



Tamil International

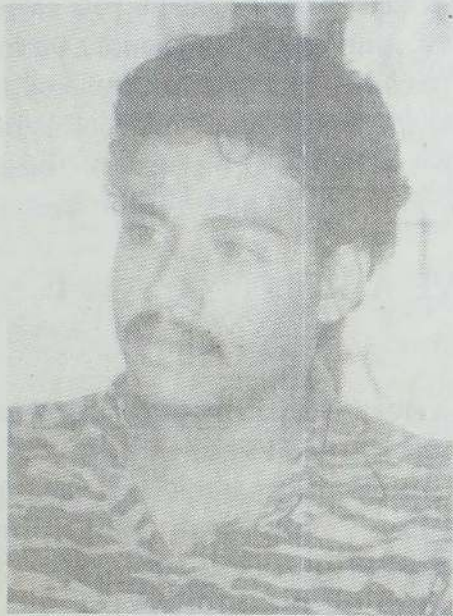
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1st May 1990

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EELAM REGAINED

North-East Sri Lanka has been transformed after the IPKF's withdrawal and the gradual assumption of power by the PFLT



BANU

At 26, the Peninsula's Military Commander



MAHATHAYA ENTERS TRINCO



WOMEN TIGERS
on a two-wheeler



PRABAHARAN WITH
JUSTICE MINISTER HAMEED

READERS' VIEWS

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

R Shanmuganathan, NSW, Australia.

Reference is made to TVI February issue. Letter to the Editor by R Devan about Prof Suntharalingam was both revealing and interesting. The extent of his involvement in the early stages of Tamil struggle against Sinhalese oppression is such that a study of his life history will be like a study of the Tamil political history of that period. However, one cannot help but wonder how this brilliant fighter against injustice made the about-turn to approve another form of injustice and be accused of hypocrisy and double standards. His stand against temple entry cannot be justified from a practical or ethical point of view. The Professor marred his otherwise remarkable public life by this error.

Reference The Island's editorial (page 9, TVI) criticising Sinhalese intelligentsia and opinion-makers for remaining silent during periods of violence in Sri Lanka. This belated criticism is especially true in the case of periodic violence against Tamils, who suffered without any sympathy from the intelligentsia. There are, however, some exceptions. The truth is that the voices of these few lone Sinhalese were drowned in the general anti-Tamil hysteria. We Tamils should not forget the noble deeds of these admirable men. One such person is Dr Brian Senewiratne. He made a greater effort than many Tamil organisations to expose the situation in Sri Lanka. There are others and we must publicise their contributions.

The cover photo of Mr Prabakaran is appropriate. He is a source of pride and a beacon of hope for Tamil speaking-people. The Tamils, who hitherto had to rely on their hoary past and mythology to find a hero to idolise, no longer have the need for it. Mr Prabakaran's success has prompted some people to categorise the Tamils as a "martial race" in accordance with British introduced practices in the subcontinent. This practice of stereotyping groups of people is undesirable and unhealthy and should not be encouraged. Encouragement of the principle of equality of humankind must be the desired result of Prabakaran's success.

PRABAHARAN, YOU ARE GREAT

S Balan, Toronto, Canada

At last the doubt whether Prabakaran is dead or alive is now cleared. I was confused for months over the issue. Expatriate Tamils, at least some of them who had doubts like me, are extremely happy. His choice not to be directly in charge of the political party and not to be the head of the government but to be involved with social services, to

take care of the war-victims, shows his greatness.

It is learnt that he is personally attending to written complaints made by the public every day. There were and are still certain acts by some of the cadres of the LTTE which, I am sure, will not be in the best interests of the Tamil cause and which will not be supported by the people and this great leader. Let us hope for the best from the "Hope of the Nation." God Bless him.

TAMIL INTERNATIONAL

N.Rajan, Batticaloa

By whatever name you call your paper, it is marvellous. It has played its role in the Tamil struggle. There is no other paper that put the IPKF in the dock. Its editorials, Eelam Thoughts, Ask Rani, were excellent. Folk Tales by Thaatha is worthy of publishing. I cannot understand why Thirukkural has been omitted in the Tamil International. Can't you provide a page for Thirukkural? What happened to Rani? I love her, I mean her replies. The paper has its role to play. Please continue. All the best.

YOU HAVE A ROLE

Balan - Zambia

There is still a great deal you have to do and can do for the Tamil State of Eelam and I sincerely hope that your journal will continue to play its great role for many more years to come. You have my sincere good wishes in your endeavours towards this.

WHAT EELAM MEANS

*Eelam is the Goddess enshrined in our hearts.
Eelam is our manthra more soothing than 'Om'.
Eelam is deep yearning to preserve our past.
Eelam is sound calmness succeeding big storms.
Eelam is our nectar which mitigates all pains.
Eelam is our sweet Mother who feeds our hungry souls.
Eelam is wise riddance of neighbourly strains.
Eelam is freedom to fulfil noble goals.
Eelam is profound love, dignity, respect.
Eelam is life's breath, constitutional tact.
Eelam is a boon to boost mutual prospects.
Eelam is beyond wishes and dreams; firm fact.
Eelam is the most precious thing one could find.
Eelam means everlasting peace in all minds.*

- Prof. Kopan Mahadeva -

TAMIL International

எப்பொருள் எத்தன்மைத்து ஆயினும் அப்பொருள்
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1st May 1990

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EDITORIAL

THE BANEFUL BANDARANAIKES

Mrs Chandrika Kumaranatunga, leader of the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party (SLMP) and second daughter of the Bandaranaiques, has given a whimsical interview to the correspondent of the Hindustan Times in Colombo (See report elsewhere in this issue). She has called for the stationing of -now hold your breath - a United Nations Peace Keeping Force in the Tamil northeast of the island! Why for Heaven's sake you might ask, at a time when another "Peace Keeping Force" has just departed leaving the people in peace after ten long years? To provide security to the Tamil-speaking people she says! And of course to see that the LTTE hands over all its weapons. Well, Well !

Considering the outlandish nature of her call, the misplaced timing, the newspaper to which she had given the interview (the Hindustan Times had shown antipathy towards both the Tamil cause and the Premadasa government) and the laughable fact that the call to provide "security to the Tamil-speaking people" comes from a Bandaranaike (it was the Bandaranaike clan beginning with Father Solomon West Ridgeway Dias in 1956 followed by Mother Srimavo in 1960 which was primarily responsible for depriving the Tamil-speaking people of their security), apart from the very improbability of Mr Perez de Cuellar obliging Madame Chandrika, the whole business could be dismissed as a profitless diversion on the part of a young widow trying to step into the mantle of an old one who has reached the end of her tether. But can we afford to shrug off what seems a preposterous proposal, given the insidiousness of the motive behind and the traditional explosiveness of anti-Tamil politics.

The history of the island politics from independence until 1977 shows that it was a ball game played between two families - the Senanayakes and the Bandaranaiques - each trying to outplay the other in a ding-dong battle for power, at the expense of the Tamils. Junius Richard Jayewardene who for thirty long years suffered in silence in the shadows of the former, asking himself the question all the time as to what birthright had given these two families the exclusive right to rule the country, managed to wear down both in a subtle war of attrition and rose to power in 1977. If the name of the game could be called political football, the name of the ball itself was Tamil. Now the Senanayakes and the Jayewardenes are virtually extinct, politically; but that leaves the Bandaranaiques yet in the picture. And let us remember that there are three of them - mother, daughter and son. Chandrika Bandaranaike's call has to be seen in that light. So strong is the power-thirst that runs in the Bandaranaike family, having enjoyed power for more than 14 years and deprived of it for the past 13 years that they would stoop to anything to grab power again. And as long as they strut around, one can be sure that peace in the northeast and the security of the Tamils would both continue to be threatened.

But that is not to say that 1990 is 1960 or 1970. Much water has flowed down the Kelani river since then. The bete noire of the Bandaranaiques - Ranasinghe Premadasa - is very much in authority in Colombo, and the old ball game is over. It is no longer a Sinhala home-and-home match. Thanks to the Liberation Tigers, the Tamils are no longer the football. They are themselves players, and in the now "friendly football" going on, Mr Velupillai Prabakaran is leading a team which has all the hallmarks of a winning one. The Bandaranaiques might be watching the match from the sideline, but they have to be watched in turn. Their capacity to disturb the game has not ended.

MACHAN MARIKKAR, WHAT IS THIS ABOUT THE SATANIC VERSES?

Periyadorai - Colombo

As was their practice, the three friends from the Audit Department - Peter Fernando from Puttalam, Citizen Singha Perera and *Namadarl* Prabha Ponniah, met one sunny Saturday evening at the Galle Face Green in Colombo. It was about half an hour before the glorious tropical sunset one always sees at the Galle Face. They were exchanging views on all manner of things, including the habits of turtles and iguanas and their culinary potential and specific medical uses by the local Ayurvedic physicians, when in came Marikkar, who was in the jewellery business. They used to meet Marikkar at the Bristol Hotel in Fort, close to their places of work, when they had a quick beer during the lunch break when one needed it most in the sticky heat of Colombo.

Now one would wonder - especially in these days of Islamic Fundamentalism of the Ayotollah - how a Muslim like Marikkar would be involved in the consumption of alcohol. He is a Sunni Muslim, like most other Sri Lankan Muslims and not a fundamental type, like the Shia Muslims of Iran. He believes in being "with it" and enjoys a little drink occasionally and the bonhomie that goes with it, which his doctor says won't do any harm to his blood pressure, which is on the low side.

"Besides", he says, "the great thing is to be able to subject yourself to all the temptations and yet not let yourself be overcome. All religions preach moderation; so there is no need for complete abstinence."

Like the Turks, the Sri Lankan Muslims are more liberal and their women do not always observe *purdah* and many of them take to higher education. In fact one of Ponniah's cousins was the Vice-Principal of a Muslim Ladies College which prepares Muslim girls to enter the universities.

Peter Fernando had a little problem

in obtaining the true facts of the Rushdie affair or the "Satanic Verses." So when Marikkar approached he lost no time in popping the question "Machan Marikkar, what is this about the Satanic Verses of this fellow Solomon Rushdie?" Peter, as all his friends know, has a penchant for delightful mispronunciations, invariably causing guffaws. He was a pleasant fellow and a born malaprop, who would sometimes purposely mispronounce to live up to his reputation and cause a laugh to lighten the mood. The name Salman is not common in Sri Lanka and so he presumed it was the commonly accepted Solomon. So Marikkar explained that Salman and Suleiman were really Arabic variations of Solomon, who was a king of Israel in 1000 BC.

Marikkar explained that the Satanic Verses was written as a dream and Rushdie says that it is not his fault that people do not understand dreams. He described Mohammed as "Mahound" and compared his wives to whores. His excuse is that the use of fiction was a way of creating a distance from actuality which he thought would prevent offence from being taken. He himself does not believe in God. The Muslims have naturally taken offence and say the book is abusive and blasphemous and seditious libel and that he should be prosecuted under the blasphemy laws which cover Christianity. Opponents declare that any extension of this archaic and anomalous law would simply multiply the anomalies in a multi-racial and plural society. They say it would produce further discrimination and injustices that would be against the public interest.

Marikkar also stated that the Islamic Party of Britain has urged suspension of the death sentence against Rushdie on the grounds that he may have had a mental breakdown while writing the book. They say that psychologists have confirmed that some passages in the book strikingly resembled descriptions of people suffering from

Schizophrenia. If this is the case, then under the compassionate laws of Islam, Rushdie could be exempt from the punishment that has been decreed by the Fatwa imposed by the Ayotollahs of Iran.

"I think he is really a silly fellow, knowing very well what he could expect from militant Islam, which has strict laws on blasphemy and apostasy" said citizen Perera, with the others agreeing.

"So now I understand all this fuss about the Satanic Verses" said Peter.

"And now, as Dennis Thatcher would say to Maggie, 'I feel like a gin and tonic coming along', so let's move over to the glorious, colonialist Galle Face Hotel for a little tincture and sample its waters" said *Namadarl* Ponniah, and they all rose and ambled towards the Hotel.

