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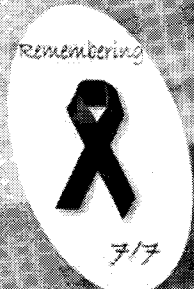
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- Voltaire



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COVER:

London under attack on 7 July
Casualties being carried away by medical personnel; scene of the bomb blast in Tavistock Square in central London

Suicide Bombers Target London

For some time now after last year's Madrid bombings that left 190 people dead and many more maimed, it had become almost normal to say that Britain was next in line for an al-Qaeda strike for its support for the Bush administration's foreign policies, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan. British security experts and political leaders had often warned of the country's vulnerability as a target for a terrorist strike. The probability or even the inevitability of such a strike nevertheless did not lessen the shock and horror of the outrageous and despicable acts of terrorism against Londoners on 7 July that left a trail of death and destruction.

The serial suicide bombings in London would appear to have been planned far in advance with a specific date in mind. They had been clearly timed for the opening day of the meeting of G-8 leaders in Scotland. Their impact seemed all the more powerful and global given the presence of almost all the powerful leaders of the world in Britain at that time. The terrorists had aimed for a political and propaganda impact on a global scale.

It would seem that the strategy behind attacks was to hit "soft" targets and cause maximum casualties rather than aim for high-profile locations or public figures. As with the Madrid train bomb attacks, rush-hour commuters were the target, the aim being to cause maximum casualties of civilians and disruption of the transport network.

As London reeled from the well co-ordinated series of suicide bomb attacks, there were those who began seeking explanations and motivations that caused them. Some argued that the 'alienation' and 'marginalisation' of the British Muslim communities (yes, communities because they belong to different races, ethnic and linguistic groups, have their origins from many countries of the world and follow all strands of Islam - Shias, Sunnies, Wahabis etc.) have been the driving force for the horrible atrocities committed by these bombers. Others blamed the foreign policies pursued by the west particularly relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the invasion of Iraq by the Bush administration backed by British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Some others, including Government spokespersons of some Arab countries, criticised Britain for the tolerance it had shown towards organisations of every political persuasion even with extremist views, for giving asylum to and harbouring "wanted persons" in other countries and for allowing them to publish their newspapers and carry out propaganda as they pleased through websites and by holding public meetings.

The question is not whether the London bombings were the result of the war in Iraq, or any other foreign policy issue, but why four British, albeit Muslim, young men did what they did to indiscriminately kill and maim scores of Londoners of varying faiths and nationalities. The bombers did not come from any particularly poor family backgrounds. They were not uneducated. In fact one of them, who was a teacher visited the Houses of Parliament recently accompanied by his constituency MP and reportedly belonged to a family that not so long ago attended a garden party with the Queen at the Buckingham Palace.

The emerging evidence reveals that the bombers were not just "nice, normal, and kind" kids until they were "brainwashed" as their family members had claimed in statements made to the press after the outrage on 7 July. At least three of them had recently visited Pakistan reportedly to meet their 'mentors', receive training and directions. The Pakistani connection inevitably leads to an al-Qaeda connection in the London bombings.

As in all other cases of al-Qaeda prompted attacks, no bomb warnings were given of the attacks in London. It was the same in the case of the serial bomb attacks in Madrid last year. Madrid was the first big al-Qaeda attack on mainland Europe. The London attacks seem to echo closely in style and scale a series of recent bombings which have been blamed on

or linked to the group.

There have been almost unanimous condemnations of the suicide bombings in London, both within the country and world over. The most powerful criticism has come from the leaders of the Muslim communities in Britain. A group of over 500 British Muslim scholars jointly issued a "fatwa" saying that the London suicide strikes "have absolutely no sanction in Islam" and the bombers were "criminals, not martyrs".

Many were struck by the extraordinary response of the people and the authorities to a human crisis brought on by terrorist strikes on civilian targets. The emergency services including the police, the fire brigade, the ambulance services, the doctors and the rest moved seamlessly into action, as if they had been foretold of the carnage that the bombers were going to unleash. The sheer determination and resilience displayed by the people of London in the face of tragedy was remarkable. The message they gave was that they were not going to be

defeated – reminiscent of the same message they gave in 1940 when Hitler launched his blitz of London. Commenting on the stoicism of the British, a foreign journalist said, "Incredibly, by late Thursday (7 July) evening, the British capital returned to a semblance of normality. The day after, the trains and buses were running and people were back on the streets going about their business."

The lesson to be learnt from the tragedy that struck London on this occasion is that, while being ready to confront and defeat the scourge of global terrorism, to accept that the world has not become a safer place than it was before the United States supported by Britain declared a "war on terror" after the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington, and particularly after the U.S-led invasion of Iraq. It must be recognised that the continued occupation of Iraq and the long festering wound of the unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict provide fertile grounds for more recruits to the cause of global 'Islamist' terrorism of the al-Qaeda variety.

P-TOMS suffers legal setback

A Bench of three Judges of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka, in delivering its judgement on a petition filed by parliamentarians belonging to the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) on 15 July, suspended the operation of certain provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Post-Tsunami Operations Management Structure (P-TOMS) entered into by the Government and the LTTE.

However, dismissing the contention that the President had no power to sign or authorising the signing of the MoU, the Court held that that it cannot be disputed that as Head of State, Head of Executive and of the Government, being in description of the of the state of the President in Article 30(1), in appropriate circumstances, the President may lawfully act on behalf of the Republic and enter into an agreement and arrangements that may be necessary to carry out the essential government functions. As head of State it is the duty of the President to ensure that essential relief and assistance for rehabilitation are made available to the needy. There is no illegality in the President entering into an MoU for objectives and reasons set out in the preamble.

"We have to bear in mind that already a ceasefire agreement has been entered into on February 23, 2002 between the government and the LTTE which according to Section 2(b) of the MoU shall continue in full force and effect. In these circumstances there is no illegality in entering into a MoU for the purpose of ren-

dering humanitarian assistance as contemplated in the preamble to the MoU," the Court stated.

The suspended sections pertained to:

(a) the location of the Regional Committee at Kilinochchi - Clause 6 (f)

(b) the project approval for post tsunami relief by the Regional Committee - Clause 6(b)(ii)

(c) the management of public funds and governmental functions - Clause 6(l)

(d) the establishment of the Regional Fund which deals with the foreign funds and secretarial funds - Clause 7

The suspension of these provisions will apply until the final determination of the fundamental rights violation petitions filed by the MPs of the JVP and the JHU.

Declining to grant the suspension of the entirety of the MoU, the Court declared that an interim order is not granted in respect of the entirety of the MoU and the structure provided in the MoU consisting of Committees may be set up, established and become functional subject to some restrictions as imposed by the judgement.

In regard to the location of the Regional Committee at Kilinochchi as provided in the MoU, the judgement said that Counsel for the Petitioners had contended that persons from certain parts of the six districts in the North and the East, referred to in the MoU, would not have easy access to Kilinochchi and this contention was not disputed. The Court said the parties would be at liberty to

decide on a suitable location for the Regional Committee as the basis of criteria that the place must be carefully located within the tsunami devastated zone and that all persons from the devastated zones should have free and uninhibited access to such location. The location of the Regional Committee may be decided on by the parties in compliance with the criteria that have been stated.

A Project Management Unit may be set up in lieu of the Unit provided for in Section (6)l (of the MoU), by the relevant ministry in accordance with the applicable procedure. Such Unit would be at liberty to coordinate, implement the projects with the District Committees, Regional Committee and the High Level Committee as provided by the MoU.

The judgement further said "funds, both foreign and local intended to be deposited in the Regional Fund, as provided by Section 7 (of the MoU), may instead be dealt with according to the provisions of the Constitution and deposited in a separate account with a custodian to be designated, if lawfully authorized.

The judgement said the foreign funds received by the country should be, in terms of Article 129(1) of the Constitution, paid into the Consolidated Fund and be disbursed in terms of the applicable law. Expenditure from this fund would be subject to an audit by the Auditor General as provided for by Article 154 of the Constitution. These are salutary safeguards included in respect of public finance to ensure transparency in disbursement of funds.

Govt's response to Court decision

The Government's attention has been drawn to the Supreme Court decision to issue an Interim Order in the case.

(continued on next page)

Donors warn Govt and Tigers

19 July - The Co-Chairs of Sri Lanka's donor countries which supports the peace process have warned that if the Ceasefire Agreement ceases to function, the wider peace process would be gravely jeopardized and international support for that process would be deeply eroded.

In a statement issued on July 19 the Co-Chairs, the European Union, United States, Japan and Norway, say they are alarmed by the deteriorating security situation in Sri Lanka.

"Since February 2005 there has been an escalation of violence resulting in the killing and injuring of persons associated with the Government of Sri Lanka, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and other political groups. Unless security is guaranteed, a central pillar of the Ceasefire Agreement will be undermined. If the Ceasefire Agreement ceases to function, the wider peace process would be gravely jeopardized and international support for that process would be deeply eroded," the statement said.

Their statement added, "The Co-chairs call on the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE each to take immediate action to prevent killings. The LTTE must stop all killings by their forces. The Sri Lankan government, in accordance with the Ceasefire Agreement, must ensure that all paramilitary groups are disarmed and prevented from any activity that might lead to acts of violence. The government must also guarantee the security of unarmed LTTE cadres in government-controlled areas"

"Maintenance of the Ceasefire Agreement is the responsibility of the two parties alone. In this effort, they have had the excellent assistance of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission and the full support of the international community. The Co-chairs believe that it is time the parties demonstrate the seriousness of their commitment to the Ceasefire Agreement by coming together to resolve outstanding issues and renew their cooperation. The SLMM can only fulfil its functions under the Ceasefire Agreement if the parties actively demonstrate the will to uphold the

NEWS REVIEW

agreement," the statement said.

LTTE on "southern political drama"

July 18 - "As Tamil people have repeatedly witnessed in their tortuous history of the past several decades, Colombo has shown its reluctance to provide remedies to Tamil people even after humanitarian disasters of colossal proportions. Sinhala leaders under severe international pressure, signed the deal (joint mechanism) after dragging for six long months, the Sinhala chauvinists then staged protests to derail the deal, and when all techniques were exhausted Sinhala nationalists engaged the willing apex court to use constitutional reasoning to scuttle the deal," said S P Thamichelvan after a 4-hour long meeting with the TNA leaders in Kilinochchi Sunday (17).

"This doesn't come as a surprise for the Tamil people. During the more than three and half years of cessation of hostilities little has been achieved in terms of implementation of any remedial measure to alleviate the suffering of NorthEast Tamils. The Tamil National Alliance parliamentarians and the Liberation Tigers have agreed to unitedly work to highlight this sad state of affairs to the International community," said Thamichelvan.

The pattern of behaviour of justice in the Sri Lankan state and the Supreme Court is well recorded. Everyone knows very well how the verdict of the Supreme Court when the culprits of a [Bindunuwewa] mass murder were brought to justice. They were simply set free by the Supreme Court, he said. With the recent stay order, the hopes of achieving a solution through negotiations have been shattered, Mr. Thamichelvan told the press.

Sri Lankan Forces and the Sinhala leadership alone have to decide how they are going to resolve the Tamil national question. We have repeatedly informed them that time was running out. Leader Pirapaharan has clearly spelt out to the Scandinavian monitors that Tamil people cannot wait indefinitely, Mr Thamichelvan said.

Parliamentarians of Tamil National Alliance (TNA) in the meeting with the Liberation Tigers Political Head resolved to jointly explain to the International community the realities on the ground with regards to the current stalemate and controversy created by the Supreme Court's stay order and the Tamil stand with regards to the nature of the Sri Lankan Constitution, TNA officials said.

Killings force intelligence operatives to lie low

July 17 - The country's premier intelligence agency, the Directorate of Internal Intelligence (DII), has asked its sleuths in the East to remain indoors and not risk their lives. This was after the last incident in Kalmunai where two DII operatives were fired upon by Tiger guerrillas.

Sgt. Rajdeen (35) and Constable A. Kapila were fatally wounded. Constable Kapila succumbed to his injuries while being flown in an Air Force helicopter to Colombo while Sgt. Rajdeen died in a Colombo hospital later. In the case of the Army's Directorate of Military Intelligence, operatives have now been told they will need to inform their superiors before

(continued from page 4)

The petitioners in this case brought to the Supreme Court's notice that the Secretary to the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Reconstruction had no legal authority to enter into such an agreement on behalf of the Government that there was no legal basis for the Government to enter into such an agreement.

The Government is happy that the Supreme Court has decided that it is not illegal for the Secretary to the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Reconstruction to enter into the agreement on behalf of the Government and the Government considers that it is a victory for the difficult process that the Government has embarked on for peace for the Supreme Court to decide that the President has not committed any illegal action and that the President has the power to enter into such an agreement in terms of the Constitution.

The Government considers that it augurs well for the peace process as well as the humanitarian process providing relief to the people affected by the tsu-

nami, the consideration shown in this judgement of the necessity of entering into such an agreement with the LTTE for the disbursement of humanitarian aid especially in the context of the fact that a ceasefire agreement was entered into with the LTTE by the previous government and that it is still in force.

Although, the operation of certain sections of the agreement has been stayed until the final determination of this action, the Supreme Court has decided that the agreement can be implemented effecting changes subject to the provisions of the Constitution with regard to the place where the Regional Committee should be held and the Regional Fund.

The Government is studying the matters pointed out by the Supreme Court and states that it will make further representations at the main hearing to be taken up in the future and that it is a matter of self confidence for the Government for the Supreme Court to make a declaration about the legality of entering into this agreement in the judgment already delivered. □

meeting informants.

The directive was personally spelt out to Division and Brigade Commanders in the East by Army Commander Shantha Kottegoda when he addressed them on Friday. The meeting took place in the Army's Eastern Commander's office in Minneriya.

These developments come as the LTTE closed its political offices in the East, fuelling speculation of stepped up attacks on security forces and vital installations. Guerrilla leaders in these areas have been told to withdraw to their camps.

Intelligence sources believe the closure of political offices is temporary and they may re-open soon. But Tiger sources in Wannai said a return would only take place if strong security guarantees were given by the Government.

Counter-measures to stall the wave of Tiger attacks on state intelligence operatives may severely dent the Government's intelligence gathering capability in the East, one observer said.

LTTE issues 2 weeks ultimatum

June 30 - Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in a crucial meeting with members of Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) demanded that the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) should provide a clear response on procedures to ensure safety of travel for LTTE cadres in the east. At a meeting on 30 June, the Head of LTTE Political Wing reportedly told the SLMM delegation headed by Mr Hargrup Haukland that Tigers would resume their own armed escort if the GoSL failed to provide satisfactory response within two weeks, according to LTTE sources from Wannai.

The announcement followed the landmine attack in Welikande on the LTTE convoy escorted by Sri Lanka Army (SLA) and facilitated by the truce monitors.

"If LTTE decides to use its own armed escort, the CFA will

likely collapse, and LTTE should not be held responsible for breaking the ceasefire," Thamichelvan told the delegation.

"In terms of the provisions in the CFA relating to the transport of LTTE members through military controlled areas and more so according to the explicit understanding reached in a meeting with the SLMM and the Norwegian Ambassador, the SLA should have provided full security and safety to our members, but what has happened at Welikanda on 26 June 2005, gives us serious concern over the genuineness of the Sri Lankan Government's commitment to the CFA," said Mr.S.P.Thamichelvan is reported to have told the SLMM and the Norwegian embassy officials, according to LTTE's Peace Secretariat website.

Thamichelvan told the delegation that the date and time of travel of the LTTE convoy was only made known to the members of the SLMM and through the SLMM to the Sri Lanka Army (SLA). "The military intelligence obtained the information from the SLA and has planned this attack. Further, none of the members of the Security forces were travelling on the bus," Thamichelvan is reported have said.

Govt responds to LTTE ultimatum

July 11 - The Government has responded to the LTTE demand, giving an ultimatum until 15 July, that the Sri Lankan army should provide adequate security for the transport of LTTE cadres through government controlled areas (between the northern and eastern provinces).

A Government press release issued on 11 July said, "Mr Jayantha Dhanapala, Secretary General of the Secretariat for Coordinating the Peace Process (SCOPP) today handed over to Mr Hargrup Haukland, Head of Mission, Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, the Government's response to the LTTE letter regarding the movement of LTTE cadres through Government controlled areas. The LTTE had on 30th June 2005, written to the Head of Mission of SLMM on this matter.

The Government has rejected the LTTE's accusations of involvement by the security forces in the landmine explosion that took place on 26th June 2005, during a LTTE movement from Kilinochchi to Batticaloa, which was escorted by the army.

The Government has also pointed out that providing of military escort for LTTE's movements through Government controlled territory is a confidence building measure and not a right under the Ceasefire Agreement.

The Government has conveyed through the SLMM to the LTTE the modalities for such movements of LTTE cadres through Government controlled areas in the letter handed over to the SLMM. It has been explained that providing armed escort for LTTE cadres for one round trip movement per month, from Kilinochchi to Batticaloa and from Kilinochchi to Trincomalee, will be continued under stipulated conditions. Government has requested the SLMM personnel to be present on the buses with the LTTE cadres and SL Army escorts."

LTTE repeats demand and ultimatum

July 16 - In a letter addressed to Head of the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) on Friday (15), Mr. S. P. Thamichelvan, Political Head of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), rejected the conditions stipulated by Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) restricting the number of journeys and the number of persons. The letter said that the GoSL has the responsibility to ensure the safety of LTTE's unarmed members in military controlled areas and urged that the proposals sent to GoSL on 30 June 2005 need to be accepted in full in order to ensure safe travel of their cadres. It further said that the time frame set by the LTTE

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was consequent to the long delay incurred.

The letter added that the LTTE will be forced to resort to its own means and modes of transport if suitable action is not taken to effectively implement its proposals without further delay. If the Tigers are forced to resort to their own means and modes of transport, the military should not interfere with LTTE's own travel and security arrangements. "If on the other hand, military attempts to prevent or hinder such travel, we would be compelled to react suitably," the letter addressed to SLMM's Head stated.

Extracts from the letter follows:

"We wish to present our position relating to the contents of the letter from the Secretary General of the Government Peace Secretariat and reiterate our clear stand on the secure travel arrangements for our members.

"The Secretary General has mentioned in his letter that as a democratically elected government, GOSL does not determine its actions on the basis of ultimatums. Ultimatum and definite time frames within which to accomplish certain requirements to maintain an agreement are two different matters and we wish to remind here that the Cease Fire Agreement itself has been premised on definite time frames. To amplify it, the CFA contains within it time frames stipulating moving away of the military from occupied positions in places of worship, schools and densely populated habitats and public buildings paving a way for restoration of normalcy. It is relevant to remind the Secretary General that it is on the acknowledgement of the ground reality of two power positions and territories being administered under their respective control, that the CFA has been formulated.

"In terms of the CFA, the government of Sri Lanka has the responsibility to ensure the safety of our unarmed members engaged in political activities in military controlled areas. Acting in

bad faith, rejecting this reality will only lead to the disruption of the cease -fire environment. Safe and secure travel of our members was made feasible during the last three and a half years with the facilitation of the Norwegian Embassy and the SLMM and the mutual understanding between the parties. Creating controversies in such a smooth transport arrangement with necessary escort, we are afraid, is shaking the root of the CFA. These actions give room for the suspicion that GOSL and its military and intelligence wings are engaged in activities that will put into grave risk the peace environment and thrust a war on the Tamil Nation.

