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Mrs. Annammah David and Mrs. Nesamma Vadivel of the Mothers' Front of Batticaloa while undertaking their fast unto death.

ABRUPT END TO FAST BY MOTHERS' FRONT

— page 13

THE 'EELAM FACTOR' IN TAMIL NADU ELECTIONS

—page 5



The D.M.K. organised a fast in Tamil Nadu on 22.2.88 to protest against the human rights violation of the IPKF in Sri Lanka. Kalaigal M. Karunanithy (Leader D.M.K. and former Chief Minister Tamil Nadu) is in the Centre. Dr. Niththyananthan, Headmaster, West London Tamil School, is seen standing on the right.

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NO TIME FOR POSTURING

The last few weeks have witnessed, even by Sri Lanka's standards, a spectacularly high rise in the killing and counter-killing of civilians in the eastern province, and more so in the Trincomalee district. Defenceless infants, children, men, women and old people have been ruthlessly killed in an orgy of unparalleled savagery. Tamils, Muslims and Sinhalese have been killed. Many people have fled from their homes in fear and thousands have been added to the ever-rising refugee population. But the attacks and counter-attacks have continued unabated.

Whatever may be the objective of these killings, they cannot be justified under any circumstances. Whoever may be their perpetrators, they must be condemned unconditionally. Neither the excuse that it is inevitable that in a war some civilians deaths are inevitable, nor the explanation that some members of the present generation have to pay with their lives in the interest of future generations can be accepted in the case of the present wave of killings. The victims have neither died in a cross-fire nor have they died in the course of a struggle for a better future. They have been killed in their homes or in buses while travelling.

These killings have continued to occur despite the presence of thousands of troops belonging to the Indian Peace Keeping Force. Up to now the Sri Lankan troops in the Tamil areas have been confined to their barracks under the terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. However the escalating body count of civilian victims and the high turnout of refugees from the eastern province have created an atmosphere in which the clamour for the deployment of Sri Lankan troops for the protection of the civilian population has become more and more strident. The recent visit by Minister Gamini Dissanayake accompanied by Service Chiefs to New Delhi and their discussions with Indian leaders would appear to have been aimed at urging New Delhi to agree to such deployment of Sri Lankan troops in the eastern province. Although not confirmed in New Delhi, reports in the Sri Lankan media indicate that India has agreed to allow the Sri Lankan troops to play a role in support of the IPKF. In other words, contrary to the Indo-Sri Lanka accord, they are to be permitted to go out and engage in military operations under the guise of protecting the civilians. This constitutes a dangerous development to the people of the eastern province. They have experienced

almost four years of death and destruction at the hands of the Sri Lankan troops. Hundreds of villages and thousands of homes were destroyed. People taken into custody disappeared without trace. People were shot in the streets and homes. Such incidents were a daily routine. The people of the eastern province do not deserve a repeat-performance.

Although brought to end under questionable circumstances, the fast unto death by the 58-year old Mrs. Annamah David of the Batticaloa Mothers' Front was poignantly symbolic of the deep desire of the people for a return to peace after years of trauma and tragedy. The Front's two demands, namely that there should be a cease-fire in the fighting between the LTTE and the IPKF and that negotiations between India and the LTTE should restart are an unambiguous manifestation of the people's thirst for peace. The wide support the action of this self-sacrificing woman received, reflected the deep-felt heartache of the people for an end to the fighting and violence. The profound significance of this action and the genuineness of the demands it advanced have not been diminished by the suspicious circumstances in which the fast was brought to an end.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has accepted the Front's demands and in a letter to the Indian Prime Minister has pledged to cooperate in the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lanka accord and expressed its readiness for unconditional talks. Indian leaders have repeatedly asserted that they too are seeking political solution. If that is what they want, it is not beyond them to arrange for a cease-fire and recommence negotiations. This is no time for political posturing for propaganda purposes by either party. This is not the time nor the Tamil areas are the place for the IPKF to experiment or gain experience in the art of combating urban guerilla warfare. Nor can the Tamil people endure a prolonged display of the capacity by Tamil militants to wield their AK47s, Kalashnikovs and landmines. The body count of Tamil militants, IPKF personnel and above all of the defenceless unarmed civilians are mounting daily. The tragedy has been played too long. India and the LTTE have a duty to put an end to this ongoing tragedy and give peace and the people a chance.

INDIAN FRESH MOVES TOWARDS LTTE

Mr. Balasubramaniam Kanagarathan alias 'Raheem', an LTTE leader under house arrest in Madras, has been flown to northern Sri Lanka to make contact with the LTTE chief, Mr. V. Prabhakaran, amid fresh efforts by India to bring the group into the mainstream of the island's politics, according to authoritative sources.

Raheem was flown to somewhere in Vavuniya along with another LTTE top-runger, Johnny, in an Indian Air Force helicopter a few days ago.

According to Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) intelligence, Mr. Prabhakaran is hiding somewhere in the jungles in the Vavuniya area. Raheem was understood to have undertaken the visit on the directive of Mr. Sathasivam Krishnakumar, alias 'Kittu', who was the Jaffna commander of the LTTE before he lost a leg in a grenade attack. He was understood to be carrying the Government of India's response to Mr. Prabhakaran's latest offer of unconditional talks to end the conflict. The

offer was contained in a letter dated March 9, to the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. The sources said New Delhi was willing to discuss all matters with the LTTE provided it first made a commitment to lay down arms and accept the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement.

India had not changed its views on allowing top LTTE leaders to retain their 'personal weapons' as agreed at the time of signing the Agreement, the sources said, adding the present contacts between New Delhi and Mr. Prabhakaran were mainly through Kittu.

Balasingham escapes: Informed sources in Jaffna said the LTTE theoretician, Mr. Anton Balasingham, had escaped to Tamil Nadu by a smuggler's boat from Madagal in the peninsula. He had narrowly escaped IPKF security sources twice.

According to the sources, Kittu might be receiving counsel from Mr. Balasingham in his current talks with the Indian officials.

KARUNANIDHI PLEADS FOR PRABAKARAN

The DMK President, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, has said the Tamils all over the world, including the people of Tamil Nadu, were shocked that about 6,000 Indian soldiers were making efforts to capture the LTTE leader, Mr. V. Prabhakaran, 'dead or alive'.

In a statement issued on 19 March, Mr. Karunanidhi said the Indian Army continuing to hunt down the LTTE members and its plans to kill Mr. Prabhakaran showed a 'vindictive' attitude, despite the LTTE's announcement that it was ready for talks and that there should be a ceasefire and a situation where the LTTE need not use arms to facilitate the beginning of negotiations. 'The hands of the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, will be stained for ever with the blood of the Tamils by the efforts to liquidate the LTTE or Mr. Prabhakaran who, from the beginning, had respect for and confidence in India'.

A plea: The Government of India, which was in a stronger position, should 'magnanimously relent' and establish peace in the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister should deem the request of Tamil Nadu as a mother pleading for the life of her son and Mr. Gandhi should change his 'callous heart' and immediately show compassion to this problem, Mr. Karunanidhi said. It was not reasonable on the part of the Government of India to find a military solution now when India had earlier advised that there should be no military solution when the Sri Lankan Army killed the Tamils and the LTTE in 1987.

'Udhayam' Publications

With a view to encourage potential Tamil novelists to publish their works, a printer in Batticaloa (St. Sebastian Printers) has taken the initiative. Last month 'Theiva Tharisanam' a novel by the Batticaloa poet and writer S. Gunaratnam was published. The publisher plans to release a Tamil novel every four months. To achieve this, he has organised a system of subscriptions from readers numbering 500 to 1000 each contributing Rs. 100/-

This payment will be valid for five years and all books published will be sent free to these subscribers.

Writers and readers in Tamil interested in this apparently a welcome book venture can contact the publisher at the following address: Udayam Publishers, 65, Lady Manning Drive, Batticaloa, Sri Lanka.

TAMIL POLITICAL PRISONERS BEGIN DEATH FAST

Five Tamil political prisoners at the New Magazine Prison at Welikade in Colombo began a fast unto death demanding the release of all political prisoners detained without trial.

The five who commenced the fast on 17 March are Sebamalai Francis Perera (22), Kandiah Amarasingham (31), Ramasamy Raman (21), Visvalingam Jeevaratnam (21) and Than-gavel Ramadas (22).

Before undertaking the fast, over 800 Tamil political prisoners detained at the Boosa army camp and the Welikade prison had written to President Jayawardene requesting him to grant them an amnesty in terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka accord. The text of the letter sent to President Jayawardene by 763 detainees at Boosa and 129 from Welikade is as follows:

This request is in response to Your Excellency's address to Parliament on

the occasion of the opening of its Eighth Session on Thursday, the 25th of February 1988.

'Your Excellency was pleased to say that Your Excellency will grant an amnesty to those who accept the Peace Accord, lay down arms and accept the democratic process.

I wish to state by this letter that I am one who accepts the peace accord. I am incarcerated. Therefore, Your Excellency's request to lay down arms will not be applicable in my case. Nevertheless, I wish to state that I eschew violence, and I am committed to the democratic process in this country in which I would like to participate at the earliest possible opportunity.

I, therefore request Your Excellency to consider favourably my immediate release consonant with Your Excellency's address to Parliament.'

WE often receive telephone calls from readers commenting adversely and sometimes favourably concerning the contents or the manner in which views are presented in the columns of TAMIL TIMES.

We invite those critics or supporters to write in their point of

view on any relevant issue in the form of articles (not more than 1100 words) or letters to the editor (not more than 200 words), and we assure publication provided they are written in a presentable style and in non-abusive language.

EDITOR

LTTE PLEDGES TO CO-OPERATE AND SEEKS TALKS WITH INDIA

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has pledged to co-operate in the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement and appealed to the Indian Prime Minister 'to occasion a cease-fire without further delay and initiate negotiations to discuss all related issues to bring about peace in Tamil areas'.

The text of the letter dated March 9 sent by LTTE leader, V. Prabhakaran, to Rajiv Gandhi reads as follows:

'I wish to write to you once again to clarify our position with regard to a negotiated settlement and the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord.

'You will appreciate that our organisation had been appealing to you for peace, for cessation of hostilities for negotiation to put an end to this unfor-

tunate conflict and to alleviate the suffering of our people.

'Morally and spiritually we are opposed to this war. We always wish to put an end to this painful tragedy which was not of our choice. In this context we regret to note that the Government of India has persistently rejected our urgent and sincere plea for peace.

'So far as the Indo-Sri Lankan accord is concerned the LTTE has pledged to co-operate with its implementation. We feel in this that the implementation of the accord should safeguard the interests and aspirations of our people. Our concern for the interests of our people is based on our legitimate fear of the chauvinistic attitude of the Sri Lankan regime, which has already thwarted the accord by failing to fulfill its commitment.

'In order to honour the demands of

the Mothers' Front of Batticaloa, we made an open statement on 27th February 88 announcing our readiness for unconditional talks. I officially inform you of our readiness for unconditional talks to resolve all the matters between the Government of India and LTTE.

'You may be aware that the condition of Mrs. Annamma David has become very serious. She has been fasting unto death for the last 19 days to bring about cease-fire and negotiations.

'I urge you earnestly to occasion a cease-fire without further delay and initiate negotiations to discuss all related issues to bring about peace in Tamil areas and save the valuable life of Mrs. Annamma David.

'I hope that you will give earnest and serious consideration to our appeal.'

EX-SENATOR KILLED

Former Senator and ex-Chairman of the Jaffna District Development Council, Mr. S. Nadarajah, was shot dead by a gunman allegedly belonging to a Tamil militant group. The penalty was meted out for his alleged association with the Indian Peace Keeping Force.

At the time of his murder, Subramaniam Nadarajah was 72 years old. He was a lawyer by profession, a pioneer member of the All Ceylon Tamil Congress and later of the TULF and was popularly known as 'Pottar'. The epithet denoted by a physical cavity on his forehead which resembled closely a 'Pottu' placed by Hindus on their forehead.

Mr. Nadarajah was a Senator from 1965 to 1971 and Chairman of the Jaffna DDC from 1981 to 1983.

IPKF ORDERS CIVILIANS TO SQUAT ON ROADS

The Indian Peace Keeping Force in the Batticaloa district, on 9 March, ordered more than 1500 civilians to evacuate their homes along the side of the railway track from Thannimunai to Vantharamoolai and squat on the nearby roads.

The IPKF is said to have ordered this action following an alleged information that Tigers were planning to attack a goods train from Colombo using some of the dwellings adjoining the railway track.

More than 500 women and children were among the crowd who had to squat on the roads in the hot sun for more than six hours. About 500 IPKF

JVP's HIT-LIST VASUDEVA NEXT TARGET?

The left parties, womens groups, social service organisations, students unions, and non governmental organisations are the next targets earmarked by the Patriotic Armed Battalion which is the military wing of the proscribed Janata Vimukthi Peramuna.

In a leaflet dated January 28th issued by the Unified Headquarters (Ekabadda Mulasthanaya) of the Patriotic Armed Battalion (Deshapremi Sannaddha Balakaya) these targets are listed as being on the hit list.

The targets listed include the Special Task Force, the Green Tigers, the Left parties now comprising the United Socialist Alliance, Christian social service organisations such as SEDEC and Deva Sarana, student groups such as the Independent Students Union and foreign funded Non Governmental Organisations.

In accordance with their policy of death to traitors and peace and freedom to the people the above-mentioned groups have all been threatened with death by this leaflet.

The STF and Green Tigers are accused of state terrorism. The USA is held responsible for the betrayal of the rights of the working class and of collaborating with the government in inviting the presence of the Indian forces in the North and East which the JVP regards as an army of occupation

men were deployed along the 15 mile stretch of the railway track until the train reached the Batticaloa railway station.

SEDEC and Deva Sarana are accused of financing Eelamist terrorist groups and engaging in reactionary activities. The ISU and the various NGO's are also held responsible for similar activities regarded by the JVP as unpatriotic.

The leaflet mentions the late Mr. Vijaya Kumaranatunga and Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara by name and calls them traitors to the motherland who deserve death.

The Left party leaders are accused of collaborating with Uma Maheswaran of the PLOTE to form terror squads to hunt down patriotic elements. These military squads are supposed to have been trained by the PLOTE in Batticaloa and given arms by the government. For these reasons and for supporting the Indo-Lanka peace accord the above mentioned groups, who are reactionaries and traitors should be eliminated, the leaflet states.

NEW ARCHDEACON FOR JAFFNA

Canon Dr. Donald Jeyapalan Kanagaratnam has recently been appointed Archdeacon, Jaffna. He had previously served as the Principal of the Theological College in Pilimalawa and was until recently the Parish Priest of the Vavuniya and Mullaitivu districts. Canon Kanagaratnam graduated from the Theological College, Serampore, India and later obtained his Doctorate from the University of California at Berkeley. Ven. Dr. Kanagaratnam will be responsible for the supervision of all Anglican Churches, Social Service Institutions and schools in North Sri Lanka. We extend our felicitations to the new archdeacon and wish him all success in his services to the community during the difficult days ahead.

MADRAS NEWSLETTER

by Arjuna

The 'Eelam Factor' in Tamil Nadu Politics

The month of March ushers in the yearly heat wave in Madras. This year promises to be no different. April-May brings in the Sun in all its scorching intensity, to be followed by the drought-hit months of June-July. Not very pleasant months to go round asking for people's votes. The question being asked by everyone is — and no one has the answer — when will the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections take place?

