

Tamil TIMES

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– Voltaire

Vol X No.2 ISSN 0266-4488 15 JANUARY 1991 75p

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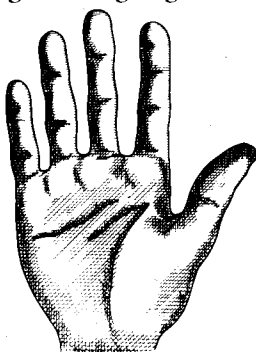
★ TRAVAILS OF WAR. . .two letters

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Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the editor or the publishers

Tamil TIMES

ISSN 0266-4488

Published by

TAMIL TIMES LTD

P.O. BOX 121

SUTTON, SURREY SM1 3 TD
UNITED KINGDOM

Phone: 081-644 0972

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

UK/India/Sri Lanka. . . £10/US\$20

All other countries. . . £15/US\$30

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A MILITARY SOLUTION, NEITHER POSSIBLE NOR DESIRABLE

The LTTE declared a unilateral ceasefire beginning midnight of 31 December. This was followed by the government announcing a suspension of offensive operations against the LTTE for a period of seven days to last until 10 January. The ray of hope that the war in North-East Sri Lanka and the resulting unprecedented death, destruction, displacement and sufferings of the civilian population will be halted has vanished. Fighting has resumed in full earnest after the government's announcement not to extend the temporary suspension of offensive military operations. The agony of the people continues unabated.

After the fighting broke out on 11 June last year, it was claimed on behalf of the government that the war would be prosecuted until the LTTE was physically eliminated. The LTTE claimed that the war would continue until Eelam was achieved. After eight months of this inhuman destructive war, neither the LTTE has been eliminated nor Eelam has been achieved despite the enormous casualties on both sides. But what are the achievements of this war so far?

Over a million people have been displaced and become refugees. About 150,000 refugees have fled to India and are 'living' in makeshift camps. More than twenty to twentyfive thousand people have abandoned their homes and moved to the south of the island. Approximately five thousand Tamils are located in 14 camps and another fifteen thousand are 'living' outside in and around Colombo. About four to five thousand have fled to western countries. The death toll among the civilian population of the North-East is estimated to be in the region of three thousand. Among the dead are Tamils, Muslims and Sinhalese. Approximately two thousand persons have 'disappeared' particularly in Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Amparai districts in the east. Hundreds have been taken into custody and their whereabouts remain a mystery. Dead bodies have littered the landscape.

Thousands of homes, hospitals, schools, temples, churches, public buildings, shops and market places have been damaged or destroyed in indiscriminate aerial bombing and naval shelling. A virtual economic blockade has brought people to the point of starvation – and in fact reliable reports indicate that as many as three hundred people have died due to starvation. No transport, no communications, no medicine and no fuel, civilian life has been disrupted and shattered – pupils and teachers could not go to schools; examinations were cancelled; public offices did not function; salaries and pensions were not paid; farmers could not work in their fields; workshops and factories remained idle and shops remained shuttered. In short, all forms of economic and social activity came to a grinding halt.

Civil society in the North-East has become virtually non-existent as all resources of the people, human and material, have been requisitioned to serve the cause of the 'war effort'. People trying to leave the war torn areas in search of physical safety have been subjected to draconian restrictions and extortionate levies of all kinds.

The war has brought nothing but disaster on an unprecedented scale to the people of the North-East. When it broke out, we characterized it as a 'callous imposition upon the people' and that it offered 'a worse prospect than ever before' and that the people did not deserve it. And our 'overwhelming concern for the people' compelled us to repeatedly call for a ceasefire, an end to this inhuman war and a return to the negotiating table. Though belatedly, our view seems to have been vindicated and accepted in that the primary reason given for the declaration of the unilateral ceasefire by the LTTE is the 'pitiable plight of the people, particularly in the eastern province'. It must be said that any responsible leadership with a little foresight could and should have anticipated these tragic developments in time.

The people need a respite from the ravages of this war. The LTTE was right to announce the ceasefire and call for negotiations. There is every indication that the views of the hawks in the Sri Lankan military establishment have prevailed and prevented a reasonable and desirable response from the government to continue with the suspension of offensive operations. The sad turn on the Tamil side is that some Tamil groups have aligned with the government and are operating in collaboration with the security forces – settling old scores with and taking revenge from the LTTE have become the name of the game. As we have repeatedly pointed out, the bane of the ever suffering Tamil community has been the internecine rivalry and armed conflicts among Tamil groups born out of a lack of respect for the right of each group to exist and function. None of the groups can claim immunity from the sin of having collaborated with the government at one time or another. The State Minister for Defence Ranjan Wijeratne said the other day that he had taken some of the Tamil groups to his bosom and that it had made his life easier to use these groups against the LTTE. It was not so long ago that the very same Minister and his government took the now derided LTTE to their bosom and used it to attack the other Tamil groups.

The most urgent task now facing those who care for the interests of the Tamil speaking people is to seek and effect a reconciliation among Tamil groups, and in this task the LTTE as the most dominant and powerful group has a big responsibility. And this means a willingness to accept and accommodate the other groups as partners in a common cause. Expression and practical demonstration of such willingness is not only the right thing to do, but also will help to wean them away from their present collaborationist role in which they are engaged. Such a development will inevitably produce a change in the character and quality of Tamil politics and bring about a renewed momentum to the political process. Simultaneously, pressure at the local and international levels must be brought upon the government to agree to an immediate ceasefire followed by a resumption of negotiations without preconditions among all concerned parties who must realise that a military solution is neither possible nor desirable.

LTTE DECLARES CEASEFIRE

The following is the text of the LTTE's statement dated 29 December 1990 declaring a unilateral ceasefire:

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam has unilaterally declared ceasefire with effect from midnight of 31st of December 1990. The LTTE will cease all its armed hostilities against the Sri Lankan armed forces from that time.

The LTTE has decided to effect the cessation of hostility with an indefinite time frame as a gesture of goodwill to promote peace and to create conditions of normalcy in Tamil Eelam. In case the government of Sri Lanka fails to reciprocate to our peace initiative and continues offensive operations, our

national liberation army will reserve the right to defensive armed actions.

Our unilateral decision to observe ceasefire have placed the entire responsibility with the Sri Lankan government as to whether to maintain peace or to continue to wage war against our people. The LTTE has provided an ideal opportunity to the Sri Lankan government to demonstrate the great intention. If the Sri Lankan government reciprocates positively and the ceasefire is observed by both parties, the LTTE will be prepared to enter peace talks.

Under the pretext of a war the Sri Lankan government is committing a

great crime of genocide against our people, in particular the Tamil people of the Eastern province are suffering enormously. Thousands of these people are undergoing untold hardships without any form of relief in the jungle areas and in the refugee camps. Under the guise of a war the government has also prevented the representatives of the Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to visit the affected areas. Our decision to observe ceasefire is motivated by the urgency of bringing the pathetic life of the people to the attention of the world and to solicit an immediate relief and rehabilitation.

Therefore, we believe the Sri Lankan government will give some serious consideration to our declaration of ceasefire.

The following is the text of the Statement dated 3 January issued by the Presidential Secretariat in response to the LTTE's declaration of ceasefire:

The Government has given its careful consideration to the statement made by the LTTE that it has decided to effect a cessation of hostilities with an indefinite time frame from midnight of 31 December, 1990. The Government welcomes this declaration of the cessation of violence by the LTTE.

It is observed that the announcement of the LTTE states that the ceasefire is intended to 'create conditions of normalcy in Tamil Eelam'. The Government rejects unequivocally the existence of a so called 'Tamil Eelam' within any part of the territory of Sri Lanka. The Government wishes to reiterate that it exercises its sovereignty over all parts of its territory and will continue to defend its integrity against any aggression from within or outside.

The statement of the LTTE also claims that the Sri Lanka Government is committing a grave crime of genocide against the Tamil people. **The Government does not, has not, and will not wage war against the Tamil people.** This is evidenced by the support, trust and confidence it enjoys from all other Political Parties representing the Tamil people. The Government is only engaged in restoring peace and normalcy in the affected areas. It is well known that the LTTE has unleashed a reign of terror, committed mass murder and brutal violence against the peace loving communities of Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers inhabiting the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

The Government as an interim measure, and as an indication of its commitment of finding a peaceful political solution has decided to suspend offensive operations against the LTTE in the Northern and Eastern Provinces for a period of seven days from midnight of Thursday, 3 January, 1991.

GOVERNMENT SUSPENDS 'OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS'

The Security Forces will continue with routine patrolling and administrative movements during this period, including surveillance of the territorial waters of Sri Lanka. This is absolutely essential in the interests of maintaining law, order, security and the proper functioning of the civil administration, and safeguarding the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. In the interests of

mony. They will take action against militants attempting to infiltrate into population centres and indulging in extortion. The Security Forces will also take steps to ensure that no restrictions are placed on the free movement of people and their voluntary participation in democratic politics.

It is hoped that this interim measure taken to suspend offensive operations for a period of seven days will lead to a further improvement in the climate of peace. Such a climate is a basic precondition for the achievement of a durable and lasting political solution. The Government hopes that as an initial demonstration of good faith, the LTTE would free all Security and Police personnel and civilians who are being kept in captivity by them.

The Government will consider extending the seven day period of suspension of offensive operations provided there is a continuing adherence to the conditions that govern the ceasefire. This could then lead to discussions for a political solution of the North-East question at which all Political Parties would be represented. Such discussions should be preceded by a declaration against the possession and use of arms by any group or persons other than those authorised by law. This would create the necessary climate conducive for negotiations.

530 Army and 309 Police Personnel Killed since June

Cabinet spokesman, Ranjan Wijeratne said at a press conference on 27 December that 859 security and police personnel had been killed and 462 missing since the fighting broke out in the North-East on June 11. Of the number killed, 530 were army men and 309 police personnel. The missing consisted of 11 army and 352 police personnel.

The Minister noted that of the 1657 army men injured and hospitalised 1303 had been discharged. Ninety policemen and 29 navy personnel were still in hospital.

ensuring that the suspension of hostilities are effective during this period, none other than the Sri Lanka Armed Forces, the Police and the Auxiliary Forces will carry weapons or be dressed in uniform.

The Security Forces will retain the right to take appropriate action to ensure their own security. They will continue to operate as in the past against any person or party indulging in military activity. The Security Forces will take action against any person carrying weapons, grenades or explosives. They will continue to operate against any person or groups attempting to disrupt communal har-

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Military Operations Resume After Seven-Day Suspension

The Government resumed 'offensive military operations' in North-East Sri Lanka against the LTTE which were suspended for seven days in response to the ceasefire declared by the LTTE. The following is the text of a communique issued from the Presidential Secretariat:

The Government in response to the LTTE's unilateral declaration of a ceasefire from 31 December, 1990 suspended offensive operations against the LTTE for a period of seven days from midnight of Thursday, 3 January.

'Since 31 December, the Government has been carefully monitoring the activities of the LTTE. Over 34 violations of the LTTE ceasefire have been reported up to Thursday, 10 January. Many of these have been of a serious nature involving loss of life. Many instances of the building of bunkers and the regrouping of LTTE cadres have been reported. On this assessment, the Government is convinced that the LTTE's ceasefire has not been dictated by a genuine desire for peace, but is a ruse to gain time to recoup their forces which are in absolute disarray.

The Government has received a communication from the LTTE dated 9 January. They make the claim that the conditions stipulated by the Government in its temporary suspension of offensive operations are unfair.

The Government's suspension of offensive operations for a period of

seven days was precisely to test whether the claim of the LTTE was genuine or not. Routine patrolling and surveillance by the security forces during this period were absolutely essential in the interests of maintaining law, order and public security. These are minimum conditions that a lawfully constituted Government has to maintain in the interests of civil administration and safeguarding of territorial integrity. To do less would be to abdicate responsibility for law and order and the protection of the civilian population.

The Government has taken note of the fact that the statements made by the LTTE so far have emanated from its so-called political wing. However, it is the military wing of the LTTE that dictates action on the ground. Therefore, the Government insists that in any further talks, the military wing must represent the LTTE.

The Government is committed to a search for a peaceful solution of the North-East question. On the 10th evening it had the opportunity of learning of the views of several parties, many of them representing the Tamil and Muslim communities with constituencies in the North and East.

'After a careful review of all representations made and on the basis of the ground situation, the Government has come to the following decisions:

(1) not to extend the temporary suspension of offensive operations which ended at midnight on Thursday,

10 January. The continuing violations of the ceasefire unilaterally declared by the LTTE leaves the Government with no other alternative course of action,

(2) calls upon Mr. Prabhakaran, the leader of the military wing of the LTTE to resume talks with the Government. Such talks should be preceded by a declaration against the possession and use of arms by any group or persons other than those authorized by law. All political parties would be invited to participate in such talks,

(3) if the invitation to talks on these terms is accepted by the LTTE, the Government would be prepared to suspend offensive operations against the LTTE.

As a mark of respect for the Thai Pongal which falls on 14 January, the Government will suspend offensive operations in the North and East on this day.

As a further manifestation of its interest in relieving the civilian population of the hardships brought about by the actions of the LTTE, the Government calls upon the LTTE to:

- release all hostages and not take in any more hostages,
- stop all torture and execution of all captives and prisoners,
- stop using civilians in mine clearing operations,
- stop recruiting for combat boys and girls under 15,
- stop all reprisals on civilians,
- stop all acts of terrorisation of civilians as a means of obtaining their support, and
- allow humanitarian access to all prisoners-of-war'.

The LTTE leader, Mr. Sathasivam Krishnakumar, alias Kittu, made it clear that the Tamil's right to self-determination will form the basis of any future negotiations with the Sri Lankan Government. The island Tamils' right to self-determination should be recognised, he said.

Speaking from his residence in London after the LTTE had declared a unilateral, indefinite ceasefire with the Sri Lankan Government's security forces from the midnight of December 31, Mr. Kittu said: 'The ball is now in the Government's court. So far there has been no reaction from it (either about accepting the ceasefire or initiating talks with the LTTE'.

However, 'There may be opportunity for talks and we expect that the talks may take place through international mediation'. He parried a question on the countries involved in the international mediation. It had not been decided so far which countries could mediate, he added.

Asked whether the LTTE would lay

LTTE Leader's Terms for Talks

down any conditions for talks with Colombo, he said: 'There should be a Tamil National Army and the Sri Lankan Government must accept that the North and East of the island is the traditional Tamil homeland. These are not conditions. These are basic problems. You cannot find a solution by ignoring these problems. But it depends on how far the Sri Lankan Government is prepared to concede the Tamils' demands and allow them to live as equal citizens with the Sinhalese. The Tamil National Army and the traditional Tamil homeland are basic issues for any solution to the problem of the Tamil-Sinhala divide', he said.

Question not there

'I am also making it clear that the question of laying down arms is not going to take place in our history', Mr. Kittu said. He referred to the Sri Lankan Minister, Mr. Ranian Wi-

jeratne's repeated demands that the LTTE should lay down its weapons as a pre-condition to any negotiations and said: 'If Colombo finds out why we took to an armed struggle, it will understand why we refuse to lay down our arms'.

A lot of young boys belonging to other groups such as the TELO, the PLOT and the EPDP were losing lives as their leadership was using them for their own selfish ends, he said. If these boys wanted to leave these groups and resume normal life as civilians, the LTTE would not be vindictive. 'We will treat them well', he said.

On the Congress(I)'s and the AIADMK's allegations that the LTTE was spreading drug and gun culture in Tamil Nadu, Mr. Kittu replied: 'We are totally against drugs. In our organisation, we cannot drink liquor. We cannot smoke. We cannot even drink

Continued on Page 23

ICRC Turns Down 'Monitoring Role'

The International Committee of The Red Cross (ICRC) turned down a request by the Sri Lanka government to monitor the unilateral ceasefire declared by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and the offer of an aircraft to carry out their own reconnaissance missions to monitor the ceasefire. The 'whole affair was a matter for the government of Sri Lanka to handle' and the ICRC was only a 'neutral intermediary' in the scenario, the ICRC had said.