"Our leadership dismissed Karuna from the organisation on charges of misconduct and this was a routine disciplinary action. A person, who has been dismissed by our leadership, has been provided with military security and it is no secret that the military is operating a group of saboteurs under the name of Karuna. This so-called Karuna group is not operative in any part of the Tamil homeland, nor does it have administrative control over any part of Tamil territory. It is the military that provides protection to him and the military intelligence wing is making use of Karuna and there are no two opinions about it.

"This so-called Karuna group is the making of the military intelligence wing, created with the hideous intention of sabotaging the peace environment that is holding for the last three and a half years. We have pointed out this to you at several instances with substantive evidence. We are ready to provide you with additional information and corroborative evidence, if it becomes necessary.

"The CFA clearly envisages in clause 1.8 that these paramilitary groups be disarmed and distanced from the Tamil homeland. This clause was necessitated after careful consideration by the facilitators and the parties due to the fear that they may pose a

serious threat to the CFA and the peace environment. This notwithstanding, it is ironical to find that the government's military has created this grave situation threatening the security of our members and we wish to strongly lodge our protest in this context. We consider the malicious intent and actions of the military and the intelligence wing as a subtle move to disrupt even the semblance of peace environment built during the last three and a half years.

"It is significant to note that the land mine attack of 26 July 2005, the assassinations of Batticaloa-Amparai Political Head Kowshalyan, Batticaloa Town Political Head Senadhi and the attack on our members on 10 July 2005 in Trincomalee had all taken place in government military controlled areas. Modus operandi, locations and the circumstantial evidence in all these incidents doubtlessly indicate that the government military and its intelligence wing are the culprits.

"The Secretary General had sought refuge in incidents that took place during the height of war, the pre-cessate-fire period. Citing reference to past incidents that took place during a period in which both the parties were engaged in a war and debating the pros and cons, is definitely not congenial to peace and in a way, this runs contrary and adverse to the maintenance of the CFA. If that is to be the criteria, then we cannot help pointing out the armed violence let loose on the Tamil people, human rights violations, disappearances and mass massacres that were perpetrated by the military during the height of war. It is only because of our commitment to the CFA and adherence to the conditions therein, that the military and its intelligence wing are able to carry out these attacks on our unarmed members while they are engaged in political work.

"The government of Sri Lanka has the responsibility to ensure safety of our members engaged in political work in areas controlled by the military as envisaged in the CFA. The SLMM has an obligation to ensure that this goal is achieved. We too have the responsibility to ensure safety of GOSL officials and representatives who visit our territory and this is being carried out with meticulous precision.

"Our members have the need to visit their relatives and friends in military controlled areas and this has been vouchsafed in the CFA. There is also the necessity for our members to participate in discussions and seminars that are held in Kilinochchi. It is relevant to mention here that our members undertook such travel even during the pre-CFA days, making use of our own means of travel with security. Our travel requirements being portrayed by GOSL as preparations for war, is a mischievous myth-making and therefore very much regrettable.

"It is only to fulfil urgent and important missions that we put forward the proposals for travel arrangement in our letter sent on 30 June 2005. These proposals need to be accepted in full in order to ensure safe travel of our members. The time frame set therein was consequent to the long delay incurred during that period of time and the urgency we had in arranging the travel. We totally reject the conditions stipulated by GOSL restricting the number of journeys and the number of persons. We see this as an attempt by GOSL to prevent the travel of our members by subtle means.

"We reiterate therefore that our travel proposals of 30 June 2005, formulated after careful and lengthy discussions, be taken in the right perspective and given effect without any further delay. Please be advised that we will be forced to resort to our means and modes of transport if suitable action is not taken to effectively implement our proposals without further delay. If this becomes a necessity, the military should not interfere with our

travel and security arrangements. If on the other hand, military attempts to prevent or hinder such travel, we would be compelled to react suitably. This, we fear, would push the CFA into a grave and complex situation."

President appeals for restraint and calm

July 14 - Expressing concern and sadness for the violence triggered by the killing of several senior unarmed political cadres of the LTTE in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka's President, Chandrika Kumaratunga appealed for calm and "instructed [authorities] to conduct a complete investigation of the events that have occurred in the Trincomalee area and to take strict action against the perpetrators in accordance with the law."

Full text of the media release follows:

A press release issued by the Director General of the Presidential Media Unit said, "President Kumaratunga is deeply concerned and saddened by the violence and loss of life occurring in and around Trincomalee, precipitated by the assassinations of several senior unarmed political cadres of the LTTE in their Trincomalee office earlier this week.

The President held several meetings since Monday the 11th July, with the security forces commanders at National Security Council meetings regarding the deterioration in the law and order situation in Trincomalee. Several specific measures and systems have been put in place to arrest and remedy the situation and the respective security forces commanders have been instructed to directly oversee the implementation of the same.

Specific measures to ensure strict adherence to the CFA by all parties shall also be implemented. Also the authorities have been instructed to conduct a complete investigation of the events that have occurred in the Trincomalee area and to take strict action against the perpetrators in accordance with the law.

President Kumaratunga firmly believes that conflicts that have caused political violence should be resolved through dialogue and negotiations and not through hostility.

At a time when the Government of Sri Lanka has taken the momentous and historic decision to commence working together with all stake holders in the post-tsunami reconstruction efforts in the North and East, through the P-TOMS (Tsunami Relief Council), it is regrettable but not entirely surprising that opponents of the same would seek through various means including orchestrated violence to disrupt the conflict transformation process, desired by the vast majority of the people of Sri Lanka. The President appeals to all concerned to exercise restraint and contribute towards normalizing the situation."

Security beefed up in Colombo

July 15 - Sri Lanka President's Official residence and adjoining streets have been declared as high security zone. The Deputy Inspector General of Police (IGP) Poojitha Jayasundera who is in-charge of the Colombo's security said that the declaration of the high-security zone areas around the President's official residence had been already gazetted.

Several key Government buildings including the Presidential Secretariat, Central Bank, the Government controlled Associated News Papers of Ceylon Ltd (Lake House), Army, Navy, Air Force, Police Head Quarters and Harbour have also been declared as falling within the HSZ.

The police and the armed forces have been authorised to check vehicles, individuals and to create barricades whenever they

are necessary within the newly announced security zone. Several leading hotels such as Colombo Hilton, Galadari, Taj Samudra, Galle Face hotel and Trance Asia are also covered under the high security zone and special arrangements have been made to ensure the safety and the convenience of the guests who use those hotels, police sources said.

The setting up of high security zone around the President's official residence and the tightening of security in and around Colombo come in the wake of the mounting number of violent incidents between the LTTE and security forces in the east of the country and the increasing agitations and marches against the government by the opposition parties and other organisations.

This is the first time heart of Colombo has been placed on high alert since the Ceasefire Agreement was signed between the LTTE and the Government in 2002 February.

US and Japan not to contribute to P-TOMS Fund

July 8 - Because of legal restrictions, the USA will not be contributing to the Trust Fund associated with P-TOMS, a press release issued by the Embassy of the United States of America in Colombo said on Friday 8 July. However, the US welcomed other donor's participation in the Trust Fund.

A press release issued by the US embassy in Colombo said, "The U.S. supports a mechanism, such as that outlined in the Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure (P-TOMS), to coordinate the equitable and expeditious prioritization, delivery and distribution of assistance to tsunami victims from all communities in the north and east. We believe this mechanism, if properly implemented with the support and participation of all affected communities, can help improve the lives of those affected by the December 26 tragedy. Because of legal restrictions, the U.S. will not be contributing to the Trust Fund associated with the P-TOMS. We welcome other donors' participation in the fund. We have allocated more than \$130 million for tsunami relief and reconstruction in Sri Lanka. Some of these funds are spent on projects administered by NGOs and INGOs that work in all affected areas, including the north, east and south."

Japan too has said it would not provide direct funds to the P-TOMS because it did not see any need for such funds as the government of Japan was supporting Sri Lanka through the Ministry of Finance.

Japanese embassy spokesman Hideaki Matsuo told The Island newspaper, "We want to stick to our method of financing. We have supported and helped many districts in the country be it South, North or East, long before tsunami. So we don't see any problem. As for the P-TOMS it is a thing for the government. We can consider playing a role only if we are asked by the government of Sri Lanka. But, they have not asked us yet."

Matsuo also said the Government cannot divert their funds to the P-TOMS on its own. "If they want to divert funds they must consult the embassy. But, there is no point in re-allocating the money provided to the Ministry of Finance to P-TOMS. We are always concerned about the beneficiaries and the people must benefit." He added that Japan did not provide blank cheques to the government of Sri Lanka and the Japanese funds must be used for the benefit of all Sri Lankans.

When asked if the government of Japan would like to be the bilateral donor representative of the P-TOMS, Matsuo said, "If the government of Sri Lanka requires we wouldn't mind." He said Japan was not against the P-TOMS and they were supportive of it.

Law against financing terrorism passed

July 7 - Sri Lanka's parliament Thursday (7) adopted the Bill to give effect to the Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Financing with a majority of sixty votes. 81 parliamentarians including ruling party, United Peoples Freedom Alliance (UPFA), main opposition United National Party (UNP), National Unity Alliance (NUA), Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) and the four dissidents of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) voted for the bill. 21 parliamentarians including 20 Tamil National Alliance (TNA) MPs and one UNP MP Mr.T.Maheswaran voted against the bill.

Parliamentarians of the SLMC and Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) were not present at that time voting.

Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Mr.Lakshman Kadirgamar tabled in parliament the draft bill on Thursday 7 July. Introducing the bill, Mr.Lakshman Kadirgamar said this draft bill is tabled in parliament according to the International Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Financing of 9th December 1999. The Government of Sri Lanka became a signatory to the convention, which entered into force in respect of Sri Lanka on 10th April 2002. It has become necessary for the GOSL to make legislative provision to give effect to Sri Lanka's obligation, parliamentary sources said.

Tamil National Alliance (TNA) parliamentarian, Mr.Mavai Senathirajah, said armed struggle started due to State sponsored terrorism by the government troops. Bombing schools and public building, killing innocent Tamil people, and forcibly dislocating people from their own houses and lands in the pretext of high security zones forced the LTTE to take up arms to safeguard the Tamil people from these atrocities, he said.

Mr. Senathirajah added that although the government said the bill has been brought against international terrorism, the bill is clearly aimed against the Tamil people in Sri Lanka. No constitution of Sri Lanka will bind the Tamil people when they regain their lost legitimate political rights. Tamils are not prepared to accept Constitutions of Sri Lanka at any stage, Mr. Senathirajah said. Tamil nationalism in Sri Lanka cannot be suppressed. We will tell the international community about the State terrorism in Sri Lanka, he added.

Mr.R.Sampanthan, TNA parliamentary group leader said international terrorism is different and the liberation struggle of the race is different. The government of United States of America speaks of international terrorism because of Bin Laden terrorist activities in their country. What is the urgent need for Sri Lankan government to introduce a bill to give effect to the International Convention on the Suppression of Terrorist Financing in this island, he asked. "LTTE has been fighting for the self determination right of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka. You cannot equate the international terrorism and the Tamil people's liberation struggle. Tamil people in Sri Lanka are subjected to political victimization. Constitutions of Sri Lanka have deprived the legitimate political rights of Tamil people by all means. LTTE has been fighting to ensure the self-determination rights of Tamil people according to the Convention of International Human Rights." said Mr.Sampanthan.

Accused in judge's murder sentenced to death

July 4 - All the five accused in the High Court Judge Sarath Ambepitiya murder case were sentenced to death by the three-member bench High Court comprising Judges Mr.Upali Abeyaratne

(President), W.A.T.Ratnayake and I.M.Abeyaratne. The Chief Justice had constituted a trial-at-bar to hear this high profile murder case.

Mr.Niyaz Nauffer alias Potta Nauffer, an Air Force deserter Nishantha Udayakumara, a manager of a co-operative store Sampath Thushara Abeyawickreme, a welder Sujith Rohan Rupesinghe and an owner of a catering service Sumeda Niroshana had been indicted with conspiracy and committing the murder and the main accused Niyaz Nauffer with abetment to commit the two killings of Judge Ambepitya and his MSD Security Inspector Mr.R.A.Upali Ranasinghe.

The murders took place on November 19 last year at the Judge's official residence in Colombo on his return from the High Court. The High Court Trial-at-Bar inquiry commenced on March 15 2005. Of the 73 prosecution witnesses listed, 41 gave evidence in a twenty-one days.

The High Court delivered its verdict stating that all the charges against the five accused had been proved beyond reasonable doubt. Hence they imposed the mandatory death sentences on all the accused.

Significant post-ceasefire economic growth in N-E

Economic growth in the North and East provinces of Sri Lanka has improved significantly during the post-Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) period, despite the protests of the LTTE and others, according to a comprehensive research study conducted by the Economic Division of the Peace Secretariat, Colombo.

The GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the Northern Province has grown by an average 12.6% during the post-CFA period

compared to 3.4% during the pre-CFA period.

The GDP of the Eastern Province increased by 10.1% per annum during the post-CFA period, compared to 4.6% during the pre-CFA period, said Secretary-General of the Peace Secretariat Jayantha Dhanapala. He was quoting the figures of a research study carried out by Seneka Abeyratne and Ranjith Lakshman of the Peace Secretariat which are yet to be published.

Speaking on the theme of Peace and Development in Sri Lanka at the Sujata Jayawardena Memorial Oration organised by the Colombo University Alumni Association at the BMICH on 15 July, Dhanapala said although the North and East have benefited immensely, much more needs to be done. "While poverty can cause conflict, the conflict has also caused poverty especially in the North-East. At this point of time only a permanent peace can reverse this in a sustainable way," he said adding that "development is ultimately an investment in peace. It builds a firewall against conflict."

The Government is totally committed to the development of the North and East as an integral part of its development strategy for the country along with the admirable work of the Ministry of Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation before and after the tsunami. It is what the people of the North and East want, he reiterated.

Quoting more figures from the research study, Dhanapala said the GDP of the North Central Province which shared common borders with the Northern and Eastern Provinces increased by 8.2% per annum in the post-CFA, compared to -0.2% in the pre-CFA period.

The Northern Province grew twice as fast as the Western Province, recording a 12.6% growth versus 6.2%. While pre-CFA



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annual growth was highest in the Western Province (6%) followed by the Southern Province (5.5%) annual GDP growth in these two provinces during post-CFA remained more or less the same.

According to the research, the Northern, Eastern and Central Provinces were the only three regions to have realised significantly higher GDP growth during the post-CFA period.

These findings are compelling evidence that the transition from war to peace has realised a substantial economic dividend in the three main provinces affected by the conflict, from which the entire country has also benefited, with the entire GDP growth increasing to 5% per annum during the post-CFA period compared to 3.9% pre-CFA period.

The most positive feature of the post-CFA economic experience has been the phenomenal growth of the agricultural sector in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

The agri sector in the North grew to 32% from 4.3% while the East grew to 19% from 4.9%. The industry and services sector also recorded a growth of 11.6% in the North, compared to -2% earlier.

Although there are no comprehensive details on private sector investments in the North-East, banking, retail trade and information communications technology sectors show clear signs of increased activity in the conflict affected areas. For example, Dialog Telekom which was not operating prior to the CFA has invested more than one million US dollars in the North and East since then. Today, of the 1.5 million mobile users in the country, 250,000 (or 17%) are located in the North and East alone.

This figure is significant when the combined population of the North and East is only 13% of the total, Dhanapala said, explaining the economic benefits of following the CFA.

Speaking on future developments, Dhanapala said post-CFA growth rates in the North and East can be sustained and improved with greater impact to the national economy "If we can consolidate the peace process, implement the post-conflict and post-tsunami rehabilitation and reconstruction program and move towards reopening direct negotiations with the LTTE within the framework of the Oslo decisions that the LTTE signed with the Government on December 5, 2002," he said

Jaffna Cancer unit reopened after 15 years

July 17 - The renovated Tellipalai District Hospital in northern Jaffna at a cost of about 90 million rupees and the newly installed Cobalt Cancer Treatment Plant in the Cancer Treatment Unit of the hospital at a cost of 55 million rupees was declared reopened and commissioned by the North East Provincial Governor Mr. Tyronne Fernando on Saturday (16) after a lapse of fifteen years. North East Provincial Ministry of Health organized the opening event.

Mr.S.Rangarajah, Chief Secretary of the North East Provincial Council (NEPC), Major General Sunil Tennekoon, Mr.S.Amirthalingam, Governor's Secretary, Dr. Jeganathan, Consultant in the Ministry of Health for northeast province, Mr.S.Sivathasan and Mr.S.Sivananthan, Consultants of the Ministry of Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Resettlement, Mr.S.Sivasamy, Jaffna Additional Government Agent and Ms Thangamma Appakutty and religious leaders of all faiths participated in the opening event.

The World Bank funded North East Emergency Rehabilitation Project (NEERP), Asian Development Bank (ADB) funded NECORD, USAID, SIRUP, Government of Japan and CAARP

provided funds for the renovation of the Tellipalai DH and the establishment of the Cancer Treatment Unit with new Cobalt Plant, health ministry sources said.

The Tellipalai DH is situated in the high security zone area and the hospital buildings were destroyed in the war. Before the displacement in 1990 the hospital had been functioning with several facilities including laboratory, X-ray unit, specialised psychiatric and gynaecology units and also it served as a referral hospital to Central Dispensaries of Kankesanthurai, Pallai, Alaveddy, Chunnakam, Punnailaikadduwan and Ilavalai.

Meanwhile, a decision was taken at a conference held in Sri Lanka Army Jaffna headquarters in Palaly and attended by the Mr. Tyronne Fernando and Major General Sunil Tennekoon, Jaffna SLA commander, to open a new access road to the Cancer Treatment Unit enabling the patients and employees to have easy access to the hospital.

The Army engineering unit has already commenced work on the construction of the access road and it would be completed shortly, said Dr.P.Ketheeswaran, Deputy Director of Health Services in Jaffna district who was also associated in the discussion held in Palaly army base.

US lends remote-controlled de-mining machine

July 7 - Government of the United States has lent Sri Lankan de-miners a "remotely operated, self-propelled brush-clearing machine," that will "eliminate the risk of horrible injury when teams go out to clear some of the thousands of mines still active in the country," said a US embassy press release issued in Colombo Thursday (7). "Three American trainers from the U.S. Army are in Vavuniya to conduct the training," the release further said.

The press release said, "Sri Lanka's courageous de-mining teams now have a state of the art machine that will eliminate the risk of horrible injury when teams go out to clear some of the thousands of mines still active in the country. Thanks to a loan from the United States, Sri Lanka's de-miners are now being trained to use a remote-controlled mechanical de-mining machine that will clear brush without exposing de-miners to potential explosions. Three American trainers from the U.S. Army are in Vavuniya to conduct the training. Three Sri Lankan Army Officers and twelve soldiers from the 1 and 6 Field Engineer regiments in Jaffna as well as the 5 and 7 Field Engineer regiments in the East are learning to use the MAXX Plus.

"The MAXX Plus is a remotely operated, self-propelled brush-clearing machine. A large brush cutting head at the end of a long mechanical arm removes heavy undergrowth and tripwires, improving the safety and exponentially increasing the productivity of humanitarian de-miners. Once the vegetation has been cleared the land can be scoured by dog teams or manually.

"Returning land to safe and productive use in one of the many benefits of the peace process; the United States is committed to assisting Sri Lanka in the removal of the threat of landmines. Humanitarian de-miners have cleared 22 million square meters since the Cease Fire Agreement."

Lankan victims in London suicide blasts

The funeral of Sajjnuja Parathasangari, a British national of Sri Lankan origin who perished in the terrorist bomb blasts in London on July 7, was held on Saturday, 16 July.

Ms. Parathasangari, a niece of TULF leader V. Anandasangari was travelling in the No 30 bus passing Kings Cross when it was

blown up by a suicide bomber, one hour or so after the rest of the suicide team had already exploded the devices they were carrying on three different underground trains.

