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Sri Lanka's Bloodiest Election

UNP WINS – TULF Leaders Defeated

SPECTACULAR SUCCESS FOR 'EROS'



★ IPKF Excesses ★ RUMPUS IN THE CAMPUS

★ Indo-Sri Lanka Friendship Treaty?

★ FOR RAJIV, SOUTH IS ALL GONE, WILL NORTH FOLLOW



THE TAMIL NADU CABINET

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EXCESSES BY THE IPKF

The Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) which arrived and took up position in north and east Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement in July 1987 continues to be in the island for the ostensible purpose of implementing the provisions of the Agreement and restore peace and normalcy. Although some battalions of the IPKF have departed purportedly following the request made by President Premadasa, an estimated 40,000 Indian troops continue to remain in the north and east.

It is true that since the arrival of the IPKF, the bulk of the Sri Lankan security forces which subjected the Tamil people to unendurable atrocities have, by and large, been prevented from doing so. It is also true that certain legislative provisions have been enacted giving effect to some of the basic Tamil demands and also to devolve a certain measure of autonomy, the extent of which has not satisfied a substantial body of Tamil opinion.

However, the fundamental fact that has to be recognised is that neither normalcy nor peace has been restored in Tamil areas after nearly a year-and-a-half of IPKF's overwhelming presence. The holding of the Provincial Council elections and the setting up of the new North-East Provincial administration, both of which had the full backing of the Indian government and the IPKF, have not improved the situation to any appreciable degree. The basic cause for this is not difficult to see. The main Tamil militant group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has not accepted the new arrangements and it is in military confrontation with the IPKF. To ensure that the newly worked out arrangements are not thwarted and with a view to breaking the LTTE's resistance, the IPKF are engaged in military operations against the LTTE and the latter is mounting counter-attacks against the IPKF.

In the course of carrying out their operations, the IPKF has committed a considerable number of excesses, some of which are reminiscent of those indulged in by the Sri Lankan security forces in the past. IPKF personnel have engaged in indiscriminate shootings in the course of which uninvolved innocent civilians have been killed. Following incidents of violence in which IPKF men have been affected, hundreds of young men have been rounded up and beaten up, or the whole population in the vicinity have been subjected to various forms of violent and cruel treatment. Incidents

of looting and raping have not been uncommon. There have been many proven cases of torture and deaths in custody. Retaliatory action against persons and property of civilians in reprisal for attacks by Tamil militants against IPKF personnel are frequent.

The latest incident in Jaffna where two students of the Jaffna University were killed and several more seriously injured when the IPKF indiscriminately opened fire at a group of students near Thirunelveli junction is typical of the high-handed manner in which personnel of the IPKF have been operating.

Another reprehensible and irresponsible feature of the conduct of even senior personnel of the IPKF is the hostility with which they deal with religious leaders and other men of goodwill who, not in a state of confrontation but with a view to remedying the situation, endeavour to point out the excesses committed by the IPKF.

By employing members of other Tamil militant groups who the IPKF considers friendly in its anti-LTTE operations, not only has the internecine rivalry among the Tamil militant groups been intensified, but also the pro-accord groups have become associated with the excesses and atrocities committed by the IPKF and consequently are progressively losing credibility and any support they may have had among the people.

The Indian government had in the past justifiably raised the question of gross violations of human rights committed against the Tamil people in Sri Lanka including mass arrests, detention without trial, torture, deaths in custody and indiscriminate arbitrary killings. However, it has allowed the IPKF to commit the same type of violations for too long under the pretext of peace-keeping. That the IPKF has to confront the LTTE militarily is no excuse for these violations to be committed.

The phenomenon of the LTTE and what it stands for is essentially a political question. It should be clear by now to everybody that the problem of restoring peace and normalcy in the Tamil areas cannot be resolved militarily and demands a political solution. Such a solution again demands a shifting of entrenched positions on the part of the Indian government and the LTTE and returning to negotiations and working out arrangements in which representative sections of all shades of Tamil opinion including the LTTE can take part.

THE BLOODIEST ELECTION IN SRI LANKA

UNP Wins Majority – Spectacular Success by 'EROS' in Tamil Areas

(from our Colombo Correspondent)

16 February – The people of Sri Lanka went to the poll on 15 February after eleven years amidst the bloodiest election-related violence in the island's history. A total of 5,596,317 votes were cast representing 63.6 per cent of the total registered voters of 9,374,164.

The UNP has emerged victorious obtaining a reasonable majority over all other parties in the 225 seat Parliament taking 125 seats and obtaining 2,837,961 (50.7 per cent) of the votes cast. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party has become the main opposition party with 67 seats obtaining 1,780,599 (31.8 per cent) of the votes. The United Socialist Alliance (USA) has fared badly securing 3 seats with 160,000 votes (2.9 per cent) of the votes. The NSSP leader, Vasudeva Nanayakara, was one of the USA candidates to win. The Eksath Lanka Janatha Party (ELJP) won 2 seats and the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP) secured 3 seats.

In the predominately Tamil areas, the Independent Block backed by the Eelam Revolutionary Organisers (EROS) scored a spectacular success winning 9 seats in the northern Tamil district, two and one in the eastern Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts respectively. The EROS backed group secured 150,340 votes in the Jaffna district, 25,239 in Trincomalee, and 46,419 in Batticaloa receiving a total of 221,998 votes. The TULF-EPRLF-ENDLF-TELO alliance obtained 3 seats in the Jaffna district, 2 in the Vanni district, 3 in the Batticaloa district, one in the Digamadulla (Amparai) district and none in Trincomalee securing a total of 188,593 votes. The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress secured 3 seats, one each in the Batticaloa, Vanni and Digamadulla districts, plus one bonus seat.

GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

Total registered voters: 9,374,164
Total polled: 596,317 (63.6%)

Parties	Votes	Percentage	No. of seats
United National Party	2,837,961	50.7	125
Sri Lanka Freedom Party	1,780,599	31.8	67
United Socialist Alliance	160,271	2.9	3
Sri Lanka Muslim Congress	202,014	3.6	4
Mahajana Eksath Peramuna	95,793	1.7	3
Ersath Lanka Janatha Party	67,723	1.2	—
All Ceylon Tamil Congress	7,610	0.1	—
Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF-EPRLF-ENDLF-TELO)	188,593	3.4	10
Independent Block (EROS-EPDF)	221,998	3.9	13

The voting in Tamil areas is as follows:

Electoral District	Total Registered	Votes Polled	Percentage
Jaffna	592,210	265,058	44.8
Vanni	141,448	47,650	33.7
Trincomalee	152,289	106,273	67.8
Batticaloa	216,574	169,284	78.2
Digamdulla (Amparai)	265,768	224,444	84.5

The voting in the north and east also saw the complete rout of the traditional leadership of the TULF. All the TULF candidates including its stalwarts and former parliamentarians of the TULF like A. Amirthalingam, M. Savasithamparam, V. Yogeswaran, V. Anandasangary, R. Sampanthan and Soosaitasan were all defeated. Of the 10 seats won by the TULF alliance, 9 were from the EPRLF and one from TELO. It is to be noted that the TULF-EPRLF-ENDLF-TELO alliance contested under the TULF umbrella, each group carried on their separate campaigns.

Cabinet Minister K.W. Deewanayagam was defeated in the Batticaloa district, and another Minister in the Jaywardene cabinet, C. Rajadurai who contested in the Colombo district was also defeated.

The electoral campaign has been accompanied by violence never experi-

enced before. In the south the JVP had called for a boycott of the elections backed up by a campaign of violence and murder of unprecedented proportions. Since the nomination day, an estimated seven hundred persons, including 14 candidates were murdered.

Those belonging to or supporting the ruling UNP and the opposition SLFP and the USA were attacked. The brunt of the JVP's violence was directed at the SLFP and the USA whose campaigns were restricted severely and therefore were greatly disadvantaged. Of the 14 candidates murdered, 8 were from the SLFP, 4 from the USA and 2 from the UNP. The protection of the state's security forces were more readily available and at the disposal of the UNP. The SLFP leader former Prime Minister, Mrs Bandaranaike, narrowly escaped an assassination attempt when a bomb attack was made at a meeting at which she was speaking. On the day of the elections, many polling stations were attacked and as many as 57 persons were killed. Some election officials and security personnel guarding polling stations fell victims of violent attacks.

In the Tamil areas, the LTTE had called for a boycott of the elections characterising it as a fraud that was being perpetrated by the government in connivance with the government of India and as a ruse to distract the Tamil people from their main struggle for a homeland of their own. The LTTE had put up posters discouraging the people from voting.

There have been many allegations of vote-rigging and impersonation in some areas of the country. Stuffing of ballot boxes with votes and threats against election staff by candidates of

Continued on page 4

IN THE KILLING FIELDS OF SRI LANKA. . .

Five-hundred and eighty four people have been killed throughout the country between January 1st and 26th. The highest number reported killed per day was 53 on Thursday (26.1.88). The day before, 37 killings were reported.

In an upsurge of violence last week, 206 people were killed in 8 days, from 19th to 26th of this month. In December a total of around 1200 were killed. And 101 killings were reported on the day following the elections (19.12.88).

The following is a breakdown of killings reported in January on a day to day basis :

Jan. 1st : 30; 2nd : 23; 3rd : 22; 4th : 30; 5th : 19; 6th : 31; 7th : 25; 8th : 25; 9th : 17; 10th : 29; 11th : 14; 12th : 17; 13th : 12; 14th : 17; 15th : 13; 16th : 14; 17th : 20; 18th : 20; 19th : 22; 20th : 23; 21st : 13; 22nd : 19; 23rd : 18; 24th : 21; 25th : 37; and 26th : 53.

(The Sunday Times, Colombo, 29.1.1989)

At least 79 killings have been reported in the first three days of this month (February), according to security sources.

Forty killings took place on the 1st and 22 on the following day. So far 16 killings have been reported on Friday, the third day of the month.

Last month, 704 people died from violence throughout the country.

(The Sunday Times, Colombo, 29.2.1989)

Continued from page 3

the ruling party have also been reported.

Normally, the voter turnout at general elections is high and reaches as high as 80 to 85 percent. But the turn out nationally at these elections was 63.6 per cent. The lower poll is mainly attributed to the mass scale violence unleashed by the JVP before and on the day of the election, particularly in the deep south of the country. The LTTE's boycott call only had a limited response in the north of the country.

STUDENTS CALL FOR NATIONALISATION OF NORTH LANKA MEDICAL COLLEGE

The North Lanka Medical College (NLMC) Students Association in Jaffna have called for the nationalisation of the college in the event the government decided to nationalise the North Colombo Medical College (NCMC) in Ragama.

The secretary of the NLMCSA, E. Devarajah said that the decision, taken at a general meeting of students held during the previous week, has been conveyed to the Secretary to the Treasury, Mr. R. Paskaralingham, and Mr. K. W. Devanayagam, Minister of Home Affairs, when a deputation of the students met them.

The students found it extremely difficult to pursue their studies due to continuing IPKF operations and lack of clinical facilities at the Tellipalai District Hospital, Mr. Devarajah added.

A batch of 56 medical interns who completed the 2nd year examinations in June 1987 in the NLMC are affected due to the non-availability of clinical facilities at the Tellipalai Hospital. A total of 136 students who have paid Rs. 125,000 each as fees waste their time due to the failure of the University Authorities to upgrade the Hospital. If it had been upgraded, clinical facilities would have been available for students.

SECRETARIES OF N-E PC

Former Registrar of the Jaffna University, V. N. Sivarajah, has been appointed Chief Secretary to the newly formed North-East Provincial Council.

M. Pathmanathan, a former Assistant Government Agent has been appointed Secretary to the Chief Minister of the North-East Provincial Council. He was LTTE's nominee as the Chief Administrator of the illfated Interim Administrative Council under the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement.

TWO VARSITY STUDENTS KILLED AND 8 INJURED IN IPKF SHOOTING

Two students of the University of Jaffna in Northern Sri Lanka were killed and eight other students were seriously injured when soldiers of the Indian Peace Keeping Force fired shots at a group of undergraduates on 2 February.

At the time of the shooting, the University students were engaged in a demonstration at Thirunelveli Junction in protest against the IPKF firing into the University Campus on 1 February in the course of conducting a search for someone who is said to have run into the University compound.

The two dead students have been identified as N. Sathyendra aged 23, a Medical Faculty student from Punkudutivu, and S. Jeganathan aged 23, a Science Faculty student also from Punkudutivu.

The injured students were admitted to the Jaffna General Hospital to undergo emergency surgery.

Tension mounted throughout Jaffna town following the shooting incident, and the University and schools around the town were closed as students began a boycott of classes.

