

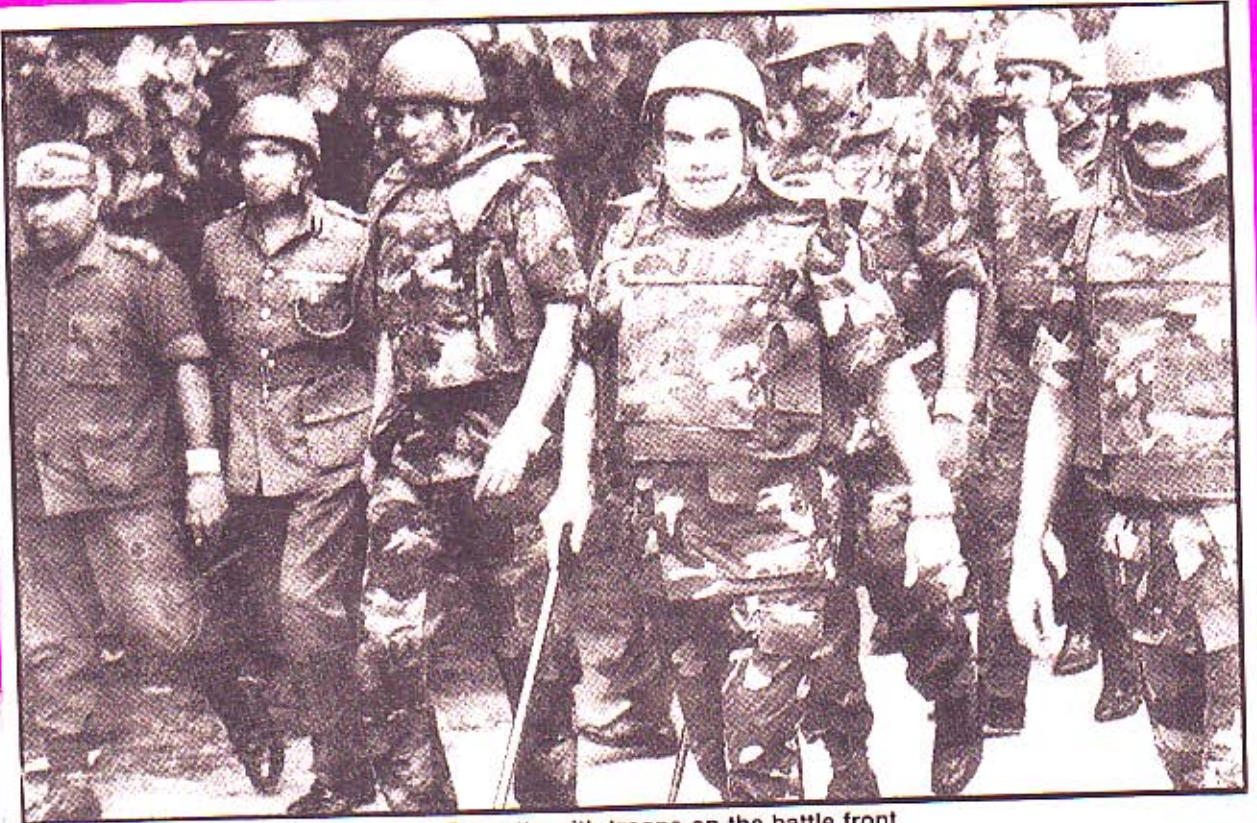
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Operation Leap Forward Vs Operation Tiger Jump



Deputy defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatta with troops on the battle front

★ **Mysterious Killers
and Mutilated Bodies**

★ **On Self-Determination**

★ **Assault on Democracy
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of what you say, but I'll
defend to the death your
right to say it.
- Voltaire.

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'Operation Leap Forward' Vs 'Operation Tiger Jump'

Eelam War III took its bloodiest turn when the country's security forces launched 'Operation Leap Forward' on Sunday 9 July directed at Jaffna, the heartland of the Tamil Tigers.

The operation described as the biggest military thrust since 'Operation Liberation' in May 1987 (which was stopped in its track by Indian intervention) was not unexpected. The several reverses suffered by the security forces since the Tigers broke off the 14-week truce on April 19 did, according to a military analyst in Colombo, force the hand of the political leadership to go on a counter-offensive.

The security forces could no longer remain on the defensive suffering incalculable casualties at the hands of the Tigers. They had to in some way redeem themselves not only in the eyes of the south, but also bolster the sagging morale of their men on the battle field, said the analyst.

In fact, two weeks earlier the Tigers had overrun, in a midnight amphibious assault, a military camp at Mandaitivu, an offshore island just three kilometres from the Jaffna town, on 28 June killing an estimated 102 soldiers out of a possible 350 who were in the camp and carrying away a vast quantity of weapons and ammunition. Although the military claimed that over 50 cadres were killed in the battle, the LTTE claimed that only 7 of their cadres died in the assault. The 200 automatic weapons, 300-odd firearms and about 1200,000 rounds of ammunition taken away by the Tigers were displayed for public view in Jaffna in the following days.

Sri Lanka has the support of the international community for military operations to weaken Tamil Tigers and force them to resume peace talks, Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar said on 21 June in Colombo in the context of reports that the government was planning a major offensive against the LTTE in the north of the country.

'All countries say they fully understand... Sri Lanka is completely clear of blame', he told a news conference. 'They fully understand there has to be a bout of fighting of the kind that is going on', he added. 'They do not expect the Sri Lankan government to take lying down these assaults'.

Kadirgamar said he hoped military offensives against the rebels would weaken them enough to force a resumption of peace talks to end the war in the northeast. 'If the LTTE suffers reversals or loss of manpower to an unacceptable degree, they have finite fighting forces, logic would dictate a change of stance on the part of the LTTE', he said.

The peace offensive of the previous months was inexorably giving way to an inevitable military offensive. 'Peace through war' seemed the guiding slogan, and a lexicon of Orwellian double-speak was gaining currency. Anuruddha Ratwatte told parliament that 'the war would be a means of creating a necessary climate for a political solution to end the war and that the government had not given up on the peace option'.

Even after the breakdown of peace talks, President Kumaratunga was still hoping that the Tigers would return to the negotiating table. But as the rapidity with which events were occurring on the war front increased, the die seemed finally cast for what could make Eelam War III more bloodier and destructive than the previous two.

'If it is total war that the Tigers want, then we are prepared to fight successfully and win the war against them', President Kumaratunga said when addressing heads of government institutions and state corporations. 'For 12 years the war effort was erratic and ill-planned. But now it is a concerted and well planned effort and we are getting close to victory step by step', she added.

Returning after a much publicised visit to the northern main military base at Palaly in the Jaffna peninsula, State Minister for Defence, Mr. Anuruddha Ratwatte, while speaking in parliament on 6 July promised to 'crush the LTTE'. 'Unlike in the past, the LTTE will not be permitted to dance the way they want, and this will definitely happen', Ratwatte said.

The government offensive certainly did not come as a surprise to the LTTE. Reports from Jaffna stated that the Tigers have been particularly active in schools and tutorials, where

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they held meetings to persuade both boys and girls to join them. The recruitment drive was backed up by a publicity campaign in the LTTE-controlled media, warning the public that the security forces were planning to launch a major offensive against the peninsula before the north-east monsoon commenced in October. Pamphlets were circulated bearing the message that government forces would wreak havoc against the civilian population. The Tigers exhorted each family to send one of its members to join their ranks. They publicly called for recruits to be trained to join the LTTE's Sea Tiger and Air Force units.

The LTTE high command ordered its cadres to prepare for a large scale sea borne attack by government troops and placed all units on alert and warned the residents to leave their homes if serious fighting started.

The Offensive

The forces numbering over 10,000 launched their offensive from the Palaly airbase at the crack of dawn on 9 July backed by air cover as naval gunboats pounded suspected Sea Tiger bases on the coastline. Before the offensive began, warplanes dropped leaflets on the Jaffna Peninsula warning of an attack and imposing a dusk to dawn curfew and asking the people to move into public buildings like temples, churches and schools.

Sources close to the military in Colombo said that the main thrust of the current operation was to move forward with the aim of recapturing and keeping territory previously under Tiger control. Previous operations have involved forces moving forward, attacking the rebels, then pulling back to base.

The operation is to hit them hard on their head and reduce their military capability so that they can be brought back to the negotiating table on our terms', Army Commander Lieutenant-General Gerry de Silva told the press on the first day of the operation.

Ten soldiers were wounded in the fighting while the Tigers fired at and hit Air Force helicopters which managed to land safely, he said.

Troops on two axes of advance from the west of the Palaly airbase planned to link up in a pincer movement and double the territory under army control, in the face of heavy mortar and machine-gun fire from the Tigers, de Silva said.

Tigers' radio broadcast monitored in north-central Vavuniya said the offensive was preceded by widespread shell-

ing from all the army's bases on Jaffna causing heavy casualties among the civilian population. One resident in Jaffna town reached by telephone said shells were 'raining down' while planes launched from the giant Palaly airbase were bombing LTTE positions. At least 85 civilians were injured in Jaffna town and 10 of them died, said a military official speaking on condition of anonymity. More than 75,000 civilians had fled the fighting following the first day of the offensive, he said.

At least two soldiers including an officer were killed and 29 wounded, the official said. By late afternoon, the casualties among civilians had increased to over 100 dead and over 150 injured. Troops had advanced three km (two miles) west of their front lines without much resistance from the Tigers.

Military sources said the purpose of the offensive was to gain control of territory in the Jaffna Peninsula, but not to capture the town of Jaffna where hundreds of thousands of Tamil civilians live.

Lawrence Thilakar, the Tamil Tigers' senior spokesman in Europe speaking from Paris said, 'The offensive is very much expected. It's not surprising because the government has no option other than the military all along. But at the same time our feeling is very much unrealistic because it will entail a lot of civilian casualties. But we have to resist on the ground when they launch a major offensive and my opinion is the government will not be successful because previous regimes also have attempted on several occasions with such massive operations and ultimately they were doomed to failure'.

Troops on the western axis advanced seven km (four miles) and captured the Punnalai causeway linking the Jaffna peninsula and Karaitivu island, where the Navy has its biggest northern base, Army spokesman Munasinghe said. The second column advanced five km (three miles) and captured Sandilipay. The southern flank was claimed to be marching in the direction of Jaffna town.

Church Bombed

It was confirmed that on 9 July 65 people were killed, including 13 children, and over 100 persons injured when the Roman Catholic St. Peters Church at Navali was hit by bombs dropped by attack aircraft. The ICRC confirmed the bombing, saying dozens of bodies were buried in the rubble. 'This is really a violation of humanitarian law if a civilian area has been deliberately targeted', ICRC Field Coordinator Dominique Henry said,

adding that he had no information whether the attack was deliberate or an accident.

Roman Catholic Bishop of Jaffna. Thomas Soundaranayagam, condemned the bombing and wrote to President Chandrika Kumaratunga to ask her armed forces not to bomb churches, temples, schools and other public places, LTTE radio said. The Bishop told the President, 'Many hundreds were rendered homeless as many houses were razed to the ground and others heavily damaged, including our church and the priest's house

'Therefore we very earnestly appeal to Your Excellency to kindly instruct your forces to desist from bombing, strafing and artillery-rocket attacks on civilian targets like churches, schools and hospitals'.

The radio said that the Roman Catholic Vicar General of Jaffna, Father S.J. Emmanuel, had condemned the bombing, which was carried out after the armed forces warning that told residents to stay at home or go to public buildings including churches and temples for safety.

The radio also said the church bombing took the casualty toll to 150 civilians killed, hundreds wounded and 300,000 displaced by the advance of troops. The radio added that more than 105 bodies were lying in the morgue at Jaffna's main hospital, most unidentifiable because of their wounds. The hospital was full of wounded, many with missing limbs, the radio said.

On being informed, President Chandrika Kumaratunga did not delay in ordering the military on 11 July to investigate the circumstances in which the church was bombed killing civilians. Kumaratunga telephoned the Archbishop of Colombo, Nicholas Marcus Fernando, to express her concern about the tragic incident.

'The president also assured the Archbishop that the on-going military operation was clearly aimed at liberating the people of Jaffna and accordingly the military had been given strict instructions to ensure maximum possible safety of the civilian population', a statement from the Presidential Secretariat said.

Tamil Parties React

'We are very sad about the civilian casualties and feel bad about the offensive. The church incident was shocking. We still urge the government and the LTTE to pursue every possible method to come to a peaceful settlement', said M. Sivasithamparam of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), which has five seats in parlia-

ment. 'While we welcome the move to liberate the people from the LTTE's clutches, our main concern is the civilians. It is inevitable that some will die in bombing and shelling but much of it can be avoided', said Douglas Devananda, leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party, which has nine seats in parliament.

'Even if the LTTE is in places of worship and schools, the military must not bomb these places. I have friends and family in Jaffna and I am very concerned about them. What is the use if people are being killed?' he said.

Devananda said the government should put forward its peace package to solve the war before making its final assault on Jaffna.

The government, which has promised to release its package of devolution for the Tamils this month, has said it wants to weaken the Tigers militarily and then bring them back to the negotiating table. 'So far, they don't seem to have been weakened and civilian casualties will increase. This means the government will lose support among the Tamils', Devananda said.

K. Premachandran, secretary-general of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front, unrepresented in parliament, said the two sides should talk peace. 'The military must stop bombing and shelling densely populated areas', he said. 'This will cause an enormous number of civilian casualties. Both the LTTE and the government should go in for a negotiated settlement'.

'Tens of thousands of people have fled the fighting', Marco Altherr, head of the ICRC delegation, told the press. 'Some reports speak of 250,000 refugees, but it is not clear how many', he said. He confirmed that about 250 people, mostly civilians, were in hospital after being wounded in the fighting.

'Most of the refugees are heading towards Jaffna town. The university, main schools and places of worship are full of refugees', a Jaffna resident who had travelled to government controlled Vavuniya said on 11 July. 'As the army progresses, people are scared. They believe the army may come into Jaffna town', the resident said.

The military spokesman, Brig. Sarath Munasinghe said that the Tigers had tried to recapture Sandilipay overnight in five hours of fighting during which one soldier was killed and two wounded. Munasinghe said the Tigers had suffered 'heavy casualties' when their attacks were repulsed.

On the third day of the operation, army spokesman Sarath Munasinghe

claimed that troops had moved further from Sandilipay, and to Moolai and advanced close to Ponnalai causeway which links peninsula with the Karainagar island, and that troops were consolidating their positions to face any counter-attack from the Tigers. He also said that since operations began, 7 soldiers had been killed and 71 wounded. By 12 July this figure had increased to 18 soldiers dead and 101 injured.

'Troops are now about six km (3.7 miles) from Jaffna town', Brigadier Sarath Munasinghe told a news conference. 'Our aim is to liberate the Jaffna people from the clutches of the LTTE. We plan to bring the entire northern province under government control but we can't give a time frame', he said.

Tigers blew up the Ponnalai bridge, one of several over the lagoon around the peninsula to the city of Jaffna, fearing troops might use it to march into Jaffna town.

Operation Tiger Jump

By 14 July, the Tigers who appeared unable to prevent the onward march of the troops during the previous days unleashed a ferocious counter-attack on government troops killing at least 45 soldiers. Using surface-to-air missiles, they also shot down a Puccara attack aircraft which was on a bombing mission. The pilot was killed when the aircraft crashed into army controlled territory. The Tigers claimed that they recaptured the towns of Alaveddy and Sandilipay inflicting heavy casualties upon the troops and capturing weapons and military vehicles as the soldiers withdrew in haste. Their radio claimed that over 100 soldiers were killed and 48 of their own cadres died in the fighting. But the army claimed that only 19 of their soldiers died in the Tigers' counter-attack.

On 15 July, the LTTE radio claimed that 245 civilians had been killed and 470 injured since the government offensive began on 9 July.

On 15 July the military ended its biggest offensive in eight years against the Tamil Tigers leaving at least 250 people dead after six days of bitter fighting.

'We have completed our operation successfully', said Maj. N. Abeysinghe, a military spokesman. He did not say when the next assault on the mostly Tiger-held Jaffna peninsula would be.

On 16 July, the day after the Sri Lankan military said that it had completed its 'Operation Leap Forward', the Tigers swung into action sinking a Navy radar-equipped command ship in the course of which they lost three

of their own craft in a daring attack on the Kankesanthurai (KKS) base located on the northern tip of the Jaffna peninsula.

The attack was carried out by frogmen/women while Sea Tiger naval wing boats diverted the navy's attention by staging surface attacks outside KKS harbour. At least two sailors were killed and 17 wounded in the Sea Tiger attack.

Sea Tiger boats tried to enter the harbour soon after midnight but were driven off by the Navy, it said, adding: 'Sea Tiger groups kept on repeatedly attempting to enter the harbour. Navy vessels fired at and sank three rebel boats, killing 10 Tigers, when they made a later attempt to enter the harbour in boats presumably filled with explosives, it said.

The command ship, the SLNS Edithara, was berthed at the KKS pier when it was holed by an underwater explosion at 1.30am (2000 GMT Saturday), the senior navy officer said. Another underwater blast rocked the ship around 5.30am (2400 GMT) and it had partly sunk in the shallow water, he said.

Sea Tiger frogmen sank a similar ship in the same harbour late last year.

A Tiger radio broadcast conceded that 63 of their fighters died when they launched counter-offensive code-named 'Operation Tiger Jump' on 14 July on government troops digging in after capturing territory from the Tigers in a major week-long offensive. And 17 Sea Tigers, all but one women, were killed in the battle in the KKS harbour.

The military said 33 soldiers were killed, raising the army death toll in the week's offensive to 63. The Tigers also shot down an air force Puccara ground-attack aircraft, killing the pilot.

The army says its four brigades have captured 78 sq. km. (30 sq. miles) of territory from Tiger control and that the rebel counter-attack was successfully repulsed. However, Tigers have asserted that they have regained control over all territory captured by the troops during the week's offensive. Residents listening to Jaffna radio said it reported that Tiger cadres had managed to infiltrate the defence lines and were 'carrying out operations' from within 'captured areas'.

The Question

Taking the war into Jaffna, is taking the war into Tiger entrenched territory. The question is whether even if the security forces manage to

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NEWS REVIEW

Mysterious Killers and Mutilated Bodies

On 26 June, 24-year-old Naresh Rajadurai left his work place, a video shop in Wellawatte, at 8.15 pm and was on his way home at Sri Saranankara Road, Dehiwela within Colombo's city limits. But he never arrived. Naresh was stopped on the way in front of a hotel, forced into a white van and taken away by unidentified persons. Three days later on 29 June, his tortured and disfigured body was one of the six similarly tortured and disfigured dead bodies found floating near Welihinda Thotupola in the Maha Oya in Alawwa in the island's north western province.

Among nearly 31 half-starved, mutilated and disfigured bodies of young males recently found floating in the Bolgoda Lake, Modera and Negombo sea coast, and in the Maha Oya (river) at Alawwa, the only one that has been identified is that of Naresh Rajadurai whose parents presently live in Canada. This is a grisly reminder of the days when headless bodies burnt at roadsides or washed up on beaches and river banks and floating in rivers and lakes were a common sight in the south of the island during the horror-stricken years of 1988-89, again raising the spectre of death squads being back in action.

