

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Special Supplement 28th September 1987



THE LAST POST

THILEEPAN HAD JUST 25 YEARS

*How many years must
one man have
Before he can hear people cry?*

—BOB DYLAN

People die.

Yes. Nature's Law.

But not everyone chooses
when and how to die.

THILEEPAN, the head of
the Political Wing of the
Liberation Tigers, chose how
and when he should die.

He started his death fast
in the premises of the his-
toric Nallur Kandaswamy

Temple to back up the mi-
nimum five demands put
forward by the LITE. (See
SR 19th September)

No one seemed to care
for what he was fighting
for.

The liberation struggle of the
Tamils in Sri Lanka was
forced to take up arms
because no one paid heed
to their demands.

Only gunfire could—and did
—make people in authority
hear.

Enough is enough, the youths
said.

As the the Tamil proverb
says.

**KNOCK, KNOCK
BOW YOUR HEAD
GET KNOCKED
KEEP BOWING
YOU FOOL.**

The flash-point was the
International Tamil Confer-
ence held at Veerasingham
Hall in Jaffna in 1974.

That point onwards, our
youths began to think armed
opposition was the only
answer to state violence.

From a historical point of
view, that was the turning
point.

A political process that
began with Ponnambalam
Ramanathan, Arunachalam,
G. G. Ponnambalam *et al*
is coming to an end.

People who dream that
Prabha will be a good (nice?)
constitutional successor of
Ponnambalam Ramanathan
should go instead for night-
mares.

A political and social era
has ended for good in Jaff-
na.

Thileepan was just about
25 when he chose to die.

He died on 26th Septem-
ber 1987 round about 11
a. m.

26th September also hap-
pens to be the day S.W.R.D.
Bandarnaike, the Prime Mini-
ster who made Sinhala Only
the law (instant Kassippu!)
in 24 hours, was assassinated
— in 1956.

SWRD and Thileepan (born
1963) are two sides of the
same coin.

Anyone who wants to study
the social and political his-
tory of Lanka should study
their contrasting careers.

Thileepan is dead.
Did he have to die?

FREEDOM MORE PRECIOUS THAN LIFE

TEXT OF A MESSAGE
FROM VELUPILLAI PRA-
BHAHARAN LEADER OF
THE LIBERATION TIGERS
OF TAMIL EELAM.
(L. T. T. E.)

Our Liberation struggle has
achieved tremendous victo-
ries at great cost.

All these achievements
were victories which our
movement earned in the
course of our armed struggle.

But my dear comrade
Thileepan's death is different
from everything else; it is
something to be ponder-
ed over because it is some-
thing qualitatively different.

Thileepan by sacrificing
his life in the shimsa arena
has established an incompa-
rable record.

His death is a great his-
torical event, which will bri-
ng about decisive changes in
the history of the Tamil
Eelam Liberation struggle.

His sacrificial death has
touched and aroused the

conscience of Tamil Ee-
lam.

It has also made India bow
its head in shame.

My dear people, for whom
did Thileepan die? Why did
he die? What is the signifi-
cance of his death? Why is
it that his death is a revolu-
tionary event which has
aroused the people?

Thileepan died for the
Tamil people.

He died for the rights of
the Tamil people.

He died to safeguard our
freedom and our honour.
By his death he has shown
how a Tamil freedom fighter
is prepared to make the
ultimate sacrifice for the

- PRABHA

people, for the land he loves.

A life is very, very precious.
I am quite aware of that.
But even more precious is
our freedom, our honour, our
rights.

I loved Thileepan dearly,
because he was a dedicated
freedom fighter. When I saw
him battling for life
I was very very disturbed but
I did not regard Thileepan as
an ordinary man. I viewed
him as a self-consuming
sacrificial fire.



India has expressed its
deep sympathies over Thilee-
pan's death. The Indian High
Commissioner has also said
that this death is meaning-
less. He has also gone on
to say that if Indian assu-
rances had been accepted,
Thileepan may have lived.
What has happened?

