

Tamil TIMES

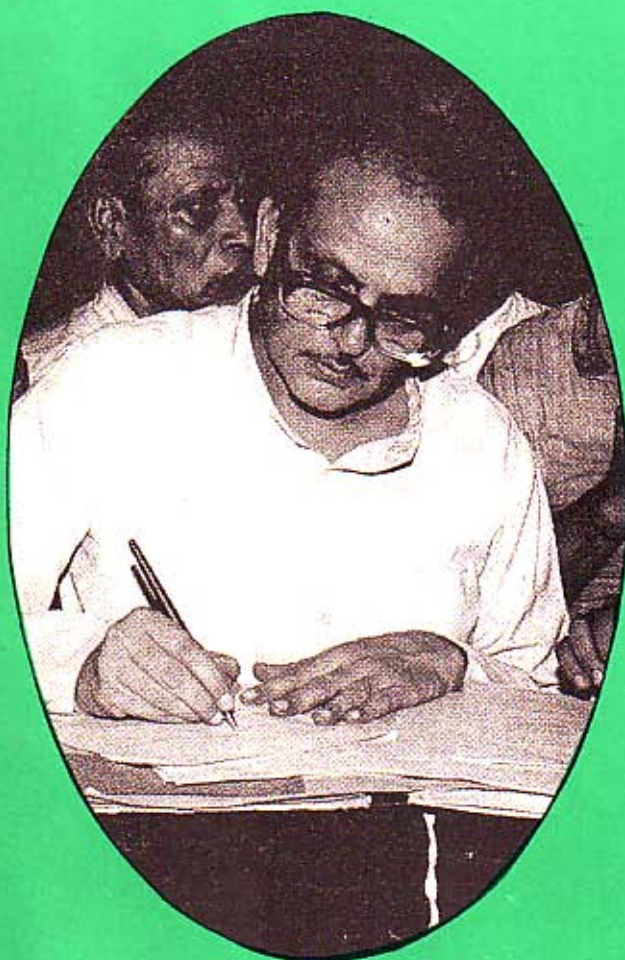
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● **The Indian Post-Election Scene**



THE NEW INDIAN PRIME MINISTER
VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH

- **Sri Lanka
– The Eastern
Powder Keg**
- **VIOLENCE SPREADS
IN TAMILS AREAS**
- **DEBACLE OF
THE DMK**
- ***For a Ceasefire
Among Tamil
Groups***

V.P. Singh Outlines His Agenda

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FOR A CEASEFIRE AMONG TAMIL GROUPS

As we enter our ninth year of uninterrupted publication, events are shaping up in the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka in not an unfamiliar pattern. As the Indian Peace Keeping Force which arrived in these areas in the wake of the much maligned Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987 is expected to depart shortly, the problems facing the Tamil people have a familiar ring. In the Amparai, Batticaloa and Mannar districts, thousands of civilians have been displaced and have become refugees. The exodus of people to Tamil Nadu has begun. The main cause for the replay of this familiar scenario is the violence that is gradually escalating in the Tamil areas. As the IPKF completes its other phases of withdrawal, it looks as though the whole of the North-Eastern province will become enveloped in violence.

The distressing and depressing aspect of the present violence is that the Tamil groups are playing into the sinister designs of the Sri Lankan government. Every action of the government seems to be deliberately intended to create more and more dissension in the ranks of the Tamil groups which are already riven apart even without outside prompting. The manner in which the government thwarted the formation of the Peace Committee contemplated in the September 18 joint declaration of the Indian Sri Lankan governments was typical. If the government wanted to bring about a certain degree of understanding among these groups, it would have taken steps to form this committee with all the Tamil groups and parties. Although it was continuing to have long drawn out confabulations with the LTTE, there was absolutely no evidence of any government effort to persuade these groups and parties to come together. On the contrary, the government, and Minister Ranjan Wijeratne in particular, was following a confrontationalist course towards the North-East Provincial administration. Revealing his true intentions, when asked at a press conference whether the government proposed to dissolve the North-East Provincial Council he went so far as to say that the government was waiting 'until the North-East Chief Minister tightened the noose round his own neck'.

One suspects that the government is deliberately fostering armed clashes among Tamil groups so that they become weakened or even get mutually annihilated until it

is time for itself to step in at the appropriate time to intervene and determine the course of events in accordance with its own terms.

On the other hand, one is tempted to feel that the Tamil groups are allowing their internecine rivalry to cloud their judgement about the true intentions of the Sri Lankan government. The alacrity with which Sri Lankan security forces, including the dreaded Special Task Force personnel, are being despatched to the Tamil areas immediately following armed confrontations between the LTTE and the other Tamil militant groups, and the readiness with which aerial attacks are being mounted in these areas are a reflection of the government's desire to saturate the Tamil areas with its forces. This development will inevitably lead to the pre-July 1987 situation when Sri Lankan forces were used to terrorise the Tamil population. The Tamil groups, particularly the LTTE which is having ongoing talks with the government, should realise that once the Sri Lankan forces in large numbers locate themselves in place in the Tamil areas, it would become virtually impossible to dislodge them and it would almost become a re-run of the pre-July 1987 course of events with much more disastrous consequences for the civilian population.

The Tamil militant groups have a duty to arrest the deteriorating situation in the interests of the community they claim to work for and not fall a prey to the machinations of the Sri Lankan government. One is not ignoring the existing state of hostility and rivalry among these groups, but these hostilities and rivalries do not arise from any fundamentally antagonistic contradictions. Perhaps they are based more on subjective and organisational reasons. An immediate imperative for the leaderships of these groups is to arrive at an immediate ceasefire. If a ceasefire between the Sri Lankan forces and the LTTE is possible, and if a ceasefire between the LTTE and the IPKF is possible, it ought to be possible for a ceasefire to take place between the Tamil militant groups. Once the ceasefire is in place, they ought to get together among themselves to discuss an agenda for the resolution of the present state of armed confrontation eventually leading to the people being offered an opportunity at a free and fair election to make their democratic choice.

The North East Powder Keg

by Rita Sebastian from Colombo

The capture and death of Janatha Vimukti Peramuna leader Rohana Wijeweera, followed by that of his deputy Upatissa Gamanayake last month was the high point of the security forces counter subversive operations. Although there was much speculation as to the manner of the elimination of the JVP leadership, a government, long beleaguered by violence suddenly found itself on top of the situation.

If earlier claims of having broken the back of the JVP were taken at face value, here was ample proof that military intelligence and military strategy had paid off. In addition, the State Minister for Defence Ranjan Wijeratne's claim that the JVP politburo, except one, was 'in' brought a visible sigh of relief from both government and opposition ranks, under JVP death threats.

But the government, only too aware that all is still not over, has not relaxed its counter subversive operations. A 'last' appeal, in the first week of December to those still holding out, to surrender, assuring them both protection and assistance, showed the government's determination to go all out to clear the decks.

It's success will become evident only in the next few months, if, as it is hoped, there is an end to southern terrorism.

If the government felt elated over the handling of the Rohana Wijeweera affair, it was brought down to earth with a sharply deteriorating security situation in the north-east. While the Tigers were talking to the government in Colombo, a politically undermined North-East Provincial Council, under EPRLF control, was flexing its muscles and making it quite clear that it would not be moved out, by what it called a sinister plan hatched between the Colombo government and the Tigers.

Even the EPRLF's bitterest critics are ready to point out that it was they, and their allies the ENDLF and TELO, who agreed to drop their guns and participate in the electoral process, whereas the Tigers chose to remain outside and continued to battle it out, not only with the Indian forces but with the other groups as well.

Assurances of observing the September twentieth IPKF-declared ceasefire was short-lived, as sporadic attacks surfaced with all sides charging each other with ceasefire violations.

Things came to a head in early November with Tiger attacks, on what they described as two camps of the illegal Tamil National Army.

This was followed in mid-November by attacks on four Sri Lankan police stations in the Amparai district by the

Tamil National Army in which fortythree Muslim Citizens Volunteer Force personnel were massacred by TNA personnel.

This was indication that the EPRLF and its allies will not let go the control of the North-East Provincial Council to which they claim a legitimate right by virtue of being elected to it, a contention the Tigers refuse to accept, pointing it out as a creation of the Indian forces.

The Chief Minister of the North-East Council Varatharajah Perumal, and State Minister for Defence Ranjan Wijeratne trading accusations and counter accusations has in no way helped to diffuse tension.

How easily the Tigers seem to have moved into eastern Amparai where Tiger spokesman and Tiger political wing member Yogi, flown in by Sri Lankan helicopter were able to address the people in the district, is indication of the new Tiger strategy to move into IPKF vacated areas and establish their credentials as a group committed to returning the region to peace and normalcy.

Their seeking political recognition is seen as a genuine move on their part to make the transition from militance to democratic politics. But the Tiger's military wing, according to Dr. Balasingham is to remain as it is ('disbanding it would be suicidal now'), until such time when they can be absorbed into the North-East Provincial Police. But before that the Tigers want a dissolution of the North-East Council and fresh elections.

Although members of the Tamil National Army are said to have moved out of Amparai, they are making their presence felt in other areas. Even given the fact that quite a number of them were forcibly conscripted youth, there are the committed EPRLF, TELO and ENDLF cadres who form the bulk of the Tamil militia who will be determined to see that the Tigers don't have their way.

The Tigers however seem to be riding on the crest of a wave. Having put things right between the Colombo government and themselves, on the surface at least, and with a change in the political leadership in India they feel the last hurdle has been jumped and now it is only a matter of time before they assert their dominance over the other groups.

What appeared to most Sri Lankans as a vague agreement between the two countries, when in September an agreement spelt out that 'all efforts will be made to de-induct the IPKF by December thirtyfirst' is now expected to fall into a definite timeframe.

As political analysts see it, and quite rightly so, there is going to be no sharp change in India's Sri Lanka policy. On the contrary, says a left leader in Sri Lanka 'an unstable government at the centre would make the bureaucracy more high-handed, less coherent, and more authoritarian'. However a visible sense of relief is being expressed by all shades of political opinion in the country that there will be an arrest to the deteriorating relations between the two countries, mainly over Indian troop presence in the island and what is thought of as the 'meddling tactics of the earlier administration'.

But what becomes crucial now is how the Tamil groups are going to accommodate each other in the security vacuum created by IPKF withdrawal. Neither the EPRLF nor the Tigers want the Sri Lankan forces to maintain law and order in the North-East region. It is for this very reason that Chief Minister Perumal has been insistent on a provincial police force. The Tigers themselves are on record that they made the request of President Premadasa that, the Sri Lankan forces should not be used in any offensive against any Tamil group, lest it be construed as an attack by Sinhala forces against the Tamil people. The EPRLF does not want a 'pan-Sinhala chauvinist army' taking control and that is why they have demanded that the ethnic balance in the army be maintained, a request taken note of by the government and recruitment on that basis already initiated.

But the tragedy is that neither the government, nor other intermediaries have been able to bring the feuding Tamil groups together. Today the rift is wider than ever before and there doesn't seem to be any likelihood of them talking peace.

It is in the multi-ethnic eastern province that the bloodiest battle is expected to be fought. Already the Muslims, anguished over the Amparai massacre of their people, have voiced their disillusionment with the North-East Provincial Council where seventeen of their members sit in opposition.

Muslim politicians accuse the EPRLF of using the Muslims as a buffer in their battle with the Tigers.

The seasons greetings
to all our readers

Best wishes and
a prosperous New Year

VIOLENCE SPREADS IN TAMIL AREAS

The rushed visit to New Delhi by Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister, Ranjan Wijeratne on 7 December and his discussions with the new Indian Prime Minister, V.P. Singh, failed to evoke a firm commitment from the Indian government that the deadline of December 31 for the complete withdrawal of the IPKF would be met. The new Prime Minister would not be rushed and promised to discuss the matter with all relevant parties and arrive at an early decision.

In the meantime, events are inexorably leading to violent confrontations, one between the government of Sri Lanka and North-East Provincial Council, and the other between the forces represented by the EPRLF-ENDLF-TELO and the LTTE.

