

Saturday Review

Nallur Branch Library

SRI LANKA

Special Supplement 23rd September 1987



**THILEEPAN OF
THE LTTE ON
THE NINTH
DAY OF HIS
DEATH FAST.**

TRINCO: WILD PEACOCKS TAKE OVER

Trincomalee is full of surprises for those unfamiliar with it. A newcomer is confronted with vivid examples of destruction the scale of which must be seen to be believed. Approaching Trincomalee by coach along the road from Vavuniya one sees rows of broken tenements, with wild peacocks stalking the bushes on land which once saw the plough. Abandoned Temples and Churches stand, looking forlornly at the advancing jungle. The hospital at Pankulam which once looked after the health needs of a robust population stands roofless its ruined walls bared to the vacant sky. Scattered here and there one sees a few Sinhalese dwellers and mini-camps of the Sri Lankan army. The Indian army too has encamped in places.

All over Trincomalee town one sees broken and burnt out houses. In Uppuveli, a suburb of Trincomalee, one sees the same monotony of destruction which has been visited on the well-to-do as well as the not so well-to-do. A disused private hospital with an operating theatre and doctors' quarters lay in ruins. Uppuveli now receives regular visits from wild elephants. A local man pointed to us the house where 10 bodies of civilians shot by security forces were burnt.

We approached Sirimawoona, a Sinhalese squatter colony of 50 houses—our guide showed us the spot where his uncle Mr. K. Dharmaraja was stabbed and burnt alive by thugs from Sirimapura in 1983.

Trincomalee town itself has a distinct charm of its own. Its houses are mostly small and old. Despite its fame, the town is singularly lacking in any signs of development. One sees much destruction of Tamil property near

areas which have been taken over by Sinhalese—like the market area, Sirimapura and the Anuradhapura junction. Some shopkeepers had finally given up after making three or more attempts at repairing and reopening their premises.

Prominent amongst targets for attack have been those who dared to provide leadership. Many of the relatives of Neminathan and the last MP Sambandan have left Trincomalee in fear. The house where the Secretary to the Trincomalee Citizen's Committee, Mrs. Subashini Varathan, lives with her father, Mr. Chitravelu was attacked on 23rd Aug. '87 after a confrontation between Sinhalese and Tamils which ended after the Indian army intervened resulting in gunshot injuries to two Sinhalese. The grenade which was thrown at Mrs. Varathan's house fortunately bounced off a shoe-flower tree. This was followed by a round of fire from an automatic weapon which missed Mrs. Varathan by about 4 ft. making holes on the wall about 3/4 inch in diameter, and 1/2 inch deep.

The extent of fear amongst Tamils in Trincomalee is such

that nearly all those who spoke to us were unwilling to be quoted by name even when they supplied crucial information. They say that the Government ultimately controls six different forces—the army, the navy, the air-

This Special Issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW focuses on Trincomalee.

The reports are by a Special team of investigators who give an in-death analysis.

force, the police, homeguards and the thugs. Different combinations of these have been and can be used with terrifying effect. Many community leaders confessed that in the present state of the local leadership, they are depending on outsiders to take up their cause. But they have, alas, received scant attention. All eyes seem to be on Jaffna.

Trincomalee too has its share of homely characters—Petition Wijayanathan, Photo Selvarajah and Plain tea Nadarajah amongst others—who have contributed towards liveliness and honesty in public life, without meeting whom one's knowledge of Trincomalee is bound to be

incomplete. Yet behind this homeliness there lurks sadness. Nearly everyone you meet has been personally affected by the war. Mr. K. S. Thillainathan, the President of the Thambalakamam Citizen's committee lost his son Ketheeswaran in Jaffna, when he was killed by the army in 1984. Ketheeswaran, a University student and member of the PLOTE, had engaged in taking photographs of army atrocities. The lady

who was our hostess had her brother killed and burnt by Sinhalese thugs. There are several returned exiles who had joined one militant group or the other. Many of them are bitter that the dawn of hope and promise had given way to the desultoriness of internecine strife in which many of their close friends had died.

There is fear and anxiety too amongst the Sinhalese and Muslim communities. More will be said on this in other articles appearing here. The Sinhalese are puzzled angry and bewildered by the sudden withdrawal of open state patronage.

The Muslim community has been rendered very apprehensive

by a series of incidents, the last being the killing of the Muttur AGA, Mr. Habib Mohamed. No progress has been made in identifying the killers. Many of the Muslims wish to cut themselves away from the Colombo based leadership. They feel that they must come to some working arrangement with the Tamils if the Tamils are going to be reasonable. At the same time they are intrigued by the bloody feuds between Tamil groups. They rightly wonder if any deal can be struck with Tamils who are in this state. Moreover, they are frightened about getting sucked into the bloodletting to which Tamils have become prone.

The greatest longterm anxiety for the Tamils remains the state machinery that is overwhelmingly dominated by Sinhalese. This machinery has been used against Tamils in the past and it is now expected to rehabilitate them. In addition to the visible machinery, there is also the considerable invisible machinery in the form of state corporations. These have been used in the past to render secret help to sponsor and settle Sinhalese, in a bid to undermine and overwhelm the Tamils.

A respected Hindu religious leader told us, "as far as Trincomalee is concerned, the Tamils must stand together and work together. If we do not stop this feuding, we are finished." This feeling was reflected by all those we met.

THE EAST AND THE FUTURE

The portion of Trincomalee bay between the shore and the rock sixty yards out into the sea is crowded with bathers. We too join the host of merry children and hear all languages spoken. The chief attraction is a muscular Muslim lad who performs somersaults as he runs into the water. He then lets children climb on his

shoulders and tosses them one by one to scream as they splash down. Even here one is confronted with some of the intractable problems of Trincomalee. On the Northern end of the bay lies Fort Frederick, containing the ancient Konneswaram temple, sacred to the Hindus. One also observes inside the Fort an eyesore

in the form of a recently constructed Buddhist temple and Buddha statue; as if the archaeological site needed modernising. Such are the puerile levels to which those who advanced the Sinhalese takeover of Trincomalee have descended. The attempt to change even the symbolism of Trincomalee has added insult to injury. We have given

examples of several 'purana' Tamil place names that have acquired Sinhalese transliterations. (Old Tamil-Muslim place names have typical endings with 'ur' and 'veli'.)

The Tamils and Muslims of the East have an urgent problem of security and

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VIEWS

SINHALESE

FR. PETER

Father Peter Kurukularchchi is a Jesuit priest and a senior member of the Trincomalee citizen's committee. We met him at his residence inside St Joseph's College, Trincomalee. We were told that the school band which was practising at that time had in its number, children from all communities. Though there may not be complete agreement on all matters Fr. Peter has undoubtedly earned the respect of the Tamil community through his impartial dealing and humanity. He had taken an active interest in the matter of Tamil detainees. More recently he had earned the displeasure of the Joint Operations Command (JOC) by demanding the removal from Trincomalee of all armed personnel who had been active in violence against Tamils. This he said, should be done in order to restore a sense of security to Tamils.

We asked him: Father, we seem to have here an un-

bridgeable gap between Tamil moderates and Sinhalese moderates like you. Your request to the JOC suggests that once the rotten elements in the Government machinery are removed, things will be fine. But for the Tamils it seems an illusion to break up the Government machinery into good and rotten parts.

One of the first Muslims we met was a leading person from the service sector in Trincomalee. This served to remind us that there were crucial and intimate links between the Tamil and Muslims communities. Yet the divide is a real one. This gentleman told us of the fear created amongst Muslims as a result of the murder of Mr. Habib Mohamed, AGA Muttur, after the accord. He added that the Tamils must take an initiative towards understanding and assuaging Muslim fears.