Religious and citizen's leaders of Jaffna have condemned the action of the IPKF, and the Vice Chancellor is reported to have sent a report of the incidents and the resulting tension to the authorities in Colombo. The Chief Minister of the North-East Provincial Council is also reported to have condemned the action of the IPKF stating that the IPKF would appear to have fallen prey to the provocations of elements bent on violence to disrupt the return to peace and normalcy.

A hartal called to protest against the shooting of the students by the IPKF was reported to have been a resounding success as all activity in the Jaffna peninsula came to a grinding halt.

MALDIVIAN PRESIDENT IMPLICATES PLOTE IN ABORTIVE COUP

President of the Republic of Maldives, Maumon Abdul Gayoom, has accused the Tamil militant group, Peoples Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) and its leader Uma Maheswaran of being involved in the attempted coup to overthrow his government on 3 November last year.

Speaking in the Maldivian Parliament on 1 February, President Gayoom said that investigations had revealed that PLOTE and its leader had planned the coup with dissident Maldivians and were responsible for masterminding the seaborne invasion which was aborted by the timely intervention of 1500 Indian paratroops.

President Gayoom added that investigations had been difficult. There were about 70 Sri Lankan Tamils among the captured mercenaries and Tamil speaking officers had to be obtained from South India to question the captured men.

The report of investigations had been sent to the Maldivian Attorney General but no date had been set for any trial. The President did not say as to how many people would be put on trial, but it was reported that around 150 persons are being detained in connection with the attempted coup.

It should be noted that following the coup attempt, when news reports attributed a PLOTE connection, its leaders vigorously denied them.

REFERENDUM ON MERGER WILL LEAD TO RETURN TO ARMED STRUGGLE

Any move by the government to hold a referendum in an attempt to re-divide the merged North-East Provinces would create a situation for Tamil organisations, including the Peoples Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) to return to armed struggle, according to the General Secretary of the Democratic Peoples Liberation Front (DPLF- the political wing of PLOTE), B. Sivaram.

Mr. Sivaram said that even those Tamil groups which had accepted the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord did so on the basis that the two provinces would be merged. Even the EPRLF which administers the merged North-East Provincial Council would be out of office with the council being dissolved as a consequence of the referendum.

A referendum resulting in the disintegration of the traditional homeland of the Tamils would also mean the loss of territorial security for the Tamil people. In those circumstances, there would be no alternative but to resume the armed struggle which would have the support of all Tamil groups, Mr. Sivaram added.

It is also to be observed that the TULF, EPRLF, ENDLF and TELO which are contesting in the general elections as a single Front have pledged to ensure that the North-East Province continues to remain merged on a permanent footing and that the powers devolved on the Provincial Council should be enhanced.

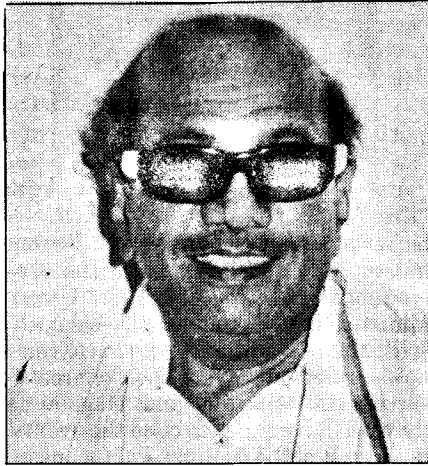
MADRAS NEWSLETTER:

by Arjuna

FOR RAJIV, SOUTH IS ALL GONE,
WILL NORTH FOLLOW?

I am no astrologer, but you do not need astrology to predict that Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's future has come under malefic stars from now on. When asked at a crowded Press conference soon after his election victory whether he considered his party's triumph as a vote against the AIADMK, Chief Minister Karunanidhi said: "It is a verdict against the Prime Minister, and his activities and speeches in Tamil Nadu to put down Dravidian sentiments." For a busy Prime Minister in this vast country to make ten visits during five months (in between his constant foreign tours) the Tamil Nadu stakes must have been incredibly high indeed. Never before did a State Assembly election matter so much to Rajiv Gandhi and his government as this one. Although the Congress had lost its grip on Tamil Nadu with the emergence into power of the DMK in 1967, it managed to retain a toehold in the state first by lining up with the DMK in 1971 and later by fraternising with MGR, and humouring him in turn until his death. It continued its toehold for one more year by imposing President's rule and spreading its influence through a Governor. The sensible policy, as many chagrined Congress supporters say after the verdict, would have been to continue the same policy, to have teamed up with Jayalalitha and her AIADMK, even given in to her demand that she shall be the CM, and weaken the Dravida movement influence by working under cover of one Dravida party or other. Observers say that what stood on the way of such a course were two factors: G.K. Moopnar's insistence that Congress is strong enough to go it alone if the Prime Minister took a personal hand in the electioneering, and the Prime Minister's own egoistic acceptance of Moopnar's advice. Reporting the election campaign an Indian periodical said:

"With so much to gain or lose, it is perhaps no surprise that Rajiv Gandhi has staked his reputation as a vote-getter in the forthcoming election... No Indian Prime Minister has toured Tamil Nadu as extensively as he has. Trips during which he has journeyed into the hinterland, donning 'dhotis' and 'angavastrams', patting little children affectionately, hugging grown-up men and chatting up women. Telling the people that only the congress can save them from the awful legacy of 20 years of Dravidian rule. 'Rajiv Gan-



M. KARUNANIDHI

dhi's tours have attracted large crowds and have helped the party tremendously,' says Tamil Nadu PCC(I) chief G.K. Moopnar, the party's nominee for the Chief Minister's post. In the absence of MGR, the poor man now looks to Rajiv for empathy. Adds general secretary K.V.Thangabalu: 'MGR's charisma has been replaced by Rajiv's. Rivals like Karunanidhi and Jayalalitha are not a patch on him in this respect.'"

Well, now even the little foothold in Tamil Nadu has gone. Even in the years to come, it might be the new leader of the Opposition, Ms. Jayalalitha who might be in a position to take on the DMK, not the Congress-I. Even before the Tamil Nadu election, Congress-I had to put up with the sneers that the party which was a national party at the time of Nehru and Indira Gandhi has been reduced to a regional party of the Hindi belt under grandson and son Rajiv Gandhi. Four Opposition parties have now stable governments in all the four southern states - Telugu Desam under N.T. Rama Rao in

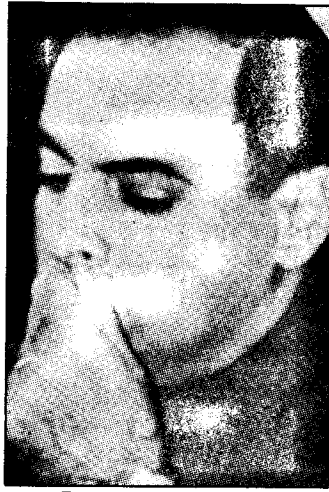
TAMIL NADU ELECTION RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Party name	Seats contested	Votes secured	Percentage	Seats won	Lost Deposit
D.M.K.	202	79,89,705	33.44	151	0
AIADMK-JL	201	51,81,040	21.68	27	33
Congress(I)	215	48,35,710	20.24	26	55
AIADMK-JR	177	21,80,805	9.12	1	141
CPI(M)	20	8,23,946	3.44	15	0
C.P.I.	13	2,95,160	1.23	3	5
Janata Dal	10	2,82,647	1.18	4	1
M.L.	5	86,912	0.36	0	3
AIFB	3	17,892	0.07	0	3
B.J.P.	35	83,850	0.35	0	34
Lok Dal	2	1,680	-	0	2
TNC-K	8	26,119	0.10	0	8
INC-S	5	2,728	0.01	0	5
INC-J	2	850	-	0	2
INC-JB	3	672	-	0	3
Independents	2,069	20,36,884	8.52	5*	2,040
Total	232	2,38,87,412			

Some interesting facts

- Two party leaders who failed to win their seats - Janaki Ramachandran and actor-politician Sivaji Ganeshan.
- Four Congress-I bigwigs who lost - Union Minister M. Arunachalam, and three M.P.s, Tindivanam Ramamurthy, P. Rangarajan Kumaramangalam, both Tamil Nadu Congress Committee secretaries and L. Balaraman.
- Congress Committee chief G. K. Moopnar scraped through with a thin majority of 1092 votes,
- The DMK was the only major party not to lose a deposit anywhere, while Congress-I lost their deposits in 55 constituencies. the AIADMK (Jayalalitha) in 33 and the AIADMK (Janaki) in 141 constituencies.
- The AIADMK (Janaki) group polled over 9% of the popular vote and won only one seat, while the CPI(M), and electoral ally of the DMK polled 3.4% and won 15 seats.
- In one constituency - Erode - there were no less than 50 candidates, 45 of whom were Independents. Subbulakshmi Jagadeesan of the DMK won the seat with 67,959 votes, while the independent candidate at the bottom of the list secured 15 votes!
- Only three out of the 14 M.P.s who contested, won their seats.
- All but two of the AIADMK Ministers who were in the MGR cabinet were defeated.
- Ten women have been elected to the new Assembly, five of them from DMK.
- Well-known politicians who lost include P. Nedumaran, Aladi Aruna, Neduncheliyan, S.D. Somasundaram and R.M. Veerappan.

Andhra Pradesh, the Janata in Karnataka, the CPI(M) in Kerala and the DMK in Tamil Nadu; despite various conspiracies in which Congress-I has now become adept, to dislodge and destabilise the state governments. But the more important question now is: how safe is even the Hindi belt for the Congress-I? Several significant developments have occurred in the north around the same time the Tamil Nadu elections were held, two of them which look positive for the Congress-I – the formation of Congress-I governments in the two tiny frontier states of Mizoram and Nagaland. As against this, two large states in the Hindi belt, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh are in the throes of a political crisis as a result of internal squabbling within the Congress-I. A party heavy-weight and Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Arjun Singh has been replaced by Union Health Minister Motilal Vora. While one section of the Congress legislators want the ouster of the Chief Minister in Bihar, in Madhya Pradesh dissident Congress legislators are opposing the appointment of Mr. Vora. It is a virtual revolt against the party high command. A senior Congress-I member of the Rajya Sabha has even called for an alternative leadership within Congress-I. The member, Mr. Chimantbhai Mehta, has attacked what he called “the deliberate cultivation of a feudal culture of loyalty to the leadership at the cost of principles.” Meanwhile, in Tamil Nadu, the Congress defeat has brought to the surface the internal



Rajiv: What next?

bickerings within the party. K. Ramamurthy, M.P. has demanded the resignations of Mr. Moopanar and Union Minister P. Chidambaram. An open split, the second in recent times, cannot be ruled out. As for the Congress-I success in Mizoram and Nagaland, they will have little effect on the events in the rest of the country. Politicians in these two states with a history of insurgencies together comprising about one and a half million people, often don the undefined garb of Congress-I in order to pay off local grudges. If their past is any guide, they will have no hesitation in changing their party once again the moment a different one assumes power in Delhi.

There is no hiding the fact that Eelam Tamils, whether they live in Sri

Lanka or in Tamil Nadu, or out in the West, are breathing a sigh of relief over the DMK victory in Tamil Nadu. Answering a question at his Press conference, Mr. Karunanidhi said that until now his party was in the opposition and had voiced its concern for a stable and peaceful Eelam. Now the party would utilise its position as the ruling party to work for the establishment of ‘real peace’ in Eelam. To another question, he said that LTTE leader Prabhakaran had conveyed his sentiments that a DMK government in Tamil Nadu would help to resolve the ethnic Tamils’ issue in the island in a smooth way. The DMK would not belie the expectations of the LTTE leader and the Lankan Tamils. As far as the Eelam tamils are concerned, what is more meaningful is not the DMK victory alone, but the fact that the DMK today is a constituent party of the National Front of Opposition parties, which on present form has a good chance of snatching power from the Congress-I in the centre, at the general elections before the end of the year. The views of these opposition parties on the Rajiv Gandhi government’s misadventure in Sri Lanka are well-known. Even making an allowance for the well-accepted fact that politicians in power cannot afford to adopt the same strong postures they do while in opposition, there will be no denying the fact that any alternative government in Delhi would be in a position to do better than the present power-axis on the Sri Lankan issue.

LTTE WANTS IPKF OUT AND SEEKS UN MEDIATION

The leadership of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in a letter dated 7 February addressed to the UN Commission on Human Rights has appealed for the mediation of the United Nations to find a negotiated political settlement to the ethnic conflict. Asking for immediate ceasefire and Indian troop withdrawal, the LTTE leadership has suggested that the United Nations could play a positive and constructive role in establishing peace in the Tamil homeland.

