

# HOT SPRING

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No. 39

## "GOVERNMENT HAS FAILED US"

### - A relation of one of the POWs

"Our Government has failed to satisfy us but we thank the LTTE for warmly welcoming us, extending all hospitality and providing all security in the midst of various difficulties", so said Mr. P. Wijeratne, one of the relatives of one of the prisoners of war who is still under LTTE custody before leaving for Colombo on Wednesday, July 7.

Four relations of some of the Sinhalese prisoners of war left Jaffna for Colombo on July 7, Wednesday by the ship 'Waduwa'.

Mr. Wijeratne told reporters that they are poor people who have to earn for the living of their families. They have therefore to go even without achieving their objective of returning with their children held prisoners in Jaffna for three years.

They are returning with heavy hearts because their expectations had failed but they are confident that their

children (prisoners of war) will be held safely by the Tigers.

He further said that their Government had failed to satisfy them but they thanked the LTTE for warmly welcoming them, extending all hospitality and providing all security for them in the midst of various difficulties.

He also said that they cannot work against the Government. If they do so they cannot save their families against the Government. Even the opposition parties do not wish to press the issues.

"On our return we will do our best through political leaders and officials to get the prisoners of war released", he further told reporters.

## Black Tigers Day Commemorated All Over Tamil Eelam

Commemoration Celebrations and meetings of Black Tigers were held all over free Tamil Eelam territory on July 5, Monday.

Reports say that a public meeting was held at Nelliady Central College premi-

ses where Captian Miller led the successful Black Tiger attack, five years ago on July 5, 1987.

The mothers of Black Tigers, Capt. Miller and Maj. Kantharopan, garlanded the pictures of their respective sons and lit lamps. The father of Sea Black Tiger Captain Chidamparam garlanded the picture of his son and lit the lamp. The picture of Sea Black Tiger Captain Vinoth was garlanded by the parents who lit the lamps. The pictures of the other Black Tigers were garlanded by LTTE leaders.

Another meeting was held at Meesalai Vigneswara Vidyalayam, Meesalai. Pictures of the Black Tigers were garlanded. Mr. Yogaratnam Yogi and many other LTTE leaders addressed the meeting.

At Manipay Heroes' Art Gallery a meeting was held for the Valikamam Division. Mr. Ilamparithy and other LTTE leaders addressed the meeting.

### BATTICALOA:

## FIGHT BETWEEN LTTE AND S. L. SOLDIERS IN AMBUSH

Fighting broke out between LTTE and Sri Lankan Army lying in ambush at Kanchirankadu and other places in the Batticaloa District.

The news from Batticaloa in this connection states that on Friday, July 2, about 10.00 a.m. heavy fighting broke out between LTTE and the Sri Lankan soldiers at Kanchirankadu.

The Sri Lanka Army men who were lying in ambush attacked a group of LTTE fighters proceeding to Kanchirankadu. The LTTE fired back at the Sri Lankan soldiers and heavy battle ensued.

Six LTTE men died in this fight. The Sri Lankan casualty is not known.

Another report also from Batticaloa stated that on Saturday, July 3, Sri Lankan forces lying in ambush at Vellaveli, Thalawai, Batticaloa District attacked a group of Tigers. The Tigers counter-attacked with handbombs. One Tiger was killed. Sri Lankan casualties were not known.

On Sunday, June 27, a group of gangsters working with the Sri Lankan Army lying in ambush fired at LTTE Cadres proceeding to Mahilavettuvan in the Batticaloa District. One LTTE member died.

## 'Stupid' Says ICRC Official

"The news report that the LTTE has infiltrated into the ICRC is baseless and stupid". Mr. Pete Switcher, Head of the ICRC Team in Jaffna said so to the correspondent of the Voice of Tigers according to a Voice of Tigers broadcast.

Mr. Switcher's comments were sought by the Voice of Tigers Radio in relation to

a news published in the Sunday Observer (Colombo) quoting a University Teacher's Human Rights Association (Jaffna) which allegedly stated that the LTTE has infiltrated the ICRC.

