

Piramanthanaru Massacre

2nd October 1985

Kilinochchi

பிரமந்தலாற்றினது கோ...
விணர்கள் வதை செய்து...
எங்களுக்கு அணிலிவே நடந்தது...
விணர்கள் கொன்றனர்...
உள்ளத்தை உட்கொண்ட...
காட்டை நாய்கள் வெட்டு...
கண்ணுக்கு கண்ணை கமகு...
பன்றிக்கும் யானைக்கும் ப...
விரமாக உழைத்து நாங்கள்...
யாருக்கும் நாம் பணியில்லை...
விவசாயப் புதல்வர்களாய் விர...

ஐப்பசி மாதத்து மழைக்கால...
காகங்கள் கரைந்து நின்ற கரு...
கடகடத்த சத்தத்துடன் கரு...
சாக்குரிவிபால் அவை சாவுக்கு...
சக்கிப்போல் மொய்த்தபடி...
கல்நெஞ்சகாரர்கள் காக்கிச்சட்டை...
வந்தனரே வந்தவர்கள் கு...
விதியெங்கும் விணர்கள் வீம்பாகத்...
துவக்குடனே சுயவர்கள் துணிவாக...
மாவிடர்கள் எல்லாரும் பதைபதை...
காவல்காக்கும் காக்கிச்சட்டை...
படபடவன்று சுட்டனரே சுட்டுசுட்டு...
நாய்களைப்போல் சுட்டனரே. விவசாயப்...
விதியெங்கும் சத்தவெள்ளம் ஆர...
நாய்களைப்போல் நம்தொழ...
சுட்டவர்கள் சென்றனரே...
பயங்கரவாதி...
ஊர்நெருங்கும்...
எங்கள் தலைகவிழ்த்ததுவே சோகமாக...

April 2006

Report by NESOHR

Cover picture: Tamil poem in memory of those massacred



“we are farmers – we are poor people doing farm work here only.”

- Thuraiasa Saradha Devi, sister

“...we heard a big sound in the air. We saw that six helicopters had come and landed on the bund. They took my son and hurt him. Finally, they killed him and others too. We saw his dead body lying in a pool of blood.”

- Suppaiah Nagappar, mother

“... we came and shot dead several LTTE carders and also blew up their garage.”

- Alagama, SLA commander

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- P1. Kiddinar Sivapathasuntharam (33)
P2. Karrupaiah Tharmalingam (23)
P3. Vansanatha Kopyathilaka Kamini (26)
P4. Steepan Raj Sathiyaseelan (26)
P5. Suppaiyah Yogarajah alias Rasan (22)
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P8. Karrupaiah Sellvarasa (24)
P9. K Ramasamy (26)
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P11. Vallipuram Vivekananthan alias Anandan (24)
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P16. Kanthasamy Tharmasigam (23)

****List of the massacre victims and age at death.****

1. Introduction

In the early morning of October 2nd 1985, Sri Lankan Army (SLA) helicopters descended on the village of Piramanthanaru. Hundreds of armed military personal spread through the town beating, torturing and killing villagers, destroying agricultural products and burning houses. By late morning, they departed leaving the village in tatters. Many were seriously injured, others left homeless, crops were gone and equipment destroyed. Sixteen people were dead.

Today, many of the villagers still suffer physical and psychological effects from massacre. Some have been left paralysed and deaf. Some exhibit physical symptoms from the mental trauma. Others have suffered silently for years. One mother, who was displaced by the war and cut off from family in Piramanthanaru, was to live for 21 years without knowing for sure the fate of her son who was killed in the attack.

The Grama Sevaka (GS - local government official) at the time, Mr S.S. Sinnathamby, collected as much information as possible after the massacre. He recorded details of those killed and injured as well as properties damaged. All this information was confiscated by authorities and he was held for interrogation for three days. We have gathered much of the information for this report, including the list of those killed, from him. Where possible we have corroborated the information with family members. However, in many cases the families have been displaced by the conflict and we were unable to trace them.

Piramanthanaru

In 1985, Piramanthanaru was a farming village of about 1000 people. Many of the locals had come as part of an agricultural scheme started in the 1950s aimed at giving land to the poor in Jaffna Peninsula, Pallai and other parts of Kilinochchi. Six hundred and ten, one and half acre land blocks were given to various people in this way for subsidiary food crop cultivation. The farming consisted mainly of vegetables, chili and banana. At the time, majority of the villagers were young single men who had come to etch out a living.