The appearance of these bodies of persons (all males), aged approximately between 20 and 35, in small batches during the last several weeks coincide with several reported 'disappearances' of Tamil youths after being taken into 'custody' by unidentified persons purportedly in 'civvies'. Tamil political circles in Colombo said some Tamil youths travelling to Colombo by train from Vavuniya in the north had been abducted and their whereabouts were still unknown. The general public opinion is that there is a relationship between the abduction of the Tamil youths and the appearance of recent bodies of tortured youths found in the Bolgoda Lake, they said. In spite of the fact, besides Naresh Rajadurai who is a Tamil, none of the other bodies have been identified. Tamil politicians seem to believe that all the victims are Tamils.

Eleven of the bodies were found floating in the Bolgoda Lake, a popular tourist attraction, and fourteen bodies were found in the coastal area of Modera and Negombo, and six at Alawwa. According to police sources, the victims had been starved, tied up, brutally tortured and their bodies

mutilated and disfigured beyond identification.

The Inspector of General of Police, Mr. Frank de Silva, told a press briefing on 22 June that one of the five decomposed bodies found on June 15 in the Bolgoda Lake was identified as that of a Tamil adult because of the tattoo marks found on the left shoulder which carried the word 'Malar', a Tamil word meaning 'flower', but also a common name among Tamil women. It is being suggested that the tattoo could have been the name of the victim's lover. Others could not be identified. The postmortem examinations had been postponed to enable relatives to identify the bodies. Three bodies were found on 10 June. There was evidence that they were starved and then drowned. The dead bodies of five persons found three days ago too would have been killed in a similar manner. The first group of bodies were found floating on the Piliyandala side and the latter group on the Panadura side of the lake.

According to Colombo Judicial Medical Officer, Dr. B.L. de Alwis, who carried out autopsies on eight of the bodies recovered from the Bolgoda Lake, all victims had been starved as he found no traces of food in the stomachs, two of them had been strangled to death - one had a cloth stuffed in his mouth - before they were dumped into the lake. The other six victims' arms and legs were bound together with rope and they were drowned. He could not identify any of them to be a Sinhala or a Tamil man. 'All the bodies are in a highly decomposed stage. The identification of man's race under these conditions is impossible, he said.

Dr. Alwis added that he identified the possible age, height, age, build, distribution of hair, teeth formation and other characteristics, which should make identification possible if a party known to the victim should come forward.

The Observer in its editorial (27.6.95) asked, 'Who are the dead and who was responsible for the killings? Whatever the circumstances are, these are extra-judicial killings to use the fashionable jargon, and the bodies have been disposed in a manner which can only insult the human personality. This is why it is imperative that the Government should give the highest priority to find out who is responsible for these incidents not merely in the interests of human rights, but also its own self-interest'.

It is said that President Chandrika Kumaratunga has been highly disturbed by the reports of these mysterious killings as they might have an

adverse impact on her government's human rights record. She has ordered an urgent and thorough investigation into these killings.

Police sources said that a team of 150 police have been searching for clues to solve the mystery of the bodies found over a three-week period in May and June. Senior Superintendent of Police, Herbie Jayasuriya who is in charge of the investigations said that every possible clue had been checked, but they have yet been unable to make a breakthrough in finding evidence as to who was responsible for these brutal killings. 'It appears that the victims were brought to the locations of their discovery from the capital Colombo and its suburbs or from outstations', he said.

Sri Lankan newspapers ran photographs of five mutilated bodies with police offering a Rs.500,000 (US\$10,000) reward for any information leading to the arrest of their killers.

Panadura Magistrate, S.M.S. Samarakoon has directed the Colombo JMO to preserve the bodies found in the Bolgoda Lake to be handed over to the CID so that the skulls would be available for further investigations. Senior detectives held discussions with Professor Peter Vaneziz, Head of the Department of Forensic Science of the University of Glasgow who was in Colombo recently in connection with the continuing investigations.

In the meantime, it has been reported that a Tamil Member of Parliament has, in a letter to Frank de Silva, the IGP, volunteered to give information regarding four youths from Mannar who went missing after their arrival in Colombo two months ago, and he is to be interviewed by the police shortly.

Abolition of Executive Presidency

July 15 has come and gone, but the powerful Executive Presidency continues. The opposition parties and the anti-government newspapers, which are many, are enjoying their newly found freedom of expression in targeting the government for attack on each and every act of omission or commission, they are engaged in berating Peoples Alliance government of Chandrika Kumaratunga for breaking its pledge to the electorate to abolish the executive presidential system before 15 July 1995.

The main opposition United National Party (UNP), which under J.R. Jayawardene introduced the executive presidential system in 1978 investing

the incumbent President with enormous powers, is now charging the government with betraying its election pledge while its leader, Ranil Wickremasinghe is offering his party's support in parliament to abolish the system.

The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) whose candidate in the last presidential election, Mr. Galapathy, withdrew from the contest on a written guarantee given by Chandrika Kumaratunga, is also up in arms that the government has not kept its pledge.

Constituent parties of the PA government itself, like the Democratic United National Party - Lalith Faction (DUNF-L) led by Srimani Athulathmudali, are also unhappy and are making noises about the government's failure to abolish the executive presidency as promised by 15 July.

All these elements and other critics accuse that, because of its wafer-thin majority in parliament, the government wants to retain the executive presidency to keep a firm grip on the reins of power. However the fact of the matter is that the political agenda as contemplated by President Kumaratunga and her senior ministers has been upset by the LTTE pulling out of the peace process and the cessation of hostilities, leading to Eelam War III.

The government's plan was to bring about a comprehensive scheme of constitutional reform which would have provided for the abolition of the executive presidency and extensive devolution of powers for the Northeast. It hoped that such a scheme combining both aspects with the prospect of a lasting peace would have received the support of an overwhelming majority of the people. The resumption of war with the Tigers has put paid to this strategy.

Many Tamil parties believe that the abolition of the executive presidency should at the same time be accompanied by a political package providing for extensive devolution of powers. Otherwise they would prefer the retention of the executive presidency rather than the return of the Westminster system of parliament. They believe that the latter system with an inbuilt and entrenched Sinhala majority has been responsible for all those measures which has led to the present ethnic conflict. According to Joseph Pararajasinghe of the TULF, 'A presidential candidate has to solicit the vote of the minorities in a presidential election and that gives the minorities a bargaining power. What we would like to see is the executive presidency retained, but its wings clipped to some extent'.

Despite the fact that the government could not keep to its deadline of 15 July, the President and her Constitutional Affairs Minister Mr. G.L. Peiris have insisted that the government is pledged to the abolition of the executive presidency. However, Mr. Peiris says that 'the government is convinced that it is neither practicable nor beneficial to take steps to abolish the executive presidency as an *ad hoc* measure in a situation where there is little or no agreement among political parties represented in parliament on many fundamental matters'.

Mr. Peiris argues that abolition is possible after 'concomitant matters directly related to the process of transfer of power from the president to parliament are addressed in depth and resolved in a manner that meets with acceptance by all political parties across the spectrum'.

Interim Council for Northeast

Political parties representing Tamils and Muslims will be given a chance to informally share power in the running of the administration in Sri Lanka's Northeast through an Interim Council which will be of an advisory nature, Justice and Constitutional Affairs Minister G.L. Peiris said recently at a press conference in Colombo.

Members of non-LTTE Tamil parties have been urging the government to set up a representative Interim Council so that they can play a decision-making role in the Northeast, where the Provincial Council stands dissolved since June 1990, and which is run by a Provincial Governor appointed by the President.

Peiris told a luncheon meeting of the Foreign Correspondents's Association on 23 June that at a preliminary meeting between President Chandrika Kumaratunga and representatives of the Tamil parties held recently it was decided to consider an informal arrangement to allow the parties to participate in provincial decision-making.

He said the council would not have any legislative powers but would be an informal mechanism to advise the governor on running the province.

The non-LTTE Tamil parties have always doubted the successful outcome of the talks between the government and the Tamil Tigers. Now that the talks have broken down and armed hostilities have again flared up, Tamil parties, including those not represented in parliament, are seeking to carve out for themselves a role in the running of the administration in the Northeast thereby seeking to enhance

their own profile and influence among the people of these areas.

Groups like the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), the Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front (ENDLF), the Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), and the All Ceylon Tamil Congress (ACTC) dormant since 1994 are resurfacing themselves and involving themselves in the political debate about the setting up of an interim council for the Northeast. These formations fared badly in the August 1994 general election, and were considered effectively marginalised.

The three political parties that secured representation in parliament were the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), the Democratic Peoples Liberation Front (DPLF) and the Eelam Peoples Democratic Party (EPDP). The EPDP has the largest representation with 9 seats, but it is at the moment facing an election petition in regard to the validity of the poll in northern Jaffna, regarded even by foreign observers as gravely flawed - only about 13,500 of the nearly 550,000 potential voters participated in the election. The DPLF, mainly based in the Vannie district, which secured 3 seats in parliament with a voter turnout of about 25 per cent can be regarded as being on a stronger footing than the EPDP.

Despite the obvious lack of much influence of these parties among the people in the Northeast, the PA government with its fragile parliamentary majority had no option but to take the Tamil representation in parliament seriously. Although the Tamil political parties sit in the opposition, they can opt to participate in the government parliamentary group meetings if they choose to do so. So far only the EPDP has done so.

The lack of representation of Tamil political parties in the cabinet places them at a disadvantage *vis-a-vis* the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) which is able to more directly influence the decision making process. The EPDP and DPLF continuously complain of the lack of influence on the government.

The proposed interim council for the Northeast, is therefore, the direct outcome of representation made by the Tamil parties with a view to enhancing their role in the decision making process affecting the Northeast.

The once-militant Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) recently told the government that its proposed interim peace plan for the north and east must be part of

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a long-term solution to the ethnic conflict and to end a war.

The EPRLF said that the ongoing war with Tamil Tigers was not sufficient reason for delaying the government's long-awaited peace package, offering a form of devolution to the areas of the Northeast. It said that the government's idea of an interim council must not prejudice the long-term peace process.

In fact, this constitutes one of the basic premises on which the EPRLF would be prepared to accept as legitimate any 'interim' arrangement for the Northeast', EPRLF secretary general K. Premachandran said in a statement. The EPRLF backs the People's Alliance coalition government of President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga but has no seats in parliament.

No doubt the LTTE will view the setting up of the interim council with hostility. The moderate Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) is also opposed to the idea of such a Council saying it wants an overall political settlement to the 12-year ethnic war and not piecemeal solutions. The TULF Members of Parliament, particularly those hailing from eastern Sri Lanka, have always displayed a nervousness to be part of any process which may give provocation to the Tamil Tigers.

Seeking Foreign Support to Control LTTE

Sri Lanka has entered into an agreement with the European Union for economic cooperation, political dialogue and combating terrorism and drug trafficking, according to Foreign Ministry sources in Colombo.

Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar who recently concluded a tour of European Union countries urged them to cooperate closely with Sri Lanka to combat terrorism. It is understood that Sri Lanka has urged Germany, France, United Kingdom and the Netherlands, which had allowed the establishment of offices of front organisations of the LTTE, to respond positively to Sri Lanka's request. It was for this purpose that Sri Lanka had entered into the agreement with the European Union on combating terrorism, drug trafficking and money laundering.

Welcoming the recent European Parliament's recent resolution blaming the LTTE for the breakdown of the peace process and calling for the halt of arms supplies to the LTTE, the Foreign Minister during his visit

urged the European Foreign Ministers in Luxembourg to bring the activities of the LTTE's offices in Europe under surveillance so that 'the dangerous phenomenon of terrorism which was tearing apart the fabric of Sri Lankan society could be brought under control'.

The Minister was also reported to have informed the European Council meeting chaired by France's Minister for European Affairs, Michel Barnier that the LTTE had 'secured through devious means' six microflight aircraft from France for the purpose of carrying out 'suicide missions'.

In response to a question from the French Minister as to how he viewed current developments in the conflict, the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister is reported to have said that the LTTE 'suffered from the delusion' that it could win its war through military means, and emphasised that the ethnic conflict was not amenable to a military solution. 'However, the LTTE will have to suffer an unacceptable level of losses in order to bring them back to the negotiating table', the Foreign Minister had said.

In the meantime, reports from Colombo indicate that the question of proscribing the LTTE is under government's consideration. At a press conference on 30 June, when asked whether the government was considering the proscription of the LTTE, Mr. Kadirgamar said, 'I must confess that after April 19 (when the LTTE withdrew from the truce and the peace process), we did not give it any particular thought. But we are going to now because I have been informed by certain European governments that they find it difficult to accede to our request to contemplate closing down LTTE offices in their countries in a situation where we ourselves have not proscribed the LTTE. We are going to give this matter close attention'.

The Attorney General, in response to a government request for advice on the matter, would appear to have given his opinion suggesting two ways of proscribing the LTTE - either by promulgating an Emergency Regulation under the Public Security Ordinance which would not take much time, or by enacting a special Act of Parliament which might take considerable time.

Political analysts in Colombo do not seem to see the government's move as having any practical significance. They point to the fact that the LTTE was once a banned organisation in the late 1970s, and if it made no difference, then, what difference would it make now when the LTTE is in a much stronger position militarily, they

ask. They suggest that the proscription would only have the effect of pushing the LTTE further towards the military option, and thwart any chances of resumption of talks with them in the future.

U.S. Wants Peace Talks to Resume

The United States would fully back the Sri Lankan government in its efforts to bring about a negotiated settlement to end the ethnic war there and use all its influence to bring back the LTTE to the negotiating table, the U.S. Ambassador to India, Mr. Frank G. Wisner said in the southern city of Madras in South India on 21 June.

Answering questions at a 'meet the press' programme at the Madras Press Club on why the American government chose to include the LTTE in the international terrorist list, Mr. Wisner said the U.S. was enormously shocked and upset about the way the LTTE had gone back unilaterally from the peace process and resorted to violence.

The United States had great hopes when peace talks resumed after President Chandrika Kumaratunga assumed power late last year. 'But we were enormously shocked and upset when the LTTE resumed violence unilaterally and without any provocation, dashing all hopes of peace', he said.

Blacklisting of the LTTE by the US government meant that from now on the U.S. would carefully watch the LTTE's activities internationally and keep a close vigil on its movements in the U.S. itself, he said, adding 'we will watch their activities and actions and condemn the killing of innocent people. We are watching the activities of the LTTE very, very carefully, both internationally and in the U.S., Mr. Wisner said.

The U.S. Ambassador also said that Washington would support Sri Lanka against Tamil rebels by seeing that no arms reached Tamil Tigers. 'We will condemn (LTTE) actions and support the Sri Lankan government's defence measures against it. We will not allow the sale of weapons to it to fight the government'.

The United States wanted peace talks to resume, Wisner said. 'We will encourage the two parties to come to the negotiating table', he said.

Bishop Wants an End to the War

The country has 'bled enough; no longer can we pay the price of another war, Dr. Kingsley Swampillai, Catho-

hc Bishop of Sri Lanka's eastern province, said while condemning the recent what he called senseless killings in Sri Lanka's eastern province, especially last month's massacre of 42 men, women and children. Sri Lankan government sources had blamed the LTTE for these killings.

The Bishop said the 'gruesome murders' of fishermen and their families at Kallawara in the eastern Trincomalee district should never be repeated. 'It is time to cry a halt to this senseless killing of human beings, especially innocent humans who have no involvement whatsoever in the on-going conflict', he said in an interview with Reuters.

The theatre of war appears to be the eastern province which has an ethnic mix of Tamils, Moslems and Sinhalese who wish to live in peace and amity', Swampillai added. Pope John Paul has also sent a message conveying his sorrow at the Kallarawa killings, he said.

If racial supremacy of one over the other or an ethnic cleansing is the goal of this war, then it is bound to bring about irreparable disaster', Swampillai said. 'It should be borne in mind that the people of the east had overwhelmingly demonstrated their yearning for peace through the recent ballot', he added. Swampillai said the country has 'bled enough'. No longer can we pay the price of another war', he said.

The eastern province voted along with the rest of the country to put the People's Alliance into power in August last year, mainly on its pledge to find a political solution to the ethnic war.

Meanwhile, a Batticaloa Jesuit priest, Father Joseph Mary, said that human rights abuses by security forces in the Batticaloa district had escalated since the LTTE broke the ceasefire in April. He said boys had been taken indiscriminately from their parents and innocent civilians had been killed.

Amnesty Condemns Return of Death Penalty

The London-based international human rights organisation, Amnesty International, has condemned the Sri Lankan government for its decision to re-implement the death penalty. 'The decision to restore this most cruel and inhuman form of punishment represents a retrogressive step for human rights in Sri Lanka', it said in a statement issued on 23 June.

The government recently said it was looking at re-imposing the death sentence which, although part of the law, has not been implemented since 1976.

Justice Minister G.L. Peiris told reporters on 22 June that at the moment, all death sentences were automatically commuted. 'The death penalty will be given only for horrendous crimes which shock the public', he said.

The issue arose shortly after parliament passed a private member's motion calling for the return of the death penalty. The motion appeared to have cross-party support.

'Amnesty International is appealing to the government of Sri Lanka to remove the death penalty from the statute books in affirmation of its stated commitment to human rights, particularly to the right to life', the statement said. Amnesty said studies had shown that the death penalty did not deter violent crimes or drug-related offences.

Sri Lanka has quickly responded to assure Amnesty International that no decision had been made to reintroduce executions even though parliament passed a private member's motion calling for the return of the death penalty.

'I wish to state categorically that there has been no firm decision to reintroduce execution', Justice Minister G.L. Peiris told Amnesty in a letter released by the ministry on 25 June. He said the purpose of the bill was to reexamine the question of the early release of prisoners serving life sentences after the death penalty had been automatically commuted.

'There has been considerable agitation on the part of the public in recent years against such early releases', Peiris said. 'This was the main element of the rationale underpinning the private member's motion'.

He said the question had arisen of whether, in extreme murder cases, the death penalty should mean just that. 'However, even in these exceptional cases, the government has made no decision to carry out the death penalty', he said.

Many human rights organisations within Sri Lanka also have condemned the proposal to reintroduce capital punishment which they describe as 'legalised revenge killing'.

Danish Ex-Minister Found Guilty

Former Danish Justice Minister, Erik Ninn-Hansen was found guilty recently of violating refugee legislation in Denmark's first impeachment trial in 85 years.

Ninn-Hansen, 73, was on trial in what has come to be known as the 'Tamilgate' refugee scandal which brought down Conservative Prime

Minister Poul Schlueter in January 1993.

The ruling, sentencing Ninn-Hansen to a conditional four months imprisonment, was announced by a special 20-judge impeachment court, which voted in favour and five against. Ninn-Hansen did not attend the court and was unavailable for comment afterwards. He suffered a stroke in June last year and ill health kept him away from the court's last hearings.

Ninn-Hansen, who pleaded not guilty to all charges, was the only politician impeached in the scandal, which his defence lawyers described as more of a political vendetta than a trial.

'The ruling brings to an end a case which has lasted more than five years and been a terrible burden for all involved in it', Conservative Party leader Hans Engell told the press.

The Danish parliament voted in June 1993 to impeach Ninn-Hansen, grand old man of the Conservative Party and Schlueter's mentor. The trial began in April 1994 and closing statements were completed earlier this month.

Ninn-Hansen was accused of breaking the law when as Justice Minister he ordered a halt to family reunifications for Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka in 1987, but failed to inform the Danish parliament the truth about his action. A judicial report in January 1993 concluded that Prime Minister Schlueter had misled parliament about the affair. This triggered the resignation of his government after a decade in power and ushered in the administration of Social Democrat Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen.