We subsequently met ACM Sharouk, a grama sevaka

In the waves of troops that took part in the Vadamarachchi offensive, there was one that killed and another that kissed babies and distributed milkfood. Of these two waves you cannot say that one is good and the other is bad. They both work towards the same clear end. It is the same with the Government machinery as far as Tamils are concerned. What have you got to say?

MUSLIM

and M.B. Munsoor, a youth awaiting University entrance. The latter told us of incidents affecting Muslims. In December '85, Mr. Ibrahim, the Muslim AGA of Kuchaveli was killed. Also killed in that incident was Mr. Mahendran, a field officer. Others killed were Mr. Latiff GS Kuchaveli (1985 latter part), Mr. Ibrahim, school principal, Nilaveli and of late, Mr. Habib Mohamed. In another incident 40 Muslims were kidnapped by unknown persons. Muslims felt the loss of educated persons deeply, as there

Fr. Peter: I see your point here. Such distinctions are sometimes possible.

Ourselves: How do you see the situation in Trincomalee? How do you view the Indian troops?

Fr. Peter: The Tamils have suffered extensively and the Sinhalese have also suffered though to a lesser degree. Both have been victims of massacres and counter massacres. I see my principal concern as that of removing mutual hatred and suspicion. Broadly speaking, I am satisfied with the conduct of

(Continued on page 7)

TAMIL

A common view expressed by all whom we met was that Trincomalee was different from Jaffna and Batticaloa. There was next to no development in Trincomalee and there was plenty of destruction. Tamils were very much on the defensive. The need for a North-East merger was accepted at least on grounds of survival. A retired AGA told us that the people of the East entertained fears of Jaffna domination. There was also the feeling that the Jaffna man came as an exploiter, who did not reinvest his earnings in Trincomalee. The feeling also remains that Jaffna men were anxious to marry their daughters to young men of the East who came up in life. But they had a tendency to kick up a fuss when it came to young Jaffna boys marrying girls from the East. He added, "what the people in Jaffna must do to obtain greater acceptability for the merger in the East, is to give a package of concrete assurances to both Tamils and Muslims that their jobs, educational and developmental opportunities will be safe"

Mr. THAVARAJAH

Mr. Thavarajah was the SLFP candidate for Trincomalee at the last elections. The general view of him was that he went very much out of the way to help whoever approached him. He had also taken a keen interest

in bringing relief to detainees and had gone through a good deal of trouble on this particular issue. When we asked him if his SLFP connections made him suspect in Tamil eyes, he replied, "I joined the SLFP in 1958 and if I do contest elections again, it will be on the SLFP ticket. I have never done anything against the interests of Tamils. In fact when the counting was taking place after the 1977 elections I had a most anxious time on Sambandan's (TULF candidate) account. In the interests of the Tamils, I was more keen than Sambandan himself that he should win".

One of Mr. Thavarajah's principal concerns was the question of integrity in the functioning of public charities and NGO's. He told us: Those who voluntarily do public service for a charitable cause must observe strict integrity, not merely in the letter of their calling, but also in the spirit of their calling. I have known cases of people who have accompanied relatives of detainees to Colombo, who have come up with unjustified expense accounts. These poor people whom they accompany do not even have money for a bottle of milk and find accommodation extremely difficult.

In such instances officials from the charitable institution have occupied rooms at Ramakrishna Lodge at Rs. 250/- per day and claimed 2nd class train fares. It does not look right. Satisfying the audit is not the main point. Whether you produce a receipt from hotel Oceanic for Rs. 500/- per day or whether you stay with a friend and claim only bus-fares, the audit does not care. I have come across cases in charitable institutions of cash shortages and bad accounting.

While the PTA has been a bit of a joke, the travails of poor detainees and their anxious relatives has resulted in a goldmine for sharks in the legal and associated professions. When someone is arrested under the PTA no legal action will work. But some unscrupulous lawyers get money out of anxious relatives by misinforming them of possible action. Some charitable institutions have obtained foreign funds to provide legal aid for detainees under the PTA and these institutions retain lawyers. That is fine and a good thing. Ainsley Samarajeeva is one lawyer who is doing a scrupulously honest and dedicated job. But I have come across cases where a lawyer gets money both from the institution as well as from the detainee's relatives. Anxious relatives come from long distances, cases get postponed, it is a big mess. People are often advised that the

law works only with big money. Once a poor mother whose son was detained came home on bad advice and left Rs. 2000/- with my daughter while I was away from home. I received a shock on discovering this. Later I traced the woman and told her, "you keep your money, I will help you." You see what unscrupulous persons can do!

If I tell you what wonders money does for PTA cases you will be shocked. I discovered that the order of files can be changed by getting hold of some minor employee. I later felt that this was wrong.

THE YMHA

We were met by messrs. B. Wijayanathan S. K. Wijayanathan and K. Dyanandan from the Trincomalee Young Mens Hindu Association. Speaking about the Trinco hospital, they said that the hospital was badly understaffed, having no specialists. The most senior MBBS was born in 1954. 90% of the staff were Sinhalese. The economy of the Tamils was so badly shaken that even when a Tamil is killed by Sinhalese thugs, they have to hire a hearse owned by some Sinhalese mudalali. Trinco has no Tamil owned hearse. Most capital is in Sinhalese hands. Most private buses are Sinhalese owned. One curiosity about Trincomalee is that on paper at least, 40% of land within Trincomalee urban limits is owned by its 33 temples. Some strong initiative is needed to boost the economy of the Tamils.

were relatively few of them. All Muslims we met would not commit themselves to us as to whom they suspected of having killed Habib Mohamed. This probably meant that they ruled out a Sinhalese assailant. Though Mr. Mohamed's father was a victim of the Anuradhapura massacre, those Tamils who knew his work said that Mr. Mohamed had been impartial and conscientious in carrying out his duties.

When asked about the Jihad Organisation, Mr. Munsoor said that this organisation was not against anyone, but was meant to secure unity amongst Muslims and to promote non-violent action to secure their interests. He explained that whilst Muslims felt the need to co-operate with Tamils, they were afraid of the bloody internal fights now going on amongst Tamils. This created uncertainty about whether any credible deal was possible with Tamils. This made choices for Muslims all the more difficult and the future uncertain.

A senior Government administrator with a wealth of experience observed that "the referendum for the North-East merger was the weak point of the accord. All major Sinhalese political parties and at least a section of the Muslims are against the merger. As long as the referendum is left hanging in the air, these parties have a vested interest in fomenting Tamil-Muslim troubles. This is easily seen as experience has shown. Again, the Government cannot scrap the referendum and go for elections with the hope of winning. The purpose of the merger for Tamils at least is that of physical and economic security. The Tamils may thus be well advised to barter away the merger for genuine federal powers for the provinces. In the interests of its credibility, the sooner India makes its intentions clear on this matter the better. If not we may find a situation that is hopelessly drifting".

THE STATE MACHINERY

Considerable fears have been aroused amongst Tamils by widespread rumours of massive Sinhalese colonisation. To understand these fears we must look closely at the state machinery and how it has functioned in the past. Trincomalee never had a Tamil Government agent. The staff at the Trincomalee kachcheri and the police force are overwhelmingly Sinhalese, despite the fact that two thirds of the population in the district is Tamil speaking. Of the 10 AGA's in the district 5 are Sinhalese. Kuchaveli and Trincomalee are Tamil AGA's divisions. Mr. Konamalai who is AGA Trincomalee performs acting duties at Kuchaveli which has no AGA. The one Tamil officer attached to AGA Trincomalee, reportedly spends a good deal of time in Jaffna. When Mr. Pathmanathan, a class 1 CAS officer was at the station, Mr. Camillus Fernando, a class 2 Sinhalese officer was promoted over him to the post of GA. Mr. Vadivelu, a Tamil Sub Inspector in the Police force was all this time kept inside the police station doing a desk job. It was only after the accord that he was given a uniform and sent out on policing duties.