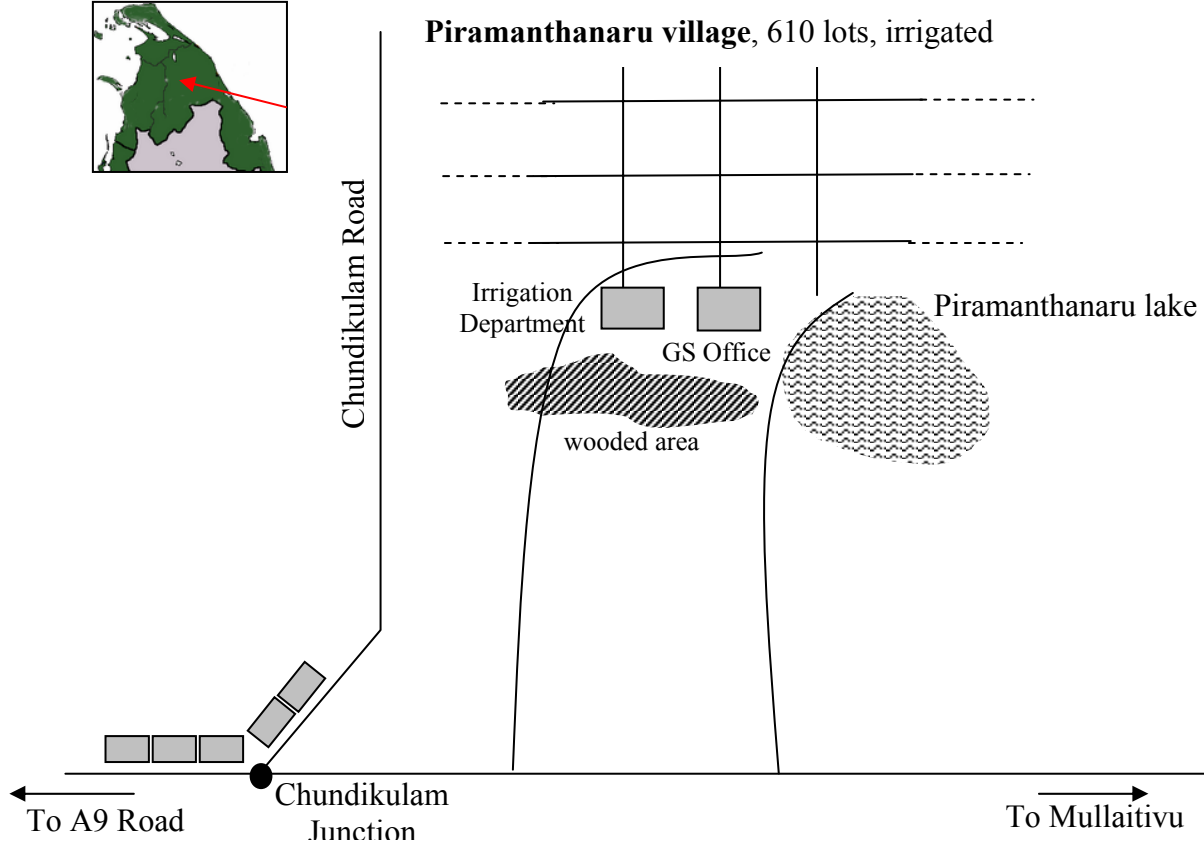
Military Camps

In 1985, there was a large military camp in Mullaitivu which is approximately 30 Kms from the village. From here, SLA personal would regularly spread out through the area but largely stick to the main A9 road. Helicopters used to fly over the villages during this time. There was also shooting and helicopter strafing going on throughout the area.

Background

The early 1980s saw a sharp rise in both recruitment to, and number of, Tamil militant groups. This was in response to the increasing, violent presence of the SLA in the Northeast and the 1983 riots, which saw the suffering of hundreds of thousands of Tamils throughout the island.

In an attempt to contain the rising armed resistance of the Tamil people, the GoSL employed various tactics including the interrogation, arrest and murder of Tamil civilians. In many rural villages in the Northeast, thousands of men, women and children have been massacred in this fashion.



2. An Early Warning to the GS

Mr. S.S. Sinnathamby, GS for the area relates some of the events that lead up to the massacre,

“I was working as a GS from 1963 for the Puliumpookanai GS division. Piramanthanaru comes inside this division.

The SLA was stationed in the Mullaitivu camp and the commander of SLA, Alagama, asked three of us, the GS of Vaddakachchi, the GS of Parathipuram GS and myself, to come and see him at the camp. This was in early 1985. He asked the three of us to come and see him through the Government Agent (GA) for Kilinochchi. Alagama had said that he heard there was illegal felling of trees in the forest and he wanted to investigate. We were scared because we had heard that the same commander, Alagama, had summoned

and shot another GS. That GS was from Mullaitivu district. The GA at the time [1985] was Poonamblam. We went to the GA and expressed our fears. He told us that our circumstances are different [to that of the Mullaitivu GS] and to go see what Alagama wants.

When we went to see Alagama, he called us in one by one and inquired - he didn't talk to us together. When we went in he told us he was not investigating illegal tree felling. He wanted to know where the LTTE camps and garages were in our divisions. I told him that my division is 36 square miles. I do not have a vehicle and I travel by bicycle. I cannot find out what is going on everywhere in my area. But as far as I know there is nothing there. He told me to go and find out all these details about LTTE places and to come next time with all the information.

Three months after this incident the Piramanthanaru massacre occurred.”

3. What Happened

The helicopters landed early in the morning when the villagers were waking up. The SLA personal hid in the concrete irrigation channels that spread through the fields. When the villagers started to make their way towards the fields it was still dusky, giving the SLA good cover from the villagers.

All those in the path of the army were targeted. People who had scares from past injuries, farming or otherwise, were beaten and commanded to reveal the location of LTTE camps.

Later, the SLA spread through the township and destroyed homes, shops and farming equipment. Among the victims of the indiscriminate shooting was a Sinhalese government irrigation worker, Vansanatha Kopyathilaka Kamini (P3).

Uma Maheswaran Kamalambihai (45) says,

“When we heard Mylar's warning [Maylar Kandasamy was running from lane to lane shouting that the army was coming.] I took my 6 children and ran into the forest. My youngest boy was only 6 months old. We stayed in the forest all day hungry and thirsty. We drank the water from the dirty ponds. The SLA looted Sivapatham's shop and took jewels and money. Then they said that he was an LTTE member and arrested him. As they left our village, they set alight the coconut thatched roof houses. Many properties and things such as school books were all set alight.”