According to the Voice of Tigers Radio Mr. Switcher also denied truth of the news item appearing in the Daily News also published by the Lake House in Colombo saying that the Tigers had carried out a piratical attack on the cargo

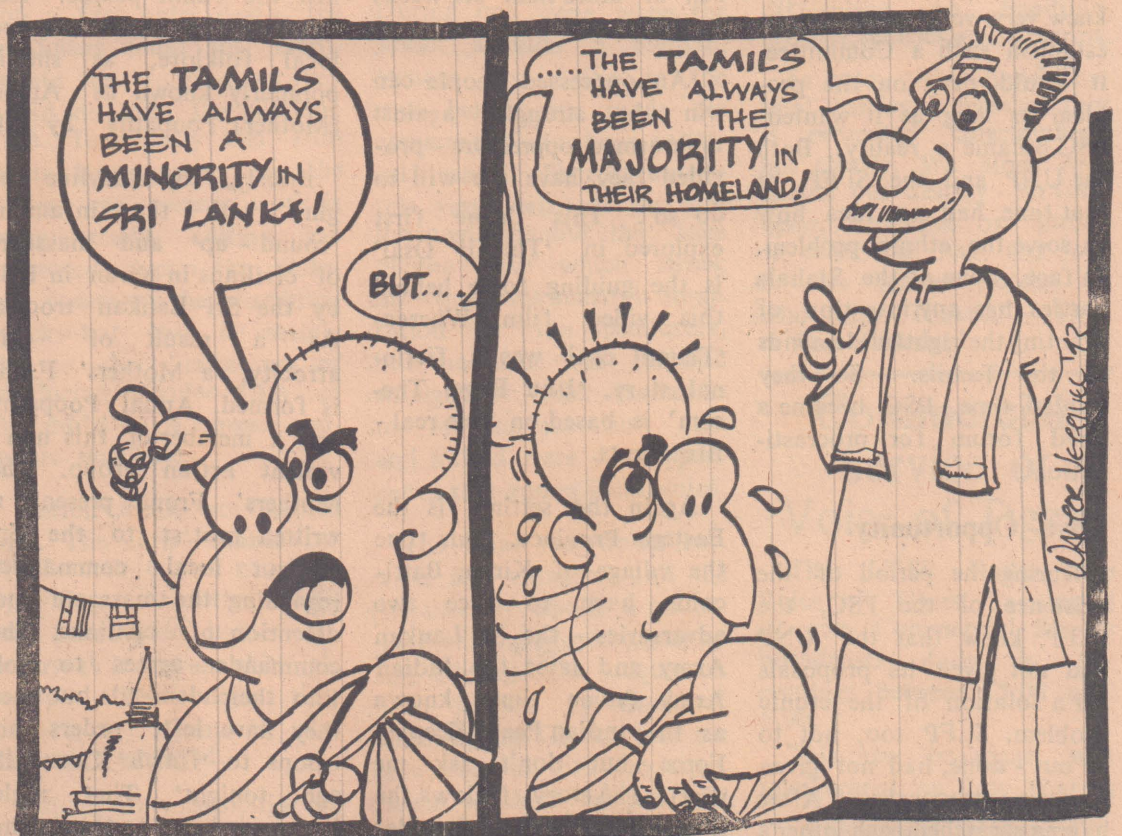
vessel "Ruhunu" at Kankesanthurai. Mr. Switcher described this news also as baseless.

When asked about the truth of the news in one of the Colombo based news papers that the failure of the negotiations in regard to the release of Sinhala prisoners was due to the ICRC, Mr. Switcher denied that the ICRC had any role to play in the negotiations. He said that the negotiations were between the Government of Sri Lanka on the one hand and the LTTE on the other and that the ICRC had no role to play in the matter.

## Support Tamil Eelam Struggle

A resolution calling upon the Tamils living in the Asia - Pacific region to extend their support to the struggle of the Tamil Nation in Eelam was unanimously passed at the 5th World Tamil Cultural Conference held at Sydney in Australia recently.

