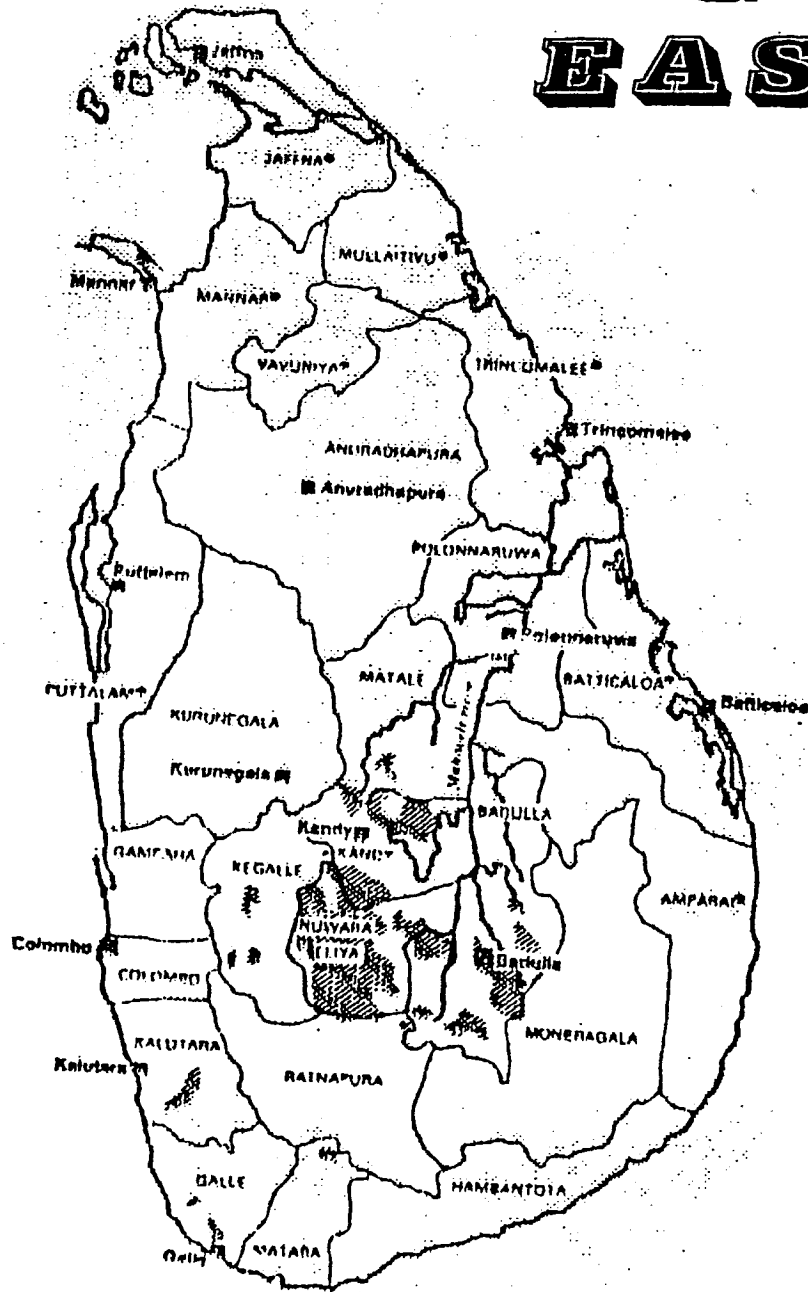


NORTH & EAST



NEWS AND VIEWS IN MASS MEDIA

NORTH & EAST

NEWS AND VIEWS IN MASS MEDIA

This is an attempt to provide an account of the current situation in our homeland. We have collected these news and views from a variety of newspapers and magazines. We hope that this will help our readers to get most of the information necessary to understand the conditions prevailing in our country. Almost all of them are just mere copies of their originals. We have provided only an opportunity for an easy access to them. Therefore, by no means, they give our own opinion. Instead, they will only help the reader to look at the different aspects of the current situation.

While our people are suffering, we hear lots of nice-sounding pronouncements made by the governments of Sri Lanka and India, which suggest that they have sympathy for our cause. But do we know their actual desire? This is the time to be more vigilant so that no one cheats us the victory we deserve. Our courage, determination and sacrifices of the past should not be allowed to amount to nothing. The blood of our people should not have been shed in vain.

Finally it will be of no use if we just know the truth, without showing an interest to relieve the suffering of our people. Therefore, we will be satisfied if this could help you, as a supplement, to clarify different issues and to think the feasible ways to go forward in the process of our struggle to achieve self-determination, freedom and peace.

We welcome your suggestions and constructive criticisms.

BACK COVER: The sources utilised to prepare this issue.

●LTTE receives message from Indian leader Rajiv wants to meet Prabhakaran

Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has indicated that he is willing to meet LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran for discussion aimed at resolving the current conflict.

A message to this effect has been conveyed to the LTTE office in Madras on behalf of Mr. Gandhi informed Tamil Nadu sources told "The Island" yesterday.

According to these sources New Delhi is keen on flying the LTTE leader to India in a special Indian plane for talks with Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee Chairman, Mr. G. Karupiah Moopanar. If the talks prove successful a mass rally is scheduled to be held at the Marina beach in Madras where both Rajiv Gandhi and Velupillai Prabhakaran are to appear together on the platform. The Tamil Nadu Congress Chief Mr. Moopanar is expected to be associated. Elections to the Tamil Nadu assembly is also likely to be announced on that day, the sources said.

Political observers feel that Mr. Gandhi's flexibility is a direct result of the forthcoming elections in Tamil Nadu. The Indian role in Sri Lanka is expected to be the primary issue in the election campaign. The Congress which is ruling at the centre has been criticised severely in Tamil

by D. B. S. Jeyaraj

Nadu over developments in the North and East of Sri Lanka.

Recent developments suggest that the predicted alliance between the Congress and the Jayalalitha faction of the ADMK is a non-starter because of differences over the allocation of seats. The Congress insists on two-thirds of the state assembly nomination which Jayalalitha is not prepared to concede. Her faction is willing to give two-thirds of the Tamil Nadu parliamentary seats to the Congress but not in the State.

Rajiv Gandhi however is very keen on capturing power in the Tamil Nadu state. The transfer of Mr. Karupiah Moopanar from all Indian politics as the party general secretary to state politics as Tamil Nadu Congress Chief is seen as a move to win Tamil Nadu. The question of winning elections in Tamil Nadu is of vital importance to Rajiv Gandhi both in terms of political expediency and prestige.

In that context political observers say that the only possible chance for the Congress to counter the growing popularity of Karunanidhi and the DMK is to effect a settlement with the LTTE. Rajiv appearing with Prabhakaran on the same platform and announcing a Congress — LTTE understanding will take the wind out of

the opposition party campaign it is felt. The Congress is not ruling a single southern state at present and is determined to re-capture Tamil Nadu which it lost in 1967.

The LTTE leader in Madras, S. Krishnakumar alias Kittu while confirming that reconciliatory moves are on has told a Tamil Nadu journal that the Tigers are watching the situation closely. We know that New Delhi's change of heart is due to the Tamil Nadu elections and we are proceeding slowly, he said.

The reconciliatory moves suffered a setback last week when former Tiger deputy-leader of Jaffna Johnny was "accidentally" shot dead by the Indian army in Vavuniya. Johnny and Raheem were flown in an Indian plane from Madras to convey the message to Prabhakaran. Johnny ventured out on a motorcycle to make contact with Prabhakaran and was killed by the Indian forces who were apparently ignorant of Johnny's "Emissary" status. The Tigers have issued a statement in Madras condemning Indian inefficiency as the cause of Johnny's death.

Despite the setback, sources said that New Delhi is still keen on talks and that a high-ranking Indian intelligence official is in constant communication with the Madras LTTE branch.

The LTTE's representatives at the 1985 Thimpu talks Lawrence alias Thilagar and Sivakumar alias Anton are also in Madras now.

T1.3.27

Centre not after LTTE chief's life, says Moopanar

MADRAS, March 19.

The Tamil Nadu Congress(I) Committee President, Mr. G. K. Moopanar, said here today that it was not the intention of the Central Government to "kill" the LTTE leader, Mr. V. Prabhakaran, or to take over Sri Lanka itself. If that were the case, there would not have been the need to send a large peace-keeping force. A small force with orders to seize would have been enough.

The Centre only wanted to help the Tamils of the island and get as many concessions as possible from the President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, he added.

Mr. Moopanar, who was speaking at a two-day workshop for Congress(I) propagandists held at Sathayamurthi Bhavan, said the DMK President, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, and certain others sought to distort the Government's policies and create an impression that India was out to destroy the Sri Lankan Tamils. This was because, they did not have any other issue before them, he said.

TH.3.20

Two LTTE men attempt suicide

TWO LTTE TERRORISTS swallowed cyanide capsules after being arrested for throwing hand grenades at the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) at Kokkuvil in Jaffna Peninsula during search operations last week, a spokesman of the Indian High Commission said in Colombo.

While one of the militants died, the other was rushed to hospital in a critical condition, the spokesman said.

One more militant was killed in an encounter with the IPKF in northern Kilinochchi District on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, reports from Pankulam in northern Mullitivu District said that the LTTE terrorists killed Amaldasan, a 16-year old Tamil, for being a "traitor". His

body was found with gun shot injuries tied to a tree, the spokesman said.

The national news agency, Lanka Puvath, said that Amaldasan had earlier been taken for questioning by the IPKF and then released.

In Jaffna, an LTTE political wing leader named Shiri was arrested on Wednesday last week while 45 other suspects were detained in Trincomalee for interrogation by the IPKF.

The IPKF also recovered a large cache of arms and ammunition including three rounds of ammunition of various kinds, bombs and mortars during a cordon and search operation in Batticaloa.

IW.3.18

23 terrorists arrested

Indian troops arrested 23 LTTE terrorists during cordon and search operations in the Batticaloa district yesterday

ST.3.20

'Tigers' arrested by IPKF

Rumanan, Kala and Kalawanchikudy in Batticaloa District were prominent LTTE figures in Ampara and Thursday. Police eight other "Tigers" of sources said yesterday.

T1.3.20

LTTE strikes back in Jaffna

By Our Jaffna Correspondent.

A warning has gone out from the LTTE to the Tamil public in Jaffna against having any unwarranted relations with the IPKF.

This is the first time after the IPKF's October operation that the LTTE, under its own emblem, has issued printed notices addressed to the Tamil public.

Headlined "WARNING" the notice carries the following instructions and a threat of the extreme punishment of death;

"The Indian Army, trying to blind the Tamil public from seeing the Army's despicable acts of rape, torture and so on is also indulging in humbugs, such as Indian Soldiers managing Tamil women."

In this state of affairs, some traitors of our race among us, urged by motives of personal profit, are not only betraying the Tamil race, but are also operating as the paid agents of the Indian Forces of Conquest.

"We would like to have it known, that prompt action ending in death sentence will be taken against those among us engaging especially in the following activities, namely :-

a) Persons furnishing information to, acting as paid agents of, or having needless relations or connections with the Indian Army of Conquest.

b) Persons needlessly establishing family - relationships or any other relationships with the Indian Army of Conquest or members of the families of such persons.

c) Persons, who making themselves out as leaders of the people, collaborate with the Indian Army of Conquest.

"The thirst of the Tamil Tigers to recover the Tamil homelands."

LTTE terrorists blast lorry: 19 killed

By Panduka Senanayake

Nineteen Sinhalese villagers including six women and two children were killed and 18 others wounded when LTTE terrorists blasted the lorry in which they were travelling at Sittaru, Trincomalee yesterday afternoon.

According to a secur-

ity spokesman, the villagers from Trincomalee were returning from a market in Kantalai when the incident occurred at about 2.30 p.m. Fifteen of the wounded persons rushed to the Anuradhapura hospital were reported to be in serious condition. SO.3.13

3 Muslim fishermen shot dead

Terrorists shot dead at least three Muslim fishermen off the coast of Muttur in Trincomalee early yesterday and critically wounded a fourth in attacks on several fishing craft. ST.3.27

In the meantime, with the successful five day hartal over, the Jaffna bazaar has once again assumed its normal activities. Schools too reopened after the short break.

However, the government offices including the Jaffna Kachcheri remain closed and inactive.

After a lapse of several months, the development lottery tickets have flooded the streets of Jaffna.

Continuously attuned for some years past by losses of various kinds on all fronts, the people of the peninsula too are probably trying to find solace in treasures by scratching the face of these shining lottery cards. ST.3.27

Woes of Eelanadu

The ink was hardly dry on our issue of last Sunday, where we condemned the destruction of the Jaffna newspaper "Murasoli" by the IPKF, when the news was received of the destruction of the best known of Jaffna's regional newspapers, the "Eelanadu".

Those responsible this time were the armed terrorists of the LTTE. They had obviously gone about the work of laying explosives and blasting a well-established and popular voice of the people of Jaffna as systematically as the IPKF was in the destruction of the Murasoli. Once again with our belief in the necessity to defend the Freedom of the Press we would protest most emphatically at this action.

If the LTTE is continuing its armed confrontation with the IPKF hoping to impress anyone that they remain the sole defenders of the Tamil people, the destruction of the Eelanadu will only prove that they are certainly no better than those whom they claim to fight.

On the other hand the destruction of these newspapers in the North, and the continuing threats to newspapers in other areas, points to a more serious crisis. That of the refusal to allow the public to come to decisions based on the free interplay of opinion.

The defence of Freedom of the Press is in its essence the defence of the Freedom of Thought and Expression, these remain freedoms which should be protected at all costs from the marauding elements of peace keeping forces, as well as, gun toting terrorists of whatever hue and stripe. ST.3.6

Boats, arms seized

Indian naval officials seized three boats and a large number of firearms from huts in the Vadelai coast of Rameswaram, according to a Press despatch.

The report in the Indian daily 'Hindu' states that the naval officials seized three fibre glass motor boats, guns, rockets, books on modern warfare and training and communications equipment from two huts on Thursday.

The Port of Rameswaram has been one of the favourite points of the LTTE for their surreptitious arms and personnel ferrying operations from Tamil Nadu to Northern Sri Lanka — LANKAPUVATHI T1.3.20

'Tigers' burn buses

Two passenger transport buses were burnt by Tigers in Jaffna yesterday, reports reaching Colombo said.

The reports, however, did not indicate whether they were state-owned or private buses.

According to reports the buses were burnt because the operators defied orders by the Tigers not to ply in support of a hartal in force in Jaffna now (J.H.) T1.3.20

Two Army Officers shot dead and vehicle burnt

Two Sri Lankan Army Officers were shot dead and their vehicle burnt by terrorists believed to be from the LTTE at Adampan in Mannar yesterday.

According to security sources, the two officers, 2nd Lt. V. A. T. Senaratne of 6th Artillery Regiment and 2nd Lt. M. M. Amarakoon of the 5th Artillery Regiment had just driven out of the army detachment at Adampan when their vehicle was ambushed about 400 yards from the camp.

The two officers who left camp at about 11.30 am were driving towards Minikulam when they were killed. Soldiers from the camp who were sent out on a patrol to investigate the source of some gunfire and a long column of smoke rising skywards had found the bodies of the officers beside their still burning vehicle.

A search of the nearby area has revealed signs that some persons had lain in ambush for a long period. Sources said that the LTTE is suspected of responsibility. SO.3.13

Thoughts of Kittu

Sathasivam Krishnakumar alias Venkat alias Kittu is very much in the Tamil Nadu news again. The Ex-Commander of Jaffna district does not hold any official designation in the LTTE hierarchy now.