The following are extracts from the letter:

“The Indian troops, under the cover of peace keeping operations continue to engage themselves in a ruthless and brutal war against the innocent civilian masses causing intolerable suffering to the Tamil people. In total violation of all norms and principles of human rights, the Indian army of occupation has been carrying out a vicious campaign of persecution and terror in the form of mass arrests, imprisonment, torture, rape and extrajudicial executions. In recent months alone, hundreds of innocent people have been senselessly murdered and thousands have been rounded up and held in custody in various army camps.

Some of these innocent people are being subjected to worst forms of inhuman cruelties.”

“The Indian military atrocities in the Tamil homeland is further aggravated by the terrorism of the Indian backed Tamil armed groups (EPRLF, ENDLF, and TELO) who have in recent months, unleashed a campaign of violence, murder and terror in Tamil areas with active connivance of the Indian military authorities. Acting as agents and informants to the Indian army and functioning as death squads, these mercenary groups have exterminated more than two hundred prominent Tamil citizens.”

“We wish to bring to your kind attention that the Government of India, in collusion with the Sri Lankan regime, has clamped down on all sources of information in a deliberate attempt to hide from the international community various crimes and atrocities committed by the Indian army and its quisling armed groups. Both the Governments have imposed rigorous censorship on the local media and have refused fact finding missions from international human rights organisations.”

“The Indian intervention has created

frightening conditions of civil war in the Tamil as well as in the Sinhala nations. In a desperate effort to salvage the Accord, the Governments of India and Sri Lanka have embarked on ruthless methods utilising their military machine to terrorise and subjugate the civilian masses. The mock elections that were stage-managed in Tamil areas were aimed to install Indian backed puppet groups as provincial administrators callously disregarding the democratic wishes and aspirations of the Tamil people.”

“Our people are deeply disillusioned and disappointed with India’s policy and have lost all trust and hope in Rajiv’s Government. The Tamil people are now convinced that the Indian administration has aggressive and hegemonistic designs in the region with the purpose of consolidating its strategic and geopolitical ambitions rather than to secure the interests of the Tamils.”

“The majority of the people in Sri Lanka, both Tamil and Sinhala nationalities, are firmly opposed to the Indian military presence. It is the considered view of the people of the island at large that the Indian military presence will not serve the interests of

TAMIL NADU GOVT. SWORN IN

DMK Administration Takes the Reins

A 17-member Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam ministry led by 65-year-old Chief Minister Muthuvel Karunanidhi has assumed the reins of the Tamil Nadu government after being sworn in on Jan 27.

A galaxy of national opposition leaders, including the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala, as well as National Front leaders V. P. Singh and Anjit Singh, watched Governor P.C. Alexander administer the oath of office to Karunanidhi and his colleagues at Valluvar Kottam, a memorial for the poet-saint Tiruvalluvar. Thousands of people who had turned up to watch the proceedings burst into hysterical cheers as Karunanidhi read out the oath in Tamil.

Valluvar Kottam, the location for the oath-taking ceremony was conceived and designed by Karunanidhi when he was previously Chief Minister. But a week before the memorial was to have been inaugurated in 1976, his government was dismissed and President's rule was imposed. Following this, Karunanidhi was not even invited for the inaugural function. He had then vowed that he would enter the premises only as Chief Minister, and the promise was redeemed thirteen years later.

Portfolios Listed

Karunanidhi retains several important portfolios including Home, Finance, Planning and Industries. While party secretary-general K. Anbazhagan is the Education Minister, Deputy Secretary-General S.J. Sadiq Pasha will be Minister of Law. The other ministers and their portfolios are: Nanjil K. Manoharan (Revenue), M. Kannapan (Transport), K.P. Kandaswamy, owner of The Tamil daily Dinakaran, Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment), Ko. Si. Mani (Agriculture), N. Veeraswamy (Food), Pon. Muthuramalingam (Information and Labour), Veerapandi Arumugam (Rural Development and Local Administration), Durai Murugan (Public Works), Mrs. Subbulashmi Jagadesan (Social Welfare), Dr Ramakrishnan (Adi-Dravida Welfare), Dr. Ponnudideivasigamani (Public Health), K.N. Nehru (Electricity), Dr. Chandrashekar (Animal Husbandry) and S. Thangavel (Handlooms).

Addressing a public meeting shortly after being sworn in, Karunanidhi said that despite a serious financial crisis the state was currently facing he would redeem the pledge made in the election manifesto 'Give me just a hundred days and I will honour my promises' he said.

Rice Stocks Depleted

He said his first priority would be to streamline the administration and put it back on the rails. 'It is unfortunate we have assumed power at a time when the state treasury is empty. Hardly three month's rice stock is left' he said.

In a move aimed at tackling the financial crisis, Karunanidhi has already appointed a well-known economist, S. Guhan, as his adviser. A civil servant, Guhan had earlier held the post of finance secretary in the state government when Karunanidhi was Chief Minister. Unable to get along with the late M.G. Ramachandran, Guhan resigned his job and has since been the director of Madras Institute of Developmental Studies.

The Chief Minister said, 'When my government was dismissed in 1976, the state treasury had a cash balance of 14 crore rupees. But right now the treasury is minus 70 crores.' He attributed the situation to M.G. Ramachandran's 'misrule'.

Celebration on Beach

To mark the DMK's assumption of

power, a victory celebration was held on the Marina beach in the evening. It was attended by several senior national leaders including V.P. Singh and Ajit Singh, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister E.K. Nayanar and Karnataka Chief Minister S.R. Bommai, who proclaimed that 'by the end of the year' the opposition victory 'will spread to every corner of the country'.

The speakers emphasized that now the four southern states were ruled by non-Congress governments 'we can settle problems by mutual discussion, and don't have to run to New Delhi'. To mark this new spirit of cooperation, Karnataka Chief Minister Bommai announced that he will be releasing immediately Cauvery water to save standing crops in Tamil Nadu. Similarly, Rama Rao said he 'will see to it that Krishna waters from Andhra reached Madras' so that the city did not face a water shortage.

All the leaders stressed that the huge mandate won by the DMK was a vote against Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. 'It is time Rajiv resigned and secured a fresh mandate to rule', they said.

Janaki Quits Politics

Janaki Ramachandran, whose All India Anna Dravida Munetra Kazhagam faction was favoured in the Assembly elections, has decided to quit active politics. She had headed the faction for 13 months.

Janaki Ramachandran, who was Chief Minister for 22 days after the death of her husband and founder-leader of the AIADMK M.G. Ramachandran, announced her decision on Jan. 31.

Her decision comes hardly a week after her faction won only one seat out of 125 contested in the January elections. She herself was defeated from Andipatti, from where her late husband was elected in 1984.

Merger bid flops

Janaki's decision comes as an anticlimax to projected merger efforts between her faction and that led by Jayalalitha. The merger moves were initiated after pressure from Middle-level leaders and workers, who feel that an undivided AIADMK would have fared much better at the polls.

A projected meeting between Janaki and Jayalalitha here on Jan. 31, however, failed to materialize. AIADMK leader R. M. Veerapan and

his supporters were reportedly against the merger.

Pressure from leaders

In her statement, Janaki said she decided to lead the party after M.G. Ramachandran due to pressure from party leaders.

The Janaki faction had, in fact, earlier won a victory of sorts when the Madras High Court directed the Jayalalitha faction to turn over headquarters of the undivided AIADMK to the Janaki faction.

Urges unity leader

Jayalalitha, in a statement, said some 'selfish' persons who hindered earlier unification moves, won again. However, she said that Janaki should not succumb to such elements and head the unified party.

Jayalalitha said that the merger alone could save AIADMK workers from attacks by the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) which swept recent Assembly elections. She alleged that Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi planned to dismantle the party built by M.G. Ramachandran and that party leaders should not allow that to happen. Jayalalitha's faction won 27 seats in the election.

THREE POLICE STATIONS ATTACKED FIVE POLICEMEN KILLED

Armed gangs, allegedly belonging to the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), attacked two police stations in Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo, and one other in its suburb on 28 January in the course of which five policemen including a Sub-inspector were killed and the attackers got away with a considerable number of weapons.

The three police stations attacked were at Bambalapitiya and Mattakuliya within the city limits and the Ragama Police station. All three attacks were mounted between 7 and 8pm on 28 January by armed gangs which arrived in vehicles.

The attack on the Bambalapitiya police station was carried out by a gang of a dozen men dressed in black who made their entry into the police station through the seaside and made their way direct to the armoury. A

policeman, named Dharmaratne who challenged the gang and another employee, named Saman, at the station were promptly shot dead. The attacking gang had hijacked a police jeep, got a police driver himself to drive the jeep in which they transported the weapons they had removed from the armoury. The police driver and the jeep were abandoned when the raiders hijacked another vehicle at gun point in which they transported their haul of weapons and ammunition.

In the attack at Mattakuliya police station, Sub-Inspectors Ariyaratne de Silva and two police constables were killed and three policemen were injured in the attack on Ragama police station. The get-away vehicle used in the Ragama attack had over-turned on the way in which a gun removed from the police station was found on the following day.

FIERCE LTTE-IPKF CLASHES

LTTE guerillas engaged personnel of the IPKF at several points in the Jaffna town and fierce clashes were reported to have occurred lasting several hours.

The clashes began at about 11am when LTTE men opened fire at a sentry point near Jaffna Fort. A short while later a loud explosion was heard which caused a panic situation among the people of the town. Several residents vacated their homes and rushed seeking shelter in the compound of the Jaffna General Hospital where the Red Cross had its post. Traders put up shutters and transport came to a halt as the exchange of fire continued for hours.

The LTTE claimed that two IPKF soldiers were killed and many others wounded in the course of their attack.

In another shooting encounter near the Jaffna Hindu College in which the LTTE and EPRLF men were involved, a teacher named Shanmugalingam and a student were killed in the 'cross-fire' and several others injured.

On the same day three EPRLF members were 'executed' in Sithandy, Mannar and two IPKF men killed 4 others injured in Trincomalle, an LTTE press release stated.

USA CANDIDATE & FAMILY KILLED

A United Socialist Alliance (USA) general election candidate in the central Province, Nissanka Karunatilake, his father A.G. Karunatilake, his two brothers Ananda and M.R. Karunatilake, his brother-in-law, R. Jayatissa and his uncle M. Jayasinghe were gunned down on 25 January in the candidate's residence allegedly by a gang of JVP gunmen.

The gunmen had arrived at the residence at Poojapiya in Katugastota posing as police officers and ordered the candidate to produce the firearms in his possession for a routine check. The unsuspecting candidate had handed over two repeater guns and a pistol. One of the gunmen had pretended to examine a repeater gun and without further ado directed it at the six victims and riddled them with bullets. All the victims died instantly.

IPKF RETALIATES

Indian soldiers were reported to have gone on a rampage killing at least five Tamils and burning eighteen shops and houses in the Pesalai area in Mannar following the killing of three soldiers belonging to the IPKF on 22 January in a land mine explosion allegedly caused by the LTTE.

In the rampage, a large number of civilians including women and children had been assaulted by IPKF men.

KILLING - IN CINEMA & FOR REAL

A drama on screen became drama in real life at a cinema in the south Sri Lankan town of Wadduwa on 23 January. The cinema 'Vince' was screening the currently popular Sinhala film "SATANA" (meaning 'Struggle'), which living up to its name includes several gory fights. But what happened on that day during one of those fights was a little more than what the audience had expected.

While Sanath Gunatillake was battling it out with Robin Fernando for the third and final time on screen, each one determined to destroy the other, a gunman entered the cinema, and standing at the doorway, shot dead with a single bullet the occupant of the first class seat by the door. The killer timed it perfectly - amidst the cacophony of gunfire on the screen, no one in the packed cinema distinguished the real gunshot from those on the screen.

In the meantime, the killer, unsuspected by all, slipped out of the cinema and escaped on a motorbike.

Incidentally, the fight on the screen ends when Robin dies, killed by Sanath. In a final ironic quirk of fate, the dead man in the audience has been identified as Sanath Perera, an ex-homeguard from Wadduwa.

(Sunday Times, 29.1.89)

GUNMEN RAID 'YAL DEVI' TRAIN

In a daring daylight robbery on 29 January, an armed gang got away with cash amounting to several thousands of rupees from the Buffet of the Colombo-bound 'Yal-Devi' train.

Eye witnesses to the incident re-

ported that the raiders numbering about ten boarded the train at Medawachchiya. While two armed men got into the engine section, the others boarded the Buffet carriage. The driver of the train was forced to stop the train at gun-point near the 142nd mile post between Medawachchiya and Parasangahawewa. When the train stopped at a point about 15 miles north of Anuradhapura, the gang in the Buffet brandished their weapons, threatened the staff and got away with the day's collections.

