

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 5 No. 35

20th September 1986

WORLD AT YOUR FINGER TIPS

Ticket confirmation,
Reconfirmation,
Cancellations.
Telephone & Telex Services

Mack Communications & Travels

(MCT)

8, 1st Lane,
Pt. Pedro Road,
Jaffna

Tele : 24791, 24836

COUP IN OFFING?

President Jayewardene, at a United National Party meeting at Kandy on Monday, hinted that some people were trying to topple the Government through a conspiracy.

The Prime Minister, Mr Ranasinha Premadasa, was also present on the occasion.

The timing of the statement was significant. It came just after a reported rift within the UNP Government at the highest level.

The President referred to past coup attempts in Sri Lanka. Almost all these coup conspiracies were directed at Sri Lanka Freedom Party Governments, in one of which Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, the then Prime Minister, was assassinated by a Buddhist monk in September 1959.

Now, according to the President (vide reports of the meeting published in the Daily News and The Island on 17th September, which was Mr. Jayewardene's 80th birthday), the latest conspiracy is directed against his Government.

Who is planning to take over? Elements from within the UNP, elements from the Armed Forces or elements from the Opposition parties?

A coup is a coup if it succeeds. The new rulers get legitimised in the eyes of the world, however dastardly they come to power. For they begin to talk of democracy and all that.

In Colombo there has been mention in diplomatic circles for some time, about a "Government-sponsored coup" to implement President Jayewardene's proposals to settle the ethnic problem.

The ethnic problem is at the core of the national crisis that is upon us all.

As we have said earlier, the South is also simmering over issues that range from economics to nationalism (the Sinhalese Buddhist variety).

Whoever comes to power through a coup has to depend on the Security Forces to remain in power.

He may be a politician or a military officer

But the lives of all dictators have been short, except that of Marcos of the Philippines who lasted as President for 17 years.

Who wants a coup? And who is behind it? The CIA, KGB, RAW or any other? For there has to be financial and military backing by a foreign power for any coup in a Third World country to be successful.

The question is: Do we want a coup at this stage of our political development, a situation after which the military become the arbiters of our lives?

No, Sri Lanka could manage without a coup if the political leaders of the day do an honest job, do what should be done and do it in time.

Mr. President: The answer is in your hands.

If you fail to meet the aspirations of ALL the people, then you, too, may have to go the way of President Marcos.

C. O. NORTHERN COMMAND

Two words were missing from our report headlined "WARNING BY THE ARMY" on Page 1 in the last issue of the SR. The words "NORTHERN COMMAND" should have appeared immediately under the line "Co-ordinating Officer." The line "Government Press, Sri Lanka" was inserted to indicate that the pamphlets were printed in Colombo on the orders of the Government.

50-CENT FUND

Fifty cents coins are hard to come by in Jaffna, like so many other items. So we have been able to collect only Rs. 101 in the past week in response to the appeal in the SATURDAY REVIEW of 6th September. This sum we have remitted by cheque to the Minister of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali in part payment of the legal costs awarded to him by the Press Council, as per its order dated 4th July 1986. We urge Readers: Please collect all the 50 cents coins in Jaffna as soon as possible because we have to pay a big sum — Rs. 1,575.

TORTURE, MORE TORTURE

Amnesty International has called for full investigations into reports of torture of prisoners in Israeli-occupied territory and under Israeli supervision in south Lebanon.

The worldwide human rights organisation said it was publicising appeals it had already made to the Israeli authorities, without success so far, to set up independent investigations and make the results public.

It cited the case of Adnan Mansour Ghanem, a Palestinian arrested in Ramallah on the occupied west Bank of the Jordan River,

which it said was typical of a steady flow of allegations of torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian prisoners.

He reported being beaten, forced to stand for long periods while hooded and handcuffed, prevented from sleeping, suffocated, and subjected to prolonged ice-cold showers. He said he was severely beaten again after complaining of torture during a court appearance.

AI also asked the Israeli authorities to investigate detailed accounts of torture which former prisoners said was carried out by

Christian militiamen under Israeli supervision in South Lebanon. These accounts came from people who had been held in Khiam Prison in the "security zone" established by Israeli forces adjoining the Israeli border.

C. W. C. OFFICE DAMAGED

The Ceylon Workers Congress office at Ginigattenne was damaged by a bomb on 16th September. 15 houses were set on fire and there was tension. Two workers were injured.

OUT SHORTLY

YUKAM

The new brightly Tamil Weekly from the NEP Ltd, publishers of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Release All The Political Prisoners in Sri Lanka jails

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

No. 118, 4th Cross Street,
P. O. Box 122
JAFFNA.

Telegrams: SATVIEW

EDITOR
GAMINI NAVARATNE

Subscription Rates inclusive
of local postage and foreign
Air Mail Rate

Sri Lanka

Annual — Rs. 175/-
Half-year—Rs. 90/-

India

Annual — Rs. 300/-
(Indian Rupees)

Singapore / Malaysia—

Annual — U. S. \$ 40

All other Countries

Annual — U. S. \$ 60

Cheques Payable to:

New Era Publications Ltd.

Advertising Rates

Contracts — Rs. 20/- per
col. centimetre

Casual — Rs. 25/- per
col. centimetre

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

WORKERS' VANGUARD - No.
410, dated 29th August 1986.

Marxist working-class biweekly
of the SPARTIACIST LEAGUE
of the U. S. 41, Warren Street,
New York, NY 1007, U. S. A.

CONGRESS-NEWS, Vol. 1, No.
4, August 1986, Monthly English
journal of the Ceylon Workers
Congress, 72, Ananda Coomara-
swamy Mawatha, Colombo 7.
Rs. 10 a copy.

JANANAYAGA THOZHILALI,
Vol. II, No. 1, dated 1st September
1986, Official Tamil organ of the
Democratic Workers Congress
published from 98, Vivekananda
Hill, Colombo 13.

JAFFNA ON SHOW

Amidst shelling and bomb blasts, the public of Jaffna, both students and laymen have been afforded an opportunity to acquire a knowledge of their world outside, and know the talents and skills of their children.

There was a large queue even on the first day and I had to wait in the queue for sometime before I could gain admission.

The Section on History and Archaeology gave photographs of ancient ruins and places of historical interest of places like Keerimalai, Nilaweli and Nallur. A University under-graduate explained lucidly some of the places and coins used by the ancient kings. He also said there was a vessel used by king which could not be brought to the Exhibition grounds because of its size and length, it was worth 10 lakhs.

The Natural Resources of the North were beautifully arranged but it was a pity there was no one to explain.

The Flora and Fauna Section was explained by a set of small boys. He explained the various stages in cultivation of plants of food value and also the modern

methods used in cultivation. He also said how unwanted waste could be used to make bio-gas. There was a large wind-mill showing how water could be pumped. Local ingenuity was seen in the assembly of a tractor from the old parts of a car and bicycle.

In the Medical Section some satisfying explanation was given on how best to protect oneself from normal diseases attacking man. The Ayurvedic Section showed how some "unwanted plants" could be used as herbs of medicinal value. There was a Blood Bank where some donated blood. How alcoholic drinks posed health hazard to man was also explained.

It is also a well known fact Jaffna offers prospect for fishing all the year round. Fish caught in various places of the North were kept in large fish tanks. Prawns, lobsters of various size and crabs were kept in deep-freeze boxes. Fishing boats of various sizes which were used in the North formed useful exhibits.

In the Industrial and Technology Section the various uses of the Palmyrah palm loomed large indeed. Sugar, jaggery, Palmyrah

syrup and soda, Arrack, jams, hand brooms and coars were notable exhibits.

Some of the highlights of the Exhibition are

- (1) Tractor assembled from parts of car and bicycle;
- (2) A refrigerator made out of rug;
- (3) A cooler from solar energy
- (4) Pumping water with the aid of a wind-mill
- (5) The multitudinous uses of the Palmyrah palm
- (6) Use of herbs in medicine.

On the whole the Exhibition is worth a long way to see and be thrilled at the immense potential of the North which could be exploited by the untiring energy of the young and the old.

—G. S. S

Y. W. C. A. TOO

One of the important buildings destroyed by Army shelling from the Fort was the Jaffna Y.W.C.A. Headquarters which was ceremoniously opened by the Canadian High Commissioner in March this year when he arrived to inaugurate the new Fire Service of the Jaffna Municipal Council.

The Y. W. C. A. runs a finishing school at the Wesleyan Methodist Trimmer Hall for the girls who leave school after their secondary education. This itself was hit by shells a few days earlier.

S. O. S. FROM MANNAR

The Mannar Association for Relief and Rehabilitation has appealed for funds to help the refugees who were forced to evacuate their homes consequent to incidents in Mannar town on 3rd and 4th of September.

About 10,000 people took refuge at Erukampiddy, while more than 500 were forced to flee their homes for safety and refuge to adjoining villages. Food, water and electricity were also cut during this period.

Although many voluntary organisations came to the rescue and helped to alleviate the distress, more funds are necessary for their relief and rehabilitation.

SR REFUGEES RELIEF FUND

LIST OF DONORS

We gratefully acknowledge the following further contributions to the SATURDAY REVIEW EDITOR'S REFUGEE RELIEF FUND:

Mr. T. Kumar	US \$	350.00
Mrs. Rajendra, Siyamalan, & Jayatharan	US \$	590.00
Mrs. A. S. Navaratnarajah	Rs.	600.00
Mr. A. V. Gunabalasingam		4,397.75
Dr. & Mrs. S. R. H. Hoole		10,000.00
Anonymous		300.00
In loving Memory of Mrs. Rukmani Canagaratnam		1,500.00
Mrs. K. Sothinathan		50.00
Mr. C. Sivasothy — a box of used clothes		250.00
Anonymous		250.00
The Members of the Carnatic Society of Darwin		8,435.00
Mr. R. Somalingam		50.00
Sri Lanka Well Wishers of Alice Springs Australia,	AUS \$	100.00
Mr. N. R. G. Hoole		1,380.00

DISBURSEMENTS

Food Supply to Myliddy Fishermen	9,841.00
Medical supplies to Mutur, Trincomalee & Mullaitivu refugees	10,000.00
Medical supplies for Mannar refugees	13,574.50
Anonymous	4000.00

(Continued from last issue)

JUNE 1986

26-6-'86 Nilaveli — Government communique: Navy personnel arrest 7 terrorist suspects when they abandon their boat and attempt to flee. Security Forces arrest 66 terrorist suspects on the same day.