Kittu who lost part of a leg in a mysterious bomb explosion went to Madras with the view of proceeding to Britain for artificial limb restoration purposes. The outbreak of hostilities between India and the Tigers saw Kittu playing a mediator role between the warring factions. He was placed under house arrest by the Indian authorities. Yet from his residence at a house in the outskirts of Thiruvanniyoor "Kittu" managed time and again to speak to enterprising members of the Tamil Nadu press. His latest interview published in a magazine belonging to the Ananda Vikatan group of publications is extremely interesting.

According to Kittu the Tigers do not want the Indian forces to leave Sri Lanka. The LTTE would not make a demand like that.

"We realise that India has to station its troops in Sri Lanka for its geo-political security reasons. We will not allow the north-eastern part of Sri Lanka to be mortgaged to any force that is hostile to India's interests," says Kittu. Excerpts from his interview are as follows.

We did not want this fight. We consider India as a friendly force. The Indian leadership does not seem to realise this.

The Indian forces need not leave our motherland. Let them be there. But if Indian forces are stationed in residential areas in the midst of densely-populated areas how will peace evolve? How can people move freely? How can there be tranquility under military occupation? That is why we are requesting the Indian troops to move back to the pre-October 10th position and close down new camps opened in residential areas after October 10:

Q: If the Indian Government says first hand over your weapons thereafter the Indian troops will return to pre-October 10 positions will you surrender your weapons then?

Kittu: Certainly. If India announces this publicly we are prepared to accept the terms. But India does not seem inclined to negotiate with us. The Indian Government considers the whole issue of negotiating with us as a matter of prestige. Kittu goes on to say: There are many tales regarding the conduct of the Indian troops. Not all the soldiers are bad. They have been of service to Tamil women on several occasions.

Before holding elections in the North and East Sinhala colonization schemes in the East have to be stopped.

There is the question of how persons already settled there could be evicted. My response to that is a counter question. If Indian Tamils living in the up-country for 150-200 years could be stripped of their citizenship and repatriated to India why cannot the State-sponsored Sinhala settlers in the Tamil homelands be evicted?

India's position is that its forces will leave Sri Lanka once the Sri Lankan Tamil problems are resolved. The Sri Lankan Government's position is that the Indian troops will return once the LTTE is crushed. Both positions are not accurate. We know definitely that India has firmly resolved to stay in Sri Lanka for several years. India is deliberately fostering many prickly issues to ensure and necessitate its long stay. Our movement cannot be destroyed by anyone?

The conditions in the North and East have prevented the public from knowing the LTTE view-point on the current situation for several months now. Since Kittu's is the first interview emanating from an LTTE high-ranker in recent times the above excerpts may be of interest.

TI. 3. 20

Terrorists protest in Ampara

Around one hundred policemen travelling from Kalmunai to Ampara from the Samanthurai police station were shot at by armed terrorists staging a hartal at the Malwate junction near Ampara on Saturday. The Indian Peace Keeping Force which was present at the scene did not intervene.

Since they could not proceed beyond the point where the hartal was being staged the police returned to Kalmunai. They did not fire back at the demonstrating terrorists.

The hartal was held in protest of the killing of three members of the LTTE at Malwate junction by police on Thursday. ST. 3. 6

AIDS test for refugees

Refugees returning to the island via Talaimannar Pier are to be tested for AIDS ST. 3. 27

ALL THOSE WHO HAVE DIED ARE TRAITORS WHO DESERVED TO DIE

Our motherland cannot be rescued from slavery except by overthrowing the illegitimate, reactionary fascist dictatorship of the India-dominated puppet Jayewardene clique and of various traitors in disguise who are supporting him.

The people recognise these as the traitors in service of reaction today: The Vijaya Kumaranatunga clique which split the SLFP at the behest of Jayewardene and then embraced Tamil Eelamist terrorist murderers; the Communist Party, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Nava Sama Samaja Party leaders who supported the betrayal of our motherland; the Independent Students' Union which is the associate of Tamil Eelamist murderers; various social service, human rights, women's artists groups and associations which

are the instruments of the Catholic Church. These are the reactionaries and traitors who supported the so-called peace agreements, who betrayed the country, who supported the Indian aggression.

These traitors have now organised themselves to assist the Hitlerite Jayewardene clique against patriotic forces. They have brought to Colombo and are conspiring with Uma Maheswaran, an Indian stooge and a Tamil murderer. They have trained some persons in Batticaloa in one of his camps; armed by him and with the blessings of the Jayewardene clique, they are now set to attack the patriotic forces.....

James Athugala, who was punished recently, was one of these trained persons. Nandana Marasinghe was one of their organisers and a police

informer. The activists of the Vijaya Kumaranatunga clique, of the Communist Party, of the Jánana Sangamaya located at Devasaranaya which is now part of the reactionary Catholic Church, opponents of so-called chauvinism, are the other parties to this.

Patriots

Do not be deceived by these traitors....we have correctly recognised the enemy. We shall punish them as they deserve. In the struggle for the liberty of our motherland and our people, no traitor can be forgiven.

Patriots, Unite

Sweep away all traitors and their supporters.

THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR
PUNISHING TRAITORS
1988-01-18.

Posters query No cut in defence

Explosives at Ruhuna Varsity

Dixit's entry

My last week's letter ended on a note of wonderment whether Jaffna, a part of Sri Lanka yet continues to be such a part or whether it was a part of India - Its 26th state.

Now there is a development of sorts from two angles.

One - The Jaffna Town Commandant's Office is contemplating the incorporation in its Indian emblem reflected on motor vehicle passes, something essentially to do with the Jaffna peninsula - namely the palmyrah. For this purpose, they have selected various photographs of the Jaffna palm (not the Indian palmyrah) and are trying to select the most suitable one, from the local photographers.

Alongside this is the other development, on the part of the LTTE. With a view to foiling the IPKF's pass systems, the LTTE had already started counter activities.

The LTTE has imposed a ban on fuel supply by all petrol filling stations in the peninsula. The employees of the Petroleum Corporation office in Jaffna have been debarred by the LTTE from attending office.

The net result of all these steps is a shortage once again of fuel in Jaffna.

It may be recalled that there were no claimants for the Eelanadu Newspaper office bomb-blast in my last week's letter. But, now we see posters in Tamil and in English on every road notably at junctions close to IPKF Posts, that the LTTE has claimed responsibility.

According to these posters, the main charges against Eelanadu are that it collaborated closely with the RAW - the intelligence agency of India - and published news and views tending to hush up the atrocities of the IPKF.

The posters further add, that the Eelanadu has been banned by the LTTE from the 29th of February, 1988 - that's the day it was blasted.

The next development in the political arena is the important discussion the LTTE spokesman Mr. C.V.K. Sivagnanam (Municipal Commissioner - Jaffna) had with the new General Officer Commanding of the IPKF in Palaly Major General Sardeshi Bande.

The detailed talks went on for two hours at the Town Commandant's office. At the conclusion of the pow wow, Mr. Sivagnanam handed over a letter to Major General Bande for his consideration. Mr. Sivagnanam has stressed here, that the Indian Govt., had best conduct the talks with the LTTE, and that they should be held in Madras, and not in any part of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Sivagnanam pointed out that talks should be held without any pre-conditions whatsoever.

Though no categorical reaction has been observed, the sudden departure of the erstwhile Town Commandant of the IPKF Brigadier Khalon's flight to New Delhi last Monday, could have been connected with this stipulation.

This is the speculation in this peninsula.

The notable feature in Jaffna these days are the multi-coloured anti-Dixit's posters to be seen everywhere.

No cut in defence

By J. S. Tissainayagam

There is no reduction of the defence component in the budget though the Indian Peace Keeping Force is in charge of the operations against the Tamil guerillas in the North and East of Sri Lanka, a finance ministry source told the Sunday Times.

He said the reason for this was because strong and well equipped armed forces were needed to take over security operations in the North and East once the Indian Peace Keeping Force was withdrawn. Coupled to this was of course the problem of containing the JVP menace in the South, he said.

The source said that though there had been cuts in the allocation for defence in the last budget the defence costs was inevitably as high as the preceding years. This was because of the increasing intake of personnel and equipment and the cost of maintaining the armed forces which includes feeding and paying salaries to the soldiers. Only the operational costs of the Sri Lankan forces had been reduced by the presence of the IPKF.

He said the presence of the IPKF was beneficial to Sri Lanka since much of the cost, both in terms of men and money, in eliminating terrorism was passed on to India. The entire cost, including fuel, was borne by the Indian Government. The only cost in the area of operations in the North and East to the Sri Lankan Government was the transport of officers for consultations and so on, he said.

Reports from India last week said the cost to India of maintaining the IPKF in Sri Lanka was Rs 225 million a day or Rs 8 billion, equivalent to Sri Lanka's total budget.

ST. 3. 6

The police recovered subversive literature, chemicals, ammunition and weapons when they searched the Ruhuna University premises yesterday.

Police said they moved in after the University was closed and made out of bounds to the students.

The police also found nitroglycerine and sulphuric acid used in the manufacture of bombs in the Student's Action Committee room.

A senior police official told 'The Sunday Times' that they also recovered a large number of threatening letters addressed to various people and a hit list allegedly prepared by the J.V.P.

SRI LANKA SNAPSHOTS

Air Force : 3,700 incl. active Reservists 16 combat aircraft, 13 armed helicopters Counter insurgency SF 2600TPA 80 Madhett : Transport : 1 squadron with 1557, 2047, 2048, 312 Riley Heron, 1 DH Heron, 3 Cessna 441 King Air 2000, Cessna 421C. Helicopters : 1 squadron with 24 Bell 212 (212) attack, 4 (412) armed in 2 SA-365 Dauphin. Training : Incl. 6 Cessna 601S2, 18 DH (St. Christopher) 3 Dove). Reserves : Air Force 10 squadrons, Airfield Construction Regt., 1 squadron. (In storage 2 Alouettes, 1500 (float))

Source - Asia Yearbook 1988

ST. 3. 13

"Who is this Dixit to condemn the talks in Sri Lanka between Sri Lankan Ministers and the LTTE?" asked these posters.

"We conduct talks in our sovereign soil with our govt. Who is this Dixit to grumble about this?" they say.

These anti Dixit posters now become companion posters so to say, beside the IPKF's posters appealing to the general public to extend their cooperation to eliminate terrorism.

There are two important junctions in the Jaffna Town, where Mahatma Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi and Nathuram Godse are referred to.

'Gose killed Gandhiji; Not Gandhism - But Rajiv kills Gandhism', is the slogan, written in out size red letters at Palaly Road - Ariyakulam Junction, and the Stanley Road - K.K.S. Road Junction.

ST. 3. 13

Security for Left leaders

The government has provided security to some Left leaders who have received threats recently, apparently from the outlawed JVP.

The JVP's threats have not been restricted to prominent figures from the traditional left parties.

Among those who have been threatened belong to strongly Sinhala-socialist parties.

SO. 3. 6



No. 907/88

INDIAN PEACE KEEPING FORCE

भारतीय शान्ति रक्षक सेना

MOTOR CAR PASS

Dixit's attitude shocks Jaffna

By a special correspondent in Jaffna

The mood in Jaffna, at a low ebb these past weeks, seems to have been replaced now with quickening activity of a different kind.

The new mood started with Indian High Commissioner J.N. Dixit's shock and surprise at reports of talks between the Sri Lanka govt. and the dominant militant group, the Tigers.

Dixit's reaction has shocked the people of Jaffna.

Possibly as a sequel to this, top officials of the IPKF initiated 'indoor' discussions with some local bodies in Jaffna.

Last Monday, there was a discussion of sorts between the Citizens Committees and Mother's Front on one side, and the Town Commandant of the IPKF, Brigadier Khalon on the other. The topics of the talks were certainly hush hush. But one thing known is that they have paved the way for further talks.

It is understood that a senior Sri Lankan Government Servant from the North, who is a close associate and spokesman of the LTTE too had some discussions with the same officials, separately.

Mr. Dixit had mentioned that the LTTE accepted in their latest talks with Sri Lanka Govt. officials that they will give up the East, and form an interim administration in the North alone, for three to five years.

However, this has been denied in Jaffna.

Mr. C.V.K. Sivagnanam Municipal Commissioner, Jaffna, who was the LTTE nominee for the Chief Administrator post to the Interim Administrative Council last September, has issued a statement to the local daily 'Uthayan' to this effect!

"The LTTE has rejected the Interim Council for the north and east on the grounds that its representation from the east therein was inadequate. It is hard to believe that LTTE has now gone ahead and dropped the East entirely from its hands. I can't believe that that is what Dixit said".

Another notable incident in Jaffna during the past week was the blasting of 'EELANADU' newspaper office.

This too happened on Monday. A few persons had marched into the quarter century old EELANADU premises, ordered the employees to leave, laid bombs and blasted it, in broad daylight.

150 fishermen lost at sea every year

By Sarasi Wijeratne

At least 150 fishermen are lost at sea every year.

Ministry of Fisheries sources said that 30-40 fishermen are on an average lost at sea every three months. The numbers lost have shown a marked increase since last year.

The majority of fishermen who are lost are from the South of Sri Lanka. Unlike fishermen in other parts of the island, fishermen in this area tend to stay out at sea

for longer time, generally for two days or more.

Meanwhile Minister of Fisheries Festus Perera said air-sea rescue systems are to come into effect soon to save fishermen in distress.

Under this system, boats are to be fitted with transmitters which will emit signals when the boats run into trouble and which will be picked up by the patrol aircraft and boats on duty. ST. 3. 20

Although no one has officially claimed responsibility All India Radio, BBC, and some other Foreign News Agencies have announced that this was the work of the LTTE. The editorial of the EELANADU, of the day it was bombed said that the LTTE relying on talks with the Sri Lankan Govt, is akin to an attempt to ford a river on a horse made of sand. It went on to suggest that we should rather trust India more. The talk in this peninsula is that it is this particular editorial was the main cause for the bomb blast.

It should be mentioned here that the announcement of Provincial Council Elections has had very little impact on the people of Jaffna.

The very day of the announcement of the nominations, the people here knew that there would be a postponement of the nominations at the last moment. As predicted, the postponement announcement did come on the night of March 1.

If more proof was needed that such an election would never take place in Jaffna, we have it. There is no election office, no voters registers and no Election Chief as things are today. Mr. Tharmabalan, the Assistant Commissioner of Elections for the Jaffna District is missing from Jaffna for several weeks now.

After two jawans of the IPKF were shot in their hands in the Central Bus Stand, Jaffna, the checking and screening of the ordinary public at road junctions has been on the increase. Youngsters and middle aged men, innocent passers by being stopped by the IPKF and made to sit on the ground for hours till the masked man arrives is a daily sight on the Jaffna roads.

This has seriously affected school attendance tuition classes and people going about their legitimate day to day activities.

The road pass for the use of vehicles is issued not by the RMV officials, or Kachcheri officials or by the local police, but by the Town Commandant of the IPKF.

As for motor bikes the pass is issued for only C-50, and scooters, C-70, C-90, 125-C.C. and 200 C.C. motor bikes have to be locked up at home.

The pass had nothing to identify it with Sri Lanka. All that one finds on it, is the Indian National Emblem (Three Lions). The languages used are English and Hindi only. The official languages of Sri Lanka Sinhala and Tamil have no place at all in the road passes.

All these goings on lead one to wonder whether Jaffna, a part of Sri Lanka, has gradually come to acquire the status of being the twenty-sixth state of Republic of India. ST. 3. c

Seven IPKF men killed

(by Shamindra Ferdinando)

Tamil terrorists on Wednesday exploded a pressure mine killing seven Indian soldiers and injuring four others on a routine patrol at Kadiraweli, on the Batticaloa-Trincomalee border.

The rest of the patrol too had come under small arms fire after the mine explosion and the Indian soldiers were reported to have retaliated with heavy guns at a hilly position used by the terrorists to mount the attack, security sources said.