Kathirgamarasa is the brother-in-law of Sakthivel (Mahan) (P15) who was one of the massacre victims.

“I was living in the village adjacent to Piramanthanaru. Five helicopters were flying

above in circles. We were at home. Helicopters started to fly low over our houses as well. I told everyone at home to run in the opposite direction to where the helicopters were flying. Most of the people in my neighbourhood ran away like this to the Tharumapuram School. Only a few of us stayed behind. I had many friends in the area where the helicopters were flying low. We wanted to go there, but it was impossible. The helicopters landed a quarter of a mile from my home. My brother-in-law (Sakthivel) was living in a house one mile from my home. For two hours the helicopters were flying and there were gun shot sounds. When the activities of the Army appeared to have stopped, myself and another person started walking that way.

A friend of mine, twenty-two year old Rasan, was returning after tapping toddy with his vessel. His home was in the area where the helicopters had landed. I told him it is not safe to go. He did not listen to me and proceeded towards his house. The Army shot him on his way to home. He must have been the first to be shot by the Army. I saw Rasan's vessel by the side of the road. I could also see the shoe marks of the Army (no one in the village wore covered shoes like the Army). I became suspicious. I saw Rasan's body in front of a temple among the bushes.

We saw shoe marks walking in both directions and we concluded that the Army must have gone back. We started to walk towards the 40th Canal. We saw bodies of Sivapatham, Kamini, Sathyalingam, Kanesamoorthy, Selvarasa, Ramasamy, and Yogarajah as we walked. We walked on to inform the families. They would not come out due to fear.

I wanted to go and see my brother-in-law but there was some suspicion that the Army may have camped there. I hesitated for a while about what to do next and then I proceeded towards my brother-in-law's house. I met Anton on the way. Anton told me what had happened. We both walked on.

We saw a house that had been burnt together with the vehicle parked inside. We saw two more bodies. One was that of Sathyaseelan and I cannot remember the name of the other one. The Army had arrested a person named Pakaiyanathan and was taking him with them. When they had come across Sathyaseelan, they had taken two-thousand rupees from his pocket and his expensive (to Sathyaseelan's means) wristwatch and chased him away. Sathyaseelan being poor and unable to accept the huge loss decided to go back to ask for his possessions from the Army. The Army shot him dead. They shot Pakyam and left his body in the forest. No one knew until people started looking and the smell of the decaying body became noticeable.

I took a tractor machine belonging to one of the villagers to move the bodies to their family home. One man, Peran, was badly wounded. We changed his clothes and gave him first aid. Then Anton and others carried him home to Yakkachchi twenty miles away by foot through lakes. I gave the bodies to the families and finally took the body of my brother-in-law, Mahan, home.

Mahan was working in a joint farm with three others, Nagappar Sathyalingam (Kanna), Vallipuram Kanesamoorthy (Appan) and Vallipuram Vivekanathan (Ananthan). Appan and Ananthan are brothers. All four of them were living in one house and doing farming. Their house and the four bodies were badly burnt when I went there. In the house there were twenty sacks of chillies, a tractor, and twenty five bags of rice, sixty ton onions, and

an insecticide pump. They were all destroyed. Another man, Krishnar Jeyathevan (Thevan) was also shot at the same time but ran away and managed to survive. He now lives in Canada.

We were all mentally fatigued. We did not have the mental energy to carry out a proper funeral. One could not find a coffin box. I called Sakhivel's sister (my wife) who had taken refuge in the Tharumapuram School and showed her the body. Then we dug a hole in the Tharumapuram cemetery and buried the body.

I did not have Mahan's birth certificate, and we could not get in touch with the mother either. So it was difficult.

The Army had tied eighteen people and locked them in a room behind a shop and had gone away. They would have all been shot when the Army returned. Among them was an eight year-old boy named Vinayagamoorthy Ganesamoorthy, who was not tied. He untied the eighteen people who subsequently managed to escape. He now lives in Sangana.

Sinnathamby Iyyah recorded the whole incident."

The Clean Up

S.S Sinnathamby gives details of what was left to be done immediately after the massacre,

"More than 90% of the homes were thatched roof houses. They burnt down more than 75 homes. The SLA did what ever they did until 11:00am (they landed at about 5:30am). Only after the helicopter left I came back and dealt with the dead bodies."

There were more than 30 people injured so I did what I could for them. There were 16 dead.

Karrupaiyah Tharmalingam (P2), Steepan Raj Sathiyaseelan (P4) and Suppaiah Arunachalam (P13) were from Dhamapuram. We took them in field tractors to Dhamapuram public cemetery. We sent one body to his relatives in Chavachcheri, Jaffna. Some were sent to Poololi and Kopia. The rest we burried behind the Piramanthanaru lake.

"Three days later the SLA came from Mullaitivu camp. When the people saw them they ran and hid. The SLA came to the Chundikulam junction where there was a private car repair shop. They blew it up as well as several other shops and houses nearby with dynamite."

"People were displaced to various schools for two weeks and we looked after them for those two weeks. There was no assistance from the government for the people for what they had lost. It was only after the Indian military arrived that some minimal compensation was given to the people. These people created Piramanthanaru through their own hard work. And the army came destroyed it all. Now the people were extremely frightened."

4. Reports and Inquiries

Twenty years later, the villagers have been given neither explanation nor justice. No official enquiry has been made by government or non-governmental groups.

S.S Sinnathamby wrote a report about the massacre and sent it through government channels. As yet, no substantive government action has been taken. The monetary compensation given by the government after the Indian military arrived in the island was a maximum of US\$200 per family. But to qualify, a death certificate needed to be produced and, as shown below, this was not a simple task. Even if a family was able to get a death certificate issued there were many obstacles to overcome in the administration of a war torn country. On top of this, many families were displaced by the war and lost contact with family in other parts of the island.