ANURA B. THANKED FOR A PARTY HE DIDN'T HOST

It was India's Republic Day. The scene was the spacious lawn of India House, the official residence of the Indian High Commission. Glittering Indian sarees vie for attention with local silks and sober Brooks Brothers business suits, as diplomats and local society mingle munching delicacies from Bombay to Calcutta.

Enter former Opposition Leader Anura Bandaranaike dressed in a black shervani suit, very much like the ones worn by top Indian politicians and officials. Mr Bandaranaike and High Commissioner Dixit, who have crossed swords sometimes are seen chatting by the steps leading to the lawn. A departing woman guest walks up to the conversing duo, shakes Anura B. by the hand and thanks him for the party. The SLFPer winces. End of scene. The curtain rises, the shervani-clad Mr. B is at the Australian National Day reception still trying to recover from the earlier body-blow.

(The Sunday Observer, Colombo, 29.1.89)

INDIA WILLING TO CONSIDER BILATERAL FRIENDSHIP TREATY

Indian High Commissioner J.N. Dixit has conveyed to President R. Premadasa that the Government of India is willing to consider the suggestion from Sri Lanka for a bilateral Indo-Sri Lanka Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation on the principles of mutual benefit and reciprocity.

President Premadasa has indicated that draft of the Treaty will be conveyed to the Indian Government in the near future, an Indian High Commission press release said.

The following is the full text of the release: "High Commissioner Dixit called on His Excellency President Premadasa on the evening of 17th January on his return from Delhi. High Commissioner conveyed a message from Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi to H.E. the President. The High Commissioner conveyed that the Government of India has taken note of the positive steps taken by H.E. the President to devolve powers to the North-Eastern and other Provincial Councils in conformity with the 13th Amend-

ment to the Sri Lankan Constitution and the Provincial Councils Act. It was also conveyed that further improvement of the devolution of powers responsive to effective decentralization and aspirations of the people at the provincial level would strengthen the stability and unity of Sri Lanka.

"High Commissioner also conveyed that the Government of India is willing to consider the suggestion from Sri Lanka for a bilateral Indo-Sri Lanka Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation on the principles of mutual benefit and reciprocity. H.E. President Premadasa indicated that a draft of the Treaty would be conveyed to the Government of India in the near future.

"High Commissioner also conveyed that the withdrawals of some elements of the IPKF as announced in the official statement issued by the Government of India on the 1st of January, 1989 has been completed and that further withdrawals will take place within the framework of that statement."

NORTH-EAST PC ELECTIONS CHALLENGED

Poopalapillai Chandrakumar, a candidate of the United National Party at the North-Eastern Provincial Council elections held in November last year, has filed a petition in the Court of Appeal challenging the validity of the elections held in the Administrative District of Batticaloa and seeking an order to get them declared null and void.

Chandrakumar, who contested in the Batticaloa District, has cited as respondents eight candidates of the EPRLF, three candidates of the SLMC and the Elections Returning Officer of the District.

Citing several alleged instances of intimidation and violence and threats

seeking to prevent ballots being cast, Chandrakumar in his petition has sought the elections to be declared null and void on the grounds that there was general intimidation of electors as a result of which a section of the electors were prevented from voting for the party of their choice.

Complaining of non-compliance with election law, Chandrakumar has, inter alia, alleged that unauthorised persons were allowed inside polling stations including members of the IPKF and armed members of the EPRLF, that polling stations were short-staffed and that the application of the indelible ink on voters and other prescribed procedures were not followed.

LTTE VOWS TO FIGHT TO THE LAST MAN

"We are fighting for separation... nothing more, nothing less. We will fight to the last man... to the last drop of blood", Theepan, who is in charge of the political wing of the LTTE in the northern Vadamarachchi area, is reported to have said in the course of an interview given at an undisclosed place, according to a Reuter report datelined 19 January.

Theepan is reported to have added that "We are fighting for our lives. The Indians are pitched everywhere. Our movements, unlike before, are restricted. We can't send them away. But we won't allow them to kill all of us."

The LTTE would continue to fight Indian troops or Sri Lankan soldiers or 'anyone who seeks to deprive us of our rights'. The LTTE does not intend to mount attacks on IPKF military camps because, "We don't have fire power for that".

In regard to the forthcoming general elections, Theepan stated, "We have requested the people not to vote. The choice is, however, theirs... we won't force them". The LTTE would contest elections only after there was a permanent solution to their demands, and "also there must be peace before elections".

ANNAMALAI KILLING CONDEMNED

Attorney-at-Law A.K. Annamalai, who is also the Nava Sama Samaja Party's northern Province Organiser was shot and killed on 11 January by two gunmen. Annamalai was at his residence in Colombuthurai, Jaffna, when the gunmen attacked.

Annamalai was popularly regarded as a friend of the poor and oppressed. His name was put down in the national list of the United Socialist Alliance for the selection to Parliament after the February 15 general election. He was a Polibureau member and Secretary of the Committee for Nationalities of the NSSP.

The LTTE has claimed responsibility for the killing.

The NSSP has characterised the assassination of Annamalai as 'one other cowardly act of petty bourgeois Tamil reaction'. Their statement said that Annamalai 'stood for the freedom of the Tamil speaking people. He never hesitated to point out the dangers of continued presence of the Indian army and wanted them out on the basis of a democratic transfer of power to the Tamil people. At the same time he was for the unity of the working people and was a true internationalist... He had to fight Tamil petty bourgeois reactionary chauvinism while fighting for the self determination of the Tamil nation'.

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"WE ARE OPPOSED TO A REFERENDUM ON NORTH-EAST MERGER"

SAYS CHIEF MINISTER, N-E COUNCIL

The following is an interview with the Chief Minister of the North-East Provincial Council, Mr. A. Varatharaja Perumal (Sunday Times, 15.1.89):

Q: Your group already holds power in the Provincial Council. What do you expect from representation in Parliament?

A: Parliament is different from the provincial government. In Parliament, the questions of the Tamil people, and the questions of the working people of this country will have a voice through our representation. And Parliament is a stage to raise the voice of our real democracy and against oppression of all kinds. That will be the role of the Parliamentary membership of our part.

Q: What kind of Tamil questions would you want to raise in Parliament?

A: More devolution of power to the Provincial Council, security matters, state aided planned colonisation, if there is any discriminatory action by the centre towards the Tamil speaking people.

Q: The LTTE does not intend entering the Parliamentary process. Wouldn't it pose a threat to you?

A: Today the LTTE is not a military threat. It is only a nuisance. And most of its leadership is running out of the country. The LTTE is not an increasing factor, it is a decreasing factor.

Q: Then why have you formed an alliance with the TULF, TELO and ENDLF to contest the elections?

A: The alliance is purely to avoid splitting Tamil votes. We do not have any common policy or anything like that.

Q: But one member of the alliance, the TELO has offered to resign some of the seats if it wins in Parliament to allow members of the LTTE to join. Do you agree with this?

A: Why do we have to do that? After all, it will be a peoples' decision. The LTTE has to come out. We will provide all the facilities for them to function in the democratic process without fear. But they have to contest, prove their credibility, and let the people decide.

Q: Why are you so opposed to Tamil votes getting divided? It is because of the forthcoming Referendum?

A: To strengthen Tamil unity has been our main motto all along. We are continuing that. Unity is for all things. It is very necessary. The Tamils are an oppressed minority and there must be unity to struggle for our legitimate rights.

Q: Do you oppose the Referendum in the East, and will you make it an issue in your election campaign?

A: Our principal position has been that we are opposed to the Referendum. Even when the accord was brought before us we told the Indian government at the time the accord was drafted that that is our principal position. Even though there were defects in the Indo-Lanka accord, it was necessary for the Tamil people at that time, so we accepted it. Still, we have a question to the Sinhala leadership of this country. They are saying the merger should be decided by the Eastern Province only. Why is that? If that is so, then the Tamils can also decide

whether they want to live with the Sinhalese or not. This is a tricky game played by the Sri Lanka government to weaken the strength of the Tamil people. Some people are talking about a separate Muslim Council for the East. Two thirds of the Muslims live in the South. Why not carve out a Muslim Council in Beruwela then? Why not in Colombo Central? Why not a separate council for Indian Tamils in Nuwara Eliya, a small council for Tamils in Wellawatte? This is only to weaken the strength of the North-eastern provincial government and the unity of the Tamil speaking people. These are all divide and rule tactics. We are opposing the Referendum, but if there is a Referendum we will face it. One thing we want to tell the Sinhala leadership. Do they want a united country or a divided North-Eastern province? If they want to strengthen the democratic forces, if they want to strengthen the unity of this country, then they should not talk about the de-merger. If they want to weaken the democratic forces, or if they want to divide this country, then they can create chaos. So the decision is up to the Sinhala leadership. The ball is in their court. We are requesting the Sinhala leadership not to play with the people for their vote-catching games which will destabilise the country.

Q: If after the elections, the need for a coalition arises, what will the position of your alliance be?

A: The Central Committee of the EPRLF will have to decide. And I hope surely that there will be unity between the progressive forces among the Sinhalese and the democratic forces among the Tamil people.

14 TAMIL CIVILIANS KILLED

Fourteen Tamil civilians were killed by personnel belonging to the Sri Lankan security forces in the village of Mahaerampaikulam in the northern Vauniya district on 17 January.

The killings were carried out in an apparent retaliation to the death of two soldiers belonging to the National Auxiliary Force and a Sinhalese civilian on the same day at Atabagaskada, five miles off Vavuniya in the course of an attack by armed militants belonging to the LTTE.

In a similar incident which occurred on 20 January at Silavatturai in the north-western Manna district, a number of civilians were killed in retaliation to the death of seven Sri Lankan soldiers who, while on a routine mission, were ambushed by Tamil militants.

Following protests at the killing of civilian Tamils in an exercise of pure retaliation and for no other reason, an investigation into the incident by a team of Sri Lankan military police has been ordered by Brigadier Ranjan de Silva, Commander of the district.

Pending the probe, over 100 soldiers of the fifth Battalion of the Ceylon Light Infantry (5-CLI) stationed in Mannar and Vavuniya have been moved to other areas on suspicion of their involvement in the killings of civilians. This action and the probe followed representations made by the Chief Minister of North-East Provincial Council, Mr. Varatharaja Perumal.

FOUR BANKS ROBBED

Four gangs of young men armed with 'galkatas' (homemade shot guns) and bombs walked into four state owned Rural Banks in the Hambantota District in broad daylight on 31 January

and got away with an estimated Rs.1,74,973,99.

The raiders had arrived on push bicycles. During the previous week, gunmen in three simultaneous attacks on four state owned banks in the southern Matara district got away with Rs.861,611.

Continued from page 6

peace and stability in the region, nor in any way resolve the ethnic problem since India has lost the status of an impartial mediator and peace maker."

Therefore, we appeal to you to use your good offices to persuade the Government of India to effect an immediate ceasefire and to withdraw all troops from the Tamil homeland. Our organisation favours the mediation of the United Nations which can play a positive and constructive role in establishing peace and normalcy in the Tamil region and in finding a negotiated political settlement to the ethnic conflict.

The Lankan Dilemma

KULDIP NAYAR

It is difficult to say whether India is a millstone round the neck of Sri Lanka or vice-versa. True, we trained and equipped some Tamil militants – the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) – but we had one justification: Sinhala racism. The Tamils in Sri Lanka were being decimated, and persecuted economically, politically and socially, and the pressure of Tamils in Tamil Nadu was inexorable.

The Sinhalese, who constitute two-thirds of their countries' population, would not accept the fact that theirs is a pluralistic society, and that the Tamils who were getting a bigger slice of the cake because of their education, entrepreneurship and skills, deserved equal rights with an identity of their own.

The confrontation between the two communities, laced with violence and bloodshed has not settled the problem. Nor does the future appear to hold any hope. But, in the meanwhile, the situation has got more complicated, especially with the presence of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka.

Most of the Sinhalese want a total withdrawal of the IPKF. Both Premadasa, the President-elect, and Sirimavo Bandaranaike, who was a close

second in the presidential elections, pledged during their campaigns to send the IPKF back. The Janatha Vimukti Perumuna (JVP) – the equivalent of the LTTE among the Sinhalese – will pressure Premadasa to make good his promise through violence. It is dead set against the IPKF and from all reports, it is clear that the JVP enjoys the support of some sections of the police and armed forces.

No doubt the Tamils in Sri Lanka have ceased to be enamoured of the IPKF because it is battling against the LTTE. But they have no option because the alternative the Sri Lankan army or the JVP or both – is worse. The IPKF is at least not indiscriminate in using its weapons. The recently elected North-east Council – the Tamil Assembly – has been robed with only limited powers. It is supposed to enjoy the powers of an Indian state government which can set up a provincial police force to preserve law and order. Had this been done it would have reassured the Tamils to some extent.