Though Ms. Parathasangari had obtained British nationality, Sri Lanka High Commissioner Kshenuka Senewiratne and the deputy high commissioner visited the residence of her parents on Thursday (14) and spent about half an hour there.

Ms. Parathasangari's body was released to the next of kin several days after the incident during which her identity was established and forensic examinations were conducted to ascertain the cause of death.

Another person of Sri Lankan origin, Praveen Wijendran, who was injured in the blast at Liverpool Street was under treatment at St Thomas Hospital in London. Sri Lanka High Commission officials who tried to visit Wijendran in hospital to provide any possible assistance are said to have been told by hospital authorities that they would need to obtain official permission to visit the patient as he was a British citizen.

Another Court case against P-TOMS

July 16 - A petition filed by a tsunami victim claiming that his Fundamental Rights had been violated by the failure to provide equal representation to all ethnic groups in the P-TOMS (Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure) committees will be taken up for hearing in the Supreme Court on 18 July.

Mahmood Lebbe Alim Ahmad, a resident of Kattankuddy in his petition has declared that the tsunami caused substantial damages to lives and property of the Muslims. He said 41 per cent of the deaths caused by the tsunami were of Muslims while 49 per cent of the injured were Muslims.

The petitioner claimed that though the Muslims were entitled to equal rights, certain clauses of the P-TOMS would violate their rights. He has submitted that he has been subject to unequal treatment as far as the composition of the Regional Committee was concerned and that there was no rational basis on which the composition of the Regional Committee had been made as the LTTE representatives have been given dominance in the Chairmanship of the Committee.

The petitioner states that a plain reading of the composition procedure and the decision-making procedure reveal that the LTTE has been given total dominance in the Regional Committee so that the LTTE could decide by itself and implement the development strategies, prioritization of relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development and more particularly Fund Management in the six relevant districts, including the Batticaloa, Ampara and Trincomalee districts, where the majority affected are Muslims.

He states that the composition and decision-making mechanisms and the location of the Regional Committee have been manoeuvred and designed in a manner to discourage or abandon Muslim representation in the Regional Committee allowing the LTTE to have a free hand and unfettered discretion in the management and control of the affairs and funds of the Regional Committee.

One out of 10 children sexually abused

July 17 - One out of every 10 children interviewed by UNICEF said that they were subjected to sexual abuse. According to the National Survey on Emerging Issues Among Adolescents In Sri Lanka, most of the children who were victims in early adolescence were boys (14%) while the statistics were the same with both genders in mid or late adolescence (10%).

According to the report, most of the adolescents were aware of sexually transmitted diseases, where 55.1% were males and 58.6% were females. The research was also done on the basis of ethnicity and it was found that awareness was fairly low within the Tamils (50.9%) when compared to Sinhalese (58.3%). The most commonly known disease was HIV/AIDS. However the knowledge regarding other sexual related diseases such as gonorrhoea and syphilis was slightly lower.

The report also stated that more than one fifth (around 21%-24%), of the adolescents knew how to adopt preventive measures against STDs. However, the knowledge of the symptoms pertaining to the STDs was on the lower side (less than 20%).

According to Assistant Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Louise Chamberlain, Sri Lanka has to respond to many risk factors in the country to meet with the UN's global target, to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015. Recent reports have identified several risk groups in Sri Lanka where the threat of HIV spread was high. These include migrant workers, internally displaced populations including tsunami refugees, the armed forces and sexually active youth.

According to the Millennium Development Goals Report (MDGR), 190 out of 649 HIV patients have died as of March this year. It also stated that, women employed in the Free Trade Zones, military personnel who are away from their families and workers in the plantation and fishing sectors are vulnerable to these diseases. It also indicated that the effects of the tsunami such as lack of privacy especially in camps and destruction of the community structures also make way for the transmission of infections such as HIV. □

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Govt and LTTE sign tsunami joint mechanism

The Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) concluded the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure (P-TOMS) on 24 June. Mr. Mudiyansele Sumanaweera Jayasinghe, Secretary of Ministry of Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation, signed the document on behalf of the Government. Mr. Shanmugalingam Ranjan, Deputy Head of Planning and Development Secretariat (PDS) signed the MoU on behalf of the LTTE.

Reportedly, the parties signed three copies of the document. One copy retained by the LTTE in Kilinochchi, one by the Government of Sri Lanka in Colombo and a third copy to be deposited in Oslo with the Norwegian facilitators who played a crucial role in the concluding of the deal.

The preamble of the pact states that the MoU is between the two parties, the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Muslim community's interests are safeguarded by its representation in the three tiered operational management structure of the P-TOMS.

According to political observers the legal status of P-TOMS is similar to that of the Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) of February 2002. Both agreements were signed without recourse to any special legislation being enacted. Article 7(b) of the MoU lists the creation of a "Regional Fund", the custodian of which will be a multilateral agency appointed by both parties, the GoSL and the LTTE. According to article 7(d), "The Parties and the Custodian shall agree on a mechanism for the establishment and operation of the Regional Fund."

Tight security: Security was tightened in Colombo as the city remained tensed amidst the anticipated signing of the tsunami deal. The security forces on the one km main road from Battaramulla junction to the parliamentary complex set up two checkpoints- one at Battaramulla junction and the second at Jayanthipura junction, which is about five hundred meters away from

the parliamentary complex..

Sri Lanka Navy patrol crafts are also seen deployed in the Diyawanna Oya surrounding the parliamentary complex, sources said. The security of the city of Colombo was been strengthened to quell any civil unrest, Mr. Chandra Fernando, Inspector General of Police told media persons Friday (24) morning.

After an unscheduled visit to Kilinochchi by members of the Norwegian delegation to meet LTTE leaders in Kilinochchi on Thursday (23), the Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister Mr Helegesen met with the Leader of the Opposition, Ranil Wickremesinghe and Prime Minister Mr Mahinda Rajapakshe in Colombo the same afternoon.

Mr Helegesen earlier met Mrs. Ferial Ashraff, parliamentarian and the leader of the National Unity Alliance, and had assured that Muslims would not be sidelined in the post-tsunami reconstruction process.

JM tabled in Parliament: As the President had previously promised, the joint mechanism proposal was formally tabled in Sri Lanka's Parliament at 9.45am on 24 June. Copies of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the Establishment of a Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure (P-TOMS) were distributed to all parliamentarians in three languages.

As Minister Mr Maithiripala Sirisena, Leader of the House, began to read the Joint Mechanism proposal, parliamentarians belonging to the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), including its propaganda Secretary Wimal Weerawansa, started shouting disrupting the parliamentary session in progress forcing the Speaker to suspend the session for ten minutes.

On resumption, pandemonium continued to reign in the House following further disruption by JVP MPs forcing the Speaker to adjourn the sessions for the day.

Meanwhile, outside the Parliament, at Battaramulla Junction, Police used

teargas and dispersed nearly two thousand people holding a demonstration at the junction in front of the security check point on the road which leads to the parliamentary complex.

Norway welcomes aid deal: June 24 - Congratulating the Government and the LTTE for officially reaching agreement on the joint management structure for the effective and equitable reconstruction and development of the tsunami-affected areas in the North and East, Norwegian Foreign Minister, Mr Jan Petersen, on Friday (24), urged the parties to rapidly establish the joint structure for the benefit of all affected by the tsunami, and to make judicious use of this opportunity to build mutual confidence to advance the peace process through their cooperation on reconstruction. Working closely with Muslims will key for effective implementation of the joint mechanism, Petersen said in his message.

The message issued by the Norwegian Foreign Minister from Oslo said, "Today the parties in the peace process have entered into an agreement of great importance, says Foreign Minister of Norway Jan Petersen, commenting on the establishment by the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of a joint management structure for the effective and equitable reconstruction and development of the tsunami-affected areas in the north and east of Sri Lanka. This is the first time in over two decades of armed conflict that the parties have agreed to cooperate in a political administrative structure that comprises the national, regional and district levels.

"It is of major political significance that the parties after nearly a half-year of efforts have signed the agreement on the joint management structure. I congratulate the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam with today's signing, says Petersen.

"The Muslim population, which has been severely affected by both the conflict and the tsunami, will be represented in the joint management structure.

"The participation of Muslims will be essential for effective reconstruction after the tsunami and for efforts to achieve a lasting solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka, says Petersen.

"It is important now that the parties rapidly establish the joint structure for the benefit of all persons affected by the tsunami, and that they make the most of this opportunity to build mutual confidence in the continued peace process through their cooperation on reconstruction. In their endeavor, the parties need the active support of the international community, both in terms of economic and political backing, the Foreign Minister emphasizes.

"It also remains critical that both parties strictly uphold the Ceasefire Agreement and that all Sri Lankans promote a peaceful environment for reconstruction.

"The Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE have worked to agree upon the joint structure since early January. The negotiations have been facilitated by the Embassy of Norway in Colombo. Visiting Sri Lanka this past week, State Secretary Vidar Helgesen has participated in the discussions with the President of Sri Lanka and her government and with the leadership of the LTTE."

Appeal by President: June 24 - Sri Lanka's President Ms Chandrika Kumaratunga appealed to all parties to "put aside divisive and confrontational politics and work as a team to alleviate the sufferings of those affected by the tsunami," in a press release issued Friday (24) from President's House in Colombo.

Full text of the press release follows: "President Chandrika Kumaratunga says the Tsunami Relief Council or the Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure (P-TOMS) which was signed today is a simple administrative arrangement to provide humanitarian relief to those affected by the tsunami. She spent extensive hours explaining the principles underpinning the TRC to all stakeholders, politicians, religious leaders and leaders of civil society in the past few weeks.

However the President said she was saddened by opposition to this administrative arrangement which went beyond democratic dissent.

Even though there was no need for it, the P-TOMS or the TRC was today tabled in Parliament to fall in line with the norms of democratic debate. However, Parliament had to be adjourned without debate because of the persistent disturbances in the House

designed to stymie progress on the TRC.

The President said it was not possible to postpone the finalizing of this arrangement without bringing into disrepute the credibility of the government. She appeals to all concerned to put aside divisive and confrontational politics and work as a team to alleviate the sufferings of those affected by the tsunami.

The President reiterated that all responsible leaders should take advantage of this window of opportunity to recommence the stalled peace process. She was confident Sri Lanka will soon achieve a negotiated durable peace which will ensure the rights of all communities in this country.

Annan welcomes: June 24 - Welcoming the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, said through his spokesperson that he "hopes the agreement will help place Sri Lanka on the road to full recovery from this unparalleled tragedy," and that "he believes that this is an important day for the many tsunami-affected families and communities in the country."

A statement from Mr. Annan's office said, "The Secretary-General is pleased that today, the Sri Lanka Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish the Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure, a joint tsunami aid sharing mechanism that will allow for the distribution of relief funds to all affected areas in Sri Lanka.

"He believes that this is an important day for the many tsunami-affected families and communities in the country. He would like to express his appreciation for the leadership shown by President Kumaratunga in achieving this result, and the joint commitment of the parties to the rebuilding of the devastated areas. They have done the right thing in placing people's needs first.

"He welcomes the inclusion of the Muslim minority in the committees that will administer the funds. The Secretary-general hopes the agreement will help place Sri Lanka on the road to full recovery from this unparalleled tragedy."

EU pledges to support Trust Fund: June 25 - Welcoming the aid deal between the Government and the LTTE, the European Union (EU) confirmed its readiness to assist the parties in setting up the post-tsunami joint administrative structure and to make it work. The EU also reiterated its pledge to commit substantial contribution to the Trust Fund set up for financing projects selected for implementation by the three tiered administrative committee.

The Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union said, "The European Union welcomes the agreement on a Post-Tsunami Operations Management Structure (P-TOMS) which has just been signed and congratulates the President of Sri Lanka, her government and the LTTE for the very positive and constructive step. This structure will greatly facilitate post-tsunami reconstruction in the North and East of Sri Lanka. The European Union is particularly pleased that it will involve all stakeholders, in particular the Muslim community. Co-operation in the framework of P-TOMS will also help to build confidence between parties to the Sri Lankan peace process.

"The European Union urges all parties to ensure that the P-TOMS becomes operational as soon as possible, so that the urgent needs of all the tsunami victims can be addressed without further delay.

"The European Union confirms its readiness to assist all the parties in setting up the structure and making it work. The European Union reiterates its pledge to commit substantial funds to the Trust Fund whose objective is to finance projects decided by the P-TOMS, once the structure has been established."

US welcomes Joint Mechanism

June 27 - Welcoming the signing of the agreement to create a joint mechanism on tsunami reconstruction, the United States said that the mechanism, if implemented properly, would help to ensure efficient and equitable reconstruction assistance to those whose lives were devastated by the South Asia tsunami in the North and East of Sri Lanka.

The statement issued in Washington on June 24, 2005 by the United States Department of State Spokesman Sean McCormack said, "The United

States welcomes the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam decision to sign an agreement to create a joint mechanism on tsunami reconstruction. If implemented properly, this mechanism will help to ensure efficient and equitable reconstruction assistance to those whose lives were devastated by the South Asia tsunami in the North and East of Sri Lanka. We hope the experience the two sides will gain by working together will help to build confidence and lead to progress in the broader peace process. It is even more important now that the two parties take all possible steps to see that the ceasefire is observed and strengthened."

JVP demonstrators tear-gassed: June 24 - Sri Lankan riot police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at the supporters of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) when demonstrators started throwing stones at the Police who tried to block the procession. JVP supporters were holding the protest demonstration to condemn the government for signing the P-TOMS agreement with the LTTE. The demonstration was held at the Clock Tower junction close to the Trincomalee main bus terminal, in front of the newly erected controversial Buddha statue stands, according to local sources. The vicinity of the bus stand along the Dockyard Road became a mini-battle ground around noon. The demonstrators withdrew to their earlier position at the Clock Tower junction, when the police started firing teargas canisters, police said.

Muslim protest against P-TOMS

June 26 - Mr M S M Hisbullah, Senior Deputy Leader of the National Unity Alliance (NUA), led by Ms Ferial Ashraff and a close ally of the United Peoples Freedom Alliance (UPFA) Government resigned Sunday (26) from the post of Chairman of the Civil Aviation Services Board in protest against the Government signing the P-TOMS with the LTTE.

Mr Hisbullah did not specify the reason in his resignation letter. However, at a press briefing held in his hometown Kattankudi in the Batticaloa district, Mr. Hisbullah stated that the Muslims have not been provided proper representation in the P-TOMS.

Muslim people cannot fully accept the P-TOMS. NUA leadership should

review its position in continuing to be part of UPFA under these circumstances. If not, "I will relinquish NUA's Deputy Leadership post," Mr. Hisbullah said.

Reports from Colombo confirmed that Mr Rauff Hakeem, leader of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), has approached NUA officials seeking to use the P-TOMS as a cause to leave the NUA and join SLMC to strengthen the position of the Muslim community.

It is said that Ms Ferial Ashraff, UPFA Minister, who is the leader of the NUA founded by her late husband Mr. A.H.M. Ashraff., has come under heavy pressure to resign from the Government and from the ruling coalition in protest against the P-TOMS which has sidelined the Muslim community.

Mr. Hisbullah, who lost in the 2004 April general election in the Batticaloa electoral district, was earlier a Deputy Minister in the previous Peoples Alliance (PA) government. Later, in the UPFA Government, Mr Hisbullah was appointed Chairman of the Civil Aviation Board, which comes under the Minister of Ports and Civil Aviation Mr. Mangala Samaraweera.

Mr. Segu Issadeen, NUA General Secretary is reported have said that they were disappointed that the interests of their community had not been taken into account when finalizing the agreement on the P-TOMS.

Muslims betrayed, says SLMC

June 24 - SLMC leader Rauff Hakeem accused Muslim government members of betraying the community by failing to ensure that Muslims had a signatory role in the Post Tsunami Operational Management Structure (P-TOMS), and relegating their status to that of mere bystanders. "This is a betrayal. I am appalled at the Muslim Ministers who despite my calls to unite have cooperated in this betrayal of the community's interests" he told journalists at a media briefing.

He said Muslim government members had done little to fulfil their mandate to agitate for an equal status for Muslims in future peace talks aimed at arriving at a final solution to the ethnic problem. "Our disunity should not be the convenient excuse for the Norwegian facilitators, the government and the LTTE to continuously ignore our legitimate demands," he said.

Mr. Hakeem charged that the Mus-

lim community was referred to as "group" in the P-TOMS, and that tantamounted to the relegation of their status as a nationality. While not opposing the P-TOMS or the LTTE being party to it, Mr. Hakeem said the Muslims should have been given a dominant role in the agreement since they were the worst affected community.

Hakeem said since the P-TOMS was an agreement between the government and LTTE, it went against the Tokyo Declaration in which Muslims were assured the right to separate representation.

A divisive mechanism

Eminent lawyer and Sri Lanka's former High Commissioner in London, Faiz Mustapha wanted to know who drafted the divisive P-TOMS agreement signed between the Government and the LTTE. Mustapha, who is supporting the petition filed against the P-TOMS, by the Democratic Unity Alliance and other Muslim Organisations said, "What the government did is very unfortunate. It is a divisive mechanism. They haven't had adequate consultations with the stake holders. Muslims were affected badly by the tsunami. People were coming together after the tsunami and it is not too late to come together."

He lamented that the country had missed a great opportunity to work in unity because the agreement was not broadened to cover everyone. He also said the President must understand that they were not going against her but fighting for a principle. The senior lawyer pointed out that Muslims were keen to have a dialogue with the Government and the LTTE to take into account their concerns and adequate Muslim representations.

To the slaughterhouse

Secretary-General and Leader of the Muslim National Alliance, Hafiz Nazeer Ahmed said the P-TOMS was an extension of the MOU signed between the then UNP government and the LTTE further compounding the pathetic plight of the Muslims. If the P-TOMS was a genuine attempt to help those affected by the tsunami, he could see no reason why the Muslims were not given equal status in the agreement since they were the worst affected by the tsunami. Ahmed was speaking at

(continued on next page)

Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") for the Establishment of a Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure ("P-TOMS")

Preamble

WHEREAS the tsunami that struck Sri Lanka on December 26, 2004 (the "tsunami") destroyed human lives and property on an unprecedented scale;

WHEREAS there is an urgent need for all communities, Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim and others, to cooperate on humanitarian grounds in the face of this common adversity;

WHEREAS the equitable allocation of post-tsunami funds to all parts of Sri Lanka struck by the tsunami will be based on accepted needs assessments;

WHEREAS in recognition of this urgent humanitarian need and in a spirit of partnership, the Government of Sri Lanka (the "GOSL") and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (the "LTTE") (the "Parties") have resolved to work together, in good faith and using their best efforts, to deliver expeditious relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development to the coastal communities in the six districts of Ampara, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu and Trincomalee ("the Six Districts") and to facilitate and expedite the process of rebuilding the affected areas;

WHEREAS there is a need for establishing P-TOMS to facilitate such cooperation among communities, and between the Parties;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing the Parties have entered into this MOU and agreed as follows:

1. Structure

a. An integrated operational management structure shall be established for the purpose of planning, implementing and coordinating post-tsunami work. Such structure shall consist of:

- i. The Post-Tsunami Coastal Reconstruction Committee (the "High-Level Committee");
 - ii. The Post-Tsunami Coastal Reconstruction Committee for the Six Districts (the "Regional Committee"); and
 - iii. Post-Tsunami Coastal Reconstruction Committees for each of the Ampara, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, and Trincomalee districts (the "District Committees").
- b. The High-Level Committee, the Regional Committee and the

District Committees shall discharge of their functions in such a manner as to address the concerns of all persons in the Tsunami Disaster Zone (the "TDZ", as defined below) and shall do so without discrimination against any person on grounds such as ethnic origin, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, birth or other status.