The resolution was moved by Prof. C. J. Eliezer, President of the Australian Federation of Tamil Associations and seconded by Dr. N. Rasalingam, President of the New Zealand Tamil Society, Auckland.





Mr. Dharmasiri Senanayake, the General Secretary of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, has stated in an interview to the BBC that his party had got out of the Parliamentary Select Committee, set up to solve the ethnic problem. He also stated that the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Mangala Munasinghe too had got out of the said Committee. He said that the reason for the SLFP opting out was that the UNP had not stated its own proposals and in the absence of same, there would be no purpose served in continuing in the PSC. He also commented that because the UNP failed to place its own proposals, the other parties were also vacillating to place their own proposals or to bring about changes in their policies regarding the ethnic problem. He also condemned the tactics of the government to hold a referendum in the East without making use of the PSC to solve the ethnic issue. The Holding of a Referendum is a matter dealt with in the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of Rajiv Gandhi and J. R. Jayewardene. Therefore the holding of a Referendum would mean validating the Provisions of this Accord. Mr. Senanayake finally said that the SLFP would not be a party to give life to this dead Accord.

Contrary to this declaration by the Secretary of the SLFP, a Colombo-based newspaper has published a news item stating that the PSC is being convened on 6-7-93 to take a decision regarding the holding of a Referendum in the East. Whom are we to believe or disbelieve?

### Procrastination

When Mr. Mangala Munasinghe of the SLFP proposed the establishment of a Parliamentary Select Committee to solve the ethnic problem, Premadasa's Government jumped at the idea because it knew very well by agreeing to establish such a Committee, it could drag on the problem as long as it wanted. PSC became a reality. Both the UNP and the SLFP, at that time had no idea how to solve the ethnic problem. In fact, none of the Sinhala parties has any intention of granting the rightful demands of the Tamils. So they wanted time. PSC became a good forum for procrastination.

### Lost Opportunity

During the period of the existence of the PSC, the SLFP knew that the UNP had not given its proposals for a solution of the ethnic problem. SLFP too, not to be out-done, had not given its own proposals. After having scratched each other's back, the SLFP thinking that

it is in a better position politically at the moment, wants to back out. It being 'in' or 'out', is not going to be any help to the problems of the Tamils. If it were a question of votes, it would go on bended knees even to the jungles of Wanni and seek the audience of Pirabakaran to beg for votes. But when it comes to the question of restoring the lost rights of the Tamils, the SLFP is not second to the UNP. One can easily understand this attitude of the Opposition

in war and in negotiation. But the Sinhalese leaders should understand that the present leadership of the Tamils is of a different calibre who could smell treachery miles away.

### Treachery

Speaking of treachery, the declaration of the Government that it cannot implement its decision to increase the salaries of government servants which it promised to pay from this month, comes to mind. The UNP in order

Now, having promised, its voters the Government, has retracted. Is it not a good example for the meaning of treachery? Does not the Government have economists and planners to advise that in the present context of ever increasing expenditure for the armed forces, increased or enhanced salaries or pensions could not be given to its civilian officers? It has so many experts. In spite of them, to promise and

armed forces, were plundered in mid sea by the Tigers. What a despicable and blatant lie? Later the Government ate its own words by being forced to issue a statement that such an incident did not happen and that the said ship was diverted to Kankasanturai on the instructions given by the Government, after it decided to go back on the agreement arrived at with the Tigers about the supply of certain articles banned to the North in return for the release of the prisoners by the Tigers. Even after the diversion of the said ship, there was a comical drama staged in the high sea between Kankesan-

## S. L. F. P. Delinks

parties recently asking for a Parliamentary debate about the recent negotiations which failed in regard to the release of the Prisoners - of - War who are in the custody of the LTTE. Without condemning the Government for having lost an opportunity which the LTTE gave graciously to prepare the ground for an overall settlement of the ethnic problem through their preparedness to exchange prisoners as a second alternative in lieu of release of certain prohibited articles to the North, the SLFP has stated that the Tigers have once again duped or deceived the Government and taken an upperhand. Here the competition is, who is the better party to defeat and deceive the Tamil people both

to influence and bribe voters during the last Provincial Council elections proposed an increase in the salaries of government servants and said that the increase would be paid from this month. Now it has stated that because of enhanced military expenditure, it could not do so.