With the imposition of President's rule and the installing of the High Commissioner in Britain Dr. P.C. Alexander as Governor (he hails from the neighbouring state of Kerala), the political dust caused by the death of MGR and the ensuing infighting in the AIADMK has settled down for the present. The only dust that is being raised is the extra one that Governor Alexander is causing through his heroic efforts to clean up the city and repair the roads; an attempt, sad to say, which was totally missing during the last years of MGR's 10-year rule, making Madras increasingly infamous not only for its political uncleanness but its physical dirt. Governor Alexander who on assuming office declared with enthusiasm that his first priority would be to hold elections does not seem to be imbued with the same enthusiasm now. The final electoral rolls, we are told would be ready on May 6, in which case the elections could not possibly take place before July, the month when the chronic water shortage is felt most. Under the Constitution, it is possible to push the polls even beyond this year: the Governor's term could be extended and the President's rule could be sustained for a year. But while water, price rises, corruption are all major domestic issues, the truth is dawning on all sections of opinion that the crucial factor at the election that might outshadow everything else is the Sri Lankan Tamil issue. This has become an embarrassing prospect for the Congress-I and the Central government.

The Congress-I has been exhibiting a determined jaw to wrest power in Tamil Nadu this time, come hell, come Karunanidhi. But then there is a long way between Delhi's determination and the facts of life. Having yielded power to the Dravida parties 20 years ago in 1967 when C.N. Annadurai formed his government and then virtually banished from the scene by Karunanidhi's spectacular DMK victory in 1971, the Congress could only keep a toe-hold in Tamil Nadu affairs

thanks to MGR's 'sick' rule and his increasing dependence on the Centre. It suited MGR — a master of realpolitik, and it suited Congress-I without a mass base, to get together in a friendly club, initially because the shadow of the DMK kept perpetually looming, and latterly because both needed each other to prevent Karunanidhi stealing a march over both of them on the Eelam Tamil question. The exit of MGR has left Congress-I with neither friend nor base except one staunch ally — Jayalalitha. But this personable lady herself had already given strong signals to everyone concerned that she has a mind of her own on the Sri Lankan Tamil question and that she cannot be taken for granted; and anyway on the question of who has the moral claim to the MGR 'legacy' — divided or undivided — it is best that no one crosses her path!

The scenario that existed in the wake of MGR's death is also fast changing. At the beginning when it was purely a home and home match in the AIADMK, the tussle was between the two Js — Janaki (62) and Jayalalitha (39), with a Dravida party confrontation ironically descending into a contest between two Brahmin females both whose origins lie outside Tamil Nadu, Janaki an Iyer from Kerala and Jayalalitha an Iyengar from Karnataka. The cynics first said that it was a fight between the wife and the mistress, but recently Janaki sponsor strong-man Veerappan expressed it in more homely language. He said the difference between the two was the one between home-cooked food and hotel food. Both sides are trading corruption charges at each other with such ferociousness and first-hand knowledge that it cuts out much of the work for the DMK, while Karunanidhi is sitting it out in the sidelines with a happy smirk on his face, because whatever political dividends that accrue are his, for the asking.

Meanwhile, Congress-I is trying hard to muscle in. Congress-I secretary in the Centre G.K. Mooppanar has been shifted to the south as Tamil Nadu Congress-I President with the express purpose of spearheading the party's campaign, but in the process causing several fissures within. The now-faded cinema star Sivaji Ganeshan has broken away and formed his own party and is working in close alliance with the Veerappan-Janaki faction. Another Congress-I group of dissidents have decided to throw their lot with the

now-emerging national opposition to the Congress-I — the Jan Morcha headed by V.P. Singh. While the present polarisation of forces indicates a Congress-I - Jayalalitha alliance on one side of the electoral fence and all other forces including the powerful DMK on the other, the chances of the Jayalalitha AIADMK being further weakened by a few defections cannot be ruled out. There are some internal rumblings already.

Sometime in January, it was presumed that the successful completion of Sri Lankan Provincial Council elections possibly around April-May could ease the path of the Congress-I in facing the Tamil Nadu elections. That hope was soon dashed. President Jayewardene had to put off the elections in the North-East until India is in a position to gather the necessary inputs for an exercise in democracy — the candidates, the voters, the fear-free atmosphere. But that precisely is Delhi's problem. As far as the Tamil people in the North-East are concerned, they cannot conceive of elections until and unless the Rajiv government sorts out its problems with the LTTE; which in turn cannot be brought about unless India drops its intransigent position on its demand for an unconditional surrender of weapons. To the Indian policy makers it could be a question of prestige but to the LTTE it could be a life-and-death issue that involves their very future and the future of the Tamil people.

While North Indian opinion is itself beginning to express disenchantment with the IPKF role in Sri Lanka, it is feared that in Tamil Nadu that might well become an explosive issue. Some accommodation with the LTTE has become imperative between now and mid-April when Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is due in Madras for the All India Congress-I flag-waving sessions. Without it, there is precious little to tell the Tamil Nadu voter. Given the distinct certainty that Karunanidhi & Co., Janaki and Veerappan (not to mention Kalimuttu with his special brand of vitriolic Tamil prose) and even Sivaji Ganeshan and all Congress-I opponents will use the Eelam Tamil issue as a stick to beat the Centre, and Jayalalitha and Mooppanar compelled not to yield ground on the issue, one cannot rule out the curious scenario of an invisible electioneer in the field — LTTE supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran!

JAFFNA MADE MANAVARAI

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'PEACE CAN'T BE BOUGHT BY SUPPRESSION'

Says People's Forum

The PEOPLE'S FORUM of Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka, a body established for the exchange of views and moulding enlightened public opinion, with its office at 21/4, Stanley Road, Jaffna, has made a strong plea to the Indian Prime Minister to desist from the course hitherto followed by his government and to 'create the necessary atmosphere for the understanding and acceptance of the Accord by the aggrieved Tamil people'.

In its third letter addressed to the Prime Minister, dated 15 February 1988, the Hony. Secretary of the Forum, Mr. T.S. Kumaresan, has said:

'During the vicious Vadamaradchchi onslaught by Sinhala armed forces, and before that during the past years of violence and atrocities perpetrated on the Tamil people by the Sri Lanka government, they had in your Excellency and the people of India someone to whom they could complain, and through you to the world for redress and justice. Today they have nobody, not even the IPKF that came with the avowed commitment to protect and safeguard them, but has turned against them suddenly transforming itself into an army of aggression. Can the victims complain to the wrong-doer and his minions? The Sinhala chauvinist leaders and other elements opposed to the peace accord are gloating at the misery of the Tamil people. It is a great pity that the arrival of the IPKF was greeted with happiness and relief by an overwhelming section of the Tamil people in the Sinhala provinces. Their hopes and aspirations have been shattered. Their unbearable experience even drove them to think whether the IPKF offensive was the final phase of the 'Operation Liberation' planned by the Sri Lanka government and against which India voiced her protest vehemently and openly indicating that she had reached her limits of patience.

'One can understand the motive of the Sinhala government — genocide of the Tamil people — but not that of the IPKF or India whose avowed commitment was all along for a negotiated political settlement to meet the aspirations of the Tamil people and against the imposition of a military solution in which the tottering fascist regime of President Jayewardene believed. In the IPKF military offensive thousands of houses had been completely destroyed and razed to the ground; temples, churches, schools, hospitals, public institutions, and even the Jaffna University and refugee camps were not exempted. In the panic and fear which ensued a great many civilians (almost the entire

population of Jaffna) left their abodes and kept wandering to places of safety, even to places like Colombo. This exodus is continuing. This is the chimera of freedom that the Tamil people in this country are chasing after. Your Excellency's government in dealing with the phantom of violence unleashed in Punjab has not resorted to killing of innocent civilians and destroying their properties.

'In the result, quite apart from the loss of lives and property, many people have been forced to live in conditions of abject squalor and poverty, having lost their means of livelihood. Education, the priceless possession which the Tamil people have always held dear to them, suffered a serious setback during this period. For the last four to five months children had been forcibly kept out of schools. Even now many children refrain from attending their schools in fear. The Courts, government offices and other public institutions remain closed for the last five months. Water and electricity were cut and the entire peninsula was thrust into total darkness. All these only show that the military operation too has failed to meet with the success that was intended. Thus, the vulnerability of the Accord is manifesting itself in all spheres of its implementation. Whether any benefit can flow from this Accord to the Tamil people remains a matter of doubt . . .

'The assumption that the present proposals for a Provincial Council set-up in Sri Lanka is parallel to the State set-up in India is most misleading. The efficacy of the Accord depends entirely on the terms of the solution envisaged to meet the crucial and fundamental issues of the struggle of the Tamil people. Unless such solution is based on real autonomy to a single Tamil region comprising the North and East with powers on matters like law and order, the police, land and land settlement and other features of autonomy it could prove illusory, and the aggrieved Tamil people could feel that their tremendous sacrifice and suffering have been in

vain. Their's is a long tale of woe littered with promises, duplicity and deceit followed by violence and genocide. Nationalism feeds on oppression.

'The picture that has emerged calls for a reappraisal of values. Should the Indian government continue with its military operation causing further havoc and disaster to the common people, or should a new approach be made towards rectification of errors already committed? This is the question looming large . . .

'To the Tamil people the events of the last three of four months were full of nightmarish experiences. Never in the wildest dreams would the Tamil people have come by the phenomenon that their Indian saviours turning to be their killers or destroyers. The psychological impact has been tremendous; they never before felt such an intense sense of betrayal. Their tales of woe and suffering are no doubt bound to debilitate the image of India in the eyes of the world. The wounds inflicted may be healed in the passage of time, but the scars will remain as important landmarks in their recorded history. Time has still not run out for doing what should be done to alleviate the sufferings of the Tamil people. This is the challenge facing the Indian government today. How the Government of India will react to meet this challenge, only the future will unfold.

'We conclude with the following passage from the speech made by Your Excellency's mother, the late Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi to the Indian Students' Association of Washington in Washington on November 5, 1971:

'We all know through history that men have been killed, men have been wounded, crushed and suppressed, but the spirit of man and the ideas of freedom, of human dignity, have never been crushed in the history of man. We have been through this in India and every country which fought for freedom has been through it. It is this spirit of man which has helped man to progress and to rise to new heights. India certainly cannot be a party to the suppression of this spirit of freedom and human dignity. Nor do we believe that peace can be bought by such suppression. Perhaps you can delay freedom but you cannot prevent it.'

Cambridge pension for Mrs Ramanujan

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE has decided to sanction a pension of £2000 sterling (about Rs 45000) per year to Mrs Janaki Ramanujan, wife of late Srinivasa Ramanujan, India's mathematical genius.

A British Deputy High Commission official in Madras called on Mrs Ramanujan at her residence to inform her of

this decision. It was at Cambridge that Mr Ramanujan did most of his research work in number theory. His old college decided to grant the pension in recognition of his unique contribution to mathematics.

Mrs Ramanujan has gratefully accepted the university's offer to sanction her an annual pension.

A SHATTERED ILLUSION OR BETRAYAL?

by C. KATHIRESAN

If we Tamils now feel betrayed by India, it is because we cast India in the role of the 'White Knight in Shining Armour' who would one day come to the rescue of the Sri Lankan Tamil damsel in distress. Every time the going got rough for us we beseeched 'Mother India' to intervene. So that when Indian planes dropped relief supplies to the beleaguered citizens of Jaffna, we heaved a sigh of relief that India had made its first tangible move. And when almost against the run of play the Indo-Sri Lankan peace accord was signed, we were convinced that our expectations of Indian support were well founded. As Indian troops set foot on Sri Lankan soil, the euphoria was uncontrollable. Suddenly, what seemed a much desired but improbable scenario was being enacted before one's very eyes.

If we are disillusioned today, it is as much for the unwarranted carnage which the IPKF unleashed on Jaffna — as it is for the reason that we have had our dreams of a special relationship shattered. Somehow we had planted firmly in our thinking process an assumption that our struggle for liberation had the unreserved support of India. It is ironic that the majority of the Sinhalese also still believe this to be true. It is this central assumption that has driven our strategy, our plans, our calculations and our hopes. All the pieces of circumstantial evidence buttressed the theory that in the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, India would put its weight firmly on the side of the Tamils. It was reasonable to assume that with over 40 million Tamils within its own territory India would find it difficult to sit on the fence in a conflict between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamils. A positive measure of this support was that after 1983 Tamil

militants were assured of a safe haven in India, from where they mounted their resistance to the Sri Lankan Security forces. It is no secret that quasi governmental agencies were in regular touch with the militants, and even trained their cadres and conveniently ignored the supplies of weaponry that were flowing in to them.

The Indian government went further by making the appropriate belligerent gestures when President Jayewardene stepped up his offensive against the Tamils. All these were strong indicators of a growing sympathy in India for the Tamil position. But, if we Tamils read more into this support than what India had in mind we were either naive or optimistic beyond reason.

There was always a symbiotic streak in the relationship that developed between India and the Tamil militants. The physical presence of Tamil Liberation Groups gave India the leverage to manage its relations with a neighbouring state which was flirting with its traditional enemies. If the Tamil militants needed India's supportive role, India equally needed them as the pressure point through which Sri Lankan acquiescence in foreign policy matters could be secured. It became increasingly clear that any negotiated settlement of the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka would involve India. The LTTE quite rightly spurned any bilateral agreement with the Jayewardene government unless the terms of such an agreement were underwritten by India. Sri Lankan government circles which had stridently opposed any interference from India in what they considered an internal problem, gradually veered round to the view that it was unavoidable, however damaging it was to their national pride. India had thus attained its immediate objective. By the time the Accord was signed, both the Sri Lankan

government and the LTTE, with all their reservations about the terms of the Accord (for obviously different reasons) had conceded the right of India to set the agenda for the resolution of the ethnic conflict.

Having thus conceded this right albeit by implication, it is injudicious for the LTTE to attempt its reversal through a trial of military strength. It is, of course, important to stress that the direction of the IPKF, which mounted what was virtually a scorched earth policy in dealing with the LTTE was not only flawed by even the minimal standards of any professional army but it also directly contributed towards the distancing of the LTTE from a position from which it could negotiate.

But negotiate we must — instead of extending the antagonistic posture into a propaganda war against India. There are situations when it is not only appropriate but more effective to achieve what you want by showing up the moral weaknesses of your adversary. But if what you want is not a sectarian, narrow, limited objective but self respect and peace for a people who have cried out for it for too long a time, there is an urgent need to review your strategy. If the LTTE on the basis of their own claims and in fact as most would concede, has become the undisputed vehicle through which this can be realised, it is important for them not to be distracted by provocations — however grave, but proceed to come to terms with the harsh realities of the real world and deliver to those whose expectations they have enshrined. Given that it is not in India's interest to preside over the total annihilation of the Tamil liberation movement, the LTTE still has options available to it which can be exercised without compromising the righteousness of the Tamil cause.

'DISAPPEARANCES' IN SRI LANKA

The question of enforced involuntary disappearance of persons in Sri Lanka was again raised at the Forty-fourth sessions of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights held at Geneva during February-March.

The following is an extract from the statement made before the Commission by Amnesty International:

In the current report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, one finds the SRI LANKA Government resorting to the familiar denials or evasions that are so often invoked by governments to avoid responsibility for 'disappearances': the 'disappeared' have left the country, or changed their names, or been killed by rival militant groups or in clashes between such groups and the security forces. However, there is also a wel-

come, albeit implicit, acknowledgement of the problem in the statement that 'with the return of effective civilian authority to the northern and eastern sections of the country, the Government hoped to release resources and personnel for better organized and more intensive work in the tracing of those reported to have disappeared'. However, no decisive inquiries appear to have been conducted by the government and so far over 650 people 'disappeared' in Sri Lanka between 1983 and mid-1987. In most cases there is first-hand evidence that the 'disappeared' were arrested by the security forces. Some former detainees, released under the terms of the July Indo-Sri Lankan accord, have sworn that they saw some of the 'disappeared' being tortured and, in a few cases, had to assist in the burning of some of their

bodies inside Special Task Force Camps in eastern Sri Lanka. Furthermore, relatives of Sinhalese persons recently reported to have been arrested in southern Sri Lanka complained they were unable to establish the whereabouts of arrested family members.'