Reports indicate an escalation of violent incidents in the Amparai, Batticaloa, Mannar and Vavuniya districts in the Tamil dominated North-Eastern Province. These violent incidents have left hundreds dead and thousands of civilians displaced and a refugee situation is being gradually created reminiscent of pre-July 1987 period. It is also reliably learnt that nearly a thousand Tamils have taken to boats to cross over to neighbouring Tamil Nadu.

The violent incidents which are fast enveloping these areas follow the gradual withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) and the attempt by rival Tamil militant groups either to retain their positions or in attempts to regain their lost positions. The Tamil National Army which has been formed by the EPRLF, ENDLF and TELO have been seeking to retain control of the areas vacated by the IPKF, and the LTTE is making a determined bid to drive out their rivals and the Tamil National Army and regain gradual control. In the midst of this internecine confrontation, the Sri Lankan armed forces including the Special Task Force are being brought into the Tamil areas and are themselves engaged in violent clashes with the Tamil National Army.

Upon the withdrawal of the IPKF from the Amparai district at the beginning of November the TNA set up camps and the Citizens Volunteer Force (CVF) of the Provincial Council began undertaking security functions. The LTTE, in its declared resolve to drive out the 'illegal TNA' mounted simultaneous attacks on the camps of their rivals. The Sri Lankan government took the opportunity to introduce its forces to 'protect the people of the district'. Having withdrawn from the area, on 17 November the TNA attacked four police stations at Sammanthurai, Chavalakadai, Kalmunai and Akkaraipattu in the course of which an estimated onehundred persons died on

both sides, including 43 reserve CVF personnel at the Karativu police station, all Muslims. The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress has accused the TNA of having allowed the Tamil CVF men to escape and massacred the Muslims, an act which the SLMC described as an absolute betrayal of the confidence reposed in the Provincial government by the Muslim population. To dislodge the TNA, the government rushed in additional reinforcements and helicopter gunships were used to fire rockets. Hundreds of civilian casualties were reported.

The IPKF completed their withdrawal from the Batticaloa district by November 30 and ever since there have been frequent armed clashes between the contingents of the LTTE and the TNA, the former seeking to establish military dominance in the area as they had already achieved in the Amparai district. The EPRLF and its allies have accused the Sri Lankan government and its security forces of aiding and abetting the LTTE. At the same time they have also accused the LTTE of enabling the Sri Lankan security forces to re-establish themselves in Tamil areas.

'LTTE cadres in separate groups are reported to be at the heels of the retreating illegal Tamil National Army whose cadres in the majority have been pushed further away from the environs of Batticaloa towards the direction of Trincomalee. LTTE cadres in considerable numbers have been seen in the areas covering Kalawanchikudi dogging the footsteps of the retreating TNA as the IPKF withdraws more men. The LTTE cadres are believed to have come from Thirukoil, Pottuvil, Amparai and Nawa-gamgamuwa', *The Island* of 5 December reported.

On 3 December two truckloads of Sri Lankan soldiers near Vavuniya in Northern Sri Lanka were ambushed by Tamil militants killing seventeen soldiers who were returning to their camp after home leave. The Colombo government's accusation that the TNA was responsible for this attack has been rejected by EPRLF sources. The

Sri Lanka forces were reported to have engaged in retaliatory attacks.

Fighting was reported to be continuing between the LTTE and the TNA contingents on 4 and 5 December in the jungles of Unnachchi, Kiran, Punnikulam and Kalawanchikudy. On the afternoon of 5 December, TNA personnel mounted an attack on the Batticaloa police station firing mortars in an effort to storm the police station complex. Elite commandos and armed forces backed by helicopter gunships were reported to have repulsed the six-hour long attack. According to SP Batticaloa, G. Thenabadu, the police assisted by the elite STF, Army and Air Force took control of the security situation after ground and air attacks directed at TNA positions dislodged them and that the Sri Lankan forces had inflicted heavy casualties and losses on the TNA. There were dozens of civilian casualties resulting from these incidents and civilian administration, transport and communications had been disrupted in Batticaloa.

The IPKF completed its withdrawal from the Mannar district on 7 December and the next phases of their pullout would be from the Vavuniya and Mullaitivu districts. Upon withdrawal of the IPKF from Mannar, soldiers from the Wijeba Infantry Regiment of the Sri Lankan Army took up positions and commenced patrols in the area. Police reinforcements also have been brought in.

EROS, although remaining friendly with the LTTE, and which had remained somewhat neutral in the clashes between the LTTE and its rival Tamil groups, has also become embroiled in the latest internecine violence. Its cadres had on more than one occasion been targetted by the TNA. Curiously, the LTTE is reported to have stormed the EROS camp at Chenkaladi in the course of which some EROS cadres had been killed and relieved of a large quantity of weapons.

The LTTE on 8 December issued an ultimatum to the cadres of the Tamil National Army to surrender within 24 hours through posters in the North-East.

WIJEWEERA'S WIFE AND SISTER SURRENDER

The wife of the murdered JVP leader, Mrs Chitrangani Wijeweera, was reported to have surrendered to Army Commander Lt. General Hamilton Wanasinghe with her five children two days after she was reported to have sought refuge at the home of a relative in Maharagama after motoring down from Ulapane where her exact whereabouts there were not known since the

death of her husband. According to the Army Commander, all possible security would be at the disposal of Mrs. Wijeweera and her children and this was being done in terms of an assurance given by President Premadasa to Mrs. Wijeweera in the course of a telephone conversation when she tele-

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phoned the President on 19 November from Army Head Quarters.

Mrs. Wijeweera also handed over a sum of Rs.175,000 and 10,000 US dollars along with one kilogram of gold jewellery to the Army Commander at the time of her surrender. The whereabouts of Mrs. Wijeweera and the children would be kept a secret in the interests of their personal safety, the Army Commander added.

The JVP leader's younger sister, Chitrani Wijeweera, also surrendered to the Mharagama police on 19 November and was promptly placed in protective custody. Chitrani had been staying with her brother and his family at the time of his arrest at Ulapane. Following her brother's arrest and subsequent killing, Chitrani had gone to stay at the residence of her uncle at Meegoda in Padukka. She had reached her uncle's house after staying in several places during the previous few days.

Chitrani has been reported to have told the police that she decided to surrender after learning of the surrender of her sister-in-law Mrs. Wijeweera.

LANKAN TROOPS DEPLOYED IN BATTICALOA

Minister of State for Defence Ranjan Wijeratne, visited Batticaloa on 2 December and ordered the Army to deploy troops in the area to disarm the TNA.

The Minister's visit followed the IPKF's withdrawal from the district and came at a time when about 3,000 TNA cadres were reportedly trapped in the area by the LTTE.

The sources said Mr. Wijeratne met senior security officials in Batticaloa and was briefed on the situation in the area.

They said he was informed about the TNA efforts to dominate the area and the difficulty the police faced in maintaining law and order.

Security in Batticaloa is currently provided by the Police with the support of the STF.

The sources said Mr. Wijeratne asked Army Commander, Lt. Gen. Hamilton Wanasinghe, who accompanied him, to deploy troops in Batticaloa to help the Police maintain law and order and carry out their normal duties.

They said TNA cadres deployed in two or three camps in the district appeared to be trapped since they could neither go north to Trincomalee nor south to Kalmunai because of LTTE concentrations in Poonani and near Kalmunai.

A confrontation between the two

rival groups appeared imminent, the sources said.

Among the others present at the conference were STF Commandant SP Lionel Karunasena, Brigadier A. de S. Daluwatte, and North-East Province DIG Anandaraja.

INDIA CONFIRMS COMPLETE IPKF PULLOUT BY DECEMBER

India has reiterated its pledge to withdraw the Indian Forces from Sri Lanka by end of this year despite sporadic clashes in the temporarily merged North-East province.

State Minister for Defence, Ranjan Wijeratne addressing the press yesterday said that Sri Lanka's High Commissioner in New Delhi, Dr. Stanley Kalpage had informed Colombo that Mr. Kuldip Sahdev of the Indian External Affairs Ministry had told the High Commissioner about India's plans to complete pull-out of all Indian forces by end of this year. 'By and large the Indian pull-out will be completed by end of this year', Minister Wijeratne said.

The North-East provincial Chief Minister, Varatharaja Perumal too had been told by Delhi, of the withdrawal of the Indian forces by end of this year, Dr. Kalpage had stated in his communique Minister Wijeratne said.

Mr Wijeratne who declined to comment or react to India's election results said the result was the will of the Indian people. 'We hope to have good relations with the Indian people and India's political leaders' he said.

Asked whether there would be any change on the scheduled Indian pull-out because of the outcome of the Indian election, Minister Wijeratne said that he saw no reason why the Indian election results should affect the scheduled Indian pull-out from Sri Lanka.

'The Sri Lankan army and police will take over security in the Batticaloa district', Minister Wijeratne said. Except for a few Tamil National Army men, all others had left the Batticaloa district along with the IPKF, he said, the IPKF completed the pull-out from the Batticaloa areas yesterday.

Minister Wijeratne advised a few TNA men who were believed to be holed up in the district to leave, immediately. He also appealed to the LTTE not to create any trouble in the district.

Asked whether the North-East security coordinating committee was scheduled to meet, he replied in the negative.

General Sepala Attygalle and Minister Wijeratne said that except for the

3000 Citizens Volunteer Force (CVF) men, cadres of any other organisations will be treated as 'illegal'. Sri Lankan forces had been ordered to take stern action against all those who carry arms in the north-east areas, they said.

TNA CADRES SURRENDER

At least 484 cadres of the 'Tamil National Army' have surrendered to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sri Lankan army.

Most of them had surrendered with arms and ammunition claimed to be used by the IPKF.

Of the 484, 400 surrendered to the LTTE in the east, LTTE political chief Anton Balasingham said. Mr Balasingham who returned to Colombo after visiting some areas in the Ampara-Batticaloa sector on 28 November said that 300 surrendered to the LTTE in the Trincomalee district where fighting erupted between the 'Tigers' and IPKF backed TNA men at Sambalthivu and Koviladi. The rest surrendered in Batticaloa.

In Welioya eighty four TNA cadres surrendered to the Sri Lankan army Defence Secretary General Sepala Attygalle said. He said that 84 men of the TNA surrendered to Sri Lankan army officers after walking over twenty miles through jungles.

TO BE ARRESTED FOR HELPING SUBVERSIVES

Several key arrests, including politicians, lawyers, businessmen and doctors are among those who would be taken into custody in the next two weeks according to senior Defence sources.

Their names have transpired in the interrogation of some of the key arrests already made.

Detectives are now on the trail of these persons, who while paying lip-service to democracy have been helping the subversives.

Politicians have been espousing their cause, while doctors treated them lawyers advised them and businessmen financed them.

Defence Ministry sources said that there were even several firms which have been making regular payments to the subversives.

A Defence Ministry source said that it is possible that some of the doctors and lawyers and businessmen and firms were helping the subversives under threat of death. But there was also evidence of positive involvement by some others.

Some of the arrests to be made would be shocking, these sources said.

STF TO BE DEPLOYED IN EASTERN PROVINCE

The government is expected to go ahead with moves to deploy the Special Task Force (STF) in the Batticaloa district, despite opposition by North-East Chief Minister, A. Varatharaja Perumal, following reports of mass concentration of 'Tamil National Army' cadres in that Eastern region, senior Defence officials disclosed.

Plans were being worked out to commission STF Commandos after scheduled pull-out of the Indian Army from the Batticaloa district.

Batticaloa district was under the control of the para-military Special Task Force (STF) until July 1987, when they were confined to barracks under the Indo-Lanka Accord.

EPRLF sources confirmed that the North-East Chief Minister had called for the total removal of the STF from the Batticaloa district and from Tamil areas in the Ampara district. Two STF camps based in Akkaraipattu and Thirukkivil were shut down shortly after the IPKF moved out of the Ampara region.

Security officials assert that there was every indication that commandos based in six camps at Kallady, Kalawanchikudy, Karadiyanaru, Kiran, Valachchenai and Pullumalai in the Batticaloa district may become operational after the Indian Army's withdrawal from that region, as there were 'rather frightening reports of TNA activities'.