### S. THIAGARAJAH

It was a promise which the Government never intended to implement. When this declaration was made, quite correctly, the Opposition parties complained to the Commissioner of Elections that this proposal was a move to influence the voters to vote for the UNP.

## from P. S. C.

then retract, is treachery of the worst order.

### Sinking Ship

The Government is capable not only of treachery but also can come out with dastardly lies. Government-owned newspaper, the Daily News, published a news item that the articles which were despatched to the North from Colombo by sea in response to an agreement to get the release of the Prisoners - of - War and which agreement was dishonoured because of the opposition from the elites in the

turai and Point Pedro with orders and counter-orders over the high frequency radio regarding unloading and reloading of the goods. Everything was in a quandary. Ultimately it all ended with the Government, the armed forces and Shipping Company behaving like tomfools. One need not wonder much, with such tomfools ruling the country, that the SLFP in spite of all its own bungling, to hope that it has a better future and that it will be wise to get out of the Parliamentary Select Committee like the rats getting out of a sinking ship.

### FILM REVIEW:

## ITHU ENGEL THESAM ( This is Our Country )

Running Time : 1 hr. approx.

Produced by : Thasan with support of Mullaitivu District Arts and Culture Organisation of Liberation Tigers.

Following the success of their previous production 'Thamil Osai', the latest release is now enjoying a run of more than six weeks in Jaffna.

'An oppressed people can win the struggle against their armed oppressors - provided they have the will to do so'. This theme first explored in 'Thamil Osai' is the guiding force behind this video film. Whereas 'Thamil osai' was a fictional story, 'Ithu Engel Thesam' is based on true real-life events.

Again the setting is the Eastern Province. This time the village of Kiran, Batticaloa have to face two adversaries - the Sri Lankan Army and later the Indian Army (some times known as the Indian Peace Keeping Force - but don't ask me why). The story follows the life of Mrs. Kanapathypillai Poopathy who achieved mar-

tyrdom on 19th April, 1988 after fasting to death to protest against the Indian Army's military action against the Tamil people. Her sacrifice has now entered local folklore, as she is popularly known as Annai (Mother) Poopathy by all.

Briefly, the storyline begins with the infamous 'round-up' and massacre of civilians in Kiran in 1985 by the Sri Lankan troops. As a result of this atrocity, a Mothers' Front is formed. Annai Poopathy was a member of this non-violent action group. The Mothers' Front presents a written protest to the Sri Lankan local commander regarding the massacre and detention of civilians. The commander agrees to look into their demands but once they have left, orders his troops to 'finish Kiran village tonight'. That night Kiran is burnt to the ground by Sinhala soldiers.

The film then follows the activities of the Mothers' Front. Then the Indian Army arrives. This sequence is presented with great gusto both on the screen and on the sound track. The Tamil people ecstatically welcome the Indian troops who use this opportunity to go into houses and shops to do a bit of looting. This hilarious sequence shows the Indian commander engaging the shopkeeper in conversation, while his jawans pocket anything they can - cigarette packets, soap etc. The poor shopkeeper doesn't know what to!

The illiteracy of the Indians is highlighted, as one jawan spots a number of shampoo sachets hanging on the shop front. The dazed shopkeeper explains 'Egg Shampoo!'. The jawan cries 'Ah egg' and proceeds to empty the contents of one into his mouth! Obviously he likes the taste of it and

his comrades pocket the rest and walk out.

The audience loves it!

It soon becomes apparent to the villagers that things are not as good as they had originally expected. News reaches them of Thileepan's fast unto death in Jaffna, October 10th, 1987. The Indian army turns its guns on the Tamil people. This brief sequence is edited very professionally and effectively using existing stock footage.

Following the interval, the film focuses on the Mothers' Front and Annai Poopathy's fast until death. In spite of threats from the Indian army and their sycophant Tamil militant groups, the fast continues. The reasonable demands are refused by the Indians, Annai Poopathy dies. Gandhism is shattered.