"So Marikkar, after all that has been said and done, you wouldn't mind drinking to poor Rushdie's health, would you?" asked Ponniah, while walking up the steps of Galle Face Hotel. Marikkar pretended not to hear.

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LTTE WOULD FIGHT AGAIN IF BETRAYED

Prabaharan, who appeared in public after a gap of two and a half years on April 1 in Jaffna, said to reporters that his men would fight the Sri Lankan Government if their demands were not met. "We want our people to live independently and honourably. We want justice," he said.

"A settlement to our problems is likely soon due to Mr Premadasa's courageous and new approach to the Tamil problem," Mr Prabaharan, who was



dressed in military fatigues, said. But he warned that the rebels "will not hesitate to take up arms and fight again if the Sri Lankan Government tries to suppress the Tamil liberation movement like the former Indian Government did." "We will try to solve our problems in the democratic way but failing we will fight. We are the sole representatives of the people of the North and East," he added.

I HAVE GAINED SELF-CONFIDENCE, COURAGE AND THE SUPPORT OF MY PEOPLE - Prabaharan

[Speaking to TIME's Anita Pratap.]

Q. What made you confront India?

A. India claimed to have intervened in Sri Lanka to secure Tamil interests. In actual fact, India came to secure its own interests. There was never any genuine attempt to understand and solve our problems. India deliberately aggravated Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis.

Q. But India has consistently stood for a united Sri Lanka.

A. India used this excuse to impress the world that it is the protector of Sri Lanka. What I can't forgive is the way India claimed to have intervened to protect the Tamils and then launched this war against our people. On the third day after the war started, I sent an appeal to India to stop the attack because of the civilian casualties. But India mistook it as a sign of weakness and pressed ahead with the offensive, thinking they could crush us.

Q. What gave you the courage to take on the world's fourth largest army?

A. India failed to secure the release of twelve of my area commanders who were arrested by the Sri Lankan security forces. When the captives later swallowed cyanide, their suicide made me determined to confront the Indian Army. Some of my top colleagues cautioned me against it and wondered

how long the LTTE could hold out. I gave them the Vietnam example - a small nation can fight a superpower with determination and dedication. When I was deciding to fight, the thought of winning or losing didn't bother me. What you have to assess is whether you have the will to fight. People cannot give up their cause, their rights, for fear of defeat.

Q. Is there a lesson in this for India?

A. That however formidable a military power you may be, you cannot impose upon a people anything against their will.

Q. What were the Indian army's main strengths and weaknesses?

A. Their strength - and their weakness - was their huge manpower. It created difficulties for us. It restricted our mobility. But because they came in large numbers, they suffered many casualties. Also, they wasted a lot of time, energy and money on providing logistical support. Another major weakness was that the Indian Army was not motivated. The soldiers didn't know why they were fighting.

Q. What were the LTTE's strengths and weaknesses?

A. Our strength - and our weakness - was our overconfidence. Sometimes our cadres took impossible risks, like ambushing an Indian patrol at a point

where there were no escape routes. This cost us casualties. We were sometimes careless. But also because of our overconfidence, our boys carried out some amazingly brave attacks.

Q. Some 6,000 Tamil civilians were killed. Was it worth it?

A. Yes. We have proved that we will not allow any force to interfere with the freedom and independence of our people.

Q. But what have you gained?

A. I have gained self-confidence, courage and the support of my people.

Q. What made you start negotiations with Premadasa?

A. Our people thought India would give us Tamil Eelam [a separate Tamil state]. Instead India reached an agreement against our will. So we thought it would be better to talk to the Sri Lankan Government and work out a better deal. Besides, the LTTE will not allow a foreign force to intervene and dominate our people. Premadasa articulated the same viewpoint. He was determined to end the foreign intervention.

Q. Now that the Indian army has gone, many fear that confrontation with the Sri Lankan Government - your historical enemy - is again inevitable.

continued on page 16

Our Literary Heritage

நாஸடியார்

மற்றறிவாம் நல்வினை யாம் இனையம் என்னுது
கைத்துண்டாம் போழ்தே கரவாது அறம் செய்மின்
முற்றி இருந்த கனி ஒழியத் தீ வளியால்
நற்காய் உதிர்தலும் உண்டு.

"Procrastination is the thief of time." This is an old adage in the English language ascribed to Edward Young who died in 1765. Sayings having a similar connotation can be found in almost all languages. The reason for this is that postponement is a very natural human tendency. We postpone or put off or defer for various reasons. Ordinary postponement may be excusable, but not procrastination. Why? Procrastination is criminal. If a thing which should not or need not be postponed is postponed, then you call it procrastination.

Time and time again our elders have warned us that we should not postpone anything for tomorrow or day after because that tomorrow or the day after may never come at all. Still we postpone as if nothing would be thereby lost. This is because we don't really realise the value of time despite reminders by our elders. We postpone for tomorrow what should be done today not knowing the true nature of a day. What is a day? The great sage Thiruvalluvar answers this question. He says that, "a day is a sharp sword that goes on cutting our life span little by little imperceptibly." The ignorant call it a day; but the wise call it a sword. If we are conscious of this fact, then, we will act swiftly like an examinee at an examination hall. Every tick of the clock at the examination hall goads the examinee into action and he plods on. But in ordinary day-to-day life we don't act that swiftly, though we have to. Naaladiyaar gives the reason as to why we should do things then and there.

We all, without exception, hope to live long years not knowing what is in store. We do not for a moment want to believe that we may not be able to

see the morrow. We firmly believe that we will have enough time tomorrow to do the thing which we should have done today. This perhaps is the reason why we postpone. But such thinking is not always correct.

Let us not therefore postpone, says Naaladiyaar. Let us not think that we are quite young and that there is no mighty hurry to do virtuous deeds now and that we could do them leisurely after indulging in all manners of pleasure at the moment. Such thinking is fallacious. He illustrates this fallacy with the help of a natural phenomenon. Take the case of a mango tree that is bowing under the weight of its fruits at various stages of development. There are ripe fruits, semi ripe fruits, very tiny fruits and even *Karukkai*. Normally it is the most ripe fruit that is expected to drop off first. But occasions are many when the unexpected *Karukkai* also drops off while the fully mature ripened fruit remains intact on the tree.

Likewise it is possible for youngsters to die sooner than old people by reason of some misfortune. We are aware how in Tamil Eelam many

youths have departed while their grandparents who have become octogenarians remain hale and hearty.

As Fate the inscrutable is capable of upsetting our plans let us perform virtuous deeds here and now when we are hale and hearty for we don't know what will befall us tomorrow. We have to give and to donate when we have and in excess of our needs.

It is when we have that we can give and earn some merit which will stand us in good stead. We are not sure whether what we have today will remain with us for ever. Wealth may not stay with us permanently. It moves from one hand to another like the change of seasons. Even the great Harichandra who had all the wealth one could think of at his command at one point of time became such a pauper that he had to work as the burner of dead bodies at a cemetery to earn his living. Such is the nature of wealth. But because Harichandra had acted wisely when he was young and wealthy, his meritorious deeds and liberal acts stood him in good stead through thick and thin. The lesson that we learn from this verse in Naaladiyaar is that life is transient and that we should perform good deeds without procrastination. Let us therefore be good and useful to others as much as possible at every turn.

MATRIMONIAL

Jaffna Hindu parents, good family connections seek suitable pretty bride under 30 years holding degree or professional qualifications for their son 32 years ACCA, working with a London firm of Chartered Accountants, educated at leading Colombo College. Correspond with chart. Mat/1/190, c/o Tamil International.

Jaffna Hindu brother seeks suitable partner 33 - 39 for his sister British Citizen with post-graduate qualifications and in permanent high government employment. Communicate with Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.

details including horoscope. Mat/2/190, c/o Tamil International.

Hindu Tamil parents seek response from well qualified young men aged 30 - 35 for well educated daughter, permanent resident in the USA. Reply to: Mat/3/190, c/o Tamil International.

Alliance sought by uncle for Hindu Tamil niece, well educated US permanent resident from prospective qualified partners aged 28 - 33. Reply Mat/4/190, c/o Tamil International.

MUSINGS OF AN EXILE

Thampu Visvanathan

After the violence of 1958 when many of us quit the land of our birth saying 'Enough is enough', we really did not envisage a long stay abroad. Within ourselves we had the desire if not the resolve to re-pack our bags and return home. In any event, we were going to maintain our links with our kith and kin by regular visits, through remittances to the needy among the many we had left behind and where possible by helping some of them to join us in our new abode. I dare say we did all of these and more but, as the years rolled by, our ties have been considerably loosened and today many of us are irrevocably and totally cut off from what was once hearth and home to generations of us. As our own (Tamil) New Year approached my thoughts went back to the happy times in the village when friends and relations would meet for a natter if not for more filling delights. So it was at Deepavali and Thai Pongal, weddings and coming-of-age rites. We waited not for invitations: we just went across the road or down the lane for we knew there would always be a warm welcome.

Here in the UK, probably in Canada and the USA as well, we now do not just 'drop in'. A visit has always to be arranged in advance. There is much to be said in support of this Western practice. Nevertheless some of the spontaneity, warmth and pleasant surprise of meeting friends and relations have gone for good. We have now become more calculating and even withdrawn. We are not huddled together as one finds Indians in Southall or Bangladeshis in Brick Lane or Pakistanis in Bradford, for example. Consequently, the opportunities for frequent meeting and socialising are few and far between. **It is here that one feels most keenly the need for a Tamil Club or Centre where one can drop in of an evening for a chat with friends**, to read Sri Lankan and Indian newspapers and journals, to watch a Tamil film, to listen to music both live and canned, to enjoy a plate of hot curry and rice at an affordable price. There is in London a growing number of

'Tamil' eating places but the average Tamil family of four can ill-afford eating out at £25 or more a time. My thoughts waft over the oceans to that popular haunt in Colombo Fort - Jaffna Hotel, Hospital Street, where in the 50's I would often go from my home in Kotahena to eat to my heart's content the sizzling hot 'country' rice, delicious crab curry and two vegetables served on a plantain leaf, all for one rupee. A second and even a third helping of rice was freely available and their famous 'venthaya kulambu'. Anything extra, like fried fish or fried prawns, would have to be paid for but, guess, what this cost - a mere 50 cents. Even in Jaffna, in the Grand Bazaar, one could eat 'ulunthu vadai', 'thosai' and 'iddiappam', washed down with delicious 'milk-coffee' for a few cents at a time.

There are many features of Tamil society in Britain which have to be looked into closely if our identity is not to be submerged and ultimately obliterated by our long absence from home and its traditional values. Our men here are far more addicted to drink than they ever were before they set foot on this soil. I have heard of a man with a young family who was earning such good money in his job and working overtime that he drank only whisky, morning, noon and night! He nearly paid the price with his life one day, with a burst blood vessel. For the slightest provocation he used to have 'bottle parties' and everybody around used to be invited. Today he neither drinks nor smokes for he well knows that he is living on borrowed time. One beneficial result of his near-death experience is the fact that his 'good-weather' friends have melted away.

Drinking in moderation in this inhospitable climate and amidst a society where it is the done thing cannot be altogether frowned upon. **What is worrisome is the growing number of our middle-aged men who are afflicted with heart ailments and blood pressure.** We occasionally hear of women too suffering from these illnesses but the risk to our

menfolk is indeed alarming. There could be ten times as many widows as there are widowers in our community. In the host nation one does not find many young or even middle-aged widows because they tend to marry again. Sadly, our women, some in their 30's and 40's, must go through the rest of their lives alone and often leading a lonely and insecure existence. Of course, children can be a source of great comfort and help provided the couple when they lived together had time for them, both literally and metaphorically! It is a fact that most Tamil parents nowadays stop with two children. Gone are the days when a typical family consisted of six or more. This was possible and even encouraged in the first half of this century. Today, partly because both husband and wife go out to work, having even one child is put off till it sometimes becomes too late to think of raising a family. Marriage is now delayed as one can notice in matrimonial advertisements seeking "professionally qualified partner for Jaffna Hindu sister (37)", "alliance for Jaffna Tamil bride (35)" and many such.