In such a set up it is difficult enough for a Tamil or a Muslim to attend to routine official business. When it comes to making complaints or seeking legal remedies, the position becomes almost impossible. Mrs Subashini Varathan gave her own recent experience. When she reported the attack on her home, the HQI (Head Quarters Inspector) came with a subordinate. The HQI asked her if she would mind the statement being recorded in Sinhalese, so that the task could be left to the subordinate. Mrs. Varathan insisted that the record should be in English. Then the HQI personally recorded her statement. Mrs. Varathan pointed out that she had been lucky because of her position. Had it been an ordinary citizen, he or she would have been presented with a statement in Sinhalese to be signed without comprehending what was written. People had lost confidence in the police and the Government a long time ago. When Tamil premises are forcibly occupied people simply resign themselves to accepting it. The situation is ideally suited for bringing in Sinhalese settlers by stealth. This has been done at great cost to the life and security of Tamils.

While the militancy lasted it was unattractive for Sinhalese settlers to come. Past experience makes it easy for people to believe that the Government will go on cheating and will attempt to introduce Sinhalese settlers under the protection provided by the Indian presence.

It is manifestly clear to everyone concerned that if justice is to be done by the Tamils and the Muslims, the entire machinery of administration and policing must be overhauled. Some recent experiences suggest that there is no intention to reform this machinery.

THE MACHINERY TODAY

The Government has recently been calling for reports on damages in order to canvass for aid. Since people lacked faith in the Government, they used to submit their claims for damages to the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) which has an office in the Urban Council building. These were then recorded and passed onto the Government. On the 10th Sept. the Indian Major was asked by the GA, Mr. Ariyaratne, not to accept these reports as the matter was being dealt with by the Government. Since the Indian Major had been instructed to maintain good relations with the GA, he complied. The Trincomalee citizens' committee then protested to the IPKF that the people had little faith in the Government machinery. The Major reported this matter to his superiors who then called for a conference to resolve matters amicably. The Government representatives sent for this conference were persons of little consequence. The GA was represented by an Executive Officer grade 2, the Sri Lankan military co-ordinating officer by a second Lieutenant and the Police by Sub Inspector Vadivel who had just been taken out of mothballs and issued with a uniform.

The Indian representative Colonel Virendra Kumar took up the sample case of a woman from Sambaltivu who had complained that her husband had been shot by the army and that the tractor he was driving had been taken away. The Indian Colonel asked the Sri Lankan Lieutenant whether the army had a tractor amongst their 'recovered articles'? The Lieutenant replied that they did not have a tractor and later admitted having some tractor

parts. The Colonel replied, "I do not know if you understand this, but how did you manage to get tractor parts without a tractor? You must go and ask your superiors". Subsequently the IPKF resumed its task of accepting reports.

On 4 Sept. a rehabilitation meeting was held which was attended amongst others by representatives of the citizens' Committee, the IPKF and the JOC (Joint Operations Command). At this meeting Fr. Peter Kurukularachchi, a senior member

On 12th Sept. the Trincomalee citizens' committee questioned D.M Ariyaratne, the GA, about colonisation in the presence of the visiting British minister.

The GA admitted that there was colonisation along the Allai-Kantalai Rd. of which Mr. Dissanayake (who is incidentally minister for lands and Mahaveli development) had denied having any knowledge. Explaining this the GA said that those affected by the Kantalai dam disaster of May 1986 consisted of 261

ation which went hand in hand. Despite the accord the Government can and does cheat in the matter of colonisation. The extent of Sinhalese colonisation at present is significant, but at the same time less than what people believe it to be. The fears of both Tamils and Muslims tend to get exaggerated as a result of bitter experience of the past. The Government machinery is singularly unresponsive to non-Sinhalese, who cannot expect the law to take its course in basic matters like security of persons and illegal occupation of land or premises by sponsored Sinhalese.

It may be asked what the Indian Peace Keeping Force is doing about all this. After all the Govern-

AND COLONISATION

of the Trinco C.C. demanded that all security forces personnel who had been responsible for violence against Tamils should be removed from Trincomalee in order to restore a sense of security to the Tamil people. It was reported that such a mildly reasonable request by a leading Sinhalese citizen had greatly annoyed the JOC. The Citizens' Committee was taken aback when the GA later suggested that Government officers who had left Trincomalee during the troubles should be called back

COLONISATION

When ministers Devanayagam and Gamini Dissanayake visited Trincomalee on 7 Sept., pointed questions about colonisation were put to them by the citizens' committees of Trincomalee and Thambalakamam. When asked about colonisation taking place along the Kantalai-Habarana Rd., Dissanayake replied that this was a legal settlement done by the Prime Minister to prevent 'robberies and various nefarious activities'. When asked about colonisation along the Allai-Kantalai Rd. he said that he was not aware of such colonisation.

There are other cases of alleged settlement which can be explained away. One report said that in Sagarapura a settlement in Kuchaveli, there were on the record 90 Sinhalese families. The number had now increased to 110. An AGA who was asked about this said that this was probably a case of regularisation of occupation where occupation has lasted about 4 years, this he said was normal

Sinhalese households, 69 Tamil households and 71 Muslim households. While the Sinhalese had been prepared to accept Government allocation of lands elsewhere, the Tamils and Muslims had insisted on getting back to the same villages. Each Sinhalese household now had about 3 families by natural increase. For this reason about 3 times 261 allotments are being made to Sinhalese along the Allai-Kantalai Rd.

One member said that there was fear amongst the Tamil people as the result of colonisation. After saying that they need have no fear, the GA went on, "what can I do for that fear? If I try to do anything about it my job will go!" The GA's reply raises several unanswered questions. Normally a person would be expected to divide up his land amongst his natural increase or to purchase additional land. Is it the policy of the Government to make allotments to the extra families resulting from natural increase, or is it an ad hoc policy which can be applied selectively to suit convenience? If the former is correct were the Tamil and Muslim victims of the dam disaster made aware of their entitlement to additional units for their natural increase if they were willing to move elsewhere? It is hard to believe that they were so informed.

IN CONCLUSION

One is led to believe that the deliberate thrust of the Government machinery in Trincomalee has been to reduce Tamils and Muslims to non-entities through oppression and Sinhalese colonis-

ment's conduct on the matter of colonisation bound to endanger the accord. Again, contrary to popular belief, the IPKF is taking a keen interest. Fr. Peter Kurukularachchi, president of the Trinco C.C. told us that Brigadier Fernandez of the IPKF and the Indian deputy High Commissioner called on him on 10 Sept. to inquire about colonisation. He had told them that the Trinco C.C. had not yet been able to check for themselves, but he had given them the places they should go and check. He believed that this was being done.

Again two questions remain. What will the Indians do about it and will they understand the subtleties of Trincomalee? The Government is likely to be armed with misleading replies that can almost fool Tamils themselves.

It may however be said that much is to be gained by the Tamils uniting to press for a complete overhaul of the Government machinery. This is understood even by rival militant groups in Trincomalee.

They understand that they must stop fighting amongst themselves and must make a positive approach to the Indians instead of alienating them by political gimmickry. This does not seem to be understood in Jaffna.