As the Indian jawan informs his commanding officer of the news of Annai Poopathy's death, the framed picture of Mahatma Gan-

(Continued on page 3)



# Insufficient Resources to Maintain Welfare Centres for Displaced Families

## - Says Council of NGOO - Jaffna

In view of the difficult situation prevailing in the District due to the military operations and consequent displacements of persons since June, 1990, the Non Governmental Organisations working in the District were faced with serious problems in carrying out relief works, mainly due to the lack of non availability of food items in sufficient quantity and these were faced by the local N. G. O.s.

It is noted that the N.G.O.s were finding it very difficult to meet the basic requirements of the displaced. The N. G. O.s are only maintaining 9882 families who exist as displaced persons. This shortfall is mainly due to the lack of sufficient resources available with the N.G.O.s. The displaced families living outside welfare centres are existing without basic necessities such as health, water supply, sanitation etc. and are facing severe problems in their daily lives.

2. Below is furnished details of the prevailing situation in the Welfare centres for displaced persons in the Jaffna District.

The report is formulated on the basis of the following subjects:

- (a) Food
- (b) Shelter
- (c) Health
- (d) Sanitation
- (e) Utilities and Water Supply.
- (f) Nutrition
- (g) Education and Pre - School
- (h) Small Scale Self employment assistance.

### 2. 1. Food

Although the dry ration provided by the Government to the displaced persons helps them to subsist, yet it does not meet the entire requirements.

### 2. 2. Shelter

Temporary shelters have been provided (size 12' X 15') with limited available sources in the District. Government assistance have been provided in part for the above services. A comprehensive shelter programme has to be carried out to house the balance displaced persons presently living in cramped up private dwellings and make shift shelters.

### 2. 3. Health

Various communicable diseases are rampant in the

welfare centres. Sufficient medical assistance and drugs are not readily available and the N. G. O.s. are unable to supplement the requirements. It is pertinent to mention that two mobile medical units have been gifted by the Sri Lanka Red Cross to provide health facilities to the displaced persons in the District.

### 2. 4. Sanitation

Temporary toilets with empty kerosene barrels have been provided in all the Centres. This is totally un-

hygienic and is the main cause of all the health problems in the above Centres. This adhoc arrangements will last only for six months and replacements become necessary thereafter.

### 2. 6. Utilities

Although Foreign N.G.O.s such as I.C.R.C. and S.C.F. (UK) have distributed kitchen utensils, plastic buckets and sheets, yet it has not been able to meet the total requirements of the District.

### 2. 7. Nutrition

A detailed survey has been carried out by the Department of Community Medicine, University of Jaffna

It has not been possible to sink new wells and drill new tube wells. rectly affects the future Generation.

### 2. 8. Pre - Schools

In these displaced Welfare Centres, it is noted that sufficient discipline among children is not provided. Hence it becomes necessary to provide pre-schools facilities at the out-set. Small Pre - Schools in temporary sheds without-necessary furniture and equipments are in existence in some welfare Centres. It will be necessary to provide the basic facilities to al-

The Council of NGOO - Jaffna District which has within its fold fifteen NGOO functioning in the Jaffna District has published a situation Report on the welfare centres in the Jaffna District organised and run by the Council for the benefit of a section of persons displaced from their homes and villages as a result of the military operations carried on in Jaffna by the government of Sri Lanka.

We publish the report in its entirety as it comes from a body directly concerned with the welfare centres and its inmates.

The report is dated 26.6.1993.

on the Nutritional Status among the displaced persons under 5 years. The total number of displaced children of the above category Welfare Centres, is found to be 20, 062. Suitable Nutritional food has not reached this area for quite some time. Unless remedial measures are taken immediately, the situation outlined in the above report is bound to deteriorate. Same situation exists among pregnant and lactating women. This indi-

### 2. 5. Water Supply

Sufficient number of open wells are not available for drinking and washing purposes in all the Centres. In some Centres the inmates have to traverse by foot long distances in search of water.