26-6-'86 Trincomalee — In a village a few miles off Trincomalee a house, a shop and 2 lorries of Sinhalese are torched by unknown persons. A girl is killed being trapped in a house, 3 are missing.

June '86 Paddiruppu — Poopalapillai a farmer is shot dead by the Security Forces.

June '86 7th Mile Post, Trincomalee — 75 Muslims are arrested by the Security Forces of whom 10 are released after questioning.

27-6-'86 Kathiraveli — Security Forces search a Refugee Camp and arrest 15 refugees.

27-6-'86 Pulipainthakal, Kiran — Security Forces who attempt to capture a camp of militants are repulsed. LTTE states that 10 Security Forces and 6 of their men were killed in this encounter, and that in attacks on village by bomber-planes and helicopters, 25 civilians are killed.

A Government communique-claims 10 terrorists killed.

27-6-'86 Kaluwanchikudi — 2 persons are killed and 5 arrested by Security Forces during search operations.

27-6-'86 Karainagar — Black uniformed Commandos moving out of Camp forced to retreat by militants, fire shells from Naval base. One civilian is killed and 2 are injured.

28-6-'86 Paranthan — Security Forces who arrive from the Kilinochchi Army Camp arrest 8 persons working in a poultry-farm, tie them to trees and shoot them dead. The 68 year old farm-manager is among those killed. 2 others are killed by bombs dropped from bomber planes and shells fired from helicopters. Several houses and shops are damaged. A culvert on the Paranthan-Mullaitivu Road is blasted by the Security Forces in an attempt to force all vehicles to pass through Kilinochchi which route is not being used from 4-6-'86, and now a deserted town except for the Kilinochchi Army Camp.

A Government communique — states 7 terrorists killed, 2 culverts are blasted by terrorists.

28-6-'86 Navatkuli — Security Forces forced to retreat to Camp by militants, fire shells into residential areas, from the Army Camp. Thavarajah, a Government employee is killed when a shell falls on his home. 2 others are injured.

June '86 Sampalivu — Security Forces on patrol attacked by militants retreat to Army Camp with 50

Muslims as hostages. Security Forces when retreating shoot at random, killing 9 persons. Of whom 3 are refugees, 7 houses are also bombed and set alight.

28-6-'86 Trincomalee — Habarana Road: 2 Security Forces and the driver are killed when an army vehicle hits a land-mine.

28-6-'86 Rameswaram, South India — Sri Lankan Navy attack an Indian fishing boat. 1 person is killed and 4 arrested, and the fishing boat is drowned.

28-6-'86 Kaluwanchikudi - Special Task Force personnel surround some houses and open fire — 2 are killed and 5 arrested. A teacher severely assaulted is hospitalised. Females are subjected to assault.

A Government communique speaks only of the 5 arrested.

June '86 Karuvappankerny, Batticaloa — Security Forces surround a house and arrest 4 persons. A youth is tortured and then shot dead.

28-6-'86 Sinnapullumalai, Batticaloa — Government communique: 7 suspected terrorists arrested by Security Forces.

June '86 Mutur — Government communique: Yoganathan a terrorist suspect is arrested with a gun.

June '86 Waanella, Trincomalee — Ponnampalam a terrorist suspect is arrested with a gun.

28-6-'86 Sammanthurai 2 Postal employees are arrested by Special Task Force personnel when on duty.

28-6-'86 Kaddaiparichchan — 47 Tamils are arrested by the Security Forces. Later all except for 2 are released.

29-6-'86 Paddiruppu — Security Forces on patrol fire killing a youth.

29-6-'86 Kovilkulam, Vavuniya — Security Forces surround a house and arrest 9 persons of whom 8 are released after questioning.

June '86 Thambaddi, Velanai — A 22-year old woman and an aged person are injured by shells fired from a Navy gun-boat.

30-6-'86 Kopay — A helicopter fires shells and strafes a jeep. A passenger bus and a van are also in vicinity. Youth who fires on helicopter from the jeep is killed. The other youths escape. During firing from the helicopter a student in the bus returning home from College who gets off the bus and flees in fear is hit and killed.

30-6-'86 Vavuniya — A bomb explodes in a booth selling illicitly brewed liquor and owned by a Sinhalese. 5 persons are killed and 23 are injured. In reprisal, Security Forces assault Tamils. Several boutiques in vicinity are set alight.

30-6-'86 Point-Pedro — From 10-30 a.m. Navy gun-boats fire shells into the Town area for about 6 hours. Schools, offices and shops are closed and people flee to safer areas.

4 persons are killed including a girl aged 12 years. 9 are injured.

June '86 Palali — A 55-year old man who goes to his abandoned house near the Army Camp to recover some items is shot dead by the Security Forces.

30-6-'86 Pesalai — Government communique: Terrorists in a boat fire on a Navy patrol boat when ordered to halt. In cross-fire, 34 terrorists are killed and 1 is arrested.

PLAN FOR REHABILITATION

The Ministry of Rehabilitation is formulating a plan for rehabilitation. This would include—

- (1) rehabilitation of commercial and residential premises.
- (2) rehabilitation of movable property
- (3) assistance for economic rehabilitation
- (4) assistance to most affected families
- (5) assistance to injured or disabled
- (6) rehabilitation of affected children
- (7) rehabilitation of affected places of worship
- (8) assistance for loss or damage to vehicles
- (9) assistance for loss of livestock
- (10) assistance to fishermen for losses.

Forms detailing the particulars to be furnished will be available at the offices of Assistant Government Agents from 24th September '86. All institutions and individuals affected during the period 1-1-1983 to 30-09-1986 are requested to obtain the relevant forms from the Assistant Government Agent's Offices and return them duly completed on or before October 10th 1986.

V. M. Punchalingam

DISTRICT SECRETARY AND GOVERNMENT AGENT
JAFFNA DISTRICT

The Kachcheri,
Jaffna.

Hong Kong Federation of Students (HKFS) PROTESTS

"How Long? A Forum on the Life and Aspirations of the Tamil people" was held on 25th August 1985 at the Hong Kong Federation of Students (HKFS) Conference Room. The forum, organized by the HKFS International Affairs Committee and the ASA Secretariat, was attended in by thirty students and overseas workers in Hong Kong. After the discussion, letter to Mr. J. R. Jayewardene (President of Sri Lanka) was circulated and signed by the participants. Here is an abridged copy of the letter to Mr. Jayewardene:

"We, who have attended this forum, join the international protest against the mass killing of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka.

From the video film and photos we have seen, a clear truth was unfolded; that Sri Lanka is not a paradise but a hell for Tamils who seek social justice and independence. A speaker from the General Union of Youth and Students (GUYS) of Eelam and a Tamil professor gave an extensive explanation of this grim reality in your country. We were so shocked and angry to know the atrocities being committed by your security forces against the

Tamils. No one is spared. Thousands were killed during military operations, arrested, thrown into prison, forcibly interrogated and tortured. House were burned forcing people to leave their villages and to become refugees in their own land.

We have never been to your country, but the stories we heard are enough to challenge us to be involved and rise up in defense of the Tamil people. What they aspire is just and fully deserving our warm support and solidarity, for we are people who recognize the value of human life and dignity. We declare our support to the continuing struggle of the Tamil people to self-determination.

We call on your government to end military operation in Tamil areas and cease from occupying the land of the Tamil people. We demand the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act of 1979, Emergency Regulation 15 A and all other laws that violate the democratic rights of the Tamil people. We appeal for the immediate release of all political prisoners without conditions. We ask your government to respect human rights and end further violation of the rights of the Tamils in Sri Lanka."

"JAFFNA PAST AND PRESENT"

Ceylon National Review of January, 1907, published a lecture of Pavalar T. A. Thuraiappillai as one of its papers. That paper under the title of *Jaffna Past and Present* is very thought-provoking. In 1910, Pavalar founded the Mahajana College of Tellippalai. The author, who hailed from Tellippalai, was a product of Jaffna College a missionary school and he started his career as a teacher in the mission school in the same village. He was a Christian but he later became a Hindu to found the Hindu institution of Mahajana College. He was no doubt influenced by the ideals of Arumuga Navalar. Subramania Barathi was his contemporary and some of the ideas of Barathi closely resemble those of the Pavalar. Pavalar was also influenced by the reform movements in India.

The Mahajana College Golden Jubilee Number of 1960 has reproduced Pavalar's paper. More than half a century after its first publication, the reproduction of the paper shows that it was considered very appropriate even for the sixties. After its second publication, another quarter century has elapsed. The paper seems so relevant even now that the reviewer will adopt the approach of giving as quotations the significant ideas of the author and to append his comments wherever possible and necessary.

First, let us see how he conceived Jaffna.

1. The past of a country is a record of the events and incidents of interest which took place in the country in the past, and is with most civilised countries a source of the deepest inspiration to their inhabitants, who took upon it as a glorious bequest of valorous deeds, intellectual greatness, and ennobling achievements.
2. Though the Jaffna Peninsula in itself is a very insignificant country, yet the Jaffnese, whose country
3. The ancient history of Jaffna, like that of many other countries, is very vague and indefinite, and is wrapped up in obscurity, especially the earliest parts of it.....
4. We Jaffnese may differ honestly in religious opinions, but we are inseparably bound together by ties of community of race, community of language, community of political aspirations and social advancement. We are all units of the Tamil Nation. We live together in one country and must fight

together for our common good in the great battle of life.