But that is a distant dream. Certain powers that the Tamils are supposed to get under the Indo-Sri Lankan Treaty require constitutional amendments, besides approval by a two-thirds majority for any party in the parliamentary elections. Nor is there any

indication that the Sinhalese will implement all that has been promised in the treaty. That makes the task of India and the IPKF more daunting.

P.V. Narsimha Rao, Union minister for external affairs, announced in the Rajya Sabha on 22 November, 1988, that the IPKF would "remain in Sri Lanka" until all steps for the devolution of power had been taken. This statement went further than Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's position soon after the IPKF entered Sri Lanka: He said that the Indian troops had gone to Sri Lanka at the request of its President and would leave when asked to do so. Perhaps New Delhi has realised that the Tamils in Sri Lanka are not safe without the IPKF.

India now faces a difficult situation because Premadasa has asked for a phased withdrawal of the IPKF. Narasimha Rao had told Parliament that the IPKF was sent over under a bilateral agreement, which could not be undone by either New Delhi or Colombo unilaterally. Does the partial withdrawal of the IPKF mean that Narasimha Rao's assurance was hollow?

New Delhi believed that the eventuality of a total IPKF withdrawal would not arise for a long time because Premadasa's poll rhetoric was only meant to win votes and will not be pursued. In fact, he had himself said that he would like to negotiate with India a peace and friendship treaty on the lines of the one that Delhi and Moscow signed in 1971. This gave him – as well as India – some leeway.

Now that the IPKF withdrawal has begun, what happens to the safety of Tamils in the North-east province? The LTTE wants a dominant say in the North-east and the JVP in the rest of Sri Lanka. Both are trigger happy. Perhaps the IPKF's initial withdrawal will meet Premadasa's request and he will not insist on its total withdrawal.

The basic question that both New Delhi and Colombo now face is: what confidence can the Tamilians have in the Sri Lankan government without the IPKF there to protect them? The victory of Premadasa testifies that the moderates have asserted themselves. But many of the moderates are not prepared to accept the Tamils as equals.

Justice is interlinked with peace – not only in the North-east where the Tamils predominate – but also in the rest of the country. One has to wait to see whether justice will be rendered. And it cannot be without much anxiety and trepidation

CITIZENS VOLUNTEER FORCE

A. Varathaaja Perumal, Chief Minister of N-E Provincial Council stated that his party, the EPRLF, would want a phased withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force following the establishment of a Citizens Volunteer Force. He said that up to 1500 persons have already been recruited to the CVF.

FINANCIAL WINDFALL FOR POLITICAL PARTIES

Recognised political parties contesting in this month's general elections which polled more than one per cent of the total number of votes polled in each electoral district at the 1977 general elections will be eligible for a financial grant from State funds.

According to Clause 127 of the Parliamentary Elections Act of 1981, the grant will be calculated at the rate of 50 cents per vote polled.

Accordingly, the UNP will receive approximately 15 million rupees, SLFP will receive 9 million rupees, TULF will be entitled to 2 million rupees, USA (which contested the 1977 elections as ULF) will receive one million rupees, and the CWC will get Rs. 300,000.

In terms of the provisions of the Act, the money will have to be deposited in the bank account of the party within ten days from the last day of the period of nomination after an application made to the Commissioner of Elections.

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Rumpus on the Jaffna campus

By J.S.Tissainayagam

Entering the campus of the University of Jaffna one feels a tinge of disappointment.

It does not have the majestic grandeur of Perademya with its verdant terraces leading up to the halls of residence, the bourganvillas in bloom and the sprawling faculty buildings; it does not have the modern structures of the Ruhunu University washed by the sea spray and the hushed evenings silhouetted against the vermillion and gold sky.

Jaffna University was Parameshwara College and is small with a tiny playing field choked by uneven outcroppings of thick grass, unpretentious buildings and a kovil of no great beauty.

In the evenings the campus stands forlorn and deserted unlike the universities in the south which are enlivened with its boisterous booze parties in the boy's halls and where under the friendly seclusion of the giant trees, lovers keep their trysts.

But for all that, if there is any institution in Jaffna where the pulse of the nation, a commuity, can be felt beating it is the Jaffna campus. Within that microcosm, the suffering and despair of the youth of Jaffna is reflected, while at the same time slow and tentative steps are being taken by both the students and academics to analyse and explain the terrorised, turbulent and blood drenched life of the Jaffna Tamil.

IPKF presence

I met the General Body of the Jaffna University Students Union last week. They had been newly elected to the Union which was allowed to have elected representatives after four years. This is itself a major step forward by the Government which banned all elected student bodies since 1984, an act roundly claimed to be one of the causes of student unrest and violence against the state.

The six students present from the General Body had been elected to the unions of their respective faculties by the undergraduates of those faculties and who together formed the General Body. Their office was only two weeks old, and they seemed enthusiastic on using it as a vehicle to win student rights and privileges.

Life in Jaffna is full by the presence of the Indian Peace Keeping Force. What is but a political issue in the south is a hard, brutal reality up there. The public is trying desperately to adjust itself to the IPKF presence and if there is any part of that public which feels particularly vulnerable to the IPKF it is the students. So it was

natural that conversation should have turned towards the IPKF.

'The Indians hate us from the time they lost 29 men during the beginning of Operation Pawan', said one referring to the drop of paratroppers near the Jaffna University Medical Faculty during which the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam snipers were able to pick them off at will, in what is regarded as one of the major blunders of the Indian army. Undergraduates feel that from then on the IPKF regarded them as potential enemies and earmarked them for destruction.

However a senior academic who did not wish to be identified (any interview on the campus begins with a peremptory, 'Don't quote me') said that this was not so. He said after the cleaning up of the Tiger hideouts in the area, the Indians had been keen on reopening the campus as at least an exercise in PR.

But the gesture was fruitless. The LTTE resistance continued. On various instances students with LTTE links were arrested. It was then that the IPKF really turned their guns against the undergraduates and their teachers. They felt the campus had become a sanctuary and clandestine arsenal for the LTTE. It became identified as a centre of anti-Indian resistance.

At an average, three students are arrested every week. Students complain that though they are given a university identity card that the last thing they produce when they are checked by the IPKF is the card. The Indian soldiers are supposed to have a psychotic aversion to the undergraduates and take them in merely because of their status.

The students said that when Thavarajah had been arrested last year the campus had fairly bristled with indignation. In spite of the severe risks involved the students had picketed near the IPKF camp. The IPKF had threatened to shoot, but restrained themselves. Those tense and volatile moments resulted in Brigadier R.I.S. Kahlon, the IPKF town commandant in Jaffna and Brigadier Sardesh Pande announcing that hence forth all arrests of university students would be followed by prompt information to the university.

But unfortunately this has not been happening. Students still get arrested and the word of one's arrest reaches only if he has a travelling companion or if they are reported missing by parents. Also students could be arrested in any of the campuses in the

peninsula. This makes information coming through difficult.

While I was speaking to the undergraduates, a message arrived that a Science Faculty student had been arrested. I thought that the whole thing was stage-managed, but apparently it was not. At once the students present began to disperse to get the machinery for his release into operation.

No consideration

The machinery is usually for the Vice Chancellor and the Dean of the faculty from which the student was arrested to visit the camp, identify the student, establish his bona fides and try to secure his release. The dons more used to the quiet of their book lined studies and strenuous academic pursuits, relate with feeling, the experience they have undergone.

Even the IPKF top brass have no consideration for the dignity of the dons. 'They tell you, "You come about students, how many of our men have been killed by the Tigers?"' said one who bears the brunt of the IPKF brutality regularly. The IPKF's anger stems from their belief that Tiger activity on the campus, such as the appearance of posters is done with the knowledge and tacit support of the staff.

The lecturers defend themselves by saying that they cannot be expected to know the political persuasions of all the students, and even if they did, there was nothing to prevent anybody pasting posters at night. But he admitted that there was an excuse for their suspicions about the campus.

On 22nd of November there was a cordon and search operation in the University hostel. This, though it nearly led to a confrontation did not fulfill the IPKF's objective, for a sub warden of the hostel, a suspected LTTEer had made good his escape.

Recently however there is a new factor to the already tricky security situation. Though the students were not willing to commit themselves on the issue, a don told me that informers were responsible in betraying students as Tiger suspects to the IPKF. The fact that they moved so closely with the IPKF made it certain that they were members of the ruling party of the provincial council the EPRLF.

The students disclosed another irri- tant troubling them. The entire uni- versity they said, had accommodation only for 52 students. The student population totals 2,500. Though there are provisions to accommodate another 52 female students the buildings have

not been completed. They said that 60% of their number came from outside the peninsula and even the rest came from areas so far away that, daily travel was impossible. This was compounded by the IPKF's local curfews and cordon and search operations, rendering travel hazardous. Most students take rooms in homes near the campus. But whereas students in the hostel pay only Rs.45/-per term, it could be as high as Rs.125/-in a private room, with the added discomfort of sharing it with another.

Faced by these problems, the undergraduates and the staff are looking for solutions. The formation of an elected student union has made the body by

and large acceptable to most students. From my brief encounter with them, they seemed non-partisan in their approach to solutions.

The students expressed a view that was contradictory to what most people in Jaffna were saying. They wanted close ties with the universities of the south. The average Jaffna Tamil is indifferent to the political or any other development in the south. The general election in the offing leaves him unmoved and the provincial council elections has not developed meaningful power to the region. But the students though non-committal on the election, thought that solidarity with other universities could be a source of political

strength.

They confessed that the indifference of the southern students to their plight during the IPKF operation which did not draw a word of sympathy, let alone a token strike, left them disillusioned about the southern response. But they are not too disheartened even though the ties with the Inter University Students Federation lapsed by 1986 they are keen on renewing it.

Their immediate programme is to draw up a list of areas such as human rights, the NCMC issue, facilities for students and so on, where they can take up common positions with their southern counterparts.

NORTH-EAST MERGER EFFECTIVE DESPITE END OF EMERGENCY

C.V. VIVEKANANTHAN

The Public Security Ordinance was enacted by our imperial masters; it came into force by Act No.25 of 1947 and was used to suppress political uprisings of our people against imperial rule.

The Public Security Ordinance and the proclamation of emergency regulations thereunder received the widest condemnation by our leaders more particularly by our veteran leftist leaders. Ironically, the United Front, a coalition of SLFP, LSSP and CP that swept the polls in 1970, brought the provisions of the Public Security Ordinance within the scope of the First Republican Constitution and it has come under the most intense attack by the then opposition leaders but to everyone's dismay, when they enacted the Second Republican Constitution they too enshrined the provisions of the Public Security Ordinance in the Constitution. Thus, criticism against the Public Security Ordinance remained only in the realm of theoretical opposition.

This Ordinance has been amended by Act No.34 of 1953 and accordingly, Section 5(d) of this Ordinance enables the President to proclaim emergency regulations amending or suspending the operation of any law and for applying any law with or without modification during the continuance of the emergency. In terms of Section 7 of the Public Security Ordinance such emergency regulation shall have effect notwithstanding anything inconsistent therewith contained in any law. If a provision of a law becomes inconsistent with the provision of the emergency regulation whether that provision shall or shall not have been amended, modified or suspended in its operation, the provision of the law has no effect to the extent of such inconsistency so long as such regulation shall remain in force. The emergency regulation shall prevail over the law.

The power of amending or suspending any law by an emergency regulation has also received constitutional recognition by Article 155(2) of the Constitution. It states that the power to make emergency regulations under the Public Security Ordinance or the law for the time being in force relating to public security shall include the power to make regulations having the legal effect of over-riding, amending or suspending the operation of the provisions of any law.

Thus the power of the President to make emergency regulations emanates from Section 5 of the Public Security as amended and the power to make regulations amending or suspending any law stems from Section 5(d) of the Ordinance and it has received constitutional recognition as set out in Article 155(2) of the Constitution. It is a source of legislative power which the president is empowered to enact during the continuance of the emergency.

Section 37(1)(a) of the Provincial Councils Act states 'The President may by proclamation declare that the provisions of this subsection shall apply to any two or three adjoining provinces specified in such proclamation (hereinafter referred to as 'the specified provinces') and thereupon such provinces shall form one administrative unit having one elected Provincial Council one Governor, one Chief Minister and one Board of Ministers.'