During one scene, when the jawan assaults a civilian, teenage boy sitting in the rows behind me, made the comment 'Nalla thaana seithirukkirangal' (They have done this very well.) It was not the comment but the tone of the voice which struck me - there was heartfelt admiration for the producers, but the scene was realistic enough for bitter memories to re-surface and fear and hatred were also apparent in that young Tamil voice.

The final showdown between the villagers and the Indian army also is a masterpiece of staging, photography and editing. The sequences have shown professional handling by Thasan and his crew. Anyone with any experience in these matters will understand the tremendous

Indian army atrocities are again realistically staged.

too a fast unto death, the producers could not manipulate the storyline, as they could do with the previous film. Technically this film is an improvement on the earlier one - camera work is more steady, editing has improved. Again the dialogue scenes are the stumbling block - but this is mainly due to the limitations of producing a video film in the midst of a severe economic blockade.

The LTTE Radio - 'the Voice of Tigers' has started its own Commercial Service broadcasts daily in the evenings between 5.00 and 6.00. This new broadcast was inaugurated on July first in

financial resources among the displaced families, the above category of children do not possess School requisites, clothing etc. 39, 991 falls within the group of schools going children in the Welfare Centres. It is deemed necessary to provide minimum Educational facilities and thus avoid a positive set back in this direction.

### 2. 10. Small scale income Generation Assistance

Although food assistance is provided by the Government, the quantum so provided is not enough for complete sustenance. Since food is not the only requirement for a family, financial resources will be necessary for other requisites. Under the circumstances, the grant of assistance for small scale Income Generation programme that is possible in the present situation is considered very necessary to counter balance the short fall in the family income. N.G.O.s. have provided this type of assistance in a very small way, but a lot remains to be done. Suitable assistance to provide further programme of this nature will go a long way to alleviate the sufferings of the displaced persons.

The foregoing facts we feel certain will provide a complete and true picture of the situation in which the displaced persons of the district are placed.

We feel that it is our bounden duty to appeal to various funding agencies to help us to remedy this situation.

This appeal is made in the name of the Council of N.G.O.s. of the Jaffna District.

## Ithu Engel..

(Continuation from Page 2)

dhi hanging on the wall behind, suddenly falls to the ground and is shattered. Though this may sound a bit contrived - it works in the film and is a powerful cinematic moment.

The final minutes of the movie deal with the funeral which the Indians try to stop by use of arms, but the people persist and succeed. Again, like 'Thamil Osai', the people come into direct confrontation with the armed might of the oppressor - and win through sheer courage.

Unlike 'Thamil Osai', 'Ithu Engel Thesam', is a slow-moving film. Being a re-creation of a true incident and that

difficulties in handling, crowds, vehicles and firearms.

In toto, 'Ithu Engel Thesam' carries a message that is presented entertainingly but clearly. We alone will decide our destiny - no foreigner, Sinhalese or Indian or otherwise, has any say in this matter - after all 'Ithu Engel Thesam' - This, is Our Country!

## Commercial Service of Voice of Tigers

The LTTE Radio - 'the Voice of Tigers' has started its own Commercial Service broadcasts daily in the evenings between 5.00 and 6.00.

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(Continued on Page 4)



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VOL: 3 Sunday 11th July 1993 ISSUE: 39

## The So-Called National Press

The so-called 'national press' in Colombo has greatly contributed to the spread of Sinhala chauvinism and the continuation and escalation of the war.

"Facts are sacred - Comment is free" goes a saying.

In the case of the 'national press' in Colombo facts are as free as the comments are highly mischievous and motivated with the sole desire of spreading the hegemonistic designs of Sinhala chauvinism.

The recent issues of the Colombo press clearly exhibit a keen desire on their part to distort any genuine attempts on the part of the LTTE and abort any peace process.

Recently the Daily News published by Lake House and controlled by the Government reported that 'Ruhunu' - the vessel laden with some essential commodities and destined to Point Pedro as a result of negotiations between LTTE and Brig. Weerasekera on behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka but which was later ordered to change course and proceed to Kankesanthurai under Sri Lankan Army occupation because the Government of Sri Lanka decided to retract on the agreement-had been subjected to 'piratical' attacks by the LTTE which had robbed the consignments in the ship.