This late age of marriage for women is a direct consequence of the unrest and upheaval in Tamil society over the past two decades.

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MEDIA EXCERPTS

PULL-OUT FALL-OUT

The hunted Tiger has turned around and the hound has fled. As the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam made a triumphant entry into the eastern port town of Trincomalee that had been the seat of provincial administration for 16 months, Chief Minister Varatharaja Perumal and his colleagues threw away their guns and boarded the nearest flying or sailing craft.

Perumal and his EPRLF colleagues have vowed that they will return to the scene, better armed and better trained. And given the attitude of the Indian authorities so far, he and his colleagues are going to get little training. The state governments of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh have made it clear that they want no more trouble. [Courtesy: *The Week*, April 1, 1990]

WEARY WARRIORS

It (IPKF) was beating a quiet retreat. There was no ceremonial send-off. No touching farewells, no bugles, bouquets and drums. They returned unnoticed. Their faces did not convey the satisfaction of a mission accomplished. Rather, it was fatigue's relief at the end of a long ordeal. The unsung return spoke volumes of the sorry end to India's biggest ever military-diplomatic overseas expedition.

The IPKF's General Officer Commanding Lt Gen A S Kalkat would not admit that the Indian mission was a failure. The fact, however, remains that the IPKF failed in its primary task of disarming LTTE which is still in control of the entire Tamil area. LTTE is in an upbeat mood, having beaten back the might of the Indian army. Moreover, in the process, it succeeded in eliminating its rivals which were competing for supremacy. There is every possibility of ethnic strife enveloping Sri Lanka. The Tigers could once again go for the Sri Lankan army's jugular. If they could fight for three long years, against heavy odds, would they scale down their demand in their moment of triumph? [Courtesy: *The Week*, April 1, 1990]

ULTIMATE INSULT

The unkindest cut awaited them on the Indian shores. The Madras harbour, from where the IPKF units were sent off with much fanfare, wore a forlorn look when they returned. **Politicians of all hues, even the Congress(I) and AIADMK variety, were conspicuous by their absence.** True, Governor P C Alexander and Minister of State for Defence Dr Raja Ramanna were at hand to receive the last of the returning contingents. But that was little solace to a force which made the best of a botched political job.

What galled the army brass was the refusal of Tamil

Nadu Chief Minister Karunanidhi to show even a modicum of solidarity with the battle-weary soldiers. It was clearly adding insult to the CM's ravings at the IPKF ever since it first landed in Sri Lanka in 1987. Every attempt to approach the CM was blocked by the bureaucrats; even the invitations went unacknowledged. "We are very, very disappointed by the CM's attitude..." said one officer bitterly. [Courtesy: *The Week*, April 1, 1990]

RETURN OF THE TIGERS

Now with the IPKF out of Sri Lanka, **the onus of working out a political solution to the ethnic issue rests with President Premadasa.** Following the IPKF pull-out, armed LTTE cadres have taken control in the north and the east.

As aggressive-looking cadres patrol the areas, the police and the Sri Lankan Army stand by, not wanting a confrontation. In Kankesanthurai in the Jaffna peninsula, the police say they are under explicit orders of the LTTE to police only certain places. Says Kailash, 24, a LTTE organiser: "The police have to take the LTTE's permission if they want to move around in the Odducuddan area."

Flags and posters of the LTTE and the PFLT dominate the areas and it seems as if no other political party exists. Restaurants and street-corners play the group's patriotic songs and speeches praising martyrs and explaining why and how they fought the cause of the Tamils all these years. Area leaders of the LTTE hold *durbars* on local problems and even preside over peoples' courts.

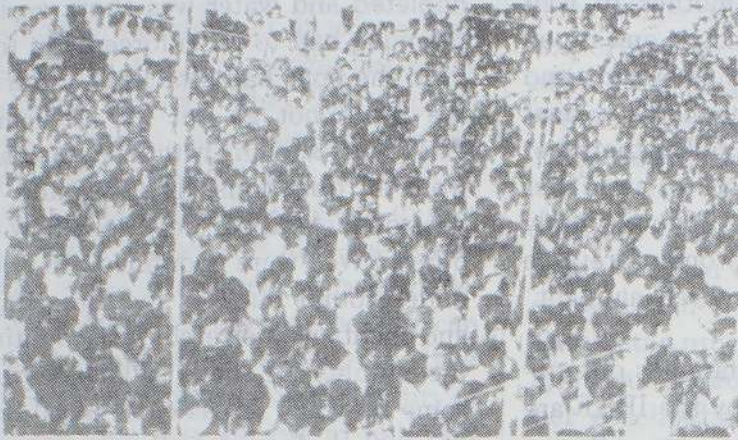
The Tigers are busy recruiting new cadres. In Jaffna, it is a common sight to see uniformed girls belonging to the LTTE travelling on two wheelers through the town, toting AK 47s, magazines and grenades.

Now, moves are afoot by the LTTE to secure more arms. In the war-ravaged coastal town of Valvettithurai in Jaffna district, the Sea Tigers, the LTTE's naval unit, had sent off a mechanised boat to Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu to collect arms. Also, the LTTE has been unearthing arms hidden by other groups before they fled the country.

The Tigers have categorically ruled out surrender of weapons, saying that the security of the North-Eastern Province depends on their retaining arms.

But following the LTTE's elevation to the stature of a political party, which will contest the provincial elections promised by Premadasa, there is a distinct change in approach. Even the taxes levied by them are now called donations to the PFLT for 'serving the people'. Tigers can be seen positioned on highways, stopping trucks carrying goods. Instead of security personnel, the Elephant Pass linking the Jaffna peninsula with the rest of the island is full of LTTE men. The members also go around shops and establishments to collect taxes, equipped with the latest bank balances from top businessmen and professionals.

Says Balasingham: "Sri Lanka cannot afford another war with the LTTE. It cannot have its record of human rights stained any further as it might interrupt the flow of foreign aid. The Sri Lankan Army also cannot contain us. So the best way is to take a new approach to making peace with us."



Thousands attended PFLT rally in Killinochchi in February

Meanwhile, the focus of the LTTE over the last few weeks has been on organising the PFLT. Daily meetings - addressed by leaders like Mahathaya and Yogi, PFLT general secretary - are drawing eager crowds. The leaders do not directly talk of Eelam, but the spirit of an independent land is present in the speeches. Last fortnight, poet Kasi Anandan drew applause at a PFLT meeting in Vavuniya when he said that any foreigner could capture his land, but could not rule over it. They could defeat the people, but could not destroy them. [Courtesy: *India Today*, April 15, 1990]

THE LESSONS OF THE INVOLVEMENT

A most unhappy chapter in our post-independence history is ending with the withdrawal of the last contingent of the Indian Peace Keeping Force from Sri Lanka. An informed and detailed study of the political, intelligence and military factors that have led to the loss of 1,155 of our combat troops, and several thousands wounded, on a mission that can only be described as a failure, is essential. It should deter any Indian Government from undertaking such a misadventure in future.

The objective was to provide security for Tamil areas while the process of setting up an elected provincial government with wide powers was completed in the newly-joined Northern and Eastern provinces. But what has been achieved? Is failure too strong a word, though it is more political than military? The answer is provided by the refugees now being accommodated in camps put up more than 30 years ago in Orissa for refugees from what was then East Pakistan.

It is clear enough that the provincial regime elected and put together under IPKF protection has disintegrated with its departure, and those associated with it are seeking refuge

in India. Fully armed cadres of the LTTE have returned to Jaffna and Trincomalee, towns wrested from them at a considerable cost to the IPKF.

It is now up to the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE to either agree or fight over the future of the territory, which was the situation when the IPKF was inducted 31 months ago.

Groups like the EPRLF, which co-operated with the IPKF, have no future there. The Tigers showed no mercy to them earlier. The prospect in Sri Lanka is as uncertain as ever. Nor has New Delhi gained its objective of drawing the island into India's security perimeter. Will we send the army back again if Colombo, now or later, rejects the conditions laid down in Rajiv Gandhi's letter to Junius Jayewardene? In today's world, co-operation cannot be secured by threat. The only way to persuade a neighbour to respect our security concerns is to gain its friendship, not exploit its difficulties. [Ajit Bhattacharya in *The Independent*, Bombay - March 24, 1990]

LESSON OF SRI LANKA

India rushed into the jungles of Jaffna and swamps of Trincomalee in haste and without thinking through what it was intended to do. The Rajiv government was particularly remiss in its dealings with the LTTE, then, as now, the most powerful and dominant of the rival Tamil groups. Clearly, Mr Rajiv Gandhi and his advisers either misread the LTTE's intentions or had an unrealistic notion of their capacity to make it fall in line. In any case, it was odd that instead of being a guarantor of an agreement between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE, the two parties to the dispute, India signed an accord with the Jayewardene government, leaving the LTTE free to wash its hands of the whole thing.

It had gone as a protector of the Tamils in general and the LTTE in particular, it now found it necessary to turn its guns on the recalcitrant LTTE. This time the army obviously overestimated its ability to tame the Tigers. It thought it could do so within weeks, if not days. But its 30 month, bitter war with the LTTE remained largely inconclusive.

It would be grossly unfair to overlook the other positive side of the coin. The bottom line is that **but for the 1987 accord and the IPKF, Sri Lanka would not have been in one piece today.** The Sri Lankan security forces could not have decimated those whom the Indian Army failed to bring to heel...[Inder Malhotra in *Times of India* - March 29, 1990]

WOMEN TIGERS ON THE PROWL

With cyanide capsules around their necks and assault rifles ready to fire, the women guerillas of the Tamil Tigers have

continued on page 14

SITUATION IN TAMIL EELAM

[Extracts from a report in Tamil by K Ramakrishnan, Secretary, Thiravida Kalagam who went there at the invitation of Prabakaran and spent 16 days touring Tamil Eelam. He exchanged views with P Nedumaran who was also there.]

Prabakaran gets up from bed very early, by 4.30 a.m. and so do his companions. Fifteen minutes later he is in his office reading the day's news papers and listening to the radio. He gives out orders based on the pieces of information he receives from all sectors and branches. Military and other leaders see him to obtain necessary advice and guidance from him. He then takes part in shooting practice, inspects the training programmes in the various camps. This is a daily routine.

Many youngsters, some as young as 11 years, have joined the Tiger movement on their own accord. In order to continue their education, schools have been opened in the camps and subjects like science, geography, maths and English are taught. Lessons from pre-recorded video and audio cassettes are made available to them. In the evenings, cultural programmes, including national and patriotic songs, are conducted and all participate. Cinema films and songs are prohibited.

Prabakaran affirmed that the Tigers will not surrender their arms unless the aspirations of the Tamil people are realised. Asked whether he did not expect to be deceived again by the Sri Lankan Government, he said that when problems are to be solved there should be mutual trust between the parties and that the future of the Tamils being in the hands of the Liberation Tigers he was ever vigilant watching the progress of the negotiations and the actions based thereon. He added that after the IPKF departed and the Tigers took over, there has been peace and calm in the Tamil homeland. The Sri Lankan police were only assigned traffic duty and security service in banks; the Sri Lankan Army was confined to their barracks in Jaffna Fort and Palaly camp.

The Tamil people will never pardon the traitors for the inhuman activities they have committed. To

quote one instance, they had gone to a house, ordered the mother to wait outside, entered the house and raped her daughter who was screaming and shouting. The mother, unable to bear the screams of agony, fell at their feet and begged them not to harm her daughter. But the cruel fellows simply laughed it off! Now women are able to move about freely even at night.

The members of the families of innocent boys murdered by the IPKF are consoling themselves by offering regular meals to the Tiger boys. The PFLT has extended its branches even to remote villages with the people's support and co-operation. A memorial has been erected for Thileepan at VVT, costing about rupees 35 lakhs, which sum was raised by voluntary contributions and land was donated by the public.