5. It is only by the cultivation of the individuality of our nation that we can secure for ourselves an honourable place among the communities which have the privilege of dwelling in this beautiful and far-famed island.

Pavalar seems to have had plenty of political foresight. It is a tragedy for Sri Lanka that the Tamil Political leaders of pre-independence era, had not thought of the Tamil nation in Sri Lanka and had not put forward the appropriate political demands before the British left the Island. The British granted independence to Sri Lanka under a unitary constitutional set-up which practically works out as complete domination by the majority community. Political demands of the minority community to gain some sort of equality and self-respect are treated with contempt and anger by the leaders of the majority community. The major political parties of this Island use the Tamil problem as a 'bait' to lure the majority community.

by

Prof. A. Veluppillai

The word 'Eelam' has become well known now. Pavalar does not use this word. Instead, he uses Jaffna as the name of a country. He seems to equate Jaffna and the Jaffna Peninsula. Though the peninsula is only a small portion of the traditional homelands of the Sri Lanka Tamils, this peninsula is very thickly populated and educationally very advanced and it was formerly the heartland of the Tamil Jaffna Kingdom. Though Jaffna and the Jaffna man has narrower connotations also, these words are even now used by leaders of other communities in Sri Lanka to refer to the Northern and the Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka and the Sri Lanka Tamils respectively.

It does not seem to be an accident that the political demand for the recognition of the Tamil community as a nation and for the establishment of a Tamil state under a federal set-up were first made by Tamil leaders who were Pavalar's students. Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam claims to be a student of Pavalar in the mission school at Tellippalai. The Mahajana College Jubilee Number gives the photograph of Mr. C. Vanni-

asingham as an old boy. Unfortunately, the demand for federalism came too late. If this demand was made by the Tamil Leaders before independence, probably the recent history of Sri Lanka might have been different from that of the recent past.

Let us now turn to some of his views on the history of Jaffna.

1. as the history as preserved in existing works seems to have been written long after the events recorded therein occurred.
2. Jaffna seems to have been at first ruled by the petty Mutkuka chiefs whose names I have mentioned.
3. After the death of Yalpadi, the minstrel, the peninsula became subject to the influence of the Sinhalese, who persecuted the Tamils to such an extent that the majority of them left Jaffna.
4. It was at the invitation of king Singai Ariyan that the ancestors of our leading aristocratic families came and settled in this country with their slaves and servants.

5. For 17 years Jaffna suffered under the tyrannical rule of the Sinhalese king Vijayabaku, who oppressed the Tamils and forced them to adopt manners and customs and modes of worship of the Sinhalese.

6. We have indeed to confess that our admiration of the past consists in the main of an idle boast of the purity and highness of certain families which are said to have come from South India. We do not take sufficient pride in the valour of the Tamil Kings who reigned in Jaffna, in the good things they did, in the excellence of the administration of most of them..... We only talk glibly of our ancestors in point of caste and family connections.

As Pavalar was dealing also with the past of Jaffna, he had to give a brief resume of the history of Jaffna. What he says about the main sources for the history of Jaffna still remains a sound view. Authors of the mainstream history of Sri Lanka generally belittle the conspicuous part played by the Tamils and minimise the importance of the history of Jaffna. Recent political developments in Sri Lanka have encouraged some archaeologists and some historians to distort Sri Lanka history to

read like history of the majority community so that political leaders can continue to deny the historical rights of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. A chauvinist attitude generally referred to as the 'Mahavamsa mentality' is being developed to identify Sri Lanka with Sinhalese history. This attitude is injected into school text books so that the future chances of co-existence of different communities on an equal footing in a multi-racial country become more and more remote.

The bare outline of the history of Jaffna, mentioned by Pavalar, still has not changed considerably. But we should note that considerable advances have been made in the study of the history of Jaffna during the last 75 years. Mudaliyar C. Rasanayagam published his *Ancient Jaffna* in 1926. Swami Ganaprasad published his *Yalppana Vaipava Vimarcanam* in 1928. His 'Sources for the study of the History of Jaffna' was published posthumously in *Tamil Culture*, Volume II in 1953. Navaratnam, C.S., published three books, *Tamil and Ceylon* (1958), *Vanni and the Vanniya* (1960) and *A Short History of Hinduism in Ceylon* (1964).

Among the recent contributors to the history of Sri Lanka Tamils S. Pathmanathan, K. Indrapala, S. Gunasingham and A. Veluppillai should be mentioned. Besides working on 'Dravidian Settlements in Ceylon and the Beginnings of the Kingdom of Jaffna' for his unpublished thesis, K. Indrapala has also edited a considerable number of Sri Lanka Tamil inscriptions in *Cintanai and Epigraphia Tamilica*. Gunasingham has concentrated on Trincomalee district with a book *Koneswaram* (1973) and with the edition of some inscriptions from the district. Veluppillai has edited a large number of Sri Lanka Tamil inscriptions in two parts (1971, 1972). Pathmanathan who worked on the history of Jaffna kingdom for his doctoral thesis, revised his work in the light of the contributions above and brought out his *Kingdom of Jaffna* (1978). Since the publication of this book, Sittampalam and Raghupathy have contributed to the history of Sri Lanka Tamils by working from the archaeological angle for their unpublished doctoral theses.

(To be continued)

The Church In Sri Lanka — More Sinhala, Less Christian

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES in Sri Lanka have not escaped the divisive and damaging consequences of the continuing Sinhala-Tamil ethnic conflict which effects the rest of the country. With the notable exceptions of the late Bishop Lakshman Wickremasinghe, the Reverend Soma Perera and a few others, the National Christian Council has remained deafeningly silent at a time when international ecumenical organizations have been looking to the N.C.C. for guidance and interpretation, and are anxious to extend whatever support they can. The inability or reluctance on the part of the N.C.C. to adopt a non-sectarian approach in respect of Government policies and the atrocities committed by the Security Forces, the principal victims of which have been the Tamil people, has resulted in an ethnic polarization within the Christian Churches. This is clearly reflected in the strained relationship between the N.C.C. and the affiliated Tamil Church of the Jaffna Diocese of South India.

The Roman Catholic hierarchy in Sri Lanka is no less polarised, and in fact is more divided than its Christian counterpart. The recent outburst by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Nicholas Marcus Fernando, the Chairman of the Catholic Bishop Conference, against the Catholic Bishop of Jaffna, the Rt. Rev. Dr. B. Deogupillai, is demonstrative of the deep ethnic division that is threatening the unity of the once monolithic Catholic Church.

This disgusting public spectacle of the head of the Catholic Church indulging in an open attack on a fellow Bishop has its own history. Following the many instances of the massacre of innocent Tamil civilians by the Sri Lankan security forces, the Catholic Bishops Conference of South India recently addressed an appeal to the Indian Prime Minister to take measures to prevent "the annihilation of Tamils of Sri Lanka". Dr. Marcus Fernando drafted a reply to this appeal denying that there was any persecution of Tamils and circulated it among his Bishops for approval. In spite of the objections raised by the Bishops of Jaffna, Batticaloa and Mannar (all Tamils) to the contents of the draft, Dr. Fernando sent out the reply as drafted and released it to the press which gave it maximum publicity. There is no doubt that, in this instance, as was the case in the past, Dr. Fernando succumbed to government pressure in doing what he did. About the same time, Dr. Fernando circulated another draft letter among the Bishops addressed to all Catholic Bishops in western countries denying that there was any persecution of the church or Catholics or Christians in Sri Lanka as claimed by 'Eelam supporters' living abroad. These two letters resulted in the Jaffna Bishop's

speech at a school prize giving function on June 18 in which the Bishop drew pointed attention to the atrocities committed against the defenceless Tamil civilians by the security forces.

"Bomb-blasts, rocket-blasts, shell-blasts, machinegun fire have become everyday occurrences for us. We are being attacked from the land, from the sea and even from the air. Hundreds of peaceful, unarmed Tamil civilians have been killed or wounded during such attacks, carried out during the past few months by the Government Forces in places like Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Vavuniya, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi, Valvettiturai Jaffna, Kayts, Mandaitivu.

Many peaceful Tamil civilians have been brutally massacred by the Armed Forces in Murunkan, Cheddi-kulam, Iruthayapuram, Akkaraipattu, Kurikadduvan, Mandaitivu, and other places. Thousands of peaceful Tamil civilians, who have been forced to flee from their traditional homes due to the activities of the Armed Forces, are not being properly cared for by the Government. Fishing, the only livelihood of thousands of peaceful Tamil civilians, has been totally banned in the Northern Eastern seas. All these clearly show that under the pretext of fighting the "Marxist Tamil terrorists" the Government is intent on the annihilation of the Tamils living in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

The Citizens' Committees of the Northern and Eastern Provinces have appealed several times to the President of Sri Lanka against these inhuman measures taken against peaceful defenceless people but with no effect. Since the peaceful Tamil civilians of the Northern and Eastern Provinces have no effective means at their disposal to defend themselves against the unjust attack on their lives and properties, the time has come, I feel, for us to raise our voice and make an appeal to the United Nations Organisation to take effective steps to halt the annihilation of the peaceful, defenceless Tamil civilians of the Northern and Eastern Provinces."

Such a courageous and outspoken exposure of the sufferings to which the Tamil people are subjected was too much for the southern-based Catholic hierarchy to stomach. Living in their safe, secure and comfortable palaces without experiencing the day to day trials and tribulations of the Tamil people, they have observed a menacing silence over the years in respect of the various acts of discrimination and

oppression against the Tamil people. While in countries like Philippines and those of Latin America, the Church has been in the vanguard of the struggle against social injustice and human rights abuses, the Catholic hierarchy gradually succumbed to the ideology of Sinhala chauvinism. After the debacle of the Church's struggle to prevent the Buddhist-led state takeover of its schools in the 1960s and following the illfated abortive coup d'état led by high ranking Catholic-Christian army, naval and police officers, the Church presumably adopted the dictum: 'If you cannot beat them, join them.' The "Sinhala Only" fervour in church practices became more and more manifest. For instance, in areas like Wattala, Mutwal and Kotahena in the Colombo district where there

were approximately 30 to 40 per cent Tamil speaking parishioners, the churches refused to accommodate the request of the Tamil speaking laity to say mass in the Tamil language at least once a month.