Later the IPKF in a search operation questioned several Tamils in connection with the mine explosion, they said.

In a search operation conducted at Chawamadu, 12 miles off Vavuniya IPKF arrested 12 males on Friday, but the citizens committee sources alleged that the arrests were indiscriminate and unwanted.

At Nedunkerni, 27 miles off Vavuniya two Tamil civilians both aged over 50 years were allegedly assaulted by the Indian soldiers after an Indian patrol came under terrorist fire in the area, last week. Sixteen Tamils were also taken in by the Indian soldiers after this attack.

The Vavuniya Citizens Committee alleged that although the Indian army promised to deploy Sri Lankan policemen at Puliyankulam, in Vavuniya. Mullathivu road after they complained about indiscriminate arrests by the Indians, the deployment was not done.

TI. 3. 6

Time and Indian pride are not on our side

By Qadri Ismail

The Indian government has now transformed Tamil Eelam into a vast military camp in which 100,000 Indian soldiers are carrying out a policy of murder, rape and pillage on an unprecedented scale. Press censorship has been implemented. All meetings have been banned. A curfew has been imposed. With such undemocratic measures the Indian government hopes to crush the Tamil liberation struggle. Under the cloak of so called peace enforcement India is advancing its own reactionary political ends and the attempted destruction of the entire Tamil nation in Sri Lanka.

Those are the opening words of the latest press release, dated Tuesday, of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Its tone is notably different from what the Tigers have been saying previously. Where there once was an attempt at conciliation, there is now anger; where there once seemed to be an opening for a compromise, there now appears to be a hardening of stance. Where, from a political analyst's point of view, there was a straw to clutch on to, now the confusion is only more compounded.

No hue and cry

Take the contents of the message Velupillai Prabhakaran sent the 44th session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in February. It raised no hue and cry about Human rights abuses in the Tamil areas either by the IPKF or the Sri Lankan forces; it said nothing about the inadequacies of the accord. Rather, they conveyed their acceptance of Geneva Conventions governing treatment of civilians and prisoners during war and then said, "We repeat our pledge to the Government of India that we will co-operate with it to implement the Indo-Sri Lankan accord to protect the honour, interests and safety of the Tamil people."

This was a significant concession from the LTTE. All the more so because, at the end, it called upon the UNCHR to "assist us and the Government of India to alleviate the profound suffering of the Tamil people." Coming in the wake of failed private attempts to mediate between the Tigers and the Government of Sri Lanka, this was a clear signal to India that the guerillas were prepared to throw in their lot with New Delhi. Indian officials in Colombo, however, dismissed this move out of hand. They said it contained nothing new.

Less than two weeks later, Mr Prabhakaran wrote again to Rajiv Gandhi. "I officially inform you," he said, "Of our readiness for unconditional talks to resolve all the matters..." In the letter to the U.N., he had indicated what the issues were: handing over of arms and "fulfilment of the basic aspirations of the Tamil people". The Indian position over the surrender of weapons has changed from an insistence that all be given over before negotiations to one that says the Tigers must make a "firm" commitment to do so. Mr Prabhakaran's letter to the U.N. could be interpreted as such.

The Indian dilemma can be understood. They signed an agreement with the LTTE once which was not honoured. And the Tiger argument for not keeping their word - that their real nominee for head of the interim council was not appointed - does not hold much water. Granted that the confusion over this was a result of the Tigers' sheer inexperience in the ways of diplomacy which their supporters say the Indians made use of; still, the LTTE must realise that they cannot have everything they want. While they continue to call the north and east 'Tamil Eelam' in their propaganda, that was a concept that was buried in a hotel in the Himalayas way back in 1985.



Prabhakaran with the Indians: the agreement was not honoured

Since Thimpu, all Tamil militant organizations were talking in private about a federal solution. None of them was happy with the accord, but, apart from the power-hungry Tigers, the rest accepted it since they knew there was no alternative. Given a tremendous amount of control over the Tamil areas in the September 28th agreement, the Tigers said they would play ball too. Then came the unnecessary move to bring Kumarappa, Pulendran and company to Colombo.

Water under the bridge

All that is water under the bridge. Since October 10th, the number of Indian troops here has, according to Indian analysts, multiplied by ten. (The Russians have barely got a few more men in Afghanistan whom they want to remove as soon as possible.) A recent visitor to Jaffna spoke of the place literally crawling with Indians. The situation in Batticaloa is getting similar. Also, over the last two weeks, reinforcements have been sent to Vavuniya and along the road up north to Elephant Pass.

Despite all this, the kachcheris are not functioning in any of the towns in the Tamil areas, including Jaffna.

The Tigers don't move around that town armed, but are still otherwise extant: not only do they occasionally kill a "collaborator" or bomb a printing press unfavourable to it; when an issue arises which they want publicity given to, posters go up through the night in a town where IPKF sentries and jeeps patrol all the main roads! In Vavuniya, journalists are able with astounding ease to make contact with the Tigers just a few kilometers from the town.

Add to this a few more disturbing facts. In Batticaloa, Tiger local level leaders are released within two weeks of them being arrested. While Jotyindra Nath Dixit raves against the Mothers' Front fast, the son and two daughters of Anamma David complain to the IPKF that their mother is being forced to continue with her protest which is not heeded. Until, in an unexpected development, Mrs David is forced to end it. Add to all this the IPKF allowing PLOT, TELO and the ENDLF to continue its harassment of Tamil civilians in the Vavuniya-

IPKF makes big haul of arms

COLOMBO, March 26 (Lankapuvath) - The Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in search operations conducted in the Jaffna sector yesterday made a detection of arms, ammunition and explosives, official sources told Lankapuvath.

They said that at Sandilipai in Jaffna the IPKF recovered 100 kilograms of shotgun pellets, 500 grams of explosives and a sufficient quantity of wax to manufacture twenty, high velocity claymore mines.

Meanwhile the Sri Lankan Security Forces in cordon and search operations conducted yesterday, apprehended 10 subversives at Polonnaruwa, one at Kurunegala and another at Minneriya, official sources told Lankapuvath.

SO. 3. 27

I counted 17 skeletons...

The stench of burning flesh was nauseating at the scene of tragic violence on Friday, where 17 people were shot, chopped and burnt on a lonely stretch on the Horawapathana road, 46 miles from Anuradhapura.

The withering of the leaves in the shrub jungle on the side of the road is ample testimony to the intensity of the heat generated when the private bus, bearing number 22 Sri 2128, was set on fire and 17 people burnt to cinders. The incident occurred around 3.30 p.m. on Friday.

Only skeletons and charred bodies remain, some still sitting in the seats occupied by them while en route to Trincomalee. Who is responsible for the crime, has yet to be discovered and Police and Armed Forces are now trying to probe the events of that black Friday.

Well fried vegetables litter the bottom part of the bus, the mangled steel being all that remains of what was once known as the "KKR bus".

Two more passengers died in hospital while seven injured persons are lying at the Anuradhapura hospital.

K. Sathyaseelaraiah, 48, whose blind son is part owner of the bus one of those in hospital. The mob who set upon the bus chopped off his right finger. "I was asleep when the bus was stopped," he said. "There were a number of people with blackened faces with shot guns and swords. I knew there was going to be trouble and crept under the seat. After the firing, I pretended to be dead. But they chopped off my finger when they boarded the bus and I had to stifle my cries. I must have passed out. Then the



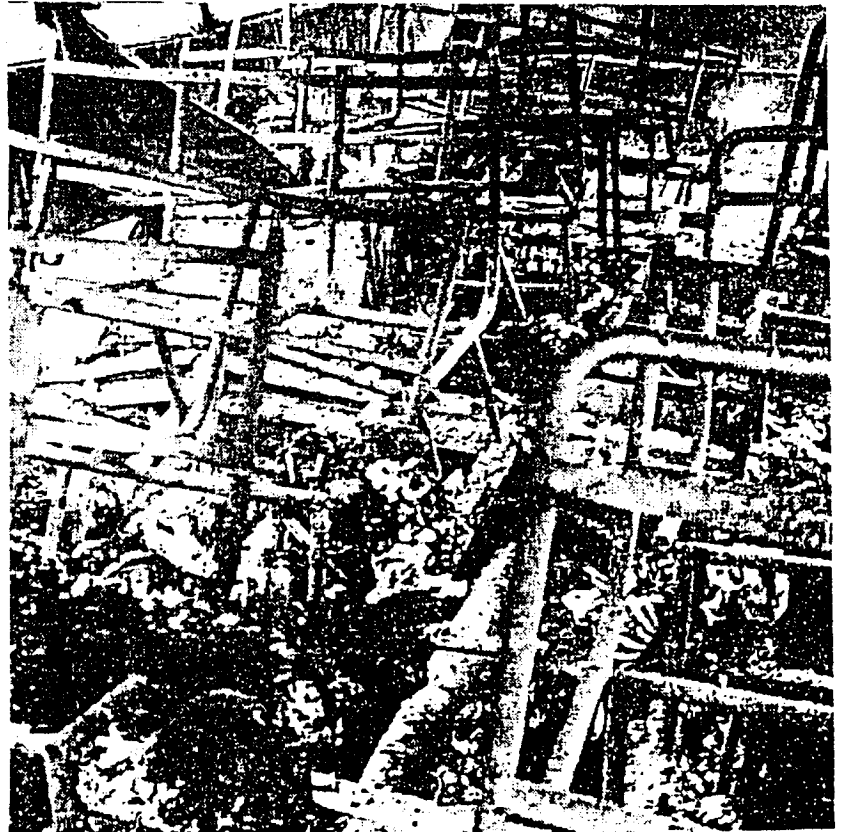
The burnt bus was still smouldering yesterday. For more exclusive pictures see page 2.

bus was set on fire. I felt that I should get out. Luckily by then, the mob had left and I was able to drag myself to the jungles and hide there".

Sathyaseelaraiah works in the Ports Authority in Trincomalee. Twenty year old Thayapalam was also in the ill fated bus. Though a Tamil, he said he was a Sinhalese but in the excitement he spoke in Tamil. The mob then shot him on the left hip and knee.

The other survivors are three Sinhalese, two Muslims and a policeman who were not killed when they identified themselves.

Many believe it was a retaliatory killing by some Sinhalese for the brutal killing of the villagers of Morawewa and the land-mine which killed 25 at Sitaru on the Kantalai Kalaruwa road on March 5



Only the skeletons remain of the 17 passengers who never completed their journey.

ST. 3. 13

130,000 Indian troops here soon

The overall total of Indian troops in Sri Lanka will shortly exceed 130,000 an Indian weekly news magazine has reported.

Another two divisions, possibly the 18th and 22nd are in the process of being sent, to reinforce an estimated 100,000 Indian soldiers already deployed in Sri Lanka, Ravi Rikhye says in the latest edition of "WEEK".

Rikhye reports in his cover story that "the reasons for this enormous deployment are beyond the ken of this discussion. More to the point should be questions of why the Ministry (External Affairs)

has not realised, after four decades of independence that it is only a servant of a democratic state, not a master of a colony, and why the Ministry is being allowed to get away with its lies".

Another correspondent V.S. Jayachandran observing that the authorities insist that the number of troops is less than half the numbers reported, comments that "they seem to be applying the currency exchange rate in this numbers game".

"One Indian rupee is equal to a little more than two Sri Lankan rupees. When New Delhi says there is one

Indian soldier in Sri Lanka, there could actually be more than two" he adds.

He also reports that Defence Minister K. C. Pant has already stated that there is no question of withdrawing the Indian Peace Keeping Force from Sri Lanka in the near future. "Significantly, Pant did not say that the IPKF would be in Sri Lanka till President Jayewardene asked for its return. He said the IPKF would remain there till peace returned. Peace is yet to peep in" he pointed out.

The report categorically states that "there are at least one lakh

Indian uniformed personnel in Sri Lanka. The figure is inclusive of naval, air force, CRDF, Indo-Tibetan border police, and National Security Guard assisting the IPKF".

Rikhye explains that "the troop deployment at the end of the fourth induction was estimated depending on how many support troops were assigned for the planned force of 17 brigades and four divisional HQs.

The Ministry has been explaining that the total is around 50,000. How do we explain the discrepancy?"

"It is an insult to the public to pretend that a 17 brigade force can be maintained with 50,000 troops and the Ministry is guilty of an outright lie which it has repeated with unimaginative regularity".

The writer estimates that the force itself should total 114,000 men, but since it is not a wartime situation, the realistic total may be 91,000.

To this he adds a further 10,000 men from the CRPF, ITBP, Railway Protection Force, National Security Guard, air detachments, navy, coast guard and marines afloat.

ST. 3. 13

THE ONLY ROAD TO PEACE

There is no peace today either in the North or the South. The Jayewardenes and the Amirthalingams must bear the responsibility for this situation. The people in the North are, in addition, subject to the military terror of a foreign army. After signing the secret pact with Gandhi, the Jayewardene-Dissanayake fascist clique is acting to repress the people's opposition by murderous assaults on patriots... The violence of the patriots is only a reaction to the State-sponsored fascist violence of the Jayewardene-Dissanayake clique.

The monopoly in violence that the Jayewardene regime enjoyed is now at an end. Being frightened, they are now escalating violence against the people. This will bring them to their inevitable end. All those who talk about peace must understand one thing: peace can be obtained only by chasing away the illegitimate, treasonous, fascist clique of Jayewardene-Dissanayake-Thondaman.

★ In order to bring peace to Sri Lanka, the traitor Jayewardene, an avatar of Hitler, must be removed from power

★ In order to bring peace to Sri Lanka, the storages of Jayewardene — Dissanayake, Ranil Wickremasinghe, Ananda Tissa de Alwis and all other traitors — must be thrown out.

★ The Indian aggressor forces must be sent out of Sri Lanka.

★ The Secret Jayewardene-Gandhi Pact must be totally rejected.

★ The Provincial Councils legislation, which is a betrayal of the rights of the majority of the people and which actually increases inequality, must be repealed.

★ The anti-democratic legislation must be repealed.

★ Eelamist terrorism must be defeated.

★ The State terrorism of the Jayewardene clique must be ended.

★ All foreign intervention in the affairs of Sri Lanka, including that of India, must be ended.

★ The territorial integrity of Sri Lanka, the sovereignty of its people and full democracy must be reaffirmed and restored.

We do not want today a provincial council election. What the country requires is a general election and a presidential election. Therefore, all opposition parties must boycott the provincial council elections, and agitate and struggle for general elections. In order to achieve the objectives mentioned, the opposition forces must ask the people for a two-thirds majority power in Parliament. We are confident that a united opposition can win this power. All patriots, all true opponent parties, all groups must realise this.

Central Committee of the
JANATA VIMUKTI
PERAMUNA

November 18, 1987

Tamils want to live in peace

Why is there no peace in north and east today?

We believed the Indian Peace Keeping Force had come here to safeguard the interests of the Tamils.

But to our surprise the Indian stance is against the interests of the Tamil speaking people.

Both Sri Lankan and Indian governments have their own interests which do not necessarily correspond to the interest and well-being of the Tamils.

Mr. R. Dileepan (of the political wing of the LTTE) who sensed the great danger, resolved to see an end to this. He started a death fast in the premises of the historic Nallur Temple to back up five minimum demands put forward by the LTTE.

No one seemed to care what he was striving for. He died for the rights of the Tamil people. Our hearts were full of grief, but not a stone was placed to mark the spot, no lines were inscribed to tell his story. Only his glorious actions keep his memory fresh.

The liberation struggle of the Tamils in Sri-Lanka began when they were forced to take-up arms because no one paid heed to their demands. The Tamil people have not forgotten the dedication and sacrifices of these youths and are always grateful to them.

The traumatic experiences of the Tamil people cannot be easily forgotten. They can be expiated only by definite and meaningful steps to allow them to live in peace and without fear.