Schlueter and another ex-Justice Minister, Hans Peter Clausen, were later reprimanded by parliament. The 'Tamilgate' affair also led to legal action against former Labour Minister Grethe Fenger Moeller. She received a 60-day suspended prison sentence last year for giving false evidence to an inquiry into the scandal.

Who Killed Vijaya? New Facts Emerge as to Cover-up

Ghosts from the past are stirring up Sri Lanka's political cauldron, threatening stormy confrontations between President Chandrika Kumaratunga and the main opposition United National Party (UNP). Seven years after her actor-politician husband, Vijaya Kumaratunga was assassinated, the President has claimed

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that one of her UNP predecessors, Ranasinghe Premadasa, was responsible for the murder.

Former President Premadasa himself was assassinated in May 1993 by a suicide bomber allegedly belonging to the LTTE.

President Kumaratunga has already told the three-member independent Commission appointed to probe Vijaya's murder that she is in possession of vital evidence that has a bearing on the inquiry. 'I was one of the two eyewitnesses to the assassination', the President said in her letter to the commission.

The proceedings of the investigation are being covered widely in the national press and have revealed that highly placed police officials acted in a highly questionable manner in conducting the inquiry into the murder of Vijaya. The evidence led so far at the inquiry has revealed that the police released key suspects on bail. One Lionel Ranasinghe had confessed to Vijaya's murder and forty more important personalities on the orders of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna and had been kept in detention without charge for months. Thereafter the investigation was transferred to another department of the police on orders from 'above', following which it was claimed that the alleged assailant Lionel Ranasinghe was killed in a shootout while attempting an escape from a place to which he was taken by police officers. The widespread belief is that Ranasinghe was deliberately killed to 'prevent the truth coming out into the open'.

Premadasa's family has reacted sharply to the revelations at the proceedings of the Commission. His daughter, Dulanjalee Jayakody, has written to the Commission asking that a lawyer be appointed to represent her father's interests. 'There are moves to implicate my father in the assassination', she told the Commission. The Commissioners turned down her request saying she was over-reacting.

Mrs. Kumaratunga left the country with her two children after her husband's assassination, because she herself was considered to be a target of JVP assassins at that time. She returned after two years of self-imposed exile to join the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), which she led to victory as part of the People's Alliance Coalition in parliamentary polls in August last year.

Last September, shortly after being sworn-in as Prime Minister, Mrs. Kumaratunga had accused the Sinhala extremist outfit, Janatha Vimukti

Peramuna (JVP), of being responsible for her husband's murder. 'JVP leader Rohan Wijeweera took a decision to kill my husband, but we decided to pay compensation to his sister. These are democratic norms that we practice. This is the difference between them and us. We are not revengeful', she had told a public meeting in southern Sri Lanka.

But the President implicated former President Premadasa in the assassination of her husband while speaking to a foreign correspondent recently. Although her critics point to an apparent contradiction in President Kumaratunga's previous statement and her present accusation, some observers in Colombo see no such contradiction. They say that, although the JVP as an organisation was engaged in a violent campaign of destabilisation against the government of Premadasa, he always had a direct link to the then JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera. 'Premadasa considered the popular Vijaya as a potential challenger to the presidency. The JVP wanted Vijaya eliminated because he was supporting the resolution of the ethnic conflict through the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement against which the JVP had unleashed a violent campaign. Lionel Ranasinghe carried out the assassination on the orders of the JVP and President Premadasa covered it up by directing the elimination of the actual assassin', these observers assert.

Amnesty on Extra Judicial Executions & Missing Persons

Amnesty International, the London-based international human rights organisation, has urged Sri Lanka to investigate reports that at least 19 civilians were extra judicially executed by security forces in eastern Sri Lanka in May-June this year. Some of the killings were apparently reprisals for attacks on security forces by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) AI said.

Other killings were reported to have happened during cordon-and-search operations when individuals resorted to killing as an alternative to arrest, Amnesty said in a report released on 4 July.

Amnesty listed the cases, including that of a woman inquiring about the detention of her son who was shot dead by a drunken policeman, two motorcyclists shot dead when they left the road to answer the call of nature and the killing in cold blood of five Muslims, including a two-year-old toddler.

Members of the police, army, Special Task Force (a police commando unit)

as well as Muslim Home Guards are reported to be responsible for the alleged extrajudicial executions', Amnesty said, urging the government to 'fulfil its obligations' to protect fundamental human rights.

'Killings by the LTTE, however heinous, can never provide justification for government forces to deliberately kill defenceless people', it said. 'Amnesty is urging the government to initiate independent investigations into the incidents'.

AI has also cited the cases of four people taken into custody by the security forces in the east of Sri Lanka between May 2 and June 4, 1995 whose whereabouts remain unknown, despite numerous appeals to the relevant authorities.

Around 2.00am on May 2, a group of eight men believed to be from the Air Force camp at China Bay, Trincomalee District, arrived in the nearby village of Karidippuvel, Vellaimanal, in a vehicle thought to belong to the Air Force. The men reportedly took Velayutham Sivalingam, aged 30 and married with four children, and Muthukumar (alias Asirvatham) Mariadas, aged 30 and married with two children, from their homes. No explanation for their detention was given. Relatives lodged complaints at the China Bay police station, the Human Rights Task Force and to a local member of parliament. Appeals were sent to the Commanding Officer, Trincomalee, the Deputy Inspector General of Trincomalee and the Air Wing Commander, Trincomalee. However, the Air Force denied the arrests.

Kanagaratnam Krishnapillai from Kiran, Batticaloa District was among four people arrested at the ferry crossing at Thuraiyaddi on May 2. All four were missing for several days. Then, on May 8 three of them were found by people gathering firewood in the jungle near the Paper Mill army camp at Valaichenai with their hands tied behind their backs. The whereabouts of Kanagaratnam Krishnapillai remains unknown.

Subramaniam Chitravel, aged 52 from Kaddaiparichchan, Trincomalee District was arrested on June 4 around 6.00pm. He was stopped by members of the security forces (possibly army personnel) in a green jeep as he was walking along Vihara Road, Trincomalee District, on his way to visit his brother. The men reportedly told Subramaniam Chitravel to hand over his bag to his companion, another farmer from Kaddaiparichchan, and to get into the jeep. A complaint was lodged with the Deputy Inspector General at

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Consensus Needed on Package for Political Solution

– Dr. Neelan Thiruchelvam

In an interview with Ravi John of 'The Sunday Leader', TULF National List MP and Member of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Constitutional Reform, Dr. Neelan Thiruchelvam agrees with those who say that the political package for the solution of the ethnic conflict must be made public only after a consensus has been reached among various parties.

Q: Dr. Thiruchelvam, there seems to be today a fairly strong lobby which says, put constitutional reform on the back burner. The principal task before the government should be to defeat militarily the LTTE. What would be your response?

A: We don't believe there is a military response to the present conflict. The process of constitutional reform is critical, not only in terms of creating a constitutional framework for a multi ethnic society, but also addressing other issues like fundamental rights and democratisation of the political system. This task, I think, needs to be pushed intensely, with a view to ensuring that the constitutional framework is a significant advance in terms of concepts, principles and institutions from the kind of arrangement that we are accustomed to since 1978.

Q: On constitutional reform, given the difficulties on power sharing with the North East because of the armed confrontation, would you favour a piecemeal approach, or would you rather wait till time is ripe for comprehensive constitutional change?

A: Well, what we would like to see is comprehensive constitutional reform which addresses the complex inter-relationships between the different kinds of issues and institutional arrangements that you have referred to. I also feel that in terms of the critical aspects of the constitutional reform exercise, it relates to the national question, which is the language provision, to some extent the provision regarding fundamental rights, the provisions that deal with power sharing between the centre and the regional institutions which may be envisaged, are critical to the constitutional reform process. The character and shape of these provisions would also qualitatively affect the future of the national question itself. Therefore, we see these two processes being inter related.

The earlier approach was essentially through negotiations with the LTTE, running parallel to the constitutional reform exercise in the hope that they would converge at some point of time.

But since April 19, the whole approach has to be re-examined and therefore one has to see whether you can – at the level of concepts, ideas and institutions – evolve a degree of consensus with those who are participating in the constitutional reform exercise, and thereby be in a position to qualitatively offer a new set of ideas as a response to the crisis in the North and East.

Q: What prevents the government from going over the head of the belligerent LTTE and dealing with the other parties?

A: I see no difficulty, in that merely reassuring the process in terms of initially hoping for a certain kind of agreement which could serve as a basis for further consultations with other political formations. I think that course of consultations is now on and the consensus which emerges out of that can be the basis of trying to bring an end to the conflict in the North and East.

Q: Why can't the government come out with the package it had ready in December while dealing with the LTTE militarily?

A: Clearly there was a set of proposals and ideas which were to be presented to the LTTE that has been made quite clear to leaders of almost all the major political parties who are part of the P.A. The Minister for Constitutional Affairs has announced that he has been discussing with the leaders of the opposition, and so those ideas, which were initially to be presented to the LTTE have in terms of their substance been communicated and discussed in major political parties. This is an exercise which needed to continue in terms of the details of the arrangements and that is the process which, I think, is taking place. Your point is that it needs to be accelerated.

Q: Whose package was this? Was it a package of the SLFP, the Minister of Constitutional Affairs, or the P.A.?

A: It was a package of the Government. I can't say what the internal consultations were within the government. One must assume that the government is an entity, but we must

recognise that what is necessary at this stage is not merely a symbolic expression of goodwill on the part of the government which is able to demonstrate to the international community that it has got a set of ideas with regard to the North East which are in advance of the position in the *status quo*. But something which can meaningfully and qualitatively alter the political *status quo* which means that there are proposals which can ultimately – through constitutional amendment, and if necessary a national referendum – be incorporated into the constitution. It is only at that point of time that public opinion, particularly in the North and East, would be convinced that the South has in a meaningful way responded to the crisis.

Q: There are elements within the P.A. who say that achieving consensus even among the constituent parties of the P.A. is extremely difficult. . .

A: Nothing is easy in a situation of this nature; issues are complex. These are emotive issues. I think we have to respond to this challenge. The challenge will become much more difficult in the context of armed confrontation. Have no illusions about the difficulties of the challenge. It has to be faced.

Q: Can you see consensus in the short term?

A: The constitution can only be amended through a constitutional reform exercise; that requires a 2/3rds majority, and if necessary then it may call for a referendum. What other alternatives do you have? If for example the P.A. Government is in a position to put forward certain proposals, and these proposals are debated in public, and it is clear that there is no consensus which enable these proposals to be taken forward, then, politically, you are informing the people of the North and East that you are unable in a legal and constitutional way, to respond to the crisis in those provinces.

Q: What would be the consequences of the P.A. not delivering on its promises to the people on the abolition of the executive presidency and constitutional reform generally?

A: That's something you may have to ask the P.A. itself. But I don't personally see a shifting of the P.A.'s position on these issues. Certainly I think that the issues are continuing to be committed to comprehensive constitutional reform. Certainly a need to move with a sense of urgency and purpose is also recognised. Therefore we are not necessarily talking about a

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very large time frame. The ability to move forward quickly depends on what extent other political parties share this sense of urgency and purpose. That is something all of us need to work towards.

Q: Isn't it unfair to lay the emphasis on the response of other political parties? Ultimately it is the government's responsibility to...

A: The government is the principle catalyst, to initiate these processes. It's a question of numbers. The P.A. has 114 members of Parliament; there are 27 Opposition Members of Parliament who continue to support the P.A. and who would probably support the P.A. on issues of constitutional reform. But you are 9-10 members short of the 2/3rds majority. That is the arithmetical reality which we need to respond to. That is not something which can be overcome by mere goodwill and good intentions. It requires a great deal of political strategy and capacity to negotiate between groups who have different agendas and interests.

Q: What does the TULF think about all this?

A: The TULF's position is what I have already articulated. They would like to see comprehensive constitutional reform, they would like the political arrangements for the resolution of the North East question to be part of that constitutional reform exercise. They would like these ideas at some stage to be presented to the LTTE, and giving the LTTE an opportunity of responding to them. Nonetheless, they would like this reform process to proceed forward as expeditiously as possible.

Q: Is it the TULF's stand that consensus should be achieved behind closed doors and once that is done, you should go public?

A: The TULF believes that and Mr. Sivasithambaram has given an interview in the newspapers which clarifies the position of the TULF; he believes that the process of constitutional reforms must be one which involves consultation between the major political parties. That process must be conducted by the government in a manner which can effectively yield results. If the government believes that these consultations should take place initially privately, that's a judgement which the TULF doesn't question.

Q: So the TULF is willing to wait for all these 'Basic essentials', before the package is unveiled?

A: This is the process which is an ongoing exercise. It is being unveiled to political parties.

Q: Not to the public?

A: That is a decision for the government when it thinks it appropriate to unveil it to the public. If the government feels that it can be done effectively well at any point of time, that's a judgement that the government must make.

Q: Do you feel vindicated in having supported the P.A.?

A: There was a certain degree of congruence in the approach of the P.A. and the TULF in the last parliamentary and presidential elections, in that the elections were on the basis that there was a need to bring an end to the conflict in the North and East. The TULF's approach was that this could only be done to develop political contacts between the two adverse extremes and thirdly through constitutional reforms. There is an inextricable link between peace, ethnic reconciliation and constitutional reform, and that is an approach which the government has taken. So long as the government seems to be committed to that inter relationship, we feel that it is the correct political approach.

Q: There is an increasingly strident lobbying that 'Tamil grievances' do not exist in fact, and that members of all communities live happily except in areas controlled by the LTTE. How would you respond?

A: I don't think that it is a valid point of view. The UNP, in 1977 in its manifesto acknowledged that there were certain underlying grievances for Tamils and Muslims, relating to their language, education, employment, settlement of land, sharing of political power which had not been adequately addressed and the failure to address these grievances had even led to an armed secessionist movement. It undertook in 1977 to summon and convene an All Party Conference for the purposes of addressing those grievances. You know the history. I'm not saying that no advances were made in some of those areas especially regarding language. It has been one of the most emotive issues which divided the people, when progressively Tamil was made a regional language and a national and official language. In the new constitution we hope that Tamil and Sinhala have equality of status.

Q: What are the outstanding problems which need to be addressed today?

A: On the language issue itself although there is constitutional recognition given, there are enormous problems with regard to the use of Tamil as an official language. Part of this relates to a lack of attitudinal changes in this society which are necessary to ensure that legal and constitutional

changes are being implemented in an effective manner. On the issue of recruitment to the public sector there has been recently in parliament the debate on the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs. I revealed that even the recent statistics with regard to public sector recruitment shows a very serious underrepresentation of both Tamils and Muslims; most particularly estate Tamils. This is not a problem which has been adequately addressed. There is in regard to the political alienation and sense of discontent among the Tamils and Muslims many very serious issues. It relates to their underlying grievances and it relates to the fact that the North-East is of distinct character. For the North East region which is essentially Tamil linguistic in character there must be some political arrangements to enable the people of those regions to share power. They have not been put into place; political and institutional arrangements which respond to the fundamental needs of the people in the North and East. That is critically related to their inability to protect their identity.

Q: Your critics might ask how the problems of employment, language, etc. can be meaningfully addressed through devolution which in some peoples' perception is a step closer to secession. How would you react?

A: That's an issue on which one must disagree. There are so many constitutional arrangements that are federal in character in multi ethnic societies, which is a means of ensuring unity while preserving ethnic groups in a political framework.

Q: Why is it important that the North East be recognised as the homeland of the Tamils? It upsets a lot of people in the south.

A: You have to recognise the fact that whatever the disputes might be with the history of the region, the demographic reality even today in the Northern and Eastern province. Linguistically it has 74% of the people who are Tamil speaking. There is a distinct character, a distinct history to the North East. The political aspirations of the people of that region have been from 1949 to ensure that they exercise political power in areas in which they predominate, in a meaningful and effective manner. I don't see how we need to necessarily get into disputes about history. It is a political and demographic reality that needs to be addressed.

Q: Dr. Thiruchelvam, what is the Tamil nation, in Sri Lanka?

A: The concept of nationhood arises

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from the perception of the nationality. Conceptually, if you feel that you are not merely a minority in a numerical aggregation of persons in a country, but you are a nationality, and that therefore you have a collective identity, and certain collective rights that are linked to collective identity, then those are concepts which result in that group of people perceiving themselves in a manner that is very distinct.

The power sharing arrangement must necessarily respond to that collective perception. This need not be a static one take for example, the Muslims. The Muslims of the Northern and Eastern Province were quite content for many decades to share power with the other groups in the North and Eastern provinces as other minorities would have in the rest of Sri Lanka. The Muslim identity has gone through a qualitative change. Their collective identity today is linked to the territorial factor of the Muslim peasants in the North East; as much as the Tamils of Sri Lanka, because they have a territorial presence, and are a territorial minority; they have articulated political aspirations which are different from the minorities who don't have that territorial character.

Q: What of that large number of Tamils who live outside the North and East?

A: You must not see the constitutional foundations of a multi-ethnic society exclusively in terms of the arrangements of the sharing of power. A multi-ethnic society must essentially be grounded on the concept of equality, non-discrimination, and institutional arrangements in order to protect those arrangements and effective political participation of those even if they are outside the North and East. So we must see the package of arrangements as a whole, and not as an isolated part.

Q: Recently Prof. G.L Peiris asserted that military ascendancy over land, air and sea must first be achieved before the political package can come out. Do you agree?

A: Our approach is that of radical pacifists. We don't believe that violence, or force can be the basis of the resolution of the problem. So it is not a discourse into which one can meaningfully enter. We share the disappointment that most people in the country and abroad have expressed that the political exercise which has commenced after this government came into power with the LTTE was terminated on April 19. We can only hope that this would only be a temporary setback and that both parties would

come to terms with the realities that they cannot militarily, qualitatively change the *status quo*.

Q: Is the LTTE the reason why the TULF is willing to give time to the unveilers of the package?

A: No, I don't think that's the only factor. We would certainly like to see the LTTE come back into the political fold. Anyone who wants to see peace achieved in the North and East would like to see the party which can deliver peace brought back into the political mainstream. I don't think that there would be any serious disagreement on that approach. We feel that the process must be pursued intensively. The government feels that it has reached a point at which it can move forward in a public discussion and public discussion be followed by constitutional reform which has the capacity to get a 2/3rds majority.

But the question of consensus on the devolution issue, on the substance of devolution on two important issues; the Mangala Moonesinghe Committee, did achieve a consensus: That is on the substance of devolution. What is the substance? This relates to the subjects that are going to be devolved in the provincial unit or the regional unit. It was agreed by that committee and with the UNP, SLFP consensus that the ancient list of subjects should be totally, if not substantially, added onto the provincial list. Then with regard to the power of the centre to override the authority of the province, it was also recognised that it had to go beyond the Indian model in regard to those powers. We are not starting *ab initio*, there is a body of consensus with regard to devolution which one can build up to achieve a devolution package which is meaningful, and which is also realistic. The second issue relates to the unit. There has been significant movement forward. There is some recognition to redemarcate boundaries. Secondly, there has been a recognition that the Muslims of the North and East must have a political unit which corresponds to their needs and their aspirations. That again involves a reform paper for the redemarcation exercise. Then thirdly you need to address the question of whether some areas in the North East could be exorcised from the North East region, to give the Sinhalese who are living in the North East a sense of participation with regions which are adjacent to the North East. These are elements in which there are no significant disagreements in the major political parties. Details have to be worked out.

Q: Dr. Thiruchelvam, we have heard that the Tamil political parties

among themselves have not come to any kind of consensus. Is this true? If so, what are the principal sticking points?