2. Scope

a. The scope of the High-Level Committee, the Regional Committee, and the District Committees shall be limited to performing the functions defined in Sections 5(b), 6(b), and 8(b), respectively, and having effect exclusively within the TDZ (as defined below), as further specified by Section 6(a) in the case of the Regional Committee and by Section 8(a) in the case of the District Committees.

b. The Tsunami Disaster Zone (the "TDZ") shall be defined as the area affected by the tsunami.

c. The TDZ shall include all that tsunami-affected land area of Sri Lanka, which is adjacent to the sea, lying within a limit of 2 kilometres landwards from the mean low water line.

d. The High-Level Committee may decide to bring additional land areas within the TDZ; provided, however, that all such land areas must have been directly impacted by the tsunami or directly affected by the displacement and resettlement of persons as a result of the tsunami.

e. New proposals for measures to be adopted in, or affecting the coastal areas covered by seawater, shall be undertaken under the aegis of an international agency. Such proposals might include measures to recover material lost to the sea during the tsunami, the cleaning up of shores and beaches affected, even when covered by seawater, and the repairing and construction of jetties or commercial fisheries harbours affected by the tsunami.

f. The Ceasefire Agreement, dated as of 23 February 2002, between the GOSL and the LTTE, shall continue in full force and effect, and nothing in this MOU shall be construed to prejudice such agreement or alter its terms in any way.

3. Period of Operation

a. This MOU shall enter into force from the date it is executed

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the opening of the Democratic Unity Alliance (DUA) branch office in Eravur in eastern Sri Lanka.

He said that the Muslims were a different community as was amply demonstrated by the LTTE when they mercilessly slaughtered innocent Muslims in mosques and villages. Kilinochchi was in an un-cleared area and he couldn't understand why the International Community that has proscribed the LTTE in their respective countries should require the Muslims to seek redress from an organisation

which they have condemned as 'terrorist'. It was akin to sending sheep to the slaughter house.

The CFA agreement between the UNF government and the LTTE confirmed the betrayal of the Muslim community. "The Muslims were paying a heavy price for placing their trust in the main political parties," Ahmed explained. He added that SLMC leader Rauf Hakeem in the UNF government failed to get the just rights of the Muslims because he was more concerned about the perks of office than the political rights of the Muslims. "He should have resigned and carried on M. H. M.

Ashraf's struggle, he claimed he took upon for himself for the emancipation of the Muslims, if he was honest to the cause," he said. "Instead he went on fooling the community and his dereliction of duty has led to the P-TOMS agreement which in turn has set the stage for the ultimately betrayal that would manifest itself in the near future when the sovereign government of Sri Lanka will have to give in to the dictates of the so called International Community." He said that not only the Muslim leaders but even the Sinhala leaders must be held accountable for this sell-out. □

by both Parties (the "Commencement Date"), and continue in operation for a period of one year from the Commencement Date.

b. The Parties shall by consensus have the option to extend this MOU for an additional period or periods.

4. Cost and Expenses

The donors shall be requested to cover all costs and expenses incurred relating to the establishment and functioning of the P-TOMS.

5. High-Level Committee

a. **Geographic Scope:** The High-Level Committee shall act exclusively in relation to the TDZ

b. **Functions:** The High-Level Committee shall perform the following functions:

i. Formulation of policies for the equitable allocation and disbursement of donor funds in the TDZ based on needs assessments submitted to the High-Level Committee, guided by the principle that funds should be allocated in proportion to the number of affected persons and the extent of damage;

ii. Provision of advisory services; and

iii. Monitoring of the functioning of P-TOMS.

c. **Composition:** The High-Level Committee shall consist of the following members

i. 1 nominee by GOSL;

ii. 1 nominee by LTTE; and

iii. 1 nominee by Muslim parties.

d. **Alternates:** Each nominating party shall designate one alternate, who will be authorized to attend meetings and act on behalf of the member only in the event he or she is unable to attend due to illness, necessary travel or other exigent circumstances.

e. **Chairperson:** The High-Level Committee shall select one of the members of the High-Level Committee to serve as the chairperson to conduct and coordinate its meetings. The role of the chair shall rotate among the members, with each chairperson serving for two months.

f. **Observers:** The High-Level Committee shall have one observer representing multilateral donors and one observer representing bilateral donors attend its meetings. The observers shall be nominated by the multilateral donor community and the bilateral donor community, respectively.

g. Decision Making:

i. The High-Level Committee shall strive to make decisions based on consensus. All members shall work together in good faith and use their best efforts to reach a common agreement before the High-Level Committee makes any decisions.

ii. In the event that consensus cannot be reached, the members shall immediately enter into an extensive consultation procedure with their nominating parties and the donor community with the aim to reach an agreement and to ensure continued cooperation in the High-Level Committee.

iii. In the event that consensus can still not be reached the nominating parties may, after having followed the consultation procedure laid down in Section 5(g, i and ii) and after having given 14 days notice, suspend the cooperation in the High-Level Committee.

h. **Location:** The High-Level Committee shall be located in Colombo.

i. **Procedures:** The High-Level Committee shall determine its own procedures for the discharge of its functions.

j. **Servicing Secretariat:** The High-Level Committee shall establish a small, independent secretariat with adequate staff.

6. Regional Committee

a. **Geographic Scope:** The Regional Committee shall act exclusively within those areas of the TDZ in the Six Districts.

b. **Functions:** The Regional Committee shall perform the following functions:

i. Development of strategies for implementation and prioritization of post-tsunami emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development measures;

ii. Project approval and management, with respect to projects for post-tsunami relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development;

iii. Overall monitoring of projects; and

iv. Fund management, with respect to the fund specifically defined in Section 7.

c. **Composition:** The Regional Committee shall consist of the following members:

i. 2 members nominated by GOSL, out of which one will serve as Deputy Chairperson.

ii. 5 members nominated by LTTE, out of which one will serve as Chairperson;

iii. 3 members nominated by the Muslim parties, out of which one will serve as Deputy Chairperson;

iv. The Regional Committee shall have a proper gender balance.

d. **Observers:** The Regional Committee shall have one observer representing multilateral donors and one observer representing bilateral donors attend its meetings. The observers shall be nominated by the multilateral donor community and the bilateral donor community, respectively. Other observers may be invited to attend the meetings of the Regional Committee.

e. Decision Making:

i. The Regional Committee shall strive to make decisions based on consensus. All members shall work together in good faith and use their best efforts to reach a common agreement before the Regional Committee makes any decisions.

ii. In the event that consensus cannot be reached, decisions shall be made by a simple majority of the Regional Committee. In the event of equality of votes, the Chairperson can exercise a casting vote.

iii. Notwithstanding paragraph iv below, in the event that a decision is taken on an issue having an adverse effect on a minority group, acknowledged by at least two members of the Regional Committee, approval will require two thirds majority (seven members) of the Regional Committee.

iv. In the event that a proposal from a District Committee does not get a simple majority in the Regional Committee and at least two members of the Regional Committee request redressing of the decision relating to the proposal, the rejection will require two thirds majority (seven members) of the Regional Committee.

f. **Location:** The Regional Committee shall be located in Kilinochchi.

g. **Procedures:** The Regional Committee, in consultation with the High-Level Committee, shall determine the procedures for the discharge of its functions.

h. **Servicing Secretariat:** A small Secretariat for the Six Districts shall be set up and may draw staff from the Secretariat for Immediate Humanitarian and Rehabilitation Needs (SIHRN). The Secretariat shall be named as the Regional Secretariat for Post-tsunami Coastal Reconstruction and Development (RSPCRD), and shall provide secretarial and administrative services to the Regional Committee.

i. **Project Management Unit.** A Project Management Unit (the "PMU") shall be established to manage the projects approved by the Regional Committee.

j. **Accounting.** The Regional Committee shall appoint a suitably qualified, independent accountant.

7. Regional Fund

a. There shall be a Post-Tsunami Coastal Fund for the Six Dis-

(continued on next page)

Modern politics played out to ancient war drums

Ajith Samaranayake

The term 'tsunami' has become such a catch phrase today that it fails any more to evoke the enormous human tragedy that Boxing Day last year produced. In the hands of the editorialist and the sub editor writing his headlines it has become a synonym for calamity.

So perhaps it was no surprise that the Government's move to set up a structure to alleviate the sufferings of the tsunami-stricken should have produced what these cliché-merchants would no doubt characterise as a political tsunami leading to the wrecking of the UNFPA Government installed barely a year ago.

It was Karl Marx who said that history repeats itself first as tragedy then as farce. In Sri Lanka, however, it seems to repeat itself purely as farce in varying stages of burlesque.

True to form therefore the Government's move to establish the somewhat comically-named P-TOMS was attended by two bravura performances by bhikkhus threatening fasts unto death, attempts by young braves in robes to storm the barricades, incendiary charades by others and other such side shows.

Now that the dust has settled down and the uncharacteristically robust-looking fasting monks have left hospital what is left is a tear gas-shrouded landscape where strange new political configurations are assuming dim shape.

Now that the JVP has left the Gov-

ernment and its four young Ministers have made an unprecedented political sacrifice we can see the principal players somewhat self-consciously assuming their new roles.

They seem to have mastered their new lines, however, with great alacrity. Those who were hailed as the architects of the alliance are busily distancing themselves from their erstwhile allies. Comrade Somawansa Amarasinghe, the eminence grise of the JVP, goes about making bombastic speeches.

The old red comrades of the LSSP and the CP now anointed with cabinet office have taken to the streets (Minister Tissa Vitharana even exchanging his sober tunic suit for a red shirt) demanding the P-TOMS. The firebrand twins of the New Left, Vasu and Bahu, are also all for it. So is the TNA which staged a vociferous demonstration in Colombo Fort in the company of Opposition MP. P. Chandrasekera, the bete noire of Mr. Thondaman on the plantations.

What this ingathering of strange bed fellows signifies is the isolation of the JVP and the JHU on the other side of the political divide. What is more knives are out in their contest for the extremist Sinhala Buddhist soul.

The JHU ran away with the JVP's clothes by being the first to stage a fast in the shadow of the hallowed Dalada Maligawa while the JVP's Bhikkhu Front

had to be content with the hum-drum portals of the Fort railway station.

But apart from their extremist Sinhala posturings the two have little in common. One cannot visualise the JHU embracing socialism just as it is unlikely that a future JVP Government will give Buddhism the foremost place in the Constitution. What unites them therefore is a visceral antipathy towards the LTTE and a deep suspicion of the intentions of the Tamil political movement as a whole.

This in turn stems from the deeply-embedded phobia in the Sinhala psyche about the Tamils, the traditional Other against which they define themselves. Sri Lanka is the home of the Sinhala Buddhists chosen for the role of the custodians of Buddhism by the Buddha no less on his death bed.

It was on the same day as the Buddha's 'parinibbana' that Prince Vijaya, the founder of the Sinhala race, set forth on his armada. Since then Buddhism and the Sinhala race have been inseparable just as Buddhism and the Sinhala State have been synonymous. It was the role of the Maha Sangha to advise and guide the Buddhist kings and individual monks such as Theraputtabhaya even shed their robes to join the Army when the Sinhala race and Buddhism were in peril.

That peril, of course, came from the Tamil invader, the power-hungry Chola kings who made periodic forays into Sri Lanka and even conquered its principal kingdom at times such as Elara whom the legendary Dutugemunu defeated in single combat.

Another great hero was King Gajaba who one night going in disguise about his kingdom as it was his wont to find out at first hand the grievances of his subjects heard the wails of a mother who had lost her son who had been taken hostage with

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tracts (the "Regional Fund"), consisting of unspecified (program) and secretariat funds. The unspecified (program) funds shall consist exclusively of foreign funds while the secretariat funds shall consist of both foreign and local funds.

b. The Parties shall appoint a suitable multi-lateral agency to be the Custodian of the Regional Fund.

c. The purpose of the Regional Fund shall be to expeditiously make available funds, following proper approved procedures, to facilitate and accelerate the relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development program in the tsunami-affected areas of the Six Districts.

d. The Parties and the Custodian shall agree on a mechanism for the establishment and operation of the Regional Fund.

8. District Committees

a. **Geographic Scope:** Each District Committee shall act exclusively in relation to those areas of the TDZ within its district.

b. **Functions:** Each District Committee shall perform the following functions within its district:

i. Identification of needs;

ii. Prioritization of needs;

iii. To generate, receive, appraise and prioritize project proposals from various stakeholders and submit recommendations to the Regional Committee; and

iv. To monitor and report on project progress to the Regional Committee.

c. **Composition and Decision Making:** The District Committees, already established and well-functioning, shall continue their work. The District Committees may further discuss and decide on issues relating to their composition and decision-making. Adequate Muslim representation shall be ensured. The District Committee shall also have a proper gender balance.

d. **Location:** Each District Committee shall be located within its district.

e. **Servicing Secretariat:** A small Servicing Secretariat shall provide secretarial and administrative services to the District Committees.

9. Execution

This MOU may be executed in duplicate, both texts being equally authentic.

others by an invading Tamil king.

This inspired King Gajaba to cross the Palk Straits (legend has it that his giant, Neela, had parted the waves with one mighty thrust of his sword) and successfully wage war and bring back double the number of hostages from South India.

These legends and heroic tales have coloured the outlook of the radical JVP no less than that of the conservative JHU. We do not know how much of this shapes the outlook of a new generation of children and young adults in this electronic age of mass 'masala' culture but when we were young these mythic tales of heroism were very much in vogue in supplementary reading materials and the 'daham pasal' discourse.

In a country therefore as much shaped by legend and folk history as modern political science and sociology it is no wonder that present day politics should be played out to the quaint music of ancient drums as shadowy ancestral armies take on imaginary foes and invaders in heroic battle.

So we have the JHU and the JVP marching separately but striking together. They are the legitimate descendants in their own eyes of the forces of Dutugemunu battling Elara or the armies of King Gajaba triumphantly invading a South Indian kingdom.

So Comrades Somawansa and Weerawansa don Dutugemunu's regal regalia (republicans though they might be) while Ven. Athuraliye Ratana, the hero of the Kanda Uda Rata Aid Meeting, nurses fond illusions of being Theraputtabhaya, the warrior monk. Cast in the role of villain, of course, is Mr. Velupillai Prabhakaran, the modern avatar of Elara but since Mr. Prabhakaran is not close at hand they vent their purely verbal fury on anybody whom they see as advocating the Tamil cause among the Sinhalese, the Government, Left political parties, NGOs, influential figures of civil society.

The battle, of course, is not fought in the wilds of the Wannu but the streets of Colombo with the President's House as the chosen target for storming by the patriotic troops.

What all this demonstrates is the need to separate history from myth, fact from legend before we embark on any task of restructuring the State and polity in keeping with the demands of the new century.

New forms of State or new political structures can hardly be expected to co-exist with ancient phobias or primordial myths. On the same token arrangements of power-sharing or guarantees by the

The case of the P-TOMS: The Judgement

The following are excerpts from the judgement of the Supreme Court, comprising the Chief Justice Sarath N Silva, and Judges Raja Fernando and R. A. N. G. Amaratunga, delivered on 15 July in respect of fundamental rights petitions filed by JVP parliamentarians in regard to the Memorandum of Understanding on Post-Tsunami Operations Management Structure (P-TOMS) signed by the Government and the LTTE on 24 June 2005:

The alleged infringement of fundamental rights relate to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the establishment of a Tsunami Operation Management Structure (P-TOMS), which has been agreed and accepted on 24.6.2005 by the 3rd Respondent, the Secretary, Ministry of Relief Rehabilitation and Reconstruction for and on behalf of the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (GOSL) and the

4th Respondent for and on behalf of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The preamble to the MOU refers to the tsunami that struck Sri Lanka on 26.12.2004, which destroyed human life and property on an unprecedented scale. It recites the need for all communities to cooperate on humanitarian grounds to ensure an equitable allocation of "post-tsunami funds" to all affected areas. It is further stated that in recognition of the urgent need and in a spirit of partnership the GOSL and LTTE have resolved to work together in good faith and use their best efforts to deliver relief to the coastal communities in the six Districts viz: Ampara, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu and Trincomalee.

The MOU provides for a management structure at three levels, of a:

- i) High Level Committee;
- ii) Regional Committee and;
- iii) District Committees

These Committees have to address the concerns of the persons in the Tsunami Disaster Zone (TDZ) defined as an extent upto 2 kilometres landwards from the mean low water line of the Tsunami affected area within Sri Lanka.

The purview of the High Level Committee appears to extend to the entirety of the TDZ and clause 2(d) of the MOU empowers the Committee to bring within the TDZ additional land area affected, provided that such areas have been directly impacted by the tsunami or directly affected by the displacement and resettlement of persons as a result of the tsunami. This Committee comprises of three members

1. One nominee of GOSL
11. One nominee of the LTTE
- iii. One nominee of the Muslim parties

international community can hardly be a bulwark against old fears and deeply-embedded myths of nationhood sanctified by religion.

This does not mean that the Sinhalese and the Buddhists who form the bulk of society should turn their backs on their heritage and their roots for this would only make for a deracinated people, a set of mimic men.

What it means is that they should recast themselves in terms of the best of modern society. For one thing it means discarding the incantation of Sinhala Buddhism. Buddhism being a religion is essentially an individual factor and should cease to be part of politics and the state.

Likewise being Sinhalese is a matter of collective identity, of values and mores and ways of life which have little to do with religion as demonstrated by those Sinhalese Catholics of Negombo, belonging to an earlier generation who were fierce nationalists or Marxists or adherents of Munidasa Kumaratunga.

If at all Sinhalese and Buddhism is to be combined that should derive from the broad humanism of the compassionate Buddhist faith rather than the tribal war cries spawned by mythic history.

The Sinhalese can be a greater rather than a lesser people even at this eleventh hour by shedding this parochial past and recasting themselves as a modern people yet rooted in the best in tradition for the alternative will be a long wallowing in self-created misery. □

Decisions of the Committee have to be based on consensus. According to clause 5(b) the main function of the Committee is to formulate ... policies for the equitable allocation and disbursement of donor funds in the TDZ, based on needs assessments that are submitted to the Committee and guided by the principle that funds should be allocated in proportion to the number of affected persons and the extent of damage.

At the next level is the Regional Committee (Clause 6 of the MOU). The geographic scope of this Committee is the area of the TDZ in the six Districts mentioned above. The functions of the Regional Committee include the development of strategies for the implementation and prioritization of post-tsunami relief; project approval and management in respect of projects for post-tsunami relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development; the over-all monitoring of projects and fund management as provided in Section 7. This section provides, for the establishment of a Post-Tsunami Coastal Fund for the six districts to be called the "Regional Fund". The fund consists of "unspecified (program)" and "secretariat funds". The "unspecified (program)" funds consist of exclusively of foreign funds, whilst "secretariat funds" consist both foreign and local funds.

It is provided that parties meaning, the GOSL and the LTTE, shall appoint a suitable multi-lateral agency to be the Custodian of the Regional Fund. The purpose of the Regional Fund shall be to expeditiously make funds available following the approved procedures to facilitate and accelerate relief rehabilitation reconstruction and development of tsunami affected areas of the six districts referred to above.

It further provides that the parties, meaning the GOSL and L TTE, and the Custodian shall agree on a mechanism for the establishment and operation of the Regional Fund.

According to section 6(c), the Regional Committee will consist of (i) Two members nominated by the GOSL (ii) Five members nominated by the LTTE one of whom shall serve as Chairperson (iii) Three members nominated by the Muslim parties.