Past injustices need to be forgiven and forgotten in order to lay a foundation leading to peace in the future. Unless these attitudes of deep-rooted prejudice and resentment can be overcome, a lasting solution to the ethnic conflict will not be forthcoming.

How many politicians and leaders today recognise this reality in the Sri Lankan ethnic crisis?

"Pursue peace with all men and be at peace among yourselves"

ST. 3. 13

Miss T. Indu
Jaffna

Jaffna: how normal is normal?

There is much talk, nowadays, about normalcy in the Northern Province. Newspapers and magazines, both foreign and local, try to show that the North is returning to normal. Journalists come to the north, take two or three photographs at the crowded bazaar or at the co-operative stores, interview people at the higher levels of society and go back to tell the world that Jaffna is returning to normal. But there is no normal life in the northern province.

How is it possible? How can one say that there is normal life when the IPKF's operation is still

on? Can anyone say that fighting is going on somewhere though normalcy has returned elsewhere?

The Government radio and other instruments of the mass media daily give news about incidents in North and East. The same sources announce that normalcy is returning to the north.

The way that the IPKF started on the 10th October last year is still on. They are occupying houses and government offices.

Camps and sentries are found in every nook and corner of the north. Jeeps, trucks and other army vehicles speed

along highways, and lanes. Searches, surprise checks and night patrols continue. Sudden curfews are clamped while the arrests of youths continue. Houses are force-opened. Inmates, men, women and children are terrified. Fences are burnt. Barbed wire fences are cut. All this on the pretext of searching for terrorists.

Any outsider visiting Jaffna should travel along K.K.S. Road, from Kokuvil to Kankasanturai and Point Pedro and along Palaly Road and then to Chavakachcheri to view the war-ravaged houses, buildings, temples and the poor man's huts.

Houses damaged by shelling are a terrible sight. They are not repaired yet. They are not in 'reparable condition. Many of the damaged houses are used as sentry points by the IPKF. Bunkers are made of the concrete blocks from the damaged houses.

Hindu temples were shelled. Their Kopurams-beautiful art works-are now a pathetic sight. One wonders: are these army people actually from a land that is famous for ancient Hindu temples?

How can there be normalcy, when even a place of worship is denied the common man?

Tea boutiques, cycle repair shops and other small business centres of the poor man were burnt to ashes. No one has helped them to rebuild, so far.

Some rehabilitation centres are functioning there. People are seen crowded at these places, holding affidavits in their hands, expecting some relief. But no one seems to have received any compensation so far.

What about the government's promises?

The former Finance Minister announced that many millions of dollars of foreign aid would be used to rehabilitate the north and east. This tune is still going on. More aid is coming for this purpose, according to the mass media.

But not a single project has been started in the north except for the filling of the holes in the main roads in the heart of Jaffna town. Damage to the Chavakachcheri Driberg College was repaired by the IPKF. But there are many other schools that lie unrepaired where classes are conducted under no roof.

Where is the normalcy?

Why don't they start work at least on essential services - hospitals, temples, market buildings and roads, if they have the foreign aid in hand?

We have a fine heritage of promises and cheatings - forty years of such experience.

Everyone knows why the Tamil youths turned to violence. Non-violent, democratic methods adopted by Tamil politicians since 1947, to win our rights were in vain.

The IPKF is still fighting the terrorists in the North and East. So how can there be normal life in the midst of this war situation?

By hiding the facts no one can find peace.

Soldiers, soldiers everywhere...

By Rita Sebastian

Time was when we travelled the North and East at will, come morning or midnight, our only fear being of wild elephants. We came upon them occasionally in the jungles off Habarana, and once on the Medawachchiya Manhar road on our way to the famed jungle shrine in Madhu.

As children we were petrified. As adults we watched fascinated, giving the elephants the right of way as they took an unhurried walk across the road.

Those roads became the most familiar things in our lives. Every town we passed through, every landmark easily recognisable, easily remembered, during childhood and adolescence, and then as grownups we journeyed to see 'family' in the north from the valleys of the central highlands where my father went to practise his profession, and where we were born, all four of us. Later, when my father decided it was time to call it a day where his profession was concerned, and retire to the land he loved, "to watch things grow" he built a home for himself and my mother in a village in the north. It was hom to us, too, when time permitted.

That home is now in "terrorist" territory. Training camps and militant hideouts have invaded that once tranquil landscape. Fortunately, my parents moved out before they could become captive to forces they were far removed from.

In the late seventies our travels to the north became less frequent, and in the early eighties we hardly went at all.

Today it is a very different landscape you encounter. Driving from Habarana on the Trincomalee road recently, we suddenly saw brown-clad figures in the distance. They seemed to merge with the landscape. As we drove close they turned out to be Sri Lankan soldiers in jungle fatigues manning the roadway.

Almost within sight of each other, at regular intervals, Sri Lankan soldiers and police, in twos and threes, armed with guns are now a familiar sight.

Mentally you begin to accept them as part of the new scenario, with every mile you drive becoming a hazardous exercise. Although landmines are targeted for service personnel and vehicles, what you cannot forget is that civilians, too, have become victims of the continuing violence. Driving past army camps, stopping at check-points, negotiating your way through road blocks, and seeing sentries atop buildings and soldiers on foot patrol, you begin to wonder whether you have accidentally strayed into a battle zone.

But there is no feeling of security here because "enemy activity" is no respecter of persons or places.

You sit all tense up, gripping your seat wondering whether there is danger lurking in the next bend in the road, or feeling thankful that the manager of the hotel where you put up for the night took time making up the bill, for otherwise you would have been only seconds away as we were, from the army vehicle hit by a landmine.

Never before have I looked down the barrel of so many guns. Never before have I been hassled by a bunch of young men who identified themselves as PLOT and TELO cadres. They surrounded the car a colleague and I were travelling in, at the petrol station in Vavuniya, and warned us that we ran the risk of being kidnapped by the 'Tigers' if we travelled north to Jaffna.

Having known what it was to be held up by men brandishing guns, on a lonely stretch of road near Mankulam at midnight, not many months ago, I chose not to run the same risk and returned to the comparative safety of Colombo.

Coward, did you say? Not really, but then I am no adventurous 'war correspondent.'

ST. 3. 20

ST. 3. 13

Bullet proof vests for Govt politicians

Government politicians will soon be issued with bullet proof vests as a security measure. Around thirty of these vests have already been cleared from a Customs bonded warehouse by the State Trading General Corporation Customs sources said.

The issue of vests became necessary follow-

ing the JVP threats on government politicians and officials of the ruling party.

When contacted however, the STGC sources said that they had indented about two thousand bullet proof vests for the use in the North, but that these vests were of no use since they were "uncomfortable to wear"

ST. 3. 27

Kalutara will live on half a bridge

(By Javed Mansoor)

Construction work on the new Kalutara bridge has been stopped following the refusal of the World Bank to make any further monetary allocations to proceed with this undertaking.

Informed sources told "The Sunday Times" that the World Bank had expressed dissatisfaction with claims by the foreign construction company, Skanska, for further financial allocations. Skanska was given the contract for the construction of this bridge.

Having accepted the contract on the estimate it had submitted the company had then made subsequent claims for a further Rs. 60 million for the construction of the south carriageway, which needed new pylons.

With half the bridge in place, Skanska then demanded a further Rs. 124 million to complete the bridge. World Bank officials at this point refused to oblige with any further allocations.

ST. 3. 27

Impersonators carry off home guards' weapons

by Jehan Haniff

Subversives in uniforms posing off as senior army officers last evening carried away the arms of the five home guards guarding the Karadeniya MP's residence at Uragama. Galle.

"Let us see your weapons," the men had told the home guards who quite, dutifully obliged.

The impersonators had thereafter walked off with the weapons which consisted of three shot

guns and two repeater shot guns.

It took some time for the home guards to realise what had happened.

TI. 3. 27

Vijaya's death: three arrests

Three persons have been arrested in Nugegoda in connection with the murder of Sri Lanka Mahajana Party leader, Vijaya Kumaranantunge, police sources said.

ST. 3. 20

Voice of America foothold in Lanka

LANKANESE FOREIGN MINISTER A C S Hameed has said there will be no change in the original number or in the capacity of the transmitters to be installed in the Voice Of America (VOA) broadcasting station on the island, which "will be solely used for public broadcasting".

Hameed was answering an adjournment notice by the Chief Whip of the main opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), Lakshman Jayakody, in parliament last week asking whether the power of the VOA transmitters was going to be reduced.

He stressed that the VOA station would be used only for public broadcasting and not for any military or intelligence purposes and any added equipment would be mon-

itored continuously to ensure that the agreement was not violated.

The present agreement provides for the setting up of two transmitters — one of 250 kilowatts strength and the other of 500 kilowatts, Hamid said, adding the VOA will pay \$80,000 annually for lease of 1800 acres at Anamaduwa in the Puttalam District, 80 kms north of Colombo.

The annexure to the Indo-Lanka Peace Accord stipulates that "Sri Lanka's agreements with foreign broadcasting organisations will be reviewed to ensure that any facilities set up by them on the island are used solely as public broadcasting facilities and not for any military intelligence purposes."

IW. 3. 18

Sri Lanka — biggest beneficiary of Israeli training

Sri Lanka has been the biggest beneficiary in Asia of Israeli training programmes last year.

According to official Israeli statistics 64 Sri Lankans had been trained in different courses conducted in Israel in 1987 followed by 54 Philipinos, 48 Thais and 14 Nepalese. Percentagewise Sri Lankans had obtained 27.57 percent of the training courses offered to Asians.

Nationals from a total of 15 Asian countries had benefitted from Israeli training programmes during the year including seven from India and five from Japan.

On a world-wide basis Mexico was placed first with 70 nationals trained in Israel followed by Ghana 66 and Sri Lanka 64.

TI. 3. 20

Crowds attack two trains

by Jehan Haniff

Two trains were slightly damaged and a few passengers injured when unknown persons attacked these trains with stones and sticks at Ihala Watawala and Watawala yesterday.

Informed sources said that Hatton police had taken into custody six persons for questioning in this connection.

TI. 3. 6



Sinhala Homeguards of Dehiwatte: Their targets so far have been the storks that stand in their paddy fields. "But we are ready to fight for our village," they say.

New council for rehabilitation of Sri Lankan repatriates

MADRAS, March 5.

The National Council of Rehabilitation for Sri Lankan Repatriates was formed here today to improve the living conditions of those repatriated to India under the Lal Bahadur Sastri-Sirimavo Bandaranaike pact of 1964.

Briefing presspersons about the formation of the National Council, the former Union Minister, Mr. C. Subramaniam, said the members of the council felt that there should not be any fresh attempts at repatriating the Indian Tamils from Sri Lanka to India till the living conditions of those already repatriated were improved. Many of the repatriates in India had very poor housing facilities and attempts should be made to provide them with decent accommodation. They should also be given employment and the first priority should be to find jobs for them in the existing plantations in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka. Uninhabited islands with a potential for development in Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep archipelagos should be identified and repatriates could be settled there with help from the Government

of India, the National Council felt.

Mr. Subramaniam said voluntary agencies should be used as far as possible in the rehabilitation process. The National Council would identify such voluntary agencies and recommend them to the Government of India for using them in rehabilitating the repatriates.

The Council was constituted with Mrs. Sarojini Varadappan as the Chairperson.

An executive committee was also formed and its members included Swami Agnivesh, Mr. C. Subramaniam, the former Supreme Court judge, Mr. V. R. Krishna Iyer and the Chairman of the Madras Institute of Development Studies, Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiah. The National Council has 33 members at present and more persons would be coopted.

In the discussions leading to the formation of the Council, Dr. Adiseshiah stressed that voluntary agencies should play an important role in rehabilitating the repatriates. The Council's main work should be to administer the rehabilitation programmes itself and it should receive finance from the Government of India

Continued from Page - 6

Paranthan stretch and only one question remains. Do the Indians know what they are doing?

In theory, yes. They know there can be no restoration of the democratic process in the Tamil areas without the Tigers (an ironic thing, that) and Mr Dixit has made almost overt statements to that effect. In practice, they are following a policy - assuming, that is, that the various instruments that apply the policy are acting in co-ordination - that is not only confusing everybody; it is contradictory. The EPRLF complain that they, who have become virtual lackeys of India, are not enjoying the fruits even of servitude. PLOT, interestingly enough, complain that the Tigers are not being brought into the mainstream - without which PLOT is sensible enough to realise it cannot do politics. And the Tigers complain that their pleas are not being heard.

When the latter happens, the LTTE react in characteristic fashion - with barbarity. There is no other word to describe their latest series of attacks on Sinhala civilians in the Trincomalee area. But then, the analyst also has the responsibility to understand the frustration that leads to these attacks (which the latest Tiger statement, of course, vehemently denies). The LTTE has shown time and again - and will show again and again - that resettlement of Sinhalese chased away from the east cannot take place before the Tigers are given a political role.

Characteristic fashion

So the question must be posed: is it only Indian pride that is standing in the way of a new deal? In relation to Punjab, Mr Gandhi only recently released five extremist Sikh priests, in the hope that this would lead to talks and a settlement with Sikh militants. Then, in characteristic fashion, he postponed the urgent necessity for such an agreement by allowing New Delhi's rule over Punjab to be prolonged by a couple of years. This kind of measly carrot and big stick attitude in Delhi towards a pressing domestic wrangle does not inspire hope in Colombo of a solution to another country's disasters, however involved Delhi may be here.

Last week's talks in Delhi were not centred on the

restoration of the political process. Rather, the problem has narrowed details of how to contain the Tigers. When the Tigers attacked Sinhala civilians before July 29th, the instant Indian reply to any query was "political solution". Where is such thinking now?

Talk to any Tamil from the north and east and he or she will tell you that the only priority for them is a restoration of normalcy - they almost couldn't care less about provincial elections. Talk to any Western diplomat and he or she will tell you that the vast sums of money that were specially voted by their governments for rehabilitation would be given to other needy countries if things were not speeded up. Talk to anybody on a Colombo street and all you will get is varying amounts of despair.

All this is not intended as an apology for the Tigers. Let alone undemocratic, they have been bestial in their approach. But we must also have the courage to ask ourselves the question as to what earthly alternative we have to the anarchy they are even now encouraging. We have to lead the Tigers in again - and put all the pressure we can on Delhi to do so. India may be a timeless culture. Time, however, is not on our side.

Expatriate academic explains

The expatriate academic from the U.S.A. who was involved in preliminary tripartite talks between the Sri Lankan Government, Indian Government and the LTTE,

has issued a clarification regarding the story "Talks begin with LTTE" which was exclusively carried in "The Island" of 28-2-88.

The academic concerned says that he does not hold any formal office in the LTTE hierarchy and therefore cannot be described a leader.

Also he says that the objective of his endeavours was to be of assistance to the Madras branch of the LTTE which has been delegated full authority for negotiations. T. 3.13

JVP terrorists rounded up

A **HARDCORE** ACTIVIST of the outlawed Janatha Vimukti Peremuna (JVP) was gunned down in a police encounter early on Thursday last week in Darangala village of Sri Lanka's southern Matara District, *Lanka Puvath* said quoting the deputy inspector general of police (southern range).

Some 323 JVP extremists and hundreds of its members have been arrested by the police throughout the island during the past few months, the report said.

The arrested extremists included seven central committee members of the party.

Hunger strike

The Democratic Peoples Liberation Front (DPLF) by which name the PLOT led by Uma Maheswaran is now known, stayed a hunger strike in Vavuniya town on Friday to seek the release of the Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil detainees at Boosa. A memorandum was handed over to the Government Agent about this demand.