The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the Commission submitted a detailed report on the subject. The following represents the statistical summary of 'disappearances' contained in the report:

- I. Cases reported to have occurred in 1987 28
- II. Outstanding cases 667
- III. Total number of cases transmitted to the Government by the Working Group 686
- IV. Government responses
 - (a) number of cases on which the Government has provided one or more specific responses 213
 - (b) Cases clarified by the Government's responses 14
- V. Cases clarified by non-governmental sources 5

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SRI LANKA

At a complicated pass, but new hopes

The situation in Sri Lanka is complicated and difficult, but there are new hopes and new expectations. A Special Correspondent of 'FRONTLINE' writes on the situation that is developing in the wake of the brutal assassination of a political visionary, a man of exceptional and even reckless courage, the SLMP leader and filmstar, Vijaya Kumaranatunga, and also looks at other developments in the North involving the IPKF and the LTTE.

Seven months after the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement — which was expected to bring ethnic peace and other gains to the island and also to the relationship between the two countries — the situation is quite unsettled and apparently full of risk. Can implementation of the balanced and far-going package overcome the obstacles and odds and go ahead? Can peace return to a nation which has been bleeding for many years now, both the Tamil and Sinhala components?

While several soft and even nonsensical options have been proposed all round, including by certain opposition elements in India which have called for a more-or-less unconditional pullout by the Indian Peace-Keeping Force, the hard option is precisely what India has been engaged in implementing. No one can pretend that this is precisely what the signers of the Agreement had in mind on July 28, 1987, or that the path ahead is clear. But in the face of the inter-related acts of ethnic violence, chauvinistic opposition and sheer terrorism, no one has come up with a reasonable alternative to the hard option being pursued on the ground.

In the North and East, over 55,000 Indian troops equipped with formidable firepower and logistical support and elements of air cover and naval deployment have been engaged in the deadly task of disarming and neutralising the Tigers — a task that has won partial success, especially in the Jaffna Peninsula, but has involved a fairly high toll. Will the LTTE go further in its course of taking on the Indian armed forces — fighting with 'one and a half hands tied to the back' — or come to terms with the basic requirements laid down by India's role of demilitarising the ethnic conflict? With the Tigers making an offer of 'unconditional talks' during which arms would be handed over in

return for security and protection of their leaders and cadres, and with India responding positively, new hopes have been raised. They focussed on the major challenge of establishing peace in the Tamil region on the basis of the LTTE handing over its arms and cooperating with India in implementing the Agreement while entering the political mainstream.

In the South of the island, the Jayewardene Government — weakened internally by the dangerous political game being played by Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa and National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali — faces tough mainstream political opposition as well as the murderous terrorism spearheaded by the Janata Vimukti Peramuna (JVP) which is determined to bring this regime (in power since 1977) to its knees. Sirimavo Bandaranaike's Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and the JVP seem to have forged some kind of undeclared political front for this purpose. The combination, plus long accumulated socio-economic and systemic troubles, do pose a live danger to the political stability of Sri Lanka as a nation. The immediate target is the Agreement — and specifically India's central, determining role in resolving the ethnic conflict.

The campaign of terror mounted by the JVP and such death threat-issuing groups as the 'Joint Headquarters of Patriotic Armed Forces' and 'The National Campaign for Punishing Traitors' (see boxes) have taken a deadly toll in the Sinhala areas. Aside from the loss of lives and the damage to property, it has spread demoralisation and uncertainty all round.

Nevertheless, the back-to-the-wall political struggle waged by President J.R. Jayewardene and the supporters of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement within the Government and outside has been a resourceful one, and India's part in implementation makes it a high-profile cooperator with a direct and major stake in the results. The Agreement provides for a new democratic institution, the provincial council, to which both legislative and executive power is to be devolved. Serious implementation means holding elections to the eight councils — especially the one for the combined North and East — without being put off by the combination of saboteurs. Creating the conditions for this democratic devolution exercise is a formidable challenge — but there is no way to go, it seems, but on into the

political minefield. Meanwhile President Jayewardene might have a surprise or two up his sleeve, for his adversaries. And India's role, going through a very difficult phase, might come through stronger and clearer by March-April.

It looks like a high-risk strategy, pursued within a tight time frame, in which tangible results achieved on the ground in the North and East are perceived to hold the key to an eventual political resolution of the crisis.

But despite the prescriptions advocated breezily by the V.P. Singhs, the Chandra Shekhars and the Karunanidhis, it is clear that capitulation and retreat would mean disaster — from the standpoint of the Tamils, from the standpoint of the viability of Sri Lanka as a nation, and from the standpoint of India's larger interests.

In the critical analysis of a scholar, James Manor, who focusses on the complexities, the risks and the new hopes: 'The Accord of 1987 is fraught with ambiguities and difficulties, but it offers Sri Lanka the first genuine prospect of social reconciliation and political regeneration since 1981. If it collapses, the alternatives are without exception alarming, for every section of the island's society.' It may be added that for India the alternatives — in terms of backing out of serious implementation of the Agreement or abandoning the hard option where the soft options amount to capitulation — are equally unacceptable.

DEATH OF A VISIONARY

On February 21, the backlash was moving and powerful — too overpowering perhaps to hold together as a settled fact of political life, in a nation wounded badly by ethnic strife and frequent terrorist strikes against civil society. It was a spontaneous democratic fightback against chauvinistic Sinhala terrorism which seemed to have forged a political understanding and even a nexus with a mainstream chauvinistic party. The mass mood was taken to the whole country by live coverage of the entire proceedings on State-owned television and radio.

The death of a political visionary, a man of exceptional and even reckless courage who happened, surprisingly to be Sri Lanka's most popular filmstar, evoked this extraordinary response from all sections of Sri Lankan society. The congregation at Independence Square where the body, enclosed in a casket mainly for the reason that the

handsome face had been blown off in the brutal assassination with a T-56 automatic rifle, was cremated on a Sunday afternoon was estimated reliably at 400,000 to 500,000. It was a very impressive figure for a nation with a population of some 16 million people.

Vijaya Kumaranatunga did not merely swim against the Chauvinistic current of the post-1983 period. He did so in a manner, and displaying a simple, heroic style, that set him off as a political leader from virtually all the rest. He spoke out, at a low moment for Tamil political fortunes as well as for the island's politics, in favour of returning to the principles and the baseline of the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact of 1957 — as a way out of the ethnic mess. When an Indian correspondent met him in Colombo in late-December 1985, he openly supported the proposition of merger of the North and East as the unit of devolution. In striking out in this unexpected way, with results that proved personally fatal, Vijaya was in strong partnership with his wife, Chandrika, younger daughter of Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the former Prime Minister, and chair-

person of the SLMP, which had broken away from the SLFP in an earlier era.

Vijaya Kumaranatunga was a charismatic political figure who advocated a fair and just political resolution of the island's ethnic dispute which had been brutalised over an extended period. He publicly recognised the socio-political fact of Tamil alienation, the roots of armed militancy, and the grievances of the Tamils. He favoured a genuine devolution of power as the rational and progressive solution.

When the Sri Lankan State was pursuing a costly military solution in the North and East, he came twice to Madras in 1986 and 1987 to meet every section of the Tamil militants plus the moderates and Indian political leaders. He travelled in a convoy to Jaffna into the Tigers' den, seeking the negotiated release of Sinhala soldiers and, in the process, a civilised political dialogue with the LTTE leaders. He even won a public accolade from the LTTE's leader, V. Prabhakaran.

After the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement was signed in July 1987, Vijaya became its strong supporter while reserving the

right to express his doubts and his criticism of the overall performance of implementation — as well as his oppositional politics. Vijaya's line in the left alliance during this period was heroic — uphill all the way. It was a line of mobilising the masses for a fightback against mainstream political chauvinism and terrorism that exploited the new mass mood. While the LTTE proved the chief obstacle on the Tamil side — taking on, eventually, nothing less than the Indian Peace-Keeping Force — the JVP proved a vicious enemy which clearly felt that its time had come in the wake of the 'treacherous' Agreement.

The brutal gunning down of Vijaya in daylight, at his home, marked a significant triumph for these forces. Since the signing of the peace Agreement, they have embarked on an ideological and terrorist campaign, switching back and forth to the relevant tracks. The SLFP opposed the constitutional amendments for the devolution of power through provincial councils and has announced a decision to boycott provincial council elections. But the most virulent enemy has been

PUNISHMENT TO ALL ENEMIES OF THE MOTHERLAND

- * All those who supported the so-called Jayewardene-Gandhi Peace Agreement which betrayed our motherland and our people to the Indian imperialists and the legislation to establish Provincial Councils.
- * All those who are supporters of the traitor Jayewardene fascist clique and its murderous policies.
- * All those who support the presence of the aggressor forces and who attempt to whitewash its destructive actions.
- * All those who attempt to betray the patriotic forces that enter the struggle to protect the motherland from the Indian aggressor forces and their puppet, Jayewardene.
- * All those who kill, torture or harass the patriotic forces in accordance with the illegal repressive laws enacted by this illegitimate government in order to repress the patriotic forces.
- * All those who organise terrorist cliques of various forms and assist the traitor Jayewardene to repress the patriotic peoples organisations (Deshapremi Janata Viyaparaya).
- * All those who engage in activity of any kind against the patriotic forces and who seek to mislead the people on behalf of the enemies of the motherland. . .

Patriots

We shall fight against Jayewardene, against his fascist clique, against his fascist killers, against the Green Tigers that he has organised. We shall climb over mountains of corpses; we shall swim across lakes of blood; we shall sacrifice our lives; we shall fight for the independence of our motherland. This we swear to you.

However, allied with this open

enemy and fighting against the patriotic forces are many enemies in disguise. These enemies, directed by the traitor Jayewardene and reactionary international organisations, appear before the people as progressives, social workers, human rights activists, artists, peasant leaders, or trade union leaders. Backed by secret funds from the UNP or from suspect organisations of the Catholic Church like SEDEC or Devasaranaya, acting in concert with Eelam terrorist organisations, they have already brought into being terrorist gangs, sometimes armed by the State, in order to terrorise and kill patriotic forces.

We can only protect our motherland by sweeping away not only the foreign aggressor, not only the open traitors but also this third force of traitors in disguise.

Who are these enemies, this third force?

The Lanka Sama Samaja Party which from its birth on December 18, 1935 has misled the working class, has betrayed the working class at every critical juncture, has in effect worked for the UNP in return for privileges, honours, etc. for the reactionaries.

The Ceylon Communist Party which from its inception on July 3, 1948 has fed itself from the World Socialist Movement but has acted as stooges of the UNP, betrayers of the entire working class movement in 1980 and has in effect betrayed the revolutionary movement in Sri Lanka.

Vijaya Kumaranatunga who entered the SLFP through marriage only in order to split what was then the principal anti-UNP force in the country, who spawned a bogus Naxalite conspiracy in order to allow Jayewar-

dene to postpone the general election of 1983, who has now embraced Eelam terrorist murderers and is acting in all respects as the obedient acolyte of Jayewardene.

Vasudeva Nanayakkara who has acted in a similar fashion and a number of so-called trade union leaders who fatten themselves on the movement but refuse to lift a finger against the repression of the working class by Jayewardene.

The Janata Sangamaya which battens on support from SEDEC and Devasaranaya and other suspect foreign organisations and is a reactionary tiger in the disguise of a peasant organisation.

A clique of various human rights and women's activists who receive assistance from reactionary international organisations and are active in disseminating leaflets and pamphlets.

The Independent Students' Union which is only a catspaw of the Eelamist terrorist organisations.

These are the enemies of those who are true enemies of Jayewardene, of the real opposition to him.

At this critical juncture, all those have taken a stand on behalf of Jayewardene, on behalf of reaction.

All these are the enemies of the motherland and therefore deserve to be punished. Independence for the motherland and peace and liberty to the people requires that all these should be swept away.

Death to all enemies of the motherland.

Liberty and Peace to the People.

JOINT HEADQUARTERS OF
PATRIOTIC ARMED FORCES
January 25, 1988

the JVP.

This party began as an ultra-'left' non-parliamentary party dedicated to the creation of a 'socialist society' through 'revolution'. It, however, refused to accept plantation labour as a genuine component of the Sri Lankan proletariat and opposed 'Indian expansionism'. At the beginning of the Eighties, it was 'sympathetic' to the cause of the Tamils, going to the extent of recognising their 'right to self-determination'. After 1983, it swung again and today it is the voice of extreme Sinhala chauvinism, totally devoid of any scruples and any 'socialist' content.

The JVP's present political agenda is simple — a call to the Sinhala people to agitate for a general election at which they would be expected to elect, with a two-thirds majority, a government that would 'abrogate' the peace Agreement, send the Indian Army, dubbed an 'aggressor force', back to India, scrap the provincial councils and crush Tamil militancy by military force.

Anyone who opposes this programme, anyone who supports the peace Agreement and the devolution of power exercise, becomes a 'traitor to the motherland'. It is this simple logic that proclaimed Vijaya Kumaranatunga a 'traitor' and publicly claimed credit for his assassination.

Vijaya was the prime mover in forging an alliance of left and progressive tendencies and parties to campaign on the chief national question in Sri Lanka — the ethnic crisis. The United Socialist Alliance was to include two Tamil political organisations — the PLOTF led by Umamaheswaran and the EPRLF led by Padmanabha — and was to be the first symbol of a determination to overcome the island's ethnic division.

The three parties of the left — the Sri Lanka Mahajan Pakshaya led by Vijaya and Chandrika Kumaranatunga, the Communist Party and the Lanka

ALL THOSE WHO HAVE DIED ARE TRAITORS WHO DESERVED TO DIE

Our motherland cannot be rescued from slavery except by overthrowing the illegitimate, reactionary fascist dictatorship of the India-dominated puppet Jayewardene clique and of various traitors in disguise who are supporting him.

The people recognise these as the traitors in service of reaction today: The Vijaya Kumaranatunga clique which split the SLP at the behest of Jayewardene and then embraced Tamil Eelamist terrorist murders; the Communist Party, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Nava Sama Samaja Party leaders who supported the betrayal of our motherland; the Independent Students' Union which is the associate of Tamil Eelamist murderers; various social service, human rights, women's artists groups and associations which are the instruments of the Catholic Church. These are the reactionaries and traitors who supported the so-called peace agreements, who betrayed the country, who supported the Indian aggression.

These traitors have now organised themselves to assist the Hitlerite Jayewardene clique against patriotic forces. They have brought to Colombo and are conspiring with Uma Mahes-

waran, an Indian stooge and a Tamil murderer. They have trained some persons in Batticaloa in one of his camps; armed by him and with the blessings of the Jayewardene clique, they are now set to attack the patriotic forces . . .

James Athugala, who was punished recently, was one of these trained persons. Nandana Marasinghe was one of their organisers and a police informer. The activists of the Vijaya Kumaranatunga clique, of the Communist Party, of the Janata Sangamaya located at Devasaranaya which is now part of the reactionary Catholic Church, opponents of so-called chauvinism, are the other parties to this.

Patriots

Do not be deceived by these traitors . . . we have correctly recognised the enemy. We shall punish them as they deserve. In the struggle for the liberty of our motherland and our people, no traitor can be forgiven.