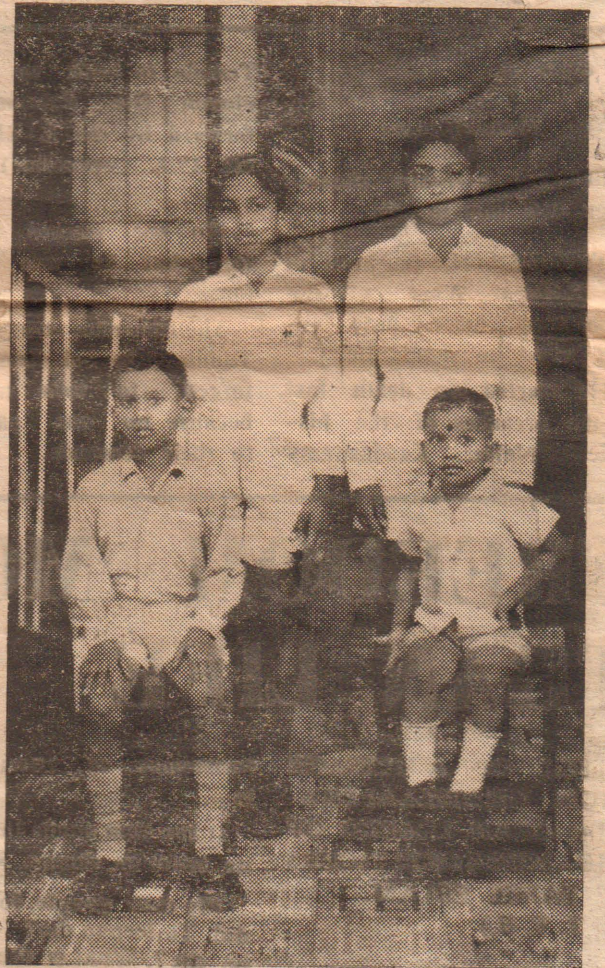
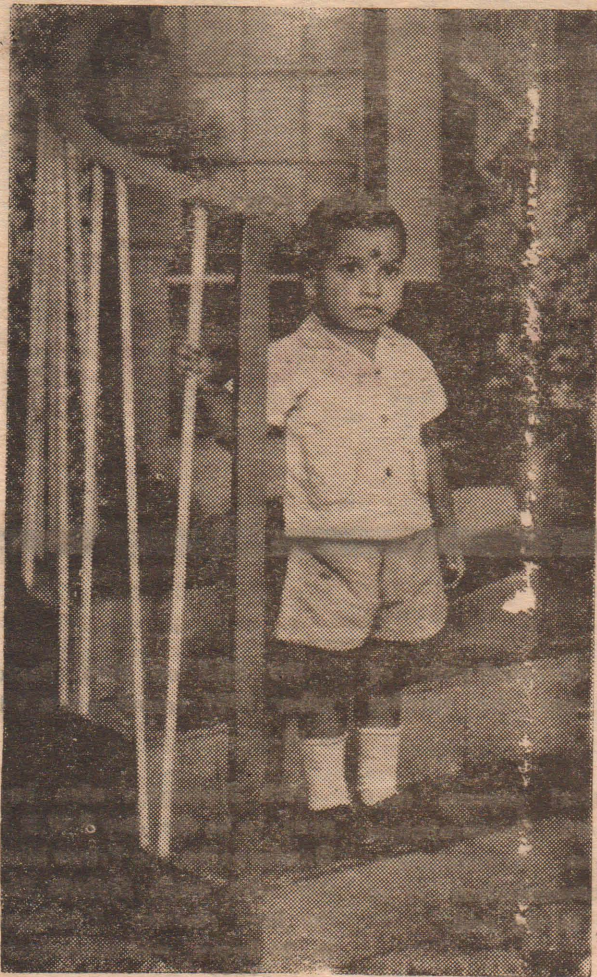
We handed over our arms
when the Indian Govt. assur-
ed us that the rights of our
people would be granted
that our people and our
land would be protected, that
the Tamil speaking people
would be given the opportu-
nity to rule themselves in
their traditional homelands.

It is because we trusted
the assurances of the Indian
Govt. that we handed over
our arms. You are all aware
of what has happened after
all these promises. While Ta-
mil refugees are unable to get
back to their own homes, Sin-
hala colonisation is going
on at a hectic pace. Tamil
territory is being gobbled up.