Many persons including school children were taken by luxury coaches to participate in the fast. Meanwhile Indian Air Force helicopters were hovering around the Mullaitivu, Kili-nochchi, Vavuniya area, where LTTE leader Prabhakaran is now believed to be hiding, informed sources said.

ST. 3.20

STF may move to Ampara

The Special Task Force may move out of Batticaloa into Ampara, according to official sources.

At present about a 1,000 strong force of this police para military unit is deployed in the Batticaloa District in 10 camps SO. 3.27

POLITICAL PRISONERS,
NEW MAGAZINE PRISON,
COLOMBO - 9.
15.02.1988.

His Excellency J.R. Jayawardane,
President of Sri Lanka,
Presidential Secretariat,
Colombo - 01.

Sir,

HUNGER-STRIKE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS DEMANDING
RELEASE UNDER INDO-SRILANKA PEACE ACCORD

We, the undersigned political prisoners, who are still detained and not released under the Indo-Lanka Peace Accord to settle the ethnic problem politically, signed by your Excellency and the Hon' Prime Minister of India on 29.07.1987, wish to bring your kind notice the following:

Article 2:11 of the above accord categorically states that all political prisoners detained, accused and convicted under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and Emergency Regulations will be given amnesty and released to join the main stream of national life. We have already stressed this and requested our release through our memorandums dated 23.11.1987 and 05.01.1988 for which we did not get any response. We are extremely disappointed and depressed by your silence. As there is no response for our appeals, we are compelled to stage a hunger strike against the undemocratic acts and violation of Fundamental Rights, given below:

- 01: 1. Under article 2:11 of the above accord many of the detainees were released and the rest continued to be detained at Magazine Prison, Boosa Army Camp, Palawalle Transit Prison and various other places, continued to be accused, produce to the courts of Law and convicted.
- 02: 1. Recently Mr. Haran, a high ranking member of 'EROS' who was said to be connected with 'Bomb incidents' in areas other than Northern and Eastern provinces, was arrested and then released. After it was voiced that his arrest was violating the peace-accord. The release was done even after a statement made public by Hon' Minister for National Security, Lalith Athulathmudali that he will be not released and charges will be framed against Mr. HARAN, whereas many others who were arrested and detained prior to the accord, and connected with the same incidents as of Mr. HARAN, still being detained.

[Ref: VEERAKESARI - 09.02.88 ; THIRUKKURAN - 10.02.88]

- :2. Youths, especially upcountry Tamils who are suspected to be connected with Eelam Liberation activities and are said to be involved with incidents occurred other than Northern and Eastern provinces are continued to be detained, accused and convicted.
- :3. The upcountry youths are convicted to be accused and indictments served under the Prevention of Terrorism Act at the High courts, Colombo at the same time complaints filed against them at the judiciary courts at the respective Police areas where they were arrested, whereas the charges are one and the same.

02:4. A prominent member of 'EROS' Mr. I.P.T. Varathan who was suspected to be involved in incidents outside Northern and Eastern provinces and who is in the 'WANTED LIST' of the Sri Lanka Police has been in personal contact with Brigd: Denzil Kobekaduwa (Army Co-ordinating officer) and had discussion with him, without being arrested.
[Ref: THINAKARAN - 17.09.1987]

:5. The General Secretary of PLOTE Mr. UMAMAHESWARAN who has been convicted by the High Courts, Colombo and sentenced for a life imprisonment is been granted General Amnesty under the Peace-Accord whereas the members of the same organization are detained and undergoing several hardships.
[Ref: SUNDAY TIMES - 13.12.1987]

:6. The organization 'EPRLF' of which the General Secretary being MR. PADMANABA who is the 8th accused in the coup-case, has been recognised as a political party by the Commissioner of Elections recently whereas many other suspected members of the same organization who were said to be involved in Eelam cause are continued to be in detention camps.
[Ref: THINAKARAN - 12.02.1988]

In view of the above undemocratic acts and violation of Fundamental Rights, we, detainees have decided to stage a HUNGER-STRIKE condemning the above violations and requesting our earliest release. This hunger strike will be in three stages beginning with a TOKEN HUNGER-STRIKE on 17.02.1988 followed by a HUNGER-STRIKE - in rotational basis, if no response to our release. The final stage will be in the form of FAST-UNTO-DEATH

Our early release will enable you to confirm your democratic rule and gain confidence of the Tamil Community and enable us to participate in the forth coming elections.

So your excellency please consider our humble request on humanitarian grounds and release us to join the mainstream of national life.

Thanking you.

Yours Anticipatingly,
[in behalf of Political Prisoners]

UC. 3279 S. THANGAYADIVEL

UC. 1493 M. KALIMUTHU

UC. 4747 P. K. SABANANTHAN.

D. 687. A. R. GUNASINGAM.



Tamil prisoners to begin fast

Tamil prisoners detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act will start a fast unto death in the New Magazine Prison from the 17th of this month to achieve their demand for the release of all prisoners as provided for in the Indo-Lanka peace accord.

In a statement signed by S. Thangavadiel, P. K. Sabanathan, M. Kalimuthu and A. R. Gunasingam, they say they took this decision on the 12th day of their hunger strike which they have undertaken on a rotation basis. The strike was launched on the 26th of February.

They add that they have already sent a memorandum stating their request to President Jayewardene and the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. Since no action had been taken in furtherance of their request, they were, they state, compelled to go ahead with plans for a fast-unto-death which they hope will bring some relief to their fellow prisoners.

Commissioner of Prisons H. P. Dharmadasa, contacted by the Sunday Times, said "We have forwarded all their requests. But these are matters of government policy over which the prison authorities have no control."

Asked what steps the prison authorities would take about the fast-unto-death in the prison premises, he said, "We will cross the bridge when we come to it."

"These are not new things. There have been hunger strikes before."

ST. 3. 13

Trincomalee

The events in the Eastern Province, particularly in Trincomalee, are perturbing. The heterogeneous population of the district where all three communities are of near-equal proportions, the strategic importance of the Trincomalee air base and harbour, the political importance of Trincomalee district contiguous to the Northern Province and the town which is tipped in some circles to be the capital of the North-Eastern Province are all factors that have contributed to the violent mix prevailing there.

In recent times many people are puzzled over the seeming helplessness of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force in the wake of a series of civilian massacres allegedly by the LTTE. Some even allege that there is a tacit understanding between the Indians and the Tigers.

The importance of Trincomalee vis-a-vis India has been expressed by K. M. Panikkar's thesis which argues that the British of all western nations were able to seize India because they had control of Trincomalee. In earlier times there was the saying of the famous Frenchman — "He who holds Trincomalee holds the whole of the Indian Ocean."

Recently there appeared in the Indian press a point of view that reiterated Trincomalee's importance to India. M. J. Akbar, the editor of the Calcutta newspaper "Telegraph" is a journalist considered close to Rajiv Gandhi and is also tipped to be appointed to the Rajya Sabha. In an article entitled "Why we are in Sri Lanka" which appeared in the "Sunday" magazine Akbar adduces a number of reasons rationalising and defending the Indian role in Sri Lanka. The most important reason according to Akbar is Trincomalee. Here are relevant extracts. "What is it that has made us all so very conveniently forget that the last invaders of

Lanka forces active again in Trinco

Sri Lankan security forces will shortly move into positions in the Trincomalee town, as part of a major effort to ease tensions in this strategic eastern district.

The move, a direct outcome of talks in New

Delhi between a government delegation led by Minister Gamini Dissanayake and Indian ministers and officials, will enable police personnel to resume routine operations.

It is also expected to infuse confidence in the

town's vastly reduced Sinhala population, thereby creating the environment for the resettlement and rehabilitation of refugees.

Towards the same end, Sri Lankan security forces based in "Sinhala areas" in the



The importance of self-reliance: Trincomalee's Government Agent D.M. Ariyaratne and Coordinating Officer Brigadier Denzil Kobbekaduwa address a "samagi" (unity) committee in Dehiwalle.

India, the British, came not from the Khyber Pass but from Madras via Trincomalee. In a very real sense, British expansion would not have been possible without the control of Trincomalee for this became the safe base from which operations could be launched or where the empire's forces could fall back in times of pressure. If for instance the British were ever pushed back into the sea from Madras or Calcutta, then there was always Trincomalee to fall back on.

But lets bring the problem to a more specific, more detailed level. How can Trincomalee be used against India at this moment if it goes under hostile influence? Sri Lanka, do remember, has been used against Indian interests and during a war when Colombo became the stopover point for Pakistani troops all through 1971. Let us assume that President Jayewardene had invited the Pakistani Army to help him fight the Tamils and the Pakistanis had control of the Lanka coast line. How long do you think would it have taken for small boats to start ferrying arms into India to help insurrectionist groups continue their wars against the Indian State?

There are enough minority groups in the country, small but dedicated and fascist and secessionist, who would be only too delighted to obtain help from a power inimical to India.

We did it well enough when we were arming the Liberation Tigers. Why should not someone else arm a Tiger which wants to maul India? Have we got some divine protection?

In the light of Akbar's comments defining the relationship of Trincomalee with the Sinhalese, Tamils as well as the Indians will help greatly in understanding disturbing developments in that district.

ST. 3. 20

peripheries will also be given more freedom to de-escalate violence by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The Sri Lankan Army, confined to barracks since the signing of the Indo Lanka accord on July 29 last year, were allowed to protect the Sinhala villages from attack, but prohibited from engaging in offensive operations.

Following the talks in New Delhi however, the Lankan troops are expected to be permitted to take whatever steps needed to apprehend militants who indulge in acts of violence.

The New Delhi talks have also resulted in the Sri Lankan and Indian ground commanders in Trincomalee being given the chance to exercise their initiatives to tackle the outbreak of violence with more flexibility than before.

ST. 3. 20

History repeats itself in the North

The recurrent phenomenon of history repeating itself is by its own merits interesting. When history repeats itself in a manner where protagonist forces imitate each other that development becomes more interesting.

The events of the past few weeks left one with a sense of convoluted *deja vu*. In the aftermath of the 1983 July violence Tamil undergraduates commenced a death fast. Their objective was that all Tamil faculties in other parts of the country should be transferred to the Jaffna University. Six males and three females started fasting and after a few days one girl's health was adversely affected. Suddenly one night with the connivance of senior office-bearers of the Undergraduates Union the LTTE struck. They forcibly abducted the fasting undergraduates, force-fed them and whisked them away to India. One of the girls subsequently became Mrs. Velupillai Prabhakaran. The Tigers also issued a statement that it was pointless losing one's life through a death fast. If the people wanted to challenge an intransigent government the only way was to join the "Tigers" and take up arms, said the statement.

Last week the Indian Army also known as the Indian Peace-Keeping Force followed the LTTE when they disrupted the Mothers Front's death fast. The Indian forces had a legitimate motive. The children of the fasting mother, Mrs. Annammah David had given the Indian Army a letter stating that (a) their mother was being forced to fast unto death against her will, (b) she was originally required to fast only for six days, (c) they were not allowed to see their mother. Therefore they wanted the IPKF to rescue their mother.

The IPKF struck like the LTTE. The President of the Mothers' Front Ms. Subendradevi, the Secretary Mrs. Selvaratnam and its Patron, Mr. Kingsley Rajanayagam were summoned to the Batticaloa rest-house camp by Brigadier I. P. Dhar for the ostensible reason of discussions on the fast. Even as the talks were on Indian soldiers went to the Maamangam Pillayar temple premises, fired shots in the air, pushed a few women who resisted and carried away the bed on which Mrs. Annammah David was lying on. Eye-witnesses claim that the feeble lady was seen clutching the bed-post. The Mothers' Front representatives were presented with a "Kashmiri-Brahmin" fait accompli by Brig. Dhar.

The Indians were not taking any chances. It was only a few weeks ago that the Indian High Commissioner, Mr. J. N. Dixit told the press that although it was possible for Indian troops to seize the fasting mother and feed her by force they were refraining from doing so because they did not want anything to happen to the mothers while in custody. So Mrs. David is now valuable property and the Indians are doing their best to revive her. If something happens to her while in Indian hands the issue will turn explosive.

Meanwhile the Mothers' Front office-bearers found themselves detained by the IPKF and then transferred to Batticaloa Prisons.

● Eelanadu

The other development which occurred a few weeks ago was the blasting of the Eelanadu newspaper in Jaffna. Again the repetitive element was there.

On October 10 the Indian Army went to the premises of two Tamil newspapers published in Jaffna The Eela Murasu and the "Murasoli". They rounded the employees, burnt the newsprint and then left with a few employees in their custody. Within minutes there were two massive explosions



A doctor, shown attending on the death fast mother

and the printing machinery was destroyed.

An Indian spokesman described the action as that of "neutralising" two anti-Indian newspapers.

Likewise in February the Tigers followed suit. The explosives were smuggled into the premises wrapped in bundles of newspapers. The security was lax thinking that these were newspaper returns. Four Tigers slipped in through the Indian sentry points with small-arms and entered the "Eelanadu" premises. They rounded up the employees, set in position the explosives and went away. The printing machinery was destroyed and so the "Eelanadu" was "neutralised" by the LTTE. The LTTE claimed credit through posters.

The "Eelanadu" was not functioning for some time after IPKF — LTTE clashes. Sometime ago an Indian General told newsmen that the IPKF would activate a newspaper in Jaffna. Shortly thereafter the "Eelanadu" was given permission to resume publications. Soon there were a few "scoops" and "inspired leaks" in the "Eelanadu" which even Indian newspapers missed. The Tigers got it into their heads that the 'Eelanadu' was the IPKF mouthpiece. So in the finest IPKF tradition the newspaper had to be neutralised.

Reading the past copies of the "Eelanadu" one finds that it had adhered to its basic tradition of sober, balanced reporting. During the period '85 to '87 where most Jaffna-based newspapers were bent on sensationalising the "Eelanadu" struck to its tradition of sober presentation. It had been in existence for over 20 years. In 1981 its building was burnt by indisciplined policemen. It was back on the streets in four days. Today only the "Uthayan" is published in Jaffna.

The events of the past weeks have shown two clear things. The freedom of democratic dissent articulated through non-violent forms is taboo; the freedom of expression through newspapers is also not on. Be it a newspaper or be it a protest fast if it is not acceptable to the LTTE or the IPKF then it would not be allowed. A fast is broken up by the LTTE in 1983; the IPKF does so in 1988; newspapers are blown up by the IPKF in 1987; a newspaper is blown up by the Tigers in 1988. History goes on repeating itself. Imitation they say is the best form of flattery. The IPKF and the LTTE continue to "flatter" each other by imitating each other.

PI. 3. 20

Police on alert in southern coast

By Premakumar
Ra Japakse

A surveillance zone is to be set up in the Southern coastal belt covering a large part of the southern province in a bid to stall what is believed to be a major gun running operation, involving Southern Subversives.

A senior police officer told The Sunday Times that intelligence reports have indicated that arms are being smuggled to the southern subversives by the fishermen who allegedly have links with the Northern terrorists.

ST. 3. 13

Airport to be expanded

By our Ampara Correspondent.

The IPKF is to expand the Ampara airport to accommodate more aircraft, airport sources said.

Most weapons, food and other needs of the IPKF are unloaded here.

Tigers, TULF invited for talks in New Delhi

By Qadri Ismail.

Representatives of Tamil organisations in Madras have been invited for discussions in New Delhi this week with officials of the Ministry of External Affairs.

The groups asked include the TULF and the LTTE, apart from other militant organisations. 'The Sunday Times' reliably understands. Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, J.N. Dixit, is currently in New Delhi for consultations with the Prime Minister and other Indian authorities involved with Sri Lankan affairs.

The new round of talks is expected to centre on the restoration of the political process in the north and the east. Nominations to Provincial Council elections in those two provinces were postponed last week. The Indians do not feel that the conditions in the Tamil areas are still ripe enough for polls. Ten days ago, at a press conference, Mr. Dixit announced that, following the operation of the IPKF in and around Batticaloa town, Indian military moves had been halted to allow the LTTE to rejoin the political process.