Section 37(1)(b) states 'The President shall not make a proclamation declaring that the provisions of subsection (1)(a) shall apply to the Northern or Eastern provinces unless he is satisfied that arms, ammunition, weapons, explosives and other military equipment, which on 29th July 1987, were held or under the control of terrorist militant or other groups having as

their objective the establishment of a separate State, have been surrendered to the Government of Sri Lanka or to authorities designated by it, and that there has been a cessation of hostilities by such groups in the said provinces'

It appears from this section that the only group that has to surrender arms is the group that has as its objective the establishment of a separate state. The President should be satisfied that the arms have been surrendered by the groups having as their objectives the establishment of a separate state and there has been a cessation of hostilities and other acts of violence by such groups before he makes a proclamation in terms of section 37(1)(a) of the Act. Though the conditions precedent to such a proclamation did not exist to enable the President to make a proclamation, political considerations made it expedient to amend or modify this section. It becomes necessary to make it amenable to the dictates of political pressure. Accordingly, the President has lawfully and rightly made use of his law making power under section 5(d) of the Public Security Ordinance to modify or amend section 37(1)(b) of the Act. In this respect, law includes regulation made under the Public Security Ordinance

'Accordingly subsection (1)(b) has been modified by the Emergency Regulation published in the extra ordinary Gazette No.521/27 of 2nd September 1988. It reads as 'During the continuance in force of these regulations, paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section 37 of the Provincial Councils Act No.42 of 1987 shall have effect as if for the words 'by such groups in the said provinces' appearing in that paragraph there were substituted the following'

'By such groups in the said province or that operation have been commenced to secure complete surrender of arms, ammunition, weapons, explo-

Continued on page 15

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NEWS IN BRIEF

UNP CHAIRMAN'S MURDER FOUR INDICTED

Three of the four suspects in the murder of UNP Chairman, Harsha Abeywardene, were served with indictments when they were produced before the High Court of Colombo on 10 January. One of the suspects is absconding.

The four suspects, I.L. Wijewardene alias Donald, A.H. Dias alias Sunil (absconding), M.S.R. Cooray alias Harry and L. Wickremasinghe, have been charged under the Emergency Regulation and the Prevention of Terrorism Act, inter alia, with having between 1.11.87 and 23.12.87 at Mt. Lavinia and Moratuwa conspired with Priyalal Alwis and others unknown to commit the murder of Harsha Abeywardene, committing his murder and the murders of Sunil Ranjith Bentota, Police Constable A.M. Gunasena and S. Liyanapathirana.

ProTEG appeals for indefinite ceasefire

An appeal for a fresh Indian initiative by declaring an indefinite ceasefire as the first step towards durable peace in north east Sri Lanka, was made by the Organisation for the Protection of Tamils of Eelam from Genocide and other Violations of Human Rights in Madras. ProTEG co-ordinator Mr. S.C. Chandrasaran in a statement issued on the eve of the Presidential election said that India should make a fresh effort to draw the LTTE into the peace process by offering an indefinite ceasefire. If the group still continued its violence it would have no explanation to offer to the Tamils, and this was a factor in favour of a peaceful settlement. He pointed out that the LTTE had reciprocated positively to the peace initiative during the previous 10-day ceasefire. It was crucial for India to draw the Tamils as a whole into the peace process in the face of the JVP emerging as a virulent representative of Sinhala chauvinism.

7000 HOME GUARDS DESERT POST

Around 7000 Home Guards have vacated their posts without notice in recent months, according to official sources. Most of the deserters are from areas of the Southern, Uva and North Central Provinces.

The government, particularly at the instigation of the then Minister of National Security Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, went about recruiting Home Guards in their thousands without much vetting to assist in its 'war effort' against Tamil militant groups.

As some of the deserters from the armed forces have done, it is learnt that many of the Home Guards who vacated their posts have joined ranks of the JVP. The government's main worry is that the deserters have gone away with the weapons they were provided with.

The 18,000 strong Home Guards have now been reduced to 11,000 and few are now volunteering to join because of the fear of becoming victims of JVP attacks.

Continued from page 13

sives or other military equipment by such groups.'

A new and alternative condition has been created by this amendment to enable a proclamation to be made under this section. Upon such amendment the President by a proclamation published in the extra-ordinary Gazette No.522/9 of 8th September 1988 merged the Northern and Eastern provinces into one administrative unit as provided for in Section 37(1)(a) of the Act

The emergency has been revoked on 12th January 1989. Then, the question remains whether the expiry of the emergency shall have legal effect of affecting the merger. The answer shall be in the negative in view of section 4 of the Public Security Ordinance.

Section 4 of the Public Security Ordinance reads as 'The expiry or revocation of any proclamation under section 2 shall not affect or be deemed to have affected;

- (a) the past operation of anything duly done or suffered to be done under Part II of this Ordinance while that part was in operation.
- (b) any offence committed or any right, liberty or penalty acquired or incurred while that Part was in operation.
- (c) the institution maintenance or enforcement of any action, proceeding or remedy under that part in respect of such offence, right, liberty or penalty'

Section 6(3) of the Interpretation Ordinance states 'Whenever any written law repeals either in whole or part a former written law, such repeal shall not, in the absence of any express provision to that effect, affect or be deemed to have affected

- (a) the past operation of or anything duly done or suffered under the repealed written law,
- (b) any offence committed, any right liberty or penalty acquired or incurred under the repealed written law.
- (c) any action proceeding or thing pending or incompleated when the repealing written law comes into operation but every such thing may be carried on and completed as if there had been no such repeal'

After the merger has been proclaimed, the Provincial Council election for the Northern and Eastern provinces has been held; Governor has been appointed; the Chief Minister and Board of Ministers have been appointed and all have taken their oaths before the revocation of the emergency. Thus, the merger has become fait accompli and it shall remain in force subject however to the referendum. As seen by section 4(a) of the Public Security Ordinance and Section 6(3)(a) of the Interpretation Ordinance the revocation or expiry of the emergency shall not affect the past operation of the emergency regulation published in Gazette Nos. 521/27 and 522/9 and anything duly done under them shall not be affected by the

subsequent revocation of the emergency regulation itself.

A person being detained by virtue of the power given under an emergency regulation has to be set free when the emergency regulation is revoked or the emergency comes to an end as his detention was a continuing act but an act that has been done and completed under the emergency regulation shall not become void by reason of the expiry of the emergency or the revocation of the emergency regulation.

Tamils made their demands through non violent methods but petulant refusal to recognize and grant reasonable demands of the Tamils made the Tamils to proclaim the Vaddukkodai resolution for a separate state and the Tamil youth to take up to arms. JVP was proscribed on a mere allegation that some of its members participated in the communal riots of July 1983 whilst the actual persons taken into custody were set free. The result is disastrous; the country is devastated by communal strife, destruction of lives and property and the presence of alien interests in our motherland.

The merger is a counsel of prudence, a political solution that will certainly keep our country united for ever but if we wish to decide otherwise the law has provided for a referendum. A punch on this sensitive subject at this juncture may not freeze the flow of blood but it will open the gateway of suspicion to throttle the communal harmony.

Thondaman wants IPKF 'to go lock, stock and barrel'

Now that a Provincial Government with a Tamil Chief Minister has assumed power, it is time the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) is withdrawn lock, stock and barrel, if normality is to be completely restored, the Sri Lankan Rural Industries Minister, Mr.S. Thondaman, has said.

"Can the presence of IPKF be taken as normality having been restored?" he asked. It is for the elected Provincial Government to ensure law and order, and restore peace and amity, Mr. Thondaman said in an interview.

"Who thought on eve of the presidential elections, that normality would be restored in Sri Lanka soon? What a sea-change one can notice after the election of Mr. Premadasa as President," he said.

"Having stood up to the confrontation for over 18 months now, we don't know what is up the sleeves of LTTE. It is really perplexing." "What are they up to?" wondered Mr. Thondaman, when asked about the LTTE and whether it would favourably respond to the changed stand of Mr. Premadasa.

Mr. Thondaman said geographically placed as they were, both India and Sri Lanka should maintain cordial and friendly relations in the larger reciprocal interest of peace and amity.

Observing that the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) is a recent entrant to politics in North Sri Lanka, he said the region alone does not represent the Tamil interests in the country. Tamils of Indian origin have been living in peace and cordiality with the Sinhalese. Mr. Thondaman wondered whether the TULF echoed the Tamil interests while pleading for IPKF presence. He wanted India and Sri Lanka to take a fresh look at the situation, given the changed political scenario and the peaceful atmosphere in the Tamil province, and take a quick decision on IPKF withdrawal.

Confident

Expressing his confidence that the LTTE leader, Mr.V. Prabhakaran, would respond to Mr. Premadasa's call to return to the mainstream, Mr. Thondaman explained how the new President settled the citizenship issue of the Tamils of Sri Lanka origin that has been eluding a solution for the past 30 years. Mr. Premadasa as Prime Minister was able to settle the issue to the entire satisfaction of all overnight.

The only remaining problem is related to the Tamils of Indian origin with Indian citizenship living in Sri Lanka and their counterparts in India. He would be taking up this issue with the two Governments soon so that whoever wanted to remain in either country could do so after changing their citizenship.

Mr. Thondaman expressed the hope that the turnout at the Sri Lankan parliamentary poll on February 15, would set a new record, bettering the figure for the presidential election. He was all confident that the Ruling United Nationalist Party and its ally, the Ceylon Workers' Congress would sweep the poll.

Nine IPKF men killed

Nine Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) personnel, including an officer, were killed in North-Eastern Sri Lanka as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) stepped up their attacks in an apparent attempt to disrupt next month's parliamentary elections.

The LTTE has called for a boycott of the February 15 elections, the first to be held in 11 years, warning that the poll, if held, would lead to chaos and bloodshed.

Four jawans and an officer belonging

to the Corps of Engineers were killed yesterday when LTTE men fired at their patrol boat in the Chundikulam lagoon, outside the northern Jaffna Peninsula, from the land. Though the boat sank two soldiers managed to swim ashore, Indian officials said adding that many militants were also killed or wounded when the IPKF men returned fire.

Two IPKF jawans were killed in Jaffna when their vehicle was ambushed today. In a separate encounter near Chundikulam yesterday, another jawan was killed.

Militants also ambushed a rail-clearing party near Pesalai in the northern Vavuniya district, killing one soldier.

The IPKF raided an abandoned house at Toppur and recovered 423 detonators. Two militants were also captured during a search operation near Karainagar. One hardcore militant, Paranjyoti alias Bawa, was killed in an exchange of fire with the Citizen's Volunteer Force (CVF)

MEDICAL INSTITUTE OF TAMILS

In March 1988, a group of Tamil Doctors met in East London to consider the concept of a Medical Institute for Tamils. The process of Consultation, continued at various venues around the country, leading to a well represented Steering Committee led by Dr. Pasupathyrajah.

The Committee embarked on the process of defining the Prime Objectives and laying the foundations of the Institute.

The Tasks were divided into four main areas:-

- 1) Medical Education and Resources.
- 2) Medical Counselling and research.
- 3) Health Projects for Tamils.
- 4) Finance and Social Activities.

The Steering Committee has already commenced work in some of these areas.

A Resource centre has been located at the 'Tamil House' 720, Romford Road, Manor Park, London E12.

Educational activities are pursued in the same venue on a regular basis. The results produced by Doctors attending these courses so far have demonstrated the difference that Academic guidance and Orientation can make to the progress of our Doctors.

Wellwishers are continuing to donate relevant equipment and Texts as well as journals to consolidate the growing Library.

The increasing Health needs of the Tamil Community, especially the Refugees, are being evaluated for appropriate action by the Medical Counselling and Research Unit.

The ever spiralling health needs in the Tamil Homelands of Sri Lanka are being assessed through Medical personnel serving in the North and East of Sri Lanka. Projects are awaited for Study and implementation.

The inaugural meeting was held on 8 January where the Constitution of the Institute was adopted.

REFERENDUM

Before relinquishing his post as President, Jayawardene issued a proclamation under Section 37 (2) of the Provincial Councils Act No.42 of 1987 fixing 5 July 1989 as the date on which Referendum will take place in the Eastern Province to determine whether the present merger of the northern and eastern provinces should continue or not.

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Professor Subramaniam Vithianandan

An Appreciation

It is with deep sorrow that we learnt of the untimely death on Sunday, January 22 of a very dear friend, the former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Jaffna, Professor Subramaniam Vithianandan, one of Sri Lanka's most brilliant and distinguished Tamil scholars and dramatists of our time. He would have reached his 65th year in May this year.

'Vithy' as he was popularly known to all those close to him joined the University of Ceylon in 1941 and came under the influence of such well known intellectuals as Ivor Jennings, J.L.C.Rodrigo, Swami Vipulananda, G.P.Malalasekera, K.Kanapathipillai and E.F.C.Ludowyck. He graduated with honours in 1944 and joined the teaching staff at Colombo and proceeded for postgraduate studies to the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London where he obtained his Ph.D working under Professor Alfred Masters. In 1952 with the shift of the Faculty of Arts and Oriental Studies he moved to Peradeniya where he rose to the position of Professor of Tamil.