The STF base at Valachchenai provided security cover to the Sinhalese fishing village of Wellawadiya while commandos based at Pullumalai ensured the security of Sinhalese farming peasants along the Batticaloa-Ampara border.

It was not immediately clear whether the Sri Lanka Army would also be moved in to supplement the STF in Batticaloa, a high-ranking security official in the region commented: 'it is still in the balance'.

WIJEWEEA'S KILLING NSSP SUSPECTS 'FOULPLAY'

A Press release by the Nava Sama Samaja Party on the death of Wijeweera stated:

According to the government announcement Wijeweera was arrested with his family at Ulapane on 12th and brought to Colombo for questioning. He was killed by Herath, a leader of the JVP/DJV when Wijeweera was taken by the security forces to search the DJV headquarters.

This incredible story smells of foul-play and conspiracy. It was announced only two weeks back by the President Premadasa that there is no arrest order for Wijeweera. Also, he was invited to participate in the All Party Conference with the promise of adequate security. In fact tight security was provided to the leaders of the LTTE. However, Wijeweera has faced the same fate that came to many youth in this country. Not only he was murdered while in custody, his body has been cremated without an inquiry. There is no evidence of the instrument that killed him. Was he really arrested or did he surrender for the protection of himself and his family?

Wijeweera was totally responsible for the murder of many working class and left leaders, for the fascist styled attacks on us and many other terrorist acts.

However that should not close our eyes to gross violation of human rights of a citizen of this country by the UNP regime and prevent us from protesting against such crimes.

Wijeweera may be no more. However the anger and hatred of a section of the youth of this country against the present unjust, oppressive system, which was exploited by Wijeweera remains. If Wijeweera is dead then it is quite possible that the fascist styled DJV/JVP will go into a serious, political crisis as happened many times before to such petty bourgeoisie movements.

However unless the left movement emerges out of the present defeat, to lead the radicalized masses against the present corrupt, unjust, reactionary regime there will always be the potential for another Wijeweera.

ICRC URGED TO ACT ON 'MISSING' 216

Parent and next of kin of 216 persons reported missing from Matara have requested the International Red Cross team currently in the island to ascertain the fate that has befallen them.

A list of the 216 missing persons has been submitted to the Red Cross team by the SLFP, M.P. for Matara District, Mahinda Wijesekara.

These missing persons, are in the main university students, school children, teachers and unemployed youth, both male and female.

A large number of youths have been taken into custody by the security personnel and police during operations but they have not been released or legal action been instituted against them, said Chandasiri Gajadeera, Provincial Council Member and Attorney-at-Law.

He added that he had made representations to the authorities concerned and to the President about the matter.

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ICRC TEAM VISIT DETAINEES

The members of the International Committee of the Red Cross who are now in Sri Lanka visited several detention camps where suspected subversives are held and hope to prepare a list of detainees in detention.

Head of the delegation Phillip Comtosse said that information regarding missing persons would be given only to family members of the detainees who seek the assistance of the ICRC to trace them.

He said they had already reached an understanding with the government on five conditions: to visit all detention camps, to see all detainees, to talk privately to any detainee, to identify the detainee and to pay repeated visits.

Mr Comtosse said that he was awaiting an official communique regarding the discussion his delegation had with the government.

Mr. Comtosse said that there was cooperation from all quarters but declined to comment on whether any subversive group involved in the conflict had contacted them for assistance.

He further said that the ICRC was a non-political institution and did not involve itself in condemning the actions of any parties involved in the conflict.

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The Indian Post-Election Scene

V.P. Singh Outlines His Agenda

Reaffirms Promise to Work for Basic Changes

By Tarun Basu

'V.P. Singh: A mere creation of The Statesman and the Indian Express (newspapers critical of Gandhi govt). They are his only supporters'. Satish Sharma, Rajiv Gandhi's close friend and political aide.

NEW DELHI

That statement, made barely a month before the elections, illustrated more than anything else how completely out of tune with popular sentiments Rajiv Gandhi and his Congress Party had become.

Sharma, once described as the second most powerful man in the country after the former Prime Minister, was not at hand when Singh, 58, riding on the crest of an electoral mandate was sworn on Dec. 2 as the seventh Prime Minister of India. Little did Singh know when he walked out of the government in April, 1987 after developing policy differences with Gandhi that a dizzying combination of circumstances would launch him in the next two years on the high road to prime ministership. But when elections were announced on Oct 17, it became crystal clear that the 500 million electorate was being asked to choose between Gandhi and Singh, and wishing away Singh at that stage was an exercise in self-deception from which the Congress never recovered till the reality of defeat stared them in the face on Nov 27.

In his first address to the nation on television and radio a day after being sworn in, Singh made it a point to thank millions of voters throughout the country whose 'struggle for change' not only propelled him into the exalted office but has made him some kind of a messianic figure, a moral authority and a folk hero who could deliver them from the tyranny of their poverty and hopelessness. Singh, speaking in eloquent Hindi immediately found the right chord when he said the new government at the Center 'will be the voice of the millions of Indian homes without the light of hope' and 'if power is a sword, it will be wielded on behalf of the poor and toiling masses'.

Singh, a poet and painter in private, had drafted his own speech leaving only the English translation to his aides. And long after he had spoken it was being talked about for its earnestness, for appearing to come straight from the heart, and of being shorn of the rhetorical frills and clichés that had characterized the majority of Gandhi speeches.



Vishranath Pratap Singh, the Victor

Future in The Villages

In the ten minute address, Singh laid the agenda for his minority government and sought to dispel any notion that his administration's political precariousness would in any way dilute its commitment to bringing about basic changes in governance of this vast and complicated nation. He said half of the country's development outlay in future would go to the villages, where the majority of India lives, a national ombudsman would operate as a moral guardian for probity in public life and even the office of Prime Minister would not be above its scrutiny and right to information would be enshrined in the constitution in keeping with the commitment to have a more open government.

Singh reiterated that in foreign policy the government would continue to follow the old national consensus. The policy of nonalignment would be strengthened, apartheid would be fought with greater vigour, the Palestinians would be supported on their rights and effective steps would be taken to improve relations with neighbours. In an earlier acceptance speech at the central hall of Parliament, after being elected leader of the National Front legislature party, Singh had described relations within the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) as having suffered a 'rude shock' and promised to remove irritants in ties with countries like Sri Lanka and Nepal, a remark that was received with immediate welcome in both capitals.

Well Meaning But...

Singh has started off well, and probably means well too, but the shaky foundation on which his prime minis-

tership rests may not give him too much room to translate his idealism into practice. First his selection as leader of the Janata Dal, the largest single constituent of the National Front, was not devoid of controversy and bitterness. Chandrashekhar, who felt cheated by other party leaders on the choice of Singh, left the meeting in a huff and spoke ominously of a 'bleak future' for the country under the new dispensation. Chandrashekhar, a contender for prime ministership was outsmarted by other leaders who had assured him that Devi Lal would be the consensus candidate of the party in place of Singh to whom Chandrashekhar has always borne an ill-concealed grudge. But after hectic backroom manoeuvres Devi Lal, after being initially chosen as the leader of the party, sprang a surprise on Chandrashekhar by passing the mantle to Singh on the plea that he had commitments in his home state of Haryana. Although the majority of the party exulted at this decision, a sullen Chandrashekhar made it obvious that he would not easily forget the slight.

Since nothing in politics is without obligation, Singh returned the gesture a day later to appoint Lal, who had pleaded commitment to his state, as the deputy Prime Minister. The latter, in turn, entrusted his job to his eldest son Om Prakash Chautala, denying that it was dynastic succession like the Gandhi family, since Chautala was qualified in his own right to become the state leader.

The Devi Lal Factor

Although Lal has said he would play the role of elder statesman in the government, political observers are not too sure whether the 75-year-old political veteran would stop short of realizing what is just a step away from his ultimate dream. Some claim that Lal, after making his renunciatory speech in parliament, had rung up Singh to say that under pressure from his supporters he was obliged to seek suitable recompense for his gesture. Lal has considerable support in the 141 member Janata Dal party and had the potential to create problems for Singh if he wanted to. Whether he would refrain from doing so anymore is a question that nobody would dismiss but Lal on his own has dismissed the idea that this government would break up in quarrels like the Janata Party government did in 1979. 'We will not repeat the mistake of 1979', Lal asserted to newsmen in Madras.

Suspense before election

NEW DELHI, Dec 1.

Suspense and high drama marked the election of Mr. V.P. Singh as the leader of the Janata Dal Parliamentary Party in the Central Hall of Parliament House this afternoon. This, coupled with his election shortly afterwards as the leader of the National Front Parliamentary Party, paved the way for Mr Singh staking his claim to form a new Government at the Centre.

The election was unanimous, but not without a sour note. Mr. Chandra Shekhar, who had earlier given enough indications of his intention to contest for the leadership, announced after Mr. Singh, was declared elected that he had reservations about it. In comments to correspondents after the meeting, he alleged that he had become a victim of a fraud.

What imparted to the proceedings the overtones of a thriller was the suspense till the last moment about the *dramatis personae*. Most members did not quite know if there would be a contest or the choice would be unanimous; even minutes before the proceedings began, soon after 3 p.m., senior Dal members were not sure.

All seats occupied: Almost all available seats were occupied by Janata Dal MPs and workers and by journalists and lensmen. Excitement ran so high that two lensmen quarrelled trying to get vantage positions.

Shortly before the deliberations began, the Janata Dal President, Mr. V.P. Singh and the Haryana Chief Minister, Mr. Devi Lal went round the hall greeting the MPs. Many persons walked up to Mr. Chandra Shekhar, who occupied a seat at one end of the third or fourth row and enquired about his health (he is suffering from an attack of malaria).

To restore order, the veteran Janata Dal leader, Mr. Madhu Dandavate, invited all members of the Dal's Political Affairs Committee to take their seats at the long table, just below the podium. He came round to Mr. Chandra Shekhar's seat to fetch him to join others including Messrs. V.P. Singh, Devi Lal, Ramakrishna Hegde, Biju Patnaik, George Fernandes, V.C. Shukla, Ajit Singh and S.R. Bommai.

Devi Lal's name put up: Mr. Dandavate explained briefly the purpose of the meeting and invited the members to propose names. Hushed silence fell over the high-domed 'third chamber of Parliament' as Mr. V.P. Singh proposed Mr Devi Lal's name as the Dal's leader in Parliament. Mr Chandra Shekhar promptly announced his full support. As no other name was proposed Mr. Madhu Dandavate declared Mr. Devi Lal elected unanimously.

The announcement came as a sur-

prise to most MPs barring of course to Mr. Chandra Shekhar. He had come out of his sick bed apparently on the understanding that Mr. Devi Lal would stop Mr. V.P. Singh from becoming the Prime Minister. While many had anticipated that the unpredictable Mr. Devi Lal might throw his hat into the ring, none expected Mr. V.P. Singh to step aside without a demur. But now it was the turn of Mr. Chandra Shekhar to be surprised.

'For the more eligible': The assembled MPs and journalists held their breath as Mr Devi Lal took the microphone to make his acceptance speech. But he did not keep them in suspense for long. He was grateful for the confidence reposed in him but offered the office 'to a more eligible' Mr. V.P. Singh. He advised the MPs to give a hand to Mr Singh. Mr. Ajit Singh lost no time in declaring his support for the proposal. The entire House, barring a crestfallen Mr. Chandra Shekhar and his acolytes, burst into cheers. 'V.P. Singh zindabad' and 'Devi Lal zindabad' cries rent the air.

Mr. Dandavate presumably thought he would close the proceedings with his observation that with the election of the leader, the crisis in the Janata Dal Parliamentary party had ended, but Mr. Chandra Shekhar intervened to add a rider: 'I had supported Mr. Devi Lal but he proposed Mr. V.P. Singh. I did not know about the deal. I have my reservations'.

Mr. V.P. Singh spoke briefly thanking the party for its confidence in him and on the tasks facing his Government. He hoped with the cooperation of all concerned he would be able to face the situation successfully.