Prabakaran cited two instances as examples of the courage and sacrifice of the Tiger boys. A Tiger soldier was captured by the IPKF and imprisoned. One day an army officer wanted to quench his thirst and got him to fetch young coconuts from a tree. The Tiger boy obeyed but skilfully used the knife not only to cut the coconut but also to cut the army officer's throat and escaped with his SLR gun. The other instance was when a Tiger was unexpectedly surrounded by IPKF soldiers. He had only two grenades with him but missed his cyanide capsule. He threw one grenade at the IPKF but it did not work. Then he pressed the other grenade to his chest, fell to the ground and killed himself.

Prabakaran cleared many of our doubts. When asked about Rajiv Gandhi's utterances that the IPKF had no intention of killing him or destroying the Tiger movement but only wanted their weapons, Prabakaran remarked: "If that is so, why did they use plenty of 250-kilo bombs on the Tamil civilians? At one stage, several thousands of Indian soldiers surrounded the dense Vanni forests where we

had camped. Our food stocks got depleted and water was short. Strict rationing had to be enforced. On top of it, the boys had attacks of malaria. We could not go out for medicine. They were shelling with large mortars from all directions. They wanted to destroy me and our boys somehow or other. We were confined to our underground bunkers for three days and nights at a stretch, just counting the number of shells falling nearby, some of which fell as close as 50 feet from my hiding place."

A lot of anti-Tiger propaganda was carried out by the IPKF in order to break the morale and courage of the Tamil people. Once they announced that a certain Army Regiment would enter the forest and that the soldiers of that Regiment would not put their drawn swords back into their sheaths without drawing the enemy's blood. Prabakaran was not moved. He said that it was all war-time gimmicks and that no one could shake them as long as they retained courage and worked for a noble cause. Finally **when the attack took place, 56 soldiers of that Regiment lost their lives including their Colonel Pakshji whose body was left behind. The Tigers gave him a decent burial.**

The Intelligence Unit of the Tigers was a skilful one. Intended moves of the Indian army units were intimated to Prabakaran beforehand. At the initial stages of the war, the IPKF had planned to deploy an army unit by helicopter into the Jaffna University campus. Prabakaran came to know about it. He stationed his men at strategic points. **As a result 28 soldiers were killed and the one remaining was captured.** The land army which came to their rescue also was routed.

It is a real treat to watch the Tiger boys and girls at work, and to see how happy their parents are when they visit their children in the Tiger camps.

TAMIL WAY OF EATING IS THE WAY FORWARD

The medical world and the dietitians have come a full circle. They have now come to the conclusion that rice eating is the only way to be healthy, wealthy and wise.

Nutrition experts and dietitians have found out that rice eating has many salutary features. They say that rice has a weight controlling quality by preventing one from over eating. Rice expands and fills the stomach to give a sense of fullness. It also keeps one from excessive eating of rich foods. For instance an average person can easily finish off 14 ounces of steak when hungry; but a similar quantity of cooked rice may be cut in half and still be satisfying. By eating a bit of rice, a bit of meat, then a bit of Massoor dhal and then a bit of brinjal or bit of murunga and a bit of spinach (Ponnankani or Vallarai) an individual will not be concentrating on just one dish or food. The eater can satisfy hunger before over-indulging in any single item of food.

This perhaps is the reason why the

Tamils of old had it as a practice to have at least five or six side dishes to accompany their rice lunch. Moreover rice takes longer to digest than bread and therefore the feeling of "fullness" lasts longer after a meal. **Nutrition experts give many reasons as to why rice is preferable to bread when it comes to a question of reducing calories.**

Because of the way in which bread is made one can eat a lot of bread; but its satiation will disappear quickly. During the process of milling wheat or rye, flour is reduced into a fine powder which when baked is easily and speedily digested by enzymes. But, rice comes in kernels that must be chewed and masticated. Even after chewing rice, particles end up at least ten times larger than baked flour. Enzymes act more slowly on such bigger particles of rice. If you don't rely on a staple food like rice, all foods become staple and you end up stuffing yourself with animal protein such as meat.

One hundred grams of boiled country rice contain 2.6 grams of protein and all of the eight essential amino acids necessary to make the other twelve your body requires. A normal four ounce serving of rice contains just 160 calories. The "staff of life" for Westerners - a mere two slices of bread - can have as many as 260 calories.

As stated above the world has come full circle to find out that the Tamil staple food, rice, which is the staple food of the Japanese also, is the panacea for all the dietary ills of the world.

In this context it would be interesting to note that **the word "rice" takes its origin from the Tamil word "Arisi"**, the botanical term for which is *Oryza Sativum*. It was because the Sri Lankan Tamils were cultivating and exporting rice, Sri Lanka was once known as the Granary of the East. May we Tamils regain that status with the birth of Tamil Eelam. (Compiled by S. Sriskandarajah -Courtesy: "Healthy Eating" Feb/March 1990.)

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A LAW UNTO THEMSELVES

A Group of officers inside the Sri Lanka Army are responsible for the spate of vigilante killings and take orders only from a Cabinet Minister, says the latest round of speculation from Colombo. The officers are said to be linked to Operation Combine, the highly successful anti-subversive operation responsible for the capture of Rohana Wijeweera and other leaders of the People's Liberation Front last year.

Defence Minister Ranjan Wijeratne, winding up Operation Combine at a ceremony in Colombo on 8 March, paid tribute to its leaders, Major General Waidyaratne and Brigadier Lucky Algama, for wiping out the JVP in four months. Army Commander-in-Chief Hamilton Wanasinghe, who looks increasingly isolated, was hurried off to Japan on a courtesy visit before the Combine ceremony. Ranjan Wijeratne told the meeting that an independent Special Forces Brigade under Brigadier Janaka Perera would be set up to monitor national security. A Brigade Headquarters in Colombo would be established under Col. Sathis Jayasundera. Waidyaratne and a clique of officers around him, now appear to be the real power in the Army and a vicious struggle is underway between the two factions to implicate each other in the robberies and killings that accompany Army activity in the South.

Some 13 people, abducted by armed men on 27 February from their homes at Nittambuwa in Gampaha District, were found shot and burnt at Wavulkelle. A female student among the victims had been raped and tortured. The massacre came to light when a man escaped with injuries and sought refuge in a Gampaha MP's house. Four policemen from the Weeragula police station in the same district were arrested in mid-March in connection with the killings and a Police Sub-Inspector has absconded. Two weeks later, the Gampaha home of Opposition SLFP MP Jeyaraja Fernandopulle was attacked by uniformed men in an unmarked vehicle and two security guards injured.

On 6 March, four soldiers of the Balawathgama Army detachment in

Kegalle District were arrested by the Kirulle police for involvement in the murder of C H Ratnayake, the brother-in-law of Sabaragamuwa Provincial Council member Danapala Epitawatte. Four other soldiers were arrested by the Wattala police on charges of robbery and murder. They had stabbed four men and thrown them into the Hamilton Canal in Wattala. One man died, but the others lived to tell the tale.

On 11 March two soldiers and a reserve policeman were detained by the Haputala police after the rape of a woman from Ohiya Estate. Three policemen attached to the Maradana police station are in detention for robbery in the Dematagoda area in Colombo.

Two junior Army officers were arrested in mid-March by military police in Hambantota in connection with the murder of a person named Dingi Malli in Ambalangoda. Three more soldiers were taken into custody by the police for their involvement in a rape at Aranayake. According to security sources, four Navy personnel were arrested on 20 March when they allegedly attempted to abduct a policeman's wife on Galle Face Green in Colombo.

Thirteen people including six Army officers were produced before the Colombo Magistrates Court on the same day in connection with a number of robberies in various parts of Colombo and were remanded in custody. By late March, there were said to be over 100 security personnel in custody for various offences. There is now growing concern over government plans to establish an Army base in each of Sri Lanka's 25 districts garrisoned by 1,000 troops.

At Aluthpola in Minuwangoda, more than 15 burning bodies were found by the police on 5 March. On 15 March, two bodies were seen burning at Boosa and in Mahaoya three bodies were recovered with gunshot injuries. Reports said that 17 persons were killed by vigilantes on 25 March in the South and their bodies left burning by the roadside.

Security forces have arrested many people in the South, including a number of Tamil youths in Colombo thought to have connections with pro-Indian militants such as EPRLF. Large quantities of arms are said to have been recovered. According to the government there are now 14,000 youths in custody. [Courtesy: The Sri Lanka Monitor, March 1990]

OPPORTUNITY TO HELP THE HELPLESS

Kachcheri, Kilinochchi. 23.03.1990

Dear Mr Thambu Visvanathan,

I read your valuable article on the subject Musings of an Involuntary Exile in the March issue of Tamil International. I am in full agreement with what you have stated. As Government Agent, Kilinochchi I assumed duties only last week. I had the privilege of visiting Gurukulam, an institution looking after the welfare of nearly 200 orphan children. The Institution is unable to maintain these children due to severe financial constraints. In this connection I have lot of literature to be sent to you after hearing from you. I shall be grateful if you can please do whatever possible to collect funds for this institution. I am sure if you do this you will be doing great service to humanity and May the blessings of God Almighty be bestowed on you.

Sgd/ K Manikavasagar Govt. Agent, Kilinochchi District

[Readers are exhorted to help this worthy institution. For our part we are willing to forward your contributions. Editor]

JAFFNA REBORN!

by Ram - Jaifna

I asked the driver who took me from Bambalapitiya to the Fort Railway station whether so early in the morning Tamil passengers do not face thefts and other harassment. He was an up-country Tamil. Pat came the reply **"the Tamils do not now face harassment or humiliation in Colombo like those days!"**



PFLT Headquarters Kondavil

The train left according to schedule at 5.45 a.m but reached Jaffna half an hour late because a footboard traveller - the train was not crowded - fell off the train near Anuradhapura. To me it was Jaffna exactly after one year. The platform was full of the good old touts for the hiring cars chock-full in the station compound. The railway station was an important camp of the IPKF and their local thugs, from where many were "dispatched." People were now moving freely. The nightmare is over.

The roads had many ruts and pot holes - in fact Colombo roads were nothing better. One cannot expect anything better because the concentration was on the killings and firearms had top priority.

Boys from the St John's Ambulance, employed by the Municipality, were controlling traffic. The one-way traffic was strictly maintained; the Indians drove both ways as did the Sinhalese army before them. The Town was bursting at its seams. Freedom from fear at last - perhaps not for a microscopic minority. More than a week has passed after my arrival. I have not heard a single fire-arm, big or small, being fired. Front doors and gates are not locked before 9 p.m - locking time was about 5.30 p.m when the "peace-keeping" was on. The few Tigers and "Larks" (*Suthanthira Paravaikal*) one sees on the road are busy commuting in their vehicles on their business. I have not seen any of them interfering with the man in the street. There are no barriers. That man is not there now to ask for the "I Card" - the Identity Card, if you are curious to know!

What is stunning is the trebling of the

cost of living within one year. It is the same in Colombo. In my view what remains static is the cycle park rate of 50 cts. per cycle. Nobody can survive without a second income.

Will it last? Will they? Won't they? Many people pose these questions. And as if to reassure them, the LTTE leader surfaced in Jaffna on 2.4.90 and gave interviews to the local media, then the Colombo media and foreign reporters, among them Chris Nuttal of the BBC and The London Guardian. He said among other things that **there will be no referendum regarding the homeland of the Tamil-speaking people and arms will remain with the Tigers until the problem is solved. He expressed his belief in a "society that is economically self-sufficient and self-reliant" and a "democratic system in which the people have the right to rule themselves."**

Roque Dalton, Salvadoran poet has said *"Against a determinedly rebellious people there is no super-powerful enemy, no persistent atrocities, no weapon destructive enough that can ever conquer them,"*

Going through some recent local magazines, I came across the following passages. In the *Lanka Guardian* of January 15, 1990, J N Dixit is reported to have said "I am firmly of the view that he (Prabaharan) is a very self-centred fascist leader... who tells me across the table that I believe in one party and in one leader..." He then proceeds to say that the IPKF was "so brilliantly successful in

organising not one but three elections in Sri Lanka....has been a catalyst for reviving democratic institutions..." We can only tell this poor man to look at Amethi, the booth capturing and vote rigging that his beloved Bharat is famous for. All these dirty features were introduced in the North-eastern provincial elections here by the IPKF and its hired thugs. If he is ignorant of them, he could be pardoned, otherwise one has to compliment him for having outdone Goebels!