A: On the substance. I don't think there is any disagreements within the Tamil political parties.

Q: Is there any disagreement between the SLMC and the Tamil political parties?

A: I don't think it is a difficulty, but it needs a fairly detailed amount of discussion. Several rounds of discussions have already taken place and we are confident that relatively in a short period of time that some consensus would arise on that issue.

Q: The SLMC wants to have some kind of council or representative body which will be equal in power, status and stature to the Tamil council. Will this be unacceptable to...?

A: Conceptually. I don't have any difficulty in that.

Q: Practically?

A: Even practically there is no difficulty in that. It's a question of marking the area which will essentially be a part of that unit. That matter can be resolved. I do not think that at this stage of the conflict we should fear the want of determination, of imagination or sincerity. One has certainly to ensure that there are political solutions. In other parts of the world which have evolved in recent years one can see essentially an imaginative structure – an arrangement in such a way so you can reconcile the competing interests and aspirations of groups. What we are trying to achieve in this whole process is the essence of inter group equity, essence of fairness in the relationships between the three large ethnic groups in this country.

Q: What is your position on interim councils?

A: That is a matter which has not been fully discussed. It was raised during the period of Mr. Premadasa and Mr. Wijetunga by the EPRLF, which had wanted to establish mini council. At that time there were constitutional and legal problems that the law did not provide for it, and there was a kind of scepticism as to whether it could significantly achieve anything.

Q: Would you think that today too?

A: Some of those concerns would remain. I'm not sure whether it would significantly provide an improvement in the *status quo*. We do have a governor, an administration, which is not functioning particularly effectively.

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On Understanding Self-Determination – Part II

On Expanding the Scope of Self-Determination

by P. Imayavaraman

(Continued from last issue)

Self determination is widely interpreted as the right of a nation to choose its mode of existence as a socio-political entity. It implies the right of the nation to statehood and, where applicable, secession. It also enables nations to come together or stay together on a voluntary basis within the framework of a multi-national state.

The association of the notion of self-determination with nations has often led to the restriction of the underlying principle to groups of people that can be defined or recognized as nations. It is partly because of this that there is a tendency among popular movements struggling to protect their identity and preserve their existence as a distinct social group to assert that they are a nation and not just an ethnic minority within the structure of a nation state.

The question of ethnicity is widely discussed today. There are those who argue that ethnic groups should be allowed, if not actively encouraged, to preserve their identity as a distinct social group for as long as they wish. There are others who consider such preservation of a distinct identity to be harmful to national unity and advocate the integration of minority ethnic groups into the mainstream, if not their assimilation by the majority. Interestingly, there are right as well as left-wing arguments in support of these opposed views. Despite all good intentions, one should not lose sight of the reasons why a group of people choose to assert their ethnic or any other social identity, and it is not a good thing to deny an ethnic group its right to preserve its identity like in the case of any other social group such as a minority nationality or the majority.

Ethnic minorities are often treated as social groups with less right to preserve their identity as distinct social groups than are nations. This is perhaps the consequence of approaching the right of any group of people to preserve its identity from the point of view of the nation state and the right to nationhood. The concept of the nation state is post-capitalist and European in origin. The national question of today is a little more complex

and needs to be treated as something more than a matter of co-existence of nations. More importantly, the principle that underlies the right of a nation to choose its mode of existence as a distinct entity cannot be restricted to people who can somehow be identified as a nation and needs to be extended to ethnic groups which, despite their strong ethnic identity, cannot form a nation.

Nations are not made by definitions but by historical processes. There can be little that is rational or sensible about what makes a particular group of people a nation. The national awareness of a group of people, both individually and collectively, is historical and contextual. Any form of ethnic or national consciousness is in itself not the driving force in the action of a people to assert their nationhood and create a nation state of their own. More often than not, it has been national oppression that has been instrumental in the emergence of new nation states.

Oppression by an exploiting class which uses nationalism as its ideology naturally provokes resistance and struggle by the oppressed people to safeguard themselves and preserve their existence as a socio-political entity in its own right. No ethnic group waits for a licence in the form of its right to secession, and the resolve to struggle. In this sense, self-determination as something applicable only to nations is more or less redundant. The real value of self-determination lies in its ability to bind nations together into a voluntary union of equal partners with a right to part company when the union ceases to be a happy relationship.

Limiting the concept of self-determination to groups of people who can be considered to constitute a nation has harmful implications for the interests of many ethnic groups all over the world, in some instances with populations exceeding those of some nations. The rights of the native American races and tribes who have been reduced to refugees on their own soil are being continuously eroded in the 'greatest democracy on earth' in the north as much as in the lesser democracies of the south. The abor-

iginal people of Australia have been made homeless on their own soil. The carving up of Africa by the colonial rulers has complicated the national problems of that continent and has had an adverse effect on the way of life of the nomadic people who have never known national boundaries. The Gypsies and Jews of Europe have been at the receiving end of nationalism for centuries. The problem of the tribal people of India, once highlighted during the Naxalbari uprising and the decade that followed, has returned to haunt Indian politics in more than one way.

Most of the oppressed people listed above cannot constitute nations, in the sense that the establishment of a nation state consisting of any of these people is almost out of the question. Does this mean that they are not entitled to self-determination? If self-determination is understood as the right to secession, that right cannot be exercised by these people. If that alone is seen as the criterion for their disqualification, one is perverting the spirit of self-determination. Self-determination when applied to nations includes the right to secession because that represents the highest level at which a nation exercises its right to choose its mode of existence. Where such an option is not available a people must have the choice, subject to the socio-political and geographic constraints which rule out secession.

It is the denial of self-determination to the tribal people of India that has prompted the hill tribes of north-eastern India to demand the carving out of a 'Jharkhand' for themselves. The tribal people cannot constitute a nation in a strict sense of the word because they comprise a wide range of tribes speaking many different languages, representing different cultural traditions and without a common socio-political heritage. But one may not fail to notice some similarities between the factors that prompted the demand for an Islamic state on the sub-continent early this century and those relating to a tribal homeland today. The viability of a tribal homeland is an issue separate from the issues underlying the demand, which are not likely to go away in a hurry.

There are some ultra-leftists in India who insist on the disintegration of the union and advocate secession even where the nationality concerned is least interested in it. There are, on the other hand, Indian nationalists, and unfortunately this includes a number of Marxists, who are oblivious to the reality that India is a multi-national

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state that is currently unable to meet the aspirations of its minority nations, tribes and other ethnic minorities as a result of the rise of Hindi-Hindu chauvinism and capitalistic greed. One cannot forget the fact that India has the world's most complex mixture of nationalities and ethnic minorities. Carving up the sub-continent into a multitude of nation states is not necessarily a good solution. But the stability and the unity of India, however desirable it may be, is not possible unless the national question is addressed on the basis of equality of national, tribal and other ethnic populations.

There is no need to remind ourselves of the dual nature of nationalism with its liberating and oppressive features. Interestingly, we come across situations where a nation struggling for its self-determination resolutely denies that right to minorities within the national boundaries it lays claim to. This has been true of Sinhala chauvinism from early this century and equally true of Tamil nationalism since its embryonic stages. Tamil nationalism meant Jaffna Vellaala upper class interests until recently and the Federal Party and the TULF attempted to conceal the separate identity of Muslims and Hill Country Tamils under the cloak of Tamil-speaking people, while in reality their politics was essentially Jaffna-centred. None of the major nationalities have cared about the identity of the aboriginal people of the island, the Veddas or Vedar, and their traditional homelands lost to development. Our gypsies, the Rodiya people, have been traditional outcasts in the Sinhala south.

The tribal population of India is rapidly losing control of its traditional lands, partly as a consequence of development as advocated by the elite of India and partly as a result of capitalist greed. They have little say in matters that affect their way of life and livelihood and are certainly not the beneficiaries of any development project carried out at the expense of their traditional grazing, farming and hunting lands. Some see this as development and some others as a process of bringing these people into the modern era. But environmental groups, quite correctly, see it differently. Some feminist groups in India too adopt the same view. In fairness to the 'Naxalite' movement of the late '60s and early '70s, it should be noted here that they stood by the tribal people in their struggles against urban capitalist greed. But, little has been achieved so far in relation to the right of these ethnic populations to choose both the path and the pace of their transforma-

tion into a modern society, if they ever want to become one.

The plight of the tribal population in many Asian and Latin-American countries is hardly different from that of the tribal minorities of India. There is far more awareness of these issues today but not enough to bring about change. Issues of human and democratic rights do not matter to imperialism unless they can be used to bully states that challenge their domination of the world, and the oppressed people can depend on themselves alone for their emancipation. This is an important reason why the issues of class, race, national liberation, women's struggle for equality and environment have to be interlinked and unity on the widest possible scale forged among the victims of imperialist exploitation and plunder. Extension of the principle of self-determination to ethnic groups besides those recognized as nations is an important step towards achieving that unity.

The advocates of highly centralized state power and large and powerful states do not like the idea of devolution. Their notions of economic integration of the world, like their ideas about science, technology and development, are flawed. Mankind cannot be united on the basis of the negation of the identity of any people and the rejection of different forms of human knowledge merely uphold a limited vision of scientific truth. Such views of knowledge are as arrogant as those of the patronizing missionaries of a few centuries ago. The struggle of the oppressed people of the third world is somehow inseparable from that for devolution and self-determination in a broader sense. It is a struggle for global democracy in the ultimate sense.

The practicality and feasibility of the extension of the principle of self-determination is likely to be called into question by the advocates of global integration as one happy family, at least for now, under imperialism with multi-national companies as the agent. There are two interesting instances in recent history where ethnic minorities with very small populations have been encouraged to preserve their identity and take control, although in a somewhat limited way, of their affairs. China with a population of 600 million, now topping a billion, has recognized some fifty-odd national minorities with some of them having populations of the order of 100,000 or less. There are autonomous regions for many of the larger ethnic groups and, in some instances, the interests of several ethnic groups are served by a single autonomous unit.

What is even more exciting is the case of the relatively small Central American state of Nicaragua. The revolutionary government of the Sandinista alliance consulted the people during 1984-86 on the matter of constitutional reform, and the constitution of 1987 declared Nicaragua as a multi-ethnic nation and enabled the setting up of autonomous regions on the Atlantic Coast which was home to six ethnic minorities, the largest numbering 120,000 and the smallest a mere 800. The Autonomy Law ensured that no ethnic group exercised hegemony over another and Nicaragua became the first country of the entire continent to declare itself to be a multi-ethnic nation. Had not US Imperialism undermined the stability of Nicaragua and forced the overthrow of the Sandinista government in 1991, the Nicaraguan experience would have been a great inspiration for the ethnic minorities of Latin America and an exemplary lesson to many countries of Asia, including Sri Lanka.

These two instances point to how the principle of self-determination can be extended to ethnic minorities that do not constitute nations. They do not represent in any way the extent to which the principle can be applied but are illustrations of its feasibility. The term self-determination has not been used, but the concept of autonomy goes fairly close to the exercise of self-determination by ethnic groups which cannot secede. What is important under such circumstances is the right of an ethnic group to autonomy, and devolution of power leads to greater democratisation and therefore to a fuller exercising of the right of the ethnic group to take decisions relating to its existence as a distinct group.

Self-determination does not exist in isolation from the international situation, and imperialism, while encouraging secession and civil war in the case of some nationalities, turns a blind eye to national oppression in its own backyard and in countries controlled by its stooges. It is therefore hard to separate the national question from the struggle against imperialism. The Third World has to redefine development and democracy in its own context and in the interests of its masses. The case for unity and closer collaboration between the peoples of the Third World is strong. Such unity is not possible with national oppression, and the expansion of the scope of self-determination to cover ethnic minorities will reinforce democracy, enable devolution of power and strengthen the struggle of the Third World for political and economic freedom.

For a New Social Contract

In our time peace has become an illusion and war our permanent condition.

But there have been moments of hope. At the beginning of this year it appeared that, finally, after decades of seemingly interminable strife, the ethnic conflict was getting resolved. For the first time in our history. It looked as if we had a government both willing and able to legislate and implement 'maximum devolution'. Then the LTTE unilaterally broke the ceasefire and ended the negotiations. Now, those months before April resemble a dream, a fantasy of peace. Suddenly, it looks as if we are back where we had always been, in the midst of an awful, hopeless, endless war.

If this situation has confused and dispirited those genuinely committed to peace, not so the nationalists. War is a situation they are familiar and comfortable with, even revel in. They were silent, effectively silenced, during the peace negotiations. They had no arguments in the face of the overwhelming mandate Chandrika Kumaratunga received for peace, especially from the rural Sinhala voter. But statements have appeared recently, signed by eminent Sinhala nationalists, arguing that there is no ethnic problem, and therefore no need for devolution. This line has it that if the government militarily eradicates the LTTE, peace would follow. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Eminent Tamil nationalists, too, have joined the fray. They say that the LTTE and the Tamil people are one, that LTTE ambitions and Tamil aspirations coincide, that the only way to solve the ethnic conflict is by appeasing the Tigers at any cost. Again, nothing could be further from the truth.

For, surely, we must know by now that making peace is an incredibly more difficult and complicated exercise than waging war. The logic of war is simple and simplistic: on either side the expectation always is that they will win. Making peace is a different and demanding enterprise. It requires meticulous planning, considerable hard-work, copious energy and infinite patience. Above all, it requires a willingness to be reasonable. Peace is a situation where, because neither side wins, both do. It is to remind the public of all this that we want to make our

own voices, on behalf of peace, heard today.

With this in view, we, a multi-ethnic group of Sri Lankans, want to renew and rejuvenate the argument for peace. We believe that the basic issues have been occluded, if not deliberately obfuscated, by both sides in this non-debate. We believe it to be imperative now that the public be reminded of what these issues are. In that spirit we offer these clarifications on some of the most abused and misunderstood terms of the day.

These people believe that war began because the LTTE and other Tamil organizations demanded and

By

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fought for a separate state. Nothing could be further from the truth. The war began because, for most of our post-independence history, the state has consistently, institutionally and deliberately discriminated against the Tamils (and other ethnic groups). The war continues because the LTTE has consistently and deliberately undermined the prospects for a negotiated settlement. In many obvious, and in many subtle ways, state discrimination continues, as does the LTTE's exacerbation of ethnic hatred in Sri Lanka. Unless and until both these are decisively dealt with, we cannot have peace.

Sinhala nationalists define peace as merely the military eradication of the LTTE. The logic of this argument is manifestly flawed: that, if

you want peace, you must simply wage war. This is not to argue against the state making reasonable military responses to LTTE aggression; but, that a military victory is not possible. In any case, since the attempt would entail untold civilian casualties, it is not even desirable. The main point, however, as many military leaders including Denzil Kobbekaduwa have repeatedly argued, is that the problem we face is primarily political, not merely military. But, even if a military victory were to occur, we would not have peace. For, as long as the root causes of the conflict are not addressed, there will always be resistance to the chauvinistic state. Indeed, even if there was no resistance, we cannot have peace in a situation where a substantial section of the population is unhappy and oppressed.

The LTTE definition of peace, on the other hand, equals Eelam. Though they preach and pretend otherwise, this is quite clear from their practice. Such a definition, too, is unacceptable; but, even if Eelam were to occur, we would not have peace. The LTTE is dictatorial - having killed hundreds of Tamils opposed to its programme; it is against pluralism - having killed hundreds of Tamil Muslims and Sinhala residents of the North East; it is totalitarian - only tolerating opinion supportive of it; it has no regard for basic human rights. These policies will continue, albeit in stronger vein, if Eelam were to be established. The LTTE, therefore, cannot deliver peace.

The peace argument of the PA Government, too, is flawed. They say that, having tried and failed to make peace, war is the only available option. They fail to grasp the point, however, that what they actually tried to do was negotiate with the LTTE. Making peace, as we said before, is a more complicated and time-consuming exercise. Its objective must be to devise a comprehensive and viable power-sharing alternative to interminable war. It requires, at the very least, making public and enacting a package of maximum devolution, along federal lines. It requires ensuring the security, freedom of movement and freedom from fear and harassment of ordinary Tamil citizens. It requires, among other things, proper implementation of the official languages policy. It requires the

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institutionalisation of policies and practices that would make this country truly multi-ethnic; that would make all its citizens feel that they belong here and are treated equally. It is surely the responsibility of this government to deliver on these and other requirements for peace; to deliver, in short, on its explicit promise to the people.

Peace is not the absence of war. It is, rather, the achievement of conditions under which people of differing persuasions could live without conflict. Therefore, there can only be peace in Sri Lanka if the root causes of the ethnic problem are addressed.

Prefixes

If the current political landscape is littered with large lies masquerading as truth, surely the grandest lie of all is the denial by some of the existence of the ethnic conflict. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth. We believe that all future debate on how to achieve peace in this country must begin with the acceptance of this fact, that we have and have had an ethnic conflict. All assertions to the contrary are arguments for and contributions toward war, not peace.

However, given these denials by Sinhala nationalists, we believe it necessary to remind and re-enlighten the public of what this conflict is and has been about. The literature on this subject is extensive. What follows is a necessarily brief summary.

First, the incontrovertible facts. In 1948/49, the state summarily and without consultation deprived thousands of plantation workers born in this country of their citizenship and their right to vote. In 1956, the state deprived all Tamil speaking Sri Lankans of the right to communicate with their government in their own language; this act also robbed hundreds of Tamil speaking Sri Lankans – both Muslims and Tamils – of employment in the state sector. Throughout this period, non-violent Tamil protestors against such discrimination were beaten by the police and other servants of the state. It is a fact that, in 1958, 1977, 1981 and most notoriously in 1983, Tamil people all over the country were the victims of pogroms at the hands of Sinhala mobs. From 1977 onwards, and continuing to the present, the Tamil people in the North East, especially, have been the victims of endless harassment, torture

and other gross violations of human rights, disappearances and of military retaliation – all at the hands of the state.

In short – and this is the only possible conclusion from the above evidence – it is a fact that, throughout our post-independence history, the state has systematically discriminated against the Tamils and other ethnic groups. That is the ethnic conflict.

It is true that the LTTE, today, and other Tamil groups in the past, have demanded exclusive political control over the North East on the basis of the right of self-determination of their 'traditional homeland'. While we recognize the political pressures – in a word Sinhala chauvinism – that led to this demand, we hold that it is irrelevant today.

Tamil nationalists assert that the 'inalienable right of self-determination' the exclusivity of the 'traditional homeland' are essential and indispensable prefixes for any proposals for the resolution of the ethnic conflict. Nothing could be further from the truth. Those are archaic and redundant notions.

The Tamil demand for autonomy – the institutions and power to look after their own affairs – is and must be seen as a moral and political demand based upon and consequent to a history of discrimination. And while it is true that the Tamil people have historically inhabited the Northeast, though never exclusively, this fact, or any 'Traditionalist' argument based upon it, is irrelevant to the present.

What is relevant today is the fact of discrimination against the Tamil people as a group; this makes their aspiration to govern themselves within a united Sri Lanka legitimate, and their case strong. Sinhala nationalists believe that, since such autonomy can only be exercised territorially, and since that territory given certain geographical facts must be the North East, this territory will be exclusively Tamil. While this may be the LTTE position, it is not a view that is shared by the Tamil people – or endorsed by us. Thus we support regional autonomy – on a territorial, not an ethnic, basis, so that all the peoples of the Northeast can develop a society and a polity that is safe, humane and democratic.