Patriots, Unite

Sweep away all traitors and their supporters.

**THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR
PUNISHING TRAITORS**
1988-01-18

Sama Samaja Party — have been working together over the last three years, advocating a political resolution of the ethnic conflict through a process of devolution. The Nava Sama Samaja Party led by Vasudeva Nanayakara has struggled for some time to join this alliance; its overtures were rejected by the LSSP which did not wish to give sanction to what it considered a break-away. This difficulty was overcome in early 1988.

The first indications that the alliance might cover a wider scope — and bridge

the ethnic divide in practical terms — was the presence of the PLOT and the EPRLF at a meeting of trade unions and other progressive organisations convened by the four parties to denounce the use of violence as a political instrument. The statement issued by the four parties chronicles the rising authoritarianism and repressive tactics of the Government in both the North and South. While condemning such 'anti-democratic' activities, the statement denounced the use of violence and
(Contd. next page 12)

THE ONLY ROAD TO PEACE

There is no peace today either in the North or the South. The Jayewardenes and the Amirthalingams must bear the responsibility for this situation. The people in the North are, in addition, subject to the military terror of a foreign army. After signing the secret pact with Gandhi, the Jayewardene-Dissanayake fascist clique is acting to repress the people's opposition by murderous assaults on patriots . . . The violence of the patriots is only a reaction to the State-sponsored fascist violence of the Jayewardene-Dissanayake clique.

The monopoly in violence that the Jayewardene regime enjoyed is now at an end. Being frightened, they are now escalating violence against the people. This will bring them to their inevitable end. All those who talk about peace must understand one thing: peace can be obtained only by chasing away the illegitimate, treasonous, fascist clique

of Jayewardene-Dissanayake-Thondaman.

- * In order to bring peace to Sri Lanka, the traitor Jayewardene, an avatar of Hitler, must be removed from power.
- * In order to bring peace to Sri Lanka, the stooges of Jayewardene — Dissanayake, Ranil Wickremasinghe, Ananda Tissa de Alwis and all other traitors — must be thrown out.
- * The Indian aggressor forces must be sent out of Sri Lanka.
- * The Secret Jayewardene-Gandhi Pact must be totally rejected.
- * The Provincial Councils legislation, which is a betrayal of the rights of the majority of the people and which actually increases inequality, must be repealed.
- * Eelamist terrorism must be defeated.
- * The State terrorism of the Jayewardene clique must be ended.
- * All foreign intervention in the affairs

of Sri Lanka, including that of India, must be ended.

- * The territorial integrity of Sri Lanka, the sovereignty of its people and full democracy must be reaffirmed and restored.

We do not want today a provincial council election. What the country requires is a general election and a presidential election. Therefore, all opposition parties must boycott the provincial council elections, and agitate and struggle for general elections. In order to achieve the objectives mentioned, the opposition forces must ask the people for a two-thirds majority in Parliament. We are confident that a united opposition can win this power. All patriots, all true opponent parties, all groups must realise this.

*Central Committee of the
JANATA VIMUKTI
PERAMUNA*

November 18, 1987

WRONG WAR, WRONG PLACE

What does enlightened Indian opinion feel about the Rajiv Gandhi Government's imbroglio in Sri Lanka? Here are relevant portions of comments made by LT.GEN. S.K. SINHA, (Retd.) in an article under the title 'Defence Debate' and published in the INDIAN EXPRESS of 26 February 1988.

Lt.Gen. Sinha, known to be a brawny, brainy soldier-scholar, is also an effective communicator, both as public speaker and writer, and while in the Army was acclaimed as a strategist of note. Even in retirement he has been gaining in stature in his home state of Bihar.

THE course of events in Sri Lanka has been topsy turvy. The peace accord has resulted in large-scale death, destruction and despair. We sent our troops to the island to protect the Tamils and have ended up fighting the Tamil Tigers. We now have 70,000 troops in Sri Lanka fighting a bleeding war on which we are spending Rs. four crore a day. The rationale behind our military involvement in Sri Lanka is difficult to understand. Initially we flexed our

military muscle by violating Sri Lankan air space and dropped 25 tons of relief stores, half of which must have fallen in the lagoons and the jungles. Thus this mercy mission providing a mere 12 tons of relief stores for 200,000 beleaguered people, hardly provided any succour. It greatly hurt Sinhalese national pride.

Thereafter, as an image building and vote catching exercise, we rushed into an accord, which was almost a copy-book repetition of the ill-fated Punjab accord. Notwithstanding the fact that our jawans have been fighting with exemplary gallantry and devotion, it is difficult for them to retrieve a situation arising out of a basically flawed accord. They have thus got engaged in fighting a wrong war at the wrong place and at the wrong time.

Imaginary threats

While talking to the students at Shantiniketan recently, the Prime Minister justified our military presence in Sri Lanka on the plea that Sri Lanka, otherwise, would have become a base for forces unfriendly to India, and that would have posed a threat to our southern borders. When one compares the justifications concerning Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, one discerns a remarkable similarity. All of them are based on imaginary threats. The so-called threat we faced from Sri Lanka needs to be discussed in detail. Being about 50 times smaller than India in population, size and military strength, Sri Lanka by itself is in no position to pose any threat to us. The superpowers can pose a threat even without any base in Sri Lanka, but in the present international scenario, that threat materialising is a very remote possibility. China is most unlikely to venture on such a long-distance operation which may be beyond its capability. Pakistan will not forget in a hurry the lesson of geography she learnt in 1971. Had Pakistan sent her forces to Sri Lanka, that would have provided us an excellent opportunity to beef up the LTTE and embroil it in a long bleeding war on the island. That would have seriously weakened her on the main front in the north.

Almost as an afterthought it is now being argued that if our forces had not gone to Sri Lanka, foreign elements inimical to us would have got a foothold there. This gets ruled out by a statement President Jayewardene made at about the time when the accord was concluded. He declared that he had first tried to get help from the US and when this was not forthcoming, he had asked UK, Pakistan and China. But they too did not respond positively. It was only then that he turned to India for help because India is 'the dominant power in the region' and is friendly to Sri Lanka. The army chief has asked us to see these operations 'in the correct overall perspective of India's security compulsions'. Indeed we must do so. There is

likely to be an accretion in Pakistan's deployable strength against us. With the Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan, two to three Pakistani divisions earmarked for the Pak-Afghan border would get released from employment on the Indo-Pak border. Some 10,000 Pakistani troops now in Saudi Arabia are returning home by March 1988. Thus there may be a 70,000 increase in Pakistani strength against us while our strength has got depleted by 70,000 due to the Sri Lankan involvement. The other argument put forward by the army chief, 'If you do not help extinguish fire in your neighbour's house, it will spread to yours,' is not very convincing. There is a large expanse of water between the neighbour and us. Moreover, one does not go to extinguish a fire in a neighbour's house and then get involved in fighting him.

Vietnam solution

The LTTE chose to present an identifiable target at Jaffna and our forces smashed their resistance in a difficult street fighting operating, compounded by the former using the civilian population, as a human shield. Now we are engaged in fighting an insurgency. The LTTE may establish a link with the Sinhalese extremists, the JVP, and insurgency may spread from the northern and eastern provinces to other parts of Sri Lanka. With opposition mounting to the octogenarian President and to the accord in his own ruling party, besides the opposition parties and the extremists, and he being the mainstay of the accord in Sri Lanka, we have all the makings of a Vietnam situation on our hands. Insurgency is always a long-drawn-out affair, sucking in more and more troops. It lasted more than 30 years in Vietnam. We ourselves have been engaged in tackling it for more than 30 years in Nagaland. The IPKF started initially as a 8,000-strong force last year, and now its strength has risen to 70,000. The situation has built up for our getting embroiled in Sri Lanka for a long time.

The political fall-out from our involvement in Sri Lanka can also be counter productive. Our forces in Sri Lanka despite all the excellent work done by them, are getting isolated. The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and his minister for internal security have not hesitated to castigate the IPKF in the Sri Lankan Parliament. The opposition parties and the extremists have continued their tirade. Even within our country, there has been growing disenchantment in Tamil Nadu. This may be exploited in the coming state elections. No amount of political gimmickry and devaluation of the nation's highest award, the Bharat Ratna, will prevent this.

The door for political negotiations with the LTTE appears to have been closed. The Prime Minister and the Defence Minister have been repeatedly asserting that there can be no talks till

Contd. from page 11

terrorist methods by both the LTTE and the JVP. The thrust of the statement was in favour of the re-establishment and reinforcement of democratic norms and practices, including the exercise of their democratic rights by the Tamil people in a scheme of devolved power.

Vijaya Kumaranatunga, who campaigned against timidity and excessive caution in taking forward this line, was the prime mover in forging the left alliance. Aside from posing a sharp alternative to the Sinhala chauvinist forces led by the SLFP and the JVP, the alliance would pose a visible alternative to the UNP in the formulation of policies for economic, social and political development. It would seek to project a non-'racist', non-capitalist alternative in the island's politics despite the ideological-political differences and nuances among the various parties of the alliance.

The formal announcement of the formation of the front, with the adoption of a programme of action, was scheduled for February 21. It happened to be the day Vijaya Kumaranatunga — the stuff of which political visionaries and heroes are made — was cremated in front of unprecedented numbers of people streaming in from various parts of the island to pay an extraordinarily moving tribute.

The question now is: what is the way forward and what lies in store for those who have proposed an alternative? Courtesy of Frontline, March 5-18, 1988

ABRUPT END TO DEATH FAST

IPKF ACCUSED

The fast unto death by 58-year old Mrs. Annammah David of the Batticaloa Mothers' Front came to an abrupt end on the 27th day amidst accusations and counter-accusations. While the IPKF which removed Mrs. David from the Pillayar Temple where she undertook the fast, said that the daughters of the lady had alleged in a letter that their mother was being forced to continue the fast against her will, the Mothers' Front under whose auspices the fast was being conducted alleged that the IPKF had forcibly removed Mrs. David against her consent with a view to bring an end to the fast.

All the circumstances point to the fact that the Indian authorities wanted to avoid the consequences following the probable death of Mrs. David had the fast continued, and therefore created a situation in which it was brought to a premature end with her removal and being force-fed.

The fast began when the two demands put forward by the Mothers' Front in the eastern coastal town of Batticaloa were not fulfilled. The Front's two demands were an unconditional cease-fire in the fighting between the IPKF and the LTTE and the holding of negotiations between India and LTTE. The fast was undertaken by two women members of the Front, Mrs. Annammah David and Mrs. Nesammah Vadivel on February 19.

Right from the beginning, the Indian High Commission in Colombo had attempted to play down the significance of the fast and discredit the Front and the two women by alleging that they had become victims of manipulation by the LTTE. On the 10th day of the fast, the Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka Mr. Dixit visited Batticaloa but did not see the fasting women. However, the two women took glucose and salted water on being told that a favourable situation was developing for negotiations to commence between the LTTE and India. It is said that they took this step to prevent a serious situation developing in the event of their death and damage the prospects for peaceful talks.

When the two women found that nothing was happening on the negotiating front and the fighting and the IPKF operations were continuing, they recommenced their fast. However, after three more days, Mrs. Nesammah Vadivel gave up the fast, but Mrs. David continued.

The death-fast of Mrs. David attracted widespread support in the Tamil areas and there were marches and token one-day fasts by women in support of the demands of the Mothers' Front and the death-fast. The trade unions in the Batticaloa district also staged one-day protest action but their march was banned by the IPKF. It also

prevented people gathering at the Mamanga Pillayar temple which had begun to attract large crowds following the fast by Mrs. David.

It is said that the daughters of Mrs. David wanted their mother not to continue with the fast because they did not want her to die in consequence. However, their persuasion of their mother did not work.

The IPKF personnel went to the temple on 16 March and, it is alleged forcibly, removed Mrs. David, took her to an IPKF Nursing Home in the Batticaloa Rest House and thereafter force-fed her.

While the IPKF had stated that they had acted in a humanitarian spirit to save Mrs. David's life, the Batticaloa Citizen's Committee has accused the IPKF of having acted in a high handed manner. The President of the Citizens' Committee, Rev. Fr. Chandra Fernando, in a statement issued concerning the events leading to the removal of Mrs. David said:

'The Citizens Committee of Batticaloa wishes to make the following statement with regard to the calling off of the fast-unto-death by Mrs. Annamma David, organised by the Mothers Front of the Batticaloa-Amparai district and her subsequent removal by the IPKF yesterday:

'On 16.03.1988 at about 11.45a.m., I received a telephone call from Brigadier Dhar of the IPKF to a meeting at the Rest house. I went there immediately with the Secretary and Assistant Secretary and found the President of the Rotary Club and office bearers of the Mothers Front also present.

'The Brigadier informed the gathering that he has received a letter, a written document from the three daughters of Mrs. Annamma David to the effect that their mother was being made to observe this fast under pressure and coercion and requesting the

assistance of the IPKF to save their mother's life.

'The Mothers Front said that they too had a written document from Mrs. Annamma David to the effect that she was undertaking this fast at her own will and pleasure and that also had a tape recording of her oral statement of the same nature.

'In view of these two conflicting statements the Citizens Committee suggested that we should all proceed to the spot and find out direct from Mrs. Annamma David the truth or otherwise of the two statements and hear from her own lips of free choice in this and then decide on the action to be taken if any. The Brigadier then said that his objective being to save a life, he has already decided to intervene and remove Mrs. Annamma David with or without her consent.

'The Citizens Committee then pointed out that there was no purpose in having summoned this meeting if the Brigadier had already decided on his course of action and walked out and while leaving we heard orders being issued to detain the representatives of the Mothers Front.

'Later, eye witnesses complained to me that IPKF had come to the sight of the fast spot and informed those gathered there that they had been requested by the President of the Mothers Front to bring Mrs. David to the rest house where she was. On being asked, why the President of the Mothers Front could not herself come and take her away, the IPKF began to break up the shed and then by firing in the air and forcibly carried away Mrs. David to an ambulance in spite of her protest and clinking on the foot of her bed.

'Mrs. Annamma David is a lady of mature years and capable of making her own decision. We are of the opinion that IPKF should have first sought the decision of Mrs. David on continuing or calling off the fast and that the forcible removal of Mrs. David is a violation of her rights.'

JAFFNA CP LEADER KILLED

S. Vijayanathan, aged 46, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka was shot dead on 8 March as he was leaving his home in the morning.

A note left on the dead man's body said that he was killed as he was a 'traitor' to the Tamils by supporting the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord.

S. Vijayanathan, who was also Secretary of the CP's Jaffna District and led its work in the peninsula, had apparently been 'warned' before that he would be killed because of his activities and those of his party. He was also the Secretary of the Joint Co-

ordinating Committee of Trade Unions in the northern province.

Various political parties in Sri Lanka and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) have condemned the killing of Vijayanathan.

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REJOINDER TO DR. SELBOURNE

The perceptive analysis of David Selbourne on Tamil deliverance (TAMIL TIMES, Jan. 1988) is a 'sour pill' for many to swallow. It has pinpointed the flaws in the leadership which have emerged among Sri Lankans (both Tamils and Sinhalese) and Indians. However, what Selbourne says need not be the gospel for the future of Sri Lanka. Though not dismissing Selbourne's logic, I wish to submit some factual overview on the techniques of Gandhi and Mao as it relates to the political struggle of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

From the times of Caesars to Chur-chills and Chiang Kai Sheks, we have learnt that the so-called 'statesmen' with military power can also bite the dust. Only nine decades ago, during the Boxer Rebellion, Kaiser William II brandished his objectives in conquering China: 'Peking should be razed to the ground. Show no mercy! Take no prisoners! A thousand years ago, the Huns of King Attila made a name for themselves . . . thus may you impose the name of Germany in China for a thousand years'. The great leveller TIME had His own game plan, so much so that Kaiser's wishes couldn't even last for half a century. Didn't the British rulers brag 'Sun never sets in the British Empire' not so long ago and have to live to eat their words?