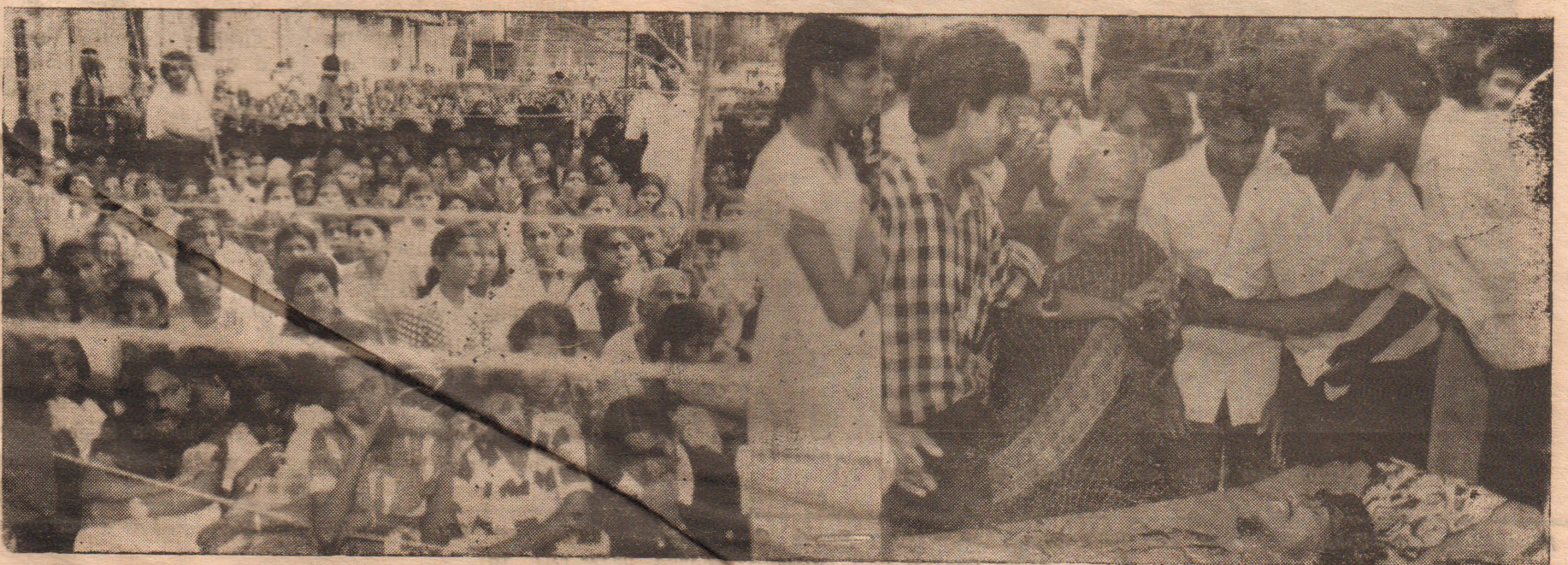
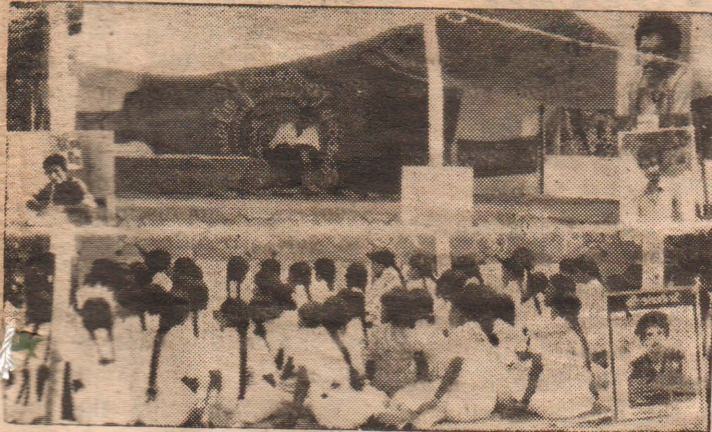
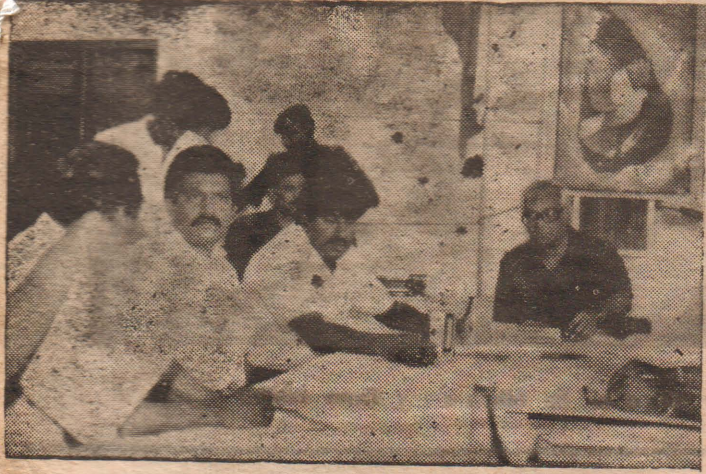
The Police Administration
of the Sinhala state is being
stepped up in the Tamil
homeland. The Sinhala Chau-
vinist state machinery is hur-
riedly infiltrating the Tamil
areas.

(Continued on page 4)

A TIGER'S DEATH —



A SAGA IN PICTURES



Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

THE LAST JOURNEY

MY BODY TO YOU - Thileepan

I'm not surprised Thileepan chose to die the way he did.