Therefore we justify and support the Tamil claim for autonomy – for federalism – not on the grounds of

some inalienable right to self-determination over some traditional homeland, but based on the fact and history of discrimination. Indeed, as we have argued above, this demand would never have arisen if not for the said discrimination. We hold that this must be considered axiomatic by anybody genuinely committed to peace and a truly multi-ethnic Sri Lanka.

It is one of the most salutary features of the present situation that some of those who once called this country Sinhala Buddhist now admit to the fact that it is multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious. In other words, a general consensus seems to be developing that this country does not consist of a Sinhala (Buddhist) majority and Tamil, Muslim and other minorities, but of a multitude of ethnic groups; that this country, or any part of it, does not belong to anyone in particular. However, the definition of a truly multi-ethnic country does not lie in the mere recognition of the fact that its citizens hail from different ethnicities; but in the recognition and institutionalisation by the state of the equality of all ethnic groups.

We believe that the characteristics of a truly multi-ethnic State would include the following:

- (1) All citizens, of the said polity are equal and have the same rights and privileges.
- (2) Any citizen, regardless of ethnicity, could aspire to any office, including the highest in the land.
- (3) No citizen could be discriminated against on the basis of belonging to any ethnic group, whether in the public or private sector; this right must be justiciable.
- (4) No ethnic group would enjoy any special privileges.

It does not and should not follow from the latter that the concept of multi-ethnicity is not compatible with federalism. Nothing could be further from the truth. Indeed, the two are complementary, not contradictory: federalism enables full and equal participation of all citizens at the regional level; multi-ethnicity enables this at the centre. And, as we have been arguing, the two are essential preconditions for peace.

It surely must be evident by now to all reasonable and right-thinking people, that if the nationalist line – whether Sinhala or Tamil – was

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THE SUB-CONTINENTAL SCENE

Mayavati's Rise to Power Marks Realignment of Forces

T.N. Gopalan

Indian politics seems to be going through a traumatic phase yet again. The latest developments in the largest state, Uttar Pradesh, where Ms. Mayavati, a fire-spouting Dalit leader has become the new Chief Minister, could pave the way for a strange realignment of forces in the country.

For Ms. Mayavati, leading a small but fast-growing and almost exclusively Dalit outfit, the Bahujan Samaj Party, has ridden piggy-back on the BJP to power, breaking out of a coalition with the Samajwadi Party of Mulayam Singh Yadav, a party representing the interests of the intermediate castes.

Now the BJP is essentially an upper caste Hindu revivalist party which is considered to symbolise everything reactionary and retrograde in the Hindu ethos.

For such a party to join hands with the BSP, representing the lowermost stratum in the Hindu hierarchy and helping it form a government even while keeping away from ministerial offices, all in an effort to sabotage the consolidation of the backward castes-Dalits block marks a cynical turning point.

Even a more cynical move is the support extended by most of the secular parties including the Cong-I and the Janata Dal to the Mayavati government on the floor of the House even though it was supported by the BJP, an anathema for them all, from the outside.

What this means for the configuration elsewhere in the country is difficult to say, but definitely a new kind of realignment of forces seems to be on the anvil.

At the same time it should also be noted here that the BJP which found itself stymied in its march to the Red Fort because of the revulsion caused in some sections of the Hindu society itself over the demolition of the Babri Masjid and the riots that followed, has now broken free of the solitary confinement cells, as it were, to which it had been consigned two years ago, by forging a new coalition of forces.

And this, in turn, has sent alarm bells ringing through the secular parties which are now desperately looking

around for possible ways of stopping the BJP in its tracks.

And so the support of these parties to the Mayavati government does not mean they too are casting their lot with the BJP, but that notwithstanding the confluence of interests in checkmating the growing clout of Mulayam Singh Yadav, the secular parties are backing Mayavati only because they do not want to be seen as opposing the first Dalit government in the history of the country.

When the elections were held to the UP Assembly two years ago, after the dismissal of the BJP government following the demolition of the Masjid, surprisingly the Samajwadi - Bahujan Samaj combine came up almost trumps, though it had not won absolute majority in the 425-member Assembly, by totting up 176 seats when the BP could bag only 177 seats, the combine was believed to have delivered a body blow to the Hindutva forces.

Such parties as the Cong-I and the Janata Dal, though badly mauled, commanded around 60 seats and they along with the two communist parties, CPI and the CPM, extended unconditional support to the SP-BSP coalition.

Mr. Mulayan Singh Yadav who had broken away from the Janata Dal to form his SP and successfully cultivated an image of a crusader for the minorities and backward castes became the Chief Minister.

Progressive commentators all over India went to town on the new experiment - the emergence of an all new coalition of the backward castes, the Dalits and the Muslims, more marginalised than most other sections of the Indian polity, was hailed as the dawn of a new era in the Indian politics.

But they failed to take into account two important factors which could cause the destruction of the coalition - one, the fact that it was the emergent intermediate castes who were seen as their immediate oppressors by the frustrated Dalits, the contradiction between them more real and more acute than between the Dalits and the upper castes, and two, the vaulting ambitions and the annoying abrasiveness of

Mulayam Singh.

As it turned out clashes ensued between the Yadavs and the Dalits in many parts and the police machinery controlled as it was by the Chief Minister chose to side with the Yadavs. Besides there was large-scale infiltration of the administration by the intermediate castes.

The climax came during the elections to panchayats a couple of months ago when Mulayam Singh went in for wholesale rigging and outright intimidation, shutting out even the coalition partner, BSP.

Mr. Kanshi Ram, the BSP supremo, and his lieutenant Mayavati, both rabble-rousers and extremely sectarian, realised that continuing their association with the likes of Mulayam would prove suicidal for their own type of politics.

At this juncture the BJP, annoyed at having been boxed in despite emerging as the largest single party, but helpless all the same, stepped out with an offer of unconditional support if the BSP parted company with SP.

No doubt Mulayam did criminalise politics in a big way and gave a free run for the intermediate castes, but he had emerged as a great bulwark against the Hindutva forces and so was very popular among certain segments. His SP could win three of the four constituencies which had by-elections recently.

And so Prime Minister Narasimha Rao who has been desperately looking for allies who could win seats for him in the next year's General Elections was quietly wooing Mulayam and could not make up his mind on whether he should direct the UP governor to sack the government even after the BSP withdrew from the coalition and the BJP extended support to the latter's efforts to form a government. But finally the anti-Mulayam sections in the UP Cong-I prevailed and out went Yadav - though not before some horrid display of terror tactics by his goons who sought to abduct some BSP MLAs and starve to death Mayavati trapped in a government guest house.

While the Kanshi Ram-Mayavati duo could pat their own backs for outwitting the crafty Mulayam and installing a Dalit government, they are also acutely aware of the sheer enormity of the compromises they have made.

The two had missed no occasion to foul-mouth the BJP in the vilest possible terms - Kanshi Ram had once suggested construction of toilets on the

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TAMIL NADU

Assault On Democracy

Lawyers Against Lawlessness

T.S. Subramanian
in Madras

An air of feigned indifference notwithstanding, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) Government in Tamil Nadu is saddled with the sins of its past. Solidarity is swelling up throughout the State for victims of violence perpetrated by the ruling party.

Convinced that the murderous assault on criminal lawyer R. Shanmugasundaram by hired gangsters on May 30 in Madras was plotted at the highest level, the advocates' fraternity has made strident demands to unmask the 'real culprits', among whom they name Chief Minister Jayalalitha, Minister of Animal Husbandry E. Madhusudhanan and Revenue Minister S.D. Somasundaram.

The advocates, provoked by the unwarranted attack, organised a strong and sustained agitation, which also succeeded in awakening the public to the emergence of a *goonda raj* in the State over the past four years. They view the attempt on Shanmugasundaram's life as a threat to the independence of the legal profession and an assault on human rights and democratic norms.

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Ayodhya in place of a Ram temple.

They were urging their followers to prepare themselves for a no-holds-barred battle against the upper castes. But now Mr. Kanshi Ram will not even concede that the BJP is communal. Mayavati who had once stirred a hornet's nest by damning Mahatma Gandhi as a casteist is now unwilling to say anything that might upset the BSP's new-found patron, the BJP. 'I want to assure people that I do not represent just a caste or a social group, (as a Chief Minister). Everybody will find justice. . . . Her zeal for her Dalit brethren is tucked away safely.

It is not still clear whether the present opportunist alliance will hold for long or whether the two will put up a joint front even when they face the elections. While it could help the BJP acquire a progressive veneer, the BSP could stand to lose substantially the Dalit vote bank.

On a writ petition filed by the Madras High Court Advocates' Association (MHAA), which sought a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into the assault and a compensation of Rs. 50 lakh from the State Government for Shanmugasundaram, Justice S. Jagadeesan of the High Court directed the State Government on June 20 to transfer the assault case to the CBI. Coming after three weeks of grim struggle, the order was a morale-booster to the advocates.

The spirit of the advocates did not wilt under the scorching sun. They boycotted courts all over Tamil Nadu, took out processions, blocked traffic, staged dharnas, went on hunger-strikes, formed human-chains and ran a poster campaign for the arrest of the 'real culprits'. Their refrain was: 'This government needs to be taught a lesson and we will teach it a lesson.'

Forty-two-year-old Shanmugasundaram, a brilliant and affable professional, was attacked with iron rods and knives by five men who stormed his office. He suffered multiple fractures on his limbs and lost the little finger on his left hand. A pool of blood had collected at the scene. Revealing their motive, the assailants shouted,

The secular parties have been taken aback by this turn around and apprehend that it could accelerate the BJP's progress to the seat of power in at the Centre. They are exploring various options to come to an electoral understanding to stall the BJP and wean away the BSP.

It is in this context that the Janata Dal and even the CPM could agree to support the Cong-I under certain conditions. There is also a distinct possibility that for all his dubious tactics, Mulayam Singh could emerge as the undisputed champion of the underdogs and the minorities since the hollowness of BSP's convictions stands exposed now. All the secular parties could some day decide to rally around him.

With the liberalisation process hitting hard the bottom rungs, the worst instincts in man coming into the open and the electorate getting communalised to a high degree at various levels, without a visionary leadership, turbulent times are ahead for India.

'How dare you file a case against *amma* (Jayalalitha)?'

Shanmugasundaram had drafted a criminal complaint to prosecute Jayalalitha under Section 169 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) because Jaya Publications, in which she is one of the partners, had bought land belonging to the Government-owned Tamil Nadu Small Industries Corporation. The complaint was to be filed by R.S. Bharathi, advocate and joint secretary of the legal wing of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), on May 31. The assault on the night of May 30 is believed to have been a pre-emptive measure (*Frontline*, June 30, 1995).

Section 169 of the IPC prohibits public servants from buying or bidding for 'certain property', 'either in his own name or in the name of another, or jointly, or in shares with others'. It says any public servant violating this provision can be punished with imprisonment for two years or fined, or both, and the purchased property confiscated.

An anonymous letter full of abuses and threats, signed 'Nizhal' (Shadow), was received by the private hospital where Shanmugasundaram is undergoing treatment. It warned the hospital authorities that if he was not 'sent home' within a week, other patients would be beaten up. Someone calling himself 'Godse' threatened Senior Advocate R. Gandhi, a driving force behind the agitation, that he would be killed if he persisted with the protests. An AIADMK advocate also asked Gandhi not to step out of his home as plans were afoot to eliminate him.

Considering the low-key public response to the earlier attacks by AIADMK supporters, on Governor Dr. M. Channa Reddy, opposition leaders, a Vice-Chancellor, two Indian Administrative Service officers, journalists and others, the expression of righteous anger by the advocates must have surprised the administration.

The day after the assault on Shanmugasundaram, irate lawyers had presented a memorandum to Channa Reddy, alleging that there was 'a conspiracy' behind the crime and that 'persons acting on behalf of the Chief Minister' had participated in it. They also sought a CBI probe as 'the matter will not receive proper attention in the hands of the State police'. They blocked traffic on the road along the Marina beach.

The blockade had signalled the beginning of an offensive by militant advocates determined to teach the Jayalalitha dispensation a lesson. As the agitation gathered momentum, party affiliations disappeared and a

From the Underworld

'Welding' Kumar, the mastermind behind the assault on advocate R. Shanmugasundaram, is one of the latest 'stars' in the ruthless underworld of murders, moonshining, extortion and drug trafficking in Madras. In this world, empires flourish and collapse with the rise and fall of *dadas*, group loyalties are binding, the spirit of vengeance is strong. Murders take place frequently. The recruiting ground for these groups is often the prison because it is there that goondas of varying degrees meet. The beaches and fishermen's colonies in north and south Madras are the battlegrounds for these groups as they compete for supremacy.

There was no checking these goonda groups once the AIADMK Government led by Jayalalitha came to power in June 1991, and it is open knowledge that some of them flourished under the patronage of an AIADMK Minister. He patronised these groups so much that the police got demoralised.

'Welding' Kumar came under the glare of press publicity following the attempt on the life of Shanmugasundaram. An alleged professional murderer, he is known to move away to a neighbouring State after each crime and return for the next one. He started his career as a welder in a workshop in Tondiarpet but has since made enough money from his main profession to own a

big house in north Madras. He has also been sought after for his skills of 'mediation': help to homeowners when tenants refuse to pay rent or will not vacate a house, and help to financiers in getting back money from recalcitrant borrowers.

Early in his career of crime, Kumar came under the fold of Ezhumalai of Royapuram. When Ezhumalai and one Pandian fell out over their cut in the tractor-trailer trade in the Madras harbour, Pandian was murdered. While seven persons were convicted to life imprisonment for this, the case against 'Welding' Kumar was separated because he absconded. He was also allegedly involved in the murder of Radhakrishnan, another rival of Ezhumalai. 'Welding' Kumar later split from Ezhumalai and set up shop on his own. Ezhumalai himself was later murdered.

Before the advent of 'Welding' Kumar on the scene, those who called the shots were 'Boxer' Vadivelu and Veeramani. Vadivelu came to prominence when goondas stormed the office of the Tamil magazine *Tharasu* at Egmore and stabbed to death two of its employees on August 14, 1991. The attack allegedly took place at the instigation of an AIADMK Minister. Vadivelu is an accused in the 'Tharasu murder case' but came out on bail. According to an informed source, after being let on

bail, he has retired from his trade and is now concentrating on his mechanised fishing boats. 'He is now a friend of the police,' said the source.

After Vadivelu's eclipse, the rowdies in north Madras 'surrendered' themselves to Veeramani, who belonged to south Madras. Veeramani, who also owns mechanised fishing boats, spread terror in both north and south Madras through murder, extortion and the illicit liquor trade. The police could do nothing about it. But Inspector K. Murali, then attached to the Marina police station, arrested Veeramani and he was jailed under the Goondas Act. His 'empire' is said to be on its last legs now.

Operating in Saidapet and nearby areas is 'Punk' Kumar. As a student in the Government Arts College, Nandanam, Madras, he contested the students' union elections. His aide Ummer who ensured his victory was murdered by Paramasivan, Purushothaman and Sampath. To avenge Ummer's murder, Kumar allegedly murdered Paramasivam the same day. Purushothaman and Sampath who were remanded to judicial custody for murdering Ummer were also killed by Kumar in broad daylight when policemen were escorting the duo to court.

Recently, ration-shops in Saidapet remained closed for a day to protest against Kumar's extortion of money from the employees of these shops.

common plan of action bound the fraternity together.

When the High Court reassembled on June 12 after the summer recess, the lawyers marched to the Secretariat, unmindful of the heat, to present a memorandum to the Chief Minister. They carried placards reading, 'Democracy dead in Tamil Nadu; violence reigns'; 'Down with police-goonda raj' and 'Yesterday it was K.M. Vijayan; today, it is Shanmugasundaram and tomorrow who?' Advocate Vijayan was in the procession limping painfully. He describes himself as a victim of 'state-sponsored terrorism'. Vijayan had sustained multiple fractures at the hands of goondas in July 1994. His crime: he had challenged the 69 per cent reservation in Tamil Nadu through the courts.

Steel barricades en route did not deter the advocates. Pushing them down, they raced towards the Secretariat with policemen in pursuit. They staged a dharna in front of the Secre-

tariat, insisting that the Chief Minister should meet them. When a police officer informed them that Jayalalitha was not available, an advocate responded with sarcasm, 'Instead of giving the memorandum to the No.1 accused, we will as well return to the court'. Chief Secretary N. Haribhaskar also dodged meeting the advocates, inviting the comment: 'We thought only the assailants were absconding. Now even the Chief Minister and the Chief Secretary are doing so.'

In the eyes of several independent observers, the police investigation of the case has been shameful, to say the least. For 10 days after the attack, they made no serious effort to get to the bottom of the crime. They delayed taking photographs, lifting fingerprints and interrogating possible witnesses. Police Commissioner K.K. Rajasekharan Nair did not even visit the scene of the crime. But he had no hesitation or compunction in putting

out a version to the press that there was no political motive behind the assault. Another senior police officer claimed that the assailants' shout, 'How dare you file a case against *amma*?' was intended to mislead the investigation.

A day before the High Court reassembled, the police made a pretence of action but this only helped expose them further. On June 11, a Sunday, three persons mysteriously surrendered themselves before a holiday magistrate in Madras. Journalists found that the residential addresses given by the three were bogus.

Senior advocate and one of the leaders of the agitation, K.T. Palpandian, appearing for the MHAA before the court on June 16, told Justice Jagadeesan why the advocates insisted on a CBI inquiry. In Tamil Nadu, 'where civil servants have become domestic servants and the police machinery is entirely abused,' how

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ஒவ்வொரு மாதத்திற்கும் விபரமான குணாதிசயம் பலன் முதலியவை

சோதிடம் கைரேகை, எண் விஞ்ஞானம் மற்றும் பல சாத்திர
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could there be a fair and impartial investigation into the assault, he asked. 'Will any police officer have the guts to question the Chief Minister? They cannot even go near the street where she lives,' he said, as the courtroom burst into laughter.

The writ petition came up for hearing on June 13 as an exceptional case during the boycott. In a show of action, the police made three arrests the very next day. The names of the arrested were given as Senthil, Arumugam and Naveen alias Navaneethan. The police did not bother to take them into custody for interrogation. Later, two more persons, Dilip and Bhaskaran, were arrested.

G. Krishnamurthy, an advocate, startled a gathering of lawyers when he revealed that hitmen were hired to assault Shanmugasundaram for a fee of Rs. 5 lakhs. Alleging that a gang led by 'Welding' Kumar was set up by Sekar Babu, an AIADMK functionary and a relative of Minister Madhusudhanan, he said the police were treating 'Welding' Kumar like a 'king in a star hotel'. Krishnamurthy claimed the assailants, whom he knew because he had been their counsel in several cases, had met him for a few minutes after the assault on May 30 but did not mention the incident.

In the court, Palpandian alleged the police had 'fabricated evidence', 'mis-directed the investigation' and 'altered' Senthil's confessional statement. The burden of his argument was that since Jayalalitha, Madhusudhanan and Somasundaram were 'directly or indirectly involved' in the attack, there would be no fair or impartial investigation by the State police. Hence the demand for a CBI probe. Palpandian pointed out that though the assailants had shouted, 'How dare you file a case against *amma*' this was not mentioned in the Government's counter-affidavit. He charged that there was a phone call from the Chief Minister's residence to the police ordering the erasure of references to Madhusudhanan's involvement from Senthil's statement. 'I can even name the officer who made the phone call,' Palpandian told the judge. 'The attack took place, maybe with her knowledge or maybe with her acquiescence. If it was without her knowledge, it may have been done by her followers who fall at her feet,' he said, producing more laughter in the courtroom.