He was singled out for appointment as the President of the Jaffna Campus of the single University of Sri Lanka set up in 1976, where he soon built up an active centre of culture and learning. His own contribution to Tamil literature and culture, comparable in many ways to that of Ediriweera Sarachchandra's contribution to Sinhala Literature and Culture, was highly recognised not only in Sri Lanka but also abroad, specially in countries such as India and Malaysia, whose universities sought his assistance regularly over the years.

With the setting up of the University of Jaffna in 1979, Vithy was invited once again to head it as its first



Vice-Chancellor. An undisputed leader and an able administrator, he was re-elected to office as Vice-Chancellor on no less than three successive occasions.

His able stewardship as Vice-Chancellor, for almost a decade (1979-1988) more than half of which period was beset with problems and also very difficult and trying circumstances is a tribute to his sagacity and skillful handling of the numerous delicate issues he had to face. This period nevertheless saw tremendous developments both in the building up of infrastructure and of academic and cultural programmes in the University. The setting up of new Faculties, first that of medicine and then of agriculture and engineering were uppermost in his mind. Medicine was introduced in 1979 whilst agricultural courses will begin this year. It is significant that the report of the feasibility of the proposal he made to set up an Engineering

Faculty was handed over last week to the University Grants Commission by the committee appointed to study this aspect last year. His deep vision and valuable contribution to higher education will no doubt become apparent in the years to come.

I got to know Vithy when I joined him as his Co-Warden of Wijewardene hall in 1962 and more closely when as fellow-Vice-Chancellors our families got better acquainted with each other. His humane approach to all problems, his friendliness and generosity, his tenacity of purpose with a deep sense of responsibility and readiness to stand by and defend the underprivileged were deeply ingrained in his character and all those who got to know him developed a deep respect for the burly figure that he was. As fellow Vice-Chancellors these attributes became more evident to us during the period he was chairman of our Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Directors when in his modest and unassuming manner and his characteristic style he helped conduct business and brought about speedy solutions to the numerous problems that had confronted the Committee. During this period, 1987-1988, he also represented the Universities of Sri Lanka as their chosen member in the Council of the Association of Commonwealth Universities.

To us in the academic world and to those of us who cherished him as a true and gracious friend, his demise is an irreparable loss as indeed it will be to his children and members of his family. But we can all feel proud and honoured to have been associated with him and be happy that the goodness he generated and the fruits of his labour at the University of Jaffna will be a living memorial for all time.

Stanley Wijesundera

GRENAD ATTACK ON PARLIAMENT FIVE CHARGED

R.M. Ajith Kumara, a former manual worker in the Parliamentary complex, and four others were indicted on 10 January in the High Court of Colombo in connection with the murder of District Minister K. Abeywickrema and the attempted assassination of former President J.R. Jayawardene and several other cabinet ministers and Members of Parliament in a grenade attack on August 18 1987.

The five accused will be tried without a jury by a bench consisting of three High Court judges commencing February 27.

All five accused made dock statements alleging that while in the cus-

tody of the police, they were tortured in various ways and forced to make signed statements.

In view of the allegations of torture, the Judge declined the application made by State Counsel that the suspects be remanded to the custody of Director of CID, and instead ordered that they be remanded under the custody of the Commissioner of Prisons and also directed that they be given special security and be allowed to meet their lawyers.

BOOSA DETENTION CAMP

TO BECOME A PRISON

The Boosa Detention Camp in south Sri Lanka is to be converted into a Prison, according to the Commissioner of Prisons.

The Boosa Camp had hitherto been used as a detention centre to detain persons taken into custody under the Emergency Regulations and the Prevention of Terrorism Act. It is in this Camp where over 10,000 Tamil youths rounded-up in various parts of the north and east in past years were detained without trial for prolonged periods.

With the lifting of the state of emergency and the lapsing of the regulations, the government has now decided to acquire the Boosa Camp under the Prisons Ordinance to be used as a normal prison. This action, according to the Commissioner of Prisons, would enable the transfer of prisoners from Welikade, Bogambara, Baduula, Mahara, Jaffna and Batticaloa and ease the problems of congestion as well as bunching together of various categories of prisoners.



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IN PARADISE ISLE

TRADE IN CHILD ABUSE

Some Sri Lankan unscrupulous businessmen with foreign connections have taken advantage of the unsettled conditions in the island to indulge in a different kind of business. They are allegedly smuggling out children in pursuit of a lucrative trade in vice - from camel-riding in the oil rich Gulf to sadistic sexual abuse including pornography.

In the recent past, a number of children mainly males, have been reported missing. Some 'child-agents' are busy prowling the streets in search of victims. In some cases, they have resorted to kidnapping. Every missing case has not been reported. But, according to police sources, over fifty cases of missing children under the age of 16 have been reported missing during the last three months.

Most of the children falling into the hands of 'child-agents' are flown out of the country with fake documents and sometimes with bogus guardians. It is reported that male children who weigh under 20 kilograms are sent mainly to the Gulf States where they are used as reluctant camel-riders in races which are watched and betted on by rich sheiks.

A Colombo newspaper carried the report in early December of the sale of

a 10 year old boy from Colombo 12 who had been sold by his father to an agent for camel-riding in the Gulf. The boy's father was arrested following a message from the Sri Lankan Embassy in Abu Dhabi that five Sri Lankan boys were being used as camel-riders there. In another instance, a 12 year old boy escaped after he had been kidnapped and held captive for more than eight hours. The escaped boy is reported to have said that he was bundled into a van as he was returning from a tuition lesson. The boy was kept bound, gagged and blindfolded as his captors travelled around and later kept tied to a chair with his hands behind his back in a well-furnished room. After receiving a telephone call, the captors bundled the boy into the van again which was driven in the direction of Dehiwela where the van came to a dead stop and his captors went into a tea-boutique to refresh themselves. The boy managed to free himself and made good his escape.

On the same day in Dehiwela, a 13 year old girl was able to break free from the clutches of a woman who had attempted to forcibly accost her into a nearby vehicle. The girl was freed due to the timely intervention of two auto-rickshaw drivers.

UNCEF CALLS FOR END TO 'SLAVETRADE'

The United Nations Children's Education Fund has appealed to the Sri Lankan government to stop the recently exposed trade in children to West Asian countries.

Crime investigators had cracked down on the lucrative racket - a virtual slave trade where children between seven and eight were sent to the Gulf region and trained to ride in camel races, one of the regions's most popular sports.

Astrologer's alleged role

Sleuths from the Colombo Fraud Investigation Bureau (CFIB) recently arrested a professor of astrology who is believed to be the master-mind behind the shocking trade. "The professor, owner of a licensed man-power recruitment agency in Colombo, has been involved in the racket for many years," said sub-inspector Arumugam of CFIB.

The professor is believed to have confessed to sending at least four boys as camel riders to the Gulf region. A Sri Lankan passport, which had been altered in order to send another boy, was also found by the police in the suspect's office.

Unsuspecting Sri Lankan children were being used as reluctant jockeys in camel races where the bettings go up to millions of dollars. During the races, the lives of the child jockeys are in constant danger.

A seven-year-old boy Rohan, one of the lucky ones who survived a two-month long ordeal as a jockey, described his ordeal to the police. "I was housed inside a makeshift cabin built out of Zinc adjoining the camel stable with two other boys of my age. One of them was a Sinhalese and together we used to constantly discuss our plight and think about our parents and friends back home."

Rohan said he was given very little food and was beaten almost daily whenever he lost a race or faulted in his duties. He said their food was restricted to two rotis a day and a cup of tea without milk as their stable boss explained that camel riders were required to be light in weight. "Twice I fell off the camel and was severely beaten by the boss for losing the races", he said, displaying the scars.

'Hold on or die'

"We were asked to wear skin-tight



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pants and had to hold on tight to a string tied around the camel's neck. Our boss warned us, 'hold on to the string or you will fall and die', he said.

According to Rohan's grandmother, he was sold for 10,000 Sri Lankan rupees into the trade by his father, a heroin addict.

Immigration officials at Colombo airport recently arrested a man trying to smuggle a nine-year old boy, Amarasinghe, to the Gulf on a fake passport.

**APPEAL FOR
TAMIL READING MATERIAL**

The Inspector of Immigration who is in charge of Harmondsworth Detention Centre, West Drayton, Middlesex has requested us for Tamil books, magazines, periodicals etc. to build up a Tamil Library for the use of Tamil detainees there. Those who could spare these items, please contact: **South London Tamil Welfare Group** 76 Queens Road, London SW19 8NR. Tel: 01-879 7716

OPINION

A LOSS OF WISDOM IN SRI LANKA

by Lt. Col. Anton J. N. Selvadurai

Dr. Schumacher in his book "Small is Beautiful" says "Man driven by greed and envy loses the power of seeing things as they really are, in their roundness and wholeness. The intelligence is dimmed and there is a loss of wisdom, a loss of happiness, serenity and peace. The working for peace involves working primarily for the restoration of wisdom by megalomaniac governments and a sick society."

Dr. Schumacher spoke of Buddhist economics and philosophy which could help to establish peace in the world. I remember way back in 1971 when I was a Staff Officer in Army Headquarters in Colombo, a certain important Buddhist priest addressed the officers. He told those gathered there that it would be foolish for the majority Sinhalese community "to have a fifth columnist in your camp". This sort of language went well with a military audience. He said the majority community should be generous and understanding and compassionate with the minorities, as laid down by the Buddha Dharma. J.R. Jayawardene too spoke of a 'Dharmishta Government', only after he was well ensconced as President, with nothing further to achieve in his climb to power. It is very easy to say noble things but putting them into practice seems to be the difficulty.

Lack of wisdom

Reviewing the past actions of the Sinhala community, one sees errors and misjudgements caused because, driven by chauvinism, bigotry, and envy of the Tamil minority, they lost the power of seeing things as they are. The very idea of making Sri Lanka an exclusive preserve of the Sinhala Buddhists contradicts the basic tenets of Buddhism. There has been a loss of wisdom in their chauvinistic pursuit of power and glory. The 'Sinhala Only' policy was the beginning of the downfall of Sri Lanka. By the mere stroke of a pen, Mr. S. W.R.D. Bandaranaike made 'Sinhala only' the official language overnight and the immediate result was the emigration of our colourful and flamboyant Burgher community to Australia. The 'Think Tank' of the government now publicly admit that this was a stupendous error. Although this move was primarily directed against the Tamils, some of them took up the challenge and learnt Sinhala. They soon became trilingual, even in the remote villages of Jaffna and Batticaloa. Our Sinhala brothers knew 'Sinhala only' and were now placed at a disadvantage. They found difficulty in the study of science and technical subjects and in the profession of medicine, engineering etc. The Sinhala language was not developed



enough to cope with the expression and terminology of modern scientific thought. They had to study English as a second language to enter the professions. They realised the counter productive effect of such a sudden change, and now have English also as an official link language which is taught in all schools. The wisdom of learning Tamil also as a second or additional language did not occur to them. It would have been such a lovely gesture and solicited the co-operation and goodwill of the Tamils. The Sinhala soldier serving in the North-East soon appreciated the need to learn Tamil for communication with the locals, because the harassed Tamils refused to speak in Sinhala in protest and pretended not to understand.

It is natural for Sinhala to be made an official language because it is the language of the majority, but its method of implementation and enforcement was immoral and cruel. No regard was paid to the minority Tamils whose language played an important role, considering the fact that at that time Tamil speaking people were in the majority in Colombo, with Indian Tamils and Muslims also speaking Tamil. Now, although rather late, the importance of all 3 languages is being realised and officially accepted. A lot of bloodshed and violence could have been avoided.

Common origins

The Tamils naturally wanted a certain amount of independence and at least the right of self-determination in what they believed to be their country. There is plenty of archaeological evidence of an ancient megalithic civilisation which was common with that, in all of South India. The 'Catamaran' brought in large numbers of South Indians regularly from time immemorial but the Sinhalese still want to think that they are of North Indian and Aryan origin. When I was a young

officer attached to the Task Force Anti-Illicit Immigration (TAFAIL) in the North we used to apprehend over a thousand illegal immigrants a day who came in their catamarans. One now realises how they contributed to the growing Sinhala community. The grandparents of many people living on the coastline from Chilaw to Negombo still speak Tamil. There are several Tamil names used by the Sinhalese. Names like Arachi, Muhandiram, Mudiyanse, Mudaliyar, are Tamil names. Titles such as 'Illangakoon', 'Tennakoon', and 'Perumal' are pure Tamil words, while names like 'Kuruppu', 'Waidyasekera', and 'Warnekulasuriya' are from Kerala. Instead of focussing attention on the common origins, we have been encouraged to concentrate on the characteristics that divide the two communities.

The role of religious readers

The introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka played a very important part in the development of the Sinhalese language and created a definite distinction between the Sinhalese Buddhists and the Tamil Hindus as 2 separate races, causing a polarisation. Even now the Buddhist Sangha are clamouring for special treatment and for a Buddha Sasana Ministry, with a view to consolidating their powers in controlling the Sinhala masses. They oppose a multi-religious society.