The Indian position on the LTTE has shifted somewhat. Following the October 10th offensive, the Indians insisted that the Tigers would have to surrender their weapons and publicly accept the Indo-Lanka agreement before any negotiations could take place about their future role in the north and east. The new Indian position, enunciated by Mr. Dixit two weeks ago, is that if the LTTE make a "firm commitment" to surrender weapons, negotiations could take place. Political analysts associate this change with Rajiv Gandhi's desire to do well in the Tamil Nadu State Assembly elections.

"The Sunday Times" learns that the Indians are very keen that a common slate of candidates from all the major Tamil organisations - LTTE, TULF and leftist groups - is formed to contest Provincial polls. This would prevent a division of the vote among Tamil groups and also provide the LTTE with certain guarantees of their security from other groups if peace returns to the Tamil areas.

A U.S. based academic, who was down in Sri Lanka recently, had gone to Madras and canvassed this idea with senior members of other Tamil organisations. These groups had said they were willing in principle to accept such a scheme if it was initiated by the Tigers. This academic had held discussions in Jaffna with Tiger Deputy-Leader Mahaththaya and members of the LTTE Political Wing and in Colombo with senior Indian High Commission officials and a Cabinet Minister in order to work out a scheme whereby normalcy is returned to the Tamil areas. The Minister concerned told "The Sunday Times", when asked, "The intermediaries seem more keen than the Tigers to make a deal." While the initial round of contacts failed to result in anything concrete, the mediation effort is expected to resume in two weeks time.

PLOT leader, Uma Maheswaran, once a very close associate of Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran,

an, told "The Sunday Times" in Colombo recently that, if experience was anything to go by, Mr. Prabhakaran would eventually do a deal and keep some power, since the alternative is to lose everything. The Indian thinking on the subject, "The Sunday Times" learns, is that no peace can be achieved without the co-operation of the LTTE.

The last time it issued a press release on the subject, at the end of February, the Tigers said they had "all along clearly indicated to India... its willingness to have talks" and that "LTTE" Commander "Kittu", in Madras, was "willing and available" for them. On the question of arms surrender, the statement said that the LTTE, a revolutionary organisation waged an armed struggle "to protect the people and defend the people's basic rights" and therefore surrendering weapons was "unacceptable as long as the freedom and rights of the people of Tamil Eelam are not safeguarded."

Among the issues Mr. Dixit is expected to raise while in Delhi is the recent settlement of 2,000 people in the Amparai district. Indian High Commission officials in Colombo, when asked about the visit, said it was "routine". Reacting to yesterday's landmine incident in the Trincomalee district, where 19 civilians were killed, a senior Sri Lankan military official said that more such attacks could be expected. "With refugees returning and the question of electoral registers coming up," he said. "The Tigers will do their best to chase out all Sinhalese from the area."

Meanwhile, the February issue of 'Ginipupura', journal of the JVP's UK branch, in an article by JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera, denies that the JVP has any alliance with the LTTE. "We are a Marxist-Leninist party and not terrorists," says Mr. Wijeweera. He opposes the division of the country "along communal lines" and says that, "In the final analysis... the oppression of national minorities (is a) manifestation of capitalism and (can) only be eliminated under socialism." ST. 3. 6

AI's former head refused entry

Mr. Martin Ennals ex-chief of the International Amnesty Organisation and the present Secretary-General of the world-wide organization "International Alert" was refused entry into Sri Lanka. Mr. Ennals was turned back to Madras when he attempted to disembark at Katunayake International Airport on Wednesday night.

Mr. Ennals a British citizen was according to informed sources on a fact-finding mission into alleged IPKF atrocities in the North and purported Human Rights violations in the South.

The head of International Alert is former British Cabinet Minister, Judith Hart.

TI. 3. 13

Firearms robbed

Unidentified persons entered the residence of the MP for Karandeniya Mrs. Daya Sepali Senadheera at Uragaha and got away with several firearms and ammunition police said.

ST. 3. 27

Five injured in Kalmunai hospital incident

Dr. Mohanathan, a dental surgeon attached to the base hospital in Kalmunai was seriously hurt and four others were also injured in an incident allegedly involving Indian Army personnel on Friday.

According to Kalmunai sources, soldiers from the IPKF camp at the Kalmunai rest

house had gone to the residential quarters of the Kalmunai medical staff, about 7.30 p.m. on Friday. The Indian soldiers were looking for another doctor S. Sasendran of the same hospital for questioning regarding a charge that he had been giving treatment to LTTE men. Dr. Sasendran

was not in the medical quarters at that time.

Thereafter the Indian soldiers had assaulted Dr. Mohanathan and three others who were playing bridge with him. A fourth was also injured. The others were Messrs Selvanayagam, Kailanapathy, Mahendran and Nadenalingam.

TI. 3. 6

Tissahamy under 'house arrest'

By Javed Mansoor

Veddah chief Tissahamy has been isolated in a bid to pressurise him to move over to lands being developed under the Mahaweli scheme.

Reliable sources told the Sunday Times that wild life officials had put up a barrier to prevent visitors including foreigners from meeting Tissahamy.

They hope this will effectively cut off Tissahamy's sources of revenue and persuade him to move out. At present he lives inside the Maduru Oya National Park along with 15 or 20 close relatives.

The barrier was erected nearly eight months ago and even Mahaweli-Ministry officials are permitted to enter only after obtaining special permission in Colombo.

Foreigners who go to meet Tissahamy are known to give him gifts and large sums of money for performing for them.

A beat officer posted near the barrier, however, said the barrier was erected to discourage poachers.

There is one range officer, two assistants and about 15 beat officers to cover the 228, 000 acres large National Park which was started around eight years ago. Tissahamy has refused to move over to another place saying he wants to die in his birth place. Most of the other veddahs have moved to Henanigala.

ST. 3. 20

Terrorists attack forces

Six Tiger terrorists were killed in two separate incidents in Mannar and Vavuniya when they attacked a Sri Lankan military route clearing patrol and an Indian detachment on Friday security sources said.

In Mannar town five terrorists died when Indian soldiers repulsed a terrorist attack without suffering any casualties.

In Vavuniya District a Sri Lankan military route clearing patrol was attacked between Avaranthalawa and Pawankulam by a group of 20 terrorists and one terrorist was reported killed when soldiers returned fire.

TI. 3. 27

SLFP strategy if polls postponed

By Romesh Fernando

The SLFP is considering calling a meeting of all recognised Opposition political groups to decide on a common course of action in the event of another referendum being held by the government to circumvent a general election.

The SLFP Central Committee is at present having an internal debate on how an extra-parliamentary struggle ought to be launched in the event of the parliamentary and presidential elections being postponed informed political sources told 'The

Sunday times'.

The SLFP intends initially to discuss the possibility of a non-violent civil disobedience campaign with the ELJP, MEP and the Liberal Party. Thereafter, invitations would be sent to all Opposition political groups including the Left parties and the Tamil parties. A section of the SLFP Central Committee is of the view that a unified Opposition challenge is necessary if they are to launch a mass agitation campaign.

These sections pointed out that, like in South Korea, if the Opposition is divided the attempt would fail, the sources said.

This section of the Central Committee is also of the view that the civil disobedience campaign should begin now in order to pressurise the government to have immediate parliamentary and presidential polls. It was the "people's power" campaign launched after the assassination of Benigno Aquino in 1983 that led to Ferdinand Marcos having elections three years later. A Philippines-type situation can only arise if the Opposition begins its non-violent agitation now. Otherwise the momentum for elections cannot be built, these sources said.

The other section of the SLFP Central Committee, however is of the opinion that the mass struggle should be launched only if and when the presidential and parliamentary elections are postponed. If an extra-parliamentary struggle is launched now it could jeopardise the chances of the elections being held. Nothing should be done to give the government an excuse to postpone elections, was the view of this group.

ST. 3. 20

● Seven parties request President

Lift proscription on JVP

Seven political parties have requested President J. R. Jayewardene to lift the proscription on the JVP unconditionally to enable it to join the democratic political process.

Leaders of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Eksath Lanka Jathika Party, Mahajana Eksath Peramuna, Tamil Congress, Sri Lanka Muslim

Dinasesa (Sinhala) March 23, 1988

"Democracy exists because people have the right of the vote and therefore the people must protect that right. If there is no vote there will be a dictatorship", said Prime Minister Premadasa at a meeting the other day.

From this observation people have begun to wonder whether something ominous is going to happen to the right to vote in this country.

The government, through a referendum postponed the general election. It is a good thing if the Prime Minister has even belatedly admitted the sin of contributing to this fraud. The Tamils, Muslims, and Sinhalese all over wanted the elections held and not a referendum. The report of the Elections Commissioner clearly indicates what a massive fraud the referendum was. After this fraud terrorism in the North and East escalated.

Young persons who had an opportunity to cast their vote for the first time lost it. Some of them also lost faith in the TULF that never catered for their needs. The ordinary people of the North who were waiting to express their discontent with the economic policies of the government lost that opportunity, in consequence of the referendum fraud. Young persons who lost faith in the vote took to the gun and this has now spread to the South.

There are once again talks of postponing general elections and another fraud is reportedly being prepared for the Presidential Election. One of these moves is the Provincial Council election.

Congress, Democratic Workers Congress and the Liberal Party have signed the letter containing this request to the President.

The parties have also called for the unconditional lifting of the proscription on Trade Unions and student organisations.

Outlining eight demands they have also called for the repeal of the prevention of Terrorism Act and requested the government to refrain from using the state of emergency except as a short term measure for particular incidents and areas.

The other demands made are:

a). Stop further arbitrary arrests and extra legal killings.

b). Release all political prisoners unconditionally.

c). Gazette names of persons who have been detained and if any have been released, dates of such release.

d). Establish a Parliamentary Select Committee on Human Rights to inquire into allegations of disappearances.

e). Setting up a Human Rights Commission of representatives of all recognised political parties and human rights organisations.

f). Dissolve ad hoc institutions of state such as Home Guards, National Auxilliary Force, National Task Force, Special Task Force and function only through duty established security forces.

A spokesman for this seven party group told, "The Island" that the United Socialist Alliance (USA) comprising the SLFP, LSSP, CP and the NLSSP were invited to participate in the discussions but had not attended any meetings. (LW)

TI. 3. 20

PUNISHMENT TO ALL ENEMIES OF THE MOTHERLAND

- ★ All those who supported the so-called Jayewardene-Gandhi Peace Agreement which betrayed our motherland and our people to the Indian imperialists and the legislation to establish Provincial Councils.
- ★ All those who are supporters of the traitor Jayewardene fascist clique and its murderous policies.
- ★ All those who support the presence of the aggressor forces and who attempt to whitewash its destructive actions.
- ★ All those who attempt to betray the patriotic forces that enter the struggle to protect the motherland from the Indian aggressor forces and their puppet, Jayewardene.
- ★ All those who kill, torture or harass the patriotic forces in accordance with the illegal repressive laws enacted by this illegitimate government in order to repress the patriotic forces.
- ★ All those who organise terrorist cliques of various forms and assist the traitor Jayewardene to repress the patriotic peoples organisations (Deshapremi Janata Viyaparaya).
- ★ All those who engage in activity of any kind against the patriotic forces and who seek to mislead the people on behalf of the enemies of the motherland.....

Patriots

We shall fight against Jayewardene, against his fascist clique, against his fascist killers, against the Green Tigers that he has organised. We shall climb over mountains of corpses; we shall swim across lakes of blood; we shall sacrifice our lives; we shall fight for the independence of our motherland. This we swear to

you.

However, allied with this open enemy and fighting against the patriotic forces are many enemies in disguise. These enemies, directed by the traitor Jayewardene and reactionary international organisations, appear before the people as progressives, social workers, human rights activists, artists, peasant leaders, or trade union leaders. Backed by secret funds from the UNP or from suspect organisations of the Catholic Church like SEDEC or Devasaranaya, acting in concert with Eelam terrorist organisations, they have already brought into being terrorist gangs, sometimes armed by the State, in order to terrorise and kill patriotic forces.

We can only protect our motherland by sweeping away not only the foreign aggressor, not only the open traitors but also this third force of traitors in disguise.

Who are these enemies, this third force?

The Lanka Sama Samaja Party which from its birth on December 18, 1935 has misled the working class, has betrayed the working class at every critical juncture, has in effect worked for the UNP in return for privileges, honours, etc. for the reactionaries.

The Ceylon Communist Party which from its inception on July 3, 1948 has fed itself from the World Socialist Movement but has acted as sloopes of the UNP, betrayers of the entire working class movement in 1980 and has in effect betrayed the revolutionary movement in Sri Lanka.

Vijaya Kumaranatunga who entered the SLFP through marriage only in order to split what was then the principal anti-UNP force in the country, who spawned a bogus Naxalite con-

spiracy in order to allow Jayewardene to postpone the general election of 1983, who has now embraced Eelam terrorist murderers and is acting in all respects as the obedient acolyte of Jayewardene.

Vasudeva Nanayakkara who has acted in a similar fashion and a number of so-called trade union leaders who fatten themselves on the movement but refuse to lift a finger against the repression of the working class by Jayewardene.

The Janata Sangamaya which batters on support from SEDEC and Devasaranaya and other suspect foreign organisations and is a reactionary tiger in the disguise of a peasant organisation.

A clique of various human rights and women's activists who receive assistance from reactionary international organisations and are active in disseminating leaflets and pamphlets.

The Independent Students' Union which is only a catspaw of the Eelamist terrorist organisations.

These are the enemies of those who are true enemies of Jayewardene, of the real opposition to him.

At this critical juncture, all those have taken a stand on behalf of Jayewardene, on behalf of reaction.

All these are the enemies of the motherland and therefore deserve to be punished. Independence for the motherland and peace and liberty to the people requires that all these should be swept away.

Death to all enemies of the motherland.

Liberty and Peace to the People.

JOINT HEADQUARTERS OF
PATRIOTIC ARMED FORCES.

January 25, 1988.

USA declares...

Only political ties with PLOT, EPRLF

By Romesh Fernando

The United Socialist Alliance comprising the SLMP, LSSP, CP and the NSSP have only a political alliance with the EPRLF and PLOT. It does not by any means have any military links with these revolutionary groups.

The JVP allegation that the USA was forming military squads to attack them with the help of Uma Maheswaran's PLOT and that these squads were being trained and armed in Batticaloa was totally false, Mr. Y. P. de Silva, General Secretary of the SLMP told The Sunday Times.

The USA intends to contest the provincial polls even though one of its candidates has been assassinated in Minneriya. The provincial polls must be regarded by the Opposition as the first step in bringing down the present UNP regime.

He added that if and when provincial council elections were held in the North and East the USA might have to come to an electoral arrangement with the PLOT and EPRLF. The other possibility would be for the PLOT and EPRLF, who now have a working relationship with the Alliance, to join the USA.

ST. 3. 27

JVP suspects arrested

Ten persons suspected of being members of the proscribed JVP were arrested by the Sri Lankan forces during a search operation in Minneriya and Hingurakgoda in the Polonnaruwa District.

ST. 3. 27

No protectorate big brother !

Last two weeks reports from New Delhi and Madras have ominous undertones for Sri Lanka. Our big brothers across the Palk Strait appear to have got the impression that the Northern and Eastern provinces are under their suzerainty and Sri Lanka got to get the permission of the so-called Indian Peace Keeping Force if it is to move its troops to protect its own citizens.