The decision making process

given in clause 6(e) is that they will be based on consensus and in the event that a consensus cannot be reached by a simple majority.

It further provides that if the decision has an adverse effect on a minority group as acknowledged by at least two members of the Regional Committee, the decision will require the approval of 2/3 majority. In the event a proposal from a District Committee does not get a simple majority and if required by two members the rejection of such request will require 2/3 majority. In terms of Section 6(f) the Regional Committee shall be located in Kilinochchi.

At the next level are District Committees, provided for in Section 8. The functions of each District Committee is to identify the needs of the TDZ within the District. Prioritization of needs, the submission of recommendations to the Regional Committee and monitoring and reporting on progress to the Regional Committee. There is no specific provision with regard to the composition of a District Committee and section 8(c) states that the Committees "already established and well functioning shall continue their work".

The Petitioners contend that the entering into of the MOU, the management structure of P-Toms, and the respective powers and functions constitute an infringement of their fundamental rights guaranteed by Article 12(1) of the Constitution, for the following reasons:

i. The 3rd Respondent does not have any authority to enter into the MOU for and on behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka

ii. The MOU does not specify that the 3rd Respondent has been authorized by the President in this matter and in any event, even the President cannot grant such authority on her own responsibility in view of the provisions of Articles 42 and 43 (1) of the Constitution.

iii. There is no legal basis to enter into the MOU with the LTTE, which is not an entity recognized by law and which is identified with terror, violence, death and destruction;

iv. The powers and functions of the Committees especially that of the Regional Committee are governmental in nature and content and cannot be validly conferred on such Com-

mittees in the manner contemplated in the MOU.

v. The foreign funds committed by the donors to carry out tsunami relief through the Government, form part of the funds of the Republic and should be disbursed and accounted for in the manner provided in the Constitution and the applicable laws and procedure. The provisions in the MOU for the Regional Fund and its management by the Regional Committee are inconsistent with the legal requirements.

On the basis of the foregoing it is contended that the MOU sets up a structure and lays down procedures that are contrary to the rule of law and deny the Petitioners equal protection of law as guaranteed by Article 12(1) of the Constitution.

It is further contended that the MOU with special provisions in relation to six districts only of the TDZ with the establishment of a Regional Committee and a Regional Fund, discriminate against citizens in the area outside their districts who have been equally or worse affected by the tsunami, on the basis of place of birth and residence and as such the fundamental rights guaranteed by Article 12(2) of the Constitution is infringed.

The matters drawn in issue by the Petitioners in relation to:

i) The ambit of Executive power of the President;

ii) The MOU ex facie agreed and accepted by the Government and the L TTE;

iii) Structure intended to be set up under the MOU in the form of Committees and their composition;

iv) The powers and functions of the Committees and the financial arrangements; are indeed unique and unprecedented in every respect.

The final relief sought by the Petitioners is that the MOU be declared void and invalid in law as being an infringement of their fundamental rights guaranteed by Article 12(1) and 12(2) of the Constitution. They have sought interim relief to restrain the Respondents from taking any steps to implement the MOU pending the final determination of these applications. (Sections of the judgement dealing with the power of the Court to grant interim relief have been omitted)

In the background stated above I would now examine the matters drawn in issue by the Petitioner and itemized as (i) and (ii) above, relating to the ambit of the executive power of the President and whether the M.O.U could have been validly entered into for the objectives as set out in the preamble.

Mr. H. L. de Silva, P.C., contended that although the President is identified in Article 4(b) as the single authority to exercise the executive power which forms part of the sovereignty of the People, the exercise of such power by the President is circumscribed by the provisions of Articles 42 and 43(l) of the Constitution. These articles reads as follows:

42. "The President shall be responsible to Parliament for the due exercise, performance and discharge of his powers, duties and functions under the Constitution and any written law, including the law for the time being relate to public security."

43. (1) "There shall be a Cabinet of Ministers charged with the direction and control of the Government of the Republic, which shall be collectively responsible and answerable to Parliament.

On a careful scrutiny it is seen that Article 42 specifies the responsibility of the President to Parliament for the due exercise, performance and discharge of the powers and duties under the Constitution and the law. Article 43(l) similarly lays down the collective responsibility of the Cabinet of Ministers to Parliament in respect of the direction and control of Government. These two provisions relating to responsibility and answerability for the exercise of executive power.

The fact that these provisions lay down the element of answerability bring home the point that the exercise performance and discharge of executive power and functions is primarily vested with the President. The stage at which answerability arises is upon the exercise of power. It could not be contended on the basis of these provisions that the President should consult or seek prior concurrence of either the Parliament or Cabinet of Ministers for the exercise of Governmental power. However, the element of responsibility and answerability postulates that the President, where it is necessary may seek the concurrence of the Cabinet of Ministers and of Parliament.

In this instance the MOU has been tabled in Parliament and there is no evidence before this Court that the Cabinet of Ministers has not been apprised of the MOU at the time of its execution. In any event if there is a default in these respects on the part of the President, they are matters for immediate concern of the Cabinet of Ministers and Parliament and not of this Court.

Counsel for the Respondents contended that the ambit of executive power of the President should be considered in the light of the provisions of Article 4(b) and 33 of the Constitution. The relevant provisions of Article 33 which specifically deals with the powers and functions of the President reads as follows

"In addition to the powers and junctions expressly conferred on or assigned to him by the Constitution or by any written law whether enacted before or after the commencement of the Constitution, the President shall have the power - (a)

(b)

(c)

(d)

(e)

(f) to do all such acts and things, not being inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution or written law as by international law, customs or usage he is required or authorized to do."

These provisions in my view confer on the President not only specific powers but also a residuary power, in respect of functions that broadly come within the realm of the executive. It cannot be disputed that as Head of the State, Head of the Executive, and of the Government, being the description of the status of the President in Article 30(l), in appropriate circumstances the President may lawfully act on behalf of the Republic and enter into agreements and arrangements that may be necessary to carry out essential Governmental functions.

The preamble to the MOU sets out the basis on which it was entered into, being the need to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the persons who have extensively suffered on an unprecedented scale from the tsunami that struck Sri Lanka in December 2004, As Head of the Executive and of the Government it is the duty of the President to ensure that essential relief assistance for rehabilitation, reconstruction and de-

velopment be made available to the persons who have thus suffered. Hence in my view there is no illegality in the President entering into an MOU for the objectives and reasons set out in the preamble. The Petitioners have failed to make out a strong prima facie case in respect of matters (i) and (ii) drawn in issue by them.

Mr. S. L. Gunasekera, contended that it is illegal to enter into the MOU with the LTTE which he described as a terrorist organization that caused tremendous loss of life and property in this country. The contention is that even assuming that the President could enter into a MOU for the objectives and reasons stated in the preamble, the other party to the MOU is not an entity recognized in law and should not be so recognized due to antecedent illegal activities of the organization.

In this regard I have to note that the matter so strenuously urged by Counsel cannot by itself denude the status of the 4th Respondent to enter into the MOU. The circumstances urged by Counsel cannot and should not have the effect of placing the 4th Respondent and the Organization that he seeks to represent beyond the pale of law. We have to also to bear in mind that already a Cease-Fire Agreement has been entered into on 23.2-2002 between the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE, which according to section 2(b) of the MOU "shall continue in full force and effect."

In these circumstances there is no illegality in entering into the MOU with the 4th Respondent for the purpose of rendering humanitarian assistance as contemplated in the preamble to the MOU. The Petitioners have failed to establish a strong prima facie case in respect of this matter as well. In the result the Petitioners have failed to make out a strong prima facie case on any ground that warrants interim relief as to the entirety of the MOU.

From this point, I have to examine the submissions with regard to the specific provisions of the MOU in relation to the Committees and their respective powers and functions.

The basic submission of the Counsel for the Petitioners in this regard is that the three Committees proposed to be set up as the Operational Management Structure would not derive authority from any law that is applicable. The Respondents reply is

that these Committees are adhoc structures intended solely to ensure the effective disbursement of post-tsunami relief in the six districts referred to above. The Respondents have not identified the provisions of any statute or any other applicable law on the basis of which the Operational Management Structures are being set up. Considering the objectives as set out in the preamble to the MOU and the fact that the Structure is set up to facilitate the disbursement of urgent humanitarian assistance, it would not be necessary, in my view to derive any specific authority from a statute, as contemplated by the Petitioners. The submission of the Petitioners that even in such circumstances the Structure sought to be established should derive authority from a statute imposes an undue rigidity to a process that must retain a degree of flexibility to ensure that all persons who have been affected are adequately cared for.

The tragedy brought about by the tsunami, the human suffering and the loss of property could not be love anticipated in its full dimension in any preceding statute. Furthermore, the matter of reaching the persons who have been affected by this tragedy in certain parts of the six districts referred to is compounded by the presence of LTTE with which organization a Cease-fire Agreement has been entered into as noted above. This combination of circumstances necessarily lead to a situation where an arrangement could be made by the Head of Government to ensure effective distribution of humanitarian aid. The Management Structure set up in the MOU has to be primarily seen in this light. In the circumstances in so far as the Management Structure is not reposed with any power that would impinge on the rights of the people or detract from the normal and statutory functions of Government and of financial control, there would be no basis to restrain the functions of the structure by way of an interim order issued by this Court.

Counsel for the Petitioners, when narrowed down to this issue, quite rightly viewed the matter in the light stated above and did not move for any interim relief in respect of the High Level Committee and the District Committees, since their functions are purely to assist the Governmental authorities on whom the final

responsibility lay. However, they urged strongly that interim relief be considered in relation to the Regional Committee which is in terms of the MOU, vested with Governmental powers and control in relation to public finance. In this connection it is to be seen Section 6(b)(ii) and (b)(iv) deal specifically with Governmental functions and management of public finance. Section - 6(b) (ii) reads as follows :

“Project approval and management, with respect to projects for post tsunami relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development;

This is necessarily a function that comes within the executive to be handled by the Ministry of which the 3 d Respondent, is the Secretary, in accordance with the provisions that have been laid down in applicable law and procedures.

Sub-section (iv) reads as follows

“Fund management, with respect to the fund specifically defined in Section 7.”

The provisions of section 7 which establish the Regional Fund have been reproduced before. The Fund consists of foreign funds and secretariat funds, including both foreign and local funds. It is clear from the provisions of the MOU that the foreign funds referred to are the donations to be received by Sri Lanka from multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors. These funds when received by the country should in terms of Article 149(l) of the Constitution be paid into the Consolidated Fund and be disbursed in terms of the Constitution and the applicable law. Expenditure from this fund would be subject to audit by the Auditor General, as provided for in Article 154 of the Constitution. These are salutary safeguards included in respect of public finance to ensure transparency in the matter of disbursement of funds and proper accountability. Multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors being fully committed to the rule of law, transparency and good governance would necessarily insist that funds committed by them magnanimously for a humanitarian objective be properly dealt with and accounted for in this country, according to the applicable law. The provisions in Section 7 read with 6(b)(iv) are plainly inconsistent with the Constitution and applicable law. Thus the Petitioners have in my view established a strong prima facie case for interim relief in respect of Sections

6(b) (ii) and 6(b)(iv) and Section 7 of the M.O.U.. A question now arises as to whether any measures could be imposed by this court to convert the situation of a prima facie illegality referred to above to one of legality so that it would be just and equitable from the perspective of all parties concerned.

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In this connection it is relevant to note that Section 6(1) coming within the purview of the Regional

Committees provides for Project Management Unit (PMU) to be established to manage the projects approved by the Regional Committee. When the operation of Section 6(b)(ii) with regard to project approval and management by the Regional Committee is stayed, necessarily the provisions of sub-paragraph (1) would have no effect. However, considering the objectives as set out in the preamble it would be necessary to establish the Project Management Unit that would exercise the Governmental functions in respect of projects for relief, reconstruction, rehabilitation and development in these districts. Therefore the 2nd and 3rd Respondents are at liberty to establish a Project Management Unit in accordance with applicable procedures. The Unit so established would take into account the measures recommended by the Regional Committee in terms of Section 6(b)(i) and the Regional Committee would retain its functions in terms of 6(b)(iii) of over-all monitoring of projects to ensure that relief is equally received by all persons who have been affected by tsunami.

Committee should have no fears with regard to the proper exercise of their choice. The Petitioner contention of the lack of such an environment of freedom in the designated place cannot be disputed. In the circumstances the Petitioners have made out a strong prima facie case in respect of Section 6(f). Accordingly interim relief is granted restraining the operation of this provision. The parties would be at liberty to decide on a suitable site to locate the Regional Committee on the basis of the criteria set out below;

1) That the place be centrally located within the TDZ of the six districts referred to;

ii) That all persons from every part of the TDZ of these districts should have free and unhindered access to such location;

The criteria set out above would result in the illegality referred to above being converted to situation according to law.

The findings stated above are summarized as follows

i) an interim order is not granted in respect of the entirety of the MOU referred to and the Structure as provided in the MOU consisting of Committees may be established and become functional subject to the restrictions as are imposed by this judgment; the operation of Sections 6(b)(ii), 6(b)(iv), 6(b)(f), 6(1) and 7 of the MOU are stayed pending the final determination of this application;

iii) the funds both foreign and local intended to be deposited in the Regional Fund as provided in Section 7 may instead be dealt with according to the provisions of the Constitution and deposited in a separate account with a Custodian to be designated, if lawfully authorized;

iv) the location of the Regional Committee may be decided on by the parties in compliance with the criteria that has been stated;

v) a Project Management Unit (PMU) may be set up in lieu of the Unit provided for in Section 6(1) by the relevant Ministry in accordance with the applicable procedure. Such Project Management Unit would be at liberty to coordinate and implement the projects with the District Committees, the Regional Committee and the High Level Committees as provided in the MOU

The foregoing will be operative till the final determination of these applications. □

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A specific submission has been made with regard to the provisions of Section 6(f) being the location of the Regional Committee. It is provided that the Regional Committee shall be located at Kili-nochchi. Counsel for the Petitioners contended that persons from certain parts of the six districts referred to would not have easy access to Kili-nochchi. This matter was not disputed by Counsel for the Respondents. The safeguards contained in the decision making process set out in Section 6(e) to be effective to any "minority group" the members of the

Straight from the heart

On Monday (11 July), Marie Fatayi-Williams stood near Tavistock Square, where her son Anthony is feared to have been killed in last week's bus bombing, and delivered a lament of extraordinary power for her lost son. Tim Collins, the British army colonel who himself gave a historic speech on the eve of the Iraq war, says such genuine emotion is rarely forgotten.

Caught in the spotlight of history, set on the stage of a very public event, Marie Fatayi-Williams, the mother of Anthony Fatayi-Williams, 26 and missing since Thursday (7 July), appeals for news of her son. Her words are a mixture of stirring rhetoric, heartfelt appeal and a stateswoman-like vision, and so speak on many levels to the nation and the world. Her appeal is a simple one - where is my son? If he has been killed, then why? Who has gained?

Marie has found herself, as I did on the eve of the invasion of Iraq, an unwitting voice, speaking amid momentous events. Her appeal, delivered on Monday (11 July) not far from Tavistock Square, where she fears her son died in the bomb attack on the number 30 bus, gives a verbal form to the whirlpool of emotions that have engulfed society as the result of last week's bombings. I suspect Marie, like myself, had no idea that her words would find such wide recognition, have fed such an acute hunger for explanation has slaked such a thirst for expression of the sheer horror of Thursday's events.

This kind of speech is normally the preserve of the great orators, statesmen and playwrights, of Shakespeare, Churchill or Lincoln. It is often a single speech, a soliloquy or address from the steps of the gallows, that explains, inspires, exhorts and challenges. But always such addresses are crafted for effect and consciously intended to sway and influence, and often, as in the case of Shakespeare's Henry V, they are set in the mouth of a long dead hero or delivered by wordsmiths who are masters of their craft. It is rare in history that such oratory is the genuine

article, springing from the heart and bursting forth to an unwitting audience.

In Marie's case, her speech gains its power as a vehicle of grief and loss, and of the angst of a mother who yearns for her beloved son. In my case it was the opposite emotion from which I drew inspiration - an appeal to understand, to empathise, to give courage and purpose. I was motivated by a need to warn and teach as well as to encourage. Marie's motivation is a reflection on loss and that most powerful of all emotions, a mother's love.

The form the address takes is as poignant as the language used. There is an initial explanation of the extraordinary circumstances of the loss, a *cri de coeur* for the innocent blood lost, a rejection of the act by its comparison to the great liberators, and the assertion that her loss is all our loss in the family of humanity. It ends with her personal grief for her flesh and blood, her hopes and pride. The language echoes verses of the Bible as well as from the Koran. It has raw passion as well as heart-rending pathos.

With only a photograph of her son and a sheet of paper as a prompt, Marie's words burst out with as much emotion as anger. Her speech stands in stark contrast to the pronouncements of politicians, prepared by aides and delivered from copious notes. It is indeed the raw originality and authentic angst that give the delivery such impact, the plea such effect. No knighted veteran of the Royal Shakespeare Company could

deliver such an address without hours or even days of rehearsal. I know from my own experience that only momentous events can provoke such a moment, only raw emotion can inspire such a spontaneous plea. I am often asked how long it took me to write my speech, delivered to my regiment, the Royal Irish, on the eve of the invasion of Iraq on March 19 2003 at Fort Blair Mayne camp in the Kuwaiti desert. My answer is simple - not one moment. There was no plan; I spoke without notes. For me there was only the looming spectre of actual warfare and the certainty of loss and killing, and I was speaking to myself as well as to my men. I suspect for Marie there was only the yawning black void of loss, the cavern left behind in her life caused by the loss of a son who can never be replaced.

What, then, can we take from this? Marie's appeal is important as it is momentous. Her words are as free from hatred as they are free from self-interest; it is clear that no man can give her her heart's desire - her son. I was also struck by the quiet dignity of her words, the clarity of her view and the weight of her convictions. She does not condemn, she appeals; her words act as an indictment of all war and violence, not just acts of terror but also the unnecessary aggression of nation states. Her message is simple: here is a human who only wanted to give, to succeed and to make his mother proud. Where is the victory in his death? Where is the progress in his destruction? In her own words: "What inspiration can senseless slaughter provide?"

I am certain that Marie's appeal will go down as one of the great speeches of our new century. It will give comfort to the families and friends of the dead and injured, both of this act and no doubt, regrettably, of events still to come. It should act as a caution to statesmen and leaders, a focus for public grief and, ultimately, as a challenge to, as well as a

Marie's speech

"This is Anthony, Anthony Fatayi-Williams, 26 years old, he's missing and we fear that he was in the bus explosion ... on Thursday. We don't know. We do know from the witnesses that he left the Northern line in Euston. We know he made a call to his office at Amec at 9.41 from the NW1 area to say he could not make [it] by the tube but he would find alternative means to work.

Since then he has not made any contact with any single person. Now New York, now Madrid, now London. There has been widespread slaughter of innocent people. There have been streams of tears, innocent tears. There have been rivers of blood, innocent blood. Death in the morning, people going to find their livelihood, death in the noontime on the highways and streets.

They are not warriors. Which cause has been served? Certainly not the cause of God, not the cause of Allah because God Almighty only gives life and is full of mercy. Anyone who has been misled, or is being misled to believe that by killing innocent people he or she is serving God should think again because it's not true. Terrorism is not the way, terrorism is not the way. It doesn't beget peace. We can't deliver peace by terrorism, never can we deliver peace by killing people. Throughout history, those people who have changed the world have done so without violence, they have [won] people to their cause through peaceful protest. Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, their discipline, their self-sacrifice, their conviction made people turn towards them, to follow them. What inspiration can senseless slaughter provide? Death and destruction of young people in their prime as well as old and helpless can never be the foundations for building society.