The Christian Worker of the 1989 4th Quarter reporting the arrest and murder of Jude Zachcharias (17), an organist, by the IPKF and its hired thugs says that an Indian officer approached Fr. Pilendran and said, "You bloody bastard this is the last day you see daylight. Your bloody Bishop can write to the Prime Minister or Rajiv, I don't care." They tied Jude Zachcharias with a rope and took him along with others to the railway station army camp. The mother of the boy after her travails at the railway camp states, "Someone brought me the news that my son's body was lying a few hundred yards from my house. I ran and put him on my lap and found blood oozing out from his head...I faced the inquiry by the coroner Ketheswaran. There were 13 gun shot wounds through the forehead and temple. The rib cage had been smashed. The toe nails were missing and his hand and leg had been broken. There were pin-prick injuries all over his body." Oh Lord, it was everybody's view that this poor boy was only an organist and not a Tiger.

The *Christian Worker* concludes "Lakhs of persons who are driven to helplessness and humiliation, begin to look upon and admire the handful of young men, who risk much, perhaps everything, shooting at the symbols of their humiliation....People begin to feel that these young men believe far more sincerely in their guns than the Church in its God."

The future of Jaffna, reborn, is in the hands of these young men.

Media Excerpts *continued from page 9*

moved out of the jungles and into the towns. Following the withdrawal of the IPKF, the emergence of the Tiger women, who long have been talked about but less often seen, is jolting Tamil society in the Jaffna peninsula.



"Deadlier than male counter part"

"Our social fabric and life-style have been completely destroyed. It will never be the same after seeing these young girls carrying guns", said Mr Velupillai Kanapathipillai, a Tamil school teacher, echoing traditional beliefs that Tamil women should be shy and retiring.

Lt Imelda, a 26-year-old commander of the female Tigers of Tamil Eelam, feels otherwise. **She said she and her women cadres can handle not only their T-81 Chinese assault rifles and machine pistols but also rocket launchers and anti-aircraft guns.** Lt Imelda's two-storey headquarters was guarded during a recent visit by about 25 camouflage-clad Tiger women. They are allied with, but segregated from, the male LTTE. No men were in sight. Imelda, like many of the male Tigers, uses a code name. While Jaffna town is patrolled mainly by male Tigers, many residents speak with awe of the female Tigers who periodically are seen in the town as well as in outlying villages.

One of Imelda's fighters, 20 year old Valarmathy, said: "Women have been in the forefront of the liberation struggle all over the world. We are no exception." Like Imelda, Valarmathy refused to say when she joined the Tigers or what she was doing before becoming a guerilla.

Stanley Dominic, district leader of the male Tigers, spoke with visible pride about the female tigers. **"They do everything we do,"** he said in an interview in Jaffna town. **"They man checkpoints 24 hours. They take part in active combat, and they are willing to bite their cyanide capsules to avoid being captured."** -AP

PREMADASA RULES OUT MILITARY SOLUTION

In his first major speech after the withdrawal of Indian soldiers from Sri Lanka, **President Premadasa has ruled out a military solution to the problems of the north and east stating that we tried out the experiment once by military action which resulted in the country being virtually set aflame. The next step was getting one of the world's greatest armies to operate since 1987. That too failed. We should understand**

the situation.

Referring to the negotiations between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE, Mr Premadasa said he had been able to build up a relationship of trust with the LTTE, but people had asked whether he could trust them. **"We must dispel these doubts and build a state of trust between us. What else can we do? Are we to go to war again? If we do that we will have to get down another army as we did earlier."**

He said the country's Sinhala Buddhist majority had a great role to play in keeping Sri Lanka united. We must realise that the Sinhala Buddhists of this country who formed 75 per cent of the population bear the most responsibility in reaching this objective. We must treat the 25 per cent of the minorities in a way so that they have confidence in us. If not, the country will be divided. There is no point in talking about unity then." [Thomas Abraham]

A VACUUM

The Petya Class destroyer of the Indian Navy anchored in the distance was a forceful symbol of India's political defeat in Sri Lanka.

The IPKF was put together and sent to Sri Lanka with military objectives in furtherance of a political objective. An issue disputed by IPKF spokesmen now is whether disarming the LTTE which rejected the July 1987 India-Sri Lanka agreement was part of its brief or not.

The LTTE now has a fighting force of 7,000, even by the IPKF's admission. The IPKF's own losses were high: 2,155 dead and 2,984 wounded. What did the IPKF achieve then? It was a classical counter insurgency situation. But then the IPKF did not reckon with one reality: **the LTTE is not just a bank of insurgents. It represents a political cause and has a mass following. To dismiss The Tigers as terrorists or even as insurgents would be to deny their political legitimacy.** Perhaps this is where every counter-insurgency operation, based on a prior rejection of the other side's legitimacy, failed.

But for the LTTE's sustained pressure, would the Sri Lankan government have accepted the Tamil identity in the island as a reality and conceded whatever it did to the Tamils? The LTTE had reason to believe that India had used them to achieve its strategic ends and therefore decided to deal with Colombo directly from April 1989 onward at President Premadasa's first overture.

The IPKF's return leaves everything about Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict wide open. It is a military vacuum and the LTTE is filling it. It is a political vacuum because the north-eastern provincial council propped by India has all but collapsed. **The IPKF's de-induction returns the unresolved ethnic conflict to Sri Lanka.** Did India achieve the strategic objectives of its involvement? No one can answer this, but more likely it has not. For all the casualties it suffered and its role in the island, no one spares a kind thought to it even in India. The politician has to be blamed. **The army was used as an instrument of policy. And it was a disaster.** [The Independent, Bombay March 20, 1990]

PEOPLE AND EVENTS

CELEBRATING NEW YEAR IN STYLE



The infant Essex Tamil Association laid on a very interesting programme of dance, music and drama on April 14 at the Leyton Assembly Hall to mark the beginning of the New Year. Great credit goes to the organizers, especially its Chairman, Mr P Jayakumar, and its popular and energetic Secretary, Mr M Perinpanathan, who spared no pains to make the occasion a truly memorable one.

The highlights of the evening, apart from the excellent dinner provided by the ladies of the association, were the unique dance of Vijayambikai Indrakumar and her nine-year old daughter Venothini who kept the audience literally spell-bound, the melodious singing of Ambika Thamo-theram to the accompaniment of Miruthangam, Ganjira, Violin and Thamboura, and the rousing Sankilian Naatu Koothu, scripted and directed by Mathi Chandrakumar and in which several other doctors and their friends in Folkestone and Hythe ecstatically joined in. Mention also must be made of two gifted Bharata Natya dancers, Anusha Varathalingam and Sangeeta Sivagnanasundram, who opened the Evening's programme with classy performances considering their tender ages.

CELEBRATIONS IN NORTH WEST LONDON

The Tamils of North West London had their celebrations on a grand scale at Alperton High School, Ealing Road, where the Brent Tamil School is based. It was organised by the Tamil Association of Brent.

The evening started with games for children followed by an eye-catching dance by Sarita Vamadeva, a student of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. Colourful items like Kannan dance, Gopi's dance and Koladdam by the students of the Brent Tamil School were superb. Ganesha Gowtham, by the 11 year old Dhushyanthy Sivanandan, a student of Uma Chandradeva, made an instant impact on the audience.

During the intermission Tamil delicacies were served. Sisters, Vidya and Sakthya Kuganathan, gave an immaculate performance of Bharatha Natiyam, which was well received by an appreciative audience. Choreography was by the popular artiste Sri Rama Rao.

The evening concluded with the star item "Thirai Isai Malai" - popular cinema songs entertainment - by veteran singers M Sathiyamoorthy and Sarojini Selvakumar who kept the audience of over 600 spell-bound. The Secretary, Nalayini Kuga-Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.
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nathan, thanked the artistes, parents, students and every one who helped to make the evening a success.

RECENT WEDDINGS



ASOK (son of Mr & Mrs A E Aloysius of Kotahena) and JEEVAMATHY (daughter of Mr & Mrs N Seevaratnam of 33 Rydal Gardens, Wembley, Middlesex) at High Gate Murugan Temple, London N6 on Wednesday, April 4.

SHANKAR (son of T Visvendran and late Mrs Visvendran) and JYOTI (daughter of Mr & Mrs Sant Parkash Singh of Darlington, Co Durham) at Sadberge Village Hall, Darlington on Saturday, April 7. 27 Cromwell Road, Stevenage, Herts

SELVACHANDRAN (son of Mrs S Chelliah and late V Chelliah of Chavakachcheri) and MAALINI (daughter of Mrs P Sivagnanam and late V Sivagnanam of Nelliaddy) at High Gate Murugan Temple, London N6 on Sunday, April 22. 37, Crescent Drive, Orpington, Kent.

OBITUARIES



K Richard SUBRAMANIAM (81), husband of Pagawathy and father of

Santhaguru (66 Windermere Ave, Wembley, UK) and Perinpanayagam (11, Dale Walk, Fleet Estate, Dartford, Kent, UK), Suhiratharatnam, and Mahendrarane (both of Barathy Lane, Chundikuli) died 14 March in Chundikuli and his remains were interred in Udupidy Church Graveyard. Richard Master, as he was popularly known, was educated at Jaffna College and taught for over 40 years in several American Mission Schools in the peninsula, ending his long and distinguished career as Principal of the A C M English School at Kankesanturai. He was a keen sportsman and a popular figure wherever he served.

Dr Subramaniam JEYASEELAN (47), Consultant Anaesthetist, Adelaide, Australia, husband of Padmini nee Joseph, father of Deepa and Sam, son of Rev and the late Mrs Kanagam Subramaniam of Chavakachcheri, brother-in-law of Manohari Anantharajah (Potters Bar), E J Vimalanathan (Banstead), S I Joseph (Sydney) and R J Jeganathan (Melbourne). 10 Brandreth St, Tasmore, S Australia 5065.

NAGARATNAM VARITHAMBY (82), on April 3 in Puloly. Wife of late Velupillai Varithamby, Mother of Suntharalingam (Asst Commissioner, Agrarian Services, Vavuniya), Indiradevi Selvathurai (Puloly), Sakunthaladevi Kanagaratnam (Puloly), Uthayalingam (Colombo), Santhalingam (UK), Ganeshalingam (UK), Panchalingam (UK), Thayaparadevi Ulaganathan (Australia). Cremation - Odaikadu, Thunnalai on April 9. 15 Thanescroft Gardens, Park Hill, Croydon.

RASADORAI MAHENDRAN (Ex Air Ceylon and Polynesian Airlines W.Samoa) husband of late Aranganayaki-Kamini, father of Gayathri (Canadian Airlines), Balaskandan (UK), Ramesh (UK), Shanker (Canada), Sivadhathachani - Ducky (Australia) and Pradhana (Canada), on March 18 in Totonto. Cremated at Kanatte. 24, Daya Road, Colombo 6.

PONNAMMAH RASARATNAM wife

of Dr S Rasaratnam (retired SHS, Jaffna), mother of Chandran (UK), Ras, Dr Sivan Vijeyasekaran, Nanthini and Kulasegaran, mother-in-law of Thevarani, sister of Rasamany Kannudurai, late Tharmaratnam, late Subramaniam on March 20 in Sydney. 2/13, Pickford Ave, Eastwood, NSW 2122.

KAMALENDIRAN, husband of Malini, father of Dilhan, son of late Dr and Mrs Chellathamby, brother of Mrs Vamadevan, Arulanandarah, Vimalendran. Funeral took place March 22, in Canada. 24 Iswari Road, Colombo 6.

DR THAMBIMUTTU VISVALINGAM (Retired Supdt, Anti-Malaria Campaign and of W H O), husband of Amirthavally, father of Surendra, Dr Rabendra and Navendra, brother of late R T Chelliah, late T Balasingham (Proctor, Badulla), T Thalayasingham (Retired Supdt of Police), late Mrs Pancharatnam, Kunaratnam and late Mrs Mahes Devanayagam. Cremation took place at Kanatte on April 8. 54, Vivekananda Road, Colombo.