This point of view is well articulated in "The Hindu", the Indian national newspaper which has been the flag ship for the terrorists (pre-July '87) and now is attempting to get a reprieve for Vellupillai Prabhakaran from Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. In an article by a special correspondent on the "Challenge in Sri Lanka" it is said: "It is easy to understand why India cannot consent — under this agreement which certainly does not provide for this — to the Sri Lankan Army's coming out of barracks as an army and conducting anti militant operations in competition or in concert with the IPKF. That would be contrary to the whole purpose and the spirit of the Agreement aside from the question of treading on the emotive feelings in India and among the Sri Lankan Tamils".

What this potty anonymous typewriter strategist, should understand is that even the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement — which is now in tatters — does not stipulate anywhere that India's consent is required for movements of Sri Lankan troops in the North and East.

The agreement itself is very clear about the confinement of Sri Lankan troops to barracks. Section 2.9 of the agreement says: "Consequent to the cessation of hostilities and the surrender of arms by militant groups, the army and other security personnel will be confined to barracks in camps as on May 25, 1987".

Those who think that they have a right to dictate on troop movements of the Sri Lanka security forces should realise that the agreement stipulates that the troops would be confined to barracks only consequent to cessation of hostilities. It is quite clear that the cessation of hostilities — the responsibility of India — has not taken place even nine months after the agreement. Do the Indians think that with the basic obligations on their part unfulfilled, Sri Lankans should be good boys and be sitting in their barracks as the "Tigers" slaughter hundreds of Sinhalese and Muslim peasants?

What the Indians should realise is that the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement pivoted on specific conditions which India was obliged to implement. There was to be the cessation of hostilities within 48 hours and the surrender of arms too within 72 hours.

That has not happened after nine months and thereupon a greater part of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement has become inoperative. The basic objectives — A referendum before December 31, 1987 to decide on the unification of the North and East, holding of Provincial Council elections too by the end of last year has not taken place.

What happened is well known. The mighty Indian military received a severe drubbing by a band of few thousand terrorists whom the Indians themselves created. Despite Velupillai Prabhakaran having rubbed the proud but bloodied Indian noses in the Jaffna sands, the Indians have not realised their limitations of military power. Instead with their estimated 125,000 troop strength they appear to have assumed that the North and Eastern Provinces are theirs and Sri Lanka got to get their permission to move their own troops.

This is also a point of time to remember that the Sri Lanka armed forces in a few weeks had Prabhakaran and his cronies cornered in Jaffna with a mere five thousand troops and it was the Indians by blatantly violating international law who saved the "Tigers" from extinction.

If there are any delusions about "confinement of Sri Lankan troops to barracks" the Indians should re-read the agreement. It is clear that the confinement was merely a transitional provision. An independent and sovereign state does not agree to keep its security forces in barracks in perpetuity.

It is time that Sri Lanka said this loud and clear lest our big brothers get the impression that we have now become a protectorate.

TI. 3. 27

Ampara Muslims say Stop IPKF-EPRLF joint operations

by M. Ismeth
Muslims in the Ampara district have vehemently protested against the IPKF conducting joint search operations with the EPRLF in Muslim villages and this matter has also been brought to the notice of General Cyril Ranatunga during his recent visit there.

These Muslims claim that as they did not harbour any tiger terrorists there was no need for EPRLF members to join in search operations in their villages. They allege that during these search operations EPRLF members make a note of wealthy Muslim houses for robbing later on.

"The Muslims of the area are 100 percent willing to co-operate with the IPKF in their house to house search operations, but they do not want the IPKF to bring the EPRLF along with them" Muslim sources said.

The IPKF could always tell the Muslim elders of the areas and the Kethees of the mosques that they want to conduct search operations and they will be only too willing to co-operate with them, sources added.

It also learnt that during the recent visit of General Cyril Ranatunga to Kalmunai, Muslims of the area had apprised him of the lack

of security provided to the Muslim villages by the IPKF and about the harassment undergone by government servants subjected to strict IPKF checks at their work places.

On a proposal made by the Muslims to form vigilante committees in Muslim villages, General Ranatunga had said that he would consult President Jayewardene and inform them, as soon as possible.

TI. 3. 27
Rajiv, PM to meet

Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi will meet Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa during the latter's trip to India. Mr. Premadasa leaves for India this week.

The Sunday Times understands that the Government of India will be going all out to make Mr. Premadasa's visit as comfortable as possible. This will include providing military helicopters for the Prime Minister and his entourage to get to their destinations quicker.

ST. 3. 27

TULF will return to Lanka soon: Amir

By J. S. Tissainayagam

The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) leadership, at present residing in Madras hopes to return to Sri Lanka shortly, the General Secretary of that party Mr. A. Amirthalingam told the Sunday Times. He however said that the exact date of their return had not been finalised.

Mr. Amirthalingam said that their return did not mean that they were going to participate in the Provincial Council or any other elections till the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka were merged in keeping with the Indo-Lanka Peace Accord.

The main purpose of the TULF's arrival in Sri Lanka would be to have discussions with other Tamil and Muslim political parties in order to achieve unity and broad based consensus on political matters.

He said that the discussions with the Muslim political parties would centre on Tamil-Muslim unity in the Eastern Province and on the safeguards for the Muslims in terms of their representations in the Eastern Province. He said that he would hold discussions with the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and the Muslim United Liberation Front on these matters. He said by and large it would be a continuation of the discussions begun in Madras when Mr. Badi-ud-din Mahmud of the SLMC met the TULF leadership last year.

Speaking of the Tamil groups, he said that he hoped he could have discussions with the newly recognised Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) and other political parties.

The TULF General Secretary said that there was no truth in the reports that the Indian Government had asked them to return to Colombo. ST. 3. 13

'No' to Trinco coal plant

The Director Coast Conservation, Mr. S. R. Amerasinghe has rejected the application by the Ceylon Electricity Boards for a permit

to build a coal plant in Trincomalee. The permit was denied because of deficiencies in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

ST. 3. 20



SRI LANKA

Separate Strategy

Colombo tries to cut New Delhi's role



IN diplomacy—as is the case in medicine—extreme complications call for extreme measures. Thus, the Jayewardene Government in Colombo has embarked, since the start of this year, on what can only be termed bypass surgery in its attempts to find a cure for the island's terminal ethnic problem. But as every doctor knows, such operations often create additional complications and, in the context of the Sri Lankan situation, they could be fatal.

For one, Colombo's decision to hold direct and secret talks with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has given the impression that the objective is to sideline New Delhi, its partner in the Indo-Sri Lankan accord, and thus regain the diplomatic advantage. If the operation was a success, it would allow Jayewardene to ask the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to quit the island rather than leave New Delhi with that option.

But the end-result is that Colombo and New Delhi have taken different forks in the ethnic road and are busy trying to trump each other's high cards. Having realised, somewhat belatedly, the game Colombo was playing, New Delhi moved quickly to sabotage it. Its High Commissioner in Colombo, J.N. Dixit, announced that any attempt to keep India out of the picture "can be misunderstood". Simultaneously, New Delhi started holding its own direct, secret talks with the LTTE to broker a political settlement. Admits Minister of State for Exter-

nal Affairs Natwar Singh: "We have been talking to them (the LTTE) almost every day for the past two weeks."

But what that indicates is that the right hand no longer knows what the left hand is doing. It also means that India-baiters like Lalith Athulathmudali, the Sri Lankan minister for national security, are back in positions of influence in Colombo. According to sources in Sri Lanka, Athulathmudali and Sri Lankan Lands Minister Gamini Dissanayake have been negotiating with LTTE chief Pirabhakaran through three key intermediaries—Dr Selvakumar, a Tamil expatriate in the US and a classmate of Pirabhakaran, D.B.S. Jeyaraj, former Colombo correspondent of *The Hindu* who has wide contacts with the Tiger leadership; and Kumar Ponnambalam, general secretary of the All-Ceylon Tamil Congress Party in Jaffna.

What Colombo is offering is a package deal whereby the Tigers will be given control of the northern province through an LTTE-dominated interim administration on condition that they abandon their claims to the eastern province. They have reportedly been promised more devolution of power than that laid down in the accord.

New Delhi, meanwhile, has let the LTTE know that without Indian support,

any deal it strikes with Colombo will be doomed. "The LTTE has a Jaffna-based cadre and they might be tempted to accept the deal. But without Indian support, they cannot hope to achieve their political ends. Their mistrust of the Sri Lankan Government has deep psychological roots," says a top External Affairs Ministry official.

New Delhi is thus hoping to strike its own deal with the Tigers by persuading them to participate in the electoral process for the postponed provincial council elections—without LTTE participation, the elections will have no standing. New Delhi's intermediary has been Kittu, the LTTE's Jaffna commander, now recovering from a leg amputation in Madras. He is in radio contact with Mahatya, the number two man in the Tiger hierarchy.

But New Delhi's bargaining position has been weakened. Despite an estimated IPKF strength of 70,000 in Sri Lanka, the Tigers are far from whipped. Now, with both Colombo and New Delhi desperately wooing Pirabhakaran, the LTTE is in a position to dictate its terms. This is precisely what is happening. The initial Indian stand was that any talks

with the LTTE would be unconditional and entail laying down all arms. Now, Pirabhakaran has made it clear that any talks with the Indian Government can take place only if the IPKF withdraws to its "pre-offensive positions" and ensures the establishment of an interim administration in the northern province with majority representation to the Tigers. Pirabhakaran has also refused to hand over all LTTE arms, insisting that a cer-

tain amount of weaponry be retained by the Tigers for their protection.

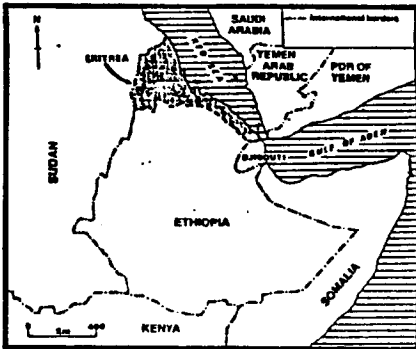
What this really means is that the LTTE is now in a position to play one side against the other. That situation has been made possible by the fact that Colombo and New Delhi have started marching to different drummers. The prospect that the process could end in some sort of an agreement with the Tigers is welcome. But that also means that the much-vaunted Indo-Sri Lankan accord is now becoming increasingly meaningless—as will be the sacrifice of the 400-odd Indian soldiers who have died on Sri Lankan soil.

—DILIP BOBB

Sri Lanka and India have taken different forks in the ethnic road and rather than acting in concert are trumping each other's cards.

Eritrea

INDUSTRIES FOR SELF RELIANCE



ERITREA: IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

As with many countries in the Sahelian climatic zone, Eritrea has long experience of droughts and poor harvests. The loss of one harvest can usually be covered with stocks put aside in the good years, or perhaps supplemented with cash from migrant labour. The difficulty arises when drought occurs over consecutive years such as 1980 to 1983. This is when famine sets in, food stocks are depleted and harvests fail, eventually people have to eat the seed that they would otherwise sow, people and animals become weak and diseased, and recovery becomes an increasing struggle. Harvests have failed yet again in 1987. At present there are more than a million people, in Eritrea alone, who are in need of food assistance.

The war has also had a serious effect on food production in Eritrea. Ethiopia's seventh offensive in 1983 caused havoc to farmers in the Barka and Senhit provinces and many fled to safer areas. Air bombardment has destroyed a vast number of livestock, burnt crops and grassland and limited food production to small plots tended after dark. Trading and fishing in coastal regions is heavily restricted by naval patrol boats. The nomads' movements are limited by the fighting, resulting in overgrazing and lack of water.

Such severe disruption of Eritrea's food production capacity means that hundreds of thousands of people are hungry. The Eritrean Relief Association (ERA) operates an extensive international infrastructure to bring relief grain and milk powder to people throughout the liberated and semi-liberated areas. In addition to this, several food processing plants have been established:

flour mills, bakeries, pasta production and DMK (durrah, milk powder and chickpeas). The DMK plant serves the dual purpose of producing lifesaving nutritional supplements for victims of malnutrition, and augmenting the Eritrean's efforts to be self-reliant in the sphere of food production.

DMK is just one of the successful small scale industries built from scratch in the liberated area of Eritrea. There are various other industries, brief histories and descriptions of which can be found in the following pages. Remarkable progress has been made with minimal resources. For life to improve in Eritrea these industries must be sustained and grow. All assistance is welcome. Details of how you can help us can be found on the back page.

FOOD PRODUCTION : DMK

During 1979, in refugee camps around the borders of Sudan, a nutritionist, Azeb, and her colleagues were studying solutions for malnutrition, especially among children. They started by mixing ground durrah and milk powder by hand. The process was slow and supplies limited, but there was notable improvement in the health of the children it reached. Production continued on this small scale at Solomuna Camp until 1984 when it was decided to establish a DMK factory in the area.

Project construction work was started in the second half of 1984. Machines, equipment and construction materials arrived in Eritrea in November 1984. Construction work and installation of the machines were completed in April 1985 and the factory became operational on 25th April 1985.

The ingredients of DMK have developed and changed with results from research and access to different food substances. At present it consists of 55% wheat, 20% chickpeas, 10% egg powder, 10% skimmed milk powder and 5% sugar. To further improve the protein content and flavour it is hoped to add sesame and groundnuts to the mixture, but this will not be possible until a roasting machine has been purchased. The ingredients are ground and mixed, resulting in a fine yellow powder which is added to water and cooked as a porridge. Approximately 1.6 tons can be produced

per 8 hour shift. The DMK is sealed in 1 kilo bags and distributed to children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years. DMK is fed to children every other day and the daily ration is 0.33 kg. During the months that DMK has been operational an average of 8000 children have been reached per month.

The project started with 17 people and now has 50 staff: 2 supervisors, 10 operators, 6 ration workers, 28 workers and 4 demonstration and evaluation workers. A shift requires about 25 workers. A new aspect of work began at the DMK factory in June 1987 with a large demonstration kitchen equipped for lessons on nutrition, diet and preparation of food. This is an important step towards improving health from a primary level. In many cases sickness can be avoided with good nutrition.

The DMK factory is one of the most vital of the cottage industries and expansion of production is essential. A further 18,000 children are known to be in need of DMK. Lack of certain machines, lack of spare parts and lack of proper maintenance are the main limiting factors to greater production. Specifically the factory is in need of: a roasting machine, a sieving machine, tools and equipment for the demonstration unit and laboratory, wheelbarrows, sieves for the hammermills, equipment catalogues and plastic bags. Sufficient supply of all these would make it possible to produce enough DMK for those most vulnerable to famine - the young children.



WEIGHING OUT INGREDIENTS FOR DMK.

SHOE FACTORY

One strong identifying feature of the people in the liberated areas of Eritrea is their black plastic sandals. A small factory was set up in the base area in 1980 with equipment bought by support groups in Italy. The factory generally works one ten hour shift, and if everything is going smoothly can produce 1000 pairs of sandals per day. The Italian injection-moulding machine is completely automatic and takes just five people to operate it; two to remove the shoes, one to sort pairs, one to check the supply of raw material and one to care for the overall running of the machine. Formerly, only adult sizes were produced but this is now expanding to five children's sizes and two sizes in a new women's style shoe.

Like many of the base area factories, workshops and laboratories, the design of the shoe factory incorporates a rapid removal option, in case of air raids. At the sandal factory the 7 tonne machine is mounted on a steel framework, and a large doorway provides access for a truck to back in under the machine and move it whenever necessary.

In a second section of the factory a granulation machine is making good use of the excess plastic from the shoe moulds, the reject shoes and the old worn out shoes which are all returned for recycling. PVC is expensive and difficult to transport from the European suppliers, so the recycled and the new are mixed half and half.



THE SHOE FACTORY.

Since 1980 the sandal factory has succeeded in supplying most of those people living in the liberated areas of Eritrea. This is a great improvement from the days when people depended on an adhoc supply of shoes from Sudan and Ethiopia.