While religion cannot be completely divorced from politics it must be appreciated that religious leaders should only intercede when there is injustice and violation of Human Rights, like in South Africa. Instead of more or less dictating to the Government, the Buddhist Sangha should be exhorting the Government in supporting the rights and self-determination of the minorities in a unitary Sri Lanka. They should be taking an active part in the process of reconciliation according to the 'Dharma' and not preaching sectarianism. The fact that there are several bikkhus behind bars for fermenting and participating in political and ethnic riots is good evidence of the un-buddhistic influence of the Sangha. The correction of the 'Bikkhu image' and the preaching of reconciliation must come foremost with the leadership of the Buddhist clergy. I hope they would appreciate the fact that peace in Sri Lanka rests heavily on their shoulders. They and they alone can influence events to a significant extent. They should give their wholehearted and trusting support to Mr. Premadasa, a man of vision, a man of the people. In due course I hope Mr. Premadasa would wean the Sangha out of political activ-

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ity and restore them to their pastoral role.

Refusal of Federal system

If only wisdom had prevailed and the system of Government changed to suit our multi-racial and multi-religious society in a Federal system, we could have lived in peace all these years. With the genius of our people we could have developed into a prosperous people like those in Japan, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea, etc. Refusal to accept the reasonable request of the Tamils for a federal state has led to so much bloodshed and hatred and the creation of Prabhakaran and the 'Tamil Tigers' and a demand for an independent state of Eelam. All the actions of successive government in this connection have been counter-productive and Sri Lanka will never be the same again. The solution now seems to be separation under the guarantee of Indian suzerainty for protection against Sinhala incursions, in a Cyprus-type arrangement. Federation with a Tamil state begging for Sinhala largesse, working through a hostile bureaucracy together with unrelenting Sinhala colonisation of Tamil areas, will obviously not be viable. Perhaps it would be more peaceful to live in separate areas as good neighbours rather than squabble under one roof.

The present system of Provincial

Councils is a farce with 20 of the 26 Secretariats still not functioning. I cannot see them functioning as they should in the North and East and in due course violence is bound to recur with Sinhala colonisation going on in the East. This would seem to be a very temporary solution and then we would get back to square one all over again.

Lack of proper perspective

Because of religious and political bigotry the people of Sri Lanka, the Island Paradise, have lost their ability to see things clearly in their proper perspective and have lost their wisdom and brought upon themselves incalculable misery. The new President has spoken of the language question and says it is a tragical social issue created by the SLFP 30 years ago on a 24-hour time frame. He seems to dissociate the UNP from this and I don't remember much opposition to it at that time from the UNP led by Dudley Senanayake and J.R. Jayawardene. The language policy was well supported by the UNP and Prime Minister, Lionel Kotelawala, introduced the Sinhala 'SRI' sign on motor vehicle number plates, much to the annoyance of the Tamil minority. I don't remember much opposition from the media either. But now Mr. Premadasa says that language should be a means of unification and not alienation. The media comments that his openness contrasts with the guile and hypocrisy of the prevarications which

the swabasha enthusiasts once adopted. There seems to be a U-turn on these issues now, because the idea of making Sri Lanka an exclusive Sinhala Buddhist preserve with no consideration for minorities does not now appear to be a feasible proposition. They were blind then because they would not see; but now they see – so it seems.

Restoration of wisdom

The recognition and acceptance by the Sinhala people of a common South Indian ancestry with the Tamils will help in removing the feelings of resentment and antagonism against them. It will help to de-polarise and diffuse the ethnic issue and bring the 2 communities to see things clearly. Sinhala leaders and historians must review this matter seriously and take steps to show the close affinities of the 2 communities, instead of alienating them. The great similarities in religion, language and culture make this understanding quite a feasible proposition and all that is needed is good leadership led by the Buddha Sasana and Mr. Premadasa.

The working for peace involves primarily the restoration of wisdom by the Government and the people led by the Buddhist Sangha in the creation of a Dharmishta Government and a truly multi-racial and multi-religious society.

A TAMIL CO-OP HOMES INC. IN TORONTO

When Ceylon, a colony of the British Empire became a Dominion – exactly four decades ago – the then called Ceylonese, started trickling into the then, not so known, but ever progressive, Land of Maples. They were seeking better opportunities and settling down to a new way of life. Seventeen years ago, the trickle became a stream. In 1972 she became a republic within the commonwealth and called herself Sri Lanka. With the British Raj gone, a place, democratic in theory, became the battleground of hungry, power-seeking politicians, where the majority ill-treated the Tamil minority. During the Bandaranaike government the ill-fated "Sinhala Only" policy had its way, denying Tamils the right of equal opportunities in their mother-tongue. The standardisation in the intake at university, saw many a Tamil migrate to Canada, "the land of immigrants". The trickle now became a steady stream. Then Junius Jayawardene's government in 1983 had not only a genocide (not to speak of the killings of Tamil prisoners at the Welikade jail), but also, the general exodus of many Tamils as sponsored or nominated landed immigrants and as refugees.

This was the time that SACEM, Society for the Aid of Ceylon Minorities, started to think in terms of



Canadian Housing

helping their folks. The Tamil Co-op Homes Inc. was one of the tangible projects of the SACEM. The sod-cutting ceremony took place in January 1987 and the place was inhabited by August 1988. We did have a few teething problems, but are looking forward to being weaned in the future. We will have a new board of directors, where the inmates hope to have a greater say than the earlier outsiders.

We have eight floors above ground level – the last being the roof garden. There are 129 units in the Building

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One has only to step into the place to be greeted with sounds of Tamil yapping. The aroma of "curry and rice", beats even the vents and expellers. So... this is the place where we hope and pray, to preserve and strengthen our Tamil traditions and culture.

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Jaffna Tamil Hindu parents seek bridegroom for doctor daughter, MBBS, 34 years, employed London, permanent resident. Please send details and horoscope. M 275, c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents seek suitable partner for their son, 31, professional engineer, British citizen. Chart and details to M 276, c/o Tamil Times

Parents seek partner for Tamil Hindu doctor daughter, 28 years, 5'5", permanent resident in Australia. Please write with details to M 277, c/o Tamil Times.

Hindu mother settled in States seeks educated, slim, fair, tall, bride for son (professional engineer) in early thirties. M 278, c/o Tamil Times

Jaffna Hindu father seeks attractive, slim, tall, educated bride for son who is just 30 years, owning house and employed as an executive in reputable firm, with total remuneration of £21,000 per annum. Send details with photograph - returned in confidence. M 279, c/o Tamil Times

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We congratulate the following couples on their recent marriage

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Ketheeswaralingam son of Mr & Mrs E. Vaithilingham, Kuppilam, Earlalai, Sri Lanka and Gowridevi daughter of Mr & Mrs Kanagaratnam, Raja Veethi, Atchuvaley, Sri Lanka on 29.1.89 at Archway Murugan Temple, London, N6

Bhaskaran son of Mr and Mrs A.N. Ponniah, 30 Third Cross Street, Jaffna, Sri Lanka and Rathidevi daughter of the late M. Sinnathamby and Mrs Sinnathamby, Nanthavil, Kokuvil, Sri Lanka and sister of Mr S. Rasaiyaah, 154 Crescent Dr, Petts Wood, Orpington, Kent BR5 1AU, U.K ON 29.1.89 at Sri Murugan Temple, London E12.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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March 17, 7.30p.m. Bhavan's Dance Ballet directed by Dr.H.K. Ranganath from India
March 18, 7.30p.m. Sitar by Pandit Ravishankar.

March 4, 7.00p.m. Tamil Orphans Trust presents Karnatic Music Concert by SMT Nageswari Bramanandha at Gayton High School Hall, Gayton Road, Harrow, Middlesex, U.K. For tickets and information ring 01-422 0012/907 3771.

OBITUARIES

Rasamany Benjamin wife of M. Benjamin (Retired - Survey Department), mother of Zelina, Basil, Thilaga, Kamala and Shanthi; mother-in-law of Dr. Ariyanayagam, Dr. Nirmala Benjamin, Jeevam Segarajasinghe, Balendra Nagalingam and Elmo Xavier; grandmother of Dr. Denaesh, Ajit, Shashi, Shobana, Arjuna, Aravinda, Anusha, Prakash, Ashok, Shalini, Minoli, Shankar, Jitendra and James, passed away at 83 Main Street, Jaffna on 8th December.



Piraveen Yogendran (6), born 30.5.82, beloved son of Mr. & Mrs. T.S. Yogendran, brother of Mathurini passed away under tragic circumstances on 21.12.88, in a car accident while on holiday in Malaysia - 38 Warren Drive North, Berrylands, Surrey KT5 9QL, U.K.

Dorothy Thevaratna Singanayagam (76) wife of late Rev J.M Singanayagam mother of Joe and Indirane passed away at her home in Manipay, Sri Lanka on 10.11.88.

Rajasuriyar Chellappah (70), beloved husband of Annalakshmi (nee Chellappah), father of Chelvy Sri Ranganathan (Ireland), Nimal (Canada), Shanthy Arudpragasam (Australia) and Dr. Naren Chellappah (Singapore) passed away in Sydney on 1.11.88 - 48 Beechgrove Lawns, Monaghan, Ireland.

Robert Setukavalar (76), husband of the late Selvaranee (nee Pullenayagam), father of Rabintran (Australia), Jayendran (Oman), Suhendran (Australia), Rajini Somanader, Selvini Devendra (U.K.), Vinodini Somanader and Premini died on 27.12.88 - 43 Central Road, Batticaloa, Sri Lanka.

George Edward (74), Retired Training College lecturer, beloved husband of Ponnimalar (nee Beadle) and father of Shanti Aruliah and Vasanti Richards passed away in Jaffna on 18.12.88 - 17 Swartz Lane, Chundikuli, Sri Lanka.

Ambalavanar Sambandan (82), Retired Lawyer, husband of the late Saraswathy (nee Veeravahu), father of Dr. Nirmala Pasupati (Oman), Saradha Satgunasingham, Padma Nadaraser, Urmila, Usha, Padmanabha (Malaysia), Dr. Sidha Sambandan (U.K.), passed away in Jaffna on 18.12.88 - 7 Hardwick Close, Eaton, Norwich NR4 6JQ U.K.)

Memorial Meeting

A meeting to commemorate the services of the late Prof. S. Viththiananthan to Tamil language and culture and to synchronise with the performance of his last rites in Sri Lanka was held on 28.1.89, at the London Tamil School, Tooting, London SW17, presided over by his former student Mr.K. Navasothy. Mr. V.N.Navaratnam (former M.P.Sri Lanka), Messers C.Kathiresan, Balasundaram, K.Vaikunthavasani, A.T.Benedict, Mrs T.Muttucumaraswamy and others spoke at the meeting.

Dr James T. Ratnam

The eminent scholar, historian, journalist and philanthropist Dr James T Ratnam died in Colombo on 4.11.88. in his 82nd year. Dr. Ratnam who hails from Pandaterruppu had after his education at University College, Colombo and Law College interested himself in various activities ranging from journalism to politics and archaeology. He will best be remembered in Jaffna for the Evelyn Ratnam Memorial Institute, he set up near the Jaffna University Campus to promote research and scholarly studies. He set up the institute in memory of his late wife and gifted it to Jaffna College, to be held in trust and to fulfil the purpose for which he founded it.

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**Admin. Officer, South Tamil Welfare Group,
76 Queens Road, London SW19 8NR.
Tel. 01-879 7716.**

**Mridangam Aranjethram of Kumarathasan Angello Kumuthan**

It was the dawn of a new era in the Tamil musical field in Britain with the Mridangam Aranjethram of Selvan Kumarathasan Angello Kumuthan on 21.1.89. at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. His Guru Sri Rasiyah Balasri hails from Jaffna and is a well respected and talented artiste among those Mridangists both here and abroad. He has introduced a budding young artiste worthy of his talent and knowledge. Kumuthan was very much at ease with his instrument and his accompaniment to Smt Sivasakthi Sivanesan appeared to all as one of a full fledged Mridangist. His solo with his Guru Sri Balasri on the Gadham and Sri Sivarajah on the Ganjira and Morsing was admirable and flawless. Above all the young artiste enjoyed playing the Mridangam and also was quick to reveal his appreciation in the superb vocal and violin renderings that night. Kumuthan's parents, Sri and Smt V. Kumarathasan of 11 Edith Road, Selhurst, London SE25 5QE, should be praised for giving their son the opportunity to satisfy the aesthetic urge in him and thereby indirectly being a shining example for other parents to emulate.

Saraswathy Packiarajah

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