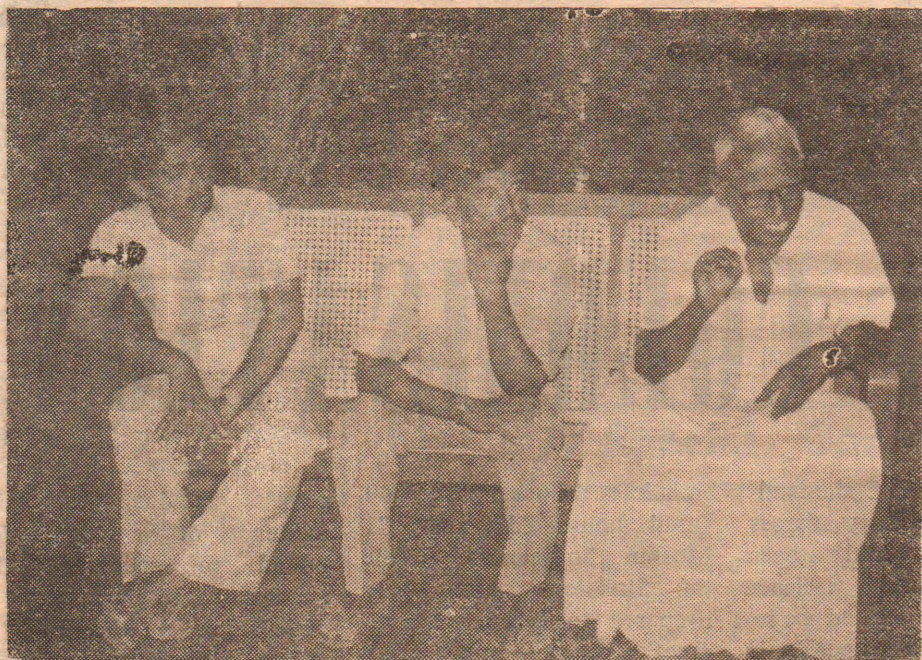
It was also reported in the press that some Eastern Province UNP members led by Devanayagam and Rajadurai had expressed satisfaction with the present Government machinery and had said that they do not need an interim administration. Here they are clearly speaking for their personal interests and not in the Tamils and Muslims of Trincomalee.



Trincomalee Y. M. H. A.
Destroyed by Thugs



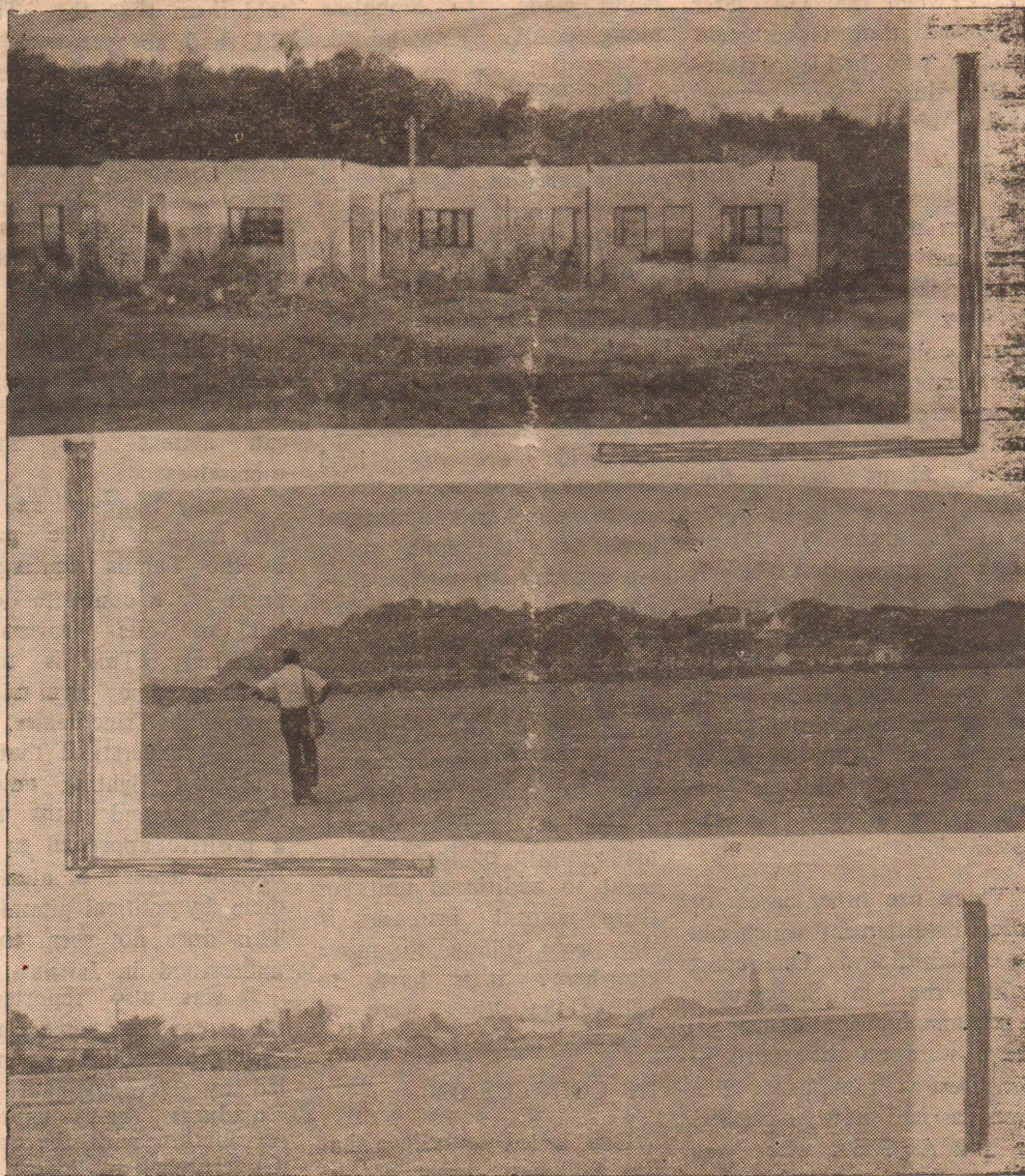
Mr. Sivalingam, Mr. Sharouk, Mr. Mansoor



Mr. Wijayanathan on the extreme right is seen here
with the members of Y. M. H. A.



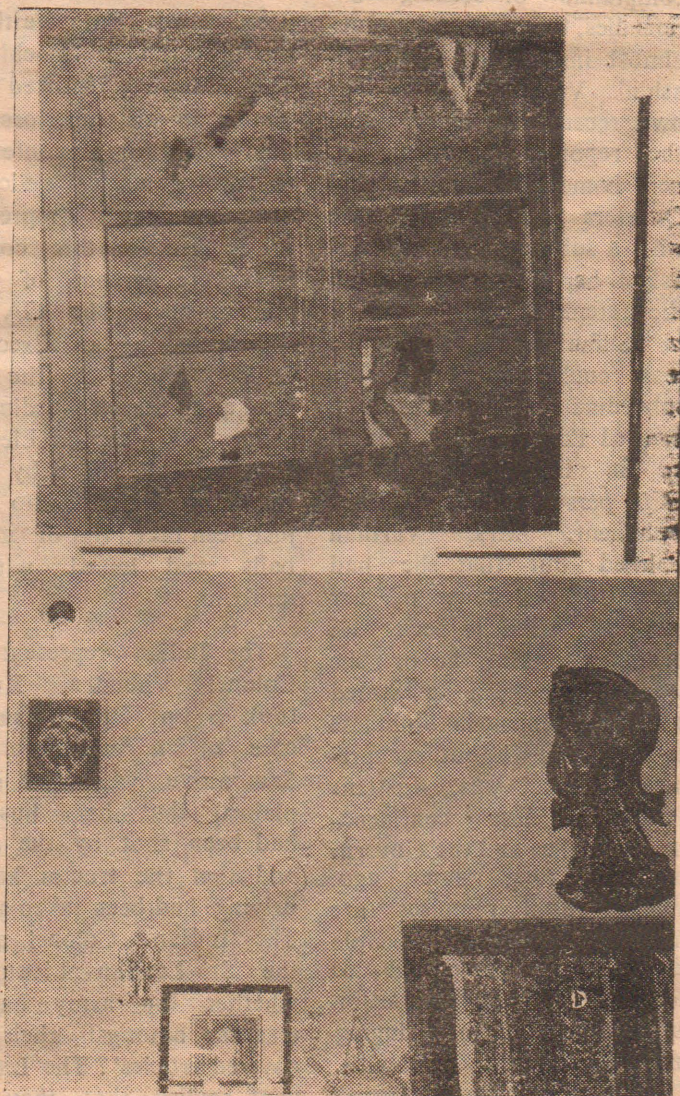
Mrs. Subashini Varathan, a senior member of the
Citizen Committee of Trincomalee