SANITARY TOWEL FACTORY

Providing everyone with locally produced sandals is an important step towards self reliance, but providing women with a free supply of sanitary towels where before it was a matter of making one's own, is revolutionary in terms of the relative freedom it gives. For some it is an even greater change. Some of the nomadic women, following traditional taboos, would sit in a tent over absorbent sand when menstruating. They would prepare food for the family in this tent and pass the prepared

meal under the flap of the tent to the men outside.

The machine for producing the sanitary towels was bought in Italy with funds raised by the National Union of Eritrean Women in exile, who continue to provide the raw materials. Production started in 1984 and the machine is capable of producing 10,000 towels per hour, fuel permitting. Rate of production also depends on demand and the supply of raw materials. The towels are distributed throughout the liberated area. Usually there are about fifteen workers in the factory, two or three operating the machine and the rest packing the towels and sealing the bags.



PACKING THE SANITARY TOWELS.

The Department of Hygiene which is responsible for this factory also has plans to develop local soap production. In June 1987 they were virtually ready to start production.

PRINTING WORKSHOP

The printing workshops, along with the photographic and cinematographic workshops, is a sub-section of the Information Department. It forms an essential part of the literacy campaign, producing approximately 80% of the educational materials. This is a remarkable achievement; text-books, exercise books and magazines are supplied to all the schools, including night school and technical school: the auto-mechanics have an excellent handwritten and illustrated technical manual, the POW's their own magazine and educational books. Other useful items such as petrol coupons, medical cards and marriage certificates are also produced.

1970 witnessed the humble beginnings of this workshop with the installation of one duplicating machine. The growth of the workshop led to a lithographic system being adopted in 1977. Ten years later the workshop includes sections for photolithography, typing, duplicating,

binding, composition, registration/distribution and training. Publications can now be produced in at least seven different languages chosen according to their purpose. The languages include Tigrinya, Tigre, Amharic, Arabic, English and languages of particular cultural groups such as Afar and Kunama.



PRINTING WORKSHOP.

There are 120 staff with about equal numbers of women and men. Print runs are usually in the region of 10,000 to 30,000 copies. All the paper, ink and machinery are from Europe and the USA, although some equipment, such as typewriters, has been captured from the Ethiopians. Paper is a major requirement and it is hoped to establish a recycling plant to reduce dependence on external supplies.

ARTIFICIAL LIMB PRODUCTION

Since the beginning of 1987 there has been a vast improvement in the production of artificial limbs. Patients can now have an individually fitted limb rather than a makeshift adaptation from a limited supply of second hand prostheses.

It is a heart-rending result of the war that there is an ever increasing number of amputees, most of the injuries being caused by land mines. However, these people are usually young and fit and certainly do not want to sit still, and there remain many ways in which they can contribute to the struggle. In fact throughout the industrial sector one finds a high number of amputees. It is a saying in Eritrea that 'only the dead lie down'.

Taibot, who has lost both his legs, has returned from the Clinic in Port Sudan to help set up the new workshop and, along with two others, to train the staff. Currently there are about fifteen staff, who are producing, on average, thirty limbs per month. At present bilateral amputees are being given priority and many are travelling

from Port Sudan for fittings and alignments. Artificial arms are not produced as there are far fewer upper limb amputees, most of whom would not bother with a prosthesis. All the funds for equipment and materials have come through ERA. The workshop is well equipped with sanding machines, bandsaw, drill, balancing apparatus and more. Material supplies are at present imported, with the exception of wood.

In a well camouflaged workshop tucked into the mountainside one finds a fairly elaborate process of manufacturing prostheses underway. First the patient comes for a mould to be made of her or his stump, used to make a positive impression of the stump. Thus, the new limb fits perfectly reducing discomfort and sores, and improving gait. The section fitting onto the stump is made with a rubber sheath, moulded while warm and supported by laminated interlayered PVA and stockinette.



ARTIFICIAL LIMB MANUFACTURE.

The middle section is made of wood and directly joined to the shoe. At this stage the patient returns so that the wooden section can be made the right length and shape, and aligned with the good leg.

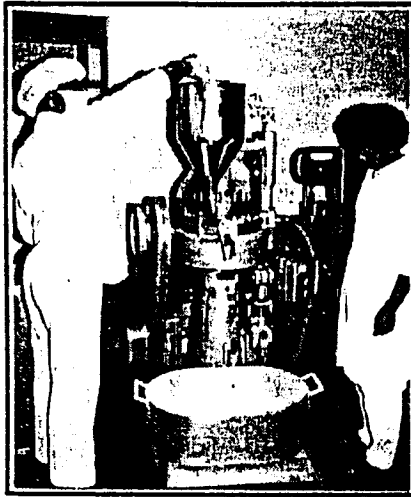
Metal legs are stronger and more adjustable but expensive. The workshop would welcome any second hand supplies. The wood is local and light but tends to absorb moisture and is a resource under much demand.

The prosthesis workshop is an extremely important addition to the small-scale industries.

DRUG PRODUCTION UNIT

The largest and most impressive manufacturing unit is in the Pharmaceutical Department at the Central Hospital. War injuries, malnutrition, chloroquine-resistant malaria and TB are just some of the challenges that the Eritrean Public Health Programme faces. Drugs occupy nearly 60% of recurrent expenditure on health care; there may be delay or failure in supply; prices are high and transport expensive. For the Eritreans it made sense to start producing their own medical supplies.

Discussion regarding the drug production unit began in 1977, in conjunction with the Eritrean Support Committee in Belgium. For children and babies with severe dehydration due to diarrhoea, infusions



PRODUCING MULTIVITAMIN TABLETS.

were identified as the most needed product. Infusions can also be used for war injuries when fluids cannot be taken orally, and for surgical operations that involve high blood loss. At the same time it was decided that production would include the most frequently used tablet drugs, such as aspirin, paracetamol, sulphonamides, ephedrin, penicillin, and the anti-tubercular drug INH.

The construction and installation of equipment for infusion production was completed in May 1983. After extensive performance tests full production began in July 1984. These intravenous fluids are produced by processing the sandy, polluted well-water through various stages of filtration, distillation and sterilisation. After mixing with salt and sugar it is siphoned into imported bags using aseptic techniques.

Four types of infusion are produced: two types of dextrose, normal saline and Ringer's lactate solution. Each bag is tested for clarity and each batch for assay, pyrogen and sterility. In December 1985 a new, more effective water treatment unit was installed. Output was increased by 400% and processing time decreased by 70%. As with all the industries the standard of equipment has a crucial influence on productive capacity. Progress, however, is never perfect. With the upgrading of the water treatment there are now other areas which cause bottlenecks in production. In the infusion unit the autoclaves and bag sealer are of inappropriate design, and their replacement will bring further improvement. Production is impressively high despite technological drawbacks. In 1987 it is planned to produce 90,000 of these 1 litre life-saver bags.

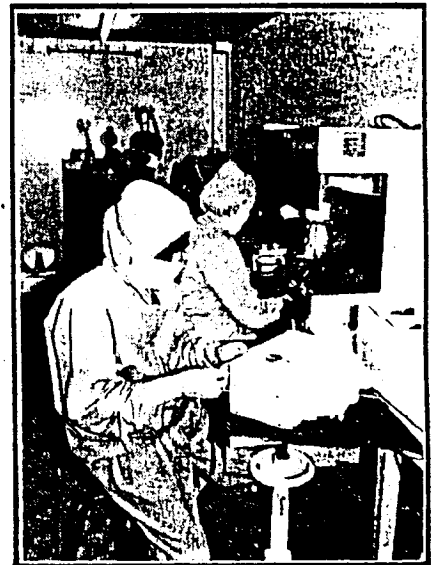
Tablet production commenced soon after the infusions and has been expanding ever since. A seven-roomed unit was built to cover the functions of washing, weighing, storage, tablet production, capsule production, packing and maintenance. As with the infusion production, dust and humidity control are important; an air conditioner is essential. Most of the equipment is from West Germany, including a mixer, a wet and dry granulator, a vibration sifter, drying ovens, a tablet press and a generator. At first, sufficient power for the tablets and infusions was a problem; only

200,000 to 400,000 tablets were being produced per month when capacity was thought to be 1 million. The power situation has now improved and 2 million tablets are being produced per month, although this is still below the maximum attainable. Every batch of pills undergoes quality control tests for assay, disintegration, weight variation, friability and hardness.

Detailed records are kept of all the pharmaceuticals, dressings, syringes, surgical instruments and hospital supplies used by the health service. Over the last few years the pharmacy has drawn up an Essential Drug List, reducing the number of drugs used. Guidelines were taken from WHO considering such factors as safety, quality, efficacy, cost, disease pattern etc. By concentrating on a basic list, scarce resources can be used more efficiently, donors can see what is needed, and there is a higher chance of covering the balanced range represented by the full list.

The Essential Drug List runs to 187 items. 14 different tablets have been produced so far and it is planned to expand this range to 32 in the near future. Capsule production of three types of antibiotic started this year. It is anticipated that 14 million capsules of Tetracyclin, Ampicillin and Chloramphenicol will be produced annually. This will hugely increase the capacity to treat infectious diseases.

Drug production has not solely concentrated on modern medicine. A survey is underway investigating Eritrea's traditional medicines and the potential of local plant resources. Some samples have been collected, such as, senna (a laxative) which is prevalent in the base area, and atropine (a detoxicant and useful for treatment of gastric ulcers). At the pharmacy there is an Ointment, Solution and Syrup section which was the first production unit, providing various medicines made mainly from local sources.



FILLING INFUSION BAGS.

Expansion in production has brought with it staff increases. From an initial 14 pharmacists, there is now a staff of 62 and this number will continue to grow. At least 30% of the staff are women. Training, as in all areas of Eritrea's work, is of high priority.

Classes are taken each morning by the staff, and they rest in the afternoon before starting production work at 5pm. There are two training courses at present, one to be a pharmacy dispenser and a more advanced course to be a pharmacy technician. Courses last between three and six months and are taught by pharmacists within the Department.

Since the early days (only four years ago) of aiming to supply just the Central Hospital, this industry is now distributing medicines to eight regional hospitals, scores of health centres and clinics and over 40 mobile health teams. Achievement such as this is outstanding, especially when it has been developed using minimal resources in an area deeply affected by war and drought. The development of the drug production unit will continue apace if not hindered by lack of resources. Foresight has led the Eritreans to create a policy framework for a full-scale, commercial drug industry, which would blossom fully after the war. It is hoped that Phase One will be complete by 1990. Apart from those enterprises already started, there are plans for production of gauze, bandage and cotton; improved packaging; a medicinal herb garden; and a fully equipped microbiological laboratory.

HISTORY & OBJECTIVES OF ERA

The Eritrean Relief Association (ERA) was created in 1975 by a group of Eritreans concerned with the plight of their compatriots. It is a non-political, non-profit making, private voluntary organisation engaged in humanitarian work inside Eritrea and among refugees abroad. It is the only humanitarian agency with direct access to those areas of Eritrea - more than 85% - under the control of the independence movement. In Sudan ERA works among Eritrean refugees. This agency is registered with the governments in the countries in which it operates and contributions may be tax deductible according to the specific rules and regulations in the country from which such funds originate. Details will be supplied upon request.

ERA's goal is to provide for the needs of victims of war and natural disaster, whether inside Eritrea or in neighbouring countries as refugees. ERA seeks to achieve this goal through pursuing the following objectives:

- publicising the plight of displaced and affected people and Eritrean refugees;

- soliciting relief aid from humanitarian organisations, governments and individuals;
- distributing such relief aid fairly and equitably according to need;
- ensuring that the rights of Eritrean refugees are respected and protected;
- undertaking development and rehabilitation projects that assist displaced and affected people and refugees to achieve a self-reliant existence;
- assisting in creating a favourable socio-economic climate within Eritrea as a means of stemming the outflow of people encouraging the return of refugees to Eritrea.

To achieve these objectives ERA sponsors activities and programmes among needy people inside Eritrea and among refugees in Sudan. Most of ERA's activities are among the former and the provision of relief assistance for the war and drought victims inside Eritrea still constitutes ERA's major activity.

THE ERITREAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION STRUGGLE IS THE LONGEST IN AFRICA

The people have fought against an "AFRICAN" colonizer backed at different periods, by both superpowers. The price paid has been colossal in both human and material terms, but the commitment to their right to self-determination and liberation remained undiminished. In the process of their struggle, the Eritrean people have attempted to develop self-reliance in a hostile environment, undertaking a number of social transformations. They have instituted land reform, guaranteed women's rights to hold land, organized a national primary health care programme and established a new and more relevant educational system. Most significantly, in the liberated areas which constitute 80% of Eritrea the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front has organized the people up to the level of village and regional assemblies which have the right to take political, judicial and community decisions. These rights are exercised through a democratic process.

SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

ST	-	The Sunday Times
TI	-	The Island
IW	-	India Weekly
TH	-	The Hindu
SO	-	Sunday Observer
FL	-	Front Line
IT	-	India Today
IB	-	India Abroad

The Way Forward

The Eritrean people resorted to armed struggle for liberation only after all attempts to achieve a political solution had failed. Even now, to the Eritrean people, it is still a valid option. Since November 1980 the EPLF proposed that a referendum be held under the auspices of the United Nations or Organization of African Unity to allow the Eritrean people to choose between regional autonomy within Ethiopia, federation with Ethiopia or independence. The military junta has not yet taken it seriously. It still remains, encouraged by its patron, committed to a military solution.

The UN had a responsibility to deal with appeals submitted by the Eritrean people about Ethiopian violations of the terms set forth in the Federal Resolution which recognized the Eritrean right to self-determination. The UN did not intervene when Ethiopia forcibly annexed Eritrea in 1962. Therefore the responsibility lies

squarely with the UN. It can still intervene.

All historical facts and international law support the Eritrean people's cause of freedom. The Eritrean case is a cornerstone to peace in the Horn of Africa.

Eritrea must be free!!!!



'Challenge Road' — Part of EPLF's thousands of miles of newly constructed road system



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**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN SRI LANKA WITH RESPECT
TO THE RETURN OF TAMILS TO SRI LANKA.**

Since the 29 July Indo-Sri Lankan agreement, Amnesty International has kept the situation of members of the Tamil community in Sri Lanka under constant review. The agreement incorporates provisions that the Indian and Sri Lankan governments will ensure the safety of Tamils and others living in the north and east.

Some provisions of the agreement are in the process of being implemented but there is delay in the implementation of others. For example, the State of Emergency remains in force all over Sri Lanka, despite a provision in the agreement that it would be lifted in the north and east by 15 August. Furthermore, the release program of prisoners announced by the government has not been fully implemented. Despite a provision in the agreement for the disbanding of the Home Guards, who along with the Special Task Force have been reported responsible for extrajudicial killings and for "disappearances", 650 of which have been recorded by Amnesty International to date, Amnesty International understands that many of its members still continue to operate in eastern Sri Lanka, especially in the Trincomalee area. At the same time, the current fighting between Tamil militants and the Indian Peace Keeping Force in the north and east of Sri Lanka raises fresh concerns about the safety and security of the Tamil population as a whole.

In the present circumstances, therefore, it is not clear to what extent the accord's provisions will be implemented and there must be considerable uncertainty about the safety of Tamils in, and returning to Sri Lanka.

In view of the present uncertain situation, Amnesty International considers it is reasonable to conclude that the conditions do not yet exist for the safe return to Sri Lanka of members of the Tamil community now abroad, at least for the time being.

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Amnesty International is an independent worldwide movement working impartially for the release of all prisoners of conscience, fair and prompt trials for political prisoners and an end to torture and executions. It is funded by donations from its members and supporters throughout the world. It has formal relations with the United Nations, Unesco, the Council of Europe, the Organization of African Unity and the Organization of American States.