XAVIER CONSTANTINE, formerly staff of St Patrick's College, husband

of Sashini, father of Joe (London), Subodini, Dilani and Dilan, son of late Mr & Mrs P J Constantine, brother of late Teresa, Julia, Basil, Belle, Charlotte (Malaysia), Monica, Anne, Leni and Rev Fr Bennett (USA) in Nigeria. 57, Ransivi Lane, Colombo 4.

VIJESPARI AMIRTHALINGAM, nee Chelliah, wife of late Thambippillai Amirthalingam (Ceylon Cold Stores), mother of Lohasunderi, Kamalasunderi, Manickavasagar (Canada) March 27. 24, 36th Lane, Wellawatte.

MRS K W GUNARATNAM, mother of the late Kirubaharan, Paramaradshahapalan and Nirmalanathan on March 28. 9th Lane, Browns Road, Jaffna.

K PARAMASIVAM (Chief Manager, Bank of Ceylon, Personal Branch), husband of Rajam, father of Lakshika, Dharshika, Umesh, brother of Mahes Sathasivam (Madras), Thamotheram (Saudi), Mahes Dharmarajah (Hong Kong), Rajaratnam (Saudi), Iswera, Meenambal and Chandra. 23/3, Sirimal Ave, Off Quarry Road, Dehiwala.

I HAVE GAINED SELF-CONFIDENCE, COURAGE AND THE SUPPORT OF MY PEOPLE

continued from page 8

A. We have had a long history of state oppression against our people. If the Sri Lankan Government resorts to oppression against the Tamils, then we will fight. But we hope the current peace will continue.

Q. How serious is the LTTE about participating in the provincial council elections?

A. We are very serious. We want to show India and the world that we are the authentic representatives of the people.

Q. Have you given up the demand for an independent Eelam?

A. We have not.

Q. Then what are you talking to Premadasa for? How can you enter the democratic mainstream if you still cling to your separatist cause?

A. We are entering the political mainstream. Our demand for self-determination will not be an impediment for us to enter the political process.

Q. Many people feel that your peace talks with Premadasa are only a tactical move.

A. We have not cheated or betrayed anybody. At the same time, if we are cheated or betrayed, we will react. But if somebody trusts us, then we will reciprocate. [Courtesy: *Time*, April 9, 1990]

THE RETURN OF THAMBY

After thirty months in hiding in the Vanni jungles the LTTE's Commander-in-chief, Veluppillai Prabhakaran (Thamby) returned to a hero's welcome in Jaffna. Speaking to reporters on April 1, he declared that the LTTE trusted President Premadasa, but said Tamil aspirations were yet to be realised. "Termination of the Indian intervention is a grand victory," he said. He warned that the LTTE would not surrender their weapons, nor abandon their goal of a separate state of Eelam and would not hesitate to resume armed struggle if oppression was unleashed on the Tamil people.

He confirmed that he would not stand for office, or participate in elections or in the administrative set up.

3,000 TNA CADRES IN INDIA

Mr Anton Balasingham is reported to have said that about 3,000 TNA cadres were in India and were being supported by the Indian external intelligence agency, the RAW.

NORMALCY IN JAFFNA

Jaffna showed signs of swift return to normalcy. Bus services were extended and the night train service from Colombo has resumed. Banks transact regular business and cinemas hold late night shows. Schools have resumed sports competitions and cultural events. Visitors to Jaffna say there is no shortage of food or fuel. Sources in Jaffna say the LTTE has already penetrated most civil organisations in the North and East. LTTE members are present at work places and often intervene in events.

Eelanadu, launched on Feb 19, is proving popular in Jaffna. A TV service, Nitharsan and a radio service will begin soon. Rehabilitation Ministry Secretary K C Logeswaran, visited Jaffna on 16 March for discussions with the government officials on the implementation of rehabilitation programmes. Former Jaffna Government Agent Devanesan Nesiah will act as Co-ordinator

between the NEPC and the government.

There are no robberies, group clashes and thuggery. People are moving around freely. Streets are not deserted till well past 9 p.m. The season of temple festivals is now in full swing and one can see multitudes at the various shrines, returning to their houses late at night. Road blocks have been removed. Roads that were closed have been opened for traffic. Members of the St Johns Ambulance Brigade are in charge of traffic arrangements in the town area.

Southern traders now frequently visit Jaffna to place orders for cigars and vegetables. Trade links between the North and South are gradually improving.

LTTE WILL PRESS FOR DISSOLUTION

The political arm of the LTTE is expected to press for the dissolution of the NE Provincial Council and holding of fresh elections during talks with President Premadasa, informed LTTE sources in Trincomalee announced. Among other items to be taken up during these talks, the LTTE said, would be the question of resettlement of Sinhala refugees in the Trincomalee district.

COMPENSATION

Over half a million dollars has been paid out to victims of violence in the 13 local government divisions of the Jaffna Peninsula in the last two years, Officials say. 3,370 deaths have been officially registered and 1,226 people have applied for compensation for injury.

20,000 TAMILS CLAIMED ASYLUM

Over 20,000 Tamils arrived in European countries last year seeking political asylum, a meeting of the European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles was told in Paris in late March. The major receiving countries were West Germany with 7,758 applications and France with 3,326.

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Switzerland had a record 4,809 applications many of whom had arrived illegally from other European countries. Acquiring refugee status for Sri Lankans in Europe remains a difficult task, observers say, especially in a number of countries where refugee arrivals have doubled this year. France remains the exception where an assiduous public information campaign on Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict has raised the recognition rate to 63%. In Britain, where refugee figures trebled last year, 1,515 Sri Lankans arrived, claiming asylum. Provisional figures suggest almost no refused cases were deported as compared to 1988 when over 100 Sri Lankan Tamils were forcibly returned to Colombo.

Legal sources say few decisions are now being made on Tamil cases and immigration authorities are clearly adopting a wait-and-see policy in the light of the changing situation in the North-East Province of Sri Lanka.

CATCH

Some 300 Indian fishermen and 50 boats have been detained in the last month by LTTE patrols in Sri Lankan territorial waters off Point Pedro. Vadamarachchi fishermen have blamed Indian vessels for destroying nets in the area.

NEW NOMINATIONS

President Premadasa moved swiftly, hours after the Indian exodus, declaring President's Rule in the NE

Province, replacing PC Chief Secretary V Nadarajah with LTTE nominee S Ganeshanathan.

IN THE HILL COUNTRY

Five unidentified gunmen shot dead S Sathasivam, S Mathavan and another person, all Plantation workers belonging to the same family, on the Meddecombra Estate in Punduloya on March 9. Police say a number of people have been arrested in connection with the killings. Police also recovered a burnt body in the Punduloya area. In mid March N Vijayapalan, suspected of belonging to Tamil militants, ENDLF, was taken into custody following a robbery in the hill country. At a ceremony on 20 March in Kandy, 125 Plantation youths passed out as police officers. They are to be deployed in the Hill Country, the first time such a large number of Tamil youths has been inducted locally.

REFUGEES IN ORISSA

The 1,600 Tamil refugees now in Malkangiri region of Orissa's Koraput district are likely to be shifted to Kerala soon.

SALARIES STOPPED

The Government of Sri Lanka has stopped the payment of salaries to all 365 personal security officers of Ministers and members of the Northeast Provincial Council with effect from March 1. The council consists of 55 EPRLF - ENDLF members, 17 SLMC members and 1 UNP member.

POLICE CLASH WITH CIVILIANS

Two policemen had fired 19 rounds of ammunition from their automatic F-14 weapons into the crowd of civilians on April 10 at Veeranagar in Trincomalee. Only two of the civilians had been injured. The policemen involved have been transferred out of the province.

There were a series of incidents that took place in Point Pedro and Valvet-

turai areas during the second week of April. Police and public clashed on April 11 at Point Pedro. LTTE intervened and ordered the police stations at Point Pedro and Valvet-turai be closed.

LTTE ACCEPTED

Mr S Ratnarajah, M P and Central Committee Member of EROS has stated, "We have the responsibility to strive for the achievement of the aspirations of the Tamil-speaking people but one must admit that the Tamil-speaking people and the Government of Sri Lanka have accepted the LTTE."

LTTE STRUCTURE

LTTE is the parent body and it is a military organisation. Veluppillai Prabaharan is its supreme military commander. PFLT, a registered political party, is the political arm of the LTTE and is therefore subordinate to the military component.

CONCILIATION

Referring to the relationship with the LTTE, Minister Ranjan Wijeratne said at a press briefing that there were only two options available to the government - confrontation or conciliation - and that the government had opted for the latter.

THE ACID TEST

"The repeal of the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution would be the acid test. Mr Premadasa will have to convince his own people that it is in the best interest of the country to repeal it" said Mr Balakumar of the EROS. This is what the LTTE want.

TO RESUME ARMED STRUGGLE

EPRLF leader Padmanabha is reported to have said " We have only temporarily suspended the armed struggle. It will be resumed if the Sri Lankan Government does not concede the 19-point demands we have placed before them." Mr Padmanabha is at Satiguda in Orissa.

SIXTH AMENDMENT

The government is considering seriously the request made by the LTTE to repeal the sixth amendment as the LTTE will not otherwise participate in the elections.

MRS POOPATHY KANAPATHIPILLAI

Month-long ceremonies in the form of relay-fasting by groups and memorial meetings commenced through out North-East on March 19, the date on which she died in 1988 after entering on a fast-unto-death campaign in her quest for peace between India and the LTTE.

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FOLK TALES AND HISTORICAL STORIES

by Thaatha

HOW FAR HAS THE RIVER MEANDERED

In the olden days important towns and cities were always founded at the mouth of rivers. Many of them grew up from being merely stopping places for men and merchandise. From there they were taken up the river in boats.

Matoddam, near Mannar, was an important sea-port of ancient Lanka. It is said to have been founded at the mouth of the ancient celebrated river Palavi. Some ancient maps show Palavi rising from the Himalaya Mountains and flowing into the sea at Matoddam. What was depicted shows the river now called Malwattu Oya rising from near Matale hills and falling into the sea at Matoddam.

It is a known fact that the underground bed-rock dips southwards in the area. So over a course of centuries the river flows have drifted southwards. Its mouth is no longer at Matoddam; it has meandered southwards near Chilavathurai.

RAVANAN'S ROCK

Ravana was the king of the Yakshas. He was a mighty chief. He has been depicted by tradition as powerful and one having ten heads.

One day he wanted to give his mother a present of a Siva Lingam. A Siva Lingam is a mystic Hindu symbol of Siva. It is usually made of stone. So he went to a Hindu temple called Koneswaram, in Dakshana Kailas (present Trincomalee). There he demanded the Lingam that was there. He was of course refused.

Balked by the refusal, he became angry. He decided to show how strong he was. He decided to carry away the entire temple with the Lingam. He would remove it with the very rock on which the temple was built. He therefore first made a cleft breaking that portion of the rock, from the rest of the hill. At length he had to give up as the temple custodians stopped him.

The cleft on the Konamamalai Hill made by Ravana can be seen even today. Local folks call it the "Ravana Veddu" or Cleft.

HOW HOT ARE THE SPRINGS

Ravana was informed of his mother's demise when he was at Dakshana Kailas; he had gone there to get a Lingam. He was stricken with grief. God Vishnu took pity on him. The God appeared as a hermit and consoled Ravana. He reminded Ravana that as a son, he had to perform various obsequies for his departed mother. Ravana was at a loss where to go for that. His own place Lankapuram was a long way off.

Therefore, Lord Vishnu took him to a nearby place, now called Kanniya; there he struck with his bow seven times; seven different springs gushed out with waters at different temperature in each. Ravana performed the traditional obsequies for his departed mother there.

Even today we can see this site, now called the "Hot

Springs of Kanniya", about six miles from Trincomalee on the Anuradhapura Road. There are six wells with spring water flows of varying temperature.