SELBOURNE laments that the suffering of Tamils in Sri Lanka 'will be prolonged as long as they fail to create from their ranks a unified and mature leadership of statesmen, not brigands'. But, statesmanship is a scarce commodity not only Sri Lankan Tamils, but also among the super powers (and senile super powers like Britain). Who are the statesmen the USA have produced after Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt? Can you consider Harry Truman (the notorious non humanist who used the atom bomb in 1945, and the shrewd, unscrupulous politician who recognized Israel as a state to win Jewish vote against the New York governor Thomas Dewey in the 1948 election) as a statesman? Other presidents of USA who followed Truman have provided only mediocre performances in their statesmanship. Among the Soviet leader, whom do you consider as a statesman after Lenin? Does Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko do credit to the term 'statesman'? Or among the British politicians, after Churchill, can anyone name a statesman? Here, among the Japanese politicians, hardly anyone qualifies to be a statesman. So why blame the Tamils only for not producing a statesman?

Selbourne also sarcastically observed that 'the Gandhian way is not available, since the Tamils have no Gandhi'.

I raise objection to this statement. When he was leading the struggle against the British rulers, the great Gandhi was also ridiculed from many corners. Leo Rosten reminisced: 'They called him (Gandhi) a crackpot, a hypocrite, a mystic. To the rajahs and maharajahs in their palaces, he was a preposterous rabble rouser. To the Indian politicians struggling for home rule, he was a deluded demagogue. To an incredulous Parliament in London, he was a trouble maker in a nappie'. (refer, READER'S DIGEST, July 1983). Look at the WHO'S WHO annual reference books, published by A.C. Black of London for the years 1930 or 1931. You cannot locate an entry on Gandhi. He was a non-entity to the British rulers even in 1930. But within two decades, this half-naked fakir's moral jujitsu dismantled the mighty British empire.

To be fair by the Sri Lankan political leaders of yester year, Tamils had a Gandhi, in S.J.V. Chelvanayakam. He was an exception among the politicians of Indian subcontinent for two reasons. First, in a region known for religious bigotry, though being a Christian, he commanded the respect of majority Hindu Tamils for two decades (c.f. former Prime Minister of Ceylon, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, who was born a Christian, but had to become an adopted Buddhist to lead the Sinhalese). Secondly, Chelvanayakam (like Mahatmaji) was not recognized for tub-thumping oratory. Instead, he was a man of action. Chelvanayakam organized Gandhian-style satyagraha campaigns and other non-violent resistance movements in the mid 1950s and early 1960s. But unfortunately, Gandhian methods couldn't perform any trick for Tamils in Sri Lanka. There are many reasons for the failure of Gandhi's techniques in Sri Lankan atmosphere.

- (1) Mahatmaji was lucky to have the British as his opponents. He himself had acknowledged that his tactics could not have worked against any other enemy, who is less civic-minded. Praise the British rulers for being good Sports.
- (2) Gandhi was fighting an oppressor who was living and planning his moves, thousands of miles away from the battle scene. But Chelvanayakam had to fight an oppressor who was (and is) living next door.
- (3) Gandhi and his followers could enter and leave the jails under British rule without much physical agony and with no threat to life (No one denies that they suffered mental torture). In Sri Lanka, considering what happened to the 52 Tamils in Welikade jail in 1983, one's life was (and is) in jeopardy when incarcerated even for political reasons.

Therefore, for four decades (1944-83), the Tamil struggle in Sri Lanka based on Gandhian principles and co-operative action within parliamentary democracy practised by C. Suntheralingam, G.G. Ponnambalam, S.J.V. Chelvanayakam, A. Amirthalingam, M. Sivasithamparam and their colleagues did not bring much sun shine to many Tamilians. However, it helped in protecting the flame of ethnic identity of the Tamilians against the state-sponsored onslaught of Sinhala language dominance and Buddhist chauvinism. These leaders of yester year deserve credit for this achievement. The Westminster model of parliamentary democracy could work in the United Kingdom to cater to a single ethnic and single religious constituency. It has failed to take firm root in other countries with multi-ethnic and multi-religious constituencies. So, the younger generation of Tamilians drifted towards the military ideology of Mao Tse Tung, since 1977. One may label it as a reckless move. But it remained as a practical alternative. And among Tamils of Sri Lanka, a small faction led by trade unionist N. Shanmugadasan had espoused this cause, though not with much popular support.

Mao (the foremost tactician of guerrilla warfare) summed up his method in just four lines: 'When the enemy advances, we retreat; When the enemy camps, we harass; When the enemy tires, we attack; When the enemy retreats, we pursue'. Mao should have known what he was talking about. In 1930, Chiang Kai Shek's forces were superior by ten to one, against his raggedy-pants army. Chiang led a 900,000-strong army, formations of 300 bombers and a German general van Seeckt. Mao's guerrilla army amounted to only 140,000 poorly-armed men (c.f. the present scene in North and East of Sri Lanka; 50,000-strong Indian Peace Keeping Force with superior artilleries against the LTTE rebels, a cadre of 5000!). The results of Mao's victory against the combined strength of Chiang's forces and Japan's Imperial Army reveals that the great leveller TIME doesn't put much faith in the numbers and sophisticated weaponry.

I agree with David Selbourne that, in a conventional war, the LTTE does not have a dog's chance to annihilate the IPKF and Sri Lankan armed forces. How are the chances for a victory for LTTE rebels in a guerrilla war against the IPKF? General Mao has also noted the five requirements for victory in a guerrilla war. These are: (1) support from the masses (2) party organization (3) strong guerrilla army (4) favourable region for military moves (5) economic self sufficiency. I leave it to the readers to assess, how many of these requirements are satisfied by Tamil rebels at present. Like the Ten Commandments, Mao also formulated the following norms of conduct for his army.

1. speak politely
2. pay fairly for what you buy
3. return everything you borrow
4. pay for anything you damage
5. do not hit or swear at people
6. do not damage crops
7. do not take liberties with women
8. do not ill-treat captives

These orders also could have been delivered from the mouth of Mahatma-jii. He had expressed similar sentiments in his newspapers HARIJAN, NAV-JEEVAN and YOUNG INDIA during his campaign against British imperialism. But in the present conflict in Sri Lanka, which side (the IPKF or the LTTE) has abided by these norms of conduct? It is only those who follow these commandments who will win the hearts and minds of Tamil population.

History is also replete with examples of powerful armies winning the battles and then losing the war. In his book, 'HIMALAYAN BLUNDER', a combat participant in the Chinese-Indian border war of 1962, Brigadier J.P. Dalvi, has critically analyzed the debacle of the Indian army. Two interesting para-

graphs from that book are worth reproducing for those who are interested in military science.

'In difficult terrain, be it mountain, jungle or snowcovered steppe, it is sometimes militarily unavoidable to trade space for time. This is a stark military fact. Military history affords many examples to prove this. In war, the primary aim is the destruction of enemy forces. It is not the holding of impossible ground for political reasons or the undertaking of operations to appease an aroused public opinion.

'Both in 1812, when Napoleon invaded Russia and in 1941 when Hitler launched an invasion, the Russians drew the advancing armies deep into Russian territory. They relied on their most formidable weapons — snow in winter and the dreaded spring thaw (facetiously known as Generals January and February) which turns Russia into a vast sea of mud, that brings armies to

a grinding halt. In both cases, the Russians sapped the vitality of the advancing enemy; and on both occasions mighty Russian counter offensives regained all lost territories and destroyed or ejected the invaders'.

So, losing ground for strategic reason is a time-tested design in warfare. Mao employed this sound technique against Japan's Imperial Army in late 1930s. The mighty American army succumbed to the same technique in Vietnam in late 1960s. How will the IPKF forces manage, if the guerrilla war spreads into the hill region of Sri Lanka? Well, analysts say that the stock of the Indian army has appreciated since the 1962 drubbing by Mao's conventional forces. But, the Indian army have yet to win a guerrilla war in a foreign land, if they consider Sri Lanka as a foreign territory. We have to wait and see what that great leveller TIME has in His mind for the Tamil.

SACHI SRI KANTHA
(University of Tokyo, Japan)

LIGHT THROUGH GANDHIAN METHODS

First, let me congratulate you on the three excellent articles in your Feb. 88 issue. I trust you will develop the theme in these articles in your forthcoming issues.

'In Great Failure' Mr. A.P. Venkadeswaran gives an authoritative and forthright exposure of the hypocrisy of Rajiv Gandhi and his colleagues. This is indeed an eloquent background to a positive call to carry on the Eelam Freedom Struggle.

In 'Where do we go from here' Mr. Sivanayagam in his usual inimitable style focuses attention on three options. 1) accept Sinhala domination, 2) accept Indian domination or 3) Continue the struggle for independence.

In 'Tamils a time for self examination' Dr. R. Narendran in a uniquely balanced intellectual and emotional analysis calls for continuation of the freedom struggle and hints at Gandhian methods.

First and foremost every Eelam Tamil should realise that there is no alternative to a Sovereign Independent Eelam to preserve the dignity and welfare of the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

In all the rigmarole that has been churned out by Sri Lankan and Indian press, let us not forget the final and firm call of Thanthai Chelva for a separate state of Eelam. Chelva is sacred and dear to Eelam Tamils as Gandhiji is to the Indians.

This call was not sent out in a rash hurry or in a spirit of arrogance. It was made after thirty long years of protracted endeavour to find a peaceful

solution to the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka. Every genuine and patient effort of Chelva was spurned and discarded by Sinhala chauvinism.

In the light of the above observations, the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord rushed with inordinate hurry by Rajiv Gandhi is a caricature of justice and truth, a mere exhibition of juvenile delinquency in the face of consummate statesmanship of Thanthai Chelva.

The course of the Eelam Freedom struggle after Chelva, is indeed a sad commentary on the leadership of the Eelam Tamils both political and militant.

Dr. Narendran's spirited call to Gandhian methods specially in the field of non cooperation is most opportune.

If through the medium of your esteemed journal you can help Dr. Narendran to organise the Eelam struggle along Gandhian lines you will be rendering a signal service to a community in distress.

I firmly believe that through Gandhian methods Eelam Tamils can win their freedom and reconstruct their devastated land and be a light unto the Indian sub continent and indeed the whole world.

I feel it in the very marrow of my bones that the Eelam Tamils are eminently suited for the Gandhian way of life by tradition and temperament.

May the forces of Truth, non-violence and simple life of Gandhiji triumph over evil threatening to engulf Eelam.

S.A. DAVID
Anna Nagar, Madras

V.O.A. IN SRI LANKA 'ONLY FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING'

LANKAN FOREIGN MINISTER A.C.S. Hameed has said there will be no change in the original number or in the capacity of the transmitters to be installed in the Voice Of America (VOA) broadcasting station on the island, which 'will be solely used for public broadcasting'.

Hameed was answering an adjournment notice by the Chief Whip of the main opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), Lakshman Jayakody, in parliament last week asking whether the power of the VOA transmitters was going to be reduced.

He stressed that the VOA station would be used only for public broadcasting and not for any military or intelligence purposes and any added equipment would be monitored continuously to ensure that the agreement was not violated.

The present agreement provides for the setting up of two transmitters — one of 250 kilowatts strength and the other of 500 kilowatts, Hamid said, adding the VOA will pay \$80,000 annually for lease of 1800 acres at Anamaduwa in the Puttalam District, 80 kms north of Colombo.

The annexure to the Indo-Lanka Peace Accord stipulates that 'Sri Lanka's agreement with foreign broadcasting organisations will be reviewed to ensure that any facilities set up by them on the island are used solely as public broadcasting facilities and not for any military intelligence purposes'.

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SEMINAR ON 'RIGHT TO LIVE'

On 27 February 1988, the Tamil Refugee Action Group held a full-day seminar dealing with 'Tamils: Right to Live'. It was aimed to bring about 'an awareness of the Tamil problem' and seek 'avenues of redress'.

The seminar held at the Middlesex Polytechnic in London was attended by nearly 300 persons representing various organisations. The Mayor of the Council of the London Borough of Haringey, Mr. Andrew Mikkides, inaugurated the seminar by lighting the traditional oil lamp (kuththu vilakku) while Councillor Toby Harris made the welcome address. Mr. A.L. Vasanthan, acting Chairman of TRAG presided.

Speakers from different organisations including British Refugee Council, United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants in the UK, Amnesty International, and Tamil Women's League spoke at the seminar. The speakers dealt with the situation of Tamils in Sri Lanka, the circumstances in which many thousands of Tamils became refugees abroad, the plight of displaced people within Sri Lanka and the need to help them, the plight of Tamil refugees in European countries, the recent severe restrictions placed on asylum seekers by legislative and administrative measures and how international aid could be mobilised to help the refugees.

Later in the afternoon, the participants broke into three working groups to discuss in detail and draw action plans on designated areas.

SUPPORT FOR MINORITY SCHOOLS

A Labour education spokesman pledged support for Hindus and Muslims who want to set up separate schools in Britain.

The pledge was made by a member of Parliament Derek Fatchett, at a Republic Day dinner hosted by the Indian Journalists' Association here, and is likely to fuel argument within his own party and in the House of Commons.

Separate Jewish and Catholic schools have long existed in Britain, as well as the many Church of England schools. Several private full-time Muslim schools have also been established in recent years, in London, Bradford, Leicester and elsewhere.

But the idea of publicly-funded separate schools is still a contentious one. Fatchett said it would be 'inconsistent' to reject educationally justifiable proposals for separate schools from Muslims or Hindus if such proposals would be approved from other religions, such as Jews or Catholics.

His comments coincided with discussions by governors at a largely-Muslim state school in Brent, London, to opt

out of local authority control under terms of new education bill.

INDIAN AIR CRASH SUSPECT REMANDED

Inderjit Singh Reyat, who was arrested on February 4 in connection with a bomb in luggage aboard a Canadian Pacific Aircraft that killed two baggage handlers at Narita Airport, Tokyo, in 1985, was produced before a Bow Street Magistrate and remanded for a further four weeks.

He will appear in court again on April 5, when the Magistrate will hear a Canadian Government request for his extradition.

The defense asked for a four-week adjournment. The prosecution did not object because all the papers concerning the case had not been received from Canadian authorities.

Reyat is wanted by the Canadian authorities in connection with the bomb that exploded when the baggage was being transferred from the Canadian Pacific Aircraft to an Air-India plane.

On the same day a bomb aboard an Air-India Jumbo from Vancouver to London exploded in midair killing 329 people on board. Reyat is charged with assembling the bomb and placing it in luggage on board Canadian Pacific aircraft. The bomb was timed to explode aboard Air-India, but went off during transfer from one aircraft to the other.

Reyat worked at the Jaguar car factory as an electrician in Coventry. He was first arrested on November 6, 1985, in Vancouver along with Talvinder Singh Parmar, a Babar Khalsa Activist on charges of possessing explosives, but was not linked to the Air-India crash or the Narita bomb deaths. It was after nearly two and a half years that the Canadian authorities gathered sufficient evidence against Reyat and asked the British police to arrest him on provisional extradition warrants.

STUDY INTO ASIAN HEART DEATH RISK

The British Heart Foundation is going to spend £125,000 on two research projects aimed at finding out why Asians in Britain have a higher heart disease death rate than the white population.