'A fraud': In the interval between the close of the Janata Dal Parliamentary Party proceedings and the commencement of the National Front Parliamentary Party meeting, a tense Mr. Chandra Shekhar had to field endless questions from correspondents to explain his reservations about the election of Mr. V.P. Singh. He minced no words to declare that a fraud had been

perpetrated on him.

Mr. Chandra Shekhar had agreed not to stake a claim, but to support Mr. Devi Lal on the understanding that the Haryana Chief Minister would head the National Front Government. But, Mr. Devi Lal sprang a surprise by striking a deal with Mr. V.P. Singh, and he was kept in the dark. The hint was obvious: had he known about the deal, he would have contested the election.

Would he join the V.P. Singh Cabinet? 'I am not used to receiving invitations through the press', was his curt response. What did he think of the future of the country? As bleak as before'. Realising perhaps that he might be accused of undermining the Government even before it was born, he hastened to add that he thought the future was bleak because of the enormity of the problems ahead.

The idea of a Government of national reconciliation was worth looking at he said.

Mr Chandra Shekhar lingered on in the Central Hall until the meeting of the Front Parliamentary Party was nearly over, and garlands began to be showered on Mr. V.P. Singh, but left soon after Mr. Singh's election was announced.

BJP, Left Front thanked: There were no hassles at the Front Parliamentary Party meeting. Mr. N.T. Rama Rao, the Front chairman, made a congratulatory speech and briefly touched on the Front's priorities. He did not forget to express the Front's thanks to the BJP and the Left Front for their support.

Mr. Devi Lal was again at hand at the Front meeting to propose Mr. V.P. Singh as the Front's Leader in Parliament. Support came quickly from Mr. P. Upendra, leader of the Telugu Desam Parliamentary Party, and Mr. K.P. Unnikrishnan of the Congress(S). Mr. V.P. Singh accepted the accolade, and made a suitable response.

Soon after the National Front meeting at a crowded press conference, Mr. V.P. Singh reaffirmed his commitment to work on the Front's election manifesto. On the Bofors issue, he said the law of the land would take its own course.

Debacle of the D.M.K.

By K. Vaidyanathan

MADRAS: History has repeated itself. When the rest of the nation opts for non-Congress (I) candidates, the electorate in the South has reaffirmed its faith in the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi. Had the South been equally hostile to Rajiv Gandhi and the party he leads, the post-poll scenario in Delhi would have been totally different. Is it an outright rejection of corruption

charges hurled at Rajiv and the collective leadership propounded by the National Front leadership?

The mandate from the South has two welcome factors - rejection of regional forces and the eagerness to ensure stability at the Centre. A closer analysis of the results proves beyond doubt that basically the instinct of the electorate was to move back and merge with the national mainstream. The



DMK's damsel, Radhika

route of the DMK in Tamil Nadu was not totally unexpected, for the party captured power early this year solely because of the split in the AIADMK and the failure of the non-DMK forces to forge an alliance.

If the DMK leadership interprets the verdict of the electorate as something unconnected to its performance during the last nine months, they dwell in a fool's paradise. The way the party went on a publicity spree to tom tom its achievements in power transformed the whole issue into a referendum on the DMK Government's performance.

There are many factors that led the voters in Tamil Nadu to inflict defeat on the DMK. The first and foremost factor is the inability of the DMK regime under Karunanidhi to curb the spiralling open market prices of essential commodities such as rice and palm oil. No other seasoned politician would have thought of hiking the power tariff rates or the bus fare that affects the common man when the Lok Sabha polls are hardly three months away, except Karunanidhi.

Another factor that proved disastrous for the DMK is Karunanidhi's over-enthusiasm to engage in a publicity spree to establish for himself an image like that of MGR. Multi coloured posters of Karunanidhi depicting him as the saviour of the poor that appeared all over Tamil Nadu could only earn the wrath of the people. They 'insulted' those who continue to hero-worship MGR even after his death.

Another significant factor was Karunanidhi's tactical error in not assimilating the senior Janaki faction leaders in the DMK. They are essentially anti-Jayalalitha forces which were waiting for an opportunity to settle their scores with her. Karunanidhi's inherent fear that they might usurp the leadership prevented him admitting them into the party. Another factor that weighed much in his mind was the future of his son Mu. Ka. Stalin whom he has been grooming for the last five years to

succeed him as the leader of the party.

Vehement critics of Jayalalitha like R.M. Veerappan, Kalimuthu, Valampuri John, P.U. Shanmugham and others were waiting in the doorsteps of Karunanidhi to get admitted. Their presence in the DMK would have spared Karunanidhi the trouble of answering Jayalalitha's queries. They would have spearheaded anti-Jaya campaigns from the DMK platforms and the natural benefactor would have been Karunanidhi. Jayalalitha was quick to grab the opportunity and magnanimously readmitted them into the AIADMK with respect. By doing so she ensured the polarisation of all anti-DMK forces which proved disastrous to Karunanidhi.

Karunanidhi has refused to resign and face the electorate owning moral responsibility for the defeat. The DMK leadership knows full well that it would be suicidal to do so. 'Why should we resign now? It is just nine months since we were elected to power and we do not propose to resign just because the Lok Sabha verdict went against us', says Minister K. Anbazhagan, a senior leader and General Secretary of the DMK.

The cadres which feel deserted because of the attitude of the leadership to keep them away from the corridors of power have already started grumbling. Secret parleys are going on to replace Karunanidhi and allow him to wield the real power from party headquarters. Younger elements in the party are vertically divided. Mu. Ka. Stalin, Karunanidhi's son and V. Gopalaswamy, Rajya Sabha member of the DMK, lead the two warring factions.

The marriage of Karunanidhi's daughter by Rajathi Ammal, the other



AIADMK leader, Jayalalitha

woman in his life, is slated to take place on December 3. It is rumoured that Rajathi Ammal prevented Karunanidhi from taking any drastic steps till the marriage. A clear picture might emerge only after the marriage.



Crowd-charmer, Vyjayantimala

In the meantime the AIADMK - Congress (I) camps are jubilant over their phenomenal success. Era. Anbarasu who trounced Dr. Kalanidhi of the DMK in the Central Madras constituency has become nothing short of a hero all over the State for blasting that DMK citadel. Both the camps expect the DMK regime to fall very soon and are already gearing themselves up to face the next elections by retaining publicity materials such as banners and cut-outs.

The results have proved once again that the Congress (I) remains the deciding factor in Lok Sabha polls. The Tamil Nadu voters have shown a uniform preference for the Congress (I) at the Centre, though they are averse to the idea of a national party forming the government in the State. This is reflected not only by the wide margins of the victorious alliance candidates but also by the fact that in as many as 31 constituencies they have polled over 50 per cent of the votes.

The DMK's publicity blitz exaggerating the Government's achievements and the constant vituperatives and obscenities copiously poured over Ms Jayalalitha by the DMK 'fire-spitters' have helped the AIADMK - Congress (I) candidates to romp home with huge margins. When the credibility is gone is it possible for a Ministry to remain in office and function effectively? From now on, one can safely count the days of the DMK in Fort St. George, opine senior leaders in the AIADMK and the Congress (I).

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Fall of Rama Rao

By MOHAN RAM

The dramatic rout of the Telugu Desam Party in Andhra Pradesh ends the Rama Rao phenomenon in Indian politics — the quick rise of a messianic leader and his precipitous fall leaving a political vacuum.

At the worst of times, when Indira Gandhi began losing one state after another following her 1977 defeat, Andhra Pradesh remained a Congress bastion till the end, until she rolled the opposition back in 1980.

In the Andhra state carved out of the Madras State in 1953 and in the larger Andhra Pradesh that emerged in 1956, the Communists presented the main challenge to the Congress. With the gradual erosion of the Communist base, the Congress had no contenders and the struggle for power was between two contending dominant castes — the Reddys and Kammas. Decisively edged, the Kammas turned to economic power investing in anything from rice mills to cinema houses and hotels.

Political Vacuum

The political vacuum in Andhra Pradesh resulting from the decline of the Communists and the Reddy dominance after overwhelming the Kammas was sought to be filled by the Telugu Desam Party.

Though essentially aiming at asserting the Telugu regional identity vis-a-vis New Delhi which had begun to treat Andhra Pradesh under servile leaders as a fiefdom, the Telugu Desam was a populist party directing its appeal to the underprivileged sections and the lower social strata — the Harijans (about 12 percent of the population) and the backward castes (about 40 percent) who had traditionally backed the Congress.

The new vertical mobility the film actor Nandamuri Tarakka Rama Rao could effect after founding his party in March 1982 had emerged as an effective combination against the Congress and could swamp the elections in the state 10 months later. In 1983, the Telugu Desam Party won 202 of the 294 seats.

A stunned Indira Gandhi tried the predictable trick — of splitting the Telugu Desam in 1984 and trying to prop the breakaway faction. But N. Bhaskara Rao, Rama Rao's Finance Minister who pulled off the coup for New Delhi had to be dismissed because he could not muster a House majority despite the Congress support. Rama Rao was back and he called fresh elections to the Assembly before facing the 1984 Lok Sabha elections which his party won decisively (30 of the 42 seats). The Telugu Desam won the Assembly elections again, in 1985.



M. Karunananthan; DMK leader and N.T. Rama Rao, Telugu Desam leader — defeated

His two-rupees-a-kilo rice scheme for the poor, job and economic concessions to the underprivileged sections, special attention to status of women won his party a broad measure of support but the growing Kamma political dominance through the Telugu Desam was inviting a caste backlash. While the Congress was faction-ridden, the ideological vacuum bred corruption and nepotism on an unimaginable scale.

For the first time, a regional party (Telugu Desam is a one-state affair) had become the focal point in national politics. At the 1984 Lok Sabha elections, the Telugu Desam emerged the second largest party in the House, pushing the Communists to the third position for the first time. Rama Rao had been aspiring for a national role. Since 1983 he had been holding conclaves of opposition parties in the hope of uniting them. The National Front, of which he is the chairman, owes its emergence to him.

Rama Rao's national role will diminish because his party lost the state after almost seven years of dominance

and his party faces extinction in the state even if it is represented in the government at the Center.

It will be a political vacuum again in Andhra Pradesh because routed along with the Telugu Desam were its allies who span the entire spectrum, from the Bharatiya Janata Party to the Communists. The Congress government, the most oppressive and corrupt the state has known, will see the return of power hungry politicians. It is also the return of the Reddy dominance and the end of short-lived Kamma power.

United News of India adds:

A 19-member Congress Party Ministry headed by Dr. M. Chenna Reddy was sworn in here on Dec. 3.

The State Governor, Kumudben Joshi, administered the oath of office and secrecy to Reddy, 12 Cabinet Ministers and six Ministers of State.

Former President N. Sanjeeva Reddy, was among the prominent people who attended the 70-minute ceremony on the sprawling Nizam College grounds.

The two-tier Ministry includes two former Telugu Desam Ministers, N. Sreenivasul Reddy, the one-time number two man in the Cabinet of Rama Rao and M. Padmanabhan. Both of them hold the Cabinet rank. While Sreenivasul Reddy was sacked from the Cabinet and expelled from the party, Padmanabhan resigned following differences with Rama Rao.

The Team comprises two women, Dr. Geeta Reddy and R. Samantakamani, both Ministers of State.

Chitaranjan Das, who defeated Rama Rao in the Kalwakurty assembly constituency, was rewarded by being made a Minister of State.

Karnataka — Congress Takes Over

By NUPUR JAIN

The seven-month-long President's rule in Karnataka came to an end last week with the swearing in of Veerendra Patil as the state's twelfth Chief Minister.

Outgoing Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is said to have handpicked Patil for the coveted post as a reward for having led the Congress Party to a spectacular victory in Karnataka after a span of over six years. The Congress Party bagged 177 of the 224 Assembly seats and 27 of the 28 Lok Sabha seats in the simultaneous Assembly and Parliamentary polls held in the state late last month.

2nd Term as Chief Minister

For 64-year-old Patil, this is his second term as Chief Minister of Karnataka as he last occupied the post between 1968 to 1971. He has had a checkered political career spanning almost 30 years during which he has shifted camps more than once.