HE DRANK THE OCEAN DRY

The Agasthiya legends are many. By tradition he is said to have lived in the Vinthiya Hills. He was a great scholar. He is reputed to have originated the first Tamil Grammar. It is said that he made several journeys to the Southern lands, from his hermitage in the Vinthiya Hills.

In one of these sojourns, he had encamped by the banks of the Mahaweli Ganga. That place was close to the present village of Kanguveli, which is half way between Trincomalee and Batticaloa. When he was there, he had a vision of the divine wedding of God Siva to Goddess Parvathy. So, the spot is hallowed today. It is known as Agasthiya Sthapanam.

The village folks go there to revere Agasthiya Maha Munivar; tradition says that he was short and had a well rounded figure; this was because one day he drank a whole ocean dry.

THE MAN OF DESTINY

That was the title posterity conferred on him. He had come because his parents had made a vow that their offspring would one day pay homage here. But to his dismay he found the object of his journey all broken up. He was much grieved; he made a determination that he would rebuild it. And that he did superbly. Chola Kankan rebuilt Koneswaram temple in splendid Pallava art and architecture, some time in the fifth century. Portuguese authors have later described the structure as having a thousand pillars. Some of these can be seen at the site today.

As mainstay for his work, a large tank was provided at Kantalai; cultivators were invited to work the rice fields and serve in the temple he had built.

When all this was finished there was a monumental temple at Koneswaram, and a large tank at Kantalai. He was destined to perform a great work. So posterity calls him "Kulakodan" meaning "Builder of Tank and Temple." That is how he is known today.

THE SIN-DISPELLING WONDER

What a name! How wonderful it would be if sins can be conveniently disposed of. Sages and hermits have tried it; it is impossible. Yet that was the claim, when one has a ritual bath in the sacred "Pava Nasa Chunai" spring.

The great Kulakodan while erecting a superb temple, also founded this fresh water spring. Cool fresh water is found in the midst of the surrounding sea. Tradition speaks of several Kings, Monarchs, Sages and eminent persons performing their ablutionary baths here.

It is unfortunate that it should have been covered up by foreigners later. Now we see only a well at the site in Fort Frederick in Trincomalee. Anyhow that serves to remind us of what had been there once.

SRI LANKAN NEWS

PREMADASA STRENGTHENS GRIP ON POWER

President Premadasa strengthened his grip on power with a cabinet reshuffle in which he dismissed one of his chief rivals for the presidency. Gamini Dissanayake, a cabinet minister for the past 13 years, was sent to the backbenches for apparent dissent. Mr Premadasa demands unquestioning loyalty, and Mr Dissanayake held different views on such issues as the handling of the withdrawal of Indian troops from the island.

The minister competed with Mr Premadasa for the ruling United National Party's nomination as presidential candidate in 1988. He was seen as India's choice for president - because of his close relationship with the Rajiv Gandhi administration - then as the choice of the former president, Junius Jayewardene, for prime minister after Mr Premadasa won the presidential nomination.

But instead he was demoted to Plantations Minister in President Premadasa's first cabinet. Now he is an MP while Mr Premadasa's other rival for the presidency, Lalith Athulathmudali, has been rewarded for loyalty with the education portfolio.

Ranjan Wijeratne who, as Foreign Minister, negotiated the withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force, has been made Plantations Minister in place of Mr Dissanayake. Coconut Industries Minister Harold Herath is a surprise choice as Foreign Minister. ACS Hameed, a leading government figure in LTTE negotiations, becomes Justice Minister.

REMOVED

Former Plantation Industries Minister, Gamini Dissanayake, Dr P M B Cyril (former State Minister for Health) and the ex-State Minister for Rehabilitation, K Vincent Perera, have been removed from the working committee of the UNP. W M P B Dissanayake (Chief Minister of Central Province), Indradasa Hettiarachchi (Project Minister for Coconut Industries and Crop

Diversification), Chandra Ranatunga (Project Minister for Construction and Building Materials) and Ananda Kularatne (State Minister for Highways) were appointed to the committee.

INFLATION

Inflation hit its highest-ever level in February according to Sri Lanka's Census and Statistics Dept as the Colombo Consumers' Price Index Number hit 952 points - a rise of 22%

ASYLUM

Sinhalese asylum-seeker, Viraj Mendis, who spent two years in sanctuary in a Manchester church arrived in Frankfurt in early March after a year in hiding in Sri Lanka. He was reunited with his wife who now has a job in West Germany.

AID

Britain will supply over 13 million in government aid to Sri Lanka in the coming year, said Tony Faint, Asia Director of the UK's Overseas Development Administration in Colombo in mid-March. A 20 million grant over three years for reconstruction in conflict-affected areas was also agreed.

TASK FORCE

Early in January, President Premadasa established a Task Force from key ministries under Rehabilitation Commissioner Col. Ananda Weerasekara, releasing Rs25 million (£1 million) to set up 20 rehabilitation centres throughout the South.

MARCHING ORDERS

President Premadasa on March 20 decided that the Israeli Interest Section at the US Embassy be closed by April 20. The US government promptly urged the Lankan government to reconsider the decision. Sri Lanka had full diplomatic relations with Israel earlier. Relations were broken off in 1970 when similar punitive measures were adopted by several Afro-Asian countries following Israeli aggression on its Arab neighbours in 1970. The ethnic distur-

bances in Sri Lanka afforded an opportunity for the Israelis to make a comeback in 1984 and set up an Israeli Interests Section at the instance of the US.

TO BE DECONTROLLED

The government is expected to decontrol the prices of wheat and bread and let the market forces determine the prices. Presently the price of bread is fixed at Rs 4.90 a pound.

MAY DAY BONANZA

President Premadasa has directed the Minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs and Provincial Councils and the Labour Minister to look into what sort of relief could be given to both public servants and mercantile employees.

PORT OF GALLE TO BE DEVELOPED

An agreement was signed by the Sri Lanka Port Authority and the Japan International Co-operation Agency to draw-up a master plan to be implemented in two stages for the development of the Port of Galle and the adjoining coastal areas.

ILLICIT DEALS

Several trade unions have made representations to the authorities regarding instances of illegal sale of duty free cars imported by some politicians in the Government and Opposition. These cars, it is alleged, have been sold at exorbitant prices - several times more than it costs to import them.

CHANDRIKA BACK

Chandrika Kumaranatunga who was away in London after the assassination of her husband is back in Sri Lanka. She is reported to have said, "I am not seeking power. I want to bring the party together."

CONDUCT INQUIRY

The USA has urged the Sri Lankan Government to conduct a full inquiry into the killing of journalist Richard de Zoysa.

HAS LOST ITS SOUL

Mr Anura Bandaranaike, opposition M P, addressing the Rotarians of Colombo recently said, "Once the dogs of war are unleashed they cannot be controlled. In our case the government does not want to control them or it has come to a stage where they cannot control them. Sri Lanka had lost its soul."

APRIL 13 TO BE NATIONAL NEW YEAR DAY

President Premadasa has declared the Sinhala and Tamil New Year Day every year as Sri Lanka's NATIONAL NEW YEAR DAY. Announcing this at the ceremonial opening of a Post Office at Anamadua, Mr. Premadasa said he was inspired to make this declaration after reading a Letter to the Editor in the "Weekend". the writer of the letter Mr G. Vidyasekera of Colombo had specifically appealed to the President to declare April 13 as Sri Lanka's National New Year Day as this was an important day for both the Sinhalese and the Tamils. "Let us all unite in the traditions of the Sinhala and Tamil New Year and let us consolidate our mutual brotherhood", the President said.

THE MAN WHO HAD A SWIPE AT RAJIV GANDHI

Wijayamuni Wijitha Rohana Silva, the naval rating who assaulted Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in Colombo on the day of the signing of the Rajiv Gandhi - Jayewardene Agreement and was serving a six-year sentence has been released, among several other prisoners. Asked by a Colombo reporter about his future, he was very reticent. "I am just going to exist as if I am non-existent in this country", he said. "I have no immediate plans for my future", he added.

FROM FRONT-BENCH TO BACK BENCH

Former Plantation Industries Minister Gamini Dissanayake, and one-time tipped to be the Indian Government's favourite for the post of President, was seen occupying the last seat of the sixth and final row on the government side at the ceremonial opening of the Second Session of the Second Parliament on the 4th April. Ousted from the Cabinet and from the United National Party's Working Committee by Mr. Premadasa, Mr. Dissanayake has said that he would not resign from the parliament or the party. Mr. Dissanayake has long been suspected

among political circles in Colombo as ex-President Jayewardene's man within the cabinet.

BROTHER & SISTER TO FIGHT IT OUT?

A brother and sister battle is brewing in the Bandaranaike family for political leadership, - between son Anura and second daughter Chandrika - while mother Mrs. Srimavo sits in the middle. Mrs. Chandrika Kumaranatunga, widow of the popular and charismatic film star-politician Vijaya Kumaranatunga who was assassinated by the JVP, is now back in the island after two years self-imposed political exile abroad. While Chandrika had earlier broken away from the SLFP - the party led by her parents - to found the new party, the SLMP, along with her husband, she is now considered the best candidate to bring about unity among the divided Opposition. But it looks as if while Mr. Anura Bandaranaike has staked his claim to the SLFP leadership once the elderly Mrs. Bandaranaike retires from the scene, the de facto No.2 in the SLMP Mr. Ossie Abeygunasekera is not likely to yield ground to Chandrika after her 2-year absence from the party and the island.

U.S. UNHAPPY OVER ISRAELI CLOSURE

President Premadasa's bold and popular move in giving the marching orders to the Israeli Interests section at the US Embassy in Colombo (introduced at the time of his predecessor for fighting LTTE militancy) has irked the US State Department. Its spokesman Richard Boucher advanced the argument that the Lankan decision went against the world trend of expanding diplomatic relations. *THE ISLAND* columnist "Kautilya" reacting to Mr. Boucher's argument stated that it was also the world trend to recognise the PLO. He recalled how when nearly one hundred countries had recognised the PLO and the UN Secretary General had invited PLO leader Yasser Arafat to address the UN General Assembly, the US in spite of its obligations to the UN had persisted in refusing to grant a visa to Mr. Arafat to enter the US. Consequently, the World Assembly had to move to Geneva to hear Mr. Arafat. Interestingly, the US State Department has welcomed the departure of the Indian forces from the island, although it was the first to welcome the Rajiv Gandhi - Jayewardene Accord which made the entry of the Indian forces possible.

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இலக்கியக் காட்சி

புறநானூறு காட்டுகின்ற காட்சிகளை நினைவூட்டுகின்ற நிகழ்ச்சிகள் பல இன்று தமிழ்மீழத்தில் நடைபெற்று வருகின்றன. 1948 இல் இருந்து 1970 வரையிலான இலங்கைத் தமிழர் வரலாற்றை நோக்கினால், குட்டக் குட்டக் குனிந்து கூனிப்போன ஓர் இனத்தின் வரலாறுகளை அது தோற்றமளிக்கும். 1970 ஆம் ஆண்டுக்குப் பின்னர், இன்று வரை நிகழ்கின்ற தமிழர் வரலாற்றை நோக்கினால், பண்பாட்டின் பேரால், வடக்கு நோக்கியும் கிழக்கு நோக்கியும் ஒட்டம் பிடித்த தமிழினம் தீமரெனப் புறநானூற்றுக் கால வீரத்தைப் பெற்றுவிட்டிருக்கும் பெருமைநருவரலாறுகத் தோற்றமளிக்கும். இ.து அப்படி என்ற கேள்விக்கு விடைகாண்பது கடினம். ஆனாலும், பின்வரும் இலக்கியக் காட்சி மேற்படி கேள்விக்கு விடை அளிக்கிறது.