The ICRC had informed the government of its position and pointed out that it could not get involved in any monitoring of the LTTE's unilateral ceasefire because the ICRC had to maintain its neutrality.

'This is a very complicated affair. We don't want to get involved in monitoring activities as the ICRC is only playing the role of a "neutral intermediary"', the Information Delegate of the ICRC in Colombo, Claude

Chatelin said.

State Minister for Defence Ranjan Wijeratne told journalists that the ICRC had so far not come in as a monitoring body. Defence Secretary Gen. Cyril Ranatunge said that even an aircraft had been made available to the ICRC to observe the ceasefire, but there had been no response yet.

Ms. Chatelin explained that the ICRC had no role to play beyond the boundary of its neutral stand on the North-East conflict. 'We can't have an opinion on this. It's a matter concerning the Sri Lanka government. It's not our business to get involved in monitoring', she said.

When told that it was Mr. Philip Comtesse, the head of the ICRC in Colombo, who had conveyed the LTTE's ceasefire offer to the government, Ms. Chatelin noted that it was only a neutral role. The ICRC is a neutral intermediary, she said.

CWC CALLS FOR GOVT-LTTE DIALOGUE

Mr. S. Thondaman, the Minister of Tourism and Rural Industrial Development and CWC President has in a letter to President Ranasinghe Premadasa stated, the CWC welcomes the initiative taken by the LTTE to declare a unilateral ceasefire and the prompt and positive response of the Government in suspending offensive military action for the time being.

'It is the considered view of the CWC that an opportunity has now been created to initiate meaningful steps towards a lasting peace in the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka. To achieve this objective the CWC considers that it would be counter productive to harbour any reservations in opening up a dialogue with the LTTE. In other words, despite the natural caution that would spring uppermost in the mind of the Government on account of past experiences, negotiations to reach a political settlement must commence

without preconditions being laid down.

'Once negotiations begin it would then be possible to draw up an agenda so that the issues that need resolution become crystallised.

'It is my suggestion that a Negotiating Committee drawn from among the Government and those parties in Parliament who had advocated a political settlement to problems aired by the representatives of the people in the Northern and Eastern Provinces would be the best medium to conduct negotiations to restore institutionalised democracy in these two areas.

'The CWC wishes to point out that a total stoppage of all military action in the North-East is essential not only for peace in that region but also for normality in the whole island. It is also necessary that a lasting political solution must be found for the ethnic problem especially in resolving the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil people. It must be

remembered that on several occasions in the past, political solutions acceptable to the Tamils and which were in the interests of the country were sabotaged by the action of extremists. This should not happen again.

'Further the CWC, as the representatives of the persons of Indian origin, is intimately concerned with a

sustaining peace in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. As the members of the Indian Tamil community, they had never manifested any involvement in the ongoing conflict, but, the youth among them had also been subjected to arrests and detention under conditions similar to those in the Northern and Eastern Provinces'.

TELO Joins Forces with STF to Fight LTTE

The Government has decided to deploy Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) cadres along with the elite police commandos in the Amparai administrative district.

State Minister for Defence Ranjan Wijeratne has given the clearance to the Colombo based TELO leadership to move to Amparai as early as possible. A senior spokesman for this group which pledged support for the government against the Tigers said. Shortly after the ministerial approval two senior leaders including a Member of Parliament from the Batticaloa District met a very senior para-military officer in charge of all operations by police commandos better known as the STF.

TELO sources said that the officer had agreed to study certain proposals submitted to him during the discussions in Colombo. Sources further said that the government had indicated its desire to allow the TELO 'fighters' to operate

alongside the police commandos who control most of the Sinhala majority Amparai District. The rest is controlled by the Army.

'The TELO would very much like to move to Weeramunai where thousands of Tamils live as refugees', Mr. N. Sri Kantha, the political advisor to the group said.

These sources further said that additional TELO cadres were expected from South India to supplement the men in the Batticaloa District and in Amparai.

TELO was given approval following the fall of the strategically important Mankulam Army Camp on November 23. About five days after the Mankulam debacle PLOTE was requested to beef up its 'forces' in the Wannai region.

Sources said that the government has pledged more arms and ammunitions to Tamil groups as they expand their 'operations' in the violence-torn North-East Province.

TRINCO ARMY COMMANDER KILLED IN LTTE LANDMINE ATTACK

A senior army officer and a senior police officer were killed on 19 December in the Trincomalee District when Tigers exploded a landmine and blew up the jeep in which they were travelling.

Brigadier Lakshman 'Lucky' Wijeratne, Brigade Commander of the army's 22 Brigade and Coordinating Officer of Trincomalee District and Superintendent of Police (Operations) for Trincomalee Richard Wijesekera died in the blast.

They are two of the most

senior officers to have been killed in the war which began on June 11. Wijeratne is the highest ranking army officer to be killed in this country in almost a decade of civil war.

Four other soldiers were reportedly in the vehicle during the blast. The army has identified two of them as CLI privates A. Prematilake and R.M. Kumarasinghe. The other two casualties are said to be the vehicle's driver and a radio operator.

The explosion occurred at

Pan-Medawachchiya between Morawewa and Trincomalee, about 10 miles west of Trinco town. The brigadier and SP had attended a conference and together were travelling to check on some civilian matters in neighbouring village communities.

The explosion was likely to have been triggered from a remote control device, this being the reason why vehicles travelling ahead of the fatal jeep of the brigadier were not hit. All six inside died on the spot.

Richard Wijesekera, 41, took charge of Trincomalee's

police operations when the war with the LTTE broke out in June.

Brigadier Lucky Wijeratne, who commanded the Sri Lanka Light Infantry at one time, also possessed an indepth knowledge of Trincomalee. Having spent most of his time over the past 10 years in this eastern port city, Brigadier Wijeratne knew the area and understood its people very well, his colleagues said.

Wijeratne was responsible for planning and carrying out some of the major military offensives against the LTTE in the East.

3500 Complaints to BASL About Disappearances

About 3,500 persons from various parts of the country have written to the Bar Association over the last one and a half months complaining that one or more of their family members had disappeared, a spokesman for the association said.

The complainants include persons from the North and East as well.

These persons had written to the association following a notice published in the newspapers by the Bar Association requesting any person whose family members had disappeared to write in along with an affidavit to the Human Rights Committee of the association setting out the facts and circumstances leading to their disappearance.

The spokesman said they are in the process of listing

the complaints according to each province and would thereafter attempt to trace the missing persons by making inquiries from the various detention centres.

'We are also examining the legal aspect of the matter and are awaiting a response from the President with regard to our resolution requesting him to appoint an independent commission of inquiry to investigate the disappearance of persons from January 1, 1983 onwards' he said.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has so far referred to the Bar Association 700 of the 1500 petitions received by the Chief Justice Parinda Ranasinghe, from detainees of nine detention centres for purposes of interviewing the detainees and filing of affidavits in support of the petitions.

TIGERS DEMOLISH JAFFNA FORT

COLOMBO, Dec. 28 - Tamil Tiger guerrillas are demolishing a 300-year-old Fort in the northern Sri Lankan town of Jaffna to prevent the army from using it again.

A spokesman for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam said that one section of wall around the star-shaped fort built by Dutch colonial rulers had been destroyed by explosives.

'This ancient fort has been the safest place for government forces in Jaffna and we want to destroy it to

prevent them from camping here in the future', he told a journalist during a visit there last week.

Tiger gunmen are guarding the empty fort which was vacated by the Sri Lankan army in September. Before that the Tigers had trapped 300-odd soldiers inside during a three-month siege.

Political sources said the fort had been important to the security forces, providing their only stronghold in Jaffna, 320 km (200 miles) north of Colombo, which

was otherwise controlled by the Tigers.

The security forces had not maintained a garrison there, however, because of daily mortar, rocket and small arms attacks from Ti-

ger bunkers around the fort.

'We found it difficult to supply food and ammunition to the camp. These had to be dropped by air', a military source said.

- Reuter.

Coup Convicts Flown to Colombo

A group of 33 Tamil separatist rebels involved in last year's coup attempt in the Maldives were flown into Colombo on 20 December from Male.

Maldivian security officials who accompanied the group handed them over to the custody of Sri Lanka police officers at Katunayaka airport, security sources disclosed.

They were later taken to a detention centre pending further arrangements, security officials said.

The 33 repatriates are part of a total of 68 Tamils, all of them members of the People's Liberation Organisation of Thamil-eelam (PLOT), who were captured when Indian forces helped crush the coup attempt in Male last year.

The return of the captives was arranged in negotiations between security au-

thorities in Male and Colombo. The 33 repatriated had been only marginally involved in the coup, according to official sources.

PLOT cadres are now assisting the Sri Lankan security forces in operations against the LTTE in the northern sector.

A Reuter report states that:

The 68 members of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam were detained on a remote island in the Maldives archipelago after their sentencing for their part in the coup.

Twelve Tamil and four Maldivian coup leaders were given death sentences which were later commuted to life imprisonment by President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom.

The remaining plotters were given jail terms ranging from 11 to 36 years.

A MILLION REFUGEES AWAIT REHABILITATION

The total number of refugees in the country belonging to all three communities mainly from the war-ravaged North and East which was 1,194,184 on September 30, this year has come down to 928,954 by December 19; a reduction of 265,230, a spokesman for the Rehabilitation Ministry said on 21 December.

The total number of refugee camps too has come down from 726 in September to 714 in December, he added. The statistics relating to the distribution of refugee camps in the country on September 30, 1990, showed Jaffna having the highest number with 352.

The total number of persons housed in 352 camps in Jaffna, 32 camps in Mullaitivu, 46 camps in Mannar and 16 camps in Kilinochchi is 762,465. Batticaloa has 60 camps housing 144,070 and

another 78,091 are housed elsewhere in Batticaloa. Anuradhapura has 52 camps sheltering 24,825, Trincomalee 36 camps sheltering 66,771, Vavuniya 32 housing 60,240, Amparai 31 housing 35,118, Kurunegala 16 housing 2,711, Puttalam 12 housing 10,641. Polonnaruwa has the least number with 10 camps having 4,587 while another 4,665 refugees are housed elsewhere, the spokesman said.

The latest statistics compiled on December 19 shows Jaffna still maintaining its earlier position with 352 camps, housing 355,000 persons. The number of camps in Mannar has increased to 46 camps housing 107,375 persons. In Mullaitivu the number of camps remained the same with 32 camps

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housing 55,925 refugees, while camps in Kilinochchi too remained the same housing 44,050 persons. The number of camps in Batticaloa has dropped to 50 housing 61,144 persons while another 104,857 were housed outside.

The number of camps in Anuradhapura has increased to 62 from earlier 53. At present the 62 camps in Anuradhapura house 27,669 persons. In Trincomalee too the number of refugee camps reduced to 28 housing 28,728 persons with another 1,240 persons housed elsewhere.

Vavuniya scored the highest drop to be left with two camps housing 450 persons from earlier 32 camps with 60,240 persons. However, another 48,150 persons are reported to have been housed elsewhere in the district.

The rest of the refugee distribution according to latest statistics, are as fol-

lows: Amparai 26 camps - 128,166 persons, Kurunegala 32 camps - 6,170 persons while another 2,245 housed elsewhere. Puttalam 54 camps (another increase from the earlier figures) housing 28,356 persons, while another 8,600 housed elsewhere.

Kalutara 4 camps housing 2,122 persons, Polonnaruwa 10 camps housing 4,853 persons while another 4,794 housed outside.

Refugees are also reported from Gampaha and Ratnapura, due to floods. Gampaha has 60,855 refugees while Ratnapura has 208 refugees. They are however, not housed in refugees camps.

The spokesman said the reduction in the total number of refugees was mainly due to most of those who took refuge in camps returning to their homes. The Department of Social Services continued to supply the remaining refugees with dry rations and other basic day to day needs, he added.

'GOVT. INCAPABLE OF SOLVING THE TAMIL PROBLEM'

The unilateral declaration of ceasefire by the LTTE has put the Premadasa regime into a new crisis. However, this alone cannot lead to any solution as this government is totally incapable of giving any solution to the Tamil national problem. In fact, the Premadasa regime has openly dismantled even the semblance of a reform package, including provincial councils, inaugurated by the previous UNP regime, a press release by the Nava Samasamaja Party stated.

It further said: However, we demand that the government send relief to the people in the North and East immediately. Essential items such as food, medicine, fertilisers etc. should be made available in sufficient quantities, while health and education services should be normalised

with the least possible delay.

On the other hand, we insist that the LTTE should extend its ceasefire to include all oppositional forces in the North and the East, including our Party, the Nava Samasamaja Party. LTTE made fascist style attacks and murdered our Tamil leader, Comrade A.K. Annamalai. Also, they attacked innocent Muslims and Sinhala villagers.

LTTE must stop such attacks forthwith and unite with all anti-government forces to build a mass movement to throw out this regime. Only then will it be possible to arrive at a solution to the national problem based on equality and preservation of human rights, autonomy for all people and the right of self determination of the Tamil speaking people.

UNIVERSITY HOSTEL SET ON FIRE

Armed persons in the early hours of 2 January set fire to a building belonging to the Eastern University situated at Wandaramulai ab-

out twelve miles north of Batticaloa, army and university sources said, yesterday.

The building described by

sources as the men's hostel and built in 1982 was destroyed in the fire. However, investigations by the Army has revealed that the men responsible for this had removed everything in the building before the destruction began.

The Vice Chancellor of the University, Dr. Sandanam and a section of the staff visited the university sources said. Dr. Sandanam yesterday informed the acting chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC) about the destruction of the men's hostel of the Eastern University.

The Eastern University was not functioning since the fighting broke out be-

tween the Army and the LTTE on June 11 last year. Over 40,000 Tamils sought protection in the university, days after the fighting commenced but were chased out by armed gangs on September 30 last year.

Despite the troubles in the district, the university authorities took steps to conduct classes at, No. 50, New Road, Batticaloa beginning November 19 last year. A large number of Muslim students were transferred to the Dumbara campus to continue studies, sources said.

The destruction of the men's hostel has posed fresh problems to the authorities, sources claimed.

Euro-Parliament Calls For Independent Probe on Human Rights Abuses

The European Parliament unanimously passed a resolution calling upon the Sri Lankan Government to set up an independent Commission of Inquiry to probe disappearances and extra-judicial executions.

It also called on the Sri Lankan government to publish immediately a complete list of those held in detention camps, police stations and details of other forms of incarceration.

The resolution calls on the Sri Lankan government to uphold its commitment to allow a UN working group to visit Sri Lanka in February 1991 to investigate disappearances.

The following is the full text of the resolution.

● Having regard to the statement of 19 October 1990 by the twelve Member states on Sri Lanka and noting their concern at human rights abuses in Sri Lanka.

● Having regard to the statement of the President of Sri Lanka that the October 1990 aid package was an endorsement of his Government's policies and programme.

● Having regard to the European Parliament's resolution of July 1990 on Sri Lanka.

● Whereas numerous cases of disappearances and extra-judicial executions continue to be reported in Sri Lanka.

● Whereas the violence of the JVP contributed to a climate of brutality and repression.

● Whereas the Sri Lanka Government has acknowledged that the JVP was suppressed by December 1989.

● Whereas renewed conflict by the LTTE in June 1990 has exacerbated problems in the North and East of Sri Lanka.

● Whereas about 1500 documented cases of disappearances and extra-judicial executions were delivered to the United Nations in November 1990 by members of the European parliament.

● Whereas no lasting solution to the conflict will be found without protection of equal rights for all people in Sri Lanka irrespective of religion, caste, class, race or ethnic background.

1. Calls on the Sri Lankan Government to constitute an independent Commission of Enquiry into disappearances and extra-judicial executions;

2. Calls on the Sri Lankan Government to publish immediately full and complete lists of those held in detention camps, police stations and other forms of incarceration.

3. Calls on the Sri Lankan Government to uphold its

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THE ILLUSORY PEACE

Rita Sebastian from Colombo

The unilateral declaration of an indefinite cessation of hostilities by the Tigers, took both government and the country by surprise. Although there were intense, behind the scenes lobbying, specially by the international community, to bring the two sides back to the negotiating table, the Tiger's surprise announcement, coming as it did, at the beginning of the new year, seemed to herald some hope to the country in general, and the war ravaged North-East region in particular.