A protégé of S. Nijalingappa, Patil had succeeded him as Chief Minister in 1968 of the yet undivided Congress Party split, he decided to follow his mentor Nijalingappa and deserted Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

In the historic Lok Sabha by-election

from Chickmagalur in 1978, Patil contested against Indira Gandhi on the Janata Party ticket and lost. Subsequently he also lost his clout in the Janata and opted to return to Indira Gandhi's fold where he was elevated to the rank of central minister, till he was dropped again.

Patil once again staged a comeback this year when Rajiv Gandhi, fed up with the bickerings in the Congress Party in Karnataka, chose him as the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee President and asked him to lead the election campaign against the Janata Dal in the state led by former Chief Minister Ramakrishna Hegde. Thanks to the division of votes in the opposition camp, the Congress Party had a comfortable victory over the Janata Dal, and Patil who won the Assembly seat from Chincholi in Gulbarga became the obvious choice for the post of Chief Minister.

His First Priority

Patil, who prides himself as an excellent administrator, told *India Abroad* that his first priority would be to tone up the administration in the state. 'There have been no major irrigation or power projects in the state ever since the Janata Party came to power, and my government will do its best to see that all development projects make a headway again', he said. 'Whatever good projects had been initiated by the Janata would be continued', he assured.

At his maiden press conference, soon after assuming office on Nov.30, Patil made it amply clear that he would be in close touch with the Congress High Command in Delhi on all matters including the formation of the ministry. When reminded that the Congress Party was now relegated to the opposition benches in Parliament, the Karnataka Chief Minister hoped that he would be extended the fullest cooperation for the development of the state from the non-Congress government at the Center.

— 'A perfect understanding of the Center and state is needed for the interest of the state', he stressed.

On Witch-Hunting

Asked if his government would indulge in witch-hunting of the Janata leaders in the state, Patil firmly ruled it out. He parried questions on dissidence in his party and said that there was nothing wrong in certain leaders' aspiring for the chief minister's post. 'If anybody aspires for chief ministership, he does not automatically become a dissident', Patil maintained when reminded that all may not go well for his party since there was simmering discontent among the dozen candidates who also lobbied for the coveted post which he finally bagged.

6 Hardliners Elected in Punjab

By AKHIL GAUTAM

Six of the 13 members of Parliament from Punjab have had links with Sikh extremists.

The president of the Akali Dal (Mann), Simranjit Singh Mann, 43, was a deputy inspector general of police before he resigned in protest against the Indian Army's Operation Blue Star at the Golden Temple in 1984 to clear it of Sikh extremists. He was arrested while allegedly trying to flee to Nepal late in 1984 and has since then been in jail. He was awaiting trial in the Indira Gandhi assassination conspiracy case, but on Dec. 2, following his election from the Tarn Taran constituency, the case against him was withdrawn and he was set free. His release followed a directive by outgoing Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Two other winners from the Mann Akali faction were Bimal Khalsa, widow of Beant Singh, Mrs. Gandhi's assassin, and his father, Sucha Singh. Bimal Khalsa was formerly a nurse at a New Delhi hospital, and her 85-year-old father-in-law is a small farmer from Maloya village on the outskirts of Chandigarh. Sucha Singh can barely speak and is bent with age.

Other Winning Candidates

Atinder Pal Singh, self-styled chief of the Khalistan Liberation Organisation, won from Patiala. He is charged

with involvement in various bomb blasts in Punjab, Haryana and Delhi. He is also implicated in the Indira Gandhi murder conspiracy case. He is a former employee of a newspaper published from Indore.

He represented the Patiala constituency, where he was arrested by the police last year. His videotaped confession, extracted by the police, had aroused considerable interest about the functioning of the underground terrorist networks.

Dhyan Singh, who humbled Haryana Chief Minister Devi Lal in the Ferozepur Lok Sabha constituency, is a little over 25 years of age and has no distinction other than that his three brothers were members of the Khalistan Commando force and were shot dead by security forces.

Slain Professor's Widow

Rajinder Kaur Bulara, who was elected from Ludhiana constituency, is the widow of Rajinder Singh, who was an associate professor at Punjab Agriculture University. He had been a sympathizer of Sikh extremists and was allegedly shot dead in cold blood by security forces. That killing has been cited by human rights activists as a classic case of police brutality.

Rajdev Singh, who was elected from the Sangrur constituency, was an unknown lawyer who took up the cases of terrorists awaiting trial in the prison where he was held in Sangrur.

Mann Seeks Peace, Tranquility

By the United News of India

The Akali Dal (Mann) chief, Simranjit Singh Mann has called upon the government to adopt the Anandpur Sahib resolution and hold negotiations with the Damdami Taksal, the panthic committee; AISSF, the militant Sikh students' body and the Akali Dal to stop the bloodshed in Punjab.

Mann, who was indicted in a conspiracy to assassinate Indira Gandhi, was released from Bhagalpur jail last week and flown to Punjab. For the dismissed police officer, it was his first bit of freedom having been in jail — often in solitary confinement — for the past five years.

Addressing a public meeting on Dec. 3 in Amritsar, Mann criticized Governor S.S. Ray and his former advisor J.F. Ribeiro for demolishing structures around the Golden Temple, saying this was 'a bid to destroy the cultural heritage' of the people of Punjab. The government had said the demolitions were part of the process of beautifica-

tion of the temple complex.

Demanding action against them, Mann said, 'We will be consulting senior lawyers like Ram Jethmalani and others' for this purpose.

He insisted that he wanted peace with all sections of the society but said, 'this could only be possible if we have peace among ourselves'. He was referring to the infighting among various Sikh organisations.

Constitution Cited

Mann hoped that with the active help of the public, 'which saved me from the gallows, and that of baba Joginder Singh, the Damdami Taksal, the federation (AISSF) and panthic committee, we can solve every matter related to Punjab'.

Affirming his faith in the Constitution, he said, 'it provides protection to all citizens irrespective of caste and creed. Let us fight for our right in a constitutional manner, if they (government) accept our plea and look into our

Continued on Page 19

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NEWS ROUND-UP

● **THE LTTE** has accused the government of India of killing their area commander Major Thankesu. In a statement issued on 19 November, the LTTE said, 'On 18.11.89 at a village called Thaneeruttru in the Mullaitivu district the Indian armed forces lying in ambush shot and killed Major Thangesu who was travelling on a bicycle. This cowardly act of the Indian army on the unsuspecting LTTE commander is a serious violation of the ceasefire'. The statement added that since the announcement of the ceasefire on 20.9.89, 150 ceasefire violations have been committed by the IPKF which included 53 murders, 21 robberies and 12 rapes.

● **AN ARMY OFFICER** was killed on 18 November when 'subversives' ambushed a mobile army patrol in Hiniduma in the Galle district. In the encounter that followed, three 'subversives' were killed.

● **SIX STATE-OWNED SLTB** buses were completely destroyed and three more damaged in Teldeniya and Matara when 'subversives' raided the Teldeniya bus depot on 17 November and set the vehicles on fire.

● **AT LEAST 37 BULLET-RIDDLED** bodies of men and women were recovered from different areas of the central Kandy district on 17 November, and these killings have been attributed to retaliatory action by members of the security forces or government-sponsored deathsquads. At Menikhinna eight persons including three females were killed in separate incidents. Of the 8, four were killed at Nikahetiya where armed persons who stormed a house shot dead three females and a male. Five others were killed in the Kandy police area in what had been described as 'action by vigilantes'. On the Orutota bridge and in the Menikhinna police area seventeen more bullet-riddled bodies of men and women were found.

In separate incidents, the Electricity Board stores at Badulla, the Moneragala post office, the St Leonards Tea Factory in Nuwara Eliya, three heavy lorries two jeeps one ambulance and two machines belonging to the State Minerals Development corporation at Kurunegala, the Government Agent's office at Sooriyawewa and a sub-post office at Mahagalwewa were set on fire.

● **THE GOVT. OF FINLAND** has announced a further contribution of Finnish Marks 1 million to UNHCR for its Programme of Returnees and Displaced Persons in Sri Lanka. In April 1988, Finland made the first instalment towards the Emergency Reconstruction Programme following a pledge of 2 million Finnish Marks at the Special Aid Group meeting.

● **FOUR BODIES** of young men at Belliatta and at Ulana another five bodies of young men were seen burning on 19 November and these incidents have been attributed to pro-government death-squads. People of Kokegalle in Ambalantota saw two victims of lamp-post killings in the form of two beheaded bodies of two young men tied to two lamp posts.

● **A MEMBER OF** the Southern Provincial Council was taken into custody on 20 November in connection with the 'JVP car bomb explosion' near the Town Hall in Galle when a meeting of the Council was in progress on June 28 this year in which four persons were killed and 30 others injured. The PC member, two of his bodyguards (a Reserve Police Constable and a Member of the National Auxiliary Force) and two alleged senior JVP men were arrested in the 'palatial residence' of one of the JVP men at Yakkala, a suburb 12 miles northwest of Colombo. Robbed gold worth Rs.600,000 was also seized from the residence.

● **A SOLDIER SHOT** dead two of his colleagues in cold blood and later dumped their bodies down a water fall at a tea plantation in the Nuwara Eliya district on 20 November. After the incident, the assailant had escaped along with the weapons belonging to the victims. A civilian driver

who was in the same vehicle and who was released by the suspect soldier later informed the authorities about the incident. Alleged to be having 'subversive' connections, the suspect soldier is yet to be apprehended. In a separate incident, three Sri Lankan soldiers identified as Sgt. L. Varusuvitharana, H.K.S. Preethikumara and Gunner W.A. Weerakoon were shot dead allegedly by a gang belonging to a Tamil militant group after the soldiers were abducted as they emerged out of the Mannar Kachcheri on 20 November.

● **TWO POLICEMEN** and a civilian were killed and three others injured when their vehicle hit a landmine at Embilipitya on 21 November. The principal of Bambaragama Madhya Maha Vidiyalaya was shot dead with six members of two families allegedly by 'subversives'. A medical practitioner, Dr. Anthony Lazarus was shot dead at Inginiyagala by a lone gunman. A father, whose son was previously arrested by the security forces for alleged involvement in 'subversive' activity, was shot dead along with his brother in the Dodangaslanda area. The victim's shop and a vehicle were also set on fire. Eight unidentified bodies of youths were found at Wattapola in the Kaduganawa and Wattegama areas. Of the eight, seven were found in Wattegama. The wife of a police Sub-Inspector, her sister and a police constable were killed when gunmen attacked a vehicle in which they were travelling in the Polgahawela area.

● **A FORMER MAYOR** of the Galle Municipal Council, Mr. A.V.S. Navaratne was cut and shot dead at Ella Ihala Galwetawatte in the Yakkalamulla police area on 23 November. A known UNP supporter, the victim at the time of his death was a member of the Galle Municipal Council. In separate incidents, at least five persons were shot and hacked to death at Urubokka and Angunakolapallessa. Fifteen bullet-riddled bodies of youth were found in the Kandy area on 23 November. Of the fifteen, three were found at Mahiyawa, while the rest of the bodies were found by people at Heerasagala near Kandy. Four suspects were shot dead in the Bakamuna area in an army operation; they were killed in their hideout when the security forces stormed it. Destruction of a major Electricity Transmitter near Ukuwela plunged most of the northern and eastern areas into darkness.

● **OVER 300 PERSONS** were taken into custody by security forces conducting cordon and search operations, according to a government communique dated 23 November. In Nuwara Eliya alone 228 suspected 'subversives' were taken in for questioning. Large hauls of gelignite sticks, detonators, hand grenades, national identity cards, guns and revolvers were reported to have been recovered. In Kegalle, unidentified gunmen took away L.P. Ajith Kumara, a student and J.A. Gunapala Jayasinghe from their residence and shot them dead; 23 suspects were taken in for questioning and muzzle loading guns and 810 national identity cards were also recovered.

● **THE UKUWELA** Electricity Power Station in the Matale district was attacked allegedly by the JVP/DJV on 26 November. The damage caused is estimated to be Rs.25 million and it will take up to six months to re-commission the power house once again. Heavily armed youths in commando-type uniforms entered the control room of the power house after they had rounded up all employees including the General Manager. In addition to the damage caused to the control room, a number of transformers had been damaged and a power pylon carrying power supply to the Anuradhapura region was also toppled over.