Last week we published how contradictory orders were given to the Captain of the vessel by the S. L. Naval command at Kankesanthurai and the drama enacted on the seas off Point Pedro.

The Daily News is a government controlled paper as everyone knows. Surely they should be able to verify the facts much easier from Government officials than others. But in their over enthusiasm to villify the Tigers some fertile brain had come out with a fiction as factual news, little realising that the people would only laugh at the government of Sri Lanka, if the facts stated in the Daily News were really true. It is now understood that investigations are being made into how a false story was published as news. As usual nothing will come out of these investigations, as all concerned are in the game!

Not being tired, Lake House appears to have chosen the ICRC for its next target and apparently has got a convenient lame donkey called University Teachers for Human Rights (Jaffna) as its source of information.

As early as 30-6-1991 we exploded the myth of this so called University Teachers for Human Rights Association (Jaffna) Branch when the Lake House tried on a previous occasion to make use of this same lame donkey to discredit the Tamil freedom struggle. Now 'he ICRC's Team Head in Jaffna has denied the report and characterised it as "stupid".

Similarly the Daily News said that the LTTE wanted 60 of its cadres released for the 39 Sinhala Policemen. This is false. The LTTE wanted a full list of Tamil prisoners but the Government refused to do so, stating that it was a 'defence secret' and gave a list 60 persons of whom none was a member of the LTTE. The LTTE thereafter as an alternative asked for the economic embargo on the North to be lifted. Everyone now knows that the Government first agreed and later retracted and Brig. Weerasekera who came to Jaffna to negotiate has denied that the LTTE put new demands for the release of the Sinhala prisoners as made out by the Government and its propaganda machinery.

Colombo 'National' pressmen have peculiar unnamed "sources" to give them all sort of falsehoods to be published as factual news. The actual fact apparently is that those so-called news reports are manufactured at the desks of avidly Sinhala chauvinistic men who claim they are journalists who must have the freedom of the press.

One understands the freedom of the press to mean the freedom to express an honest opinion on facts but not to twist facts or invent fictions. The purpose of writing this is not to correct the incorrigible but only to expose the claim 'national' press. The fact of the matter is that this island cannot have a single national press because there are two nations in the Island. The mere fact that the Sinhala-owned press writes in English does not make it 'national' in the sense of embracing the Eelam Tamils too.

## Dr. Balasingham at Black Tigers' Commemoration Meeting

"When the truths behind the fast undertaken by the Sinhalese Prisoners of War came to be known all over the world, the Government of Sri Lanka was shaken up. It is as a consequence of this that Brigadier Weerasekera came to Jaffna", said Dr. Anton Balasingham of the LTTE speaking at Black Tigers' Commemoration Day meeting held at Nelliady Central College on Monday July 5.

It was at the Nelliady Central College Sri Lankan Army Camp that Captain Miller, the first Black Tiger, made his successful and devastating attack on the Sinhala Army 5 years ago on July 5, 1987.

Continuing Dr. Balasingham stated: The Sinhala Prisoners of War decided to go on a fast. When the news of their fast became known to the world, the Government of Sri Lanka was shaken up. It is as a consequence of this that Brigadier Weerasekera came to Jaffna. We told Brigadier Weerasekera to give a list of the Prisoners of War held by the Government of Sri Lanka. We told him that we could exchange 39 Sinhala prisoners of war for 39 Tamil prisoners of war. Brig. Weerasekera said that the Government of Sri Lanka was not willing to hand over a list of prisoners she held, as it contained defence secrets!

Their people are held prisoners by us to the knowledge of the public. We present them to the ICRC. The ICRC makes monthly check on the food and medical services provided to them. But the Government of Sri Lanka says that it cannot provide the list of Tamil prisoners of war. Nobody knows where they are or how they are tortured. The ICRC does not visit the Tamils held by the government as prisoners of war.