That the government did respond positively, with a seven day 'suspension of offensive operations' was to be expected. It would not have wanted to lose the moral advantage it had gained in the eyes of the international community, that it was the Tigers who had reneged on their commitment to the peace process, when in June 1990, they broke off a 13-month peace dialogue with the Sri Lankan Government and launched a fresh offensive in the North-East region.

President Ranasinghe Premadasa, bitterly criticised by the opposition for having carried on an year long dialogue with the Tigers, without making public any of the substantive issues discussed, invited all the registered political parties in the country to meet with him before the government responded to the LTTE ceasefire.

Although the main opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party did not attend the meeting, SLFP President and leader of the opposition, Mrs Sirima Bandaranaike, together with a grouping of six other political parties communicated their response in a letter addressed to the President. One of the main conditions laid down was, that any further peace talks must be preceded by 'a declaration against the possession or use of arms by persons other than those authorised by law'. It was a condition incorporated into the Government's first response to the Tigers.

The fragile truce showed no signs of holding even in the very first days, as both sides charged and counter-charged each other of violations. By the time the seven days lapsed, the Government had chalked up 34 violations by government forces to the 39 violations by the Tigers. The Government-listed violations ranged, from building of fresh bunkers and directing mortar and small arms fire at army camps, by the Tigers. The Tigers counter-charged with allegations of troops moving out of camps and firing at Tiger positions, rape of women in refugee camps and abductions. The

charges itself were a pointer, that the truce would not hold.

On the evening before the Government's seven-day ceasefire lapsed, the political parties met with President Ranasinghe Premadasa for a second time. Most of the rival Tamil parties had expressed doubts on the genuineness of the LTTE peace offer, calling it a ruse by the Tigers to buy time in order to regroup before launching a major onslaught on Government forces. It was left to the moderate Tamil United Liberation Front to plead the Tiger cause, citing that its declaration of a cessation of hostilities was 'unilateral, unconditional and has specified an indefinite timeframe'. At the second meeting, the consensus, according to those who participated was to further extend the ceasefire by another week giving the Tigers time to re-think their options and perhaps be persuaded at least to meet the Government halfway.

So it took most political parties by surprise when on January 12, a Government communique announced that the ceasefire would not be extended. It was significant that the Government made it conditional that only the participation of LTTE Supremo Vellupillai Prabhakaran in any future peace talks would lead to any further cessation of hostilities. The government made the point that since it was the military wing that decided issues on the ground it was the military wing that should be involved in negotiations.

It is strange that while the Tigers keep reiterating, in statements issued from London, that their unilateral ceasefire is still effective and repeated appeals to the Government to respond positively to resuming the peace dialogue, the leadership has not reacted to the Government's call to Prabhakaran to participate in any such dialogue. Another condition laid down by the Sri Lankan government is that all political parties would be party to the negotiations. A condition unacceptable to the Tigers who have claimed that they are the sole representatives of the Tamil people and therefore any agreement for resolving the issue should be between them and the Government.

But what the Tigers are forgetting is that the Premadasa Government can no longer talk to them alone, as it did in April 1989. Much water has flown under the bridge since June 11, and it has become transparently clear that only a national consensus can resolve the national question.

Premadasa has to now contend with two constituencies within and without

the Government. One constituency has pointed out that the destruction and devastation in the North-East region is so extensive that only a humane response can relieve the anguish and untold sufferings of the civilian population. The hawkish constituency however feels that the LTTE has been militarily marginalised and politically alienated, to some extent at least from the civilian population in the East and a ceasefire is to enable them to consolidate and regroup without any significant peace dividends. The question that is still being asked is why the Tigers, always prone to hawkish rhetoric declared the ceasefire.

Political analysts feel there were several reasons. A need to redeem themselves in the eyes of the international community, the crack-down on the LTTE in Tamil Nadu and not least, a disarray of their fighting force. Whatever the reasons, if the Tigers are genuine in resolving the Tamil question no stone must be left unturned in achieving a durable political solution.

There are of course formidable procedural difficulties to be overcome in getting back to the negotiating table. And then of course where would the venue be for future negotiations. The Tigers coming to Colombo is remote. And a Government-Opposition delegation going to Jaffna is also unrealistic. In the circumstances the Government will have to consider a third country like it did at Thimpu.

But one important factor in the whole process will be the attitude of the Sri Lankan security forces. No civilian President can ignore the concerns of an army which has lost over a thousand men and several thousand injured, in a country besieged by two insurrections in the last decade. Given the mood in the country now with the Army Commander, Lt. General Hamilton Wanasinghe quoted as having told a Sunday newspaper last week that the Tigers would be eliminated in the next six months, tomorrow is as unpredictable as today.

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commitment to allow a UN working group to visit Sri Lanka in February 1991 to investigate disappearances.

4. Calls upon the Member states to implement adequate mechanisms to indicate progress on human rights

400,000 Workers to go on Strike

About 400,000 workers in the plantations sector will come out on a one day token strike on January 21 in protest against the failure by the management of plantations to extend to the plantation workers the Rs. 300 wage increase recommended by government to the public sector.

These workers comprise 200,000 workers who are members of the Joint Plantation Trade Union Committee (JPTUC) while the rest will comprise workers sympathetic with the demand for the wage increase of Rs. 300.

Mr. S. Nadesan, the convener of the JPTUC said that the Rs. 200/- wage in-

and proper law and order before further aid packages are agreed.

5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation and to the Sri Lankan Government.

crease granted to the public sector early last year was denied the estate workers. And now even the Rs. 300/- wage increase granted to the public sector had not been paid to the estate workers.

The JPTUC had written to the Ministers of Finance, Plantation Industries and Labour but no action had been taken to date although the letters had been acknowledged, Mr. Nadesan claimed.

The JPTUC had also requested a meeting with two of the major Plantation Sector Trade Unions the Lanka Jathika Estate Workers Union and the Ceylon Workers Congress to discuss the wage increase.

Judge Threatened in Case Against Police Officer

Justice (Dr.) Ranjith Amerasinghe said on 7 January while presiding at the hearing of a fundamental rights application in the Supreme Court that a post card containing a menacing statement was received by him on December 7 last year.

Justice Amerasinghe directed the Registrar, Supreme Court, to send a copy of the post card together with a copy of Monday's proceedings to the Inspector-General of Police and the Secretary, Ministry of Defence, for investigation and very early report.

Justice Amerasinghe made the following statement from the Bench:

'On December 7, 1990 a post card containing a menacing statement addressed to me personally was received by me in my Chambers. The writer appears to have been disturbed by the fact that a Police officer had been asked to show cause why he should not be punished for Contempt of Court.

'Every private communication to a Judge for the purpose of influencing his decision upon a matter publicly before him is necessarily calculated to divert the course of justice and deserves reproof and censure as a high Contempt of Court. If we are to do what men and women of goodwill who respect the rule of law want us to do, the power they have vested in us to ensure that we who are their judges are free from peril and foul horror real or pretended, express or veiled, ought to be effectively exercised'. Justice Amerasinghe observed.

He further said: 'The post card in question causes me no personal anxiety and induces no prejudice in my mind. However, since I am anxious to ensure that it may not even be mistakenly supposed that I was in any way influenced, let the rule issued for Contempt of Court and the petitioner's application be both listed before any bench of which I am

not a member'.

The petitioner in this application Seetha Weerakoon an Advanced Level student who is detained at the Kandy Remand Prison alleged that she had been wrongfully arrested and detained in violation of her constitutionally guaranteed fundamental rights.

The respondents to the application are OIC Galagedera Police IP Mahendra Meepage, Army Commander Lt. General Hamilton Wanasinghe, IGP Ernest Perera, Secretary Ministry of Defence, General Cyril Ranatunge, Superintendent Remand Prison, Kandy and the Attorney-General.

When the matter was taken up for consideration by court on November 16, 1990, counsel for the petitioner, Mr. Kalyananda Tiranagama complained that the officer in charge of the Galagedera Police Station IP Mahendra Meepage had requested the father of the petitioner to withdraw the fundamental rights application and that failure to do so might result in certain unfavourable consequences. Counsel undertook to file on

November 29, 1990 an affidavit in support of his complaint.

A copy of the proceedings in court on November 16, 1990 together with a copy of the letter of the petitioner's mother which was submitted to court by Mr. Tiranagama were ordered by Court to be transmitted by the Registrar of the Supreme Court to the Inspector-General of Police for his attention and such action as he may deem to be appropriate in the circumstances.

On November 29, 1990 Mr. Tiranagama submitted affidavits from the mother of the petitioner and another person in support of the complaint he had made on November 16.

On December 6, 1990 the Registrar of the Supreme Court was directed by the Court to issue a rule in terms of the draft submitted by the Attorney-General requiring Edmond Mahendra Meepage, Officer in charge Galagedera Police Station, to appear before Court on January 7, 1991 and show cause why he should not be punished for the offence of Contempt of the Supreme Court.

5000 Soldiers to North Every Six Weeks

Plantation Industries Minister and State Minister for Defence, Ranjan Wijeratne recently revealed that the government was training and despatching to the North 5000 soldiers once in every six weeks to supplement troops fighting the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Speaking at the Executive Committee meeting of the UNP at Siri Kotha, the minister explained that clearing the North would take 'a little time' because of the vast extents of jungle in the region. When travelling in a helicopter one could see miles and miles of dense jungle. The Tigers had built bunkers and were hiding in those wilds. They were getting ready to attack the security forces. The first task was to destroy the LTTE bunkers. The military thrust was continuing in Vavuniya, Kilinochchi and Jaffna.

Mr. Wijeratne said that the LTTE should be destroyed without harming innocent people. This was not a war against the Tamils. Jaffna could be flattened but the government was responsible for the security of the people. There cannot be such mass killings. Once the North was captured more troops would be required to consolidate the region and provide security to the people.

He added that opposition charges of inadequate arms, ammunition and equipment on the side of forces were baseless. Rs. 100 million had been set aside for defence. That was 18 per cent of the budget.

The minister observed that so far about 450 security personnel had been killed and 1200 injured in the fighting. They were all young people. The forces were courageous and they were forging ahead.

'Sufferings in the East motivated LTTE Ceasefire'

Sathasivam Krishnakumar better known as Kittu, onetime Jaffna Commander of the LTTE now domiciled in London, gave this telephone interview to D.B.S. Jeyaraj for the Canadian Tamil newspaper 'Senthamarai'.

The security of our people and the integrity of our territory will be non-negotiable in talks with the Sri Lankan government', Kittu has said in an interview with D.B.S. Jeyaraj for the 'Senthamarai', a Tamil newspaper published in Canada.

The right to maintain a Tamil army is the only necessity for the safety of our people. This army can be a section of the forces or an auxiliary or an armed police unit. We are not concerned about the name, but it is necessary to have an armed Tamil force to ensure the safety of our people.

We cannot accept the bifurcation of Thamil Eelam which is now described as the North East.

We have made it clear to those who have attempted to mediate between us and the Government that these two matters are strictly non-negotiable', said Kittu.

The interview follows:

D.B.S.J.: On what basis will your organization hold talks with the government?

Kittu: Tamil people have the basic right of self-determination to decide their future. They have a sovereignty. We are observing the changes that are taking place in the international arena.

The European countries are coming together. But in the Soviet Union it is different. The tendency to demand self-rule can be seen there. Federalism has improved into a system of confederation. In Canada the Meech Lake accord has failed and Quebec prefers a system of sovereignty association.

One thing becomes clear from all this. That those countries, although they like to find greater accord among themselves, do not want to lose their identity and the right of self-determination.

Constitutions are changing to suit the aspirations of the people. This can be seen taking place in the world today.

The people of Tamil Eelam also need a form of rule based on the right of self-determination which would recognize our distinct political identity and ensure self-rule. (Thanaadchi).

Although the safety and the distinct political identity of our people cannot be compromised we can discuss the kind of political powers which are required without impinging upon our right of self-determination.

The substance of the discussions has

to be about the form and the principles of this political power.

Nothing should be thrust upon us during these talks.

D.B.S.J.: What about Defence Minister R. Wijeratne's statement that there can be talks only if arms are laid down?

Kittu: We will never accept that. We are not ones who love weapons nor are we mentally ill. Those who ask us to lay down our arms should find out why we took up arms in the first place. They won't express such views if they consider this.

We have the responsibility to ensure the safety of our people at all times. And then it would also be an argument to demean us by showing us as separatists. This is a problem between two separate nations. A problem between two different countries.

D.B.S.J.: What are the reasons for the unilateral declaration of ceasefire?

Kittu: It was the plight of the people of the Eastern province particularly, the plight of the Tamil there that compelled us to take this decision.

Their predicament is most pitiable. They have been chased away from their villages, and are suffering as refugees.

The floods have wreaked havoc, there is no food, relief supplies do not reach them.

Many are even living in the jungles. There is no medicine or medical help. No foreign aid giving or social service organizations are allowed to see their conditions nor are they allowed to do relief work. Two hundred and one people have died there due to lack of medical attention and starvation. One hundred and five of these are women and children. It is different when people die as a direct result of a war. But here they are dying because of this situation. It is a duty by us to help these people.

We want to show their predicament to the world and will provide them aid.

D.B.S.J.: If all this is to be done isn't it necessary for the ceasefire to succeed?

Kittu: Up to now (2nd) Sri Lanka government has not announced that it has accepted the ceasefire. We do not know whether they will accept it, and even if they accept it, we do not know how long they will let it last.

For 40 years there has been cheating by various governments in power. It is

not clear whether they will come for talks. Even if they come we do not know whether they will allow any good to come out of it. But it is the duty of the movement to use any opportunity that it may get to remove the suffering of the people. That is why we have begun this effort. We have given an opportunity to the government to settle the problem through peaceful means. We don't know whether they will accept our offer but it is our duty to create an opportunity for peace.

D.B.S.J.: If that is so what have you got to say about the opinion that you did not make use of the opportunity before the June 11 war?

Kittu: We will not allow at any stage, anyone to deprive us of our right in the guise of peace. What will those who express this opinion have to say about the fact that 35 army camps were put up in Trincomalee following the withdrawal of the IPKF?

D.B.S.J.: What do you have to say to those who ask why you should not give up arms for good if you are concerned with the suffering of the people?

Kittu: I would ask such people whether anything called the Tamil nation would remain in the country if we give up our armed struggle?

D.B.S.J.: The LTTE said earlier that there will be a four day ceasefire for the New Year. Why have you now declared an indefinite ceasefire?

Kittu: Earlier we had decided to have a brief ceasefire for the New Year. But later it was felt that it was necessary to have a long ceasefire in view of the sufferings of the people in the East. Now even when we have asked for an indefinite one the government has requested three days to make its response.

Under these circumstances it was thought that a ceasefire for three or four days would not be practicable. We also thought that the government could agree to an indefinite one if a brief ceasefire was acceptable to them.

D.B.S.J.: Once you said that some countries and independent organizations stressed the need for talks but Prabhakaran at that time had said that the time was 'not ripe'. Do you now feel that the time is ripe for talks?

Kittu: Prabhakaran did not use those words. But he expressed his opinion to the effect that the conditions had not arisen to make the Sri Lanka government feel the need for negotiations.

Even now we do not believe that the government will come for real negotiations. But we are trying. If the government ignores negotiations then the truth that they are warmongers will be known to the world.

D.B.S.J.: Did international pressures, the arrests in Tamilnadu and the

Continued on Page 17

TRAVAILS OF WAR . . . Two Letters

The following are extracts from a letter received from a Catholic Sister in Jaffna: 'The war continues in the north with aerial bombing, helicopter shooting and gunboat shelling. Besides, we are being strangled to death by government's ban on food, medicine and fuel. Since the Mankulam attack, the government has refused permission to the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) and other NGOs to take medicines to Jaffna. Sister Jane Mary of Holy Family Convent, Jaffna, was bitten by a dog, taken to ICRC for treatment, but ICRC did not treat her since they said they were here to attend to only victims of the war. So, Sr. Mary died of tetanus. This is only one case. There are hundreds of such cases.