I knew him from his school days at Jaffna Hindu College where he shone as a chess champion.

He had the single-minded devotion of a grandmaster.

He joined the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in the 1980's and within about five years he was appointed the Head of the Political Wing of the LTTE in Jaffna.

Thileepan was not the type of person who would sneak into his house to have a meal after he joined the movement.

He always had his meals at the camp along with his colleagues.

Whatever was good for his colleagues was good for him.

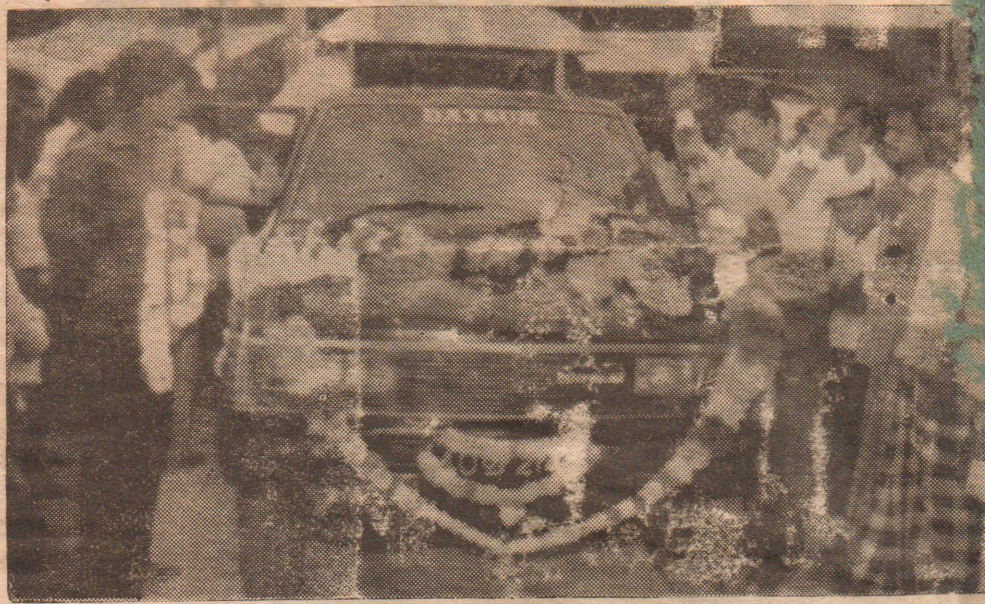
It is quite in character that Thileepan's body is neither being buried or cremated.

Thileepan wanted his body to be handed over to the Medical Faculty of the University of Jaffna.

His wishes have been complied with,

This shows the spirit of the man --- Thileepan.

— by a Special Correspondent



Thileepan's body about to be taken away from Nallur

Fast Continues



KIRUBA (Trinco)



THIRUCHELVAM (Mu'laiti)

Elegy

We are the abandoned ones
My brother
You who
Suffer for my sins
Every drop of water
We'll store up for you
The poem I write
You won't read.

The wind
Heated with
Your breath
Hammers me
His hunger was terrible
So was his thirst
Stronger than all these
Our people's anger

Freedom More...

(Continued from page 1)

Under cover of the Peace Accord and with the assistance of the peace keeping Force the Sinhala state is trying to root itself in Tamil Eelam.

Thileepan who realised the great danger, resolved to see an end to all this.

There is no point in combating the Sinhala state to win our demands.

It is India which interfered in our ethnic problem.

It is India that guaranteed the rights of our people. It was India that took over our arms. It is India that has stopped our armed struggle. Therefore it is against the Indian Govt. that we have to demand our rights

This is the reason why Thileepan launched a Dharmista struggle against India. Moreover he chose as his spiritual weapon the great instrument bequeathed by India.

Twenty four hours before Thileepan died after refusing to take even a drop of water, we save prior information to the Indian Commissioner Mr. J. N. Dixit.

Nothing happened even eight days after he started his death fast.

Instead the media which are under the control of the Indian Govt. especially All India

Radio unleashed a massive campaign of lies against

Thileepan's fast was liberately distorted and garbled.

On the 9th day the Indian High Commissioner to Jaffna,

He gave us assurance which were absolutely meaningless.

I told him that the Tamil speaking people had been betrayed every time by accepting empty assurances.

I told him please forward constructive proposals. Please see to it that our demands are implemented. Till then the fast will not be given up. I also told him that if you are interested in Thileepan's life why don't you come and see him?

In the presence of our people please give him your assurances I told him.

Then I said we would give up the fast.

The Indian High Commissioner refused to comply.



Mr. Nedumaran looks on anxiously at Thileepan