“I wrote a detailed report about this incident and forwarded this to the GA and AGA. This was also sent to other public institutions and to the defence Minister of Sri Lanka, Mr Athulakmuthali and the Prime Minister. The Eelanaadu newspaper in Jaffna published the incident in the front pages for 2 or 3 days. The Tamil daily, Veerakesari, and Daily Mirror in Colombo published this incident as well.

I went to each house and collated the value of their damages. 16 people were killed in total. However, I was only able to get 13 names and 11 photos. The photos and the names of 13 of those killed and condolences were printed at Imperial Press on 10th of October 1985. That condolence sheet was forwarded this to all the officers. (see Annexure A)

Then we faced the problem of having to issue death certificates. There was no coroner in the area. There was only one in Kilinochchi. It wasn't that easy to go and see him because the military were everywhere. Helicopters were everywhere and there was shooting everywhere so there was no way I could go to Kilinochchi. So I collected information as much as possible about the people who were killed. I took it to the Kandavalai births and deaths register and registered there deaths as 'killed by military firing'. I would have registered over 10 such death certificates. Among those for whom I couldn't get details was the son of the Baticaloa women [mother of Sakhivel P15]. His family wasn't there and even now we are unable to register his death.”

See Annexure B for death certificate of Sinnaiyah Sounthirarajan (P12).

A statement relating to the massacre, made by villager Shankaran Saminathan, was given to police on 12th July 1990. No police action has been taken.

EXTRACT FROM THE M.O.I.R. OF KILINOCHCHI POLICE.

DATE: 12.06.90 TIME: 11.40 PAGE: 118 PARA: 188

Sangaran Saminathan, 38 years old, Sri Lankan Tamil, Hindu, resident at Piramanthamaru, Mullaitivu Road, Vavamsadu appeared at the Police Station and presented a typed statement thus. My family and I are resident at the above address at Piramanthamaru. On 02-10-1985 the Sri Lankan Army who were patrolling in our area suddenly started firing at random. A number of residents were victims of this firing. Through fear of life my family and I left the house in a hurry to take shelter in a safe place. When conditions returned to normal we came back to the house and found a number of houses, along with mine, had been set on fire and they were burning. We could not enter the house and had to take refuge at Kandavalai School. The losses incurred on account of this incident are as follows:-

House damage.....	R. 10,000/-
Household goods damaged.....	" 8,000/-
4 bags chillies & 3 bags paddy burnt.....	" 7,000/-
Total losses incurred.....	<u>25,000/-</u>

I am making this entry for record purpose and for future reference. This is all I have to say. *w. S. S. S. S. S. S.*

I, P.C. 7271, *J. Leij...* hereby declare that the above statement was handed over by Sangaran Saminathan and I have pasted a copy of same correctly. *J. Leij...*

I certify that the above is a true extract of complaint made by the abovenamed the original of which is in my custody.

10.00
POLICE STATION
KILINOCHCHI

5. Harassment of the GS

"It was only after I had done all this [collected the information of deaths and damages], the Mullaitivu Military Commander, Alagama, called me again. This time he called only me. He called me and said "See! When I called you last time you said you didn't know about any LTTE activities in your division. But we came and shot dead several LTTE carders and also blew up their garage." But I know that all those who were killed were farmers and young people. Piramanthamaru was a scheme for young farmers. They were

given land under this scheme. It was these young men who were killed when they were on the way to their fields.”

All the documents S.S Sinnathamby had collated – details of costs incurred, newspaper articles outlining events and statements made by villagers – were confiscated by the military.

“In 1986 I was arrested from my home in Vaddakachchi, by the Jaffna commander, Lt Kobekudduva. They took all my documents in my home like maps and these paper cuttings. I was released after three days. They took away all the documents that I had. I do not know what happened to them.”

6. The Attackers

The villagers all report that the attackers were from the SLA and were wearing the army uniform. What follows is accounts from villagers that may lend further insight into the politics at play.

Thurairasa Saradha Devi, sister of Ponnuthurai Pakiyanathan says:

“One of them was a tall white man who was watching everything carefully. Many other people in my village saw him that day. Villagers later referred to him as Mosaddu [Mozad]. I didn't know what it meant the. Later I learnt that Mosaddu are overseas white men.”

Mrs Kula Ariaswari (46),

“A person called Disco, who the villages knew and who belonged to [a Tamil militant group – not LTTE], had put paint on his face and wearing clothes to disguise himself. He was showing the SLA where to go”.

7. The Victims and Their Families

P1. Kiddinar Sivapathasundaran (33)

Mrs Kanagaratnam Nagamma, sister of Kiddinar Sivapathasundaran says:

“On October 2nd 1985, we saw six helicopters in the air. My brother Kiddinar Sivapathasundaran aged thirty-three years old had a commodity goods shop in his plot. He had three children – Suresh, Suganthy and Jayanthy. His wife and children were all living with them. He opened the shop early in the morning. At that time, six helicopters landed on the bund of the tank. Some Army members entered the shop. They covered his eyes and arrested him. He was taken away but we were told that after the enquiry he would be returned. After ten minutes we heard a gun fire. His wife, children and I ran into the forest. The next morning we came back to the house and saw the shop. Nearly fifty-thousand rupees were taken by the Army and twenty-thousand rupees worth of goods damaged. Afterwards we searched for him. We saw his dead body some distance away with bullet wounds. We were scared and took his body and buried him in his own place at Point Pedro.”