Is there any international pressure that can be placed on the SL Government to lift the ban on food and medicine? Because of the indefinite curfew, the ship that brought food returned to Colombo three times without unloading. Even in a war, the government must protect its citizens which is not the case with us. Innocent civilians are being killed in hundreds by indiscriminate aerial bombing. Only 4 LTTE men died during the last six months, and only one camp destroyed by bombing operations. But more than one thousand houses have been destroyed in Jaffna alone.

This is our life in the north. Please pray for us.

15.12.90

(The author's name and address is withheld for obvious reasons - Editor).

☆☆☆☆

The following extracts from another letter dated 27 December 1990 received from a person who had been in the UK on a visit and returned to Sri Lanka in early December:

'... Remittances and letters to the north have to be sent through doctors and patients handled by the ICRC. In my case it is through the kind courtesy of our mutual friend, Dr. . . . We also had quite a number fleeing from the north being unable to bear the indiscriminate air bombing and firing from helicopters and shells and rockets from the sea and land. Spiralling prices of scarce consumer items in a situation where there is no money available (banks are not functioning; salaries and pensions have not been paid since June) have added to their woes. Many people have come to Colombo and crowd the telex and telephone booths to contact their dear ones living abroad while staying in 'lodges' paying exorbitant rents. While it is so crowded in the city, the youngsters gossiping in front of eating houses are also rounded up by the police and released after

paying up a stated sum as bribe, unless of course one is prepared to wait the usual three to five days for checking. . . .

Travel cost from Jaffna is heavy. No doubt one has to hang on for many days to get the visa issued by the Tigers after intensive questioning - visas are being issued only for medical or job-related reasons. And one has to pay the demanded visa fee in money and kind which is very much higher than the amount I paid to the UK High Commission when I applied for a visa to come over there.

It looks as if this war will continue for years in the process of which the north will be flattened and the civilians swept away either to India or to the south of the island or by death. The situation for the Tamils, be they from the north or east, is bleak. Although in name the east is under control, many losses to forces from landmines continue at regular intervals; retaliation means surprise checks of refugee camps and young Tamils are rounded up, taken away and shot. This has led to the others to run away into the jungles. Recent floods have badly affected the people. Starvation and floods have taken a heavy toll of their lives.

Tellipalai (in Jaffna) and its environs are deserted being close to the Palali air base and K.K.S. Harbour controlled by the forces. The 'boys' in bunkers continue to shell while aerial bombing continues indiscriminately. . . . With the fall of Mankulam, the boys seem to have their control giving headache for the forces at Elephant Pass. The causeway is demolished so that the limited travel is via Pooneryn and jungles at considerable risk and cost. Indefinite and continuous curfews in both the north and east obviously affect the flow of essential supplies of which the state is unconcerned. Hospitals and power stations in the north have been destroyed and no attempts are made to repair or replace them while those damaged or destroyed in the south during JVP times were repaired overnight. Intended punishment of the Tigers only affects the civilians and certainly not the LTTE who have generators etc for their own purposes. Cultivation, industries, communications, transport, liquidity and above all essentials continue to be severely affected. It's really a continuing sad state of affairs with no one to speak on behalf of the people - their agonising little voices go unheard.

You know Mr. . . . (who is 94 years old) and his daughter Mrs. . . . - both came to the UK before the fighting started to attend his grandson's graduation; they have written to me asking whether they could return as

the old man and his daughter find unable to bear the winter there. . . . In view of the drug shortage and lack of hospital facilities the items that are permitted to move there, it is best for the old to be away at this time. My doctor friends have repeatedly stressed the unreasonableness of the JOC (Joint Operations Command - Army) - every time some of their men are killed by the Tigers, vengeance in the form of cutting off supply of medicine and food to the north is added to the many other unreasonable restrictions.

Another sad turn within our own people - some of the other Tamil groups are using the present occasion to settle old scores and take revenge from the Tigers and are operating together with the security forces in the east and the Vavuniya areas. All of them have brought disaster to the people. What they want now is peace so that they can pick up the pieces and live normally; they don't want anything else.

There is so much that is happening here about which those outside will not know. They must be engulfed in the Gulf crisis and other international affairs. . . . And of course the many Arangetrams, recitals, dances and the many social occasions in which our people in the UK seem to be very much engaged. . . .

Yours sincerely,

V. R.

27.12.90

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NEWS ROUND-UP

● **THE GOVERNMENT** and the Opposition have agreed on the need for the appointment of a 'Nominations Commission' which will be responsible for recommending suitable appointees to all high level public service posts. The method of appointment will be that the Commission will submit a list of suitable names and the number to be appointed from which the President will choose the officer or officers concerned. The proposal to appoint a Nominations Commission was recommended by the Presidential Commission on Youth Unrest to depoliticise the public service at top level.

● **THE SRI LANKA NARCOTICS** Bureau has recently bared a massive multi-million rupees heroin and gold smuggling racket between India and Sri Lanka and arrested a 12 member ring. The latest detection was made when one of the couriers who had been operating from 1987 was arrested. The suspect had spelled out details of the operation which had 'terrorist' connection. Gold had been smuggled into Colombo from the Middle East and Singapore, and in turn smuggled into India where the price of gold was high. The same couriers were used to smuggle large quantities of heroin to Jaffna by boat and Colombo by air. The suspected courier had been nabbed by customs at the Katunayake airport trying to smuggle Rs. 400,000 worth of gold to India.

● **TENS OF THOUSANDS** of Tamils were fleeing from North-East Sri Lanka due to atrocities committed by the LTTE which was making efforts to incite anti-Tamil riots and clashes in Colombo so that those Tamils who had gone to Colombo would go back to their homes. The LTTE was trying not only to prevent the people from the north, but also had already announced that it would get all Tamils now living in the south back to the north. A large number of Tamils were aware of the LTTE move and many of them were trying to sell off whatever belongings they had and leave the country, claimed Douglas Devananda, the leader of the Eelam Peoples Democratic Party which is now supporting the Government in its war effort against the LTTE.

● **SEVEN COMMANDOS** belonging to the Special Task Force were killed in a Tiger ambush at Panama on the Panama-Kotuvil road when a contingent of STF personnel were on routine patrol. According to Defence Ministry sources five LTTE men were killed when they attacked an army patrol in the Pachanoor village in the Muttur district of Trincomalee.

● **TWENTYSEVEN** lecturers of the Moratuwa university, who have been sent abroad on scholarships for specialised training, had either not returned or left the university's service on their return, according to a report of the Auditor General.

● **OVER 500 REFUGEE** families from Puthukudiyiruppu, Kovilady, Palampoddu, Pathmedu and Pokunari villages who have been occupying the buildings and premises of the Tamapalakamam Tamil Maha Vidyalaya and a section of the rural hospital have expressed reluctance to return to their homes because of the fear of being attacked by 'Muslim homeguards'.

● **A JVP LEADER** high on the wanted list, Chandradasa Wijeman-na alias Neviraja - a deserter from the Sri Lanka Navy - was recently arrested at Matugam by the police. He is alleged to have been involved in several attacks - attack on the army cantonment at Panagoda, Police Field Force at Bambalapitiya, the daylight robbery at the Peoples Bank Branch at Wellawatte in Colombo and raids on the Moratumulla, Padukka and Kirulapone police stations.

● **NINE SOLDIERS** were killed and eight others injured in a Tiger landmine attack on two vehicles in which they were travelling followed by shooting at close range on 17 December at Meeyankulam on the Punnani-Valaichenai road. In a separate incident on the same day the Special Task Force claimed that it killed three alleged Tigers who attempted to attack STF personnel at Periyakalappu near Akkaraipattu.

● **THE COURT OF APPEAL** in Colombo recently re-issued notice on the Commander of the Sri Lankan Army, Lt.Gen. Hamilton Wanasinghe and the Attorney General on a Habeas Corpus application by Mrs. Chitralekha of New Chetty Street in Colombo who had said in her application that her husband S. Muthiah Hari was removed from their home by a group of men in army uniform and when inquiries were made from the army camp at Battaramulla, the authorities had denied arrest and detention of her husband. All police stations in the area had failed to give any information regarding her husband whom she had not seen since the day of his abduction. When the case was called on December 14, the Army Commander and the Attorney General had not responded.

● **GOVERNMENT FORCES** carried out bombing attacks in the Kurumbachiddi-Mallakam area in the Jaffna peninsula on 19

December and claimed to have killed at least 20 persons including 15 alleged women cadres of the LTTE. The death of Major Sundari, a leader of the LTTE's women section, has been confirmed by the LTTE. In a separate incident about five miles north of Mullaitivu helicopter gunships attacked and reportedly sank five boats into which supplies were being unloaded from a bigger craft. It was claimed that all those who were in the boats were also killed.

● **UNIDENTIFIED** armed persons opened fire on the residence of TELO leader in Batticaloa town immediately killing the leader identified as David, his wife, another family friend and critically wounding the son.

● **JAYANTHA SAMARADIVAKARA**, a youth alleged to be a JVP student leader, who had led protest campaigns and school strikes in the Matugama area during the height of the JVP's violent campaign, was believed to have been killed in a Navy attack at Pantiya, Matugama in 1988 was recently arrested at Nugegoda.

● **AT LEAST 100** persons were injured when police used violence to disperse an anti-government picket and 'Satiyagraha' organised by the United Socialist Alliance in Kandy recently. The organisers stated that the police used unprovoked and unnecessary force and violence to break up a group of peaceful placard carrying demonstrators who settled down opposite the Dalada Maligawa Buddhist temple to perform the satiyagraha. The action was in protest, against the high cost of living, abuse of human rights and political victimisation by the government. Member of Parliament Athauda Seneviratne complained in parliament that several participants including the LSSP leader, Bernard Soysa and Secretary of the CP, K.P. Silva and Secretary of the USA, Raja Collure were beaten up by a group of around 300 policemen.

● **THE GOVERNMENT** claimed that a Navy 'Davora' class fast attack craft on patrol off the coast near Mathagal in the Kankesanthurai sector detected a fibreglass dinghy allegedly ferrying supplies to the LTTE opened fire destroying the dinghy and killing three men on 18 December.

● **MR. S.W.B. WADUGODAPITIYA**, the Commissioner appointed to investigate the Mossad involvement in Sri Lankan affairs has returned from Canada with the testimony of Victor Ostrovsky, the ex-Mossad agent and author of the book, 'By Way of Deception - the Making and Unmaking of a Mossad Agent'.

● **THE LTTE** has claimed that it lost 53 of its cadres including fourteen women when they attacked and overran the Mankulam Army Camp in late December last year. It also published pictures of the arms and ammunition captured from government forces when the Camp fell.

● **FOLLOWING** the landmine attack on 19 December in which the Trincomalee Army Commander and a Superintendent of Police were killed, government forces backed by air cover launched simultaneous attacks on LTTE positions in the Trincomalee district. A curfew was imposed from midday on 20 December in the southern part of Batticaloa district and troops began a search and destroy operation. Nearby jungles were subjected to air attack. The government claimed that about 30 LTTE men attempting to escape in five boats from bases under attack by security forces were killed when the boats were attacked and destroyed by helicopter gunships. At a press conference in Colombo on 21 December, State Minister for Defence, Ranjan Wijeratne said that security forces had begun an all-out drive against the LTTE in Batticaloa, Amparai, Vavuniya and Mullaitivu districts where a 24 hour curfew had been imposed.

● **FOUR SOLDIERS** were killed and one injured on 22 December in a Tiger attack at Kondaachchi in Mannar. The soldiers were on routine clearing patrol when they were ambushed.

● **THE GOVERNMENT CLAIMED** that nine soldiers were killed and twenty-six more were wounded and seventeen persons allegedly belonging to the LTTE were killed in battles at Tellipalai in Jaffna on 22 December. It was reported that the Tellipalai operation was conducted with air support to eliminate three LTTE bases, but the LTTE cadres had fought back with machine-guns, five-zero guns and grenades restricting the advance movement of the troops.

● **THE ADDITIONAL** Residential Project Manager of Mahaveli System L., Capt. Aberatne Banda Pussella was shot dead allegedly by LTTE cadres at Halambawea in the Padaviya-Weli Oya settlement area on 22 December. The Captain, a volunteer of the Gemunu Watch Regiment was driving his official car when the attackers opened fire with automatics.

● **TIGERS ON 28 DECEMBER** ambushed a truck proceeding to Amparai to collect supplies for the Bakmitiyawa army camp killing ten and wounding two. The dead were identified as six soldiers, one policeman and three civilians.

NEWS ROUND-UP

● **THE EDUCATION AUTHORITIES** in Jaffna have informed the Department of Education in Colombo that the LTTE had agreed to the proposal of holding special examinations for the GCE ordinary and advanced level examinations in the north-east. Normally the examinations are held simultaneously in the whole of the island but they could not be held in the north-east last year due to the fighting between government forces and the LTTE.

● **WHILE THE ARMY** with air support continued its operations in the Batticaloa district, Tigers struck back on 24 December in the Anuradhapura-Trincomalee sector killing at least nineteen soldiers and three civilian women. The Tigers activated a landmine under the truck in which the soldiers were travelling along the Horawapana-Aluthoya road. Weapons, ammunition and communications equipment belonging to the soldiers were removed by the Tigers who escaped before reinforcements arrived. In the Batticaloa district the troops continued their operations backed by armoured vehicles and airsupport in the Mandhur-Kokkaddicholai area. PLOTE cadres were reportedly helping the security forces. The government imposed a ban on fishing north of Mollikulam and south of Mannar as from 24 December. Meanwhile Tigers began a sustained attack on the Army Camp at Elephant Pass. On 23 December they attempted to ram into the camp two trailers packed with explosives. Soldiers from the camp spotted the trailers in time at a distance and opened fire on the loaded trailers which blew up along with its occupants. State Minister for Defence, Ranjan Wijeratne told a press conference on 27 December that Tiger suicide squads had made three abortive attempts to attack the Elephant Pass Army Camp with explosive laden vehicles but were blasted before they could ram their way into the camp and a number of Tigers were believed to have been killed during these attempts.

● **SRI LANKA AND CHINA** recently signed an Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement in Colombo under which China would provide an interest free loan of approximately Rs. 385 million during the period 1991 to 1995. The money would be used to finance projects to be mutually agreed. The loan would be repaid in equal instalments over ten years after an initial grace period of ten years.

● **THE HEALTH MINISTRY** has offered an incentive of Rs. 10,000 – in addition to their normal salary – to all surgeons, specialists and anaesthetists who would serve in government hospitals in the North-East on a voluntary basis.

● **ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT** of Police T. Jeyakumar, a brother of the ruling party MP for Vavuniya, Mrs. Pulendran, and Superintendent of Police Gopalakrishnan who were abducted by LTTE cadres soon after fighting broke out in June are reportedly being held in a Tiger detention camp in the north. The information comes from former detainee of the same camp who was subsequently released.

● **TWO LEADERS OF TELO** (Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation), G. Karunakaran and N. Sri Kanth have called upon the Indian Government to release 400 of their men detained in a recent crackdown against Tamil militants by the Tamil Nadu police. They met the Deputy High Commissioner for India in Colombo on 26 December and handed over a memorandum requesting the release and deportation of their men to Sri Lanka. Mr. Sri Kanth said that the arrested men included the TELO leader A. Selvam and two central committee members.

● **A MARRIED WOMAN** returning from Saudi Arabia and on her way from Colombo to Jaffna was stopped for questioning by some unknown gangsters at Vavuniya town. She had returned to Sri Lanka where her children are and had with her cash in Sri Lankan currency worth rupees one lakh inside her purse. This cash was taken away by the gangsters and the woman was asked to go without anything. She was on her way to her native village of Kopay.

● **FIVE TAMILS** including women and children were reported to have been hacked to death in the heart of the Trincomalee town near Samadhu Pillaiyar Temple. Their bodies were burnt on heaps of old tyres. The report states that the Sinhala Army committed this crime. This happened on the 18th December.

● **SRI LANKAN AIR FORCE** planes bombed Pallai Railway Station and the market areas on the 22nd of December. One person sustained injuries and many buildings were damaged. The person injured is S. Shanmugathas aged 50.