In its eagerness to resist the charge by Sinhala-Buddhist extremists that the Christian tradition was an 'alien element' within the Sri Lankan body politic, the Church commenced its campaign to establish its own 'Sinhala authenticity'. Tamils, whether they be Catholics, Christians or Hindus, had to be sacrificed to establish the so-called authentic Sinhala identity of the Church. In this campaign, many leading members of the Church have become more Sinhala and less Christian.

(Courtesy: "Tamil Times, London, August 1986)

JAFFNA, OH, JAFFNA

I am leaving for Colombo after another long stay in Jaffna, six weeks this time. I need a holiday very badly.

What with the incessant shelling from the Army Camp in the Fort earlier this month — two schools (Central and Vembadi) and even the Jaffna General Hospital were affected — my nerves have been on edge for far too long.

More than all that, I have been missing my favorite dish — fish — all these days. The ban on all offshore fishing has not only deprived nearly one lakh of people of their sole means of livelihood but also deprived me of one of the consolations of life.

Fish and chips. What a fine combination. The chips are still there. But the fish is in the sea.

The weather has also been unkind to the people of Jaffna. No rain for a long time. Cultivation schedules have been upset so that there may be serious food shortages in the coming months.

That air-dropped leaflet from the Co-ordinating Officer, Northern Command, was very ominous. I expected the worst. Thank God, the situation has been peaceful in the past several days.

I hope it will remain so for some more time, till the leaders on all sides come to their senses, realise their responsibilities and hammer

out an agreement that would be fair and just to all. That is my constant prayer.

I have attended too many funerals in Jaffna that I have taken a policy decision not to attend any more in future.

I like to see full bodies, embalmed and decorated, lying in majesty in death at the end of their God-given span. But what I have seen more often are only parts of bodies.

What I find regrettable in this crisis situation is that some people in Jaffna are continuing their fighting for very selfish reasons.

As an outsider, who is now very much an insider, I get information from all quarters. The information disturbs me, because it reveals an acute absence of unity and purpose.

The national liberation struggle of the Tamil people has reached a crucial stage. Find the Tamil leaders who can stand up to this challenge. I have been seeking for them in all corners. I have found some, but they are all concerned only with their self-interests, which do not always coincide with the interests of the people at large.

I only hope that Jaffna will be intact when I return from my holiday.

Writing about in-fighting among the adults, I wish to relate an experience with the youths of both sides, last Wednesday.

A journalist from a European country had arrived at Palaly airport by Upali flight. He had no way of getting to town. There are no taxis at the airport.

A telephone came to me asking for help. As a journalist I could not refuse to respond. I asked

(Continued on page 7)

How And Why Wonder Book Of Ronnie:

CORPS THAT

The Ceylon Cement Corporation, was one of the better-run corporations in the public sector in the past. It had a good record of production, performance and profits. It was also one of the most solvent corporations in the public sector.

In 1980, the corporation on its own commenced negotiations for the expansion of the Kankasanturai Cement Factory by the installation of an additional process line at a cost which they estimated at approximately Rs. 803 million. This cost eventually turned out to be Rs. 1,768 million. An increase of more than 120 percent! These negotiations were started by the Cement Corporation on their own without any reference to the Cabinet or the Treasury, and without prior Cabinet or Treasury approval, with a German firm called Klockner Humboldt Deutz AG of West Germany. These negotiations were also started without calling for tenders. The Cement Corporation also started financial negotiations with a number of foreign banks including the Dresdner Bank in Frankfurt and the Bank Indo-Suez for financing this project. This too was done without prior approval of the Cabinet or the Treasury.

"After much preliminary work was done without any reference to the Treasury or the Cabinet, a Cabinet paper was eventually submitted on 1st October, 1980, by the then Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs, Mr. Cyril Mathew seeking Cabinet approval for the project. Approval was sought from Cabinet for the following:-

- (i) To finance the project as far as possible from the funds of the Cement Corporation, which could be done up to Rs. 284 million.
- (ii) To obtain the balance finance from commercial lending institutions.
- (iii) To enter into a contract with Messrs Klockner Humboldt Deutz AG of West Germany without calling for tenders, for Engineering and Designing for the K.H.D. Plant and to obtain machinery from them as well as other firms on their recommendations for the total process.

On this Cabinet Paper, the Cabinet granted approval for the project but stipulated that negotiations for the foreign funds required should be conducted by the Ministry of Finance and Planning in consultation with the Ministry of Industries and Scientific Affairs. At this stage, Mr. Asoka Somaratne, then Chairman of the Cement Corporation, came to the Treasury met some Treasury officials and requested Treasury assistance to negotiate the loan. Un-

fortunately, the pitch had been already queered by the Cement Corporation, so far as loan negotiations were concerned. They had conducted negotiations on their own both with the German firm and the foreign banks without getting prior Cabinet or Treasury approval and they had also committed themselves to give a Government guarantee without the consent either of the Cabinet or the Treasury. The loan negotiations could have been conducted on more favourable terms if the Government had directly negotiated this loan from the very start on behalf of the Ceylon Cement Corporation. As a result the Government had to pay a higher interest rate than it would normally have paid, and also to give a Government guarantee on behalf of the Cement Corporation.

Export Credit

In this connection, the Chairman of the Ceylon Cement Corporation, Mr. Asoka Somaratne, had himself met the Director of Economic Affairs of the Treasury, on 20th November, 1980, and stated that the possibility of securing export credit for the Plant had been explored by him without success. He further stated that the contract relating to the project had to be signed before December 1st, 1980, giving the Treasury only ten days time to negotiate the foreign finance. Papers relating to negotiations already conducted by the Ceylon Cement Corporation with the Dresdner Bank, Frankfurt, and the Indo-Suez Bank were also referred to the Director of Economic Affairs for further negotiations. The eventual terms obtained by the Ceylon Cement Corporation as a result of the amateurish manner in which they handled the whole transaction were not at all favourable considering the normal credit rating of Sri Lanka at this time. To put it in a nutshell—the whole affair was messed up by the Ceylon Cement Corporation and the Treasury had to come to their rescue at the last moment.

In the end, the Treasury concluded a loan of US\$ 25 million long with bridging facilities of US\$ 3.5 million required to make the down-payment. These terms were submitted to the Cabinet by the Ministry of Finance and Planning for approval on 6th January, 1981. This was approved by the Cabinet on 14th January, 1981. The

point is that this loan had to be hurriedly arranged by the Ministry of Finance and Planning in ten days to save the Ceylon Cement Corporation from the predicament in which they had landed themselves by going ahead with this matter on their own without following the procedure laid down for these matters by the Cabinet and the Treasury. The statement of Mr. Somaratne in the 'Sun' newspaper and the 'Daily News' with regard to the loan seeks to present a completely distorted version of the actual sequence of events.

Pier

As regards the pier or harbour, the original estimate submitted by the Ceylon Cement Corporation was Rs. 45 million. As stated by Mr. Somaratne, the Ministry of Finance commented at the very outset that "this would appear to be an unrealistically low estimate". In the event, the Ministry of Finance pro-

know is to produce cement, not to build harbours or piers. As it turned out, however, the pier was constructed by the Cement Corporation at more than double the cost of their estimate. This whole transaction was a complete negation of financial discipline and cost control.

Harbour view Hotel

"I now come to the construction of a hotel at a cost of Rs. 45 million by the Cement Corporation. Mr. Somaratne takes up the position that this was done by a public Limited Liability Company and hence it was not necessary to obtain Cabinet approval. The fact is that although Lanka cement was a Public Limited Liability Company, its public share issue of Rs. 120 million, out of a total of Rs. 300 million, was totally underwritten by the Cement Corporation, while the Corporation itself directly took Rs. 179 million of shares and also took up the un-

Minister of Finance and Planning, Mr. Ronnie de Mel last month chided the public sector corporations, in general for its lack of cost-control and financial discipline. This prompted Mr. Asoka Somaratne, M.P., and former Chairman of the Ceylon Cement Corporation, to write in the "Sun" and "Daily News" rebutting the Minister's allegations.

We publish here excerpts from the Minister's statement in Parliament. After six long years, we the public have now at least come to know how the Ceylon Corporation has been mismanaged.

ved to be correct. The pier eventually cost Rs. 107 million—more than twice the estimate of the Cement Corporation. It is not correct for Mr. Somaratne to state that this proposal was approved by the Cabinet in October, 1980.

What the Cabinet decided was quite different. The Cabinet decided that the Ministry of Industries and Scientific Affairs should consult the Ministry of Trade and Shipping as regards the construction of the pier. This was due to the fact that the Ministry of Finance had, apart from stating that the estimate was unrealistically low, also pointed out that the construction of facilities like a pier was not an appropriate function of the Cement Corporation and that it would be more appropriately handled by the Ports Authority under the Ministry of Trade and Shipping. It is the Ports Authority that constructs piers, not the Cement Corporation. The function of the Cement Corporation as you

subscribed portion of the public issue. Thus the funds utilised for the hotel project came largely from the Cement Corporation. It is the function of the Cement Corporation to produce cement, not to build hotels in places like Kankasanturai.

Power plant

"I now come to the next issue—the Power Generating Plant purchased at a total cost of over Rs. 453 million. Mr. Somaratne states that the Cabinet approved the erection of a power generating plant for KKS Cement Factory in 1982 because the Ceylon Electricity Board was not in a position to supply the power requirements of the new plant at KKS. It is totally inexcusable that the Cement Corporation should have commenced work on the new factory extensions in a mighty hurry in 1981, in circumstances which I have already described to the house, without even obtaining



FAILED

a prior assurance of power supply. Proper planning, cost control and financial discipline seems to have been totally absent in the working of the Cement Corporation for such things to happen. This undue haste in concluding contracts for a Rs. 1,768 million extension to a cement factory without even ensuring its power supply surpasseth all understanding.