My son Anthony is my first son, my only son, the head of my family. In African society, we hold on to sons. He has dreams and hopes and I, his mother, must fight to protect them. This is now the fifth day, five days on, and we are waiting to know what happened to him and I, his mother, I need to know what happened to Anthony. His young sisters need to know what

happened, his uncles and aunties need to know what happened to Anthony, his father needs to know what happened to Anthony. Millions of my friends back home in Nigeria need to know what happened to Anthony. His friends surrounding me here, who have put this together, need to know what has happened to Anthony. I need to know, I want to protect him. I'm his mother, I will fight till I die to protect him. To protect his values and to protect his memory.

Innocent blood will always cry to God Almighty for reparation. How much blood must be spilled? How many tears shall we cry? How many mothers' hearts must be maimed? My heart is maimed. I pray I will see my son, Anthony. Why? I need to know, Anthony needs to know, Anthony needs to know, so do many others unaccounted for innocent victims, they need to know.

It's time to stop and think. We cannot live in fear because we are surrounded by hatred. Look around us today. Anthony is a Nigerian, born in London, worked in London, he is a world citizen. Here today we have Christians, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Hindus, all of us united in love for Anthony. Hatred begets only hatred. It is time to stop this vicious cycle of killing. We must all stand together, for our common humanity. I need to know what happened to my Anthony. He's the love of my life. My first son, my first son, 26. He tells me one day, "Mummy, I don't want to die, I don't want to die. I want to live, I want to take care of you, I will do great things for you, I will look after you, you will see what I will achieve for you. I will make you happy." And he was making me happy. I am proud of him, I am still very proud of him but I need to now where he is, I need to know what happened to him. I grieve, I am sad, I am distraught, I am destroyed.

He didn't do anything to anybody, he loved everybody so much. If what I hear is true, even when he came out of the underground he was directing people to take buses, to be sure that they were OK. Then he called his office at the same time to tell them he was running late. He was a multi-purpose person, trying to save people, trying to call his office, trying to meet his appointments. What did he then do to deserve this. Where is he, someone tell me, where is he?"

condemnation of, the perpetrators.

Marie is already an icon of the loss of Thursday July 7. Having travelled from Africa to find a better life, Anthony Fatayi-Williams carried the hopes and pride of his family. Now, as his mother has travelled to London, arguably one of the most cosmopolitan and integrated cities in the world, and standing nearby a wrecked

icon of that city, a red double-decker bus, she has made an appeal which is as haunting as it is relevant, as poignant as it is appealing. It is a fact that such oratory as both Marie and I produced is born of momentous events, and inspired by hope and fears in equal measure.

But Marie's appeal is also important on another level. I have long

urged soldiers in conflict zones to keep communicating with the population in order to be seen as people - it is easier to kill uniforms than it is to kill people. On July 7 the suicide bombers attacked icons of a society that they hated more than they loved life, the red London bus and the tube. Marie's speech has stressed the real victims' identities. They are all of us.

(The Guardian, July 13, 2005)

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Tsunami: moments of solidarity and emergence of hostility

Dr M A Mohamed Saleem

Many future generations will remember 26th December 2004 as the darkest day in the recent history of Sri-Lanka. Thousands of innocent lives of all ages were lost, and properties worth billions of rupees damaged by the destructive Tsunami. From the point of origin it took over two hours for the Tsunami to reach Sri-Lanka, and had there been a simple alert of the impending danger, even after it first hit Kalmunai on the eastern coast of the country, many lives on the south and western coast could have been saved.

The human tragedy caused by the tsunami is unprecedented, and generated spontaneous outpourings of sympathy and material help for Sri-Lanka from individuals, private and public organizations. That was also the point when Sri-Lankans demonstrated convergence of sympathy and solidarity for eliminating human suffering. When the wall of Tsunami water engulfed everything on its way it did not differentiate Tamils, Muslims and Sinhalese. Within minutes it wiped away everything: families, settlements, lifelong accumulations, pride and hopes. Assessment of the extent of damages caused by the tsunami, which happened within minutes, took several weeks of many thousands of enumerator-working time on the ground. On a final count, the country lost close to 40,000 lives and 140,000 were made homeless.

Moving down the east coast from Jaffna and around the south & south western coast up to Colombo the tsunami had virtually cut every coastal village into two: tsunami damaged and undamaged parts. Everyone in the undamaged part of a village and its adjoining hinterland villages spontaneously organized themselves into a relief-providing voluntary force to help the disaster victims. There are recorded instances of Tamils taking

refuge among the Muslims and Muslims being looked after by the Sinhalese and vice-versa in different parts of the country. In every village the living buried the dead, shared whatever they had with the needy, nursed the sick, fed the hungry, cared for the elderly and orphans, consoled the bereaved, cleaned up the debris and rallied support to rebuild from the shattered remains. Thus, every village had already organized itself, however informally, and people did the best to look after the welfare of the community, based on their own assessment of the extent of damage to every family in that village. They took inventories of all the items that came in and issued them out for distribution to the needy. The village also had established lost property centers for anyone to turn in found items dislodged by the tsunami waters and returned them to the rightful owners. These were indeed the moments of solidarity.

Then, there appeared the Professional Relief-Givers (PRG) on the scene. The first thing they did was to separate the tsunami-victims in each village from the rest so that they could take charge of relief deliveries. They brought in anything and everything, even things that were inappropriate. The PRG entrusted deliveries of those items onto groups of individuals and private persons who had no knowledge of the ground conditions. These relief-giving field assistants had no obligation or interest in reaching out to the genuine victims, and anybody who got to the scene first got something. The fittest genuine victims, and anybody who got to the scene first got something. The fittest benefited, the weakest pushed out and, on many occasions, relief went to the wrong hands.

Soon the sympathy for the tsunami victims evaporated at the vil-

lage level, and in extreme cases turned to hostility. The reasons are many:-

* When tsunami hit it disrupted functioning of the entire village and all logistics took a heavy beating. Shortages of day to day things were acute and infrastructure was over-stretched.

* After few days there was a flux of relief materials: food items, cloths, shelter materials and they were targeted directly to the victims. However, there was hardly any attention to the rest of the community whose lives and livelihoods have also suffered as a result of tsunami.

* The food relief and other essentials brought in large quantities for the victims. But, these essentials were in short supply in the market and people unaffected by the tsunami had no way of getting their essential items. Normal replenishment of stocks for the village was disrupted as different relief agencies commandeered all road transports for their work

* There was an artificial oversupply of some commodities in the refugee camps. There was surplus of food, and many other items given as relief were irrelevant to the victims. This created an unofficial market outlet for the tsunami-victims to trade in such items, and the villagers accused them of making money out of their misery.

* The tsunami victims and the whole relief operation were seen as a disruptive influence to normal village life. Antisocial activities increased, and perpetrators justified looting from the tsunami damaged houses — “the donors will compensate the victims for their losses anyway”.

* There were influx of foreigners (as aid workers) and, their lifestyles and demands led to value changes among the people, and are causing a lot of social problems. The foreigners were accused of changing the price structure of everything in the village.

There is no doubt that the affected people will have to be rehabilitated, and provided with assistance to recover from their misery. Most importantly, they need to be re-integrated — socio-culturally —

(continued on next page)

BOOK REVIEW

The wages of war

V. Suryanarayan

SRI LANKA - Voices from a War Zone: Nirupama Subramanian; Viking, Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd., 11, Community Centre, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi-110017. Rs. 350. - *An account of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka documented through the "little histories" of ordinary people*

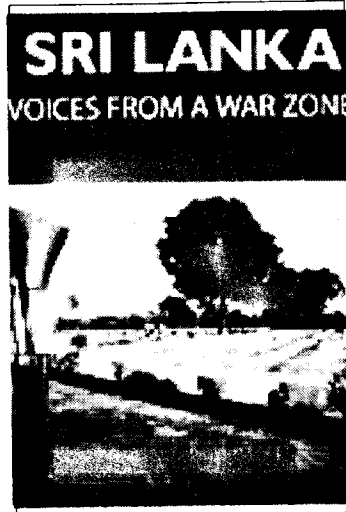
The ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, which has taken a heavy toll of human lives, has inspired the publication of a large number of literary works — books written by academicians, partisan accounts penned by pro-LTTE and pro-Government authors, reminiscences by Indian and Sri Lankan diplomats and officers of the armed forces and, poetry and fiction written by talented authors.

This absorbing account of war-torn Sri Lanka belongs to a different category. Nirupama Subramanian, who served in Sri Lanka for seven years, first as the correspondent of Indian Express and later of The Hindu, had the good fortune to view the fast-changing events in the island at close quarters.

Her stint in Sri Lanka coincided with the end of one peace process and the beginning of another. In between, the island was subjected to the brutality and savagery of the Third Eelam War.

Little histories

The book is not just an account of the ethnic conflict; it is, as Nirupama mentions, "little histories;" — soldiers and their widows; the families of the disappeared; mothers of child soldiers; children who escaped from training camps; peo-



ple displaced by the war; people living amidst war; a government official whose job demanded walking the fine line between the government and the Tigers; the only psychiatrist in the northeast; a counter-insurgent; a child monk; women training to work as housemaids in rich homes abroad; the distraught father of a woman who was killed in suicide bombing; peo-

ferent communities to restart the stalled peace talks with the LTTE. If P-TOMS is implemented there are greater chances of further territorial and racial estrangement.

A workable mechanism needs to be derived from consideration of simplifying logistics to serve the needs on the ground so that, there will be participation and commitment of the community to improve the living standards by contributing to achieving common goods. Certainly, the P-TOMS is not a workable mechanism for equitable distribution of recovery assistance and, given the terrorizing credentials of the LTTE, it will be very difficult to win people's confidence for LTTE to play the major decision making role in a human care programme. That will make P-TOMS a major source for inciting a new hostile environment in the country. □

ple who thought they had escaped the war, but realised that they had become virtual prisoners in refugee camps.

Woven into these narratives is the broader canvas - the tragedy of Chandrika Kumaratunga, who became Prime Minister and later the President on a massive mandate for peace, but was forced by circumstances to pursue the military option; the metamorphosis of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), which wrote the history of Sri Lanka in blood two times in recent history, but today has taken to the parliamentary path, propounding an ideology which is a mix of socialism and Sinhala nationalism, an ally in the ruling coalition, which parted company with the People's Alliance on the question of associating LTTE in interim administration and post-Tsunami relief work; and above all, Velupillai Prabhakaran, the cult figure of the Tigers, who has emerged as the undisputed leader of the most ruthless and, at the same time, disciplined terrorist organisation in South Asia. Has Prabhakaran given up the demand for a separate state? Will the Tigers settle for a federal solution? How long will the present ceasefire last?

The dilemma

The dilemma facing the Sri Lankan Tamils was articulated by Jagan as follows, "The Tigers have to be handled by us. We have allowed a tyrant to come up from among us, the Tamils. Now we have to throw him out. But we cannot do it with the Sinhalese troops treating the Tamils as their enemies. Look at it this way, we carry a double burden now. We have to fight the Sinhalese racism and the tyranny of the Tigers, both together."

It is not merely the Tamils who lost; the ordinary Sinhalese were also subjected to considerable suffering. During 1987-89, when the JVP became the champion of Sinhala nationalism and unleashed unprecedented violence, Kelaniya Ganga and Kalu Ganga, those two rivers of exquisite beauty, were "clogged with bodies and foamed with blood."

Bishop Reginald Heber, with prophetic vision, wrote in the 19th Century, "What though the spicy breezes, blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle, though every prospect pleases, and only man is vile."

Reading the absorbing accounts of the author, I was reminded of an encounter described by the Sri Lankan writer, Rohini Hensman, with a refugee family.

Need for peace

The story relates to Anna's family. Anna's father pointed out the irony that "for two years between 1983 and 1985, (continued on next page)

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within the community. The good intentions of helping the victims to reconstruct their lives should not create a social divide in the community. Assistance should not create a syndrome- "be a victim to be benefited and rewarded". Rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts therefore will have to go beyond the immediate tsunami impact area. There needs to be a holistic view of the entire community.

There have been shortfalls in the mechanisms so far tried to deliver R&R assistance. However, the Post Tsunami Operation Management Structure (P-TOMS) recently signed by the government and the LTTE will neither help the recovery from tsunami destruction nor can it lead to confidence building between the dif-

HEALTH MATTERS

Age-related macular degeneration

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of blindness. It is just one form of macular disease, which affects the eye's retina. An estimated 500,000 people in the UK suffer from AMD, 40% of these are over the age of 75.

What is AMD?

AMD is the most common form of macular disease, which affects the central part of the retina. It is an age-related process and usually develops after a person reaches 50 years. It generally involves both eyes, although they may not be affected at the same time or to the same degree.

Some 90% of these cases are dry AMD which cannot be treated but 10% are wet ADM.

Dry AMD means visual cells simply stop to function. Wet AMD is by far the most aggressive form of the disease.

The condition is caused by the growth of new blood vessels under the centre of the retina. These can leak fluid, causing scar tissue to form and destroying central vision in a period of between two months and three years. Peripheral vision is retained. The condition causes problems reading, seeing small objects and distorted vision.

What are the symptoms? In the early

(continued from page 27)

they were living in the very same camps, when their home in Dehiwela was attacked and all their belongings burned."

The family moved to Batticaloa and slowly rebuilt their lives. They are now back in the camps, having lost everything for the second time, "reduced to destitution once again." Anna's mother remarked, "The problem is that neither the armed forces nor the Tigers are the least bit concerned about people ... They are fighting for their own reasons ... " In Colombo, they wanted to kill us because we were Tamil, in Batticaloa they wanted to kill us because I speak Sinhala and they thought I was Sinhalese. There is no freedom anywhere in the country. What we need is peace, not Eelam." □

stages of AMD, central vision may be blurred or distorted. Objects may take an unusual size or shape. This process can happen quickly or develop over several months.

People with the condition may become very sensitive to light or actually see lights that are not there. There may be some discomfort, although overall the condition is not painful.

How is AMD treated? Photo dynamic therapy (PDT) is the first effective treatment for correcting wet AMD. It is a relatively new treatment and was first used in the UK in 1999 by doctors at the Royal Liverpool University hospital.

PDT is thought to be suitable for around a third of patients with wet AMD since it is effective only if the condition is caught early. It involves injecting a light sensitive dye called Visudyne into the body, which sticks to the lining of abnormal blood vessels within the retina. The process takes half an hour. A light is then shone into the area through a contact lens, activating the dye and causing it to damage the abnormal blood vessels. The treatment may need to be repeated every three months and costs £900 a time.

Side effects include lower back pain, a reaction to light and a temporary loss of vision in around 3% of cases. The treatment is not available throughout the NHS because of its high cost.

However, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence is drawing up guidelines which could see the therapy made available on the NHS albeit only to certain patients. (Source BBC)

•••••

Diabetes: Unhealthy lifestyles are to blame

Leading an unhealthy lifestyle as an adult is the biggest risk factor for diabetes, British scientists say.

Childhood factors such as birth weight are no way near as important as obesity in adulthood for type 2 diabetes, the Newcastle University research shows.

Type 2 diabetes usually occurs in

middle to older aged adults, but recently cases have been reported in children, probably linked to obesity.

The authors told a diabetes journal it was "never too late" to turn healthy. The life you lead as an adult has the biggest influence on your health, in terms of diabetes risk

Lead researcher Dr Mark Pearce said, "Obviously, it is better to eat healthily and take regular exercise from childhood onwards. But it is never too late, even if you are in your 50s. Our findings suggest that it is adult body fat that alters a person's risk of insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes in later life."

His study in Diabetes/Metabolism Research and Reviews followed 412 men and women from birth to age 50. Factors such as birth weight and infant nutrition did not appear to greatly alter diabetes risk, contrary to previous reports that they might.

However, lack of physical activity and poor diet in adulthood, culminating in obesity, significantly increased the likelihood of diabetes at the age of 50.

The men and women with higher body fat and higher waist to hip ratios were more likely to have insulin resistance - an earlier warning sign of full-blown diabetes.

People with type 2 diabetes, also known as non insulin dependent diabetes, do not make enough insulin or cannot make proper use of it.

Dr Pearce said: "Previous studies have suggested that risk of poor health in later life is programmed by impaired development in the womb, and that poor growth in foetal and infant life is associated with impaired insulin secretion and sensitivity. However, not all of these studies have had access to complete data on later life.

"Our study, which has examined people from birth to adulthood, suggests that the life you lead as an adult has the biggest influence on your health, in terms of diabetes risk, in later life."

Amanda Vezey from Diabetes UK said: "We already know that lifestyle factors play a large part in the development of type 2 diabetes.

"This study further emphasises the importance of eating a healthy, balanced diet and taking part in regular physical activity." She advised people start this as early as possible to reduce their risk.

(BBC 6 July, 2005)

SRI LANKA INFORMATION SITE

WWW.srilankans.com

WHICH TEAM DO YOU SUPPORT?

Laavanyan Ratnapalan

Most Tamil sports fans in the United Kingdom support England in international football matches.

This is in itself an unsurprising fact. English footballers are among the wealthiest, most successful and famous sportsmen in a world which craves all of those things in equal measure. Conversely, few Tamil people will be able to name anyone who plays for the Sri Lankan football team, let alone support them. They are one of football's minnows, who are unlikely to reach a major tournament in our lifetime, still less to challenge for honours. So you might think that it is obvious that British Tamils should support England instead of Sri Lanka when it comes to football.

With cricket, however, it is more complicated. While many Tamils in the UK would support England against almost anyone in this sport, they will almost certainly favour Sri Lanka when it comes to a head-to-head contest between the two nations. Even more problematically, they are also likely to favour India instead of England. What is the reason for this difference between the two sports?

On the one hand it could be maintained that in cricket Sri Lanka has a chance of competing against the English, and indeed in recent years has been more successful than them, and so there has been a genuine rivalry that has stirred the native pride of Sri Lankan Tamils who live abroad. Sing when you're winning and all that. But this does not explain their support for India.

Not many Tamils will remember the last major Indian intervention in Sri Lanka with fondness, yet the people of the subcontinent still share with their island neighbours what are regarded as key cultural traits. Similarities of – for what it's worth – 'race', language, and religion, continue to keep Tamils interested in India and particularly in the life of its southern states. It's not as if India has the best cricket team in the world, either: at the present time – that contest probably waits to be decided with the forthcoming Ashes test series. Despite England's resurgent cricket team and despite the recent captainship of this team by Nasser Hussein, a Madras-born Muslim, Tamil support for the English team tends to be judged on the identity of their opponents alone. There do not appear to be any stirrings of change where this matter is concerned.

RANDOM THOUGHTS

The situation in football could hardly be more different. Sri Lanka are currently ranked 141st by FIFA and India are at 135, between Andorra and Malta. England are ranked 7th. Doubtless, if there were to be a football match between ei-



David Beckham,
captain of the English football team



Sanath Jayasuriya,
former Sri Lankan cricket captain

ther of these teams and England then the latter would comfortably thrash them. Despite English anxieties about not having won the World Cup since 1966, at least their supporters can console themselves with the fact that their team is considered among the favourites to win it in Germany next year, whereas for India and Sri Lanka qualification is out of the picture. So it could be argued that there is no interest in supporting football in the subcontinent because nobody wants to cheer for a bunch of losers.