● **A TODDY TAPPER** named Swakim aged 45, father of six children was cut to death by the Sri Lankan Army troops on 22nd

December when he went to Karampon from his house at Naranthanai to tap toddy.

His body was later recovered in the day by some of his relations. His own knife used for the toddy tapping was found blood stained by the side of his dead body suggesting that his own knife had been used to cut him.

● **ARTILLERY SHELLS** from the Vavuniya Army Camp exploded at Pampaimadu junction. Many people including small children were injured. This occurred on 21st December. A young woman named Suthagar Punithamalar (24) and her daughter Kirija (3) have been admitted to the Jaffna Hospital with serious injuries.

● **REPORTS FROM VALAICHCHENAI** state that nine Tamils were hacked to death at Valaichchenai by Muslim Homeguards. Three of the dead have been identified. They are Nallathamby Kandasamy aged 37, father of five children, Arumugam Nadarasa aged 27 and Nallathamby Palaiah, father of one child. All these persons are from Valaichchenai. The others have not been identified.

● **ON 22ND OF DECEMBER** from early morning till afternoon, heavy artillery shells were fired from the Army Camp at Palaly towards the villages of Kadduvan, Varathalaivilan, Tellippalai, Sooduvilunthan and Kilanai in the Vali North Division. Hundreds of shells exploded in these areas and the whole of Vali North Division was affected. An old lady, 60 years of age died and two others were severely injured. The Thalavankaladdy Pillaiyar Kovil, the buildings of the Tellippalai M.P.C.S. and several dwelling houses were badly damaged on this account.

● **AFP NEWS RELEASE** states that bodies of 50 Tamil women were found shot and thrown along roadsides in two villages in the Batticaloa District. The Sri Lankan Government has, however, stated that these killings would be investigated.

● **ON 15TH DECEMBER** at about 5.00 p.m. two Sri Lankan war planes dropped two bombs at random in the Vaddukkodai area. One bomb fell near the Adaikkalam Thoddam Kandasamy Kovil at Mavady, Vaddukkodai. A woman T. Sivakumary aged 22 was badly injured in her leg and was admitted to the Jaffna hospital. One house was heavily damaged. The other bomb was dropped near the Serukkan junction in Naranthanai area where Selvanayagam aged 70 and Thangamma aged 69 were injured seriously and were taken to the Jaffna Hospital. Thangamma succumbed to her injuries on her way to the hospital.

● **ON THE 16TH DECEMBER**, at Kokkuthoduvai village in the Mullaitivu District, the Government Tamil Mixed School was bombed by the Sri Lankan Air Force Planes when the School was in session. Nine students were injured when the bombing occurred at about 1 o'clock in the afternoon. The school building was partly damaged. The dwelling house belonging to one Velupillai Vadivelu situated nearby was completely destroyed.

● **ON THE 16TH DECEMBER**, At the Velanai junction two Sri Lankan War planes dropped many bombs. Many people were gathered in front of the MPCS shop building to purchase their food rations. Thevarajah Thanaledchumy and her daughter Thevarajah Brintha were killed on the spot. Another youth by the name of Manickam Kandeepan aged 13 was also killed on the spot. Many others were injured and they were taken to the hospital. In addition to these bombings, artillery shell attacks were aimed at the Velanai Village by the Karainagar Sri Lanka Navy and a young girl Rasiyah Karthika was killed. The father of the dead girl was injured and he was later admitted to the Jaffna hospital.

● **IT HAS BEEN** reported that on the 17th December at Anthonyarkulam in the village of Thathamalai in Batticaloa District, the Sri Lankan Army troops shot and killed five civilians who were with their cattle in the fields. The dead were V. Masillamany (20), N. Thiruchelvam (18), M. Uthayakumaran (20), and S. Ariyanayakam (18). The dead bodies were later removed by the villagers.

● **REPORTS HAVE BEEN** received that Mr. Jeganathan, Principal of the Kalkuda Maha Vidyalayam in Batticaloa District was arrested on the morning of 6th December on his way to the school by some unknown gangsters. Later he was shot dead and his body was found in the same place on the same day evening.

● **INFORMATION HAS** since been received to the effect that in the Eastern Province there is an acute shortage of essential food items and medicinal drugs. In many villages in the Batticaloa District, in view of the military operations, the refugees are mostly underfed and they are undergoing immense difficulties for want of the basic minimum necessities like food, clothing and sanitary facilities. Even ordinary drugs and medicines are not made available to the sick refugees. Further it has been reported that about sixty Tamils have died for want of food and medical attention from the month of June this year in the Batticaloa District.

Crackdown on Tamil Militants in Tamil Nadu

THE ALLEGED links between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) have become the latest basis for a continuing crackdown against militants belonging to all Sri Lankan Tamil groups in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

Prime Minister, Chandra Shekar recently told the Indian parliament that confidential information given to the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister had not only reached the LTTE in Madras but also in Jaffna in Sri Lanka. He warned the CM not to go on challenging the Centre like he had been doing lately. 'Gone are the days when the central government was run from Madras', the PM said. Assuring that his government would 'think a hundred times' before resorting to Article 356 of the Constitution to dismiss the state government, the PM said that he had given no directives to the CM but had shared with the state government the information the Centre had, but the information had been passed.

There was not only a nexus between the ULFA and the LTTE, but the former actually had six centres in Tamil Nadu. Two ULFA activists had been arrested from a hospital in the state and they had given very 'disturbing' information. The situation in the state had become really serious, and Tamil Nadu had become a market of AK47 rifles for insurgents from various parts of the country, the PM told parliament.

Rejecting the allegations about the links between the LTTE, ULFA and his DMK-led government providing assistance to the two groups as an 'imaginary web being spun to dismiss the duly-elected government', M. Karunanidhi told a press conference in Madras on January 9 that even assuming that there were links between the LTTE and ULFA, it was for the Centre to detect in time and take appropriate action. He accused the Congress and AIADMK with initiating the propaganda deliberately with political motives. He said that people from the North-East of the country including Assam had been coming to Vellore in Tamil Nadu for medical treatment in the Christian Medical Hospital there. If some of these people belonged to the ULFA, how could the state government be held responsible, the CM asked. He denied that the Centre or the Assam State Government had informed the Tamil Nadu Government about the presence of ULFA activists in the state.

In recent weeks, hundred of Sri Lankan Tamils have been rounded up

and detained in Tamil Nadu following a sustained campaign by Rajiv Gandhi's Congress(I) and the Jayalalithaled AIADMK and sections of the Indian media about the alleged nexus between DMK-led state government of Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi and the LTTE accompanied by threats that the central government at Delhi might be forced to dissolve the state government on the pretext of 'deteriorating law and order situation in the state'.

Navy Seizes 70 boats

Over 70 boats reportedly used by Sri Lankan Tamils have been impounded in the last few days by the Indian Navy. The boats were heading for the Tamil Nadu coast, according to information reaching here.

The impounding of the boats follows the strengthening of vigilance along the coast after talks between the State Government and the Centre on checking militant activity in Tamil Nadu.

As part of the package evolved for this purpose it was agreed that boats illegally used by the Tamils to cross the sea would be impounded by the Navy and Coast Guard.

Information on the contents of the boats as also whether they were used by militants or to ferry refugees is not still available.

Due to rough weather in the high seas and crackdown operations along the coast, the arrival of refugees from the island nation has almost ground to a halt since December 25. However, on December 30, 11 families of refugees consisting of 59 members reached Gopalapattinam near Pudukottai.

The State Government has so far allocated Rs. 18 crores for providing relief and accommodation to the refugees, the total number being 117,365.

The following are some among the many reports concerning the accusations against the DMK state government and Tamil militant activity:

★ 'If terrorism in Punjab and Kashmir is a legacy of the Congress(I) government at the Centre, the rise of terrorism in Tamil Nadu is entirely the work of the National Front'. The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu should submit a White Paper on the presence and activities of the LTTE in the state, said BJP President L.K. Advani. (*Hindu*, 8.12.90).

★ Tiruchi, Nov. 30: Ten LTTE militants in the 20-25 age group surrendered to the police at Thillainagar after nearly a 10 hour drama of suspense and tension. Acting on orders from Madras, police laid siege to the house in which the militants were camping. The militants were taken by surprise and when Pulavar Kasi Aanandan, a poet who was their guest came down from upstairs where the men were sleeping, he was quickly secured. After several hours of refusal and threats to swallow cyanide if the police tried to arrest them, the militants came down and surrendered. Some of them had injuries apparently from clashes with the Sri Lankan Army. They were taken to the Woriyur police station. (*Hindu*).

★ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi has decided to take firm action against the LTTE and close down all LTTE offices in the state of Tamil Nadu. The Indian Navy and the Police would be ordered to keep a surveillance of militant activities in coastal areas. (*All India Radio*).

★ Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M. Karunanidhi who met Prime Minister Chandra Shekar on December 3 expressed confidence that the Union government would help the state government in the execution of its future plans to contain activities of Tamil militants. He said that Lankan groups in the state had been armed with superior weapons like AK47s. The State Government had recovered about 100 AK47 rifles from an 'Indian Government training camp for militants'. At the instance of his State Government, three Indian Navy ships had been deployed in the region. During the regime of M.G. Ramachandran, there were 31 LTTE camps in Tamil Nadu. He accused MGR of donating Rs. 4 crores (Rs.400 million) to the LTTE in 1987 for the purchase of weapons. Quoting from the official journal of Jayalalitha's AIADMK calling her party workers to support the LTTE, the CM charged those who were accusing his administration of being soft towards the LTTE of themselves encouraging it. (*Hindu*).

★ Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, Nagendra Nath Jha dismissed Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi's claim that 31 camps were established in Tamil Nadu for the training of LTTE cadres during the former regime of AIADMK under the late M.G. Ramachandran. (*Sunday Times*, (Colombo), 16.12.90).

★ The Indian Government pledged that New Delhi would not allow Sri Lankan Tamil guerrillas to use its territory for their anti-government struggle. Foreign Minister V.C. Shukla stated at a meeting of MPs that Indian policy was aimed at persuading concerned parties in Sri Lanka to end

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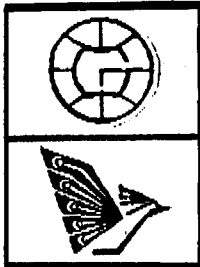
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Tigers Accuse Tamil Nadu Govt. of 'Inhuman Action'

A statement issued by the LTTE expressed deep felt sorrow and pain of mind at the 'unexpected inhuman action of the Government of Tamil Nadu in arresting and detaining the injured, maimed and sick LTTE fighters receiving treatment in India' and thus showing a complete lack of fraternal feelings of sympathy for fellow Tamils facing genocide in Tamil Eelam.

The statement adds:-

'The Tamil Eelam people are facing genocide, unprecedented in history, in the hands of the Sinhalese racist government. The LTTE is carrying on the battle for the survival of the Eelam Tamils shedding the life and blood of their own fighters. The Government of Tamil Nadu, which in this grave situation is bound to extend its moral support to the LTTE, has instead embarked on steps inimical to Tamil interests and which appear to provide assistance to the Sinhala racist rulers of Tamil Eelam.

The Tamil Nadu Government apart from heaping completely baseless allegations against the LTTE has arrested and put behind bars our sick, injured and maimed fighters receiving treatment in Tamil Nadu. The lack of

fraternal Tamil and humanitarian feelings implicit in the actions of the Tamil Nadu Government has caused shock and surprise to the Tamils all over the world.

The Government of Tamil Nadu has recently arrested and put behind bars LTTE fighters the majority of whom are sick, having been injured or maimed in battle for freedom. Many of them have lost their limbs. One has lost his eyes and three of them are benumbed below their hips. One is a female fighter.

The Tamil Nadu police have assaulted those detained to look after these wounded and sick freedom fighters. It is noteworthy that all these wounded LTTE fighters were arrested in hospital where they were under treatment.

Some of the very seriously injured fighters of the LTTE could not be treated under secure conditions in Tamil Eelam due to the war. We brought to the knowledge of the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu the pathetic condition of those such seriously injured fighters and the Tamil Nadu Government after consultations with

the central government admitted the fighters for treatment in Tamil Nadu.

The Government of Tamil Nadu today has arrested and put behind bars these very injured and maimed fighters whom it earlier admitted into Tamil Nadu for treatment. We regard this unjust action as an act of betrayal of the LTTE and the people of Tamil Eelam.

We are not at all interested in the power politics of Tamil Nadu. Our people, facing genocide, are engaged in a life and death struggle. It would be most unreasonable for anyone to make use of our struggle for their selfish political gains. There is germane in this type of selfish politics the dangerous seeds of encouragement of genocide.

The LTTE as representing the Liberation Movement of the people of Tamil Eelam has been fighting for the last 18 years for achievement of a high ideal. Symbolic of the rise of our people our movement has made untold sacrifices. The LTTE is the only bulwark against the genocide faced by the defenceless people of Tamil Eelam. We therefore beseech the people of Tamil Nadu and the political movements in Tamil Nadu to recognise this fact and to provide the necessary support to the LTTE and to its struggles to ensure the security and freedom of the people of Tamil Nadu.

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drawbacks in the East compel you to declare the ceasefire?

Kittu: There were efforts at the international level to bring about negotiations. You cannot call that pressure. But those efforts were considered with due respect. All those who are being arrested in Tamilnadu are not our fighters.

Our wounded fighters for whom Karunanidhi had made medical facilities available are the ones who are being arrested without any mercy.

It is not appropriate to say of us who opposed even the Indian army that the arrests in Tamilnadu have affected our capability.

Our struggle is not based on Tamilnadu. In the north we have the upper hand, militarily. The situation there is such that another camp may fall into our hands. In the East we have carried out many successful attacks recently. Even the Brigadier-In-Charge of the Trincomalee district was killed. Our strength in the East is increasing. Therefore none of what you cited are reasons for this ceasefire. As I mentioned earlier the reason was to give relief to the people in the east and an opportunity to the government to settle the problem peacefully.

D.B.S.J.: Why haven't you asked for a committee to monitor the ceasefire?

Kittu: Sri Lanka government has not as yet agreed to a proper ceasefire. When there is a proper ceasefire which will be observed by both parties an arrangement can be made for monitoring the ceasefire.

D.B.S.J.: Earlier Dr. Balasingham said that the Tigers would go for talks only if India acted as a mediator. What is your position now?

Kittu: Even though we had said that India has not indicated any willingness on its part to mediate. There hasn't even been a signal from them. Now they are hunting down and arresting our wounded fighters. Under these circumstances the possibility of Indian mediation is becoming less practicable.

D.B.S.J.: There had been reports earlier that you were holding talks with the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in London, Sepala Attygalle. Did you and the government have any talks about a ceasefire at that time?

Kittu: After the fighting began in June the first contact I made with them was to send our statement on the ceasefire. But many organisations have been engaged in trying to bring about negotiations. There have been exchanges of views with the government through these organizations.

D.B.S.J.: About Arular's efforts in Colombo?

Kittu: Arular met Mahathaya, Yogi and Balasingham and told them that

he was going to make peace efforts. We told him that we were not opposed. He is doing it on his own. He is not our representative.

D.B.S.J.: How should it be with the security forces during the ceasefire?

The army has said that the regular patrolling will continue.

Kittu: This regular patrolling can cause trouble. There is no patrolling in the north. But if the army tries to make use of the ceasefire and move out

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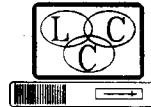
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peacefully the fighting between the Tigers and the Colombo government. India would not be a party to the disintegration of the island. He voiced concern at the serious situation prevailing in the Tamil-dominated north-east Sri Lanka and regretted that efforts to solve the ethnic problem had not yielded positive results. (AFP - New Delhi).

★ Though the Congress(I) in particular, often in conjunction with the AIADMK, has been raising embarrassing questions on the presence and activities of Tamil militants, especially the LTTE, in Tamil Nadu, the ruling DMK did not feel the pinch thanks to the 'friendly' National Front Government headed by V.P. Singh at the Centre. As DMK was a constituent member of the Front, the PM chose not to go public on this controversy.