"In this case too, Mr. Somaratne wrote to the Director of Economic Affairs of the Treasury on 23rd June, 1982, stating that he had been unable to obtain local finance for the power plant and requesting that a foreign loan of US\$ 16 million be obtained for this purpose. The Treasury was therefore called upon to negotiate this loan. It did so with prior Cabinet sanction, following strict Cabinet procedure. In the end, this expensive power generating plant costing Rs. 453 million has hardly been used, thereby adding to the terrific financial burdens and liabilities of the Cement Corporation. The present management of the Cement Corporation has informed me that the power plant consists of two gas turbines and one steam turbine. Out of the two gas turbines one was commissioned in May, 1984. This turbine has been used on and off to run the new plant whenever there is a power interruption on the main grid. The second gas turbine was also installed but at the commissioning stage itself an insulation failure in the rotor was detected. The rotor was returned to Messrs Siemens, and it was brought back at the end of 1984 after repairs. Thus the second gas turbine has still not been really commissioned. The foreign components of the steam turbine are in Sri Lanka but not yet installed.

This is the information which I have obtained from the present management of the Cement Corporation. After Mr. Somaratne's statement I have taken the trouble to double-check this matter. This has been a complete waste of Rs. 453 million by the Cement Corporation.

Tax Exemption

The question of the exemption from BTT granted to Tokyo Cement Ltd., the so-called foreign competitor of the Cement Corporation according to Mr. Somaratne. Let me state at the outset that Tokyo Cement Ltd. is a Public Limited Liability Company quoted in the

Colombo Stock Exchange, with both foreign and local equity participation. While accepting collective responsibility for the Cabinet decision to exempt Tokyo Cement Ltd. from BTT, I must state quite categorically that the Treasury, and I personally, were totally opposed to granting this concession to Tokyo Cement Ltd. The concession to the joint venture, which is a Public Limited Liability Company in Sri Lanka, was granted by the Cabinet only because the Cabinet felt that it should honour a prior commitment made to grant this concession to Tokyo Cement without consulting the Ministry of Finance or the Treasury. By this time the Cement Corporation was already in severe difficulties due to other causes. The statement that the Cement Corporation got into its present difficulties due to this concession having been granted by the Cabinet is only begging the question and trying to draw a red herring across the trail. In any event the Cement Corporation has also been given a similar BTT concession, though somewhat later. The House will therefore see that Mr. Somaratne's statement that an unfair advantage was conferred on the so-called "for-

eign competitor" of the Cement Corporation by the Ministry of Finance is a complete distortion of the facts. This was a decision of the Cabinet against the advice of the Ministry of Finance.

"The Prime Minister and the present management of the Cement Corporation are doing their best to rescue it from the parlous state in which the previous management left it. I wish to give the House a brief summary of the critical financial situation of the Cement Corporation. The debts and liabilities of the Cement Corporation as at 30th June this year totalled Rs. 2,464 million (2.4 billion rupees). These consist of—

"The Ceylon Cement Corporation is today in a completely parlous state so far as its finances are concerned due to mismanagement inefficiency and lack of financial and cost control in the past. The Hon. the Prime Minister and the present management are making superhuman efforts to put it right. I wish them all success in their endeavours but it is almost a superhuman task which they face.

This is an industry that should never have got into its present mess and it could have been run as a very profitable and viable venture. It was always run as one of our most satisfactory Public Sector Corporation from its very inception

in the nineteen fifties up till 1977. I am sorry it has come to this present pass because ultimately the Treasury, the Budget and the people of this country will have to pay for these sins of omission and commission of the previous management of the Cement Corporation.

Remedies

"The Cabinet has now appointed a committee to examine the affairs of the Cement Corporation and report on the future viability, if at all, of the Cement Corporation and also attempt to fix responsibility for the precarious financial position in which the Corporation now finds itself. The Cabinet has also asked this committee to examine and report on the possibility of selling the Rs. 453 million power plant installed by the corporation to the Ceylon Electricity Board; of selling the pier which had been constructed by the Ceylon Cement Corporation to the Sri Lanka Ports Authority and of selling the hotel to anybody willing to buy this white elephant of the Cement Corporation.

This in short is a part of the story of mismanagement, inefficiency and callous disregard for financial discipline and cost control of the previous management of the Cement Corporation.

Jaffna, Oh, Jaffna

(Continued from page 5)

several taxi drivers to go and pick him up but they were unwilling because Palaly is a 'prohibited zone'.

Finally, one driver agreed to go after I said I would come with him.

About two miles from the airport, we were stopped by sentries, LTTE brand. I identified myself and explained why I wanted to go to the airport. There were nearly a dozen of them, carrying AK-MS guns, by walkie-talkie they contacted their leaders and I was given clearance.

Not the car. They said it was dangerous to go by car on the main road. They were worried about my safety.

Until clearance was given, they invited me to sit on a bench, the only seat they could offer. Suddenly, a helicopter gunship came over head. They asked me to take cover under a huge tree, while they took up positions to fire at the helicopter. Fortunately, there was no firing from the air.

Then I began walking towards the airport, nearly two miles from

the check-point. A lonely walk on the middle of the road because there was no other traffic.

I had walked barely half a mile when someone from somewhere shouted "Halt! Hands up. Don't move."

I halted, put my hands up and stayed put.

About a dozen soldiers surrounded me, frisked me and checked my identity. They were doing their duty.

When I explained the purpose I was going to the airport, they called Headquarters by walkie-talkie, I said I was not willing or capable of walking any further.

It was left to the journalist to walk up to the Army check-point. An elderly man, he walked up the whole way, accompanied by a Senior officer.

Then I walked with him to the Boys' check-point, where the car was parked. They checked his identity, examined his bag and asked him why he came to Jaffna.

I said I was thirsty. One boy climbed up a coconut tree and brought down some young nuts (kurumba). The water was delicious, as the foreign journalist said. (At the Army check-point, I was given a bottle of Fanta).

I wanted to light a cigarette. There were no match-sticks around. "We don't smoke", one boy explained. The driver saved the situation because he was also a smoker, though he prefers cigars to cigarettes.

And so on to Jaffna, where I parked my journalist at Hotel Gnansams, now under a new management headed by Mr. Raja Ramakrishnan.

In the night I was wondering where we are heading.

On the one side, a young group of Tamil youths, idealistic, dedicated, waiting for the enemy.

On the other side, a young group of Sinhalese soldiers, equally idealistic and dedicated and waiting for the enemy.

The age of the lieutenant in charge of the army check-point was 25 years. That of the leader of the Boys' check-point was 21.

Boys fighting against Boys. What for?

Power comes through the barrel of the gun, Mao said.

True, true. But after that, what? We can't live with guns alone.

—GAMINI NAVARATNE

Inside Jaffna Fort: Battle Of Nerves

JAFFNA FORT, SRI LANKA, Wednesday (Reuter) — The last home-made mortar bomb thumped down at about 10 p.m. — the final round fired by Tamil rebels in a two-night bombardment of Sri Lankan troops bottled up in this 300-year-old fortress.

The explosion could be clearly heard through thick limestone ramparts over the dungeon used by soldiers as shelter from sporadic barrages by separatist guerrillas.

"With the firing at night, we take precautions by going to the bunkers", said Major Galbokka Ariyaratne, 37, whose canvas cot was next to mine in the dungeon.

"It gets on our nerves. They don't want us to relax".

Jaffna Fort is the main government base in the Jaffna peninsula, a stronghold of rebels fighting for a separate Tamil state, and has come under frequent attack since an infantry battalion moved in last year.

The fortress, with eight-metre (25-foot) high walls, was laid out in a star shape by Dutch colonists. It stands on the edge of Jaffna, a city of 12,000 people which is virtually controlled by the rebels.

The 10 other military camps in Jaffna are linked to the headquarters by helicopter gunship flights.

Around the fort is a 1,000-metre (yard) no man's land, beyond that are the rebels' sandbagged bunkers.

Only the area south of the old walls is out of guerrilla firing range.

The rebels make their own mortar bombs — sometimes for delayed explosion. Timing is set by the length of fuse attached to a bomb and ignited by the propellant charge.

The bombs have aluminium cases. "As a result, the rebel shrapnel explodes into large pieces — that's why the wounds of our soldiers are big ones", says Brigadier Gerard de Silva, the tall, dapper commander of security forces in the Jaffna district.

Two soldiers were killed on Sunday, first night of the latest attack, and two were wounded the following night.

The army counters the guerrilla fire with its own mortars. It said that in Monday's exchange Sri Lanka's most wanted rebel, Sathasivam Krishnakumar, was wounded and four other guerrillas were killed.

Krishnakumar, alias Kittu, is the Jaffna commander of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, most powerful of the groups fighting for an independent state.

The siege is a strain for the soldiers. In their dungeon sleeping quarters they swap stories about girl friends, but there is little laughter and there are no pin-ups on the walls.

"I think we should have a psychologist at the fort but our problem is we generally lack doctors in all camps," De Silva told me.

At his office in Palaly, a small air base about 15 km (10 miles) from the fort, he said soldiers used to be posted to Jaffna for a year. Now that has been cut to six months.

"One year is far too long" said De Silva. "The operations and ten-

sions are too much. We believe three to four months should be the maximum".

At the end of three weeks, a soldier is entitled to a week's leave but that depends on the level of the fighting.

De Silva added: "Going on leave does not solve the problems, because a soldier sees the tension in the minds of his loved ones at home. That is the reaction I see in my wife and children".

Off-duty, soldiers relieve some of the tension of the night bombardments by watching video films.