According to Palpandian, the motive for the attack was that Shanmugasundaram 'was preparing a complaint against *amma*' and it was to be ensured that 'no case will be filed against the Chief Minister'. Therefore, he said,

'there are sufficient grounds for the police to investigate whether the Chief Minister has knowledge of it'.

On Somasundaram's role, he pointed out that the Minister had denied on June 1 that the assailants had ever made any reference to '*amma*'. 'This denial can come only when he has knowledge of it and therefore the police have to question him,' Palpandian said. He alleged that it was at the instance of Somasundaram that the surrender of three persons (with fake addresses) was arranged.

Palpandian argued that though Senthil had implicated Madhusudhanan and his brother-in-law Sekar Babu, his confessional statement was altered to mislead the investigation and attempts were made to extricate Sekar Babu. Ramani Natarajan, an advocate, had received a phone call that the blue Maruti van in which the assailants had escaped, belonged to Sekar Babu. But the police claimed a Maruti car was used for the escape.

Besides, the police 'had put into the mouth of Senthil certain statements he had never made,' Palpandian said. The confessional statement attributed three different motives for the attack: that Shanmugasundaram was interfering in the real estate business of 'Welding' Kumar, that Shanmugasundaram had received money but did not appear in the court to argue some cases, and that he was interfering in the assailants' 'profession'.

The investigation is distorted. The confessional statement of Senthil is not recorded properly. In the confessional statement, Madhusudhanan is not implicated. The shocking thing is that the police did not even ask for the police custody of those arrested. This is a partisan investigation. Therefore, the CBI should take over the investigation', Palpandian concluded.

Countering his arguments, Government Pleader R. Muthukumaraswamy said there were 'no justifying circumstances' to transfer the case to the CBI because the State police investigation was 'timely', 'proper' and 'proceeding in the right direction'. The investigation had started immediately after the receipt of the report on the crime. The police had shown the photograph of Senthil to Shanmugasundaram who identified him as one of the hitmen. Four persons, including Senthil, were arrested soon after and 'Welding' Kumar was yet to be arrested. Only after his arrest would the motive behind the crime be known. There was no material evidence to establish the involvement of Ministers in the crime and the issue was being politicised, Muthukumaraswamy claimed. 'They

are trying to link the Chief Minister with this,' he said.

On the surrender of three persons, he said that when the police were questioning the hardcore elements, these three had surrendered on their own, fearing that they too 'will be harassed'. They had said that they had nothing to do with the offence, the Government Pleader claimed.

The Madras High Court order came after a short period of waiting. Justice Jagadeesan told a packed courtroom why he had directed the Government to hand over the investigation to the CBI. On going through the police diary he did not come across anything about the involvement of Ministers or the relatives of a Minister in the confessional statement, and hence concluded that the 'averments of the petitioner were unfounded'. However, since Palpandian had argued that two more assailants were yet to be arrested, he assumed that details about the involvement of Ministers may emerge after these arrests.

'In such cases, the apprehension that the police may not record the statement properly may be a well-founded one. When the petitioner expects a proper investigation to get at the culprits, a mere apprehension in his mind that proper justice may not be done to him is itself a ground to transfer the investigation to a third person. The citizen should always have faith in the police officials and the judiciary as well. Then only he will have the satisfaction that his case has been properly dealt with', the Judge said. Therefore, 'without any disregard to the State police,' he ordered that the investigation be transferred to the CBI.

The Judge directed the CBI to complete the investigation in four months and submit a report to the court. He asked the State Government to extend 'all help and cooperation' to the CBI in completing the investigation. Besides, the State Government was to meet the medical expenses of Shanmugasundaram. On the MHAA's demand for a compensation of Rs. 50 lakhs, he said if the involvement of politicians or Ministers was established, it was open to the trial court to award compensation.

The lawyers' camp was tense in the period preceding the High court order, with some wanting the boycott to be called off and the young, militant members stoutly opposing it. But the order made all jubilant. They decided it was not enough to knock the bottom out of the 'arrogance' of the Jayalalitha dispensation. Soon after, they took out processions in the High Court

Continued on page 29

Politics of Violence

When the affable young DMK lawyer, R. Shanmugasundaram hit upon the idea of embarrassing the imperious Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Ms. J. Jayalalitha, by filing a private complaint to prosecute her on the charge that 'Jaya Publications', a company in which she is a partner, bought state-owned land at a cut price, he little realised that he would be subjected to a murderous attack.

Functionaries of the State's ruling AIADMK party, two Ministers and the Chief Minister herself have been accused of being responsible for masterminding the attack on the lawyer which is the latest incident in a long line of similar attacks on those whom the Chief Minister regarded as her critics or enemies.

Right from the notorious acid attack on Ms. Chandralekha, a senior official belonging to the Indian Administrative Service who was once close to Jayalalitha, but later fell out with her for mysterious reasons, the name of her Minister of Animal Husbandry Mr. E. Madhusudhanan has been cropping up time and again whenever some critic or someone ill-disposed to the State government was bashed up. Madhusudhanan is one of the Ministers implicated in the attack on the lawyer.

In June this year, the State government made yet another abortive and ludicrous move to frame the Chief Minister's *bête noire*, Dr. Subramaniam Swamy.

This time round the ever faithful DK leader K. Veeramani and his colleagues came in handy, though ultimately all had lots of eggs on their faces.

A former DK man Ravi, wanted under the TADA in connection with a bomb blast case of last year, surrendered to the courts and charged that Dr. Subramaniam Swamy had harboured him while he was at large and the former had instigated him to stage a fake attack on Dr. Swamy himself and then throw the blame on the Chief Minister. However, he had a change of heart and was surrendering, the man claimed. It was some leading DK lawyers who produced him before the court.

Immediately thereafter DK General Secretary K. Veeramani addressed a press conference saying that he had 'unimpeachable' evidence to show that Ravi had indeed been harboured by Dr. Swamy and demanded that he be detained under the TADA.

The designs of the State government

were becoming clear. An unnerved Dr. Swamy who left the State post-haste on the day Ravi surrendered, remained confined to the safer environs of New Delhi and could only fret and fume but do little else. He was mortally scared that he might be taken into custody by hook or crook and tortured and humiliated.

However the 'unimpeachable' evidence produced by Ravi's lawyers was full of holes. A photograph showing Ravi and Swamy together was found to be a fabricated one. A couple of letters allegedly written by Ravi's wife to him while he was living in Swamy's residence in New Delhi were also found to be fake.

Reluctantly the state government decided not to proceed against Swamy and brought down the curtains on yet another ugly episode.

A beaming Swamy returned to the city amid the blinding lights of flash bulbs and ranted and raved against Jayalalitha. There was even a well-attended public meeting. But the media and the people lost interest in him thereafter, yet another lesson to Jayalalitha on the art of governance.

There were to be yet other instances of political vendetta. Valampuri John, popular orator and a former member of the Rajya Sabha, and Mr. Samuel Gunaseelan, an eccentric Tamil nationalist and a noted Dalit theoretician, found themselves at the receiving end.

John had actually been a lackey of Jayalalitha once, but subsequently turned against her during the power struggle in the AIADMK when MGR was on his last legs.

When she became the Chief Minister, he desperately sought rapprochement, but was contemptuously spurned. He became even angrier and floated a Tamil weekly promising a serial which would be an exposé of her past.

The copies of the first issue were seized and she resorted to other means to squelch the venture at that stage itself. And now after four years, the serial is being carried in the hard-hitting anti-Jayal Tamil weekly *Nakkeeran*.

An AIADMK functionary in Tirunelveli down south filed a defamation case, - John was accused of defaming the CM of course. The serial is not very informative, incidentally, but provides some mirth to gossipmongers.

Even before the court served sum-

mons on John, the city police took him to custody.

Actually the magistrate before whom the case was first filed was subsequently transferred following some objectionable comments he made in public. As a parting kick he issued a non-bailable warrant against John, but it was cancelled by the man who succeeded him.

John was released on bail thereafter, but now the police are planning to implicate him in an even more sinister plot - he is being charged with seeking to outrage the modesty of his own daughters.

Apparently there is some property dispute between John and his daughters and some complaint of theirs is being distorted in this fashion. John himself is unable to lay his hands on the complaint copy, but the AIADMK media is going to town on the matter, making him feel miserable and almost rue the day he decided to take on Jayalalitha.

Gunaseelan, alias Guna, hailing from Karnataka, who is maintaining that the Telugu-speaking non-Brahmin communities have hijacked the Dravidian movement, spelling doom for the native Tamils was detained under the TADA after his book *Davidathaal Veezhndhom* raised a lot of hackles in the DK circles. He reviles even Periyar EVR in that book, and apparently at the behest of Veeramani, Gunaseelan was arrested. After a lot of demonstrations, Guna has been released on bail, the charges against him still remaining vague, something like his books having inspired some terrorist activities.

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Trincomalee and inquiries were made at various paces of detention in Trincomalee, but without success.

Since the outbreak of hostilities in the northeast of Sri Lanka between the security forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), there have been reports of arbitrary arrests of hundreds of Tamil people, particularly in the east of the country and in the capital, Colombo.

In view of the escalating human rights abuses, particularly after the breakdown of the truce between the government and the LTTE, the government recently re-established the Human-Rights Task Force (HRTF), an independent body to monitor and safeguard the welfare of detainees. President Kumaratunga has issued mandatory directives to the heads of the security forces to safeguard the rights of detainees.

READERS FORUM

RELIGIOUS CONVERSION AMONG THE TAMILS

I READ Ratnajeevan Hoole's article on religious conversion among the Tamils with some anguish (*Tamil Times*, May 1995). Here is an academic who is treading cavalierly in murky waters. There is nothing wrong in developing cross disciplinary interest to shed some light on the past history of Tamils. If only some caution is taken to accumulate all the relevant data and sift kernels of truth from chaff before jumping to print with an inciting hypothesis, how much our community stands to gain from Hoole's enthusiasm? Within the space limited in the Readers Forum, I wish to rebut his inflammatory hypothesis on religious conversion that 'belonging to the "government religion" was the general tendency among Tamils' in the past.

I question Hoole's selective use of historical sources. He relies on Nilakanta Shastri's *History of South India* (1958) to highlight the fact that during Saivite revival between AD 600 to 900 forcible conversion of Buddhist shrines into Hindu ones occurred. An equally reputable historian Jawaharlal Nehru does not support this point of view. In his acclaimed work, *The Discovery of India* (1946), Nehru had written, 'there was no widespread or violent extermination of Buddhism in India. Occasionally there were local troubles or conflicts between a Hindu ruler and the Buddhist sangha, organization of monks, which had grown powerful. These had usually a political origin and they did not make any essential difference. It must also be remembered that Hinduism was at no time wholly displaced by Buddhism. Even when Buddhism was at its height in India, Hinduism was widely prevalent. Buddhism died a natural death in India, or rather it was a fading out and a transformation into something else'.

Hoole also lists some examples of religious conversions among Tamil Nayanmars (especially Appar) and Aalvaars to stress his controversial hypothesis. I believe he is comparing apples and oranges. He has failed to comprehend that Jainism and Buddhism were indigenous Indian 'offshoots' of Hinduism and they cannot in any way be equated with religions such as Christianity and Islam which were introduced into India by foreigners.

Buddhism and Jainism originated as reform movements of Hinduism, primarily to oppose the rigid caste system. But with time they too contributed to the origin of low castes. As Nehru wrote in a nut shell, 'The emphasis of Jainism and Buddhism on non-violence led to the tilling of the soil being considered a lowly occupation, for it often resulted in the destruction of animal life. This occupation, which had been the pride of the Indo-Aryans, went down in the scale of values in some parts of the country, in spite of its fundamental importance, and those who actually tilled the land descended in the social scale. Thus Buddhism, which was a revolt against priest craft and ritualism and against the degradation of any human being and his deprivation of the opportunities of growth and leading a higher life, unconsciously led to the degradation of vast numbers of tillers of the soil'.

Thus, as Huston Smith (former professor of philosophy at the MIT, Massachusetts) summed up in his book, *The Religions of Man* (1958), 'Upto around 1000 AD, Buddhism continued in India as a distinct movement. However her differences with Hinduism softened - Hinduism admitting the need for the reforms Buddha championed and Buddhism becoming more like Hinduism as it widened into Mahayana - until in the end Buddhism merged back into the historical stream from which it had arisen', Opposed to Nilakanta Shastri's view, Nehru and Huston Smith do not believe that Buddhism died a violent death in India.

Another important point which Nehru had addressed which may be of interest to Hoole (who seems uncomfortable with the preoccupation of 'sex as a part of worship' in India) is on the two streams of life styles which the Indian society supported. While Hinduism emphasized 'life affirmation' (Nehru's words), its reformist offshoots Buddhism and Jainism campaigned for 'life negation'. Nehru had written, 'In India we find during every period when her civilization bloomed an intense joy in life and nature, a pleasure in the act of living, the development of art and music and literature and song and dancing and painting and the theatre, and even a highly sophisticated inquiry into sex relations'. Nehru continues in the next paragraph, 'Buddhism and Jainism rather emphasized the abstention from life, and in certain periods of Indian history there was a running away from life on a big scale. . . Perhaps ideas of renunciation and life negation are caused or emphasized by a feeling of frustration

due to political and economic factors'.

Thus, one should look at conversion campaigns which occurred between AD 600 and 1000, among Tamil Nayanmars and Aalvaars as challenge between life affirmation and life negation. This interplay can be appreciated in the recent history of affluent nations as well. USA enjoyed the life affirmation in the 1920s, followed by a life negation period in the 1930s during the Great Depression. Japan also experienced a life negation phase after its defeat in the Second World War, which lasted for two decades (1945-65). Japan switched to life affirmation phase, during the last 25 years (1970-95), which was assisted strongly by the Vietnam War fought in a neighbouring land. But citizens of America and Japan did not change their religious affiliations drastically. The debates which occurred during the period of Tamil Nayanmars (Manickavasagar, Appar and Gnanasambandar) should be understood in this context.

I also do not like the manner in which Hoole has selectively used some figures to support his hypothesis, while leaving out chunks of relevant information which provide a different interpretation to his quoted numbers. Specifically I mention here the following example. Hoole has written, 'By 1684, Jaffna had 180,364 Protestants in a population of 278,759 and by 1785 (it had increased to) 200,233 Protestants'. He relies on J.E. Tennent (1850) for the first figure and K.M. de Silva (1981) for the second figure. Since I don't have Tennent's book with me I cannot check on that figure. But I checked K.M. de Silva's book, *A History of Sri Lanka*. The sentences by de Silva which followed the quoted figure of 200,233 (but omitted by Hoole) make interesting reading. De Silva says, 'The bulk of these (relating to 200,233) as the Dutch records admit, were Calvinists and Christians only in name. Calvinism in fact did not develop any strong roots among the people, and its influence did not survive the collapse of Dutch power'.

Furthermore, in the same page, de Silva also had noted (contrary to what Hoole had implied in his article) that, during the Dutch rule, 'harassment of Hindus and Muslims continued - though not with the same virulence as under the Portuguese. Buddhism and Hindu worship was prohibited in towns, but it would appear, not in villages. The extensive temple properties confiscated by the Portuguese were not returned to those who originally controlled them'. Shame on Hoole for twisting the history to suit his fancy hypothesis!

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For want of space, I just conclude with another questionable strategy adopted by Hoole to support his thesis. He had relied on Father Fernao de Queyroz's 1688 work, *The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon*, to identify the number of Catholic converts in Jaffna during the Portuguese period. This is like believing Hitler's version on the history of Jews in 20th century Germany. The name of Queyroz's tract itself reveals how the Portuguese version would have been loaded with bias. Nehru also wrote in his *Discovery of India* that, 'History is almost always written by the victors

and conquerors and gives their viewpoint; or at any rate, the victors' version is given prominence and holds the field'. I believe that Hoole in his enthusiasm to formulate a controversial thesis has also relied on questionable sources like that of Queyroz. Hoole's portrayal of the last king of Jaffna Kingdom, Changili as a genuine convert to Roman Catholicism is humorous indeed. According to K.M. de Silva, Changili killed all princes of the blood save the legitimate heir of his predecessor Ethirimanna Singham, and ascended to the throne in 1615. The legitimate heir to the throne was Ethirimanna Singham's three-year-old son. But Changili, writes de

Silva, 'had little popular support in Jaffnapatam, and his position there soon became insecure'. That was the reason why he was toppled easily by the Portuguese in 1619. He would have thought that converting to Christianity could save his head. But he deserved his fate for the sins he committed. So, what merit is there for his purported deathbed remarks that it was better to 'be a Christian coolly than a Pagan king'. Wasn't he an impostor?

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BOOK REVIEWS

A Plan For Peace in Eelam

By Prof. Kopan Mahadeva

Century House, 99-101, Sutton Road, Birmingham B23 5XA at £5.00 plus p&p (2nd class: 50p for U.K., £1.00 to EEC, and £2.00 elsewhere, by Air).

This Plan was brought out in April 1994 in the form of a 104-page book (Ref: T.T. 15 June 1994). Via his preface, the Author simultaneously presents the Plan to the Government of Sri Lanka and to leaders of all local political parties and liberation groups in conflict, led by the LTTE, to the UN and Commonwealth Secretariats, other national and international agencies working for peace, to friendly nations all over the world, and so on.

Does this Plan offer something which is new? Would it meet the Tamil aspirations without hindering anyone else's real, legitimate progress? Is it fair to all the ethnic groups? Will it help the Island as a whole? Are its provisions practicable? Is the time-frame given for its implementation realistic? Is it factual? Objective? Such questions naturally arise in the minds of the readers, and anyone who reads it fully would answer all these affirmatively. Also, the text has been divided into small chapters, mostly in self-contained pages.

Since the book is meant also for those who might not know how this war began, it starts with an introduction and historical background, then goes on to make a case why it is vital to strive for peace most urgently, defines the type of peace which will last, decries the futility of militarism, states what the Tamils want, traces the religious kinship between the Tamils and the Sinhalese, and quotes

Sinhalese leaders from all walks of life who have spoken up for the Tamils during 1977-94, and also of Tamils' consequent travails in the hands of the successive governments. It also states the case of Muslims and Up-country Tamils, and presents LTTE's policies objectively, from the speeches, statements, interviews and news reports of Mr. V. Pirabakaran and other Leaders.

It also deals with such matters as Sovereignty, Tamils' right of Self-determination, and National Integrity. Rights enjoyed by Tamils, and Sinhalese views held on Tamil rights before 1948 are dealt with, with the Author's own views on referendums, followed by the texts of the 1957 B-C Pact, the 1965 D-C Pact, the 1976 Vaddukkoddai Resolution of Tamils, a 1987 outline plan of the Author, the 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, a Tamil-Muslim Agreement of 1988, Mr. M. Moonasinghe's 1992 Option Paper, and also summaries of the Thimpu Talks of 1985 and of the 1991 CWC Proposal. It is after laying a foundation with the main past events, that the Author unfolds his own Plan of April 1994.

The Main Aspects of the Plan

1. Brand New Constitution; 2. Change of Role of President from Executive to Ceremonial, assisted by a Vice President; 3. The Powers of Central Parliament to pass on to eight Provincial Parliaments; autonomy to present Provincial Councils; 4. A Central Advisory Senate; 5. Chief Ministers of the Provincial States to be Vice President and then President, in order of seniority; 6. District & Village Councils only, at local level, under Provincial States; 7. Provincial States to have own Police and Armed Services; 8. Centrally: Police, Armed Services, and Ministries managed by Committees, to perform training, co-ordination, and advisory functions only; 9. A Two-stage Peace Pact &

Referendum; 10. Stages of Progression to Normality & Peace, set on a time-frame of 2-3 years.