But with the change of government at the Centre and the new PM, Chandra Shekhar, known to have some very strong views on Sri Lanka and the militants, the Tamil Nadu Government could not afford to play cool on this front any longer. The Congress(I)-AIADMK-Janatha Dal(S) combine felt that the time was ripe for it to demand the dismissal of the DMK government on a charge of extending patronage to the 'militant and smuggling activities' of the LTTE, besides using the state as a base for its military programme.

Even as the pressure was mounting, Chief Minister Karunanidhi, began to demonstrate that the state and its police could act, if they so wished. A group of crippled militants, reportedly in Madras for treatment after they were wounded in battle in Sri Lanka, were held, though many of their colleagues staying in the same house in Adhyar were allowed to escape. But within days another 10 LTTE boys were picked up in a house in Tiruchi. These incidents are seen by the detractors of the DMK as a mere drama to impress upon the Centre that the state government can be tough with militants.

According to one senior official, after the Chief Minister's latest visit to Delhi, there is a change in the government's attitude towards the Sri Lankan Tamil militants. There was hectic activity in the Secretariat with the top officials of the home department, the state police, the navy, customs officials and coast guards putting their heads together to work out strategies to at least curtail the unlawful acts indulged in by the militants. At the moment the government appears to want to get tough with the Sri Lankans. The weeks ahead will show to what extent precisely. (Hindu, 9.12.90).

★ Indian police arrested 86 members of Tamil militant groups on 15 December in a continuing crackdown in Tamil

Nadu, the PTI reported. The arrests took to 167 the number of militants held over two days in the state. Police carried out simultaneous raids on militant hideouts in a pre-dawn sweep arresting 65 in the state capital, Madras, and 21 elsewhere. The suspects belonged to assorted Tamil groups such as Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Front (EPRLF), Peoples Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), and Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO). Topping the list was 29 EPRLF cadres followed by persons belonging to ENDLF (22), PLOTE (18) TELOS-Selvan Group (14), TELO-Kandan Group (2) and EROS (1).

All 81 arrested on the previous day, 14 December, belonged to the LTTE. The arrests were accompanied by the seizure of a powerful wireless transmitter, two high speed boat engines, one jeep, gelatine sticks, detonators and pistols, PTI said quoting a government press release in Madras.

The EPRLF condemned the police swoop calling the arrests indiscriminate and alleged that only the LTTE had been violating the law and appealed to the Indian politicians to help secure the release of its members. (AFP, New Delhi, December 15).

The Tamil Nadu police arrested 81 persons suspected to be LTTE men in an early morning swoop in different parts of the state. In today's (December 14) simultaneous raids conducted in Madras and the districts of Chengai Anna, Salem, Tiruchi and Madurai, houses believed to be occupied by the LTTE men were searched.

An official press release stated that in Tiruchi the police recovered a wireless set and three cyanide capsules from a locked house. In a nearby village, Erinjiyur, a bundle of gelatine sticks, medicines and bandages were recovered. Five motor cycles (four in Madras and one in Salem) were also seized. Police said no firearms were found. In Madras alone 70 LTTE cadres were picked up in simultaneous raids conducted at Tiruvanmiyur, Kalakshetra Colony, Adyar and Virugambakkam. The arrested persons were in the age group of 25 to 30 and they are likely to be sent to refugee camps. (The Hindu).

★ An LTTE militant, Dulango Nataraja, was arrested at the Sahar International Airport in Bombay on his arrival from Paris. Police said that the LTTE man who arrived by Air France was carrying a staggering amount of ammunition - 15,500 cartridges of 22 bore gun and two signalling devices. The suspect was reported to be the secretary of a Tamil organisation in Paris. (UNI - Dec. 15, The Hindu (IE), 22.12.90).

★ Answering questions relating to Tamil militant activity in Tamil Nadu,

Union Minister for Commerce, Law and Justice, Dr. Subramaniam Swamy said that his impression was that three districts of Tamil Nadu - Ramanathapuram, Thanjavur and South Arcot - were out of control of the state administration. (The Hindu (IE), 22.12.90)

★ The recent rounding up of Tamil militants in Tamil Nadu was an eyewash to give the impression that the Tamil Nadu Government was serious about curbing militant activities, Tamil Nadu Congress(I) MP Mr. K. Ramamurthy said. He alleged that 'prior intimation has been given to the militants so that they can escape and only some students who have even shown their examination hall tickets and some invalids have been picked up for the sake of statistics'. In regard to a recent report that ten LTTE militants were taken into custody from a house in Tiruchi, he said that his information was that nearly 50 militants from the same house 'have been allowed to escape with four lorryloads of arms and ammunition'. When officials at a check-point intercepted the group they were told that the vehicles were being taken with the permission of the state government.

Militants among the Sri Lankan Tamils were taken away from the refugee camps in Thanjavur, Pudukottai, Madurai, Tirunelveli and Chidamparamanagar districts and lodged in special camps. The 52 militants who were taken away from refugee camps belonged to: LTTE (22), EPRLF (11), TELO (15), PLOT (2), and ENDLF (2). (The Hindu).

★ The series of arrests of Sri Lankan Tamils believed to be militants during the past fortnight or so has created ill-will between the groups and the Tamil Nadu Government. Many of those detained claiming to be students are complaining about "unnecessary harassment", according to informed sources.

'Even as the Government of India has asked the state government to strengthen security in the coastal districts, besides alerting the Navy and Coast Guard to step up vigil to check the movement of militants and smuggling, the state administration accepts the case that the illegal movement cannot be stopped altogether given the long coastline. But it had instructed authorities to impound any unknown or unidentified boats or vessels found on the shore.

The Centre which had decided to send the BSF (Border Security Force) or CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) to the coastal districts has apparently made it clear that the militants should not be allowed a 'free run' in any part of Tamil Nadu. While genuine refugees were welcome to seek security, militants will not be allowed to use the state as a base'. (The Hindu, Dec. 21).

A Commitment to Peace

by Jehan Perera

In the city of Newcastle in Australia is a war memorial. The visitor from Sri Lanka will be moved by it for it commemorates tens of thousands of young Australians who died in war. Bronze figures of a man and woman hold hands and gaze at the legend, 'With ennobled minds we stand, before our noble dead'. In Sri Lanka today can we see a similar ennobling?

In the West, wars in this century alone that were meant to solve disputes over land, wealth and the right to rule took a staggering toll in life. Much greater than in our wars beginning in 1971 in the south, and continuing today in the north. In the Soviet Union alone 30 million died in the two decades after the Russian Revolution. Another 20 million died in the five year period in World War II. In Germany, six million people were put to death for being Jews. These are well-established historical facts. In Sri Lanka, perhaps a hundred thousand lost their lives in the past decade. Much less and still too much.

But now for close to 50 years there has been no war in Europe. The most powerful armies the world has ever seen have confronted each other across the border that separates Eastern from Western Europe. But they have not fought. Out of the bitterness of the experience of war the people of Europe have learnt and not forgotten. Soviet tanks did not roll into the West to shore up the crumbling Soviet system because of the memories of war and its horror. There has been a commitment to peace within Europe which European governments have chosen to respect because it has arisen from the bottom up, from the people themselves. Perhaps a similar process is evolving in Sri Lanka.

Not so long ago, in 1983 for instance, a warlike and belligerent mood encompassed the people of Sri Lanka, both Sinhalese and Tamil. There was a perception of Sinhala-Tamil conflict in which each community wanted to defeat, humiliate and collectively punish the other.

What else can explain the 1983 riots? During those terrible days it appeared as if the entire Sinhalese population had agreed to inflict collective punishment upon the Tamils. On more sober reflection, it is apparent that very few Sinhalese actually went about killing and wounding Tamils or destroying their houses. The majority acquiesced. That is the sin we will have to live with and because of it the great divide between our two communities. Unless forgiveness is sought.

Never Again

The 1983 riots were a turning point in the attitude of the Tamils towards the Sri Lankan state and the government that represented it. That is why we need to dwell upon it, unpleasant though it is. Many of us will no doubt have vivid memories of that hot week in July. There was not a rain cloud in the bright blue sky to quench the raging fires and the enraged mobs. I remember setting off for work that morning to find the shops at Thimbirigasyaya junction in flames. My question whether the Tamils whose shops were being burnt in Colombo were responsible for the ambush in the north brought forth the demand to know whether I was Tamil or Sinhalese. I remember locating my friend back from Harvard for the summer holidays in a refugee camp and taking him to his house in Dehiwela to find it looted and burnt. I remember listening to our President on television and hearing him say that what we were witnessing was the righteous anger of the Sinhalese people.

I also remember visiting a Tamil MP and explaining to his wife that what had happened was to be expected, it had been 'coming' to the Tamils, for terrorism could not but bring retaliation. The events that unfolded in the country since then are a manifestation of those actions and states of mind. I had tried to rationalise and justify an outrageous crime to my Tamil friend. Had I been a Sri Lankan before being a Sinhalese my proper response to the events of July 1983 would have been very different. It would have been to say to my Tamil friend that I was sorry, what had happened was totally wrong, and that I would commit myself to working for a Sri Lanka where no one would be left unequal and unprotected. A commitment to peace in Sri Lanka will call for no less from us, whether we are Sinhalese, Tamil or Muslim.

Common Suffering

Such a process is indeed occurring at the grassroots level. The sense of collective hostility of the Sinhalese people against the Tamil people has largely evaporated. There is no longer the same perception among the Sinhalese that the war in the north is a Sinhala-Tamil one. There is no more desire for confrontation. This is a tremendous change, and is at the base of the potential for a peaceful solution. Perhaps the Tamil people in the north and east feel this way too.

What has caused this changed

perception to come about? Perhaps it is because the war in the north is not ending fast but is only bleeding the country, its people and the economy. Perhaps it is because the LTTE war against the Indian army and the sufferings of the Tamil people at the hands of the Indians convinced the Sinhalese that the loyalty of the Tamil people was to their homeland. Perhaps it is because of the sufferings of the Sinhalese themselves during the JVP insurrection which has given them a sympathy for the suffering of the Tamils, and the understanding that injustice lies at the root of the insurrections in the north and south. Perhaps it is because of repeated government statements that the war is not one against the Tamil people but against the LTTE.

Whatever the reason federalism, which at one time had the potential for upsetting the Sinhalese people, will today in all likelihood not be an objectionable solution to a wasteful war. To the extent that federalism satisfies the desire of the Tamil people for self determination, for participation in development and for democracy it cannot be objectionable to the Sinhalese for that is what they also want along with the Muslims. The fact cannot be ignored that Sri Lanka is still a very inequitable society. The bottom 40% get only 7% of the national income. They do not participate in development. Decision-making power is still concentrated in the hands of a westernised and English-speaking class of people whose interests are very different from that of the 90% non-westernised and non-English speaking people. So the majority do not determine their own futures. Elections have not changed this basic future of our society. Our democracy needs to be improved. So self determination, participation in development and democracy are problems of justice common to the Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims.

Properly presented at a referendum there is a strong possibility that federalism will be approved by most Sri Lankans as the compromise solution least injurious to their real interests. A solution ratified by the people at a referendum will also be the firmest guarantee that it will be respected and not violated.

The reason that federalism will be acceptable is that the war in the north is no longer seen as a Sinhala-Tamil one. On the contrary it is seen as one in which the government is pitted against the LTTE. So any stable solution that the government will enter into will be acceptable to the Sinhalese people. Of course separation into two independent states will not be a stable solution. Two national armies cannot possibly coexist peacefully on a small and densely populated island, more densely

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populated even than India. On the other hand federalism will ensure a single national army in which the minorities will enjoy a meaningful voice. A federal solution will transfer power presently located in the central government to provincial or state governments. It will not weaken the Sinhalese people in their own endeavour of self determination, participation in development and democratic government. Certainly no more than the war, and the colossal military cost and the abuses of emergency rule have. So the Sinhalese will not lose through federalism.

Gradually a constellation of forces is emerging that favour a federal solution. Firstly, federalism was the demand articulated by mainstream Tamil opinion until the guns of the militants silenced the voice of the mainstream. So federalism is not simply a solution to be offered or accepted because of a military stalemate, but because it satisfies a long-standing Tamil sense of justice. Secondly, the opposition parties will find it difficult, if not impossible, to mobilise Sinhalese sentiment against federalism because such a sentiment does not exist as the powerful force it once was. Thirdly the opposition parties are unable to come up with any alternative solution, both with respect to the political options as well as the military ones.

New Opportunities

But will the LTTE be prepared to accept federalism? Can they be trusted? At one level it will appear that the group of individuals who form the leadership of the LTTE neither want federalism nor can be trusted. Instead we should place our trust in a process that will lead to justice. That means winning the support of the Tamil people by putting forward a solution based on justice to all, obtaining the support of the international community and, most of all, changing our own attitudes. Such a process will be very difficult for the LTTE leadership to oppose.

In other words, an offer of federalism to the LTTE leadership in the spirit of a tactic to end the war is unlikely to work. The LTTE leadership will sense opportunism and be opportunistic in turn. Rather the offer of federalism must be seen in the spirit of justice to a section of the Sri Lankan people and as a part of a wider process of social change that will ensure more and more justice to an ever-increasing proportion of Sri Lankan people. This must include special provision for providing those young men who have become Tigers with an assurance of employment and a brighter future. Or else humanly speaking they will be very loathe to lay down their arms.

The LTTE leadership in turn will be

unwise not to make use of the opportunity that is opening up to them. For perhaps the first time in over three decades, Sinhalese public opinion is sympathetic to the Tamil aspiration to have equal rights within a federal system. For the first time Sri Lanka also has a head of government in Mr. Premadasa who is not thinking in terms of maintaining elite Sinhalese domination over the country but rather in uplifting the masses of ordinary people. This is not an opportunity to be missed. If it is missed, the Tamil people together with their Sinhalese and Muslim brethren will continue to be trapped in a downward spiral that must inevitably culminate in a countrywide social explosion as poverty, unemployment and malnutrition take their inevitable toll. Already, Sri Lankan children between the ages of one

and two suffer from more severe malnutrition than the children of Bangladesh.

A critical step in this wider process of social change that Sri Lanka needs is for each of us to turn the searchlight inwards and seek to acknowledge the wrongs we have done to others. At the level of the grassroots this process is already taking place. With minds ennobled by suffering and by their realisation our people now stand before their noble dead. This is why there have been no retaliatory killings for massacres even 50 times greater than those which sparked off the July 1983 riots. A commitment to peace requires a wrenching and noble change, both within ourselves as persons and in our country's political institutions. To speed up this process from the top is the challenge.

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of their camps we certainly will attack. We expect the army to be in their present positions.

D.B.S.J.: What are the countries and organizations behind this peace effort?

Kittu: We cannot name any country in particular. Many like Canada, Britain, Australia and Norway made efforts. Many organizations like the Red Cross also tried. We can't name any one country or organization.

D.B.S.J.: Can your indefinite ceasefire continue without the government's cooperation?

Kittu: Certainly not. We will give time for them to think about negotiations. We cannot continue it for years just because we said it was indefinite.

D.B.S.J.: Was this ceasefire approved by Prabhakaran?

Kittu: The headquarters would not have made the announcement without his approval.

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D.B.S.J.: In your last round of talks with the government one of your demands was the removal of the 6th amendment. What is your position now?

Kittu: That was at that time. Now we have only asked for holding talks. But during the talks a situation may arise where we may be able to seek the change or removal of the constitution itself.

D.B.S.J.: Finally, how do you think the government will react to your ceasefire?

Kittu: I cannot say. The ball is in their court. We hope that they will act with reasonable goodwill.