"We get James Bond. We have seen 'Dr. No' several times and also 'The Green Beret' said Captain Lakshiri Amaratunga, 26. 'At times we tune in to the terrorists' TV show on weapons making".

By morning everything is usually quiet.

"Sometimes we play volleyball and cricket till the last daylight", Amaratunga said.

"At night, sometimes, the terrorists fire some shots, we fire back — it's a different volleyball game".

Note: According to our reports — Mr. S. Krishnakumar alias Kittu has not been hurt.

(Courtesy: The Daily News, 11th September '86)

LEGEND

*Tormented between two noises
The infant Gemunu
On one side inarticulate sea
On the other the Tamil raging*

*And he crouched in bed
Listening to the voices
Which bade him rise
And drive out from his native land
The stranger chattering gibberish*

*How much of waste
And trouble of bright swords
Stream of bloodshed reeking
In the aboriginal darkness
Of a child's fear.*

—D. M. DE SILVA

Dear Sister.....

This is the Mothers' Front's reply to the letter by Mrs. Kiruba Sella-thurai of Pt. Pedro, published in the Saturday Review of 23rd August.

You have asked "why all the fuss about an Army Officer seeing a Tamil baby (tiger cub) being born?"

You have said: Since February the Mothers Front received no mention in the SR but made a grand entry in August chasing some half-crazy peeping Tom.

The Mothers Front lacked in dignity and courage to reflect in a balanced way the true concern of us mothers, you also said.

Our answers to your questions are as follows.

It was not to fuss but to stress the fact that we mothers of the North and East are deeply hurt and humiliated by the vulgar attitude of the Army Officer for two reasons. First, a childbirth is a very private moment of every woman and she has the right to her privacy at the time when she is in labour. No outsider other than the doctor, nurse or midwife has any business in the labour room, this is the norm in any civilised country. Secondly we

vehemently object to our babies at the very onset of birth be referred to as 'tiger cub'.

The SR is not the yard stick by which you should assess us or our work. Perhaps you do not read our vernacular newspapers in which so many of our statements have appeared since February? Issuing statements to the press is not the only work we do. We would like to make you a member of our Mothers Front and wish you to see the tremendous amount of work we are doing.

The Mothers Front is the only organisation which reflects the feelings of our women with courage and dignity at this time of great trial, hardship and anguish and not a single day passes without our women in the North and East being victims of violence. It is easy to sit back in your own homes and pass judgement on those who give their selfless service and all their spare time to a cause. We want all mothers to join us and work — for there is so much to do and so few of us to serve willingly the moment.

Yours sincerely,
G. Gunanayagam
President.

IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH

MARANATHHUL VALVOM (We live amidst death) — A collection of poems by 31 Poets in Tamil, Nov. 1985, published by Tamiliyal:

*Dry, parched cracking soil!
Heavy imprints of hob-nailed boots!!
Clusters like blooming red flowers!*

The cover design of a new book of poetry in Tamil is illustrative of its title *Maranaththul Valvom* (We live amidst death) and the greater part of its contents relating mainly to the trials and tribulations of the Jaffna people who live in hope of a better tomorrow amidst the shadow of death. The cover is suggestive of a people who, despite the impact of the military presence, bloodshed, and hardships, continue to remain human and yearn to 'live' while 'existing.'

Maranaththul Valvom is a collection of 82 poems written over a period of 9 years (1977-85). A large number have been published in Tamil literary journals like *Mallikai* (Jasmine), *Alai* (Wave), *Puthusu* (New) etc. Also the bulk of the poetry published has been in the eighties when the ethnic strife accentuated. It is a literary chronicle of post-77 events in Jaffna. It is an index of the changing perceptions, responses and attitudes of the Northern people to the prevalent political conditions. It also provides an insight into the politicisation and cultural awakening of the Tamil people. The ongoing struggle between the state and the Tamil militants has resulted in several forms of poetry emerging at different levels. Wall posters, leaflets, graffiti, street dramas etc., in the North display elements of this new poetry. The poetry in this book does not espouse the militant cause but reflects clearly the mood of the Jaffna people — attachment to their land and a longing for a better life.

A paradoxical feature of this new poetry is that it is in a sense a revival of classical Tamil poetry of the Sangham period. The concepts of *Akam* (inner) and *Puram* (outer) occupy great importance as subjects of poetics of the Sangham period. Both terms relate to emotion. Nearly all verse classified under *Akam* is love poetry while *Puram* is more often bardic or heroic poetry. This does not at all times relate to war but includes much of what may be described as panegyric. K. N. Sivarajapillai in *Chronology of the Early Tamils* suggests that historically *Puram* poetry preceded the more introspective love Poetry. In the case of *Akam* five different aspects of love were poetically associated with five geographical areas of the Tamil Country. They were as follows; *Punartai* (union), *Piritai* (separation), *Irutai* (awaiting), *Jrankai* (wailing), *Utai* (quarrel). The significance of the new poetry is that all these distinc-

tive attributes of the classical poetry are prevalent here too. But unlike in the old there are variations of form and content. Nevertheless the ageless feelings of emotion retain continuity despite the changes of modern conditions. Heroic poetry in Tamil ended with the Chola period. Today after centuries of "alien" rule by the "Nayakars" (Telugu) and Europeans it is emerging in Sri Lanka in keeping with contemporary political reality. Thus the growth pattern of the poetical tradition contrasts sharply with Tamil Nadu in this respect. National oppression, state violence, militant violence, death and the politics of bloodshed have evolved a new dimension in Tamil literary growth here.

It must be noted that the 1956-77 period in Lanka was also characterised by literary developments consonant to the political situation. But most of the poetry with elements of chauvinism related to the love of the Tamil language and a deep sense of nostalgia for the glorious Tamil past.



This was due to the influence of the South Indian Dravidian movement and the political course followed by the Federal party and later the T.U. L.F. But the new poetry deals with the environmental reality of the present. It is no secret that the reality in Tamil areas is akin to Hobbies, definition of life being 'nasty, brutish and short.' In that backdrop the new poetry dealing with humanism, liberation, courage, heroism, attachment to one's homeland, lack of shelter etc., are subjects of which the people have a realistic awareness. Thus the people are able to identify with this poetry which has a simple style devoid of literary flourishes or poetic embellishments. It is very much "people's poetry". The poems in *we live amidst death* have an underlying thread. It is the recurrent cry for human rights, human dignity and above all the guarantee for life. Since the battlefields, blood, death and sacrifice referred to by the poets are real experience, the poetry does not seem to have pretence, hypocrisy or artificiality.

The poets featured in this collection range from the doyen of Tamil poets

Murugaian, to the fledgling Geethapriyan. The most outstanding of these, is in my opinion "Veerathai thooku" (With your heroism). On 10-9-84 a bus carrying Tamil passengers was stopped by soldiers in civils at Poovarasankulam. 19 persons were killed. It was the impact of this incident which prompted M. Ponnambalam to write this poem. The greatest merit of this poem is that the author while calling upon the people to face guns with "uplifted heroism" does not confine it merely to the guns in the hands of the state but also includes those of the so-called militants. A substantial portion of the travails of the Tamil people must be apportioned to the militant groups (splinter or pseudo) also. The fundamental weakness of "We shall live amongst death" is that most poets attribute the presence of death to only one quarter from where it emanates the State and State-related circles. Most poets tend to gloss over the 'tyranny' or 'miscarriages of justice' perpetrated by the militants with the exception of a few oblique references. But Ponnambalam says: 'when you see a man carrying a gun, do not be afraid. Let him be a liberating chaff or barbaric soldier. Do not be afraid... Hey, uplift your heroism. Let any gun-toter who seeks to exploit your freedom shake and shiver.' He also points out that the gun like any other weapon is a 'Nirguni' and that it is the wielder who gives it potency.

A positive feature of the book is the total absence of chauvinist sentiments or anti-Sinhala venom. It is the State and its organs which are criticised. A feeling shared by at least three of the poets featured is that the tenets of Buddhism are not adhered to by the Sri Lankan State. The poets relate their work directly to the Buddha and bring this out boldly. M. A. Nuhman's 'The Murder of Buddha' relates to the burning of the Jaffna Library. In his dream the Buddha has been shot dead by security men in civils on the steps of the Library. The Buddha is cremated on a pyre of the 90,000 books in the library. The Dhammapada and the Sigalovada Sutta also turn into ashes with the Buddha. Vivaratnam in his *The voice of Buddha's silence*, writes of a Buddha who, disgusted with the behaviour of his followers, walks out of Sri Lanka. 'Make way for me to walk away from you,' he says. The Buddha charges that 'he who abdicated his state was now being held captive on the throne of a Sinhala Buddhist state'.

There is a commonality in some of the expressions and images. 'Darkness', 'night' and 'ashes' recur constantly. So do 'we' and 'they'. The cleavage between the Sinhala and Tamil communities seems complete. Yet the hope for a better tomorrow is always there. The titles 'phoenix' by Pushparajan and 'The night was theirs' by Oorvasi speak for themselves. Oorvasi along with Maitreyi and "Auvai" are the three women poets featured in the book.

One poem by Oorvasi is 'Why are we waiting'. Andrew Marvel's elaborate wooing of his Coy Mistress is reversed in this. The poet is direct and simple. 'Our land and our moments/Nothing seems to be ours/In such a situation: a moment like this may never be ours/Anything can happen in the ensuing darkness of the night.' Therefore, Love/Let us join together in the deep solitude of this dawn.'

The people who remain in Jaffna may be broadly categorised into those who cannot leave Jaffna and those who will not leave Jaffna. While living in hope there is also a resignation to fate, an expectation of death which seems inevitable. According to Cheliyan's 'Death', 'We do not fear to die by fighting for our happiness or for our people/ But we hate to die on the streets as slaves for our New Masters'. Another is by Dhustiyanthan who writes, 'Some one died yesterday/That was neither myself nor yourself/some one died yesterday/That was neither myself nor yourself/Some one died today/It was not you or I/If someone dies tomorrow/then it has to be either you or me/Definitely it will be one of us'.