தஞ்சாவூரில் அஞ்சா நெஞ்சம் கொண்ட தமிழக் குடும்பங்கள் பல இருந்தன. அதாவது தமிழ் மாணம் காப்பதற்குத் தலைகொடுக்கத் தயாராக உள்ள பல குடும்பங்கள் இருந்தன. அவற்றுள் ஒரு குடும்பத்துக்கு ஓரே ஓர் ஆண் மகன். அந்த ஆண் மகனை அருமையாகவும் ஆண்மையுடனும் வளர்க்க விரும்பினர் தாயும் தந்தையும். மகனே பாலகன்; சொல்வழிகளையப் பருவத்தினன். ஆனால் உறக்கமும் உணவும் அவனுக்குப் பிடிக்காதவை. அவனைப் படுக்க வைப்பதும், பால் உண்ணவைப்பதும் பெரும் பாடு. வாடா பால் உண்ண என்றால் வர மாட்டான். ஓடுவான். தாயோ பாற்கிண்ணத்துடன் தூத்துவான். போருக்குப் போய்விட்ட அப்பா வந்ததும் அவரிடம் சொல்லி அடிவாங்கிக் கொடுப்பேன் என்று அந்தட்டிப் பார்ப்பான். அசைய மாட்டான். இனி முடியாது என்ற கட்டம் வந்ததும் வேலிக் கதிகாலாக உள்ள பூவரசு மாத்திலிருந்து ஒரு தடிமுறித்து அவனை அடிக்க என ஒங்குவான். ஒங்கினது தான் தாமதம் அவன் அஞ்சி ஓடுகிற போய் ஓடிவந்து விடுவான். அப்படிக்குப் பயந்தவனாக இருந்தான். அப்படி இருந்தவன் வளர்ந்து காலையானான். பதினாறு ஆண்டுகள் நிறைந்தன.

பழம் பகைமை காரணமாக சோழனுக்கும் பாண்டியனுக்கும் போர் முண்டது. போருக்குப் போன அந்தத் தந்தை. ஆனால் ஊருக்கு வரவில்லை அவன். வீர சாகசங்கள் புரிந்த கணவன், விரகவர்க்கம் புகுந்தான் என்ற செய்தி கேட்டு கலங்கினான் மனைவி. அப்பாவின் ஆவி அகன்றதே என்று அலமந்தான் மைந்தன். அடுத்த நாளும் அவ்வூரில் போர்ப்பறை முழங்கியது. "எதிரிகள் ஊருக்குள் நுழையப் போகிறார்கள் வாருங்கள் இளைஞரே போர்முனைக்கு" என்ற செய்தி ஊரெங்கும் பறந்தது. சோழரின் மாணம் போகிறது என்ற செய்தியைக் கேட்ட கணவனைப் பறிகொடுத்த மனைவியின் உள்ளத்தில் இருந்த கவலை மறைந்தது. தமிழ்மாண உணர்வு தலை எடுத்தது. மகனை அணைத்தான். உடைவான் கொடுத்தான். "சென்று வா மகனே, வென்று வா" என்றான்.

தாயைப் பணிந்து, தந்தையின் வீரத்தை நினைந்து, தமிழ் மாணம் காக்கப் புறப்பட்டான் அந்தத் தந்தையன். போர் முகத்தில் கும் போர் நிகழ்ந்தது. இந்தத் தந்தையன் தந்தைக்கு மைந்தன் நான் என்பதை நிரூபிப்பது போல் வெட்டிச் சாய்த்தான். போரை அவதானித்துப் போர்ப்பரணி பாட எனப் போயிருந்த புலவர்களில் ஒருவரான பொன்முடியார் என்ற புலவர் அந்தச் சிறுவனின் வானாண்மையைப் பார்த்து வியந்தார். ஊருக்குள் ஓடிப்போய் அந்த நல்ல செய்தியை அவனுடைய தாய்க்கு உரைத்தார் பெற்றபோது பெற்ற இன்பத்தைக் காட்டிலும் கூடுதலான இன்பத்தைப் பெற்றான். மகனைக் காணத் துடித்தான் வழிமேல் விழிவைத்துக் காத்திருந்தான். ஆதவன் மறைந்தான். ஆனால் மகன் வரவில்லை. பலபேர் பலவாறு சொன்னார்கள். பட்டான் படுகளத்தில் என்றார் சிலர். படைமைய விட்டுப் பறந்தோடி மறைந்தான் என்றனர் சிலர். எதை நம்புவது? எவரை நம்புவது? என்று புரியவில்லை. பட்டான் என்ற செய்தியால் அவன் பதறவில்லை. பிறந்தவர் ஒருநாள் இறந்தோடுக வேண்டும் என்பது அவருக்குத் தெரியும். ஆனால் படைமைய விட்டுப் பறந்தோடினான் என்ற வார்த்தைகள் அவனைக் குடைந்தன. அவனால் பொறுக்க முடியவில்லை. விளக்கொன்றைக் கையிலேந்தியபடி விரைந்தான் போர்க்களத்திற்கு. கணம் எல்லாம் தேடிப்பார்த்தான். காணவில்லைக் கண்மணியை அங்கே எங்கும். புலிக்குப் பிறந்த தன் மகன் பூனையாகிப் போர்க்களத்தை விட்டு ஓடிப்போயிருப்பானே என்ற ஐயம் அவனைக் கொல்லாமல் கொன்றது. கவலையினால் வாய்விட்டுக் கதறினான் -

"ஆழ்ந்து விட்டேன் கவலையிலே என்னருமை மகனே; போர்க்களத்தில் புகழுடம்பைப் பெற்றாயா நீ? புறங்காட்டித் தமழ்மாணம் கொன்றாயோ நீ; சொல் மகனே என் உயிரை மாய்க்கு முன்னே" என்று அழுதான் அந்தத் தாய். அவன் கேட்ட கேள்வி முடியுமுன்னே, "வாழ்கின்றேன் வீரனாக; வான் பிளந்த நெஞ்சுடைய குரனாக; தாழ்வெனது குடிக்கென்றும் வாராதம்மா; சோழார் குடி சோர்வடைய மாட்டாதம்மா" என்றொரு குரல் பிணத்தினூடு எழுந்தது. தாங்கிப் போரிட்ட கேடயம் தரையில் கிடக்க, நெஞ்சில் வேல் பட்டு, நெஞ்செவும்புகள் ஓடிந்து, குற்றயிராய்க் கிடந்தான் பாலன். "மகனே" என்றான் தாய். "வெற்றியம்மா வெற்றி" என்றான் வீரமகன் அவ்வளவில் குற்றயாராகக்கிடந்த உயிர் மற்றுலகம் தனக்கேகிற்று. தலை எல்லாம் சுற்றியது பெற்ற தாய்க்கு. ஆனாலும் அவன் கவலை நீளவில்லை. பழைய நினைவுகள் அவருக்கு வந்தன. சின்னவனாக இருந்த போது பால் குடிக்க மறுத்த வேளைகளில், நான் ஓச்சிய பூவரசம் தடிக்குப் பயந்து, கோழிபோல் பதுங்கிய இவனா இன்று, நெஞ்சிலே வேலை ஏற்றுக் கொண்ட நிலையிலும் வெற்றியம்மா வெற்றி என்று சொற்றுக்கின்றான் என்று விம்மியது அந்தத் தாயுள்ளம். அந்தக் காட்சியை அந்தக் கும்மிருட்டில் கண்ணீர் மல்கக் கண்ட பொன்முடியார் அதைப் பாடலாக வடித்துள்ளார். அது புறநானூற்றில் 310 ஆம் பாடலாக இடம் பெற்று உள்ளது. இதோ அப்பாடல் -

"பால் கொண்டு மடுப்பவும் உண்ணான் ஆகலின்,
செருஅது ஓச்சிய சிறு கோல் அஞ்சி,
உயவொடு வருந்தும் மனனே; இனியே
புகர் நிறங் கொண்ட களிறட்டு ஆனான்
முன் நாள் வீழ்ந்த உரவோர் மகனே!
உன்னி வென்னும் புண்ஒன்று அம்பு
மான்உனை அன்ன குடுமித்
தோல் மிசைக் கிடந்த புல் அணலோனே"

செ. சிறீக்கந்தராசா

[புறநானூறு 310]

HAMEED MEETS PRABAHARAN

Justice Minister A C S Hameed who is also Chairman of the North-East Peace Committee had a three hour meeting in Jaffna on 12th April with LTTE Chief Velupillai Prabaharan. The news release from the Minister's office said that Mr Hameed had explained in detail to the LTTE leader the policies of President Premadasa to find a durable solution to the ethnic problem and to ensure a fair deal to the minorities of the country.

The news release said that Mr Prabaharan had told the Minister that he greatly appreciated the President's

"sincere and genuine efforts" and assured him that the LTTE would extend its fullest co-operation to the President's initiatives to achieve a lasting settlement of the ethnic problem and ensure peace and normalcy country-wide.

Included in the discussions were the political future of the Sinhalese and the Muslims in the North-East. It was decided that certain steps should be taken early to resolve some of the problems faced by the Muslims. Mr Prabaharan has told Mr Hameed that the LTTE was interested in the

rehabilitation and reconstruction programs for the North-East and assured the LTTE's support to ensure that these are completed as quickly as possible. This is the first time a senior government minister has met the LTTE supremo.

The release also said that they discussed the circumstances under which the Point Pedro and Valvettiturai police stations were closed the previous week. It was agreed that the two police stations would be opened within 48 hours.

SLMP LEADER FOR UN FORCE IN N-E

A senior Sri Lanka Opposition leader has called for stationing a UN peace-keeping force in the north-east to provide security to the Tamil speaking people there, while insisting that the LTTE be made to hand over all its weapons.

Mrs Chandrika Kumaranatunge, leader of the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party (SLMP), accused the Government of pursuing an "unstatesman-like policy" in playing upon the differences between the rival Tamil groups in the north-east. She said the government had supplied "loads of weapons" to the Tamil Tigers in a bid to help them run over the non-LTTE Tamil groups.

In an interview with this correspondent, Mrs Kumaranatunge stated that she had "reliable information" that the government had supplied huge quan-

tities of arms to the LTTE and provided them back-up support when they needed it. "In some cases, we know, the arms were delivered to the LTTE camps in the north-east, while in some others the Tamil Tigers had collected the weapons from Sri Lankan army camps located outside the periphery of the north-east."

At one stage, the Tamil Tigers had operated out of the Sri Lankan army camps and had received the army's logistical support in running over the EPRLF and other groups, she added.

While welcoming the fact that the LTTE had entered into a dialogue with the government, she felt that the conditions under which these discussions were being conducted "did not at all augur well" for finding a permanent solution to the Tamil problem.

If the LTTE maintained that they needed the weapons to provide security to the Tamil-speaking people in the north-east, the Government should get the UN Peace-keeping force to do that job. But it "must" insist on the Tamil Tigers giving up their weapons, Mrs Kumaranatunge said.

The SLMP leader feared that "the trouble will start again" in the north-east, where the Government's policy of "encouraging" the LTTE to "liquidate" the rival Tamil groups had only forced the non-LTTE groups to go underground for the present. This was no way to find accommodation and build a consensus among the groups which was the only way to establish durable peace in the region.

Mrs Kumaranatunge returned to the island a few weeks ago to resume political work, and is now engaged in galvanising a badly splintered Opposition into a common front. [M K Tikku in the *Hindustan Times*, April 15, 1990]

17 BILLION DOLLARS WASTED

The Indian Army which went to Sri Lanka to keep peace did not receive a single cent as assistance from that government. The Indian Government has spent over 17 billion dollars. In addition India has sacrificed the lives of over 1,000 soldiers. So stated Indian State Minister for Defence, Rajaramanna.

He further said that this amount doesn't include the salaries, allowan-

ces and rations. The expenses cover the period July 1987 up to February 1990. The amount doesn't reflect the expenditure for March 1990.

Approximately 3,000 Indians have been wounded. The minister further disclosed that earlier Indian "Peace Keeping" missions in foreign lands did not suffer such losses. [Courtesy: *Eelanatham*, April 4.]

BUSES OPERATE TILL 10.30 PM

Mr Kili, the Valikamam Organiser of the LTTE, has requested that shops in the Jaffna city be kept open till 9.00 pm and buses run up to 10.30 p.m. [Courtesy: *Eelanatham*, April 4]