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READERS FORUM

TAMIL-MUSLIM CONFLICT

R. Shanmuganathan (R.S.) has found fault with me for not being 'balanced' in my short note on anti-Muslim violence (written in Colombo while on a short visit) published in the October 1990 issue of *Tamil Times*. He writes: 'It is not clear why Mr. Shanmuganathan ignored the Tamil side of the story. Is it ignorance or hypocrisy?' My answer is, it is neither. If I failed to appear 'balanced' in the eyes of readers like R.S., it is precisely because I wanted to avoid any hypocrisy on my part. It is, indeed, regrettable that the only reader of *Tamil Times* who took the trouble to put pen to paper after reading my note had chosen to disregard its main points. I was airing my criticisms of the dominant tendencies in the Tamil liberation struggle and of Tamil nationalism itself. I was focusing at a level more fundamental than human rights. When a liberation movement consistently violates the rights of other people in the name of the liberation of its own people, something has fundamentally gone wrong with its politics. A point has been reached when one is justified in doubting the emancipatory potential of the struggle. For a movement that does not respect the rights of other people can not be expected to respect the rights of its own people. And all the main Tamil militant groups have been accused of such violations by bodies like Amnesty International.

The Home Guards are an arm of the chauvinist, oppressive state. They are killers aided and abetted by the government to terrorise local populations. The government has been assiduously sowing discord and promoting violent conflicts between Tamils and Muslims. Tamils and Muslims in the North-East share a common language and a common homeland. It does not take a great Machiavellian to see that the most effective way to thwart the Tamil demand for a merged North-East homeland is to keep the Tamils and Muslims divided. The government is doing just that. The Muslim Home Guards are a cheap and an effective tool for the government to achieve its aim. The acts of the Muslim Home Guards should be condemned indeed. I never meant to give the impression of condoning them. But when armed Tamils calling themselves freedom fighters behave like the Home Guards, we have to go beyond a so-called balanced approach and question their politics because it is in the name of our nation's liberation the revenge is being taken. The killing of Muslim civilians in the East and the expulsion of the

Muslim people from the North have only served the evil intentions of the government. The government and the Muslim leaders collaborating with it, and the extremist advocates of 'jihad' could not have hoped for more. The Tamil cause has suffered its worst political and moral defeat.

The anti-Muslim violence was not an isolated phenomenon. Killing of unarmed civilians by Tamil militants has a history. Such violence has become a part of the militarist politics of the main Tamil groups. The Anuradhapura massacre and several other incidents in which Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim people got killed are well known to all of us 'who live in the safety of the western democratic societies', to borrow a phrase from Shanmuganathan. But the vast majority of us have chosen to observe a hypocritical and cowardly silence about these blatant acts of terror. This appalling silence has now turned into an even more appalling indifference to the sufferings of the Tamil people themselves. The late Rajani Thirana-gama captured the state of the Eelam Tamils most brilliantly:

'A state of resignation envelopes the community. The long shadow of the gun has not only been the source of power and glory, but also of fear and terror as well. In the menacing shadow play, forces complementing each other, dance in each others momentum. The paralysing depression is not due to the violence and authority imposed from outside, but rather to the destructive violence emanating from within the womb of our society'.

Rajani was living in Jaffna when she wrote this and paid the ultimate price for stating the truth. This destructive violence has claimed a heavy toll of innocent lives. The use of revolutionary violence is not only inevitable but totally defensible in a people's struggle to free themselves from national oppression and genocide. But it is by no means revolutionary to imitate the behaviour of the state's armed forces and its hirelings like the Home Guards and unleash terror on unarmed civilians. It is not an act of liberation when the gun meant to fight the armed enemy and defend the people is turned against the people to terrorise them. The highly militarised internecine conflicts between militant groups have caused the death of many an innocent Tamil. The rivalry between militant groups has gone so far that some of them can collaborate with the state, against which they armed themselves in the first place to liberate the Tamil people, to annihilate their rivals without any compunction. Such collaboration has become common since the ill-fated Indo-Lanka accord. In all such instances the most active form of collaboration has been with the state's armed forces.

All these are unmistakable symptoms of the inversion of the relations between the political and the military levels of the liberation struggle; i.e. the latter is in command of the former. In the past few years, this violence has become an institutionalised process with its own logic of militarist authoritarianism which cuts across apparent lines of ideological division. This institutionalisation, which may be an indication of a nascent authoritarian state in the Tamil homeland, has its politics and its ideology of legitimation. The ideology is a chauvinist form of Tamil nationalism which looks like a mirror image of Sinhala nationalism.

One hears instant theories about the brutalisation of our society. It would be a mistake to think that it is due to the violence of marauding bands. Nor is it a product of any mental aberration in 'our boys'. It is a manifestation of an institutionalised militarist approach to all kinds of conflicts including real and imaginary political differences. In such an approach there is not much room for resolving contradictions among the people, and between the different political formations with a common cause, through dialogue and exchange of criticisms. It is a deadly combination of self-righteousness and military might which thrives by militarising every possible contradiction. One of the most damaging results of this militarist politics is that potential allies are converted into adversaries and the struggle is weakened from within. The militarisation of conflicts between Tamil organisations and the ensuing fratricide and the anti-Muslim violence should be seen in this light.

As to how such a process became so strongly established in a matter of few years, and as to how the militarist approach became a common property of all the groups is a subject for serious study. The internal and the geopolitical factors that have determined or contributed to this process have yet to be analysed and interpreted.

Nevertheless, the gravity of the situation is so palpable that we can not be indifferent to it any more. As Tamils, we should engage ourselves in a serious soul searching exercise in a spirit of self-criticism and a deeper concern with the destiny of the Tamil speaking people in our country. Concerned Tamils should, before it is too late, open a serious dialogue with the liberation movements. This, rather than prayers as suggested by Shanmuganathan, is something worth paying our attention to. 'We who live in the safety of the western democratic societies' would be guilty of crass indifference if we failed to do our bit to promote democracy back home in the North-East and in the whole of Lanka. There is a great need to build a powerful mass consensus capable of forcing the movements to return to a

path of revolutionary politics in which people – Tamils, Muslims and Sinhalese – matter as the makers of history. This is a humble plea from a concerned individual, not a prescription from a comfortable seat.

N. Shanmugaratnam.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE TAMIL TIGERS

PERMIT me to reply to K. Thambiah and S. Sivasegaram (*Tamil Times*, Nov. '90) both of whom were critical of some of my previous communications to this journal. First, being a Tamil born in the post-independent Sri Lanka, like so many hundreds of thousands of Tamils living in Sri Lanka, India and elsewhere on this globe, I share the ideals for which the LTTE is fighting a revolutionary war against the Sri Lankan government's armed forces. But this does not mean that I agree with all the actions of the LTTE and I also have no authority to speak on behalf of the LTTE. However I am not going to give up to anyone who does not acknowledge the positive contributions of the LTTE to the Tamil liberation struggle.

To be brief, I would answer in the negative to each of the ten questions posed to me by Thambiah. However, as a student of history, I would add that the LTTE has behaved (and is behaving) like every other revolutionary movement in the world which initiated an armed struggle against a more powerful, entrenched adversary. Beginning from the American revolutionary war (led by George Washington) in the 18th century to the Soviet revolution (led by Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin), Chinese revolution (led by Mao Tse Tung and Zhou En Lai) and Cuban revolution (led by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara) in this century, all the revolutionary struggles have shed much blood, not all belonging to that of adversary. Hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians also died for no fault of theirs. There were also an adequate share of blunders in every revolutionary struggle which became a success. So why one has to set a different standard to the Tamil Tigers, while paying homage to the actions of revolutionary heroes of the past, whether it is Washington or Lenin?

Thambiah did pick up the brief for Jehan Perera, to whom I issued the challenge to 'show a State which originated in the past two centuries without violating "the human rights of other people"'. But he himself could not come up with a single answer to my challenge. This further explains my point of view that if we study the historical events in proper perspective, the actions of the LTTE infringing the human rights of fellow citizens (whether they are Tamils, Muslims or Sinhalese) is neither applaudable nor

despicable, in terms of a revolutionary struggle. It will be great if Eelam is born without a shed of blood, but even under the leadership of the apostle of non-violence Mahatma Gandhi, a free India was born with a loss of many millions of lives, with another 'pre-term baby' Pakistan, which itself gave a tragic birth again to Bangladesh.

It is also amusing that Thambiah has selectively cited from my eulogy to Amirthalingam to portray that I have condoned the way in which the TULF leader was assassinated. I wonder why his memory failed to locate the sentence in which I also stated, '...murdered by some deranged individuals belonging to their own ethnic group' (*Tamil Times*, Sept. '89). I wrote another letter in the same issue in which I noted, 'I share his (Dr. David Selbourne's) apprehension about the way in which the TULF leader A. Amirthalingam met his death'. Why has Thambiah's memory failed to remember this line also?

Regarding Sivasegaram's indirect reference to my earlier criticism of David Selbourne's condescension towards Sri Lankans (*Tamil Times*, Sept. '89), I will let the readers decide whether what I wrote was 'a pile of abuse' or 'a crude response'. Sivasegaram is entitled to have his opinion. But I could say that it is a pleasure to read this pretender of Diogenes (who preached Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology in his Peradeniya period) now trotting out phrases like 'democratic rights' and 'democratisation of the struggle'. What a change the *glasnost* era has brought to some intellectuals? I have one doubt about which type of democracy Sivasegaram refers to? Is it the Yankee version? British version? *glasnost* version? Mao version? Japanese version? or Lee Kwan Yew version?

The funniest thing is that, even in the USA, as Richard Shenkman wrote, 'So controversial was the word "democrat" that it does not appear in any of the famous documents associated with the birth of the USA – not in the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution or any of the State constitutions' (*Legends, Lies and Cherished Myths of American History*, 1988).

Sachi Sri Kantha.

3300 Henry Avenue,
Philadelphia, PA 19129, USA.

DEPRESSING NEWS

THERE is absolute lack of basic facilities in the North and East. As far as I am aware there is no organised transport, no electricity, no fuel, no schools, no banks, no postal services and hardly any functioning hospital. This is depressing news to us all. But some letters sent to Jaffna after June 1990

have got through and we have got replies. Are all these letters getting through, only transported by the Red Cross or is there some functioning postal service. Also some encashment of cheques drawn on Jaffna Banks seem to have been possible. Also transport in lorries had been made available to the thousands of Muslims to the South from Jaffna and Mannar. Although it is sad to hear of this mass evacuation of Muslims from their homes, this information reveals that petrol has been made available for this transport. Are there any lorries plying to and from Jaffna and if so are any provisions reaching Jaffna. What form of public transport is available for the people out of these areas.

In addition there are reports in *Tamil Times* of ravages in the North. In your report 'Operation Jaya Shakti' Major General Kobbedaduwa was quoted as saying that he wanted to secure 40 kilometres (you probably mean 40 square kilometres) around Palaly Air Force Base and K.K.S. Harbour and that 1000 houses are destroyed. Those of us who have friends and relations in this area wish to know the names of the villages which are destroyed and the degree of destruction.

I feel that information on the above and similar incidents is of vital importance and should be published in *Tamil Times*.

As you have correspondents in Colombo this should not be too difficult. I am sure most of your readers will be thankful if you could see that this information is given monthly.

Yours faithfully

Dr. S. Puvirajasingham

76 Rating Lane
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA13 9LD

Continued from Page 5

Coca-Cola. If they say we are selling drugs or guns, it is a lie. It is a planned propaganda against us. The LTTE also has no connection with the death threat issued against some leaders in Tamil Nadu. It is painful that local politics is being used to damage our people's future'.

The crackdown on the militants in Tamil Nadu would not affect the LTTE. It was yet another lesson to the LTTE that it should stand on its own.

Would the LTTE like India's mediation in any future negotiations with Sri Lanka, he was asked. 'We have not received any good signal so far from India. On the contrary, action (crackdown in Tamil Nadu) has been taken against the LTTE in an uncivilised manner. In this situation, we are not able to say anything. We are not able to understand India's standpoint', the LTTE leader added.

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MATRIMONIAL

Jaffna Catholic parents seek partner for son, 31, final year electronic engineering student completing May 91 in Norway. Willing to emigrate. M 450 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Tamil parents seek qualified groom for daughter, 24, steno-typist employed in London. Send details, horoscope. M 451 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu seeks professionally qualified bridegroom, bachelors only, for Singaporean, educated, beautiful daughter, 39, bungalow owner, well settled. M 452 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu aunt seeks attractive bride for nephew, 33, qualified motor mechanic employed Canada. Send horoscope, details. M 453 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu male, 34, 5'8", good looking, graduate seeks for marriage, a home loving, honest, faithful lady. Must be British Citizen or permanent resident. M 454 c/o Tamil Times.

Christian Tamil parents seek professional groom for daughter, 22, 5'5". Write with recent photograph. M 455 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents seek groom for graduate daughter, 34, quality controller in Australia. Inter-marriage considered with son, 28, bank employee, U.K. Send details horoscope M 456 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Tamil Christian brothers in U.K. seek groom for only sister, 29, pretty, teacher. M 457 c/o Tamil Times.

WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couple on their recent marriage.

Sivaram son of Mr. A. Sivanandan and Dr. (Mrs.) A. Sivanandan of 23 Dr. Gurusamy Road, Chetpet, Madras 31 and Bahirathy daughter of Mr. & Mrs. P.V. Ganeshanathan of 31 Taylor Terrace, Tawa, Wellington, New Zealand on 2.12.90 at Hotel Dasaprakash, Madras.

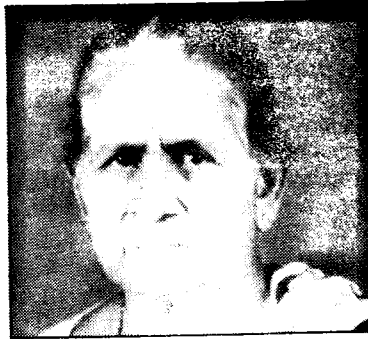
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In the Obituary Announcement of Mrs. Sivarathinam Tharmalingam, which appeared in the 15th December issue of Tamil Times, the reference to the deceased's son-in-law, 'Mr. V. Perampalam (Retired Asst. Commissioner, Publications, Sri Lanka)' was inadvertently omitted. The omission is regretted.

OBITUARIES

Mrs. Gnanammah Rosa Saminather, retired head teacher, beloved wife of the late N. Saminather (retired head teacher), loving mother of Anton Jeyanandan (Canada), Malliga Baladasan, Josy Jeyendran, Leslie Jeyadeva, Jerald Jeyaraja (all of U.K.), mother-in-law of Pamela, Baladasan, Rane, Nalini & Jugini; grand mother of Jason, Yvonne, Ahelan, Brintha, Melanie and Daishini passed away peacefully on 22.11.90 in Sri Lanka. Burial took place on 23.11.90 at the Ertalai Cemetery, Chunnakam, Sri Lanka.



Mrs. Pasupathy Krishnapillai expired in Colombo on 7th November 1990. She was the beloved wife of the late S. Krishnapillai (Chief Trains Controller, C.G.R., Sri Lanka); sister of the late K. Ponnampalam; mother of K. Palakidnar, Mrs. Subathra Ramanathan (both of Sri Lanka), late K. Gopalaratnam, late Dr. K. Rajagopal, K. Ratnagopal (Australia), Mrs. Rukmany devi Ganeswaran (Zimbabwe); mother-in-law of Lakshmidevi, Wigneswari, Selvarani, late P. Ramanathan, Santhanapoopathy and Ganeswaran; grand mother of Ananthakrishnan, Rathakrishnan, Meera Ganeshan, Devaki, Yasotha Yogendra, Ratha Arunthavanathan (all of Sri Lanka), Gitanjali Jeyaratnam, Sanjeevan (both of Norway), Uma Selvaratnam, Ramesh, Renuka Shankar-Chandran (all of U.K.), Ramjeevan (U.S.A.), Rajiv, Sanjeev, Gokulan, Shyamalan and Mathuran; great grand mother of Amrtha and Janakan.

We think of you in silence
And often repeat your name,
But the only thing that answers
Is your photo in its frame.

So unexpected was the call
Which has grieved us all
Only those who lost can tell
The pain of parting without farewell

Remember She is just away
And in our thoughts of her
There will remain fond memories
Which time can never dim

A loving mother you have been
Every trouble you have seen
For each of us you did your best
God grant you amma eternal rest.

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IN MEMORIAM

In loving memory of our beloved Dad
A.Chelliahpillai
Born: 28.12.1908 Rest: 24.01.90



Our hearts still ache with sadness
Dad, the secret tears still flow
For what it meant to lose you Dad
No one will ever know.