Exchange of prisoners of war is an international norm. The Sinhala government does not understand this. Therefore we made an alternative suggestion. We told Brig. Weerasekera to lift the economic embargo to give relief to the Tamils who are suffering by the blockade.

We were told that we would make use of batteries and lay land mines but they could remove the ban on other items in the first instance. So we told them to lift the ban and send those other items and that we would release the prisoners of war.

Brigadier Weerasekera went back to Colombo and returned. He told us that the ban

had been lifted and wanted us to release the prisoners of war. We told him that the goods must reach the hands of the people first and we would release the prisoners. We explained to him how the Tamils have been cheated down the ages.

We told him that the government can re-impose the ban if the prisoners are removed to Colombo even before the goods have reached Jaffna. We pointed out to him that no goods had come to Jaffna even though we were told that the ban had been lifted. But after Brig. Weerasekera went to Colombo, there was a government report that the LTTE was demanding new items.

The new President, some important Ministers and the Joint Operations Command at first decided to remove the economic embargo. When the arrangements were made to ship goods exempted from ban the Army hierarchy opposed the move. A conflict arose between the Army and the Government. The Government therefore decided to twist the whole story and tried to put the blame on us. But we are not going to be cheated.

The Govt. of Sri Lanka is in a weak position. The Army is gaining the upper hand. The Government fears that if it removes the economic blockade, it may lose votes at the forthcoming elections.

Continuing Dr. Balasingham said that many religious heads came to Jaffna and went back. The LTTE has explained to all of them the LTTE position. LTTE desires peace not because it can strengthen itself as imagined by the Sinhalese. As a matter of fact LTTE strengthens itself only during war by capturing arms and ammunition from the Army. The Government of Sri Lanka is now carrying on a war against the Tamil people and strangulating them. The Government's move does not adversely affect the LTTE.

Speaking on the move to open a route for movement of traffic between peninsular Jaffna and mainland, Dr. Balasingham said that the UNHCR came forward to get the route along Poonakari opened. We welcomed it. We knew that even if the route was opened, the LTTE cannot make use of the route for its cadres to move in and out with weapons. But we asked the UNHCR to go ahead with its efforts so that civilians may pass this way.

We told the UNHCR that they are an international body. The people can pass through the route under their supervision but the Sri Lankan Army should not check the passengers. But the Sri Lanka Army insists on checking passengers. If the Sri Lankan Army is going to check passengers at Poonakari, what work has the UNHCR to do there? At Vavunia the Sri Lankan Army is checking passengers. Beyond Vavunia it is the Sinhala country. So they may check. But what right has the Sinhala Army to check Tamil passengers between Palai and Kilinochchi? How can the Sinhala Army be allowed to check Tamil passengers travelling within Tamil territory?

We are considering the latest document handed over to us by the UNHCR. We do not want to permit the Sinhala Army to check Tamil people within Tamil territory.

The Sinhala Army is not allowing essential commodities being brought into Jaffna. The Sinhala Army is preventing free movement of people along the Poonakari route.

The Presidential and parliamentary elections have to be held soon. The Government will do nothing tangible during this period. In the meantime the Army is gaining the upper hand in Colombo.

Dr. Balasingham further said that the LTTE leader Mr. V. Pirabakaran had already said that the LTTE was prepared to consider a federal structure with the Northeast forming the Tamil homeland. But the Government is bent on dividing the Northeast somehow. We have repeatedly made our position clear. If the government of Sri Lanka does not respond and persists in its policy, the Tamils shall have no alternative but to restore their own sovereign state.

## Commercial...

(Continuation from Page 3)

addition to its normal daily programmes which are beamed over air twice daily - in the morning between 7.30 and 8.30 and again in the evening between 8.00 and 9.00 on the F.M. Metre Band. During the week ends, i.e. on Saturdays and Sundays, special programmes of interests to students are broadcast.

This Commercial Service broadcast introduced by the LTTE on the same metre band, in addition to broadcasting its Commercial programmes, gives a wide coverage for all local sporting events. Hence it has become quite popular with Sports fans.

New Era Publications,  
Luckshmi Building, Dutch Rd.  
Kalviyankadu.