The extra risk to Asians does not seem to be due to differences in blood pressure, smoking or levels of cholesterol.

Asians are also known to have a higher frequency of one type of diabetes, and the biochemical changes linked to that vulnerability may help to explain the high rate of heart disease.

The diet and health of 3,000 London men, half of them Asians, will be studied by Professor Michael Marmot and Dr Paul McKeigue, researchers at the University College and Middlesex

School of Medicine, London.

The results will be analysed in the hope of finding out the importance of diabetes as a factor in heart disease, particularly the part played by raised amounts of the hormone insulin in the blood of many Asians.

The second project will involve screening 1,000 Asians and 1,000 non-Asians in west London with genetic differences between them being studied by Professor Marmot and Dr Steve Humphries of the Charing Cross Sunley Research Centre.

Another grant, worth £57,500, has been awarded by the heart foundation to researchers at Dundee University to study the diet of 12,000 people in Scotland, which has one of the world's worst death rates from heart disease.

ETHNIC MINORITIES AND EMPLOYMENT

Although ethnic minorities only make up 4.6 per cent of Britain's population of working age, their unemployment percentage is as high as 20 per cent, i.e. double that for the white population.

An article on workforce trends in the Employment Gazette, published by the Department of Employment, concentrates on the UK's 1.54 million non-white workers: 489,000 Indians, 375,000 West Indians or Guyanese, 269,000 Pakistanis or Bangladeshis and the remainder mainly of mixed, Chinese, African or Arab origin.

They are concentrated in certain industries and regions, with 27 per cent of the men (especially Bangladeshis and Pakistanis) in the hotel, catering and repair industries compared to 16 per cent of white men, and 20 per cent of Indian men in the retail distribution.

Ethnic minority workers are also disproportionately highly represented in transport and communications, the health service and parts of manufacturing.

Ethnic minority women often work in the health service and manufacturing while white women are more likely to be in education and banking.

Contd. from page 12

they have surrendered all their weapons or we have recovered them all. This is reminiscent of the stand taken by the allies towards the end of the second World War about no talks with Germany, unless it surrendered unconditionally. In the event, the western allies found a political map drawn in Europe after the war in a manner adverse to their interests. Further, after we succeed in totally disarming the LTTE, what is the guarantee that on our withdrawal from Sri Lanka, and possibly in a post-Jayewardene era, the Tamils on the island will be treated fairly particularly when their ability to offer resistance would have been neutralised.

IT HAPPENED IN JAFFNA

**3000 CIVILIANS FORCED TO
SQUAT UNDER SCORCHING
SUN FOR NINE HOURS**

We carry below a translation of a special report published in the JUNIOR VIKATAN, a popular Tamil-language weekly of Madras in its issue of 24 February.

JUNIOR VIKATAN is a lively sister publication of the prestigious ANANDA VIKATAN with its office at 757, Anna Salai, Madras 600 002. (Editor: S. Balasubramaniam. Associate Editor: Mathan)

"The question whether the military offensive ordered against the Liberation Tigers was justified or not may be left aside for the moment as a debatable issue. There could be pros and cons. Okay, let us even grant for the sake of argument that there were good reasons that motivated the action. But how in the name of humanity could anyone condone or justify the high-handed and brutal way in which the ordinary citizens of Jaffna were treated?" asked a prominent newspaperman speaking to us in Madras. He had just come from Sri Lanka.

He continued: "Why did Indian newspapers who prattle time and again about freedom and democracy in their own country maintain a monumental silence and callous indifference when in the stupid hope of disarming the Liberation Tigers in a day or two, the Indian forces went about killing innocent peaceful citizens and treating them as a herd of cattle?"

"Imagine the plight of the people. Not knowing when a shell might burst, and take away whose life, at what place, the dazed citizens of Jaffna were running helter-skelter in search of shelter, and having found it, hiding in fear wondering whether it would be safe enough? The Liberation Tigers were living mingled with the people it was being shouted. So what? Where else could they live? Does that mean that the entire population has to be put to sword and fire because the Indian Army does not understand the concept of a "degree of war"?

"There was this incident in the "Mudasakkadai" junction (a commercial and business area) in the Jaffna town," he said. "A Liberation Tiger had taken a pot-shot at an Indian jawan and killed him. Within a short time a whole battalion of Indian soldiers moved into the area, cordoned off all the environs, marched every man, woman and child found in the area and ordered them to squat on the tarred roads in the hot sun. This began around 9 a.m. and very

soon they had lined up nearly 3000 persons. There was absolutely no consideration whether they were old folk, elderly men or women or the sick or the young. Until about 6p.m. they were kept there, without food, without drinking water, with not even the facility to ease themselves, until all shops and roads and lanes and nooks and corners were flushed in search of the lone Tiger guerrilla.

"Any young Tamil, irrespective of who he was, and without any questions being asked, was promptly assaulted with rifle butts. In some instances even elderly people were shabbily man-handled.

"One group of soldiers who entered the office of the Tamil daily newspaper, the EELANADU, pushed and dragged all the members of the staff to the road outside. Interestingly, the editor in charge, Mr. Perumal is a person of recent Indian origin from the plantations and one who was closely associated with the elderly and respected one-time editor Mr. Haran (He was an Indian national who passed away later in India — Ed.) Mr Perumal himself was dragged out and when he tried to explain, he was beaten with a belt and a piece of wire.

"Next, Indian soldiers stormed into the well-known Tamil Hindu educational institution, the Vaidheeswara Vidyalayam, also in the same area, and pulled out both the men and women teachers and roughed them up in the presence of their own students. Some of them suffered face injuries as a result of being pushed and hit by rifle butts.

"Humiliated as they were by being forced to sit on the public road like convicted criminals, the suffering people were not even allowed to leave the place to ease themselves, despite several pleas.

"Repeatedly the soldiers went up to the group of squatting people and threatened them: "You should know the fellow who killed our soldier. It could not have happened without someone here knowing the identity of the person. Tell us, tell us ... or else ...", they kept shouting at them.

"Unable to endure the tormenting any longer, an elderly citizen spoke up: "Sirs, we come to the town not to observe what is happening here. We come here on business, urgent business for our living, and once we finish it, we get out of this problematical place as fast as we came in. We don't like to remain here one moment longer than is necessary. We do not have the time (because of the daily evening curfew) nor the mind nor the authority to look with suspicion at everyone else who is here. As for you, you have sentry points

here every 50 yards. You should be having at least 100 jawans in this area guarding, watching, questioning, examining all of us. Are you fair in asking us this question that should properly be addressed to your own sentries?"

"The elderly man who spoke up, paid the price for it. He was slapped and kicked.

"Only vehicles, whether buses or cars or two-wheelers, which have been issued IPKF passes could carry people. Even if you have a woman with childbirth pains to be rushed to hospital you have to find a vehicle with a pass. Getting a pass is not that easy anyway. It would be like boring into a mountain to catch a mouse. Many people who have waited vainly in queues for these passes decide that it would be easier to walk the miles.

"On the appeal made by the Liberation Tigers, or maybe because of their threats, government officers have refused to attend offices. As a result essential government business is paralysed. Only the Jaffna General hospital is functioning somewhat.

"Out of the Jaffna newspapers, only the "Eelanadu" has been given permission to come out, since January 15, and that too under a specific condition; that no news relating to happenings in Jaffna could be published without IPKF clearance. The publishers were told that the imposition of this condition itself should not be published. (Since then, the publication had again ceased with the blowing up of the Eelanadu office building by a Tamil militant group on February 29 — Ed.TT).

"On top of all these, the harassment that Tamils undergo at the hands of some supposed Tamil militant group of youths on the Jaffna-Colombo road, at a spot barely 50-100 yards from the IPKF and Sri Lanka army checkpoints has been causing untold misery. When they identify merchants and business people they are promptly abducted from the place and ransom demands are made; apart from this, all travellers are questioned and treated with disrespect. The funny thing is that such high-handed behaviour, extortion and robbery take place in such close proximity to the IPKF camps. One does not know whether a part of this loot goes into the hands of the IPKF personnel. Jaffna businessman V.K.Rajaratnam who deals in radios, Television sets, Tape recorders etc. was recently identified by these youths and a ransom demand of Rs.3 lakhs was made in return for his freedom. Only after a sizeable portion of the ransom money was paid was he released.

"The Jaffna residents are convinced in their own minds that any attempts to hold elections without arriving at a political settlement with the Liberation Tigers would only result in a volcanic eruption of violence in Jaffna. Will the Government of India, and its officials grasp this reality?"

ELECTIONS TO FOUR PROVINCIAL COUNCILS

SLFP TO BOYCOTT, BUT USA TO CONTEST

Four hundred and thirty-six candidates belonging to three recognised political parties have handed in their nominations to contest the elections to four of the nine provincial councils in Sri Lanka. The nominations closed on 9 March and the elections are scheduled to take place on 28 April.

The elections are for the North Central Province comprising the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa administrative districts, the North Western Province comprising the Kurunegala and Puttalam districts, the Uva Province comprising the Badulla and Moneragala districts and Sabaragamuwa Province comprising the Ratnapura and Kegalle districts.

The elections for the Central, Southern, Western, Northern and Eastern Provinces have been postponed presumably because of the unstable security situation. An order under the Public Security Ordinance has been promulgated to enable this postponement. Although no official reason has been given, the postponement of elections in these provinces has been attributed to the continuing violence in the north and east occasioned by Tamil militancy, and in the south by the terrorist activity by the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP).

Taking account of the security situation, it would seem that the government has decided to hold the elections on a phased basis starting with the elections for the four Councils on April 28. In the second phase, elections will be held for the Western and Central Provinces, and in the last phase for the Southern, Northern and Eastern Provinces. Although at the time of President Jayawardene's visit to New Delhi during late January it was anticipated by India and Sri Lanka that elections for the north and east would be held by April-May, clearly the continuing violence in these parts make it impossible for any elections to be held in the near future.

Three recognised political parties have submitted nominations for the April 28 elections. Although for electoral purposes they are being treated as parties, in reality they are political coalitions of several parties. The Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC), a recognised political party in its own right, has decided to field candidates under the ruling United National Party ticket. The United Socialist Alliance (USA) is a left-combination of the Sri Lanka Mahajana (Peoples) Party, Lanka Sama Samaja Party, Communist Party of Sri Lanka and the Nava Sama Samaja Party. The Muslim Congress is

a new political manifestation constituted in the context of increasing consciousness of a separate Muslim identity. The UNP and the USA have nominated 179 candidates in the four provinces while the Muslim Congress has fielded 78 candidates.

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), the main opposition party to the ruling UNP did not submit nominations because it had previously decided to boycott the elections on the ground that it was opposed to the setting up of Provincial Councils. When legislation was presented before parliament providing for the establishment of Provincial Councils, the SLFP voted against it and declared that it would repeal the laws concerned when it came to power. The irony in the SLFP's conduct is that when it is demanding that the people should be given the right to vote at a general election, it has decided to boycott the Provincial Council elections to be held on 28 April, the first time the people in these four provinces numbering 2,897,541 voters have been given the right to deliver their judgement since July 1977. The SLFP is bound to call upon the people to desist from exercising their vote, but how such a call will be heeded is doubtful. The JVP which has been engaged in a campaign of terror is bound to come to the rescue of the SLFP by attempting to unleash violence with a view to disrupting the elections.

The UNP is making a determined bid to gain control of the four Provincial Councils. Already four senior Members of Parliament have resigned in a bid to bolster up the UNP campaign in the four provinces. Being the ruling party, the UNP is also expected to employ its power and patronage to the maximum in its campaign.

It is generally believed that the United Socialist Alliance will fare reasonably well considering the unpopularity of the government on the economic front. If the people are not swayed by the SLFP's boycott call, they are likely to show their displeasure with the misrule of the UNP for the last ten years by registering their votes in favour of the USA. Another factor in their favour is that the UNP cannot hit the USA with the ethnic and pro-Sinhala card as they did in the past because the USA also supports the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord as the UNP does. If the USA emerges fairly successfully in these elections, it may provide the alternative to ruling UNP as far as the people are concerned and the SLFP might cease to be the main opposition in the eyes of the people.

'EELANADU' PRESS BLASTED

THE office, press and buildings of the EELANADU, a Tamil language newspaper with the largest circulation in the Tamil areas and published in northern Jaffna, were blasted to the ground on 29 February.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam claimed responsibility for the blast alleging that the paper had become a tool in the hands of the Indian Peace Keeping Force.

The attackers are reported to have arrived in the afternoon and ordered all 44 members of the staff working at the time to move out, laid explosives within the building and under the printing machinery and set off the blast causing considerable damage.

The IPKF which operates from the Jaffna Fort did not intervene although the newspaper building was in close proximity and the attackers had spent some 45 minutes within the premises before it was blasted. The IPKF's explanation for its lack of intervention was that had they intervened there would have been considerable civilian casualties.

The Eelananadu was the last surviving of four Tamil newspapers published from Jaffna. The others, the Udayan, Murasoli and Eela Murasoli stopped publication after they suffered serious damage after the IPKF offensive began on October 10.

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THE IPKF OPERATION IN JAFFNA

AN INDEPENDENT ACCOUNT

The following is the text of an account given by Dr Antoine Crouan of Medecins Sans Frontieres at the International Conference on Tamil Refugees held in Paris in December 1987.

Medecins Sans Frontieres is a French humanitarian medical organisation which had been operating in northern Sri Lanka when the IPKF offensive began on 10 October 1987:

'We hail from the Medecins Sans Frontieres, a humanitarian organisation which has been involved in Sri Lanka for the last 18 months in four different areas: Jaffna peninsula, Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Mannar. I, along with my colleagues M. Jean Louis Menchieres and Ms. Poulain Guillemette who have spent four and six months in the northern port-city Point Pedro, and Mannar, are present here for the conference. If you like to ask us any questions, you may do so later in the proceedings.

'I would like to make a brief statement of what we have seen there in Sri Lanka and give you a brief analysis of the situation over there. Anyway, as you know, it is not easy! When you want to make an analysis about a resistance war, you have to analyse three aspects: the political, military and civilian aspects. I will take these three main points briefly.

'The political aspect: Who wins? Who will win? Until now, it is certainly not the civilians! I should say, for the majority of the international community Indian government has always been considered a mediator. They make everybody feel that they really try their very best to resolve the problem. In fact, that opinion still continues! All the newspapers and all the reports made by the journalists have been, of course, as corroborated by other friends this morning, really totally biased.

'When a group of journalists are briefed only by the Indian Joint Operation Command or when all the journalists are brought to a place where they had gathered all types of weapons claimed to be those of the Tigers, in a war situation, of course, you can show even with a small picture the consequences of the land mines, and with the land mines itself you can prove to the world at the outset that the Tigers are terrorists. In fact, it has been proved by means of photographs, films etc. So, politically, I should say that India continues to enjoy this kind of image in the international arena. It is very difficult to gainsay this.

60,000 TROOPS

'Militarily, we are really impressed by the means employed by the Indian Army. About 60,000 Indian military personnel all over the countryside is a lot!

'Strategy is also very important. They succeeded in winning over to their side the majority of the Sri Lankan people, I mean the Sinhalese, impressing on them that the latter were doing a bad job, and, until now, the Sinhalese permitted the Indian Army to do what they themselves should have otherwise done. So, the Indians are free! They are free to do what they want. And, when nobody can go to the Tamil areas, you know that one can do what one wants really!! This war conducted in silence is, day by day, getting really worse and worse. Strategy has also changed from the beginning. I am not referring to the period following the signing of the Pact. I mean later on during the fighting. I should say that, at the beginning, the Indian Army troops tried to drive into Jaffna peninsula and everywhere else: Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Mannar etc. only through their own force. I mean, you just drive through the roads until you arrive somewhere. If you have no opposition, you do nothing. So, the military strategists pushed their men in front of weapons or a bomb! Consequences? During the first two weeks of the offensive more than 200 people died, and they changed their strategy totally. You could have noticed a fantastic difference between the Jaffna offensive and the Point Pedro offensive. They changed their strategy totally. Two weeks later, by contrast, direct bombardment of human beings took place. As a result, the toll on civilians has been notably very high.