P2. Karrupaiyah Tharmalingam (23)



The photo is from GS Sinnathamby's condolence sheet. Family has since displaced from Piramanthanaru.

P3. Vansanatha Kopyathilaka Kamini (26)

GS Sinnathamby knows Kamini well. Kamini is a Sinhalese man from Kurunagala. He was working in the Sri Lankan government Department of Irrigation and was stationed in Piramanthanaru.

P4. Stepan Raj Sathiyaseelan (26)



The photo is from GS Sinnathamby's condolence sheet. Family has since displaced from Piramanthanaru.

P5. Suppaiya Yogarajah alias Rasan (22)



Valli Bandari, father-in-law to Rasan says:

“My family and I had been settled in Piramanthanaru from 1977. He [Rasan] was twenty years old and was working as a Toddy Tapper whilst also doing cultivation work. My uncle was also living with us. Yogarajah married my daughter on May 5th, 1985. Early in the morning on October 2nd, 1985, he went to Punnaineeravi for toddy tapping. He was captured near Piramanthanaru Pillayar temple. The SLA shot him dead. My family and I all ran. I returned back on October 7th. My house had been burnt. I heard about my son-in-law’s death. I went to the spot in which he was shot and saw my son-in-law’s dead body. I buried the body at Chundikulam.”

P6. Nagappiar Sathiyalingam (21)



Suppaiyyah Nagappiar, mother of Nagappiar Sathiyalingham (Kannan) says:

“My son named Nagappiar Sathiyalingham (Kannan) aged twenty one years old worked in our subsidiary food crops garden. Early in the morning on October 2nd, 1985 we heard a big sound in the air. We saw that six helicopters had come and landed on the lake bund. Some Army members were coming through the field along the concrete irrigation channels. They took my son and hurt him. Finally, they killed him and others too. We saw his dead body lying in a pool of blood. I buried him at a common cemetery.”

P7. Ponnuthurai Pakiyanathan (21)



Thurairasa Saradha Devi sister of Ponnuthurai Pakiyanathan says:

“Early in the morning at 7am on October 2nd, 1985, I was preparing breakfast. My husband had gone to Pulliyampokkani to buy paddy. Suddenly one helicopter came and landed by the side of my house. So we ran into the house and hid. The Army surrounded my house. Some of those who came spoke good Tamil. The army ordered us to come out and kneel. There was another child with us who also knelt on the floor. They captured my brother and tied his hands. They took him by the side of the helicopter, made him hold a rifle, and took video footage and a photo. Afterwards they brought my brother to the house and asked me if he was an LTTE man. I denied this and said “he is not an LTTE man - we are farmers – we are poor people doing farm work here only. We don’t know about LTTE movement.” But the Army said that they had a photo with a

weapon – so how could we say that he was not a terrorist? We were hit by guns and boots. They threatened me saying they were going to shoot us – so therefore we should tell the truth. They said that my brother was LTTE and that they had a photo of him with a gun. If we did not agree with them, they would kill us and all the children. With that they burnt our house down. We were all shouting and begged them for mercy. They took my brother with them. I followed them and cried and asked the Army several times to release him. One Army member kicked me with his boots and I fell on the floor. After sometime I opened my eyes. I did not see my brother. Our house and other houses were burnt. There was smoke everywhere. My children and I slowly went to Pulliyampokkanai and returned the next morning. We saw so many dead bodies and could not find my brother. We went to Mullaithivu and asked the Army commander about my brother. He denied any knowledge of my brother. We found the body six days after the incident. There were several stab marks and his hands were tied behind his back. They had stabbed and pushed him from the helicopter. All his bones were broken. We burnt his body at the site.”

P8. Karrupaiyah Sellvarasa (24)



The photo is from GS Sinnathamy's condolence sheet. Family has since displaced from Piramanthararu.

P9. K Ramasamy (26)



The photo is from GS Sinnathamy's condolence sheet. Family has since displaced from Piramanthararu.

P10. & P11. Two Brothers

Vallipuram Kaneshamoorthy (29) & Vallipuram Vivekananthan alias Anandan (24)



Subramanian Nilloshinthevi, aunty of the brothers says:

“My brother’s son Vallipuram Kaneshamoorthy was given land for cultivation by the government in 1987. He did his farm work very carefully. Early in the morning at 6am on October 2nd, 1985, some helicopters landed in the village. The Army came down from the helicopter and shot Kaneshamoorthy and his brother Anandan. They were both left in blood. Their house was also burnt. The dried chillies, onions... everything was burnt. Their funeral happened at Mr Kanthasamy’s house.”

P12. Sinnaiah Sounthararajan (24)



Sounthararajan Kamalajini, wife of Sinnaiah Sounthararajan says:

“Early in the morning at 5am on October 2nd, 1985, the SLA came by five helicopters and landed on the bund of the tank. My husband was captured on the way to work. His two hands were tied behind him. They shot him dead. I heard this news at about 10am. Immediately I went to Tharmapuram and told my brother what had happened. With the help of my brother we took my husband’s body and buried him at Thamrapuram Cemetery. Our house had been burnt. I lost my house, my husband and all our possessions. I have not received any compensation.”

The death certificate for S Sountharajan is provided in Annexure B.

P13. Sinnaiah Arunachalam (31)



The photo is from GS Sinnathamby's condolence sheet. Family has since displaced from Piramanthanaru.

P14. S Sivapatham (33)



The photo is from GS Sinnathamby's condolence sheet. Family has since displaced from Piramanthanaru.