● **TWENTYEIGHT** smouldering bodies of youths were found in separate locations in the Gampaha district on 26 November. Policemen from Narammala Station shot dead four 'subversives' when they raided a hideout in Godakaruwa.

● **FOUR SECURITY** service personnel attempting to rob a gas station on 26 November were arrested by a police

In The Sri Lanka Parliament. . .

Foreign Affairs Minister and State Minister for Defence Mr. Ranjan Wijeratne said that two soldiers had sustained injuries when 'subversives' attacked an army patrol at Kandalagama on October 7. They also activated a claymore mine. The security forces however repulsed the attack killing five of the attackers.

Answering an adjournment question by Lakshman Kiriella (SLFP, Kandy District), the Minister added that when the army personnel resumed their journey they were attacked again. Three bombs were flung and one exploded. The security forces fired at the attackers killing 22 of them.

Mr. Kiriella: According to the information I have, the 22 persons killed were onion growers. They sold their produce to the government. They were not terrorists. The next-of-kin of persons killed in that fashion cannot obtain death certificates. That brought untold hardships to the dependents of those killed. Will the Minister take necessary steps to ensure that those people were able to obtain death certificates?

Mr. Wijeratne: I won't give. Those killed were terrorists!

Mr. Kiriella: How are the dependents to exist?

Mr. Wijeratne: Ask them to grow and sell onions; there is no point in talking. I won't give.

Mr. Kiriella: They have a right to obtain death certificates. It is very unfair.

Mr. Wijeratne: It is unfair to throw bombs also. I won't give.

Mr. Kiriella: The families need not suffer. That is not your private property. It is a legitimate right to obtain a death certificate.

Mr. Wijeratne: You don't have to tell me that. You thought I was a fool! I won't give.

Mr. Kiriella: You have to give.

Mr. Wijeratne: Soldiers are killed and you expect us to give compensation (to the attackers). You are talking on behalf of terrorists!

Mr. Kiriella: This letter was sent to the opposition Leader.

Mr. Wijeratne: I don't care where it was sent! You are representing terrorists!

Mr. Kiriella: I am raising this on behalf of the Opposition Leader (Interruption)

Mr. Speaker: What can I do? I am helpless!

Ranjan Wijeratne told Parliament on 22 November that the Sri Lankan security forces had been given instructions to 'smash' anybody who provoked them. 'We don't want to be drawn into battle, but anybody who provokes our security forces would be dealt with. Woe upon anybody who does that', he said.

Answering an adjournment question by D.M. Jayaratne (SLFP, Kandy), the Minister noted that the government was facing up to the challenge of the Tamil National Army. Steps had been taken to provide security to people of all communities in the region.

Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara (USA): In some parts of Amparai including Akkaraipattu and Oluvil, the LTTE had been parading the streets!

Mr. Wijeratne: Are you speaking on behalf of India or the EPRLF? There is no LTTE there.

Mr. Nanayakkara: I am speaking as a Member of Parliament. (Interruption)

Mr. Speaker: The Minister says that the LTTE is not there.

Mr. Wijeratne: (To Mr. Nanayakkara) Don't just cough.

Mr. Nanayakkara: I want to know whether the government is taking cognisance of the fact that the LTTE is in control?

Mr. Wijeratne: Have you gone there? You are in Colombo!

Mr. Speaker: The Minister has answered the question.

Mr. Nanayakkara: I accept it. I will sit down. I said something which the EROS told me.

Mr. Wijeratne: Let EROS tell me if there is anything. Why, have they no tongue?

Mr. D.M. Jayaratne: Will the IPKF be sent back to Amparai?

Mr. Wijeratne: No. We are trying to send them out of Batticaloa also.

(The Island, 23.11.89)

THREE MINISTERS 17 OTHERS INJURED IN BOMB ATTACK

State Minister for Justice Tyrone Fernando, Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Nanda Mathew and tourism Minister Gamini Lokuge were among over twenty others wounded in a bomb attack at the Prince of Wales College grounds on 26 November.

The attack was launched at 6.30 p.m. after Prime Minister D.B. Wijetunga left the College grounds after attending the Tharuna Ulela of the Colombo District organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

State Minister Fernando was rushed to the Navaloka Hospital under heavy security forces and police cover while heavily armed personnel rushed to the area.

Senior security forces and police officers visited the scene of the attack soon after the news reached top officials.

Health sources said that some of the wounded were rushed to the General and Kalubowila hospital for urgent medical attention.

A number of civilians were also reported to have been injured during the melee that followed the bomb attack which took the security men by surprise.

Security forces claimed that the attack was carried out by JVP activists as a morale booster.

Health sources said that some of the injured persons were also rushed to the General and Kalubowila hospital under guard. They were not in danger, sources claimed.

Sources said that the bomb was thrown from a point close to the stage where the band was performing and the attackers fled the area in the confusion and pandemonium that followed.

NEWS ROUND-UP

highway patrol. The suspects were nabbed as they were threatening the owner of the gas station at Gangodawila and trying to steal the day's collection. Police identified the suspects as two airmen, a naval rating and a soldier.

● **A TOTAL OF 221** university students were reported missing up to 28 November according to statistics available to the Committee Monitoring the arrest of university students. Of this 54 are from the Peradeniya University, 43 from Ruhuna, 40 from Sri Jayawardenepura, 18 from Moratuwa, 30 from Colombo and 40 from Kelaniya. There are also 156 students in detention comprising 47 from Peradeniya, 38 from Ruhuna, 32 from Sri Jayawardenepura, 6 from Moratuwa, 25 from Colombo and 8 from Kelaniya University.

● **HEAVILY ARMED** men, estimated to be 75 in number, mounted simultaneous attacks upon the Bathgama army detachment camp and the Dickwella police station on 28 November. In the ensuing encounter, four 'subversives' were killed and two policemen were wounded.

● **SEVENTEEN** men belonging to the Citizens Voluntary Force (CVF) were killed after they were ambushed by the LTTE between Madagal and Pandatheruppu on 26 November. The CVF men also were relieved of their weapons and ammunition. One LTTEer was killed in the encounter.

● **SEVENTEEN** bullet-riddled bodies with burn injuries were recovered from roadsides at Kamburupitiya in Matara on 28 November. Two fishermen were killed and three others wounded when an unidentified armed group burst into a house in Tangalle, locked all the occupants in a room and sprayed bullets.

● **THE PRINCIPAL** of the Welimada Madhya Maha Vidyalaya Ven. Girame Indrasumana Thero was shot dead allegedly by 'subversives' on 30 November. At Debathgama-Urakanda, an estate Superintendent identified as Victor Samarasinghe and the incumbent of the Debathgama Raja Maha Viharaya, Ven. Gelipitiye Thero were shot and hacked to death. At Menikkinna in the Kandy district, seven bullet-riddled bodies were found. Suspected 'subversives' killed the father and mother of a soldier at Ramukana.

The rise and rise of V.P. Singh

NEW DELHI, Dec 2 (UNI) — It has been a meteoric rise for Mr V.P. Singh, widely known as 'Raja Saheb'.

Popular desire for a change has put the party led by him at the centrestage of Indian politics.

He was driven out in July, 1987, from the Congress (I), which he had served for several years in various capacities, following his resignation as the Defence Minister amid the din created over allegations of kickbacks in defence deals.

His campaign, since then, against those in power and the success achieved by him in uniting a fragmented Opposition to offer one-to-one fight to the Congress (I) in the recently concluded general election has paid rich dividends.

A person who has always been over-sensitive about his image. Mr Singh's entry into politics dates back to the Sarvodaya movement. It was a dramatic entry as he cut his finger with a sword to apply 'tilak' on the forehead of Mr Lal Bahadur Shastri, who considered Mr Singh his son.

He came into it full time when he was given an Assembly ticket in 1967 by Mr Dinesh Singh.

Mr Singh spurned all allurements offered by the then Chief Minister Chandra Bhanu Gupta and expressed his loyalty to Mrs Indira Gandhi when the Indian National Congress was divided in 1969.

A shy and silent Member of Parliament from Allahabad in 1971, his friends recall, he was only interested in subjects like science and atomic energy.

When Mr Dinesh Singh fell out of Mrs Gandhi's favour, avenues opened up for Mr V.P. Singh as he was inducted into the Indira Gandhi Ministry as Deputy Minister.

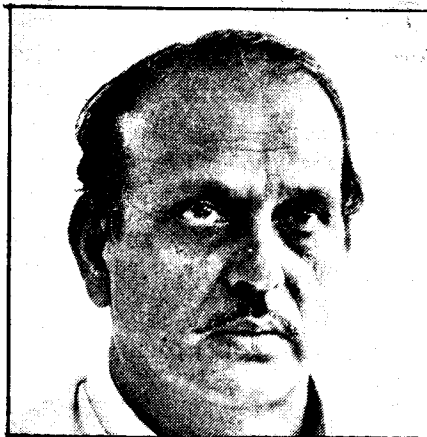
There was no looking back for him and Mrs Gandhi's return to power in 1980 saw him installed as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

His tenure as Chief Minister, however, ended abruptly when he resigned from the post after an anti-dacoity operation launched by his Government misfired.

Later, Mrs Gandhi brought him back to the Centre and promoted him as a Cabinet Minister with Commerce portfolio.

As Commerce Minister, Mr Singh brought about several changes in the import and export policies, which resulted in the expansion of the country's trade with other nations.

When Mr Rajiv Gandhi took over as the Prime Minister, he shifted Mr Singh to the Finance Ministry, and that was when Mr Singh launched a



The New Indian Prime Minister
VISHRANATH PRATAP SINGH

campaign against economic offenders and big business houses.

People started talking about him. He was shifted to the Defence Ministry in controversial circumstances. In the Defence Ministry also he made himself unpopular with the party leaders when he started digging into 'controversial', defence deals.

When a Hindi publication wrote a story containing allegations regarding his family's 'Dahiya Trust', he turned the tables on his detractors by approaching five Opposition leaders to sit in judgement on the issue.

Only then the Congress (I) leadership began to realise the danger in permitting Mr Singh to continue to build his image.

Party leaders created conditions under which Mr Singh was left with no alternative but to resign from the Cabinet.

The divided Opposition saw in him a 'messiah' who had built up a clean image and was a possible contender for the Prime Ministership in future.

Each Opposition party tried to woo him but Mr Singh was not inclined to join any.

By then, the controversy over the Bofors deal assumed alarming proportions. The Congress (I) leaders started a campaign against Mr Singh. After a lot of mud slinging, Mr Singh decided to re-enter the centrestage of politics by floating the Jan Morcha, comprising mostly Congressmen who had either been thrown out of the party or had quit.

But Mr Singh was on the lookout for a platform from where he could raise his voice and reply to the allegations being levelled against him by the Congress (I) leaders.

Then came an opportunity for him. Mr Singh won the Allahabad parliamentary byelection and entered Parliament as an Independent member.

The entire Opposition made a beeline for Mr Singh and for the first time it found in him a leader who could guide them to victory in the general election.

The Janata Dal was floated in October, 1988, with the merger of the Janata Party, the Lok Dal (B), the Lok Dal (A), the Rashtriya Sanjay Manch and the Jan Morcha. Mr Singh was asked to shoulder the responsibility of its presidentship.

But Mr Singh knew that a victory against the Congress (I) was impossible until the mainstream Opposition and the regional parties came together.

Soon, Mr Singh convinced leaders of regional parties to join hands with the mainstream Opposition in the struggle against the Congress (I) and the National Front, comprising the Janata Dal, the Congress (S), the Telugu Desam, the Dravida Munnetra Kasagham and the Asom Gana Parishad, was born. Mr Singh took over as its Convener.

A unified Opposition then launched a full blast attack against the Congress (I).

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

January 6 6.45 p.m. Bharatanatyam Arangetram of Sudharshini, Niroshini and Anushini, daughters of Rev. Dr. Wesley and Mrs. Shyamala Ariarajah at Logan Hall, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL. For invitations Tel: 01-672 9717.

Jan 12 7.30 p.m. & Jan 14 6.30 p.m. Founder's Day Celebration with Music, Dance, Drama etc at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 4A Castletown Road, London W14 9HQ. All Welcome.