Three other poems related to the theme of those who have migrated away from Jaffna to foreign climes warrant mention. One by 'Vannachiragu' portrays the feelings of those who have left their homeland, 'I shall return, land of my birth' is the title of the poem and is in itself self-explanatory of the contents. The others relate to the view point of those who remain behind towards those who have left. 'A letter to Berlin' by Cheliyan is about the asylum-seeking refugees. 'Before the flames that engulfed our towns have been extinguished/Before the stains of our blood have frozen/Do not look for me in the refugee mob/ which walks over the corpses of our murdered youth and lands at Berlin.'

— D. B. S. JEYARAJ

Opening Up Of USSR

SOME of the recent developments in the Soviet Union will cheer those who have been watching with hope the Gorbachev regime's thrust towards greater openness. Consider the reporting of the Chernobyl disaster in the media. It began true to style. The news was disseminated late. The number of dead was put at two on the basis of the first official statement. The extent of the damage and the radiation level in the Kiev-Chernobyl area was grossly played down.

Things however, changed soon. Television started showing stark scenes of the site and its environs. Apart from tales of heroism by those who fought the fire at the reactor and carried out rescue operations, the media came out with instances of cowardice, failure to rescue people and ducking of responsibility. It revealed that more than 400 members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) who ought to have been at the forefront of the rescue operations, had fled. Many local officials were not at their posts. Evacuation was often bungled.

The media was, of course, silent on crucial matters like the number of people evacuated, the time taken in evacuation and the extent of contamination. It said little about the experiment at the plant which preceded the disaster. While questions relating to the long-term effects of radiation on people's health and the future of agriculture in the affected areas cannot be answered at the moment, these were not even posed. Nevertheless, there has been a qualitative leap from the past when events reflecting poorly on the party and Government were either suppressed or projected as they ought to have occurred and not as they did.

Censorship

If this suggests a new climate, so does the campaign by Yevgeny Evtushenko and others associated with literary dissent for the posthumous rehabilitation of Boris Pasternak, disgraced for the publication in the West of his Nobel prize-winning novel *Dr. Zhivago*. Evtushenko announced on June 30, soon after he and several other liberal writers and poets had been elected to the 63-member secretariat of the Soviet Writers' Union, that the secretariat will now press for the publication of *Dr. Zhivago* in the Soviet Union and for the conversion of the house in which Pasternak lived in his last days into a museum in his honour.

Earlier, Evtushenko had lashed out against censorship in an article in the *Sovietskaya Kultura* of April 15. He had declared in it: "The archaic dinosaurs of so-called security are still trying to put their personal opinions above all others, doing everything to prevent writers, film directors, artists, scientists and workers from saying what is on their mind".

While courage has always been Evtushenko's hallmark, the report that the piece was invited as the first in a series of contributions to a new column, suggested that his attack had authority's approval. Besides, in March, Mikhail Nenashev, head of the USSR's gargantuan publishing industry, had called upon Soviet journalists to take risks, upset those in power and inform people "about problems, shortcomings and mistakes." Nenashev, who was, till February, editor of *Sovietskaya Rossiya*, the daily in the forefront of Gorbachev's drive for greater openness, stated in an interview with the magazine of the powerful Soviet Journalists' Union, "Let us call successes, successes, shortcomings, shortcomings and mistakes, mistakes. Much depends on the capacity of a journalist to display personal boldness."

Past experience

If people are still sceptical about the significance of these events, it is because of past experience. Nikita Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin and the cult of personality at the 20th congress of the CPSU in 1956, was followed by a relaxation of ideological and bureaucratic control over culture. The process gained further momentum after Khrushchev's second great de-Stalinisation speech at the CPSU's 22nd congress in 1961. In April 1962, Evtushenko and Andrei Voznesensky, another outspoken critic of literary orthodoxy and the crimes of Stalin's days, were elected to the directing committee of the Moscow branch of the Soviet Writers' Union. Several of its conservative members were removed. In September, Khrushchev personally authorised the publication of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *A day in the life of Ivan Denisovich*, an authentic and horrifying account of life in Stalin's concentration camps. It appeared in the November issue of *Novy Mir* (New World) which, under the outstanding editorship of Alexander Tvardovsky, was at the forefront of the struggle for creative freedom and artistic integrity.

The conservatives, who were still entrenched in positions of authority, were alarmed by all this. Khrushchev,

shared some of their misgivings. His violent and abusive outburst against abstract artists at an exhibition in Moscow by the Union of Soviet Artists on December 1, 1962, dismayed those for liberalisation and encouraged archconservatives like V. A. Kochetov, editor of *Oktobry* to strike back. If, however the fate of the new trend appeared uncertain, it was only for a while. In mid-June, 1963 a four-day plenary session of the central committee of the CPSU on ideological questions decided to stop jamming the Russian-language broadcasts of the BBC and other Western broadcasting organisations. In August, Alexander Tvardovsky was invited to Gagra on the Black Sea to personally read out to Khrushchev his long poem "Vasily Tyorkin in the Other World", which was a satire on the bureaucratic stupidities of Stalin's regime. A few days later the poem appeared in full in *Izvestiya*, then edited by Khrushchev's son-in-law.

by

Hiranmay Karlekar

Protagonists of liberalisation, however, could not gain a decisive advantage, though works critical of the Stalin era continued to appear. It was a stalemate which continued even after Khrushchev's ouster from power in October, 1964, and throughout 1965. In February, 1966, came the sentencing of Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel to seven and five years of hard labour for having published *Lampoons and Slanders on Soviet Reality* in the west. The wave of protests which followed were in vain. In 1967, there were arrests of other dissident writers—Alexander Ginsburg, Yuri Galanskov, Alexi Ciovolovsky and a 20-year old student Vera Lashkova. The demonstrations these triggered led to further arrests. The message was clear. The promise of a creative spring had withered in the winter of the CPSU's orthodoxy.

Things of course, were different then, Khrushchev himself was not for liberalisation *per se*. It was to him a tactic to mobilise intellectuals against Stalinism. Nor had the ghost of the latter been fully exorcised. As Evtushenko wrote in his famous poem "Stalin's heirs" in *Pravda* in October, 1962: "Certain of his heirs grow roses in their retirement, but secretly regard their retirement, as only temporary. Others even attack Stalin from the platform, but at night, look back with nostalgia to the old days..."

A new era

Those who were not Stalin's heirs such as men like Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny who succeeded Khrushchev,

were plodding and mediocre, steeped in communist orthodoxy, unable to devise daring initiatives and content to preside over the *status quo*. The first break came with Yuri Andropov, an exceptional man who rose over his illness to perform prodigies of labour. Then came the Chernenko interlude. And now the Gorbachev era, marked by a panache and an élan and displaying a burst of energy not seen since the early days of the revolution.

With Gorbachev, criticism and exposure are weapons to root out the corruption that pervades almost all spheres of Soviet life. Openness is not an end in itself but a tool to divest the CPSU and the Soviet government of layers of flab. But if this tempers optimism, the positive aspect is that openness is now policy, sanctified, above all, by the deliberations of the CPSU's 27th congress in March this year.

The question arises, will criticism be countenanced if it is directed against the CPSU and its basic ideological assumptions. Or if it challenges the structure of the Soviet state? So far, the indications are not reassuring. While Evtushenko lambasts censorship and Mikhail Nenashev asks Soviet journalists to tweak powerful noses, Andrei Shakharov, the symbol of Soviet dissent, remains in exile in Gorky and lesser known dissidents are sent off to psychiatric wards.

Insecurity

Yet one can never tell. Criticism has a way of flinging doors open and undermining authority. Openness invariably makes for democracy and tolerance of dissent. Besides, there are indications that the Soviet leadership is now planning to move towards democracy as well. Gorbachev said in his closing address to the 27th congress. To achieve acceleration means to open room for the initiative and independent activity of every worker and every work collectively through extending democracy, steadily developing the socialist self-government of the people and promoting public openness in the life of the party and society.

While Gorbachev appears sufficiently well entrenched to carry democratisation through, much will depend on international developments. Apart from factors like the CPSU's organisation on the principle of democratic centralism, the Soviet Union's emergence as a dictatorship owes much to the threats to its survival between 1917 and 1922, its isolation in the twenties and the rise of Hitler in the thirties. These have left its leaders with a deep sense of insecurity which makes them view with apprehension anything they see as a threat to the Soviet state of which they are the custodians. What this means is simple. Gorbachev may be halted in his tracks, if President Reagan does something terrible like invading Nicaragua or carpet-bombing Libya.

—(Courtesy : INDIAN EXPRESS)

AI SAYS

SRI LANKA GOVERNMENT MUST EXPLAIN "DISAPPEARANCES"

Amnesty International, on 10th September, called on the Government of Sri Lanka to explain the "disappearance" of several hundred people reported to have been seized by the country's security forces over the past 20 months.

The worldwide human rights organization urged the government to take immediate steps to inform the relatives of the fate or whereabouts of the "disappeared" people, most of whom are young Tamil civilians.

A new 89-page Amnesty International report, *Sri Lanka Disappearances*, offers testimony by eyewitnesses to the seizure of "disappeared" people and details of 272 specific cases. None of the "disappeared" victims have been seen since their arrest.

The report says there is evidence that many have been shot or have died after torture and been buried in secret graves or burned.

It includes eye witness testimony to the torture in detention of men who "disappeared" after arrest and also describes an incident in which 40 men were re-

portedly ordered to dig their own graves before being shot.

Other "disappeared" people are believed to be in unacknowledged detention in police stations and military camps - many of them are feared to have been tortured.

Tortures reported to Amnesty International included burning, beatings with plastic pipes, hanging upside down for long periods and the application of hot chillies to sensitive parts of the body, including the eyes.

The organization said the government had persistently refused to investigate almost all cases of "disappearance" or to bring officials responsible to justice.