Building damaged by the communal violence is on the top

Trinco Fort area is seen here in the middle

Distant view of Trinco market at the bottom



Mrs. Subashini Varathan's house with the bullet marks
and damages



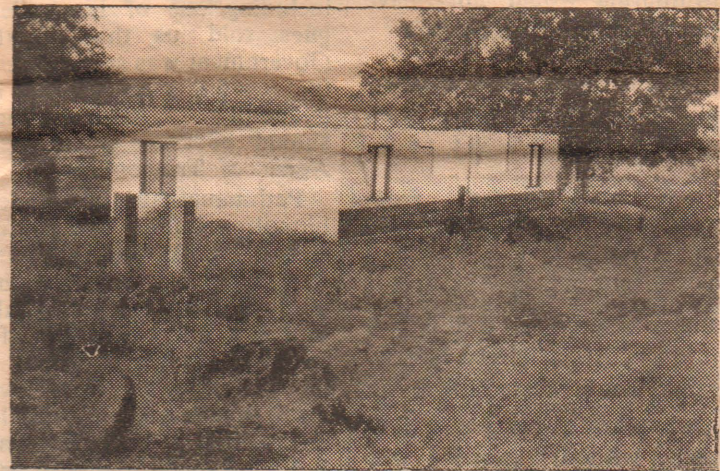
Uppuveli Pillayar Kovil damaged during the disturbance



The Special Team investigators of SATURDAY REVIEW



View of a village destroyed in Trincomalee district



Pankulam library remains with only the walls after the ethnic holocaust. Jungle tides over



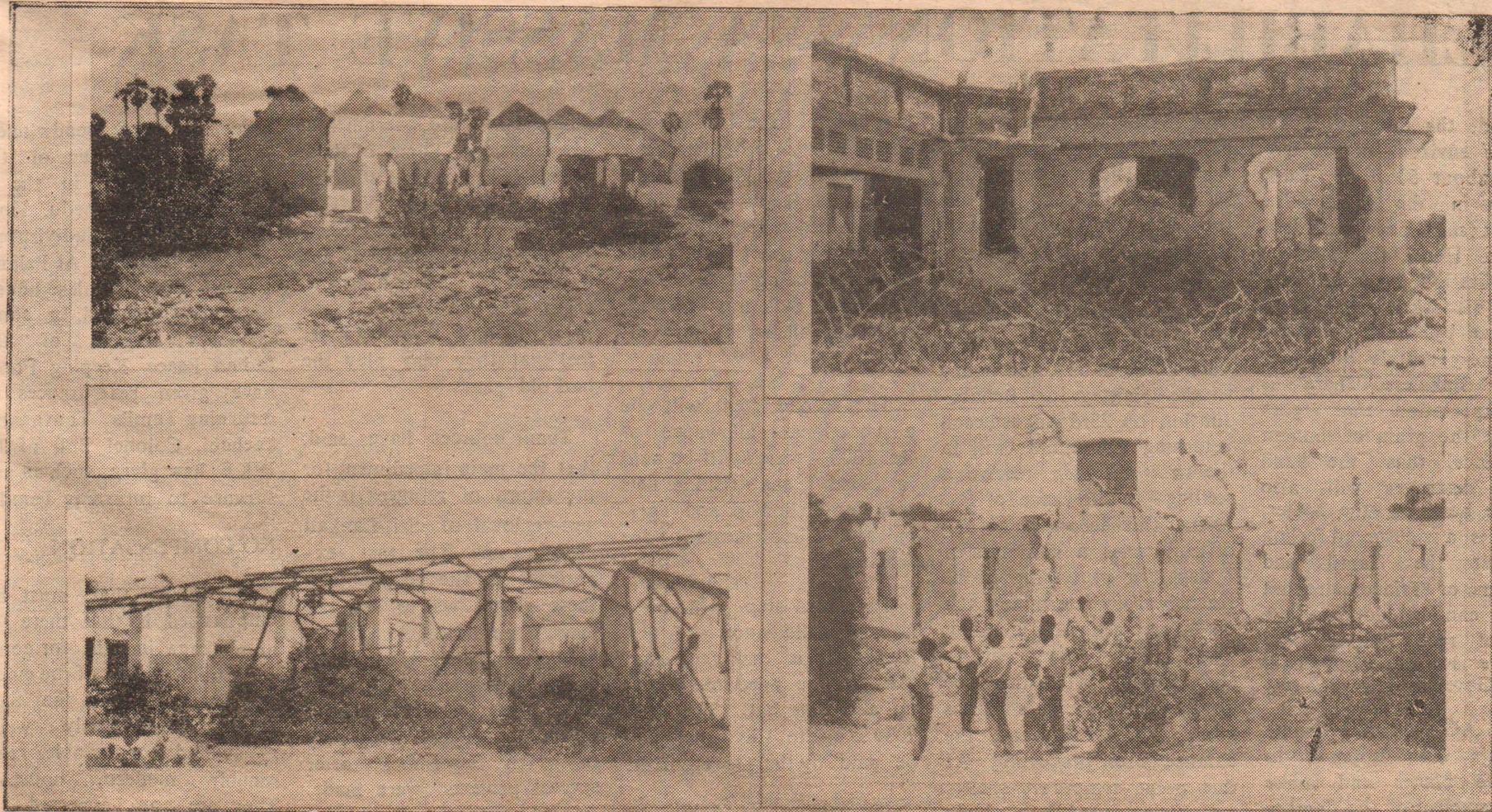
Outspoken and active social worker 'Thavarajah master'



Fr. Peter Kurukulaarachchi a senior member of the Citizen's Committee of Trincomalee.



Buddhist Monk Venerable Dharmaratna Thero



Buildings destroyed by the Army backed thugs in Uppuveli ; shrubs and bushes have covered the buildings

THE LAW WAS AN ASS

THE TALE OF TRINCOMALEE'S ADDITIONAL G. A.

Mr. N. Pathmanathan (now 45) was arrested in December 1983 under PTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act.). He was released 45 months later on 4 September 1987 with all charges dropped. His arrest was connected with the escape of Tamil prisoners from Batticaloa. The charge against Pathmanathan was under section 5 of the PTA — he was accused of having knowledge of, and failing to inform the security authorities of the whereabouts of persons having knowledge of Terrorist suspects. It is interesting to note that the allegation is not about any knowledge of criminal doings, but about second hand knowledge of persons suspected of being criminal under the PTA. On such a flimsy charge a respected senior Tamil official was removed unceremoniously from his home in the night without being allowed to bid goodbye to his daughter who was asleep and was detained for 45 months. The main charge was against Mr. V. Thiagalingam (now 54), Manager of the Agricultural Development Authority at Trincomalee, whose vehicle had allegedly been used by the escapees.

Mr. Pathmanathan had been a class 1 CAS officer who had graduated from the University of Ceylon in 1964. Prior to his arrest, in a move of blatant discrimination, Mr. Camillus Fernando, a Class 2 Sinhalese officer had been appointed GA over him. At the time of

his arrest Pathmanathan was acting for the GA.