Tamil Performing Arts Society presents Tamil play Muham Illatha Mantharkal

Jan 6 6.30 p.m. Langdon School, Langdon Road, London E6.

Jan 13 6.30 p.m. George Wood Theatre, Goldsmith College, Lewisham Way, London SE14.

BUDGET FOR 1990

Finance Minister, Mr. D.B. Wijetunge presented his budget for the year 1990 on 15 November in parliament. The main features of the budget are as follows:

- * Wage increase of Rs. 200 per month from January 1990 for Government employees whose initial salary is below Rs. 2000 per month to be extended to pensioners as well.
- * Tax credit of Rs. 900 from the year of assessment 1990/1991 for individuals who are in receipt of employment income, thereby raising the income tax threshold to Rs. 36,000 per annum from earlier Rs. 27,000 per annum.
- * Raise exemption limit of terminal benefits from Rs 100,000 to Rs. 200,000.
- * Five year tax holidays for non-traditional exporters will not be extended beyond March 31, 1990.
- * Ten year tax holiday for approved venture capital companies.
- * Withholding tax on dividends reduced from 20 percent to 15 percent.
- * No change to be made in the Wealth threshold.
- * To apply the current market value of all property from the year of assessment 1990/91.
- * Increase in turnover tax from 20 percent to 40 percent on a wide variety of luxury and some non-luxury items.
- * Surcharge of 20 percent on all motor cars including station wagons.
- * Increase in the duty of Ethyl alcohol.
- * Postage on letters and postcards to be increased by 25 cents, registration fee by Rs. 2 to Rs 3?
- * Overseas telecommunication charges increased by 10 percent from January 1990.
- * Fee of non-refundable deposit of Rs. 1000 on all-country passports.
- * The overall budget deficit is Rs. 40,220 million.

FLOUR AND BREAD PRICES UP

The price of bread and flour has been increased by 10 cents and 30 cents respectively with effect from November 17. The current price of wheat flour (retail) is Rs. 10.60 up 30 cents from Rs. 10.30. The wholesale price is Rs. 10.15 up 30 cents from the earlier price of Rs. 9.85 a kilo. The co-operative stocks are priced at Rs. 9.95 a kilo, up 30 cents from Rs. 9.65, Food Commissioners Department sources said.

The price of bread has increased to Rs. 4.00 per 440 grammes loaf – up 10 cents from Rs. 3.90 a loaf, according to Mr. V.R. Rodrigo Acting Commissioner of Food, the price increases will be gazetted shortly. He further said an increase in the price of various rice varieties was unlikely.

DEFUNCT GOVT. BODIES TO BE REACTIVATED

A communique issued by the Ministry of Trade and Shipping yesterday said that the government would take speedy measures to reactivate all defunct government institutions in the North Eastern Province. This assurance was given by the Minister of Trade and Shipping A.R. Munsoor when a delegation of members of Parliament representing the Eastern Province led by Mr. A. Gunaseelan (EROS M.P.) met the Minister at his office last week.

'The Minister said that he had already instructed all the institutions coming under his purview to reactivate their organization's activities in these provinces', the communique said.

The delegation also drew the attention on the suspensions of Muthur Trincomalee boat service and the recruitment of workers to the Port of Trincomalee. He also said that since the rehabilitation work undertaken with the assistance of the international funding agencies was handled by the Central Government through the respective Government Agents, the members of Parliament should be consulted.

The Minister in his reply said that action would be taken to fill the vacancies by recruiting young unemployed from the surrounding areas instead of sending from Colombo', the communique said.

OUTSTANDING GOVT. DEBT

The estimated outstanding government debt as at the end of June 1989, according to the Central Bank was Rs. 233,397 million. This was an increase of Rs. 9,214 million or four percent over the outstanding debt of Rs. 224,183 million recorded at the end of 1988.

The Bank places the country's outstanding domestic debt at Rs. 107,756 million, an increase of nine percent, while the outstanding foreign debt at Rs. 125,641 million has recorded only a negligible increase over the corresponding levels as at the end of 1988.

On the above basis, the outstanding liability account of domestic debt accounted for 46 percent of the total debt at the end of June 1989. Of the domestic debt the medium and long term debt amounted to Rs. 52,001 million, while short term debt totalled Rs. 55,755 million.

The total foreign debt comprises a sum of Rs. 87,700 million or nearly 70 percent on project loans and Rs. 35,006 million of commodity loans. Therefore the outstanding project loans grew by two percent during the first half of 1989.

6463 VARSITY ADMISSIONS

A total of 6463 students have been selected for the University academic year 1989/90, with the highest intake for the Arts (1849). The Secretariat of the University Grants Commission has made arrangements to post letters of admission to successful candidates in the next few days.

The admissions are on the basis of a minimum cutoff mark for each district for separate academic areas. The cutoff marks for medicine are highest in all districts.

There is a considerable difference in cutoff points in Colombo and underprivileged areas. The difference in cutoff points for medicine between Colombo and Nuwara Eliya are 271 (Colombo) and 204 (Nuwara Eliya).

The breakdown of the student intake for separate academic areas are:

Medicine	—	551
Dental Science	—	82
Veterinary Science	—	54
Agriculture	—	357
Biological Science	—	726
Engineering I	—	466
Engineering II	—	60
Physical Science	—	984
Management Studies	—	458
Commerce	—	611
Law	—	198
Arts	—	1849
Architecture	—	39
Quantity Surveying	—	28
Total	—	6463

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE A SHARP DROP

Hit by a series of civil disturbances that affected industry, agriculture and trade, Sri Lanka's economic performance deteriorated sharply during the first half of this year, compared with the performance in the same period last year, according to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.

Production for all major crops, except coconut, recorded decreases due both to the drought during the first quarter of this year and the unsettled conditions which affected cultivation activities.

Tea and rubber production declined by 20 per cent and 11 per cent respectively while paddy production dropped by 9 per cent in Maha 1988/89. Coconut production rose by 34 per cent over the depressed level of production the previous year.

Absenteeism and interruptions to production due to civil disturbances were the main reasons for the 2 per cent decline in industrial output, (the combined outcome of a 9 per cent growth in the private sector and decrease of 18 per cent in the public sector), the Central Bank said.

The 78,000 tourist arrivals recorded during the first half of this year was an 18 per cent decline over the same period last year.

The estimated deficit widened to SDR 293 million (Rs. 12,749 million) from SDR 283 million (Rs. 11,979 million) during the first half of last year, while the current account deficit increased from SDR 73 million to SDR 154 million.

A 40 per cent reduction in net capital inflows contributed to further worsen the balance of payments outturn. There was a nearly four-fold increase in the overall deficit, from SDR 32 million in the first half of 1988 to SDR 121 million in the first half of this year.

The country's gross external assets at the end of June 1989 was SDR 372 million, enough to finance 2.1 months of imports projected for the second half of 1989, the Central Bank report said.

RECRUIT TEACHERS THRO' COMPETITION

The Ceylon Teachers Union has come out strongly against the proposed appointment of 25,000 teachers, which has now been postponed and demanded that teachers be recruited only through a competitive examination.

The Union also demanded that the minimum qualifications to enter the teaching profession should be passes in three subjects at the G.C.E. (A/Level) in one sitting.

The present system of recruitment devalued the status of the G.C.E. A/Level certificate, he said.

Adopting a system to provide the lesser privileged to secure posts of teachers was good, but it would definitely be open to corruption. The numerous cases of bogus certificates evidenced this fact he added.

The argument that the present system of recruitment provided opportunity to the very poor was without force since only one per cent of those who entered school sit the A/Levels ultimately; and these students came from the fairly well to do families.

He suggested that the recruitment scheme which was in operation from 1979 onward be adopted again.

Under that system those eligible to enter university, but were not selected were interviewed for the posts of teachers. That ensured that the cream of the students were chosen for the teaching profession.

The union is also demanding that the government introduce strict laws to prevent school principals from collecting money from parents or students for admission and term tests.

They also want the government to bring down the cost of books and stationery, pay teachers overtime, for working more than six hours a day in the classroom, distribute sports goods

to poor schools throughout the island regularly and redraw the present scheme of categorising difficult area schools.

FOREIGNER BURNT TO DEATH

A foreign civil engineer was burnt to death and forty vehicles set on fire in the Gokeralla police area in the early hours on 24 November in an attack carried out by suspected anti-Government activists.

The engineer identified as Jum Herchoi (32) was burnt to death in his room, a police officer in the area said.

At least forty suspected anti-Government activists armed with automatics had surrounded the foreign construction company's work site in the early hours and ordered the employees, including at least thirty foreigners to leave the site immediately.

Then forty vehicles including twenty seven trucks and a water bowser were set on fire and the entire complex was destroyed in a very short time.

Police and army have estimated the damage at millions of rupees. 'Upto now, the firm concerned has not made a complaint to the police', Gokeralla OIC Rohan Dias said.

The foreigner had not left the area as there was another work site of the same firm in the Dambulla area. The company was involved in a World Bank funded road rehabilitation project army sources said.

INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION IN PLANTATIONS RAISED

Several matters relating to education in the plantations were raised by the President of the DWC A. Aziz with Education Minister W.J.M. Lokubandara last week when the Minister met a deputation of the DWC at the Layards Road residence of Mr. Aziz.

A press release by the DWC stated that the Minister had agreed to go into all the issues raised and take necessary action to eradicate the inequality now existing in the national education system.

The matters discussed were all estate schools to be upgraded to Advance level, with science facilities, playgrounds, teachers' quarters and suitable school buildings.

6% of the National Budget on education to be allocated to plantation sector education.

Plantation community to be treated as an under-privileged community in respect of teaching appointments in the plantations, relaxation of rules for appointments for teachers from the plantations, minimum qualifications to be brought down to O/level with 2 credits, and age limit rules.

Lands to be requisitioned for school expansion and for the construction of school play-grounds, teachers' quarters and libraries.

Buildings to be constructed in order that floor area pupil ratio is maintained as in the rest of the country.

Have a separate standardization for plantation schools as district standardization for university admission did not reflect education levels and facilities of the plantation schools and immediate steps to be taken to rectify the present inadequacy of teachers in the plantation schools.

FOREIGNERS MUST PAY IN FOREIGN CURRENCY

Foreigners staying in hotels in Sri Lanka will have to pay for their bills in foreign currency under new regulations to be effective from January 1, 1990.

According to Central Bank sources, this system of paying the hotel bills in foreign currency will be similar to the one that is existing in India.

However, foreigners holding resident visas will be exempt from this system.

Continued From Page 13

problems, it's good. Otherwise, we would follow the path you (public) suggest.

The former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had directed the Home Ministry to withdraw criminal proceedings against Mann soon after the defeat of the Congress Party.

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) had filed the second indictment in the Indira assassination case on April 7 this year, in a Delhi court, charging Mann and three others with conspiring to kill Mrs. Gandhi and attempting to wage a war against the state.

Earlier Gandhi was reported to have said, 'I hold no ill-will or rancour. I have always striven to heal wounds. At times I have succeeded; sometimes I have been disappointed'.

Gandhi also said that he believed that 'if there is any more steps that can be taken to bring down the curtain on the unfortunate part and to ring in the future, that step should be taken now. The conspiracy case filed at Delhi will not heal wounds'.

Gandhi pointed out that Mann had shown his allegiance to the constitution of India, asked the people for their support and would now take his place as a Member of Parliament in the highest democratic forum in the country. During the election campaign, his party had taken a resolute stand against separatism and violence.



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Closing Date for submission of Papers: 10th February, 1990

* He alone is a friend who helps us to think about our problems on our own *

MIOT's PLANS FOR TAMIL HOMELANDS

In January 1989 a group of expatriate doctors and dentists resident in U.K. inaugurated the Medical Institute of Tamils (MIOT) which drew up plans to contribute towards the health care of the Tamil community both here and in the homelands. The Institute already has a membership of nearly two hundred. Not wishing to restrict itself to London it has already had three very successful meetings in Rugby, Nottingham and Swanley in Kent.