CIVILIAN KILLING

'We have lots of testimonies of different military officers and non-commissioned officers from Jaffna peninsula. I remember one from the Jaffna Port; it was around 28th October, 1987, one of the non-commissioned officers was telling me: "Eh! It is very curious. Just today only the Joint Operation Command came and told us not to kill the civilians!" Before, no orders were given. It proves really that this strategy is the same everywhere.

'Militarily, in such a war of resistance you can't find any resistance, because it is taking place amidst the civilian population, as is the case with the famous theory of fish inside a bowl of water, where one empties the bowl to take out the fish. The very same strategy is used in so many countries all over the world by different armies.

The same strategy is also used in Sri Lanka by the Indian Army! We do not know, and for many reasons nobody will be able to say exactly the number of injured people in Jaffna peninsula and in other parts of the north and the east.

THREE KINDS OF PEOPLE

'First of all, it's just another story! During the first three weeks of the offensive, every time the civilians were killed, the Indian Army cut down some trees and burnt all the bodies immediately in order to conceal their identity, thus enabling them to make propaganda out of it, that it was the "terrorists" who had done that and, of course, not the Indian Army! With the result that the civilians have been turned into hostages or used as human shields! It has been impossible for the military strategists to differentiate between the real civilians, the helpers and what they call "terrorists" from among the population. For us, who have worked a lot and continue to do so from a medical point of view, what could be our conclusion? There are three kinds of people differing one from the other.

'As far as the civilians surrendering themselves at the hospital are concerned, today it is possible for them to go to hospitals only if they are not well known. When they think that the Indians can recognise them as "HEL-PERS", they are, of course, totally frightened, and they do not go to the hospitals. Certainly, there has been a certain percentage of the population, maybe about 20 to 40 per cent, who are totally frightened to go and get either the humanitarian aid or the medical and surgical facilities from the hospitals. We have to focus our attention on this part of the population!

'Of course, the last third of the population constitutes the militants themselves. They are totally hiding in the jungles, where they have no access to medical or surgical facilities. I should say that there are about 400 to 500 of them who are really badly injured, still in the jungles. These areas are really controlled by the Indian Army. If you take a resistance war of this kind, and a situation like that which has been prevailing in the north and the east, the ICRC or any humanitarian organisation must come to the aid of the population, and thus to the resistance fighters themselves, who are really not in a position to get any humanitarian aid that they are in need of. Unfortunately, until now, there has been no such attempt. Besides it is very difficult!

URGENT MEDICAL NEEDS

'So, the medical facilities or the medical needs are really urgent and important. But, for many reasons, we are not ourselves able to do what is necessary in all the conflict areas. First of all, we cannot do all the things because, as you know, almost all the Tamil medical team members have fled

Sri Lanka. Secondly, the people are not able to reach the hospitals, and, therefore, we must organise mobile clinics both in the country and the jungles. But, it is very difficult to organise these because the Indian Army does not allow us to do what we must do as a humanitarian organisation, and they do not allow us to do what is necessary. This is the real scene there, as far as medical aspect is concerned.

'Another important thing is that everybody is afraid. You can imagine what is going on right now in Sri Lanka. To live during the last five years in a sort of war situation, while the war intensified during 1986 and 1987, with the Indian Army being a friend then and an enemy now, the population is now really without any future. We feel, I mean all the members of the medical team, that a wide cross-section of the civilian population, Sri Lankan doctors and the other professionals, they really do not see for themselves a viable future! I cannot think of a situation where for a whole population, the future is threatened by a lot of extremism. Extremism is one of the main words in Sri Lanka now. It is impossible to be in the middle. Whether you are for the humanitarian cause or whether politically you want to resolve the conflict by taking the middle of the road, it is impossible to express what

you want or what you wish. On the Indian side or the Sri Lankan side or the Tamil side, extremism is really the main word. So, we are pessimistic!

'Obviously, what will be important to do is to find immediately a mediator, a real mediator, given all the means all the way, to obtain the ICRC presence in Sri Lanka permanently. As corroborated by other friends this morning, we cannot expect the Indian National Red Cross to exercise neutrality. This is certainly bad. We have a great deal of information about the Indian National Red Cross. We know certainly, even though they are doing some humanitarian work, that they are not as neutral as they ought to be.

'Also, in many places in the areas of conflict, we must succeed in obtaining cease-fire zones. This is very important. I will say that the hospitals in Sri Lanka are quite militarised for many reasons. Of course, you can understand this!

WE CANNOT BE BLIND

'Well, that is all. Finally, I would like to tell you that I myself and other members of our teams have enough experiences of uncommon activities and number of testimonies on violation of human rights in Sri Lanka. Also, we would like to emphasise that we are

here not on behalf of the Medecins Sans Frontieres, a humanitarian organisation freely giving its services in Sri Lanka. We are here individually on behalf of only ourselves. You may wonder why we do not represent the Medecins Sans Frontieres. It is simply because of our presence there in Sri Lanka! Until now, the gentleman's agreement with the Sri Lankan government, more precisely with the Sri Lankan Health Ministry, and different resistance groups who know what we have been doing, we have established some measure of integrity with all the difficulties, and we must continue maintaining our integrity in giving our services to the needy ones. Anyway, it does not mean that we must remain blind to all what we have witnessed there, or that we should refrain from saying what we must say. I am sure that some friends in Paris know well enough that those of us from the MSF have always been trying to do our best, and that we, the members of the medical teams from the Medecins Sans Frontieres, never hesitate to say personally what we have seen in Sri Lanka.

'If any of you want to ask any question or get more information from us, we shall be pleased to provide you with the relevant answers or the necessary information.'

Madras, March 1: A spurt in the entry of dutiable goods brought from Sri Lanka by some Indian army officers has led to the introduction of unusual Customs check at the military airbase at Tambaram.

Informed sources said the Defence Department requested the Customs to send a team of officers to check the average six military flights a day arriving from Jaffna, mostly carrying middle level IPKF officials.

There is considerable resentment among the defence officers, most of whom land at the Tambaram airbase in normal weather. Defence officials are puzzled by the continued arrival of dutiable goods from Jaffna even after

A break with custom for IPKF

the markets there closed in the wake of armed conflicts with LTTE.

Soon after the signing of the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement, many electronic items like VCRs, stereos and television sets of Japanese make were available at throwaway price in the Jaffna markets. Indian army officers were welcomed by the Tamils and even given discounts for purchases they made with Indian rupees. Bringing them to the mainland was not a problem as Tambaram was a 'free' air base.

Since October 1987, however, Jaffna shops have been closed, some even

destroyed in the conflict. Even essentials are scarce, and their prices have shot up.

The Tambaram Customs post, however, came into force only recently, 'on the invitation of the Defence Department', according to Customs sources. Three officers are posted there. Navy officers who visit foreign ports routinely face Customs check when they return. At Meenambakkam airport, however, senior defence personnel can pass through a special enclosure without Customs check.

Indian Express, March 2, 1988

NUMEROLOGY & POLITICS

There is an 'octopus' grip on the island politics, according to numerology buffs. At least five of the central characters on the Sri Lankan scene have eight as their birth number.

Two of them are Sinhala leaders, two are protagonists of Tamil Eelam and the fifth is the most important Indian in Sri Lanka.

Numerologically, eight represents cunning, adamanance and sharp swings in fortunes.

President Jayewardene was born on September 17. The sum of the two digits (one plus seven) is eight, which is his birth number. A decade ago, as opposition leader, he had only eight MPs in the UNP.

The birth number of Lalith Athulathmudali, who is tipped to succeed Jayawardene, is also eight. He was born on November 26. It is generally accepted that he is second only to Jayawardene in craftiness.

Athulathmudali and Tiger leader Prabhakaran have the same birthday, though they were born 18 years apart. Prabhakaran was born on November 26, 1954. He shot into prominence in the early eighties, hunted down his rivals and is a hunted man today.

TULF leader A. Amirthalingam has a very interesting date of birth — August 26, 1927. He was born in the eighth month and the sum of digits in his birthday (26) is eight. The sum of all

digits in his date of birth (26-8-1927) is also eight. In 1977 he became the leader of the opposition in parliament, which was unexpected. He lost the position equally unexpectedly.

The most important Indian in Sri Lanka whose birth number is eight is High Commissioner J.N. Dixit. In his case there is no need to add the digits and obtain the sum: his is a clean eight. He was born on the eighth of January 1936. Does this mean he is the cleverest of them all? Or could New Delhi make him the fall guy and call him back? That is something that the numerologists cannot figure out.

(The WEEK, India)



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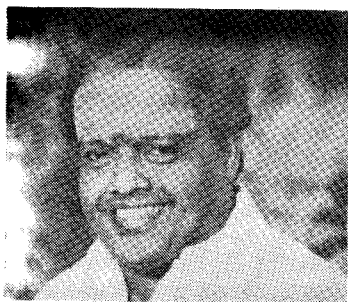
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A MELODIOUS VOICE IS STILLED



Professor S. Govindarajan, Head of the Department of Music, Annamalai University and Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts passed away on Thursday 24th March at the age of 55. Popularly known as 'Sirgazhi Govindarajan' and affectionately referred to as 'Isaimani' by millions of fans and music lovers not only in India but far beyond its shores as far as Great Britain, USA, Mauritius and Australia he had occupied a place of honour in their hearts.

Born in Sirgazhi, South India he followed long years of rigid training on the Guru-Sishya system under the guidance of an able master Thirupamburam Swaminatha Pillai. Those who attend his recitals would recall that he never fails to dedicate a song in honour of his Guru in every performance. Such was his Guru devotion — Guru Bakthi.

By means of regular practice, dedication and sincerity of purpose Isaimani Govindarajan shot to stardom and appeared virtually in every music festival and classical concert in South India. His popularity took a new dimension when he started singing play back

songs for the heroes of yesteryears in the South Indian movie world. He was one of the few singers who had clear cut **pronunciation and moral discipline** both of which contributed to his success in the film world. The Tamil Nadu Government honoured him as the best play back singer in 1971. His role in movies was not only behind the screen but also in front of it. In about 12 classical/devotional films he had acted in various roles such as Agathiyar, Nandanar and Narathar.

As a distinguished artiste of the All India Radio and Door-Dharshan (Indian National TV) he was always invited and given pride of place in national programmes of importance — to name a few 'Charana Kamalalayam', a musical feature based on Sri Arunagirinathar — 'Kumaranum Kosalai Kumaranum' — a TV presentation. Although Isaimani has sung on 24 LP records, 7 concert recitals, and 25 traditional song albums his songs on Murugan (Tamil Deity) tower among all of them.

As an acknowledgement of his attainments in the field of music he was honoured by the University of Madras with the Degree of 'Dr of Literature'. Within a short period of time his performances, his style and his contributions to music were recognized by the Central Government of India and the State Government of Tamil Nadu which honoured him with the distinguished 'Padmashri' and 'State Artiste' (Aasthana-Kalaigarnar) awards respectively.

Sirgazhi had conducted recitals abroad in India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore, England, USA, Canada, France, Germany and Switzerland. His recitals abroad have always been dedicated to a particular cause. He had visited London on more than one occasion. In 1978 he visited UK to raise funds, in aid of the first Hindu Temple being built in UK. This Temple — the largest in Europe built by the Britannia Hindu Temple Trust stands proudly today in Archway, Highgate remembering the worthy support and contribution given by artistes like the late Isaimani.

The late Sirgazhi has left behind a legacy to the Tamil music world in the form of his son **Dr Sirgazhi Siva Chidambaram** who although a Doctor of Medicine and a Post Graduate Medical Scholar ably assisted his illustrious father in all recitals and proved himself to be an able musician in his own right.

Isaimani Govindarajan visited London less than four months ago — in November 1987. The sponsors of his tour Messrs Sivraj Enterprises invited me to compere his two shows in Tooting and at Goldsmith College London. I felt honoured to be offered this rare opportunity to introduce this Great Maestro. But fate had also decreed that four months after that cold wintery night in November, I shall be also writing an appreciation of this outstanding performer — an Emperor among Tamil Classical Musicians.

May all the deities whose praises the late Sirgazhi had sung grant his soul eternal peace.

WIMAL SOCKANATHAN

Profile of courage

The first thing that struck you about Vijaya Kumaranatunga was his simplicity and lack of pretension. When FRONTLINE's correspondent met him at his home in the Colombo suburb of Polhengode last December, the first impression was of mild disappointment: could this man, dressed in a lungi, looking like any other middle class Sri Lankan, really be the star of over 100 films, an idol of the Sinhala screen? But then, the man's physical presence began to sink in. The well-known face, darker and more rugged in real life than in his films, the muscular, athletic physique and the deep voice, helped to explain the secret of Vijaya's success.

As he began to converse, his political appeal also became apparent. His ideas might not have sounded profound or original, but they were stated with great conviction and sincerity, in slow, occasionally halting English. He spoke of socialism as the only solution to Sri Lanka's crisis, and argued the need for a non-racial left front as an alternative to the island's two main political parties, the ruling United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) led by his mother-in-law, Sirimavo Bandaranaike.

It was his socialist beliefs that drew Vijaya to the SLFP, where he started his political career. His ties with the SLFP were cemented after he married Bandaranaike's Sorbonne-educated younger daughter, Chandrika, who was, like him, a political activist and a socialist by conviction. Vijaya rose in the party hierarchy, and played a major role in the 1982 presidential campaign of the SLFP candidate, Hector Kobbekeduwe.

Vijaya and Chandrika were part of the 'left wing' of the SLFP, and were often in conflict with the 'right wing' led by Sirimavo Bandaranaike's son Anura. Growing differences of opinion between the two groups finally led Vijaya to walk out of the SLFP and start the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party in 1984, along with his wife and other like-minded people.

But more than his socialist beliefs, it was his unwavering commitment to creating a political system in which Tamils and Sinhalese would be partners that made him such a controversial figure. In a nation bitterly divided by ethnic animosity, Vijaya Kumaranatunga stood out for his principled and courageous efforts to build a non-racial political movement which would unite the Sinhalese and the Tamils. It

was this commitment which made him undertake politically risky, high-profile visits to Madras and Jaffna between June 1986 and January 1987 to talk to leaders of the Tamil militant groups. The visits did not contribute specifically towards resolving the ethnic conflict, but they were important symbolic gestures. At a time when Sinhalese and Tamil politicians regarded each other with distrust and hatred, Vijaya went out of his way to demonstrate to his own Sinhalese community that the Tamils were people who could and should be talked to.

When a solution to the ethnic conflict appeared in the form of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, Vijaya supported it enthusiastically, earning the wrath of Sinhalese extremists who dubbed him and everyone else who supported the accord traitors. Vijaya saw shortcomings in the Agreement, and described it as 'not perfect, but the only way to end this war'. He had doubts about India's ability to persuade the LTTE to lay down arms, and he had reservations about President Jayewardene's willingness to implement the other provisions.

Vijaya Kumaranatunga was highly critical of the politics of the UNP and the SLFP, and he had contempt for the Janata Vimukti Peramuna (JVP).