Cricket is a sport that is remembered better by Tamil people than football. It is still far more popular in Sri Lanka and across the subcontinent than it is in England. The people of Chennai and Colombo are as passionate about cricket as the people of Liverpool and London are about football. Perhaps first generation Tamils in the UK feel a connection with their homeland when they watch cricket. Ironi-

cally, Sri Lanka has only quite recently – in the previous decade and a half – become a serious power in world cricket. Yet cricket is as much a part of the colonial heritage there as the English schools of Jaffna that helped to spread its popularity among young Tamils. The pull of the sport goes far beyond success and failure. That's one of the reasons for its enduring popularity.

In contradiction to the mass appeal of the sport in the Commonwealth, cricket in the UK is still seen as a pastime for toffs and boys with a private school education. One reason why this is so is because at the time that it could have become popular among the working classes, in the early Twentieth Century, cricket was superseded by a simpler, cheaper, and more accessible alternative: football. Many of the oldest football clubs in England originally built their stadia in working class urban areas and drew their support from an enthusiastic local populace. The irony is that nowadays English professional cricket is crying out for people who can help to bring money into the game, whereas nothing about professional football in England is cheap.

Football's reach is now truly global: Manchester United, England's best-supported football team, is owned by an American businessman whose first player acquisition is a South Korean. Three continents are brought together by one football club; and yet the lack of British Asians in the top ranks of football has been noticed for many years. English football is popular among Tamils even though they do not have a representative on the pitch. This marks another difference with the situation in English cricket, where even the presence of a Nasser Hussein has not dislodged Tamils' preference for the teams from the subcontinent.

Considering these facts, we may return to a question that was hinted at previously: why does the Indian cricket team tend to be favoured by Sri Lankan Tamils when they play against the English, whereas the English football team is supported by these same Tamils against any opponent? Is it a difference that is based on the spectatorship of the two sports, or the history of the British in the Indian subcontinent, or some other reason? Leaving aside the still-thornier issue of British Tamils who will support Italy, Brazil, or even Argentina during the next World Cup, this basic contradiction in human reasoning is both perplexing and suggestive of the nature of modern cultural identity. □

NEWS TRACK

\$1m duty slapped on Oxfam relief vehicles: June 17 - British charity Oxfam had to pay Sri Lanka customs US\$1 million as tax to clear 25 four-wheel drive vehicles imported for tsunami duty, a BBC report said. Oxfam

told BBC news that Indian-made Mahindra vehicles were essential in ensuring access to the poorest communities over rough terrain and bad roads. It is reported that when Oxfam officials tried to reason out with the government, the ministry of finance offered three options: pay the duty, re-export the vehicles or hand them over to a government ministry of their choice.

Police Sergeant shot dead: June 18 - Police sergeant Mr.M.Muthubanda (35) of Kantalai Police was shot dead Friday (17) night around 7.45 p.m.in Serunuwara located south of Trincomalee by unidentified gunmen who came in a push bicycle, Police said. At that time of incident he was standing in front of the Serunuwara government hospital. Mr.Muthubanda was a resident of Serunuwara and had come on leave to visit his home village, police said.

Injured in grenade attack: June 18 - A Police constable, Mr. Shiampala Vadagamage Sumatithilake (36), and a member of PLOTE, Mr. Sathasivam Siththiravel, (32), were injured in an attack by unidentified gunmen when they were travelling in a tractor in Kallady, 3 km south of Batticaloa town, Friday (17) around 4.15 pm, Police said. Attackers allegedly belonging to the LTTE had reportedly fired at the tractor after lodging a grenade inside the vehicle.

Mannar LTTE offices attacked: June 19 - Two offices of the Liberation Tigers in Sri Lanka Army (SLA) controlled area of Mannar have been simultaneously attacked by unidentified gunmen around 9.45 pm Saturday (18) with grenades and gunfire, sources in Mannar said. Sounds of grenade explosions and gunfire were heard near the political office of the LTTE, located in Mannar -Thalaimannar Road and LTTE's administrative office located in Mannar Moor street. belonging to Eelam Peoples Democratic Party (EPDP)

LTTE's Mannar division Political Officer, Mr Arunthavam, alleged that the gunmen who attacked their offices belonged to the EPDP. He said that the attackers threw two grenades at the backyard of their offices and then started firing towards the front entrance to the building causing damages to the building. Large number of armed policemen was deployed in the streets of Mannar following the attack. Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission was also at the scene, according to sources in Mannar town.

PLOTE member shot dead: June 20 - Mr. Uthayakumarasingam Vallipuram (42), a senior PLOTE member was shot and killed allegedly by LTTE gunmen Sunday (19) at 8.30 pm in Kovilkulam - Therku Iluppaikulam Road, 4 km southeast of Vavuniya, Police said. The PLOTE member, a father of 3 children, is also known as Sadaikili in Vavuniya, sources said.

Ammunition bag found in Colombo: June 20 - A bag containing at two hand grenades, bullets for T-56 rifle and Airforce camouflage uniforms was found abandoned at a bus halt near Maradana Technical College in Colombo Monday (20) morning at 9.45 am, police sources said. Police suspect that the ammunition had been taken from Katunayakka Airforce base.

Ex-PLOTE member killed: June 20 - Mr Tharmalingam Asokan, 26, an auto-rikshaw driver and an ex-PLOTE member was shot and killed inside his auto-rikshaw at 12.30 pm on Monday (20) in Thalikkulam 13 km west of Vavuniya. Police, tracing an eyewitness who had seen the assassins escape from the scene, suspected that the assassins were also travelling in the auto-rikshaw. The gunmen allegedly belonging to the LTTE had used 9 mm pistol, according to the Police.

Tamil civilian shot dead: June 21 - Mr. Sithiravel Sathiyathan, 33, a Tamil civilian and a resident of Sampoor in Muttur east was shot dead by an unidentified gunman Tuesday (21) afternoon

around 12.30 in the heart of Muttur town near a petrol station, Police said. The victim was travelling in a motorbike with another Tamil civilian from Sampoor to Muttur to buy provisions when he was killed, Muttur

Police said. The alleged assassin reportedly wore a mask when he shot the victim.

Grenade attack on LTTE office: June 21 - Unidentified gunmen lobbed a grenade inside LTTE Political office in Puthukudiyiruppu, Valaichenai, north of Batticaloa, on Tuesday (21) evening at 5.45 pm, sources in Batticaloa said. The attackers fired shots towards the building before dousing the windows and the fence with gasoline and setting them ablaze. No one was injured in the attack. LTTE officials stationed at the office managed to escape from the scene before the attackers entered the building, sources said. Two motorbikes were burned down by the attackers. Tension prevailed in Valaichenai following the attack. This is the second grenade attack on the LTTE office in Valaichenai within two months.

Youth found shot dead in Batticaloa: June 23 - An unidentified person, aged around 20-years, was found dead with three gunshot injuries in Navatkuda, 4 km south of Batticaloa, Thursday (23) morning. Katankudy Police found a note left behind by the assassins at Kanapathipillai Road with the body. The note stated that the victim belonged to LTTE's "pistol group", Police said. The dead person was not from the area, according to Navatkuda Grama Sevakar (GS), the Village Administrative Officer.

Grenade attack in Trinco: June 25 - An unidentified person Friday (24) night around 8.30 p.m. lobbed two grenades at the house of Mr.V.Vigneswaran, President of the Trincomalee District Tamil People's Forum (TDTPF). His house is located at Anpuvallipuram, about 3 k.m. east of Trincomalee town on the Kandy road. Mr.Vigneswaran was not in the house at the time of incident, sources said.

The TDTPF under the leadership of Mr.Vigneswaran has been spearheading the campaign for the removal of the controversial Buddha statue, which was erected in a land close to the Trincomalee central bus stand last month.

The unidentified person who spoke in Tamil fluently had gone and asked for Mr.Vigneswaran. That person had lobbed two grenades at the house on being told that Mr.Vigneswaran was away. The two grenades exploded causing damages to articles found in the dining room, according to an inmate of the house. No one was injured in the explosion, he said.

Vehicle with LTTE officials ambushed: June 27 - A convoy carrying Amparai Political Head of the Liberation Tigers, Mr. Kuyilpan and other LTTE political staff, with Sri Lanka Army (SLA) escort facilitated by Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM), was attacked at Welikanda at 2.55 pm Sunday (26), Welikanda Police said. The bus carrying around 40 eastern LTTE officials from Kilinochchi to Batticaloa was ambushed with a land mine, but none were killed as the vehicle narrowly escaped the impact of the bomb. One LTTE official was injured in the attack. The ambush took place between two Sri Lankan military camps, at Boaththe, around 1 km from Welikanda SLA base. The convoy resumed its journey towards Batticaloa with high security, Police said.

The convoy escaped full blast of the explosion as it was travelling on the opposite side of the road to negotiate large potholes where the mine was buried. LTTE officials added. Rear side of the bus was damaged, as the bus narrowly escaped the landmine attack, he added.

A woman official of the LTTE, Ms S Tharsa, was discharged shortly after being admitted to Welikanda hospital, according to Welikanda Police ASP M P Dayaratne.

The bus with SLA escort set off from Omanthai SLA check-

point Sunday morning towards Black Bridge SLA checkpoint in Chenkalady, sources said. The bus was carrying Amparai Political Head of the LTTE and other eastern political officials who were staying in Kilinochchi without transportation facilities for more than four weeks, LTTE sources said.

Welikanda, bordering the Batticaloa and Polannaruwa districts is located around 65 km northwest of Batticaloa.

Businessman shot and wounded: June 27 - Mr Thambirajah Maheswararajah (31) was shot and wounded by unidentified gunmen at Lake Road in Batticaloa town around 2.00 pm on Sunday (26), sources said. Mr Thambirajah, a Batticaloa Amparai district Liquor agent, who was wounded in his right shoulder was admitted in Batticaloa Hospital. On 07 April 2005 Mr Thambirajah's previous residence in Chenkalady came under grenade attack by unidentified men. The grenade attack was blamed on paramilitary Karuna Group. Thambirajah moved into Batticaloa, following the grenade attack, sources said.

LTTE office attacked: June 27 - Three unidentified armed men entered Komari, Pottuvil political office of the LTTE around 4.30 pm Sunday (26) and caused extensive damage to the office, LTTE sources in Komari said. The office is located in Akkaraipattu-Pottuvil main road in an SLA controlled area. There were no LTTE officials at the time of the attack, Mr Nilakaran, Udumpankoddam Political Co-ordinator told TamilNet.

The attackers ransacked the office and removed many important documents from the office, LTTE officials said. Doors, windows and office tools were damaged by the attackers. Komari is located 40 km south of Akkaraipattu in Amparai district.

'Chandrika, a non-Buddhist'? June 28 - "President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunge is the number one enemy of Buddhism in Sri Lanka," said the National Bhikku Front (NBF), an organization of Buddhist monks in Colombo. The NBF urged the top Buddhist Prelates to withdraw the blessings they gave Ms Kumaratunge as Head of the State and to declare her as a non-Buddhist.

Venerable Dambara Amila Thero who staged a fast-to-death campaign a week earlier against the signing of the P-TOMS between the UPFA Government and the LTTE was speaking at a press briefing held at Hotel Nippon in Colombo Monday (27) morning.

Dambara Amila Thero who was forcibly removed from the venue of his fast by Police to the Colombo hospital further said that the President had earlier agreed to discuss the P-TOMS with the Chief Prelates of Sri Lanka and obtain their explicit blessings before signing the agreement. "Ms Kumaratunga did not keep her pledge and went against the Buddhist hierarchy of the country," he said. Amila Thero added that the NBF would continue to intensify its "island-wide" opposition against the signing of the P-TOMS.

Paper delivery agent shot dead: June 30 - Mr Arasakumar Kannamuthu, 38, a newspaper delivery agent for Batticaloa Eelanatham newspaper published by the LTTE, was shot and killed by unidentified gunmen Wednesday (28) morning around 8.45 am. The killing took place at Matupola in Kalmunai- Akkaraipattu road, a Sri Lanka Army (SLA) held place 50 km south of Batticaloa. The victim was on his route to Oluvil in a motorbike after delivering newspaper to Ninthavoor newspaper agent.

Arasakumar was shot by two gunmen riding a motorbike who had reportedly used 9 mm handgun. Arasakumar, also known as Bobby, is from Kokkaddicholai and a father of 3 children. Arasakumar began his career as a paperboy and later became an agent delivering newspaper in bulk to shops in Amparai district. Reportedly the Karuna Group had earlier threatened newspaper agents in Batticaloa and Amparai districts over phone and via fax.

Three SLA soldiers shot dead: July 1 - Three soldiers belonging to Sri Lankan Army (SLA) Intelligence were shot and killed in Urani, a suburb of Batticaloa, at 10.30 am on Thursday (30 June), Batticaloa Police said. The soldiers, attached to the Intelligence Unit at the Head Quarters of the 223 Brigade of the SLA, were

killed by unidentified gunmen between a SLA mini-camp at Palameenmedu and a Police post at Periyaurani, while they were returning from Palameenmedu fish market in a three-wheeler.

Lance Corporal Saran Kularatne, Saman Kumara and Saminda Kumara, the driver of the three-wheeler were the soldiers killed by the gunmen who the army alleged belonged to the LTTE. A T-56 assault-rifle was recovered from the scene, Police said. The incident took place at New Boundary Road, near the water tank in Urani.

Dissident MPs' expulsion from invalid: July 1 - Sri Lanka's Supreme Court has ruled that the expulsion of three dissident parliamentarians Messrs Rishard Badiudin, Ameer Ali and Najeeb Abdul Majeed from the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) was invalid and of no force and effect in law. The dissident parliamentarians are currently Ministers in the United Peoples Freedom Alliance (UPFA) government. The three petitioners in their applications had sought the Supreme Court to make an order nullifying their expulsion from the SLMC without giving adequate notice and without seeking their explanation.

Police constable shot dead: July 2 - Mr Samintha Roshan, 29, a Police constable, was shot and killed Saturday (2) around 11.15 am in Sri Lanka Army (SLA) held Kalkudah, 35 km north of Batticaloa. The killing, for which the army blamed the LTTE, took place 350 metres from Kalkudah Police station at Central Road, sources said. The Police constable was on duty when he was shot dead with a 9 mm pistol by an unidentified gunman riding a bicycle, Police said. Mr Samintha is from Elipitiya in Galle and was attached to Kalkuda Police.

UNP-s foot march: July 3 - A 162 km long foot-march organized by the main opposition United National Party (UNP), began Saturday (3) morning from the Vishnu Shrine, Donra head in the south of Sri Lanka. The UNP organized the march called "Peoples Power Movement" demanding that the Presidential election must be held in 2005. Protesters also demanded that the United Peoples Front Alliance government must reduce the cost of living. Mr.Ranil Wickremasinghe inaugurating the foot march Saturday said the UNP will not allow the UPFA government to deprive the rights of the people to elect a new President during this year as stipulated in the Constitution.

Mr.Ranil Wickremasinghe, Leader of the UNP, Mr.Karu Jayasuriya, Deputy Leader, Chief Opposition Whip Mr.Mahinda Samarasinghe, parliamentarians Mr.G.L.Peiris, Mr.Gamini Jayawickrema, Mr.Gamini Lokuge, Lakshman Kiriella, Ravi Samaraweera, and several others participated in the march.

According to the scheduled programme, the foot-march would reach Galle on July 4, Hikkaduwa on July 5, Balapitya on July 6, Induruwa on July 7, Beruwala on July 8, Kalutara on July 9, Panadura on July 10, Moratuwa on July 11 and finally Colombo Town Hall on July 12. The final rally would be held at the Colombo Town Hall premises on July 12.

Civilian killed in grenade attack: July 4 - One civilian was killed and two were seriously wounded when unidentified gunmen lobbed a grenade into a rice mill in Pattiyadipitty, Akkaraipattu Sunday (3) night around 11.30 pm, Police said. Pattiyadipitty is located in Amparai district in Akkaraipattu, 64 km south of Batticaloa. Gunmen entered a room where six employees were sleeping and fired into the room after lobbing a grenade, sources said.

The employee killed was identified as Mr Anpan, aged 35 years, and a father of a child. Mr Kathirimalai, 45, a father of 7 children and Mr Perinpan, 35, a father of 4 children were injured in the attack.

All the victims who were employees at the rice mill belonging to a Muslim owner, sources said. Police came to the crime spot around 1.30 am and transferred the wounded persons to Amparai hospital. The reason behind the attack was unclear. Gunmen had used T-56 rifle to fire inside the room, according to Akkaraipattu Police Officer In-Charge (OIC) Mr Sarath Gamage who is conducting investigations into the attack.

One wounded in grenade attack: July 4 - Mr Mahadevan Ratnasigamany, 29, was seriously wounded when unidentified persons lobbed a grenade into his residence at Sithandy in Eravur. The attack took place around 9.30 pm Sunday (3) night, Police said. Eravur Police is conducting investigations into the attack on the house located in Murugan Kovil Road at Sithandy.

Army band member shot dead in Trinco: July 5 - Mr.Sujith Prasanna, a band group member of the Gajaba Regiment of the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) base located inside the Fort Frederick in Trincomalee was shot dead by an unidentified person at Thaniyagama, a suburb in Chinabay when he was returning home Monday (4) early morning after attending a party, Police said. Chinabay is located about nine km off the east port town.

NPM protests against SLMM: July 4 - More than three-thousand supporters of the National Patriotic Movement (NPM) protested in front of the Norwegian Embassy in Ward Place, Colombo, Monday (3) against the slaying of three Sri Lankan Army (SLA) soldiers attached to the Intelligence Unit of 223 Brigade Head Quarters in Batticaloa the previous week. The National Patriotic Movement, a broad coalition of extreme Sinhala Buddhist nationalists, led by monk Ven. Elle Gunawansa Thero, also accused the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) for its failure to stop the killings. The NPM activists handed over a memorandum to an official at the Royal Norwegian Embassy. The memorandum also accused the members of the SLMM for not taking action to stop the killings. Riot police armed with batons prevented the protestors from approaching the embassy premises, sources said.

Tamil youth shot dead: July 5 - Mr.Varothaiyan, reportedly a former member of the EPRLF who later joined the EPDP, was shot dead allegedly by LTTE gunmen on Monday (4) around 7.30 pm when he was in his three wheeler at Thakkia Lane junction close to Trincomalee St. Joseph's College, police said. Varothaiyan who was seriously injured following the shooting was admitted in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of the Trincomalee general hospital and later succumbed to his injuries.

Sivaram murder suspect not identified: July 5 - The identification parade in the ounalst Mr.D.Sivaram's murder case was held Tuesday (5) in the Kaduwela Magistrate Court north of Colombo. All the six witnesses including Mr.Kusal Perera, journalist and Mr.Ravi Kumudesh, a health trade union official were present in Court. They did not identify the suspect at the parade held before the Magistrate Ms Champa Janaki Rajaratne. Witnesses Mr.Kusal Perera and Mr.Ravi Kumudesh were in the company of Mr.Sivaram on the day of incident April 28 at that time of abduction.

The suspect Arumugam Sriskandarajah was brought to court under heavy security. Journalists were not allowed to enter the courthouse and also to take photographs of the suspect. Further hearing in the case was put off July 19

Youth shot dead in Polannaruwa: July 05 - An unidentified gunman shot and killed a Tamil youth Mr. Nazar Mahalingam, 29, Monday (3) night around 9.30 pm at Muslim Colony in Polannaruwa. The victim was a Muslim convert and had moved from Nelukkulam in Vavuniya to Muslim Colony recently, Police said. The gunman who had come to the residence of Mr Nazar, asked the victim to come out of the house, shot him with a T-56 rifle and fled from the scene, sources said.