P15. Sakthivel alias Mahan (17)

Kathirgamarasa, brother-in-law says:

"I wanted to go and see my brother-in-law but there was some suspicion that the Army may have camped there. I hesitated for a while about what to do next and then I proceeded towards my brother-in-law's house. I met Anton on the way. Anton told me what had happened. We both walked on...I did not have Mahan's birth certificate, and we could not get in touch with the mother either. So it was difficult."

P16. Kanthasamy Tharmasigam (23)

Family has since displaced from Piramanthanaru. GS Sinnathamby and the villagers confirm he was one of the victims.

Other Victims

Ambikaiamma, mother of Sakthivel (Mahan), is typical of many of families who do not find out of a loved ones death until years after. There are various reasons for this in a war torn society. In Ambikaiamma's case it was a combination of displacement and poverty which kept her for 21 years from knowing what had happened.

As narrated by Ambikaiamma:

“We were living in Semamudu in Vavuniya. I had twelve children of which eight were daughters. My husband did not take care of us. Life was hard. So I sent Mahan to Piramanthanaru in 1981 to work as a farm labourer. I went and saw Mahan once in Piramanthanaru. He told me that he will write to me soon and then I could also come and live with him. The same year we were displaced from Vavuniya. We went to Batticaloa because my daughter was living there. I lost contact with Mahan after that. We heard about the incident on the radio but I did not imagine Mahan would be one of those killed.

After the A9 was opened in 2002 some Batticaloa people who were displaced in Vanni came back to Batticaloa. I heard the news from them that my son had been killed in the Piramanthanaru Massacre“.

Rangasamy Pushpanathan (age 52) describes some of the assaults carried out by the SLA:

“They came and arrested many villagers. They tied their hands and kicked them with their boots. They enquired about the LTTE. They tied people upside down to the branch of the tree. They poured water through their nose and asked the other family members to not make any noise. At about 11.00 am the SLA left”.

Ponnaiyah Selvarasah buried five bodies of youths killed that day after the SLA had left. His house was burnt and he was in hospital for 5 days.

Ramanathan Amirthalingam (age 50) says:

My wife, two children and I ran east in fear. There, we saw some houses were burning. So we turned west and ran where there were also houses burning. My family, along with sixteen others, hid in the bushes and watched the action. After sometime we realised the danger of the situation and went to Ramanathapuram School. There Mr. S S Sinnathamby Gramasevaka gave us food and clothes and looked after us well. We were there for four days. When we returned home, we saw that many houses including ours were burnt. The cattle had eaten and damaged our crops. Two cows were dead. We had many bags of dried chillies, paddy and other crops. Everything had been burnt. The rough estimate of the damage was Rs 80,000.00.

Sokkanathan Varatharasa (age 46) was attacked with a gun. His has lost his hearing.

Ramanathan Gunaratnam (age 45) was injured with the butt of a rifle and was taken to hospital. He still cannot walk.

Mahendran Maheswari's (age 42) husband was hit many times. *“My husband was shouting but they assaulted him without mercy. I bowed down to the Armies and asked for mercy. But they did not stop. After sometime the Army went to another house. I untied my husband and together with my children we ran through the forest to Tharmapuram.*

When I think about that day I still feel scared. My husband suffers from chest pains”.

Tengasamy Pushpanathan says (age 52): *They [SLA] also tied up my hands, asked me a lot of questions and kicked me with their boots. They stood me upside down and poured water down my nose. They locked us in our house and threatened us saying we were not allowed to make any noise. At around 4:30 in the afternoon, army members left our home.*

Veeraiyah Kumarakurthevi says (age 42): *My husband Suppaiyah Veeraiyah, normally goes out to work in the field. On the way there the SLA arrested him and removed his shirt. They took his identity card and money. They tied his hands with his shirt. They hit him severely until blood came from his ears. They asked him if he knew any LTTE members. They asked him to sit at that place without going anywhere and they went away. He used this opportunity to run to Punnaneeravi and escaped.*

8. Conclusion

Today there is still a strong farming community living in Piramanthanaru though many who lived through the massacre have left to be with family or to try to find a better life. Those who have stayed have not forgotten and the events are still fresh in the community memory. Recently, a journalist from the village wrote an article about the massacre for a local newspaper.

No one in the village has received any form of apology or explanation from governmental authorities and only meagre monetary compensation was given a few years after the attack. As recorded in this report, villagers have attempted to seek recourse with no answer from governmental sources. In fact, as in the case of the GS at the time, every attempt was made to silence any grievance.

Why have the villagers been left with a vacuum where there should be answers and apologies? Indeed, when there is evidence of “Mosaddu”, as well as state forces, carrying out a planned massacre against village farmers, are important questions not raised?

