The badly hacked body of Police constable Priyantha de Silva of the Agrapatana Police discovered among tea bushes. Nearly fifty to sixty shops belonging both to Tamils and Sinhalese set on fire over the past three days, according to unofficial reports.

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SITUATION REPORT

(Continued from page 6)

Helicopter attacks at Mullaitivu leave at least 8 persons injured. Several residents flee to adjoining jungles for safety.

Armed youths divert a Kankesanturai-bound fuel carrying train at Mallakam and rob the fuel by using water pumps.

Jaffna offices back at work.

Fisherman Antony Paul (32) who was shot by army men through the stomach while he was fishing near the coast at Talaimannar, admitted to Jaffna hospital for emergency operation.

Jayarathne (30) a Sinhala owner of a eating place, Ambalangoda Hotel, in Vavuniya shot at by armed youths. Fearing reprisals by the army, other shopkeepers close up their shops, and public activity comes to standstill.

LTTE claims the killing of 16 soldiers in Mannar yesterday.

JANUARY 31

Army terror in Mullaitivu. People flee the area. A mother of 7 children Nalliah Selasthina (46), of Selvapuram village, Viswalingam Annalingam (56), and P. Markupillai (66) brought to Jaffna hospital with gunshot injuries for emergency operations. Offices and schools closed. Two govt. officials,

Thevasigamany and Sountharalingam kidnapped by unknown persons and their fate is not known.

In Colombo, Minister Athulathmudali meets Jaffna govt. officials to discuss the implementation of the security zone order.

A mass 24-hour prayer session to be organised in Jaffna, in order to bring the people together and call for an early end to their sufferings.

Residents of Vadamaradchy stage a demonstration demanding the withdrawal of the armed forces from Jaffna.

40 cyclists stopped on the roads at Vavuniya by armed forces and taken for questioning.

Curfew imposed again in the Nuwara Eliya district in the hill country.

Estate workers surround an army jeep in large numbers at Somerset Estate in Talawakelle and compel army men to free an estate youth who had been picked up on the way and taken into the jeep.

Thirukovil Citizens' Committee President Meharajah detained by commandos several days ago, has been released.



(Continued from page 2)

were rushed to Colombo on Air Force planes on Wednesday night after the mine blast are receiving medical treatment at the Colombo General Hospital and the Lady Ridgeway Children's hospital. Twenty six more civilians were wounded at the Trincomalee naval base hospital... (Sun - 21/2/86)

Minister dismisses Hart

The Human Rights Committee of which Dame Judith Hart is Chairman met in Geneva recently and decided to visit all countries giving aid to Sri Lanka and prevent them from doing so, State Minister Anandathissa de Alwis said yesterday at the weekly media briefing. "We don't think many governments will pay heed to this", Mr. de Alwis commented... Mr. De Alwis said that Dame Hart had made the point that in her view these guerrillas (terrorists) could not survive without the support of the people amidst whom they lived. He said that Mrs. T. Ranganayaki Pathmanathan M.P. for Pottuvil had pointed out that the people in those areas supported those guerrillas simply because they were afraid of lamp-post killings. Asked what the cabinet thought of the committee's move, Dr. De Alwis replied: "totally unfair". He added that these do-good agencies were penetrated by various propaganda groups. They distort the picture of whatever goes on in a country, retard its progress and create situations for bloodsheds. They are exercising a tremendous amount of power without responsibility. Dr. De Alwis referred to these as well funded bodies that travelled round the world on expense accounts. (Daily News - 27/2/86)

Editorial Comment by 'The Island' - 1 March 1986

Big Brother or Honest Broker?

The Indian Minister of External Affairs B.R. Bhagat, who first delivered himself of the startling statement that there was genocide in Sri Lanka, has now gratuitously asked the country work out a timeframe within which it will have to settle the ethnic problem which has been dogging the country for the last several decades. We do not have the full speech made by the Indian Minister in the Rajya Sabha debate on the situation in Sri Lanka, but according to what appears in the Indian media it is clear that Mr. Bhagat has been guilty of a gross interference in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka. Since Indo-Sri Lanka relations entered the present stage of stress and strain there have been many such acts as Mr. Bhagat's, and they would be comic if not for the grave harm which they can do to relations between the two countries. Only last year there was Mr. Kursheed Alam Khan, the Minister of State for External Affairs, a gentlemen about whom we do not hear very much now following his inglorious jettisoning in a Cabinet reshuffled sometime ago. Now Mr. Bhagat has joined to the comic act.

What is curious about Mr. Bhagat's utterances is that his remarks are seemingly contrary to the public sentiments of his own Prime Minister. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi speaking in the same debate had said that the Sri Lanka Government had submitted a fresh paper and expressed the hope that this would present a move forward. While the Prime Minister thus expresses cautions optimism, the External Affairs Minister flagrantly foists a timeframe on Sri Lanka. This is the like tale of the organ grinder and

his monkey. Which is the voice of New Delhi? It is that Mr. Bhagat is not on the same wavelength as his Prime Minister? Or is it that while adhering to the niceties of diplomatic protocol by mouthing all the correct sentiments New Delhi is getting Mr. Bhagat to express its actual views?

Whatever the reason, the Indian Minister's remarks are ill-informed and unwarranted and smacks odiously of an arrogant Big Brother mentality which Sri Lankans will resent. To say that there is genocide in Sri Lanka is either the act of a fool or a knave. What has to be kept in mind is that Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, J.N. Dixit left post-haste for New Delhi presumably to advise the Government before the commencement of the debate on Sri Lanka. Is it then that Mr. Bhagat is ill-informed or wrongly advised. Or is it that he wants to wreck Indo-Sri Lanka relations by his odious posturings? To say as Mr. Bhagat has done that the Indian Government had directed its representatives in Geneva to raise the killing of "innocent Tamils" at the Human Rights Commission meeting there is clearly an act of grave provocation and mischief-making. Is it that the Indian Government wants to join that motley band of Eelamists, separatists, terrorists and their long-distance sympathisers who want to blacken the image of Sri Lanka in the Western world?

The other aspect of this episode is even more curious. While Mr. Bhagat is reportedly trying to bulldoze the Sri Lanka Government into a settlement within a month, Prime Minister Gandhi has been quoted as

telling a magazine interviewer that it will take at least two more years to crush Sikh extremists in the Punjab. Punjab is just one state in India while the ethnic problem and the terrorist menace embrace the whole of Sri Lanka and any political resolution of the problem will raise fundamental problems of politics touching the very bed-rock of the constitution and the political order. How then does India expect Sri Lanka to settle the problem in a month? Unfortunately there is no Indian rope trick available for resolving political problems overnight.

What India must realise is that it was Sri Lanka which invited India's good offices to settle the ethnic issue in the aftermath of the tragic communal outburst of July 1983. As late as February 20 President Jayawardene thanked the Indian Government and Prime Minister Gandhi, in particular, for the interest taken by them in bringing the Tamil groups and the Sri Lanka Government together for negotiations when he inaugurated the new session of Parliament. President Jayawardene has reiterated his willingness to settle problems through discussions, and Sri Lanka's search for a political solution has not ceased. In such a context statements such as Mr. Bhagat's can only bring India's bona fides into question and make her image of the "honest broker" seem a trifle bedraggled.



SITUATION REPORT