In one case this year the authorities charged the warden of a Methodist orphanage with "spreading false rumours and false statements" after he had talked to the foreign press about the "disappearance" of about 23 young men. During his trial (in which he was acquitted) a high Court judge said the evidence "cast serious doubt" on the prosecution

case that there had been no arrests.

The human rights abuses, attributed to personnel of the army, air force and the Special Task Force commando unit, are said to have become a definite pattern in late 1984. This was when armed Tamil groups stepped up their actions for a separate state on the island they have killed many hundreds of members of the security forces as well as civilians among Sri Lanka's Sinhalese majority.

Amnesty International said it condemned torture or killings of prisoners by anyone, including opposition groups. But although the Government had a duty to maintain law and order, "acts of violence by opposition groups can never justify security forces themselves resorting to violations of human rights."

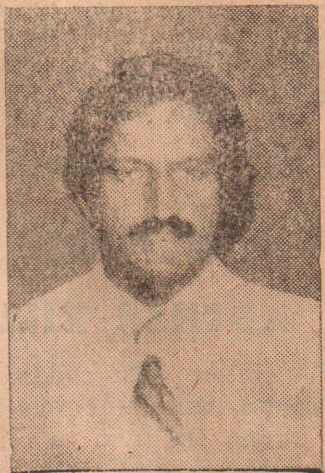
Amnesty International said it believed that "disappearances" and other human rights abuses in Sri Lanka such as political killings, torture and arbitrary detention had been made easier by the suspension of important legal safeguards under the country's emergency legislation. There was

provision for prolonged incommunicado detention without charge or trial and serious restrictions on the holding of inquests. The security forces may well have been encouraged by the Government's attitude to believe they could dispose of bodies without questions being asked. Amnesty International said.

Its new report urges the Government of Sri Lanka to establish "speedy and impartial investigations by an independent body" to determine what happened to the "disappeared." It calls for an up-to-date central register of arrests to be set up to which lawyers, relatives and the courts could have immediate access. Security Force personnel found responsible for abuses should be brought to justice.

Amnesty International said it had previously expressed concern about "disappearances" in Sri Lanka to President J. R. Jayewardene and to the Minister of National Security but had received no response. Last year the United Nations Working Group on Disappearances asked the Sri Lanka Government to clarify nearly 200 cases.

One More Disappearance



He was travelling from Colombo on 24th July, 1986 by train up to Anuradhapura where he boarded a C.T.B. bus and was seated behind the driver. When the bus reached Rambewewa junction, it was stopped by an army convoy proceeding from Anuradhapura to Vavuniya.

Mr. Rajadurai, along with some other Tamil passengers were pulled out of the bus and beaten severely. Bleeding profusely, Raja-

durai was thrown into the truck. The assault and arrest of Rajadurai had been witnessed by a retired Post Master, Teachers and Students of the Rambewewa Sinhalese school, employees of the petrol shed nearby and salesmen in the meat stall Rambewewa Junction.

Mr. Joseph Rudrarajan Rajadurai (32) was an Agricultural Officer attached to the Hatton National Bank Ltd. Vavuniya Branch was married with wife and child, one and a half years old.

All efforts to trace the whereabouts of Mr. Rajadurai, through Police Stations, Army Commander Anuradhapura, National Intelligence Bureau and the Air Force authorities, have proved of no avail.

Mr. Rajadurai has 'disappeared'. The Amnesty International has one more to add to its "statistics" of Missing Persons, which as it is, an "unending task".

SEWING SCHOOL BRANCH OPENED

A Branch of the Sewing School run by the Lions Club of Maviddapuram was established at Chunnakam on 23rd August 1986.

This Opening Ceremony was done under the Chairmanship of Lion P. J. Antonympillai, President, Lions Club of Maviddapuram. The Chief Guest was Lion G. Yuhendran, Zone Chairman and the Guest of Honour was Lion E. Vijayarathnam, District Chairman Vocational Training.

Lion G. Yuhendran when delivering his address observed that all Lions Service Centres must do their very best to help people in this hour of need. He also said that it would not be possible to have Local Fund Raising Campaigns due to the hardships faced by the people and that the Local Lions Clubs should approach their counter parts in Foreign Countries to obtain assistance - financially and in kind.

Lion E. Vijayarathnam said that the main objective of all Lions Clubs in the North should be to help the suffering masses in every possible way and that Lions Club of Maviddapuram was heading in the right direction especially in finding employment avenues for girls School leavers. He also remarked on the efficient manner in which the Maviddapuram Sewing School was being managed and how it had provided employment for the girls of the area.

Lion A. V. Sarma Immediate Past President of Lions Club of Maviddapuram and Project Chairman for the Sewing School Projects detailed the activities of the Sewing Schools run by the Lions Club of Maviddapuram and their future activities.

The Charter President Lion R. Manoharan delivered the Vote of Thanks. Lion A. Ramanathan and Lion Raju N. Veerasingham Secretary had made all the arrangements for the Opening of the Chunnakam Branch.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Kill, Kill And Kill Yet Again

Clashes between Security Forces and militants have been reported at various places in the past week.

At Elephant Pass, there was a clash between Security Forces and militants when the former attempted to move out of the camp. During clash an observation post was destroyed and an armoured car damaged by cannon fire on 17th September. Two soldiers were reported killed and others injured, some seriously. There was firing of shells from the camp. The damaged armoured car was towed back.

In Mankulam, too, there were clashes for the second day running when the Security Forces attempted to move out. The camp was reported to have sustained damages where some members of the Security Forces were injured.

At Thandy, Thirukovil, in the Batticaloa district a jeep carrying commandos was reported to have been hit by a land-mine explosion in which four soldiers were killed and six seriously injured.

In Paduvankarai also in Batticaloa district there was a confrontation between the Armed Forces and

the militants when the former attempted to surround the villages of Kurinchamunai, Kannankudi and Manatpiddy. Many people have left the area and sought refuge in forests. Attempts to take food to those affected were said to have been frustrated by the Security Forces.

At Sambalthivu, in the Trincomalee district, there was a confrontation where four soldiers were reported killed at Akkaraipattu-Winayagapuram area, a police commando unit was caught up in a landmine explosion in which three soldiers were killed.

K. SIVAGURUNATHAN - ADVOCATE, TAX CONSULTANT.

The funeral of Kumarasamy Sivagurunathan, beloved husband of Thilagavathy, Loving father of Murukesan, Sakuntala, Rangini, Nalayini and Kumeresan, Father-in-Law of Gananathan, Thiagarajah, Alan Kanagasooriam and Dushiyanthi, took place in Madras on Monday, 15th September 1986.

NEP PRESS

For your next printing job, try the New Era Publications Ltd. Press.

We are equipped to undertake all types of commercial work, from wedding and visiting cards to books and newspapers in Tamil and English.

Quality work is assured at competitive rates.
Please contact —

Mr. A. J. Emmanuel,
Printing Manager,
NEP Ltd.,
267, Main Street, Jaffna,

The Press Council case, Lalith vs SR, is scheduled to be taken up on 26th September.

PADUWANKARAI BATTLE

A plane is reported to have smashed Kali Kovil at Paduvankarai in Batticaloa district on 16th September. The battle which started six days ago between the LTTE and the Security was continuing. The Security Forces have put up a small camp at Tholavadi in the Paduvankarai Area.

Two bomber Aircrafts bombed the area for two hours on 16th September.

Paduwankarai, Kannankudah, Karaiyakkam Island, Mandapathady and Pochchiapulai are the villages that were affected.

People have sought refuge at the Vilavedduwan Government School. At the time of writing, tension was still prevailing.

BATTICALOA ON FIRE AGAIN

As we went to press, we learnt that fifteen Tamils were killed, some of them while sipping tea in a boutique. Some of them were reported to have been burnt alive. Several vehicles had been set on fire by Commando units.

Batticaloa town area was enveloped in tension with people confined of their home. Government offices and schools remained closed.

This happened after a bomb explosion was heard near the airport. People at that time were proceeding on their day-to-day business when suddenly the commandos arrived on the scene and opened fire.

We have not been able to obtain any further details owing to communication difficulties.

WHY NOT STICKERS?

Editor
SATURDAY REVIEW

The issue of postage stamps by a militant group does not serve any useful purpose other than to embarrass a large number of postal employees. All militant groups should come to a consensus.

The general public of the North and the East should ask Prof. Sivathamby to issue postage stickers for Re. 1 as 'HELP THE REFUGEES', like the one-time anti-T.B. stickers. It is put in addition to the normal postage and hence does not offend the law. It is also good publicity reminding us that the problem is serious.

The refugees committees should get the entire support of the general public and the heads of various religious bodies, retired administrators and medical officers, should form Specialist committees for (a) finance, (b) temporary housing or shelter, (c) food, (d) clothing, (e) education, and (f) resettlement.

If the committees are organised and well-supervised, people are prepared to send monthly donations payable to a registered refugee fund because the danger is that anyone who helps can also become a refugee or agathi even temporarily.

Mirusuvil

S. P. Rasiah.

Our Man in Canada

According to a report appearing in the State controlled Daily News of 17th September, Sri Lanka's Canadian envoy, General Tissa Weeratunge has been subject to a 'propaganda blitz.' The material for the 'blitz' is stated to have been taken from the report of Amnesty International. According to reports of Reuter and AFP, Ottawa is quoted as saying that the charges were serious. General Tissa Weeratunge was head of the 'Operations Command.' He is reported to have committed human rights violations when he was head of the Army in Jaffna.

REFUGEE

MOTHER KILLED

A mother of 8 children, Isaac Eileen Rukmani (52) was killed by a direct hit from a shell fired from the Jaffna Fort whilst taking refuge in the toilet of her house at 2nd Cross Street, Jaffna on the evening of 7th September. Her remains were picked up in pieces and interred at the cemetery. She had come as a refugee from Trincomalee a few months ago. Her children were fortunately not with her at the time of the incident.