Annexure A

Condolence sheet prepared soon after the massacre. (Page-1)

1985-10-02 இல் திருமணம் செய்து 1985-10-02 இல் இறந்த இளம்பிள்ளை இராஜசேகர்







விவசாயிகள் வாழ்ந்ததால் குடியேற்றத் திட்டங்களைப் பின்பற்றி ஒன்று தான் பிரமத்தலா திட்டம் 1977ம் ஆண்டில் அண்ணாது கட்டினர் காடுகளை வெட்டி களைகள் ஆக்கினர் ஒன்றிரண்டு இடங்களில் ஆக்கினர் குளங்களை கரைப்பும் குளங்கள் அழித்து தங்கு விவசாயம் செய்து தங்கு வாழ்ந்து வந்தனர் சென்ற ஆண்டில் சூப்பிரிமாதம் அந்தமாதத்தில் 20 இடத்தில் அன்றைய இரவு இரண்டாகிய ஆறு செவி கொட்டினர் வானத்தில் பறந்தன பறந்தவை 8மே இறங்கின செவியில் இறங்கி கூப்பிடப்படவில்லை குதித்தே பறந்தனர் ஒரு மறைந்தனர் இறங்கிய செவியில் மேலே எழுந்தது வஞ்சகமற்ற சிரமத்து வானிகள் தமது அகரணங்கள் வயிற்றுக்காய் நிலத்தேரடு போராட்டம் புறப்பட்டனர் எம்மியிய தொழிலாளர் கூட்டங்கள் பிடித்தே வந்தனர் அவற்றின்மேல்வானிகள் தாம் செய்த உணவுப்பொருள் கொடுப்பதற்காய் எழுது சிரமம் நினைந்த போது அவர்கள் அடுத்தே கட்டிட விந்தினர் தேரமும் மூன்று குடியும் காடைபர்கள் செவியில் விவசாயிகள் பிழைத்திருக்கிற வானத்தில் இறந்த டப்டப் என்ற சத்தங்கள் பல ஒலிக்கை பகுத்து போல் செவியில் வட்டம் இட்டனர் செவியில் இறங்கிய காடைபர்கள் சூழி சென்ற போது பிடித்தவைத்த தொழிலாளர் கட்டிட சென்றனர் அரணில் அக்காயுத்தகட்டு தாமது ஒருணைம் அறிந்தோம் கட்டப்பட்டவர்கள் பயங்கரவாதிகள் என்று குறிப்பிட்டுத் தீர்த்தனர் அனைத்து (வா) மக்களையாவும் அன்று எழுது சிரமத்தில் ஏற்பட்ட அந்த அவலநிலைகளை அனைவரும் வாரி விவசாயிகளின் நினைவை ஒருணைம் நினைவு கூர்வோமாவின் அறிவை அனைத்து நாம் அடியும் கண்ணி கண்ணிக் கவராமல் அவர்களின் மரணத்தை ஒருணைம் நினைவு கூர்ந்து அவர்களால் அஞ்சிக்கூட்டம் ஒன்றை நடத்திட விவசாயிகள் சங்கம் அமைக்கிறது இரண்டு வாரி விவசாயிகள் கண்ணி கவராமல் கவரப்படாமல் விவசாயிகள் சங்கத்தை








மேலிருந்து கீழ்:
N. சத்தியலிங்கம்
 அலகாவற்றறை 8-1-1964
 சி. சிவபாதம்
 புகோலி 2-1-1952
க. திரையலிங்கம் (குஞ்சா)
 தருமபுரம் 14-6-1953
 என். சத்தியலிங்கம்
 தருமபுரம் 1-1-1959
 வி. கணேசமூர்த்தி
 30-7-1956
 பெ. பாயக்கியத்தல்
 கோப்பாய் 26-16-1964



வி. விவகாசி
 இடைக்காடு 22-3-1961

K. செல்வராசு
 அல்வாய் 2-10-1961
K. இராமசாமி 7-10-1959
S. செந்திரவேலு 18-2-1961
S. சோகரானு 30-3-1963
 காமலி
 குஞ்சாலை 13-8-1959
ச. அநுசூயலம்
 தருமபுரம் 15-11-1956

Annexure B

Death Certificate of Sinnaiyah Sounthirarajan (P12), Page-1

மாதிரி எண். 67
 பதிவு எண் 67
 Registration B 67
 Non-secy. Paper*
 S., T. & L. Orig. & Dup.) 8/70

129
 24/10/88
 Application No. and Date


மரண ஸாதிக்கம்
 மரண அத்தாட்சிப் பத்திரம்
CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

N^o 418966
 12
 3

Sinnaiyah Sounthirarajan
 District

1. மரணம் சம்பவ இடம் Date and place of death	1985 ^{ம்} (அக்டோபர் மாதம்) 24-நாள் சென்னை நகரம் திண்டிவனம் திண்டிவனம் சென்னை நகரம்
2. மரணம் சம்பவம் Full name	சின்னையா சௌந்திரராஜன்
3. பாலினம் மற்றும் இனம் Sex and race	ஆண். திண்டிவனம் குடியேற்றம்
4. வயது Age	திண்டிவனம் வயது
5. தனியாக அல்லது தொழில் Rank or profession	சென்னை நகரம் திண்டிவனம்
6. பெற்றோர் பெயர்கள் Parents' full names	தந்தை: சென்னை நகரம் திண்டிவனம் தாய்: சின்னையா சௌந்திராஜன்

1985 இல் மரணம் சம்பவம் இடம் சென்னை நகரம் திண்டிவனம் திண்டிவனம் சென்னை நகரம்

[ச.ச.ச./ம.ம.ம./ந.ந.ந.]

Death Certificate of Sinnaiyah Sounthirarajan (P12), Page-2

<p>பொது மரணம் ... Cause of death, and place of burial or cremation</p>	<p>இவ்வாறு மரணமானது ... உள்ள இடம் ... பிள்ளைகளால்</p>
<p>8. அறிவிப்பாளரின் முழு பெயர், முகவரி அல்லது வசிப்பிடம் ... Informant's full name, residence and capacity for giving information</p>	<p>பெரியசாலை ... பிள்ளைகளால்</p>
<p>9. அறிவிப்பாளரின் கையொப்பம் ... Informant's signature</p>	<p>பெரியசாலை ... பிள்ளைகளால்</p>
<p>10. பதிவு செய்த நாள் ... Date of registration</p>	<p>1986 ... பிள்ளைகளால்</p>
<p>11. பதிவு செய்த அதிகாரியின் கையொப்பம் ... Registrar's signature</p>	<p>பதிவு செய்த அதிகாரி ... பிள்ளைகளால்</p>

I do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a death registration entry filed of record in this office.