PRISON

Mr. Pathmanathan was held at various detention centres including Welikade, Boosa and New Magazine prison. He had been subject to mental but not to physical torture. Expecting to be in prison for a long time, he had begun studying for his law degree. There had been an attempt in Welikade to attack Tamil prisoners on 22 April '87. This was immediately after the Pettah bomb blast. Sinhalese prisoners had forcibly obtained tools and were attempting to break through to the Tamil prisoners. The

sory Board consisted of Dr. A.R.B. Amarasinghe, Secretary to the Ministry of Justice (Chairman) and Mr. Siva Rajaratnam. The board looked upon his case favourably and promised that he will be released within two weeks. But this was not to be.

Pathmanathan was taken to courts to be charged on 2nd Dec. '85. This had to be put off because the judge was on leave. Pathmanathan was served with his indictment in prison on 30th Jan. '86. Most prisoners are persistently advised by lawyers to plead guilty. The lawyers say that it was of no use trying to fight the PTA. Finding it too embarrassing to let Path-

by A Special Correspondent

manathan go, the Government's strategy seems to have been to prolong his detention in the hope that he would be harassed into pleading guilty. Pathmanathan insisted that come what may, he was not going to plead guilty. Mr. Thiagalingam finally pleaded guilty in Apr. '86, was given one year's rigorous imprisonment (RI) and was released in Dec. '86.

PTA AT WORK

It seems, indeed, the case that even the judges are bewildered by the PTA and do not take it seriously. They seem to take it as a ceremony that has to be gone through with.

THE LAW

Pathmanathan was taken before the Advisory Board, set up under the PTA, in Feb. 1985 with Eardley Perera representing him. The Advi-

Mr. Muthuraja, a postal peon at Vavuniya, was arrested in the company of Jeevaraj in 1985. Jeevaraj was apparently putting up posters for the EPRLF. Muthuraja confessed to having attended a lecture, where the lecturer had spoken about socialism, the equality of women, the need to change the economic system and not a word about separation. Muthuraja was charged with having failed to inform the authorities the whereabouts of the lecturer. One would have normally thought that the only reason for apprehending such a lecturer would have been to commend him for his edifying message. In the event Jeevaraj who had taken Muthuraja for the lecture was released without being charged a week before Muthuraja was taken to courts. Muthuraja did not know the meaning of EPRLF whether in English or in Tamil. It was said that had Jeevaraj been putting up posters about the UNESCO, Muthuraja would not have known the difference.

When Muthuraja pleaded guilty, the Judge gave him a mere 1 week's RI.

Mr. Nandakumar from Eravur, a University student in economics was arrested at his home in April '87 under section 5 (failing to inform). A bewildered Nandakumar has confessed to having seen an armed party at a distance, without knowing who they were and what they were doing.

AT HOME

Mr. Pathmanathan was finally released on 4th September 1987 with all charges withdrawn. Had he pleaded guilty, he would have lost his job. Because he was under interdiction, his wife and daughter were able to stay in quarters. Asked how they managed, Mrs. Pathmanathan said that she had a job and until his death, her brother had helped them financially. Her brother was manager at the prawn factory in Kokkadichcholai, and had been murdered by the STF early this year as part of the much publicised massacre. One is again reminded of how closely death has stalked people of the East.

Pathmanathan who was looking relaxed and cheerful when we met him on 11, Sept. has now got to apply for his reinstatement and back pay. There is no compensation for persons who have been so meanly and inconsiderately treated by the Government. Pathmanathan's employer. Others, including one of his colleagues, told us that if the Government was serious about the accord and about its goodwill, Pathmanathan should be made Government Agent of Trincomalee.

Pathmanathan considers himself primarily a professional public servant and was insistent on avoiding publicity, which he felt would diminish his credibility for impartial service. Asked if he was angry and bitter over his experience, he smiled and replied, "no, not at all, I learnt much more in prison than what I learnt at the University."

REHABILITATION — A MASSIVE TASK

Beside the damage caused in the environs of Trincomalee about 50 or so Tamil villages in the Trincomalee district faced near total destruction. Hence the task of rehabilitation is a massive one. This task is supposed to be done by the Government machinery that is overwhelmingly Sinhalese. There is the expectation that goes against the grain of human experience, that the hand of the destroyer will also be the hand of the healer. There is a widespread feeling amongst the Tamils and Muslims of Trincomalee that justice can be done to the task of rehabilitation only if there is a radical overhaul of the Government machinery.

The AGA's and Grama Sevaka's are supposed to visit the places and make an assessment of the damage before payment is made.

There are at present not enough Tamil AGA's to do the job. The only two Tamil AGA's and GS's to do the job. The only two Tamil AGA's are acting appointments.

According to the Rs. 10,000/- package announced by Mr. Austin Fernando, Secretary to the Ministry for Rehabilitation on 23rd August, each returning household will in the first instance receive a settling-in allowance of Rs. 1000/- This according to one official takes a minimum of 7 days for processing at the Kachcheri to determine if the party was genuinely affected. Two months food rations (Rs. 2000/-) will also be given, with two week's rations given immediately and the balance after processing. At this point temporary shelter will be provided in perhaps an available Government build-

ing. There have been some complaints of problems here. But one Tamil AGA assured us that as far as his division is concerned, affected, people are coming back and that they are being cared for. He also did not envisage major problems in other divisions.

The second step will be a vocational allowance of Rs. 1000/- which will be paid in kind — say fishing nets etc. for fisherfolk and agricultural implements for farmers.

The third step will be a housing allowance of Rs. 3000/-. It is envisaged that this will be adequate to put up a cadjan hut. The Rs. 7000/- up to this point will be paid by the Government.

The balance Rs. 3000/- or so in the package will be

handled by non-Governmental organisations. Some of these are: EHED (Roman Catholic), the Rotary Club, YMCA, YMHA (Trincomalee), Sarvodaya, Bala Mandalaya and the Sinhala Cultural Association. The last three are suspect in Tamil eyes. Tamils feel that they may play the bad old game.

Tamil sources have said, that the main impediment for the return of refugees is the non-removal of Sri Lankan army camps. The past experience of the people with these camps was to say the least, traumatic. At Thambalakamam the S. L. Army camp remains at the 13th mile post and the check point barrier was lifted only on 11th September after several protests were made. According to the Thambalakamam C.C. there are 69

cases of loss of breadwinners in their area. Out of the 1600 households in the 3 hamlets of Pattimedu, Kootankuli and Kovilkudiyiruppu 450 have returned. At Palampottaru 600 Sinhalese households have returned. In some instances officers of the Indian Peace Keeping Force have given reassurances to returning Tamils. Thuvanankachchi, Colonel Bali of the IPKF has given such an assurance to returning Tamils.

NO COMPENSATION

One point that must be emphasised is that there is no package in sight for compensation. Many of the evicted Tamils, unlike the Sinhalese, lived fairly well. (They had comfortable, reasonably modern, houses.) They are now expected to

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The Psyche Of The Market Sinhalese

Whenever we made inquiries about the market to the market Sinhalese, they were warned, "they are very, fearful and restless after the accord. You may talk to them from an away. But you will be followed and we will be faced with unnecessary problems." We had to content ourselves with talking to those who had close dealings with them. What emerged gave a picture of Sinhalese too living in fear and one cannot help feeling sorry for them as abandoned pawns in a deplorable Government scheme. Two incidents will help to illustrate their state of mind.

TWO INCIDENTS

After the accord a foreign TV cameraman came to the market area, stood his camera on a tripod and began swinging it about. A market tough approached him and asked, "who gave you permission to take photographs? Where is your permit?" The foreigner signalled to the Sri Lankan naval officer in mufti who had accompanied him. This officer came forward and told the tough, "it is all right, you can go." The tough replied, "I don't

care. Where is the permit? Look at your time. It is yet one hour more before the curfew. I am not going. You can go if you like!"