Mr. A. Chelliahpillai, Merchant, Ratnapura, Sri Lanka was the son of the late Mr. & Mrs. S. Arunachalam (Pungudutivu, Sri Lanka); son-in-law of Mr. & Mrs. Sinniah (Pungudutivu); beloved husband of the late Mrs. Packiam Chelliah; dear father of Mrs. Parameswary Kandiah (Sri Lanka), Mrs. Thanaluxmy Nagendram (Germany), Mrs. Kamalambigai Vasudevan, Mrs. Kamalasan Sivapatham (both of U.K.), Mrs. Masilamany Rajalingam (Sri Lanka), Pushparajalingam (France) and Punniyalingam (U.K.); father-in-law of P. Kandiah, T. Nagendran, S. Vasudevan (Fleet Food & Wines Ltd, U.K.), S. Sivapatham, K. Rajalingam (Pakeerathan Stores, Jaffna), P. Pathminidevy & P. Meenakumary; grandfather of Balakrishnan (U.K.), Kalanithy Sabanathan (Bharain), late Arunthavanithy, Karunakaran, Kirupanithy (both of Germany), Thevagini, Sivaginy, Sivatharshini (all of U.K.), Sivamainthan (Germany), Shayeemainthan, Kunrakkumaran, Koneshakumaran (all of U.K.), Rajapakeerathan (France), Valarmathy, Vanmathy (both of U.K.), Marie, Jegan, Johnson, Shantha (all of France), Shinthiya & Arjun (both of U.K.), great grand father of Birendran, Warendran (both of U.K.), Thanuja, Thatshika (both of Bharain) and Sankeethan (Germany) - 22 Turton Road, Wembley, Middx., U.K.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

February 2 6.00 p.m. Hounslow Tamil Sangham presents 'Kalai Vizha' at Hounslow Manor School, Cecil Road, Hounslow, Middx. For tickets and information Tel: 081-847 3660.

Feb. 3 3.30 p.m. Novena at Asian Chaplaincy, 48 Gt. Peter Street, London SW1P 2HA. Tel: 071-222 2895.

Feb. 12 Maha Sivarathiri

Feb. 17 6.30 p.m. Shakespeare's School of Oriental Dancing presents 'Shankunthalam', Dance Drama at Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane, Wembley, Middx. Tel: 081-847 3660.

Feb. 28 Masi Maham

At the Bhavan Centre, 4A Castletown Road, London W14 9HQ. Tel: 071-381 3036/4608.

Feb. 2. 5.30 p.m. Slide Show of the Splendours of Rajasthan by Jayant Thakkar.

Feb. 9. 7.00 p.m. Odissi by Shubhada Rajesh.

Feb. 16 5.30 p.m. Ethics in World Religions with particular reference to Islam by Dr. M.A. Zaki Badawi.

Feb. 17 5.30 p.m. Batik Exhibition & Workshop by Savita R. Kalhan.

Feb. 22 7.45 p.m. Kathak by Asavari Kumar.

Feb. 23 7.00 p.m. Carnatic Vocal Concert by Sivasakti Sivanesan.

At the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, London W8 6NQ. Tel: 071-603 4535 ext 250.

Feb. 3 7.30 p.m. Bharata Natyam by Monisha Patel.

Feb. 7 7.30 p.m. Correspondences, the story of Indian Mathematical Prodigy Ramanujam in Bharata Natyam by Shobana Jeyasingh and others.

Emily Pushpam Arulanantham (née Aseerwatham)

A Tribute paid at the Service of
Thanksgiving for her life at
St. John's Church, Folkestone, U.K.
on 24th November, 1990



I consider myself privileged to have the opportunity to pay my humble tribute to a great person whom I have known for more than forty five years. It could be more, but at least for forty five years I have known her very closely, first as a schoolboy and then as a teacher at St. John's College, Jaffna.

Emily Pushpam Arulanantham born on 11th December 1904 and who died on the 15th of this month was indeed a great person. She and my mother were class-mates at Chundikuli Girls' College, and I can recall very vividly my mother referring to Mrs. Arulanantham as 'a bundle of charm and beauty'. I always saw her and found her to be a person of great beauty. It was a beauty that came from within herself - an inner beauty and an outer beauty. In all that she said and all that she did there was that glorious beauty about her, and this is something that nobody who had known her could easily forget. That was one of her greatest qualities to which I pay tribute today, and thank God that we had such a person among us to beautify what would otherwise have been a desolate place.

Born of a sense of mission, this beauty that made her work for others, to feel for others - born of that sense of mission was her sense of dedication - a dedication to everything she did and everything she was associated with, first to her family, her parents and her sisters and then to her husband and her children.

It so happened that she came to be married to a priest who was also an educationist and the principal of a leading school, the late Rev. J.T. Arulanantham. It was no easy task to carry out her various duties; her responsibilities were so many and so varied, but she carried them out to the best of her ability. As anyone associated with the school would know it was not an easy role to play, especially as the wife of one who himself

displayed great qualities of intellectual courage and vision, of independent thought and action. His success as Principal depended very much on the help he received from his wife.

I can recall very vividly Mrs. Arulanantham walking across the playing field and meeting students individually, everyone of them. She was friendly with everyone, could adapt herself to anybody and she could mix with any group. She was always pleasant and kind, interested in, and identifying with, others, making others feel happy and secure within themselves.

Her greatest and most outstanding contribution to the school can be said to be that she helped her husband in building up a community, a sense of community life, in and around the school. It was a community that was very strong. Be they Christians or Hindus or Muslims or Buddhists, Tamils or Sinhalese - even students from other countries had studied there - there was a sense of community that was built up over a period of about two decades, and Mrs. Arulanantham's contribution to it was tremendous.

She brought her love to bear on her children. They were an example to the others in the school as anyone could testify. I have seen them as small kids, little chubby ones, and boys used to have a lot of fun with them, but they were so cultured and so kind and took it so well. For such a kind of upbringing the credit goes very much to a great mother who taught them what love was, who taught them what a home was, who taught them what a community was, what relationship was and what their responsibilities were; gave them an open heart and an open mind. Hers was an open heart and an open mind, indeed an open home, a life marked by grace, charm, beauty, dedication and simplicity.

She was a great mother who spent most of her life singing, promoting music, encouraging others to sing, and learn music so that they could praise God. Special mention must be made of her contribution to orchestral music and the Combined Carols Festival in Jaffna.

Her prayers have been answered. She has gone into God's presence and seen his magnificent face. All that remains for us to do is to congratulate her on her splendid achievement, thank God for her life and offer our silent prayers for the repose of her soul.

Dr. K. Paramothayan.

Computer Font Design in Tamil

Mr. K. Sivagurunathapillai of Goldsmith's College, University of London was invited by the departments of Computing & Mathematics and Electrical & Electronic Engineering of South Bank Polytechnic to give a lecture/demonstration on 21.11.90 at a Joint Seminar in Computing, Mathematics and Applications on the work he had done on Computer Font Designs in Tamil.

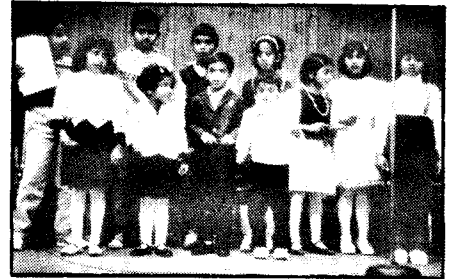
Mr. Sivagurunathapillai stated that for a long time Tamil characters were not available on computers because of the large number (247) characters required. The recent development of font design programmes enabled Tamil characters to be created and reduced to the number of keys on a conventional keyboard (52), leaving another 2 sets of 26 keys available for further development.

He used the grid map and demonstrated how he created the Tamil characters on the computer, allocating the keys for the sound of the letter, for example the letter R for the Tamil 'Ra'. He explained how he reduced the

247 keys to 52 keys using an Apple Macintosh computer. He said that he has developed Tamil fonts on BBC 480Z and Nimbus computers as well, but the fonts available on the Apple Macintosh, which uses a better bitmap version, reproduce reasonably good Tamil characters. He has produced a bilingual Tamil/English book titled 'Stupid Crocodile' using the Tamil fonts designed by him.

At present he is developing a software package where the computer can talk in Tamil. He hopes that this package would encourage youngsters to listen to the Tamil version displayed on the computer screen, create their own Tamil stories and words and print them out as they do in English during their normal school hours.

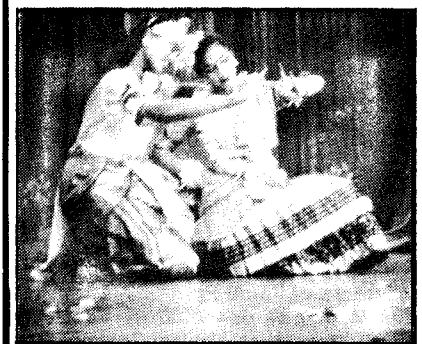
Christmas Carols in Vancouver



British Columbia's Tamil children sang Christmas Carols for the first time in Tamil at the 3rd Annual Carol Service held at the Kerrisdale Community Centre in Vancouver on 22nd December 1990. The highlight of the Tamil Carols was the children's carol 'Varum Palare' sung by 11 children between the ages 3 and 12. The youth choir of seven teenagers sang 'Bethlehem Ennum Oorile' accompanied by M.S. Rajah on Flute, Elmo Rajah on Tabla, Vasuki Balachandran on Piano and Jonathan Lewis on Keyboard. The Christmas Message was delivered by Chaplin Mervin Peterson of the Vancouver International Airport. The service ended with the singing of the traditional Mangalam.

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Taprobane Travel Achieves Record Sales to Sri Lanka

Taprobane Travel/Sri Lanka Tours, one of the leading agents for travel and tours to Sri Lanka, achieved a record sales figure of £1.3 million to Sri Lanka in 1990 on KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (for whom they are the sole consolidators to Colombo) and on Air Lanka, the national carrier. Managing Director, Gamit Ameresekere, expects 1991 to be a 'boom' year for travel to Sri Lanka and aims at an



Mr. Gamit Ameresekere

increase of at least 25% on account of Air Lanka's fourth flight to Sri Lanka and the re-introduction of KLM's second flight in July.

Taprobane Travel besides being one of Air Lanka's top consolidators acts as consolidator for KLM to Colombo, Bangkok, Singapore, Manila, Sydney and Melbourne. From January, they have on offer new KLM destinations New York, Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa and Los Angeles. The company's association with KLM dates back to 1978, when there was only one weekly flight to Sri Lanka. They were also one of the first consolidators for Air Lanka from September 1979 when the national carrier commenced operations from London. The UTA network is also used by Taprobane Travel to the Far East, Australia and Africa on a consolidation basis.

Tamil Service on Sunrise Radio Completes One Year

The weekly Tamil Service on Britain's first community broadcasting station, Sunrise Radio completed an year's service on 6.11.90. The broadcast continues on the Medium Wave Band on 1413 KHz (212m) on Mondays but the time has been changed to 10.00pm to 11.00pm instead of from 9.00pm to 10.00pm.



Presenters of Tamil Programme L to R - Nada Mohan, R. Janarthanan, Mrs. Yoga Thillainathan, Miss Thulasi Thillainathan, Dr. Ratnam Niththyanathan and Kana-pathipillai Sanguhan.

The Circulation Manager thanks all subscribers, readers and well wishers who readily responded to his letter sent with the last issue of Tamil Times by sending several new subscriptions, gift subscriptions, renewal subscriptions for two years and more and names and addresses of prospective subscribers. He regrets his inability to thank them individually.

'KURAVANJI' - (Tamil Ballet)



The Lakshmi Arts Centre under the excellent choreography of its Dance Director, Mrs. Selvaluxmy Ramakrishnan staged 'Kuravanji' a literary favourite amongst all classical dancers, composers and musicians. For the London Stage this Tamil Ballet was a 'first' and could easily be considered the 'best'.

Students from The Lakshmi Art Centre narrated this well known story in their inimitable style with their gentle but efficient dance movements. The meaning of this epic was conveyed beautifully to the audience, who were no doubt amazed at the power of interpretation and skill of communication found among the young dancers most of whom were born in U.K. and brought up in an atmosphere alien to the traditional Tamil culture. Their ability to convey to the audience the real essence of the ancient Tamil literary masterpiece in its full glory should be commended. Performances by Chithra Satkunanathan, Sapna Billimoria, Vanathi Nithianathan were par excellence. Others including Kavitha Thevarajah and Parul Mandavia and the entire cast of about 34 dancers performed their respective roles extremely well. The full credit for the training of these dancers and moulding them into the respective roles into which they beautifully fitted - should go to the choreographer and dance director of the Institute Mrs. Selvaluxmy Ramakrishnan. Obviously she could not have undertaken and completed successfully this spectacular and colossal production without the co-operation and willingness of the parents some of whom were seen on stage as stage managers, curtain pullers, lights operators and so on.

There appears to prevail a minority view that Tamil literary epics like Kuravanji reek of male chauvinism. This is clearly incorrect. In Hindu mythology and Tamil literature which is intertwined with Hinduism we see a set theme of the heroine pining for the love of her Lord (for example Sakthi longing for Shiva). This really does not depict male domination or female inferiority as it is understood today. It only symbolises the Jeevathma longing for union with Paramathma. Sexual equality has already been proclaimed and propounded in Tamil literature and Hinduism by statements such as Sivam and Sakthi are indeed one and each unit cannot independently act without the other.

- Wimal Sockanathan.

Karunanidhi Invited to London

Dr. R. Niththyanathan, Director of Fine Arts, London met Mr. M. Karunanidhi, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 23.12.90 and invited him to inaugurate the birth centenary celebrations of poet Bharathidasan to be held in London in April and May 1991. It is expected that a team of artistes, who have been exponents of the poet's compositions will accompany him.

Arumuga Navalar Day in London

Arumuga Navalar Day was celebrated in London at Graveney School Hall, London SW17 by a large gathering of his admirers and followers on 8.12.90, for the sixth year in succession. Proceedings commenced with the conducting of a Guru pooja by Vaheesa Sarma. Mr. V.R. Ramanathan welcoming those present referred to the services rendered by Navalar as a patriot and a saint. Mr. I.T. Sambanthan who had been a member of the Navalar Sabai, Jaffna, spoke about the great service rendered to the Tamils and the Hindus by Navalar when their language and religion were threatened by foreign influence. His influence spread throughout Sri Lanka and South India where he established a school in Chithambaram and a printing press in Madras, which still continue to spread his message.

Items of light entertainment followed and these included an instrumental orchestra of seven veenas and two miruthangams by the pupils of Mrs. Senthilselvi Vamanathan, speeches by Niroshan Arulambalam and Thenuka Jegatheeswaran, a flute recital by Balamurugan Yogarajah accompanied by his brother Balamurali, and the singing of devotional songs by Bramhi Jegatheeswaran. The highlight of the evening was the rendering of songs on Navalar composed by the poet Gnanamaniam by Mrs. Vijayakumari Thavasilingam. She was accompanied by Sivasankar on Violin and Visakan Sivarasa on Miruthangam. Mrs. Mutucumaraswamy who had been organising the function for the last six years proposed a vote of thanks.

Pioneering Transplant Operation Without Pain



Consultant Cardiac Thoracic Surgeon Sabaratham Sabanathan has pioneered the first single lung transplant operation in the English Midlands at the Bradford Royal Infirmary. Forty minutes after the complex four hour operation, the patient 57-year-old, Peter Cronie was fully awake and feeling no pain. The new system in which severe pain around a surgical chest wound is blocked for five days with a continuous supply of local anaesthetic through a catheter tube was devised by Mr. Sabanathan. The new pain killing technique involves the surgeon making a pocket between the chest wall and the lining on the inside of the chest and creating a pool of anaesthetic which covers the four or five nerves above and below the incision.

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I, NALLIAH BALAKRISHNAN, Solicitor, presently of Nalliah & Xavier, hereby give notice that, as from 10th January 1991, I shall practise under the name, style and firm of NALLIAH & COMPANY at No. 1 Craven Park, Harlesden, London NW10 8SX.



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