The Plan is written in simple language, devoid of confusing jargon. The model suggested suits Sri Lanka whose Tamil name, Eelam has been highlighted.

This Plan for peace holds good despite the change of government in August 1994, but wherever it is suggested in the Plan for Mr. Wijetunge to take certain actions as the President, it would now be Mrs. Kumaratunga who has to perform them. Also the roles of Mr. Wickremasinghe and Mrs. Bandaranaike have reversed since August 1994.

In fact this Plan has become much more important currently. LTTE has publicly told the Government in recent months that they would now consider a federal-type constitutional answer to the ethnic problem if that would really satisfy the aspirations of Tamils. But, to-date, no such plan is imminent. Public statements by Cabinet Ministers reveal that any such proposal would merely be to delegate a few more powers than at present to the Northeastern Provincial Council, based on the B-C Pact of 1957, which even Mr. Chelvanayakam meant as an interim measure when he signed it, and will not be now acceptable to the Tamils. Hence the best, readily available alternative to either complete separation of the Tamils or the inadequate, potentially unacceptable proposals which the Government seems to presently contemplate, would be a voluntary confederation-type formula based on this Plan - most likely to be acceptable to both the Tamils and the Sinhalese. also, since the President is well committed to abolish the Executive Presidentship by July 1995, and would need a complete plan by that time, this Plan offers the best compromise, which both parties should earnestly consider, at least as a start.

ing point for negotiations. The Plan's main aspect of decentralisation of power from the central parliament to those of the eight provinces, should satisfy the aspirations of not only Tamils but also the Sinhalese citizens of the other seven provinces.

Hoping Against Hope - A Review

Edited and published by Peter Schalk, Professor of History of Religion, University of Uppsala, Sweden. December 1994, Price £25.

Hoping Against Hope is the collection of letters written by the Citizen Committee of Jaffna during the period of 1990 to 1992 during which Northeastern province of Sri Lanka, particularly the people of Jaffna, were devastated by the Eelam War Two.

Professor Schalk, who has been attached to the University of Jaffna for several years under a collaboration programme with the Uppsala University, has witnessed the horror and the suffering of people of Jaffna during his visits to this war torn region. The academics of the Jaffna University together with the religious leaders and other prominent citizens of the society, in a desperate attempt to alleviate the sufferings of the people in their day to day life, formed this Committee. The editor who had been a participating observer of this Committee says: 'in the future, no history of Yalppanam can be written without referring to these documents'. Further he says: 'This book is the work of many whose names I cannot tell'. These alone describe the value of this book.

The book also tells us about the difficulties and risks faced by the members of the Committee and the courage shown by them. Several letters in this collection provide the statistics of the economic situation, the death and destruction caused by Sri Lankan as well as Indian armies with dates. The information is most valuable for researchers in ethnic studies. Most of these letters were addressed to the then President of Sri Lanka, various diplomatic missions and Heads of states.

As the title of the book suggests the people of Jaffna are still Hoping against Hope for a peaceful, secure life with equal rights. This book may be the first of a series of its kind of this era.

- Vijayan -

Chellaiah Edwin Anandarajan - An Appreciation

A Great Educationist & Principal

Born: 31 January 1932; Entered glory: 26 July 1985; Asst. Teacher: May 1955 - May 1970; Co-Vice Principal: June 1970 - December 1974; Vice-Principal: June 1975 - February 1976; Principal: March 1976 - June 1985.

A decade has passed since the day on which Chellaiah Edwin Anandarajan was torn away, cruelly, from the bosom of his family by an assassin's bullets. Jaffna lost one of its most promising sons, one of her brightest luminaries. Vivid memories remain of that traumatic event. One cannot forget the grief of the stricken family, the spontaneous lamentations of the school community, the shocked unbelief of old boys, parents and people from all strata of Jaffna society. The passage of time has dulled the pain of parting and, now, it is possible to look back dispassionately at his life and work.

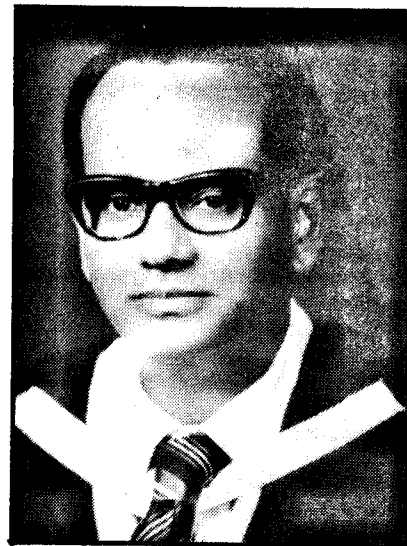
Anandarajan became the Principal of St. John's College, Jaffna, following in the footsteps of a long line of illustrious and distinguished men. He did have St. John's College in his heritage for his great-grandfather Robert Williams had been a Headmaster and his father Mr. G.S. Chellaiah was a teacher. He chose the teaching profession which was fortunate for St. John's and for Jaffna.

I came to know Anandarajan well as a very good teacher of Zoology, anxious to develop teacher capabilities and student achievement. I was lecturing in Zoology at the University in Colombo and was involved in curriculum development, syllabus formulation and examinations. Our paths crossed, first, at various seminars and

discussions. Later on, marriage ties brought our families together. I was able to understand and appreciate Anandarajan as a family man and a social worker. I worked (closely) with him as he laboured in the interest of his students, especially during the years of the infamous medium-wise standardisation. He did me the great honour in 1983 of inviting me to be Chief Guest at the College Prize Giving. I remember the occasion vividly, his charismatic presence on and off stage. Sitting on the stage with him I thought of the prominent role he had in Jaffna society, how much he would inspire his students and the immense contributions he would make in the years that lay ahead. Alas, that was not to be.

He was a born leader endowed with special qualities of leadership. In his student days at St. John's he held numerous positions including that of scout leader, cadet leader, and senior prefect. When he moved into teaching, positions came to him easily. He was the unanimous choice for Principal, and when the mantle fell on him he wore it with ease and grace as 'to the custom born'. He was president of the Jaffna YMCA, president of Rotary and a delegate to the Colombo Diocesan Council.

Anandarajan was supremely self-confident. The members of his family circle looked up to him with trust and



devotion. His students turned to him with their problems, educational and otherwise. So did their parents and teachers. People in the community came to him with their problems - marriage, bereavements, disputes and disappointments. He helped them all to the extent that he could. So in time his name became a household word in Jaffna society.

His period of stewardship at St. John's was perhaps the most turbulent and difficult that any Principal before him had to face. First there was the matter of medium-wise standardisation and then the '83 riots and the ethnic conflict. The riots brought a large influx of students and he ensured that St. John's would do her utmost to help his people in the hour of their greatest need. During the troubles that developed in Jaffna during the last years of his life he rendered yeoman service. Such was his stature that he could talk to both sides and

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therefore was able to help those who got into difficulty. He served tirelessly on the Citizen's Committee. In the end he laid down his life in the course of these endeavours.

His efforts for the school bore ample fruit. Achievements in studies and sports were maintained at high level. St. John's remained at the forefront of education not only in the peninsula but also in the island. He undertook an extensive building programme, includ-

Continued from page 23

premises, demanding the arrest of Madhusudhanan. Advocate V. Suresh said, 'The Minister should step down until his name is cleared. It would have been proper if the Chief Minister had intervened and the Minister had resigned. But their silence shows they have something to do with the incident.'

Public support was encouraging. On June 21, the advocates took out a procession from the High Court to Anna Salai (Mount Road) and blocked the traffic. The MHAA, which has been spearheading the agitation, announced a Statewide bandh on June 27, for which it sought the support of all political parties.

But fissures appeared again as the advocates differed on whether they should continue their boycotts of the courts. Palpandian, who consistently opposed the boycott, 'withdrew' from the joint action committee. In a letter to MHAA President P. Jayaraman, he said, 'I am sorry to find that the association has no control over the agitation... Continuation of the boycott will be counterproductive and result only in exposing ourselves to public disapproval. I, therefore, withdraw from the committee.'

But a section was adamant that the agitation did not hinge on the court order. Said R. Antony Xavier: 'The struggle is to achieve unity in future also. The order handing over the investigation to the CBI does not meet our demand fully'. Endorsing his view, V. Prakash said, 'The judgment entrusting the investigation to the CBI certainly changes the situation but does not take away the demand that the breakdown of law and order has to be set right. The battle has not ended. Certainly, the advocates will be ensuring a bigger agitation to get the support of the public to maintain democratic norms in Tamil Nadu.'

A key figure in the agitation, Ramani Natarajan, spoke for most of her colleagues when she said, 'This is the first agitation where we remained united and achieved victory in a short

ing the Pooranampillai Block. The Ponnudurai Block, The Arulanatham Block. These will remain as lasting monuments not only to those for whom they are named but also to the man whose initiatives and purpose made them realities.

Much has changed during the last ten years in the land that he loved so well. St. John's continues to serve to the best of her ability. Anandarajan realised from the beginning that the development of Jaffna is inextricably intertwined with education. Therefore,

time. The verdict on the writ petition vindicates our faith in the judicial system. People have raised some doubts about what the CBI can do. That is not the point. It is for us, lawyers, to get the system to work. We should not allow the local police to stymie the investigation. The agitation for the restoration of the rule of law must continue.'

Courtesy of Frontline July 14, 1995.

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correct, we would have had peace long ago, either in the form of a unitary Sri Lanka or a Tamil Eelam. For, it is precisely the nationalist policy against the Tamils that has been followed by successive governments since 1983; and, since 1983, we have never had peace - and very rarely had hope. Conversely, and also since 1983, the LTTE, too, has followed a nationalist policy. It, too, has failed to deliver peace. Despite this massive and evident failure, however, nationalists on both sides continue to ask for more of the same. We believe it time to call the chauvinists' bluff. This myopic and masochistic line will only produce perpetual war, further erosions of the Sri Lankan social fabric and, indeed, the self-destruction of the very ethnic groups the nationalists pretend to protect.

This, clearly, is an untenable future. We, therefore, believe the time has come for a new social contract for Sri Lanka; one based on the recognition and institutionalisation of multi-ethnicity. It is only by accepting, even encouraging and celebrating the fact of diversity that we can have true equality in this country.

What we need, therefore, is a sustained process of healing and humanising, aimed at establishing a way of life that accepts devolution, difference and diversity. This is a policy that has been tried and tested in countries as different as Canada, South Africa, India, Nigeria and

he dedicated himself to that field. Whatever lies before us in the future his vision remains true. St. John's must prosper and grow from strength to strength. So too must the entire system of education. That would be a lasting memorial to a great Principal and educationist.

K.D. Arudpragasam,
Professor of Zoology, University of Colombo.

President, National Academy of Sciences, Sri Lanka.

Malayasia, among others.

There is no reason why Sri Lanka should shy away from this. It is the only hope for turning peace from an illusion into the permanent condition that governs every day life in this little island.

Continued from page 14

ly. But those constraints are structural in character. They reflect the realities of the ground situation.

Q: Do you advise the president on the ethnic issue and the constitutional reform?

A: As one who is deeply committed and is deeply involved in the processes of ethnic reconciliation and constitutional reform as I have been, I have relentlessly pressured anyone who can take decisions on these issues to move in a positive and imaginative manner.

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MATRIMONIAL

Hindu parents in Sydney seek professionally qualified partner for daughter, 25, Ph.D. scholar, Mars eighth. Apply with horoscope. M 798 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parent seeks partner, 36-40, for doctor daughter employed in USA. M 799 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Catholic seeks partners for British Rail engineer brother, 40, and sister employed in Computing in Colombo, 31. Send details. M 800 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Catholic brother seeks partner for unmarried educated sister, 41. Divorcees or widowers considered. M 801 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu Tamil doctor and wife Sinhala Buddhist, resident UK, seek professional partner for accountant daughter, 5'2", 27 in good UK employment. Residents from UK, Canada, States preferred. Race, religion immaterial. M 802 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents seek kind hearted, dutiful, teetotaler groom in employment for fair, attractive, slim daughter in employment, 35, 5'4", innocent divorcee. Send horoscope, details. M 803 c/o Tamil Times.

WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couples on their recent wedding.

Dr. Paramasivam son of the late Mr. & Mrs. Sivapatham of Jaffna and **Prabahini** daughter of the late Mr. M.T. Nagendram and Mrs. Maheswari Nagendram of Navaly, Jaffna on 5.4.95 at 'Delhi Palace', 22323 Shermon Way, California, USA.

Dr. Sivasothy (Rasu) son of Dr. & Mrs. S. Pasupathy Rajah of 'The Haven', Hook Green, Meopham, Kent and **Dr. Shivani** daughter of Dr. & Mrs. S. Puvirajasingham of 76 Rating Lane, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria on 25.6.95 at Thurrock Civic Hall, Grays, Essex.

Anandan son of the late Mr. J.D. Arnold and Mrs. Sugirtham Arnold of 5 Eastbury Avenue,

Northwood, Middx., and **Meera** daughter of Mr. & Mrs. S. Sammuganathan of 2309 S.E. 2nd Street, Boynton Beach, Florida on 1.7.95 at The Hammersmith Town Hall, London W6.

Pradeep (Hari) son of Mr. & Mrs. N. Vamadevan of 1 Sterry Drive, Thames Ditton, Surrey and **Nishanthi** daughter of Dr. & Mrs. E. Kangesu of 30 St. Martins Drive, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey on 9.7.95 at Anugraha Hotel & Conference Centre, Egham, Surrey.

OBITUARIES



Mr. Subramaniam Srishanmuganathan, formerly of Royal Air Force, Sri Lanka, Kuwait Airways and McDonald Douglas Corporation, Canada; beloved husband of Priyadharshini (Nalini); proud father of Anusuya Sujenthiran (UK) and Rahulan; father-in-law of Sujenthiran; loving grandfather of Arunan and Vidhushan; son of the late Mr. & Mrs. Subramaniam; son-in-law of the late Mr. & Mrs. Gopalasingam and brother of Ravi (Germany) and the late Nanmalar Nagalingam passed away on 23.6.95 after a car accident. Funeral service and cremation took place on 28.6.95 at Glendale Crematorium, Toronto, Canada

The members of the family thank all friends and relatives who attended the funeral, sent messages of sympathy and condoled with them during the time of great sorrow. - 3641 Corliss Crescent, Mississauga, Canada. Tel: (905) 671 1909.



Mr. Saravanamuttu Rajah, Retired Education Officer, Sri Lanka; beloved husband of Sivanesam; loving father of Dr. Ranjitrajah (USA), Jeyadeva (Canada), Rajani, Mahinda and Janapriyanesa (both of UK); brother of Kanagaratnam, Sellamma, Kamalam and late Rukumani; father-in-law of Bharathy, Pooma, Kiritharan and Rathy; grandfather of Niroshan, Vibooshan, Shiyamalie, Vaishnavie and Athiyen passed away in Colombo on 3.6.95 and was cremated at General Cemetery, Kanatte on 9th June - 288 Burges Road, East Ham, London E6 2ES. Tel: 0181 472 1395.

Mr. Arumugam Sinnadurai, beloved husband of late Annammah, loving father of Dr. S.E. Moorthy, Nageswari and Muthulingam; father-in-law of Shanthy, Mathy (all of California), Kanagaratnam (Sri Lanka) passed away on 25.2.95 and funeral took place on 26th February at Lancaster, California.

Mrs. Ratnaranee Abraham, beloved wife of late Colonel Wilmot Abraham of Sri Lankan Army; loving mother of Shanthy, Neville (California), Adrian (Canada); mother-in-law of Moorthy and Nesa passed away on 5.6.95 and funeral took place on 7th June at Lancaster, California.

Mrs. Manonmani Poopal, beloved wife of Mr. V. Poopal; loving mother of Sivananthan, Dr. Manga and Vasantha; mother-in-law of Carma (all of California) passed away on 19.6.95 and funeral took place on 20th June at Lancaster, California.

Mrs. Sellamuthu Kanapathypillai, beloved wife of late Kanapathypillai; loving mother of Dr. Shun Sunder (California), Kandasamy, Subramaniyam, Kanthymathy (Canada), Para-

meswary (India), Luxmy and Vimala (Sri Lanka) passed away on 3.6.95 and funeral took place at Scarborough, Canada.

IN MEMORIAM



In loving memory of **Mrs. Manikay Sivasampu** on the fifth anniversary of her passing away on 2.8.90.

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by her two sons. - 15 Wolsey Way, Chessington, Surrey KT9 1XG.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

July 29 9.00am J.S.S.A. (UK) Cricket & Netball Festival 1995 at Warren Farm Sports Centre, Windmill Lane, Southall, Middx. Tel: 0181 399 7848.

Aug. 4 Varalakshmi Viratham.

Aug. 6 Feast of The Transfiguration of Lord Jesus.

Aug. 7 Eekathasi.

Aug. 8 Pirathosam: Feast of St. Dominic.

Aug. 10 Full Moon; Aavani Avittam; Feast of St. Lawrence.

Aug. 11 Feast of St. Clare.

Aug. 15 Feast Day of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Aug. 19 Sri Krishna Jayanthi.

Aug. 21 Eekathasi.

Aug. 22 Feast of Queenship of Mary.

Aug. 23 Pirathosam.

Aug. 25 Amavasai: Feast of St. Louis.

Aug. 28 Feast of St. Augustine:

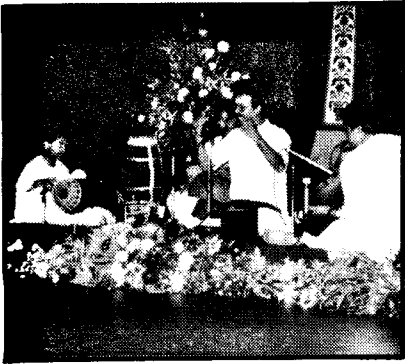
Aug. 28 9.00am Cricket Carnival, Netball & Family Fun Day at Warren Sports Centre, Windmill Lane, Southall, Middx. Tel: 0191 381 1342.

Aug. 29 Vinayagar Sathurthi.

Land in Colombo For Sale

7 perches, Alexandra Place, Colombo 7, for sale. Rs. 100,000 per perch. Contact Mayuresa Mahadeva, C/Galeon 11 - 9A, 28042 Madrid, Spain.

A Classical Debut



The Mridanga Arengetram of twelve year old Hari Nathan Prakash, son of Mr. & Mrs. Arunagiri Nathan of New Barnet, Herts., at the Commonwealth Institute on 10th June was not one that could be termed as a student's debut. Seated among a classical set of mature musicians Hari never for a moment disclosed any nervousness. On the contrary he displayed total professional involvement. His superb rhythmic fingerings, pulsating bodily expressions and keen observance of the intricate phrases of the singer revealed Hari's full grasp of percussion technique and the expert tutelage of the Guru Bhavani Shankar. Appropriately for the lead voice a full throated classical trained TVG style Rajkumar Bharati was billed and his brilliant phrasings and swara prastharas seemed to thrill the young mridangist to keep in step synchronously.

A full repertoire of cutcheri items including a succinct ragam-thanam-pallavi was gone through and at no time one could see any hesitation in Hari's handling of the intricate time measures. Unusually that evening the audience consisting of most of the well known musicians and musicologists in London were present and one could notice the appreciative response from them. It reflected the student's mastery of the instrument and the Guru's expert tutelage. The event also provided an expert troupe of accompanists - B.K. Chandrasekar on the violin, R.N. Prakash on the ghatam and Chidambaranathan on the morsung. It was a grand cutcheri and a different style of Arangeetram in spite of a last minute visual hiccup!