When the Indian army arrived they were cheerfully welcomed by the Tamils. Some Tamils used this occasion to give release to pent up feelings.

On 23rd August an LTTE flag was raised at Madaththadi junction and a box looking like a parcel bomb was placed underneath. A Sinhalese tough, Sirisena, who had gone into a tea boutique had not noticed this. As he was leaving after his tea, he was approached by some Tamil boys who drew his attention to the flag. He was told, "if you are a true blooded Sinhalese, you must bring that flag down." Sirisena became angry. He went to two Tamil taxi drivers in turn and asked them to remove the flag. Both drivers in turn replied, "you go and tell that to whoever put it up." Sirisena when and fetched a crowd which was in turn confronted by a Tamil crowd. Stones were thrown, and when the

Indian army arrived, stones were in turn thrown at them by Sinhalese and result was that two Sinhalese were wounded when Indian troops opened fire.

THEIR PSYCHE

The Trincomalee market Sinhalese are not a community in the normal sense. They have functioned as an ultra military arm of Government strategy against Tamils. For this reason they cannot be allowed to become normal civilians, but they must be maintained in a state of suspicion, fear, squalor and elemental greed. They must be both aggressors and victims at the same time.

They are manipulated by the fish mudalalis, who are in turn used by others. The game plan consists in calling the toughs and treating them to a generous helping of liquor. Next their emotions are played upon, so that they would do the needful.

AFTER THE ACCORD

The market Sinhalese are said to be very bitter after the accord. They can see

that the Tamils are less amenable to being pushed around. On 18th August when the parliament was attacked, killing 1 Minister and injuring others, the market Sinhalese celebrated by setting off crackers. Their anger at what they consider Government deception runs deep. They say, "if the Government had told us earlier what the end would be, we would have appreciated it. They have taken us along a course where we were encouraged to make enemies of the Tamils. Now we have been dropped like a hot brick and we do not know what the Tamils and Indians are up to".

According to market sources, the Sinhalese have been told by senior police officials not to start anything against the Tamils and that they could no longer look for support. Senior officials in the administration are reported to have advised Sinhalese occupants of shops forcibly grabbed from Tamils to vacate such premises and apply for premises in the new market. Otherwise, they were warned, they may have to end up with nothing.

We were told that they were initially coming towards accepting the Indian Peace Keeping Force. But they are very suspicious after the shooting incident. The Indians, we were told, should deal with them carefully because anger could drive the market Sinhalese towards recklessness.

INTRIGUE

Here is a story told by a Trincomalee resident that accords well with the atmosphere of conspiracy that surrounds the town:

For three years I have been seeing a man around town, dressed up like a Catholic brother with longish hair and spectacles. He spoke gentlemanly English and was extremely polite. I had little doubt that he was indeed a clergyman. This year I was talking to two naval officers and this man appeared. The two officers stood to attention and addressed him as 'sir'. Soon after he went I asked the naval officers, 'is he a Captain or a Lieutenant?' The embarrassed officers admitted that the clergyman-like character was from military intelligence!

VIEWS

(Continued from page 2)

Indian troops. The Sinhalese are still getting used to them. Their presence has definitely reassured the Tamils.

Ourselves: Since you are a Sinhalese Roman Catholic we may ask you this question. Tamils have complained that it has been the policy of the Roman Catholic Church to Sinhalese the Tamil speaking people along the Western sea board between Negombo and Puttalam. Can you comment on this?

Fr. Peter: I have myself worked in Chilaw (I am from Kandy). There you find the situation of people sometimes speaking Tamil and observing Sinhalese customs, or speaking Sinhalese and observing Tamil customs.

Arch bishop Marcus Fernando is from a Tamil speaking background. Here the policy of our church is that the serving clergy should know both Sinhalese and Tamil. Even in Trincomalee we have mixed congregations and the clergy are expected to be multi-lingual. We conduct worship in English, Tamil as well as Sinhalese.

VEN. DHARMARATNE

Ven Dharmaratne is the incumbent of the Buddhist

monastery at the 4th mile post on the Kandy Rd. He was recommended to us by Fr. Peter as being a moderate. Upon our unannounced arrival, he kindly invited us in and spoke to us. Ven. Dharmaratne had his education at the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya. He told us that he conducted Tamil classes for Sinhalese children, encouraged Tamils to learn Sinhalese and went about Trincomalee with Fr. Peter, preaching in all languages to all communities, to live harmoniously. So far so good. But when it came to concrete issues we found the stands taken by the venerable master intriguing. When asked about civilian deaths, this meant to him principally Sinhalese deaths.

Ven. Thero: On 4th June '86 17 Sinhalese people, including a Buddhist monk were killed near here. Again 70 Sinhalese were killed on 11th June '86 in bus blasts. During the recent Sinhala-Tamil new year 150 Sinhalese were killed at Kituluttuwa. I would not say that the killings were done by Tamils. Not all Tamils are terrorists.

Ourselves: But Sir, many more Tamils have been hacked, shot and burnt

in Trincomalee since June '83. Some of these incidents took place not far from here. Many were killed by Government Forces. Would you not call them terrorists too?

Ven. Thero: I am not aware of killings near here. The Government is impartial and is fair by everyone. The Government forces kill terrorists to uphold the law.

Ourselves: But there have been well authenticated cases of security forces killing women and children, as well as summary executions which do not fit into the context of upholding the law.

Ven. Thero: Of course there are bound to be accidents. But it is the Tamils who started all this. The Sinhalese did not start this.

Ourselves: But Sir, in such matters, it is almost impossible to assign one cause. You will be just breaking into history at one point to say that some one is to blame. You know as a Buddhist that Karma is a cycle.

Ven. Thero: That is true. All are to blame. On further

probing we found the venerable master back-bracking from earlier positions.

The Tamil version of the killings of Sinhalese civilians in June '86 was that prior to these 25 Tamil bus passengers disappeared along that stretch of the road. They were presumed abducted and killed by Sinhalese thugs. A point was reached where Tamils could not travel in or out of Trincomalee, and only Sinhalese travelled in buses. After the bus blasts in which 70 Sinhalese were killed, pressure was brought to bear on Sinhalese thugs to leave Tamils alone. Only then were Tamils able to travel. Such has been the brutal logic of life in Trincomalee. Again, for a genuine Sinhalese moderate like Fr. Peter: it has been easy to accept Ven. Dharmaratne as a moderate. But this was not the case with the Tamils we spoke to. They question his innocence, considering that he lived close to some of the worst, incidents against Tamils. This, if anything, points to the large gap that needs to be bridged if the two communities are to live together.

Rehabilita...

(Continued from page 6)

live in a cadjan hut with a smelly pit for a toilet. Such compensation is going to be a long time coming, if it comes. There are besides many, again mostly Tamils, who have lost breadwinners. Schooling will be another problem.

Two senior Western diplomats told us that the Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel is 'shooting his mouth' when he says that rehabilitation aid is going to pour in. What will come now will be token amounts. It may take up to two years for negotiations to be over and for contracts to be signed.

The total destruction was assessed at Rs. 15 billion (US Dollars. 500 million) by the Ministry of finance. This is by co-incidence what was spent on defence (if that is the word) by this country last year. The Government experienced no qualms nor difficulties in pocketing out this sum. We have every right to demand that the Government spends this sum on rehabilitation without delay.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

THE CONQUEST OF TRINCO

Central to the problems faced by Trincomalee is the persistent thrust for state-sponsored colonisation by Sinhalese. This originally had a good deal of subtlety about it. More recent methods have been patently crude, employing even massacres by Security forces. At one point nearly all of Trincomalee's 50 or so Tamil villages had faced something close to total destruction. The following picture emerged from conversations with retired senior Government officials.