The working of the Institute has been moulded from its inception by the contact it has been able to have with people closely involved in Healthcare in the homelands. The inaugural meeting was addressed by Dr. Dhaya Somsunderam, Lecturer in Psychiatry at the University of Jaffna. MIOT had several meetings with Dr. Sivakumaran, Consultant Physician, Jaffna during his recent trip to the UK. The Jaffna General Hospital Development Association made a request for help to sponsor nurses for specialized training abroad and MIOT with the help of East London and Essex Tamil Associations was able to support two nurses.

The Association for Health and Counselling is an organization based in Jaffna headed by Rev. S.M. Selvaratnam engaged in supporting victims of

torture. One of its Joint Secretaries Mr. Lakshman was in the UK attending a course and MIOT was able to provide accommodation and financial support.

Through its contacts with international agencies MIOT was able to sponsor Dr. Nachinarkiniyan, Secretary, Health NorthEast Province on a trip to the UK. Dr Nachinarkiniyan was also able to visit Geneva and the USA in order to meet several organisations with a view to obtaining support for various projects in the NE province.

Dr. Nachinarkiniyan addressing a meeting organised by MIOT outlined three major areas in which help is urgently needed. The immediate and pressing need was the shortage of Specialist staff. There are at present nearly thirty vacancies for specialist staff in the NE province. He stressed that not only has this affected the quality of the healthcare that is currently being provided but has also undermined the training of undergraduates and postgraduates to meet the needs of the future. He also emphasised the need to have adequate numbers of appropriately trained Rural Health Workers who can concentrate on preventive medicine. There is currently a shortage of staff who could

provide the necessary training. From a longer term point of view he was keen to obtain support for the Institute of Rural Health that is being planned. Another area that needs urgent assistance is the counselling and rehabilitation of victims of torture. He urged MIOT to support projects aimed at providing emotional and material support to these unfortunate members of our community.

With regard to the recruitment of specialist staff, Dr. Nachinarkiniyan felt that it may be possible to obtain the assistance of specialists from countries such as India or from Europe. He felt that MIOT could play a vital role in the co-ordination of help from various international agencies. Already MIOT has had several offers of help. In addition to its own contribution, MIOT is co-ordinating this programme.

Among those who met members of the MIOT was Dr. Roelf Padt, Director of Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Frontiers) who came down from Holland. He discussed the feasibility of his organisation sending doctors and members of the primary health team to help the running of the hospitals in the North-East in Sri Lanka. Dr. Nachinarkiniyan was also present at this meeting.

'MUHAM ILLATHA MANITHARGAL' ('THE FACELESS ONES')

London's Tamil fans who attended a variety performance held by the Brent Tamil Association recently were entertained to a memorable treat rarely seen outside Sri Lanka. It was a Tamil play titled 'Muham Illatha Manithargal' (The Faceless Ones) produced and presented by the Tamil Performing Arts Society.

Veteran Director Balendra made an ideal choice in selecting a story by Bengalese Playwright Badal Sarkhar. The story surrounds three (or rather four) undergraduates Amal, Wimal, Kamal 'and Then' Indrajit. We in the audience are constantly reminded by Director Balendra that these characters represent us, and we represent the characters.

The undergraduate life in the Sri Lankan University was depicted brilliantly by Rajkumar, Dhivakaran, Kamalakanthan and Krishnarajah. The dingy room of the undergraduate, constant nagging by the mother to have his meals, the friends who disturb his studies while he settles down at his desk, the lecturers in Tamil literature, politics and science subjects, the tension of the examination hall and the authoritarian examiner were all brought before our eyes with no elaborate settings decor or stage furniture. I liked the scene when the final examination results were announced by a University employee standing on a platform and the successful undergraduates cheering loudly.

Director Balendra then goes on to point out that success in examinations is not necessarily followed by success in life, and conducts us through the maze of life facing the new



graduates. Amal, Wimal, Kamal 'and Then' Indrajit attend interviews for jobs, face the trauma of life which each one of us was called upon to face at some stage or other in our real life.

Throughout the play the roles of the two female characters although appearing infrequently make memorable and indelible impressions on the viewers. Pathma Sivakumar appearing as the 'nagging' mother did her role very well. Anantharani's performance as 'Manasi' was unforgettable. Her years of experience as a talented artiste on Tamil stage and radio was clearly evident in her facial expressions and voice modulations. The varied characteristics of a teenage lover, a newly married young bride, and the wife of several years of married life were all handled by Anantharani with ease.

The golden thread that links all these characters on and off stage is that of the writer and narrator which director Balendra himself took over. His comments as a narrator in one instance - seated on the floor on one side of the stage while the University lovers

Manasi and Indrajit sat in another corner discussing sweet nothings was appreciated by the audience. He must be commended for this extraordinary attempt to make the audience participate in the play instead of merely watching it. Although attempted in Sri Lanka many years ago this is a novel attempt in the Tamil drama field in Western countries today.

The play starts with the narrator asking questions from the audience and the three (or rather four) characters seated amongst us in the audience emerge from the audience and get onto the stage. The music composition direction and the songs were quite pleasing, but the lighting needs more attention as the light effects which are the livewire for this play did not come up to the expectations in certain scenes.

This play has come out at a time when Tamil Video nasties - which are imported trash from the South Indian film world are in the process of corrupting the taste and morals of our Tamil Society particularly the young Tamil children in their formative years - turning them into zombies of a frozen culture. One must encourage more plays of this nature by including one play in every variety entertainment produced and presented in various parts of London by the various Tamil Schools and Tamil Organisations. We will then be able to see many more talented director Balendras from the immigrant Tamil population in the UK which constitute the Amal, Wimal, Kamal, 'and Then' Indrajits.

Wimal Soćkanathan.

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MATRIMONIAL

Brother seeks groom for sisters: 43, Montessori and secretarial qualified; 40, part qualified accountant. Horoscopes and details to M 339, c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu doctor brother seeks partner for sister, 28, resident U.K., Mars afflicted. Reply with details, horoscope. M 340, c/o Tamil Times.

Alliance invited by top professional Jaffna Hindu parents in U.S. for doctor son, US citizen, from beautiful, fair, intelligent, educated, well placed girl under 21 years. M 341, c/o Tamil Times.

Brother seeks partner for qualified electronic engineer brother, 37, British citizen resident U.S.A., very good, successful, Hindu, Jaffna Tamil family. Girl must be attractive, preferably doctor, or at least university graduate. M 342, c/o Tamil Times.

Parents seek educated partner for Jaffna Hindu attractive girl, civil engineer, 33. Please write with horoscope. M 343, c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents seek fair, attractive, professionally qualified partner, preferably accountancy, under 26 for son, 29, University of London graduate in Mathematics, Computer Science. Reply with horoscope. M 344, c/o Tamil Times.

Doctor brother seeks partner for his brother, Catholic, 31, did O levels, settling in Sweden and in employment. Religion immaterial. M 345, c/o Tamil Times.

Sister seeks partner for Catholic sister, 35, Montessori trained, pending American residence. M 346, c/o Tamil Times.

WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couples on their recent marriage.

Asokan son of the late Dr. T. Arulampalam and the late Dr. Mrs. M. Arulampalam and **Jeyanthini** daughter of Mr. & Mrs. V. Kathirkamanathan of 90 Woodford Crescent, Pinner, Middx., U.K. at Kingsbury High School Hall, London NW9 on 18.11.89.

Somaskanda son of Mr & Mrs V. Chinniah of Earlalai South, Chunnakam, Sri Lanka and **Vasuky** daughter of the late Mr. N. Markandu and Mrs. S. Markandu, KKS, Sri Lanka at Kingsbury High School Hall, London NW9 on 19.11.89.

Ravindra son of the late Mr. K. Maniarpillai and Mrs. Y. Maniarpillai of 32 Carob Place, Cherrybrook, NSW 2120, Australia and **Radha** daughter of Mr. & Mrs. R. Shanmuganathan of 11 Sabrina Grove, Plumpton, NSW 2761, Australia at West Strathfield Bowling Club Hall on 3.12.89.

Kumarathas son of Mr. & Mrs. S. Ponnuthurai, 93 Champion Lane, Kokuvil East, Sri Lanka and **Jamuna Rani** daughter of Mr. S. & the late Mrs. Pushpaharan of 177 Palali Road, Urelu East, Sri Lanka at Heath Clark School Hall, Croydon, Surrey, U.K. on 9.12.89.

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OBITUARIES

Rosalind Gunasegaram (76) passed away peacefully at her home in Nallur on 7.8.89. She leaves behind two sons Aputharajah (Staff, Jaffna Central College), Thavam (U.K.), daughter Savitri (Jaffna); son-in-law Edirveerasingham (Saudi); daughters-in-law Lali and Pathmini and grand-children Dharshi, Chrisanthi, Veronica, Kishorekumar, Jeevakumar, Christine and Christie to mourn her loss.



MRS. KUGANESWARY SUBRAMANIAM

(wife of late Mr. A. Subramaniam
Attorney at Law Urumpiray)

Born: 19 July 1922 Passed away:
10 November 1989, in New Jersey, U.S.A.

WE HAVE LOST A MOTHER

*A mother so firm and stern but always caring
The needs of everyone of us was HER only craving.
Health, Wealth and Education SHE gave us all
For the envy of all in measure never small
By HER ability to plan and to guide
A future so suitable to the societies tide.
HER decisions are considered final
For suggestions can be a smiling denial
They have stood the test of time
HER decisions have always been fine
Which removes HER state of isolation
To one of profound appreciation.
SHE never lacked the personal power
Or the financial resource
For this was provided in full by
A Father who worked honestly and diligently
On whom always dividends towered
To manage and to move around
Without blame or prejudice to any around.
We children seven not SMALL in number
Nor in HER ambition for all to wonder
Should suffice to rest HER Soul in Peace.*

EVER GRATEFUL EVER REMEMBERING

EVER LOVING

From Loving Children

Easwara Khanthan & Rohini (U.S.A.)
Easwara Haran & Rathy (U.S.A.)
Easwara Gowri & Ravi Nadarajah (U.S.A.)
Easwara Rupan & Shankari (U.K.)
Easwara Janani & Sivaloganathan (U.K.)
Easwara Narthana & Abhirami (U.S.A.)
Easwara Ramanan & Dhakshini (New Zealand)

Mr. V.A. Thurairajah (75) beloved husband of Daisy Jebamani; father of Indranee (Canada), Pathmaranee (U.K.), Sountharanee (Sri Lanka), Thevaranee (U.K.), Luxumy (Sri Lanka), Swarna (Canada); father-in-law of Mahendran, Zamir, Balasubramaniam, Noel and Indran passed away at Uduvil, Sri Lanka on 17.11.89 - 1B Vernon Drive, Harefield, Middx.



Mr. Kanapathypillai Kanagasabai (79) formerly Chief Accountant, Police Department, Sri Lanka; beloved husband of the late Jegathambal (Yogam), father of the late Mrs Sarojini Visvendran, Chandramohan (Sri Lanka), Dr. Indramohan (Zambia) Surendramohan (U.K.); grandfather of Shankar and Latha Visvendran, Geetha and Aravindhan, Indramohan, Rishayini Surendramohan; father-in-law of Visvendran, Sugitharani, Dr. Pathmini and Sarojini passed away on 30.10.89 at his son's residence in Punna-laikadduvan, Sri Lanka. May his soul rest in Peace - T. Visvendran, 27 Cromwell Road, Stevenage, Herts SG2 9HT, U.K. Tel: 0438-356533.

IN MEMORIAM

In ever loving memory of

Dr T. Thambyahpillai (Research Fellow, Imperial College, London) who passed away on 4th December 1984.



Your memory is fresh in our hearts and minds,
Is there a break from the eternal flow of tears?
You were so special, so kind,
And what a waste to see you go,
We are still overcome with emotion,
We feel so sad since you passed away,
Nothing changes that,
We miss you more day by day.
Your loving wife and children, Meenalosani, Sivakamasunthari and Shiyamalanayagi.

Correction The IN MEMORIAM of the late Mr. P.V. Nadarajah which appeared in the issue of 15 November 1989 should have shown the date of passing away as 16 November, 1988. The error is regretted.

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