Talents Unsung



It happened to watch a video recording of a children's drama on the life of KARNAN, the munificent hero of Mahabharata. It is an unedited, straightforward, amateur video, but clear and sharp enough, faithful-

ly revealing the histrionic talent among the thirty odd boys aged between eight and fourteen.

The entire life of Karnan, from birth to Kunthi by the Sun God, his archery contest with Arjuna, Duryothana's favour and the subtleties employed by Krishna from behind to end the life of the great hero were all portrayed with critical detail by the children with remarkable acting and clear narration and dialogue in English. An interesting feature of this production which baffled me was the absence of any mike on the stage but every word of the dialogue was clearly heard. The secret, it was revealed, was the dialogues were vocalised by promoters behind the curtain and the actors simply mimicked those words. It was a brilliant achievement by the children and ingenuity of the director and producer Sivanandan of the Merton centre of Sai Baba mission, who himself created the script as well. Our congratulations.

Sivapatha Sundaram.

Three Sisters Dance to Aid Orphans

The three sisters, Sujatha, Ameera and Gunalogie, daughters of Mr. & Mrs. Gunasekaram of Edmonton, London N9 gave a Bharatha Natyam recital at the Acton Assembly Hall, London W3 on 1st July 1995 in aid of the Dhurga Devasthanam Orphans' Trust, Tellipalai, Sri Lanka.



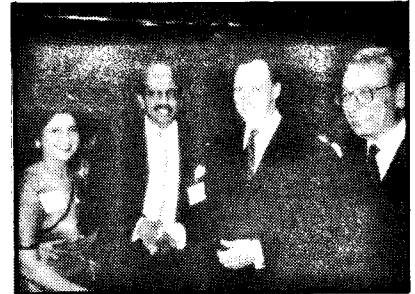
Apart from the traditional items like Varnam, Patham and Thillana they performed two dance dramas - 'Skanda Leela' and 'Pasmasaran Vatham' which were the highlights of the evening's programme.

The choreography and Nattuvangam was by their Guru Smt Pathmini Gunaseelan. The other supporting artistes were Vocal: Smt Ambika Thamotheram. Mirdangam: Sri Muthu Sivarajah. Violin: Smt Kalaivani Indrakumar. Flute: Sri P. Gnanavarathan and Morsing: Sri K. Sithamparanathan.

Global Diversity Conference in Australia

The world's Global Diversity Conference was held in Sydney, Australia during the last week of April '95. It also marked the 50th Anniversary of the U.N. and was

hosted by the Government of Australia. The main purpose of the conference was to promote the eradication of racial discrimination in countries with pluralistic social background. 34 countries participated at the conference. Dr. Raj Chandran, Commissioner for Racial Equality, (UK) represented his organisation at the conference.



Picture above shows Dr. Raj Chandran, his wife Dr. Qudsia, Paul Keating Prime Minister of Australia and Boutros Boutros-Ghali Secretary General of the United Nations. In Australia Dr. Raj Chandran was the Guest Speaker at the Inaugural Meeting of the Medical Institute of Overseas Tamil Doctors in Australia. He was the Chief Guest at a reception held by the Tamil Foundation of Australia.

Before returning to England he visited New Zealand and California where he addressed meetings of Tamil doctors and Tamil expatriates.

M.I.O.T. Entertains and Helps Health Care in Tamil Homelands



Traditional Tamil Folk Dance and Drama - The Naatukoothu - were given a boost by the Medical Institute of Tamils of South East London and Kent when they presented their spring events at Kelsey Park School Hall, Beckenham, Kent. The first was on 20th May when the highlight of the evening was the production of the Naatukoothu 'Sarithram Samaitha Seharasasekaran' by Dr. M. Chandrakumar, a Medical Consultant from Folkestone, which received a standing ovation from the appreciative art lovers who filled the auditorium. The Chief Guest was Mr. Derek Jenkins, a retired Consultant General Surgeon, who has had many years of close association with Tamil language and

Tamils in South India and is well versed with their culture and traditions. There was a 'Kavi Arangu' by Saravanan Jayanathan and his team Thaboharan, Indu, Amuthan, Jehan and Ahalaya, a speech in Tamil by Jeyashanker Jayanathan, a Carnatic Vocal Recital by Tharaka and Arani Chandrakumar and Bharatha Natyam Recitals by Meera Kamalanathan and Ravina Krishna.

The second musical concert 'Kala Malai' was held on 24th June when Sri Rajkumar Bharathi, great grandson of the famous South Indian Poet and Patriot, presented an all Tamil Carnatic Vocal recital which was applauded by the audience. This was followed by an excellent Bharatha Natyam recital by Smt Thanuja Bhavani Shanker with vocal support by Sri Rajkumar Bharathi and a special and rare combination of Mridangam and Nattuvangam by Sri Bhavani Shankar. Sri Kothandapani accompanied on the Violin.

The Chairman Dr. S. Sivathasan, speaking at both functions outlined the objectives of M.I.O.T. and assured the audience that the valuable funds raised would be used to assist the health care needs and projects in the Tamil homelands.

Yoga Swami Remembered in London

His Holiness Sivaya Supiramuniya Swami - Gurudeva - to his devotees, visited the Yoga Swami Centre in Manor Park, London E12 on 22.6.95, as his first public engagement on this visit to the UK, to pay his respects to his Guru, Yoga Swami. His Holiness had as a 20-year-old American youth in spiritual thirst sailed from San Francisco in 1947 to find his Guru. Having wandered all over India, he found his guru in Yoga Swami in Jaffna. Yoga Swami taught to seek within to know the self and see God everywhere and in everyone. His Holiness blessed the devotees at the Centre and inaugurated a Building Fund for the Centre with a donation of \$101.

At the end of this function he proceeded to Thamil House, 720 Romford Road, London E12, where he was received by Siva Thondan Nilayam and the Saiva Muneta Sangam. Audio Cassettes of Natchinthanai Hymns composed by Yoga Swami and sung with his blessings by his great devotee Smt Nageswari Bramanandha were then released to his Holiness and others present.



Smt Nageswari Bramanandha then sang some of the Natchinthanai Hymns after which the meeting terminated with a message from His Holiness impressing on parents the need for teaching Hinduism to their children.

MIOT Seminar on Health Problems for Immigrants

The Medical Institute of Tamils, South East Thames Region is conducting a Scientific and Cultural Seminar on 30th September 1995 for the benefit of youths between 16 and 30 years of age and others who intend to or are attending or have completed a course in Medical or Allied Health Fields. The seminar will be held at Radens Suite, 29th Floor, Guys Tower, Guys Hospital, London Bridge, London SE1 9RT. The admission is free except for practitioners and MIOT members who will be charged a small fee. For further particulars please contact Mr. V. Rajayogeswaran, 80 Tyrone Way, Sidcup, Kent DA14 6AZ.

Those conducting the seminar are Prof. R. Swaminathan, Mr. V. Rajayogeswaran, Prof. R. Balarajan, Dr. S. Thiriloganathan, Dr. R. Namasivayam and Dr. M. Visuvaratnam.

Parents, Relatives and Friends of those eligible to take part are kindly requested to encourage attendance at this seminar.

Appreciation - Saravanamuthu Ilankanathan

It is exactly one year since Ilankanathan of National and Grindlays Bank, later Hatton National Bank, Nuwara Eliya, departed from this world of ours.

If the purpose of living is caring for others, then Ilankanathan, affectionately called 'Kuddy Mama', lived his life in full. I can best illustrate this by my own experience.

It was in June, 1958, soon after the first bout of ethnic violence I left Kandy and went to Nuwara Eliya to set up in legal practice. Kuddy Mama was then staying with a few other gentlemen in a house, as they had all sent their families to Jaffna after the ethnic violence. Later when the families returned, each of them began to move into their own houses. Left with nowhere to go, I began looking for boarding houses.

I recall, standing at the post office and wondering where to go. I felt someone touch my shoulder and say, 'I understand that you are looking for a boarding house. How can you go anywhere when we are here' and took me to his house. Since then, it became a home to me. That was Kuddy Mama. He spoke little, had a good sense of humour, never hurt anyone, a good listener, a trusted companion, a sincere friend and above all a great host.

While living with him, his wife, Leela, who lived up to his expectations and their lovely little daughter Urmila, I found his home to be a home for everyone who came there. As a common good friend rightly said 'Kuddy Mama's house was an open house to relatives, friends, friends of friends and complete strangers'.

I should say, I was fortunate to have known and lived with him and his family.

It is hard to come by someone like him these days. A few like him, no doubt, can change the world into a happy family.

May his soul rest in eternal peace in the Lord.

A. Sivanandan.

AUSTRALIAN NEWSLETTER

The Sri Lankan Doctors' Association of New South Wales which was formed in 1976, active till 1983 and dormant for over a decade had its Annual Reunion Dinner Dance on 10.6.95 at the Sebel Townhouse Hotel, Sydney. The function was organised by Mrs. Irangani Gunatilleke and the Helen Lucas Band (a Sri Lankan Band) provided the music. Over a hundred doctors and their partners had an enjoyable time with the sumptuous dinner served and the dancing which continued late into the night. Many of them met after a long time and delighted in renewing old friendships going back to their days as medical students in Sri Lanka.

Sydney Tamil Resource Centre, which runs a library of Tamil books at 4/16A The Boulevard, Strathfield, Sydney held a well attended exhibition of Tamil books at the Homebush Primary School Hall on 12.6.95. The exhibition was opened by Ms. Susan Pers, Deputy Commissioner of Community Relations. She congratulated the centre on its excellent service to the Tamil Community of Sydney, a glowing example of the success of multiculturalism in Australia and said that the Government would continue its financial support to the centre.

Dr. V.E. Packianathan, the President of the Centre welcomed Ms. Susan Pers and the others present and announced that to mark the occasion the centre had published a Bibliography of selected books and periodicals in the centre. Copies of it were presented to some of those present who had rendered meritorious service to the community.

Natanalaya, the School of Dancing run by 'Kalasuri' Smt Jayalukshimiy Kandiah presented a selection of Classical Bharatha Natya and Folk Dances and 'Skanda Leela,' a Dance Drama on 17.6.95 at Bankstown Civic Centre, Sydney.

The evening began with Panchamoorthy Anjali performed by six senior students followed by Pinnal Kolattam by some of the junior students, a Padam in Shanmgapriya and a Goubha dance. The Dance Drama 'Skanda Leela' was presented after the interval. It was a polished performance produced both by the senior and junior students.

CANADIAN NEWS LETTER

Book Release

The book titled 'The Fall and Rise of the Tamil Nation', authored by Mr. V. Navaratnam, founder member of the Federal Party and former Member of Parliament of Kays

was released on 14.5.95 at an impressive ceremony held in Scarborough in the presence of the author. The first half of the ceremony was presided over by Mr. Guggan Sri Skandarajah and the latter half by Mr. S.K. Makendran. The guest speakers were Poet Sivananthan, N. Wimal Edwards, Mr. R.N. Logenthalingam, Mr. A. Vellupillai, Mr. A. Pathmanathan and Mr. Daniel Woods. Mr. N. Sivalingam, Inaugural President of the Tamil Eelam Society bought the first copy. The ceremony ended with an emotional speech in Tamil by the author.

The book priced at 25 Canadian dollars is available for sale from Mohan & Mohan, 3300 McNicoll Ave., Suite 225, Scarborough, Ontario M1V 5J6, Canada.

Demonstration in Toronto

A demonstration in support of the demand for a 'Tamil Homeland in Sri Lanka' was held in Toronto on 17.6.95. Around 23,000 Tamils took part in this march which is acclaimed as the biggest ever of Tamils in North America. A van decorated with the Tiger Emblem led the processionists who

carried Tiger flags and placards with moving slogans.

Ontario Elections

The Progressive Conservative Party with only 37% of the votes cast won a landslide victory at the June Provincial elections, capturing 82 out of a total of 130 seats. Their policies are an extension of the U.S. Republican agenda. The average Canadian is already smarting over the proposed reduction of Non-Profit Housing and 20% cut on welfare payments.

A Book of History and Events Awaits Publication – Needs Help

Thambimuthu Duraisingham Solicitor, Attorney at Law, and Notary Public is as much a dedicated Marxist as he is a devoted and knowledgeable Hindu, whose presence even at the ripe old age of 83 cannot be missed at any Colombo gathering concerned with radical politics or Hindu religious and cultural affairs.

If one person more than another was responsible for spreading scientific socialist knowledge in this country from the early forties it was Duraisingham through his publishing house – Mohan and Bhatt and the agency of the Left Book Club.

Nationalist and radical leaders of South India like Thiru V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliyar and P. Jeevanandham made a significant contribution through their speeches, and writings, towards moulding Duraisingham's political philosophy and outlook early in his life.

The notable milestones in Duraisingham's life were his joining the first national anti-imperialist movement, the Suriya Mal, in 1931, his being a founder member of the LSSP in 1935 and later breaking away from the LSSP and founding of the Communist Party in 1945 under the leadership of Dr. S.A. Wickremasinghe, Pieter Keuneman, A. Vaidialingam, M.G. Mendis, Rev. Sarankara Thero *et al.*

In the course of his 83 year old life Duraisingham has spoken and written on a variety of subjects, social, political, economic, religious and spiritual without wavering from his historical and dialectical outlook. For the past few years he has collected, compiled and arranged his writings for thirty years with those of others to be published for the benefit and education of the present and future generations under the title 'Politics and Life in Our Times'.

The compilation consist of 60 pieces by him and 120 by others from Juvenal, Arunachalam to Julius Nyerere and Velupilla Pirabhakaran. The manuscript runs into almost 1000 pages and awaits publication for which Duraisingham solicits financial contributions from friends, well-wishers and benefactors.

The articles, speeches, reports and dissertations found in this collection have been published in newspapers, magazines and books as and when they were

written or delivered. It is a compendious history of events and happening as and when they were enacted by the chief *dramatis personae* in all the political, social and religious events of these times. Some of the writings are short while others are long, but taken together they give a brief, but complete picture of the salient events of this century, both national and international.

This is a book that ought to be published and a part of the estimated costs of printing has already been contributed by friends and well-wishers. Duraisingham cannot place the print order without liberal assistance from other well-wishers and friends living far and wide. Remittances may please be made payable to: T. Duraisingham, 31, Wilson

Street, Colombo 12, (Sri Lanka). His telephone number is Colombo 328687.

V. Kanapathipillai,

Colombo 3.

The Day Will Come

The day will come
When the winners won
And the losers win

The day will see
What the winners will be
What the losers will be
.....Free

The day will come
When the winners lose
And the losers chose

The day will come
When the winner will need
The losersFreed

Lemn Sissay

Continued from page 5

take most of the peninsula whether they will be able to hold it in the face of the hostile population, made more hostile by the violence, death and destruction caused in the course of such a take over. For whatever reservations a section of the Jaffna population may have about the Tigers, theirs as someone said is a 'love-hate relationship'. They may hate the Tigers for many things, but would they permit them to be defeated is the question.

The last time Jaffna was physically wrested from the Tigers was during the Indian troop deployment in the island's northeast, under the controversial Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987. Barely three months into the peace agreement, the Tigers renege and provoked prompting the Indian Peace Keeping Force into offensive action.

Although initially the IPKF numbered in the region of 40,000 soldiers, at the height of the offensive an estimated 100,000 Indian troops, including logistical staff, were in the island.

Taking Jaffna was on their agenda as well. So several columns of soldiers marched under heavy resistance from the Tigers into Jaffna town and set up

campes all over the peninsula. And tragically several hundred civilians trapped between the parties paid with their lives.

The Indian troops suffered the disadvantage of fighting on alien territory, on unfamiliar terrain. But it is not the unfamiliarity of the terrain that is going to dictate the outcome of Eelam War III.

For the Tigers who started off as a guerrilla force, and still are, have now equipped themselves with sophisticated weaponry, and would strike hard at the security forces.

Both sides are well aware that civilians are going to be caught up in the crossfire syndrome. With a figure of over 250 killed and a few hundred more injured in the week's offensive, there is no question that the civilian casualties would be unacceptably high in the process of a military adventure to take over Jaffna.

It is the civilians who are always called upon to bear the tremendous brunt and burden of the war. It is not just their livelihood and their day to day sustenance that they are deprived of, but more importantly the psychological trauma of living in mortal fear of the bombs and the shells.

South London Tamil Welfare Group Vacancy

A Registered Charity, serving the welfare needs of the Tamil Community in South London has immediate vacancy for the following Part-time position.

VOLUNTEER ORGANISER AND PROJECT WORKER

(Funded by Age Concern England)

You will be responsible for successfully implementing the Community Care Project for the Older People using volunteers.

SALARY: pro-rata £12,471/= Inc OLW (26.5 hours)

The applicants for this demanding position should have –

- ★ Personal interest in the care of the Older People and the ability to respond sympathetically to the needs of the Older People.
- ★ Experience in working with Older People and volunteers.
- ★ Experience in volunteer recruitment.
- ★ Experience in Word-Processing.
- ★ Organising skills.

In addition you will need –

- ★ Fluency in both English and Tamil including interpretation and translation.
- ★ Good communication skills and telephone manner.
- ★ Ability to work on his/her Initiative and with a proven track record to meet targets.
- ★ Flexible approach and the ability to work well under pressure including working on Saturdays and during unsocial hours.

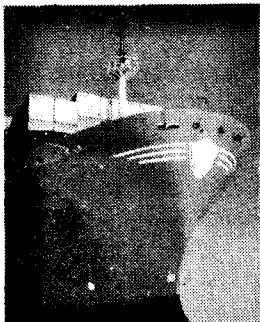
For further details and an application form, please write to –

The Co-ordinator
South London Tamil Welfare Group
41-47 Hartfield Road
LONDON SW19 3SG
Telephone No. 0181-540 3715

Closing date for receipt of application is Friday 4th August 1995.
We are an Equal Opportunities Employer and operate a No Smoking Policy.



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TRANSCONTINENTAL

நீங்கள் தொடர்பு கொள்ள வேண்டியவர்கள்: Harry Mahendra, Asoka Fernando or Nagabalan

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BONDED WAREHOUSE

Laksiriseva, 253/3 Avissawella Road, Colombo 14 Tel: 575576



TRICO INTERNATIONAL (SHIPPING) LTD

TRICO SHIPPING SCHEDULE

YOUR GOODS MUST BE AT OUR WAREHOUSE 5 WORKING DAYS BEFORE DEPARTURE

Vessel Name	Closing Date	Sailing	Arrival
Hanjin Le Havre	22.07.95	27/07/95	13/08/95
Hanjin Long Beach	6.08.95	11/08/95	27/08/95
Hanjin Kaohalung	20.08.95	25.08.95	10.09.95

We offer you the same service from the following destinations

CANADA

Trico Shipping - 685 Lansdowne Av.,
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AUSTRALIA

Unit 8, 24-26 Carrick,
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Our modern warehouse and offices are under one roof with ample car parking facilities where our customers have the extra benefit of packing their goods themselves with our assistance.

We offer a friendly and professional service at competitive rates. Once your goods are in our hands, we guarantee a safe and efficient delivery to your destination. We also offer FREE STORAGE to our customers for a period of ONE MONTH in our bonded warehouse in Colombo.

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UNIWEST INTERNATIONAL

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London N11 1NA

Tel : 0181-361 5087 / 4937
0181-368 9544

Fax : 0181-361 8498

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