Population of Trincomalee district in 1953: 84,509 (Sinhalese - 15,156, Tamils 35,132, Muslims - 28,016, others - 1603).

Population in 1981: 256,790 (Sinhalese 86,341, Tamils - 86,743, Indian Tamils 6767, Muslims 74,403 others - 2536).

The district consists of 3 divisions: Trincomalee - 266 sq. Miles., Muttur - 170 sq. miles and Seruvila - 574 sq. miles. Total area - 1010 sq. miles.

Seruvila covers all colonisation areas, the planning of which was not done in the Trincomalee Kachcheri.

The Colonisation schemes are: Kantalai (1952), Allai (1954), Morawewa (Formerly Mudalikulam, for ex-employees of British bases. Many Tamils benefited from this - 1958) and the Vanaru village expansion scheme (New Vanella - early 70's).

Before Independence Trincomalee district had 4 DRO's divisions 1. Town and graves 2. Kattukulampattu (Kuchaveli) 3. Kottiyarpuram 4. Thambalakamampattu.

These were then broken up into AGA's divisions as follows: Kottiyarpuram became Muttur and Seruvila, Kattukulampattu East became Kuchaveli. Kattukulampattu West became Gomerankadawela (formerly Kumeresankadavai), Kantalai and Morawena Thambalakamampattu became Kinnya and Thambalakamam.

Later a portion of Padaviya (Padavisripura) in the Anuradhapura district was detached from Anuradhapura

and annexed to the Seruvila division of Trincomalee district in order to provide expansion room for the Sinhalese colonisation scheme at Padaviya.

At present there are 2 Tamil AGA's, both acting, 3 Muslim AGA's (one recently killed) and 5 Sinhalese AGA's.

More recently, the Mahaveli development scheme has become a means of introducing Sinhalese settlers. Under this scheme Periyavilankulam in the Trincomalee district has been renamed Mahadivulweva.

STATE CORPORATIONS

State owned Corporations have been used as a means of introducing Sinhalese into Trincomalee in large numbers. The following Corporations have main offices in Trincomalee: Port Authority, Petroleum, Fisheries Harbour, Sugar, Cadju.

Two large private industries which employ a large number of Sinhalese are Prima and Tokyo Cement. A scheme with 400 houses has been set up at Dhaniyagama (formerly Thaniyakiramam) where there are hardly any Tamils amongst the residents.

In 1983 (before the riots) the Hotels Corporation announced through the gazette and issued notices to owners, to acquire all coastal lands along the 7 mile stretch from the 3rd mile post to Nilaweli. This was not carried through. Had it been carried through, it would have been a severe blow to the economy of the indigenous Tamil population.

On 14-5-82 the Port Authority of Trincomalee issued a gazette notice (193) under the Sri Lanka Ports Authority Act of 1978 to acquire 9767 acres of land. All communities were affected here. But going by past experience, the main ultimate beneficiaries would have been Sinhalese.

Sinhalese fisheries settlements were introduced at: Kullavadi and Sirimapura - 70's, Sagarapura (formerly Pudavaikkattu) - 70's and Kallaruva (formerly Kallanpattai).

A joke has it that after the accord the Sri Lankan forces hit upon a brilliant idea to frustrate the Indians. They would occupy all school and Government buildings. How can an army come here if they do not

SIRIMAPURA

The most recent has been the takeover by Sinhalese toughs acting in collusion with the forces, of Central Road and the trade in Fish, Vegetables and Groceries.

A good example is the tale of Sirimapura. The colony of 50 families was planted with the help of Fish Mudalalis in the 70's on a piece of a land which had been sold by its Tamil owners to the British naval authorities, who had purchased it with the intention of housing lavatory coolies. This colony was in a strategic area next to the railway station junction, with Tamil residents on either side.

In June and July '83 Sinhalese thugs from Sirimapura attacked, stabbed and burnt neighbouring Tamil residents in the Uppuveli and town areas. The security forces provided protection for the Sirimapura residents, but not to the Tamils. Unfortunate Tamils found on the roads met with violent ends. Because of Sirimapura's command over the railway station junction, Tamils were unable to come into or leave Trincomalee. Proctor V.R. Satchidanandan, a senior community leader and acting judge had a narrow escape after being abducted by Sirimapura thugs in the early hours of the morning. The proctor was being walked on the road dressed in a loin-cloth when they were met by a Police Inspector known to the proctor. After inquiring, the Inspector ordered his release and went away without offering to escort him. However Satchidanandan did escape. During the last two years nearly all Tamil houses have been destroyed either by or with the connivance of security forces. The Sirimapura residents had also clashed with the Muslims at Jamalia Mosque. According to local Muslims this happened after Sirimapura toughs used the Mosque premises for taking of drugs.

Since the Tamil burial grounds adjoin Sirimapura, protection money had to be paid to toughs in Sirima-

have tiled roofs, running water and kitchen facilities? Nevertheless the Indian soldiers came. Without much ado they settled themselves in open fields and under trees.

pura even to bury corpse, of murdered Tamils.

Other similar Sinhalese colonies planted at Abayapura, Mihindapura and Pattispura have had the effect of surrounding the Trincomalee Tamils and at critical times cutting off their contacts with the outside world. Burnt out shells of former Tamil residences can be found near these colonies. The strategy for expansion in recent times has been to attack with the connivance of the security forces, drive out the Tamils and then expand. This strategy has resulted in the takeover of most of the market area by the Sinhalese.

During the 1983 riots nearly 40 Tamil shops in Central Road area were burnt down and looted by the navy. These premises were then occupied by Sinhalese traders. At this time Tamils were very much in fear of being attacked by Sinhalese. As a protest Tamils set up temporary market called Kanagam Mill on private land.

The East And The...

(Continued from page 1)

reconstruction, which in the first instance calls for a change in the Government machinery. While they are struggling to form a political leadership based in the East, on several crucial points they freely admit that an initiative must come from Jaffna. But the performance of Jaffna has been sadly disappointing. The cardinal importance of India for better or for worse, is a reality. The problems of the East require a constructive approach to India. This consists in recognising that India has its own interests and exploiting the common ground between Indian interests and those of the people of the North and East. But the opinion makers in Jaffna seem to have gone in for an irresponsible orgy of India bashing. In many respects India's performance since the accord suggests that they could be used to further many of our key interests. But we

One Trinco resident told us 'how shrewd these Indians were'. While on patrol they may occasionally come across a Sinhalese person carrying a gun in the market. The Indian troops would all him and ask him to show them the gun. They would then say, 'a nice gun you have. Even we are not issued with guns like these. You must keep it carefully. Do not at any cost give it to anyone else'. They would then return the gun, have a friendly chat, and go away. Then they would go to the Sri Lanka police and tell them 'such and such a person in such and such a place has a gun. Go and confiscate it'. So much so that the market Sinhalese thought that the Indians were the good guys and the Sri Lankan police the bad guys!

It is necessary for the purposes of Sinhala chauvinism that the Sinhalese in Trincomalee should be maintained in a state of ignorance, brutality, suspicion, hatred and fear. They are both victims and aggressors in a game played by successive Governments. If the Indians has not come, it may have taken ten years or more, but the Tamils would have been forced to vacate Trincomalee.

seem to complain that they too have their own interests and allow ours to go by default. Such an attitude can only persuade India to ignore the Tamils and make their deals with a belatedly compliant Government in Colombo. Another aspect of Jaffna is that even sensational events in the East seem to be non-events here. The East is very much concerned about the recent spate of tragic killings. The Muslims are extremely worried. They are all worried about themselves and worried about their seemingly futile dependence on Jaffna. But we for once have become blind Gandhians. Judging by the mood in Trincomalee, one cannot rule out even if only out of sheer necessity, the emergence of an Eastern political leadership, independent of the North and having its own Tamil-Muslim consensus.