(Contd. on next page)

Contd. from page 23

'They have no backing, no strength. They only have the power to disrupt,' he said last December. He felt the JVP's strength was being exaggerated by the ruling party and the media. 'They have only been able to kill petty village level UNP workers so far,' he said. (This was before the assassination of the UNP party chairman, Harsha Abeywardene.) He knew his life was in danger, but shrugged it off: 'Our party-men are young and strong. We can look after ourselves.'

The JVP probably felt threatened by Vijaya Kumaranatunga more than by other Sinhala politicians because he appealed to the same segment of the Sinhalese population that the JVP was trying to build as its base: young, frustrated, radical, rural youth. Vijaya Kumaranatunga was perhaps the only Sinhalese politician who could match the charismatic JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera, and he was confident he would be able to weaken the JVP's base. Had he lived long enough, he would have had a chance to test his popularity during the presidential election, in which he was to have been the candidate of the United Socialist Alliance.

The impression that one was left with after meeting Vijaya Kumaranatunga was of a man who lived for his political beliefs, and was willing, if necessary, to take his politics out on to the streets and fight for what he believed in. It is this quality which will probably be missed most by the left and the secular political forces in Sri Lanka during the crucial election year ahead.

Thomas Abraham

2250 MEN DESERT

Around 2250 security personnel have deserted the Sri Lankan armed forces since last year, according to security sources in Colombo. The majority of those who abandoned their posts was from the army.

Intensive investigations are being undertaken by the National Intelligence Bureau and the Counter Subversion Unit to track the whereabouts of these deserters. The fear is that many of them have joined southern based armed political groups like the JVP.

With the arrest of several former servicemen in connection with many murders, armed attacks and raids and seizure of army uniforms in secluded hideouts, police sources believe that the JVP has recruited a considerable number of service deserters into their ranks.

It is also suspected that the JVP had infiltrated the services by making their members join the forces during 1984 and 1985 when the government was engaged in feverish campaign of indiscriminate recruitment to bolster up the numerical strength of the forces with the view to fight against Tamil militants.

Appreciation

Satyendra Coomaraswamy, affectionately known as Sathi to all his friends and associates passed away on 15th January 1988 (Thaipongal day) after a heart attack at his residence in Battaramulla, Colombo.

Sathi was a sportsman par excellence. Cricket was his first choice despite his brilliance in Tennis and Athletics. He was a product of Royal college and was later at University college and at both institutions won colours in Tennis, Athletics and Cricket. He was the national 100 yards sprint champion.

Sathi had the rare distinction of captaining his country before his club — The Tamil Union Cricket and Athletic Club. His international cricket career began in 1948 when he played under M. Sathasivam against the memorable team led by the legendary Don Bradman. In that match Sathi bagged four wickets and narrowly missed a hat trick. Later that year he played against the West Indies team led by John Goddard which included the famous 'Three Ws' and scored an aggressive half century. In the following year he played against the touring

Pakistani team against stalwarts like Khan and Fazal Mohammed. His last appearance in international cricket was in 1950 against the Commonwealth Eleven led by Bill Alley before becoming a member of the National Selection Committee and serving on it for over a decade.

He first worked for Shell and later became a Director of Shaw Wallace & Hedges Ltd. His father Mr. C. Coomaraswamy was a highly respected public servant who retired as Government Agent, Jaffna, a very senior post at the top of the ladder in those days. His brother was the famous 'Roving Raju', a former diplomat at large. He leaves behind his wife Padmini and three daughters Priya, Mrs Shyamala Surendranathan (U.K.) and Anushya (Colombo).

Sathi was the gentlest of gentlemen who never allowed his successes to cloud his humility. He was a true sportsman who could face success and failure with equal composure. May a great soul rest in peace.

Kay

A Painter Departs

Ivan Peries leaves his easel at 67

A founder of 'The '43 Group', Colombo, Ivan Peries, who was of that generation whose perspective transcended sectarian distinctions, leaves behind a lasting legacy for an international posterity as well.

Born in Dehiwela whose first light was an enduring first love, the young Ivan made his way West just after the war to continue his one demanding dedication. He worked at the Anglo-French Art Centre in London and then in Paris. Since 1952 when he held his first exhibition at the Imperial Institute, he has exhibited at several venues in England, India and on the continent including the Petit Palais, Paris, and the Biennale, Venice. His work was due for an exhibition at the Hayward Gallery. His paintings have been reproduced in many publications and is in Collections in England, Europe, Africa and India.

Critics place him as one of the enduring painters of the modern period of European art. *The Arrival* (1959-60), which visitors to the Lyre Room, Royal Festival Hall, Exhibition in June last year will remember, being regarded as perhaps his greatest creation and the one which secures his place of permanence.

A gathering of fellow countrymen and friends of his second home at his last resting place in South End, Essex, included the English Painter, Adrian Morris, Dr. Robert Skelton, Keeper of the India Section of the Victoria & Albert Museum which has some of our countryman's work, and Martin Russell, Collector and great friend and patron of The '43 Group.

The eye which opened on our west coast and closed on England's east is an unsetting star.

UNHCR AID FOR RETURNING REFUGEES

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Geneva, has launched a \$13.5 million (Rs. 17.55 crores) special programme of limited assistance to Sri Lankan refugees and asylum-seekers returning to that island nation.

Talking to presspersons at the Man-dapam refugees transit camp, Mr. R. Sampath Kumar, UNHCR director for Asia and Oceania, said the programme was planned to benefit 75,000 refugees or asylum-seekers returning for the

most part from India spontaneously or through organised repatriation by December 1988.

'The financial requirement is currently projected as \$13.5 million (Rs. 40 crores — Sri Lankan) not including the food needs, which will be covered by the World Food Programme,' he said.

As security conditions improved in Sri Lanka, refugees and asylum-seekers in other countries too might wish to repatriate voluntarily.

JAFFNA MEDICAL FACULTY THREATENED WITH CLOSURE

The Faculty of Medicine of the University of Jaffna is in the throes of a crisis. And if meaningful steps are not taken immediately to sort out the crisis, the 'Tamil Times' understand that the Faculty could face closure, perhaps as early as June '88.

This is the latest disaster facing Jaffna, after being savaged by those who came to give salvation. Education, the priceless heritage of the Tamils of Eelam, had already been reduced to the status of a lame duck as a result of the events of yesteryears. And now — the closure of the Jaffna Medical Faculty could mean the end of the road for aspiring doctors from the Tamil community.

The primary and most pressing problem that has precipitated the present crisis is the woefully inadequate staffing levels of most clinical and para clinical Departments of the Medical Faculty. It is understood that if this situation continues the Faculty would be forced to fold up by June '88.

Realising the seriousness and urgency of the problem, students of the Faculty have launched a 'SAVE THE JAFFNA MEDICAL FACULTY' campaign through the Medical students' committees of the Faculty. A campaign office has been set up at the Faculty. And from here appeals are going out to Tamil doctors working overseas and to well wishers of the Jaffna Medical Faculty.

They are sending job application forms to Tamil doctors working overseas and pleading with them to apply for one of the vacant posts.

'If you do accept to fill in a vacancy, we will be most grateful and obliged,' they say. 'If due to personal obligation you are unable to do so now, please help us by contacting as many people as possible and tell them about our needs.'

Plucking at the heart strings of the overseas Tamil doctors, they appeal: 'This is the Faculty's hour of need and we would be most grateful if you could kindly help us to solve this crisis. We need grace, we need help from you — NOW.'

They have circulated a list of some of the vacancies that have to be filled urgently:

Vacancies at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna (Clinical Department)

Medicine: Professor 1, Registrar 2.
Surgery: Senior Lecturer 2, Registrar 1.

Obstetrics & Gynaecology: Senior Lecturer 2, Registrar 2.
Paediatrics: Senior Lecturer 2, Registrar 1.

Vacant posts of Consultants/SHO at the General Hospital (Teaching) Jaffna

Consultants: Neurosurgeon 1, Ortho-

paedic Surgeon 1, Thoracic Surgeon 1, Dermatologist 1, VD Specialist 1, Physical Medicine 1, ENT Surgeon 1, Eye Surgeon 1.

Senior House Officers: Medicine 2, Surgery 1, Obstetrics & Gynaecology 2, Paediatrics 1, R.O 1.

Para Clinical Vacancies

1. Professor of Anatomy
2. Professor of Pharmacology
3. Professor of Medicine
4. Endowment chair in Oncology
5. Endowment chair in Orthopaedic Surgery
6. Senior Lecturer in Pathology, Parasitology, Physiology, Psychiatry, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Surgery, Biochemistry.

7. Temporary Senior Lecturer/Temp. Lecturer in Pathology/Parasitology/Microbiology/Physiology, Psychiatry, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Surgery, Medicine, Anatomy, Biochemistry.

8. Assistant Lecturer/Temp. Asst. Lecturer in Physiology, Parasitology, Microbiology, Anatomy & Biochemistry. Positions on contract also invited.

The road to hell, they say, is paved with good intentions. But that alone is not enough to prevent the closure of the Jaffna Medical Faculty. To anyone who is prepared to rise to the occasion to help out the Jaffna Medical Faculty, the address for correspondence is: 'SAVE THE JAFFNA MEDICAL FACULTY', Medical Students Committees, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna, Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Rs 14m damage to Jaffna campus

As a result of the operations of the IPKF in the Jaffna Peninsula in October last year, the Jaffna University which had been functioning smoothly up to that time, suffered heavy losses in both human and material terms.

Since the Head Office of the LTTE was situated just opposite the university, the IPKF found the university grounds a suitable place for the dropping of paratroops. But with the shooting of paratroopers by the LTTE, the campus and the surrounding area turned into a bloody battlefield, 29 civilians were killed while heavy damage was caused to university property.

At a special meeting of the council of the university of Jaffna held on December 12, it was revealed that eight people including a Professor, one staff member and six students had been killed.

Professor Chandrasegaram who was killed, had rendered very valuable service in the field of Education. He had been a lecturer at the Universities of Colombo and Peradeniya and a visiting lecturer at the Universities of London, and Kerala.

According to the Report submitted to the Secretary of the University Grants Commission by Prof. S. Vithiananthan, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Jaffna, the total loss amounts to Rs. 14 million. Damage caused was mainly in respect of University buildings, teaching equipment, lecture and student notes, library material and laboratory equipment.

The Jaffna University is expected to reopen next month.

TAMIL DOCTORS IN UK FORM NEW ORGANISATION

A new Tamil organisation in UK, bearing the provisional name and style of 'Medical Institute of Tamils', was launched this month.

A sizeable gathering of Tamil doctors, hailing from both Eelam and Tamil Nadu, discussed and endorsed the need for launching such an organisation and gave the green light to an ad hoc steering committee elected for the purpose, to go ahead and draw up a constitution for the organisation and to liaise with Tamil doctors resident in the UK with the purpose of drawing them into its fold.

A number of aims and objectives were discussed and approved at the inaugural meeting convened at East London by Drs S. Mahendran, N. Sivananthan, V. Nerminathan and A. Selvaratnam:

* To provide a forum to exchange medical knowledge

* To provide a venue for social gathering

* To serve as an information centre for prospective Tamil Medical and Paramedical graduates and postgraduates.

* To provide a resource centre (Library - Audio & Video cassettes - Examination guidance literature etc.) for such graduates arriving in this country, seeking further education.

* To act as a pressure group working for the recognition in UK of Medical schools based in Tamil homelands.

Also discussed were proposals to generate a regular income for the organisation for its activities.

A spokesman for the organisation stressed that the new grouping aimed to supplement existing organisations and not to supplant them. This view was unanimously endorsed by the gathering.

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HINDU, parents seek professionally qualified partner for their 27 year old Doctor daughter. Details & horoscope to Box 209 c/o Tamil Times.

JAFFNA HINDU sister, seeks a pretty educated partner for 31 year old systems engineer brother employed in UAE. Write to Box M 213 c/o Tamil Times.

UNCLE seeks Hindu fully/partly professionally qualified brides for U.K. resident engineer, 30 years and B.Sc. final year engineering student, 28 years. Details to Box M 214 c/o Tamil Times.

CHRISTIAN CURATE seeks Christian partner, non smoker, teetotaler, age group 40-45 for his youngest sister, British subject, doing well in life. Must be employed. Write to Box M 215 c/o Tamil Times.

MBA from USA, age 30, from Jaffna Hindu family, holding professional position in USA, seeks bride, professionally qualified or pursuing studies for a professional career. Mars afflicted. Suitable applicants are invited to forward horoscope and if possible a photograph to Box M 216 c/o Tamil Times.

BROTHER in U.K. seeks suitable bridegroom for his professionally qualified sister, 30 year old B.Sc. (Nursing), Christian, presently working in Jaffna. Please send particulars to Box M 217 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents, seek partner for their 30 year old science graduate daughter working in Sri Lanka. Please send horoscope and details to Box M 218, c/o Tamil Times.

YOUNG MAN 31, U.K. citizen, graduate settled Nottingham seeks partner resident in U.K. Please write with details to Box M 219 c/o Tamil Times.

PARENTS seek suitable Hindu Tamil partner for son, 36 years, Accountant in leading firm in Sri Lanka. Please apply with horoscope and photograph. Strict confidentiality and return of photograph assured. Write to Box M 220 c/o Tamil Times.

SRI LANKAN Doctor, former staff member of United Nations, with two sons finishing their Post Graduate studies (M.B.A. & Electrical Engineering) in United States, 26 and 25 years respectively wishes to contact Sri Lankan parents, preferably Christians, settled in United States with a view to finding suitable marriage partners for his sons. Please contact Dr. K. Balasubramaniam 524C, Sea Home, Tanjung Bungah, 11200 Penang, Malaysia.

IN REMEMBRANCE

The late Thambithurai Paramapathy of 4 Old Park Road, Jaffna remembered by his loved ones on his birthday 18 March 1988. 'In thee O' Lord I put my trust'.

OBITUARY

Ponnuswamy Vaithilingam — Beloved husband of late Amirthavalli and Sundaravalli, father of Pathmavathy (Australia), Ramathan (Canada), Sathivathy (Malaysia) Sathianathan (Australia), Thilagavathy (Jaffna), Indranathan (Canada), and Dr. (Mrs.) Dharmavathy Jegatheeswaran (Canada), passed away peacefully on February 15th, 1988 in Vannarponnai, Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

April 17, 1p.m. **S.C.O.T. Tamil New Year Lunch**, Lola Jones Hall, Greaves Place, off Garratt Lane, Tooting, London SW17. Tickets available from The Treasurer, 181 Torbay Road, Harrow, Middx., Telephone 01-422 8984.

April 23, 7p.m. **Cultural Show** by students and teachers of Institute of Tamil Culture, Surbiton in Hollyfield School Hall, Surbiton Hill Road, Surbiton, Surrey.

April 24, 1.30p.m. **Festival of Our Patron Saints**, Mass at Westminster Cathedral, followed by Asian Bazaar organised by Asian Chaplaincy, 48 Great Peter Street, Westminster, London SW1P 2HA (Phone 01-222 2895).

April 30, 6.30p.m. **Star Night by Leading Cine Artistes** at Central Hall, Storey's Gate, Westminster, London SW1. Tickets from Siv Raj Enterprises, Telephone 01-767 8201/8388.

At Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 4A Castletown Road, London W14 (Phone 01-381 3086/4608):

April 5-10, 10.30a.m. to 7p.m. Bhavan's **Book Exhibition**.

April 23, 7p.m. **Santoor** by Nandkishor Muley.

April 29, 7p.m. **Lecture** by Prof. Veera Raghavan on 'Moving Towards Integrated Culture'.

April 30, 7.30p.m. **Bharatanatyam** by Prakash Yadagudde.

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