பதிவு செய்த அதிகாரியின் அலுவலகம்
DISTRICT REGISTRAR'S OFFICE
பதிவு செய்த அதிகாரியின் அலுவலகம்
REGISTRAR-GENERAL'S OFFICE

பதிவு செய்த ...
பதிவு செய்த ...
பதிவு செய்த ...

பதிவு செய்த அதிகாரி ...
பதிவு செய்த அதிகாரி ...
பதிவு செய்த அதிகாரி ...

திகதி/நாள்/பாடல்/Date

Annexure C

Excerpts from, “The Reluctant Mercenary”

By Tim Smith, The Book Guild Ltd, United Kingdom, 2002

Time is 1986. **Tim Smith** the author is broke.

On Page 7:

Greg an old friend and an instructor at a Flying School in London rings, and says he is with the Sri Lankan Air Force, instructing. Greg invites Tim for a instructing job with the Sri Lankan Air Force. He job is to be gotten from an off-shore based company, KMS, with office in London

Page 10:

Tim’s interview at the discretely located KMS office is more like an interrogation.

Page 15:

KMS was in it for the money, and whether they wanted it or not, they provided an excellent firewall between themselves, the contract and the British Government.

Page 19:

Ken Whyte, another Whiteface, meets Tim at the Colombo airport.

Page 48:

Tim is in Jaffna at the KKS Air Force camp in the “Whiteface” mess. He meets **Dave Warton**, another Whiteface. Chatting to Dave, Tim says he learnt what he has got himself into. Not flying instruction but flying gun ships.

Page 50:

“Where are you going, what have you seen?” I asked.

“I think he is maybe a bad guy, if I shoot at him and he runs away, it will prove that he is”, Namal replied with a childlike innocence that was totally confounding. With that he sent a stream of .50 bullets stitching along the road. The old man fell from his bike and lay very still. I was stunned.

Page 64:

Tim meets **Spike**, another Whiteface, at KKS, who is about to finish his contract in a few days. Speaking to Spike, Tim learns that **Ken Whyte’s** real name is **Brian Somebody** and that he is Lt Col in the SAS.

Page 65:

Ken Whyte arrives at KKS with the big man from UK, **Bill Walker**.

Page 68:

For a while, following Ken's visit, the evening discussions on our patio were concerned primarily with what would happen if we really were brought down in Bandit Country?

The British High Commissioner has openly declared to the company that he wasn't aware of, and would deny, any knowledge of our presence in the country. We couldn't get any diplomatic moves to get us back if we were captured following a forced landing, and it wasn't as if we were gung-ho Parass or SAS types to fight our way back. Oh, the ground training staff were OK. They paraded around their Police Training Camp and taught them how to march and fire weapons, but they didn't get involved in anti-social things like killing Tamils.

We, on the other hand, did on a daily basis, and we did not even exist....

Page 69:

Reports came in as we flew southwards over Jafna Fort that people had been seen running out of the fishing village that the beach landings had been aimed at. Arriving on the north side of the village, it was plain to see that those fleeing the area were in fact women and children with a scattering of old men. Namal immediately started manoeuvring the Gunship to set it up for an attack. There is no stopping the bloodthirsty little fool. So I casually reminded him that it wouldn't look good on his military record if he were charged with massacring fleeing villagers. He shuffled visibly in his seat but took the tip and continued towards the beach and left the villagers to escape the attentions of landing troops.

Page 72:

Following day started quietly enough, when a Gunship arrived from Batticaloa. Wonder of wonders, Dave had returned from Anuradhapura, with him were two more Whitefaces, Stan "the man" and Don Burton, over from the east coast, Batticaloa, Trincomalee and China Bay.

Page 73:

The local news broadcast that evening told of the re-taking of VVT. No mention was made of the pasting they have taken, the 70 civilians that had died, the flattened houses, or of the Whitefaces who did most of the work.

Page 93:

The chatter of side-gunner's first burst at the tractor was still ringing in my ears when a woman stepped out from beneath the trailer. Dressed in a vibrant blue-green sari, with a child on her hip, she walked away.

Even when the side-gunner opened fire again she again continued; with her shoulders back and her head erect she just kept walking away from it.

"Stop, stop for God's sake stop. Are you bloody blind, do you kill women and children?" I shouted.

The gunner stopped. The woman walked on. She sure has some guts, that woman. She was brave, so very brave, she deserved to live, if only for that.

Page 112:

Tim meets two more Whitefaces, **John Winterbourne** and **Richard Ramsden**, who were new to the job.

Page 114:

Tim meets another new Whiteface recruit **Donald Skants**.

Page 174:

Meets yet another Whiteface contract pilot **Tony Willings**

Note:

Tim Smith suffered from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and writes the book as a therapy.

Whitefaces mentioned in Tim Smith's book, who are working as pilots for Sri Lankan Gunships to fight the LTTE:

1. Tim Smith
2. Greg
3. David Whyte (Colombo Boss) (alias Brian Somebody)
4. Bill Walker (UK Boss)
5. Dave Warton
6. Spike
7. Stan "the man".
8. Don Burton
9. John Winterbourne
10. Richard Ramsden
11. Donald Skants
12. Tony Willings