LTTE observes Black Tigers Day: July 05 - The LTTE on Tuesday (4) observed Black Tigers Day with sport events and public meetings. A main event was held in the evening at Nellyyady Central College in Vadamardchchi division in Jaffna district where on 5th July, 1987 Captain Miller, the first Black Tiger in a suicide mission drove an explosive laden truck into the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) troops garrisoned in the school. Forty soldiers were killed in that attack.

Hundreds of people including students and parents of Black Tigers killed in the war took part in a procession from Nellyyady Junction to the Central College with a Band Music leading the

procession. A float carried photos of Black Tigers who had been killed in action.

Black Tigers Day events were held in Killinochchi where a procession carrying photographs of Black Tigers including Captain Miller and Captain Angayatkanni commenced from Killinochchi Kandasamy Temple premises. In Trincomalee district the main Black Tigers day event was held in Sampoor in the LTTE controlled Muttur east from morning till midnight with sport activities, cultural items and public meeting.

Two policemen shot, one killed: July 6 - Two policemen allegedly from the Counter-Subversive Unit (CSU) were shot and seriously wounded when they were riding in a motorbike from Kalmunai Police station to Amparai. Both the policemen were initially rushed to Kalmunai Ashraff memorial hospital in critical condition. One of the policemen, A Kapila (25) from Badulla, succumbed to injuries while being transported to Colombo Hospital by helicopter, sources said. The shooting incident took place in front of a National Savings Bank branch in Kalmunai, 400 meters from the Kalmunai Police station, at 11.25 am on Wednesday (5).

Mr. Mohamed Rafideen, 35, from Irakkamam in Ampara, was in critical condition.

Two unidentified gunmen, reportedly from the LTTE, waiting in a motorbike shot the policemen with 9mm handgun, sources said. Tension prevailed in Kalmunai town as police and Sri Lanka Army (SLA) soldiers started a search operation following the incident.

Arrested at Uyilankulam checkpoint: July 6 - Mannar Magistrate Mr.N.M.M.Abdullah Wednesday (5) ordered remand in custody till July 20 of a Tamil youth, Mr. V. Sugunthan, on a report from the Mannar Police that the suspect had been arrested on suspicion when entering the government controlled area through Uyilankulam sentry from the LTTE held area in Vanni, sources said.

The Police told court the policemen on duty at the sentry point had recovered a set of Sri Lanka police uniform and national identity cards belong to others, from the possession of the suspect, allegedly belonging to the LTTE, is a native of Murukanpidy.

Karuna cadre shot and killed: July 7 - The dead body of a Valaichenai youth identified as Mr. Rajeenthan Selvarajah, 27, was found by Valaichenai Police in Palainagar Thursday (6) morning. Mr. Rajeenthan, reportedly from the Karuna Group, was shot and killed by a gunman around 7.30 pm on the previous night while he was returning to his hideout after paying a visit to his house in Thiyavedduvan in eastern Batticaloa district. The gunman reportedly belonging to the LTTE had used a T-56 rifle, according to the Police. Last year, in August 2004, gunmen shot and killed Rajeenthan's brother Nijanthan, who also reportedly belonged to Karuna Group, sources said.

Sri Lanka condemns London bombing: July 8 - Sri Lanka's President Ms Chandrika Kumaratunge sent a condolence message to the British Government expressing her and Sri Lanka's citizens' grief over the death and destruction caused by bomb blasts, sources in Colombo said.

Excerpts from the message said, "It is with shock and dismay that I learnt of what appears to be terror attacks in London today causing death and injuries to many civilians. We condemn such acts unreservedly. We share your view that democratic values and the way of life of the civilised world cannot be undermined by terrorism.

"On behalf of the Govt. and the people of Sri Lanka, I would like to convey to the govt and the people of the UK and to the victims and their families our sympathy and solidarity on this occasion."

Three LTTE officials, one civilian killed: July 10 - A group of unidentified gunmen shot and killed three LTTE officials and one civilians inside a LTTE office at 3rd Mile Post in Selvanayagapuram, Trincomalee. At least 7 well armed men, in

military uniform, lobbed two grenades into the residential building housing the office and fired at the LTTE officials and one civilian inside Sunday (10) morning at 10.45 am.

The victims were identified by the LTTE as Lt.Colonel Dikkan alias Vengai (Sebastiampillai Jeyachandran, Ward No 6, Periyakulam, Sambaltivu), Second Lieutenant Ilampuli (Thangarajah Wijendrarasa, Koontheivu, Muttur) and Anushan Kulasingham, National Auxiliary Force member.

The civilian killed was identified as Mr Koneswaran Muthaiah. A neighbour, Mr. Selvakumar, 32, who was standing on the street 100 meters away from the office building, was shot in his legs by the attackers who were fleeing from the scene after the attack. Another civilian was also injured in the gunfire by the assailants. The attackers were travelling in a maroon colour van with tinted glasses.

Tension prevailed in 3rd Mile Post as residents angered by the incident blocked SLA soldiers who were being deployed at the scene. Protestors demanded the removal of the soldiers from the premises of the farm. SLA soldiers were later withdrawn at the request by the Police.

Protesting youth destroyed the camera of a police officer who was taking photos of the protestors who had gathered at the spot.

A Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) official and Trincomalee acting magistrate, Mr. M K Selvarajah, visited the scene of the crime. Selvanayagapuram, an SLA held coastal suburb, is located 4 km north of Trincomalee town. The building, which belongs to a farm run by the agricultural department, has been used by the political cadres of the Tigers since the signing of Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) in the February 2002, sources said.

Trinco security tightened: July 10 - A bomb exploded at Mudcove junction along Mattikalai road in Trincomalee town, around 9.30 p.m., Sunday (10). There were no casualties, police said. Meanwhile, top officials of the Sri Lanka Navy, Army and Police in Trincomalee held an urgent meeting Sunday (9) evening to strengthen the security of the eastern port town following the Chelvanayakapuram killings, security sources said.

Rear Admiral Wasantha Karanagoda who assumed duties as the Commander, Eastern Naval Area and Co-ordinator in Chief of Security Forces and Police in the Trincomalee district on 4 July, held discussion with army and police officials following the Chelvanayakapuram killings.

Military denies role in killing of LTTE men: July 11 - The Defence Ministry denied LTTE allegations that the security forces were behind Sunday's (10) attack at Selvanayagapuram in Trincomalee where four LTTE members including two senior cadres were killed.

Military Spokesman Daya Ratnayake said it was the practice of the LTTE to point fingers of guilt at the military after every such attack. He said 99 percent of such attacks could have been prevented if the LTTE had adhered to the Ceasefire Agreement. He said more than 400 Wannai and Karuna faction cadres had been killed due to factional clashes. "Anyone would agree that in the past three years, the military had acted patiently while the LTTE had been trying to provoke the armed forces," the spokesman said.

Student killed in grenade attack: July 12 - A nineteen year old A/Level student, Perinpam Sangarapillai, was killed Monday (11) night around 9.00 pm by unknown attackers who lobbed a grenade at him at Savukkady on Tharavari Road in Eravur. Mr. Perinpam was returning home on a bicycle after attending a computer course. The motive for the killing was that the victim had refused to be enlisted by the LTTE as a fighting cadre, Eravur Police claimed. Perinpam was not involved in any political or armed activities according to his parents. Eravur Police found the body from a bush along the road.

Soldier wounded by sniper: July 12 - A soldier, on duty at the Anuradhapura road junction in Trincomalee, was injured on Monday (11) when he was shot at from a long distance, Trincomalee

police said. Police said the soldier sustained injuries to his hand but they were not serious. A sniper, believed to be an LTTE cadre may have hidden in a thicket far off from the Army checkpoint at the junction and got away after the shooting, police said.

There have been several incidents in the recent past in the Trincomalee district where the LTTE had engaged in acts like this with the intention of provoking the security forces, police said.

200 000 in UNP protest march: July 13 - The final lap of the protest foot-march organised by the opposition United National Party (UNP) drew around two hundred thousand anti-government protesters in Colombo on Tuesday (12) as it reached the final destination. The protest demanding the UPFA Government and President Chandrika Kumaratunge to hold the Presidential polls this year crippled the traffic in the Colombo city.

The last lap of the march commenced in Dehiwala in the morning along the main Galle Road and proceeding towards Lipton's circle in the heart of the capital.

Armed forces and the Police were deployed to guard Government institutions and departments which remained closed. Routes leading to the President's residence were blocked for traffic.

The Up-country Peoples Front (UPF), the Western Province Peoples Front (WPPF) and the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) took part in the final lap of the march along with the UNP leaders. The 10 day march was begun on July 2 in the tsunami hit Devinuwara region in the down south of the country and reached Colombo on Monday (11) drawing more than ten thousand supporters of the United national Party led by Mr Ranil Wickremesinghe.

General shut down in Trinco: July 13 - The normal life in Trincomalee town came to standstill Tuesday (12) following a general shout down called by the LTTE-backed Trincomalee District Tamil People's Forum (TDTPF), condemning the murder of LTTE members at Chelvanayakapuram by unidentified armed men in military uniform on 10 July.

Schools were closed down; state and private banks did not operate; business establishments did not open; offices of central government and provincial council did not function, as employees did not report for work; local authorities including Urban Council, Trincomalee did not function; And bus services came to a standstill, as passengers did not turn at the central bus stand.

A large number of Sri Lanka Army (SLA) and police personnel were deployed in the town. SLA soldiers had set up temporary checkpoints at several vital junctions in the east port town and checked motorists and pedestrians, the sources said.

One soldier, 13 policemen injured: July 13 - One soldier of the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) and four policemen of the Sri Lankan Police including a Sub-Inspector sustained injuries in two separate incidents in the suburbs of Trincomalee town on Tuesday (12).

In the first incident that took place at Anuradhapura junction, a suburb about four km off the eastern port town along Trincomalee-Kandy road, an unidentified gunman fired at a group of soldiers manning the checkpoint around 12.30 pm.. A soldier identified as Bandara sustained injuries, Police said.

In the second incident that took place in the afternoon around 3.30 pm near Allesgarden area on Trincomalee-Nilaveli road unidentified persons lobbed a grenade into the truck in which members of anti-riot squad of the Trincomalee Police were on patrol duty. 13 policemen including a sub-inspector Perera were injured in this incident, Police said.

The army blamed the LTTE for both the attacks. More army soldiers and policemen were deployed to strengthen the security in the Trincomalee town and its suburbs following these incidents, sources said.

Four SLA soldiers injured in Trinco: July 14 - Four soldiers of the Sri Lanka Army were injured in two separate grenade attacks in Trincomalee and Muttur since early morning on Wednesday (13).

Three soldiers in Muttur were injured when an unidentified

person threw a grenade on a group of army soldiers on duty near a welfare centre on Wednesday early morning 1.30 a.m. A child was also injured in the incident. All have been admitted in the Trincomalee general hospital, police said.

In another incident that took place Wednesday morning around 10.30 a.m. at Gandhinagar, a suburb of Trincomalee, a soldier of the SLA sustained injuries when a grenade was thrown at him, police said.

With these casualties the number of soldiers injured in grenade attacks and firing increased to six and policemen to thirteen since Tuesday. The army accused the LTTE of carrying out these attacks in violation of the ceasefire.

CSU policeman succumbs to injuries: July 14 - Kalmunai police station Counter Subversive Unit (CSU) police constable Mr. M. Rafaideen, 35, who received serious injuries on 6 July in a shooting incident in Kalmunai town, succumbed to injuries in Colombo Hospital Tuesday (12) night, hospital sources said. Mr. Rafaideen was transferred to Colombo hospital in a helicopter. A colleague of Mr. Rafaideen, Mr. A. Kapila, 26, succumbed to injuries in a few hours after the shooting incident.

Two unidentified gunmen waiting in a motorbike shot the policemen with 9mm handgun. The shooting incident took place in front of a National Savings Bank branch in Kalmunai, 400 meters from the Kalmunai Police station.

Ten soldiers injured in grenade attack: July 14 - Security has been beefed up in the Trincomalee district following a grenade attack on a truck of the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) injuring ten soldiers including a Lieutenant Wednesday (13) night around 8.30 pm. at Palathoppur in Muttur division. The attack took place when the army truck was on its way distributing meals to soldiers located in the area, military sources said. All the injured soldiers have been admitted in the Trincomalee General Hospital.

Since Tuesday about eleven police personnel and fourteen army soldiers have been injured in sporadic grenade attacks and firing by unidentified attackers, sources said.

The National Security Council was scheduled to meet Wednesday night to discuss and decide on further action into the current volatile situation in the Trincomalee district which has arisen following the killings of LTTE officials in Chelvanayakapuram last Sunday by unidentified gunmen and thereafter sporadic grenade attacks and firing on SLA soldiers manning checkpoints.

Mr. Rohan Abeyawardene, Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) for Eastern Region has asked the defence authorities to deploy more troops and policemen in the Trincomalee district. The DIG said that the LTTE cadres were carrying out the attacks on the military personnel accusing the military of having links with the killers of their senior cadres at Chelvanayakapuram in Trincomalee recently. Meanwhile Colombo media sources reported quoting Army Commander Major General Shantha Kottegoda as saying that the LTTE had been engaging in provocative action and the troops would hit back at the attackers if they targeted the security forces.

10 wounded in bomb attack on relief centre: July 14 - A bomb was thrown at a tsunami relief centre in the Muslim town of Muttur in north-eastern Sri Lanka on 13 July, injuring at least nine civilians and a soldier, police said, blaming the attack on Tamil Tigers. The bomb was hurled at a security post at the relief centre in the town, police said. The nine civilians hurt in the pre-dawn attack were all survivors of December's tsunami disaster, which killed more than 31,000 people in Sri Lanka and initially displaced a million. All the wounded were admitted to hospital.

Tamil youth shot dead in Puttalam: July 15 - Mr. Krishnan Ravichandran, 23, was shot and killed by unidentified gunmen Thursday (14) around 2:30 a.m. at Sempattai, Mathuramkuli in Puttalam district, sources said. Unidentified men driving in a white van abducted the victim, brought him to Sempattai in the van, and shot and killed him there, Police said. The victim, a father of

one child, is from Jaffna and was living in Grandpass, Colombo 14.

Karuna group member killed: July 15 - An alleged Karuna faction member was shot dead in the Puttalam town reportedly by a LTTE pistol gang member and less than half an hour later the gunman escaping in a bus was nabbed by the police. The shooting took place inside a hotel where the Karuna faction member was employed as a waiter. The cashier of the hotel was injured in the shooting and was taken to the Colombo National Hospital in a critical condition. The gunman after the shooting in the heart of Puttalam town had boarded a three wheeler, travelled a short distance and got into an Anamaduwa-bound bus. Police had later identified the three-wheeler and questioned the driver who said that the youth in it had got into the bus. Police gave chase to the bus and arrested the suspected who allegedly admitted that he was sent to the area to kill Karuna faction members. The victim was a youth from Trincomalee.

Police officer shot in Trincomalee: July 15 - Mr. Ranjit Lokkuhettige, Officer in Charge of the Tampalakamam police post was injured when an unidentified person shot at him on Thursday (14) morning around 8:45 am. when he was returning to his station on motorbike after physical training. The attack took place at Pokkuruni, a suburb in Tampalakamam village, which is located along Trincomalee-Kandy highway about 24 km southwest of Trincomalee, police said. Mr. Lokkuhettige who is a Sub Inspector was first admitted to the Kantalai district hospital and later transferred to Dambulla general hospital. Security personnel immediately cordoned off the area where the attack took place and conducted search operation to apprehend the attacker, police sources said.

Two civilians injured in grenade explosion: July 15 - Two civilians, a Tamil and a Sinhalese, were wounded when a grenade lobbed by an unidentified person missed the target and fell into a saloon and exploded. The incident took place at Anuradhapura junction, about two km off Trincomalee town on Trincomalee-Kandy highway, police said. The attacker lobbed the grenade targeting a passing police vehicle at the site. Immediately police and army soldiers rushed to site, cordoned the area and conducted search operation, police said.

The injured were admitted in the Trincomalee General Hospital. The Police arrested a youth related to the incident. The military blamed the LTTE for the incident.

Firefight between tigers and Navy: July 15 - One Liberation Tiger cadre was killed and two Sri Lankan Navy soldiers were injured in a shooting incident that took place near Perkar area in Kumburupiddy division north of Trincomalee, according to Police sources. The incident took place near the German radio relay station Deutsche Velle around 6:30 pm. Thursday (14). Meanwhile, Kumburupiddy villagers, who have taken refuge in the Methodist Church, said that two Tamil civilians were missing from the area following the shooting incident. The missing were identified as Muthiah Rasa (20) and Thangarajah Keetheswaran (25) of Kumburupiddy.

Journalist' remanded in Lt. Col's killing: July 15 - The journalist suspected of complicity in the Army Intelligence officer Lt. Col. Tuan Nizam Muthaliff murder, was remanded till August 26, by the Colombo Additional Magistrate Gihan Pilapitiya on 14 July.

The suspect, Indurugolla Vidanaarachchilage Sanjeewa, a resident of Galborella, Kelaniya was arrested and charged with aiding and abetting to commit the murder. Producing him before the Magistrate Court, the Police said their investigations had revealed that he had conspired to commit the murder of Muthaliff. They said more persons had to be questioned in this connection.

Three other suspects have been arrested by the Bandaragama police but they were not produced in Court.

Police told Court that according to the statement of one of the other suspects, Chakravartige Renuka Damayanthi, who was a friend of Sanjeewa, Sanjeewa had conspired to kill Col. Muthaliff. On hearing the news of the murder of Col. Muthaliff, Sanjeewa had spoken to a person named Anura and asked for details of the murder. The suspect had rented out a house for Damayanthi and the persons named Rajan, Udayan and Anura had been frequent visitors to that house, police said.

Earlier, Bandaragama Police produced six suspects including three women, allegedly involved in the murder before the Horana Magistrate and Additional District Judge B.A.R. Somasinghe and remanded them. The suspects are Arumugam Sendil Kumar alias Rajan of Kopay, Rajaratna Seetha Umma of Ratmalana, A.R. Karunaratne alias Anura Desappriya of Ratmalana, Mohamed Anzar alias Mohamed Rizvi of Maligawatte, Fathideva Saroja and Karunaratne Mudiyaesalage Shamalee of Welikanda. CID told court they would file plaint against Sendil Kumar alias Rajan, Rajaratnam Saraswathie alias Umma and Athulgeralalage Karunaratne alias Anura. The CID also told court that vital information about the killing had been elicited from the suspects now in remand custody. Lt. Col. Muthaliph was killed on May 31 near the Kirulapone colour lights while he was on his way to attend to an official work. According to the investigations, the suspects in custody are also alleged to have planned to attack the Air Force armoury. The suspects were arrested by Bandaragama Police and handed them over to the CID to conduct further investigations.

Three Muslims killed in Akkaraipattu: July 16 - Three persons, two Muslims and a person with Sinhala-Tamil mixed background, were shot and killed by unidentified gunmen at the Sixth Mile post, Akkaraipattu in eastern Batticaloa on Thursday (14) night. The killers had stopped the persons, who were travelling in a three-wheeler, tied the victims' hands behind before shooting them dead, Police said. The three-wheeler was set on fire by the killers.

Soldiers from the Special Task Force (STF) and Police personnel have been deployed in Akkaraipattu town as the situation in the area was reported as tense following the discovery of the bodies on Friday (15) morning. The victims have been identified as Abdul Lathif Rivaz, 26, a father of 4 children from Union Road in Akkaraipattu, Mohamed Nazar, 25, from Sea Road in Akkaraipattu and Jayasekara Banda Kucharanan, from Veerachanai in Palugamam, Batticaloa.

Graduates demand permanent jobs: July 16 - Thousands of unemployed graduates and those who hold temporary teaching jobs protested in front of the Fort Railway station in Colombo on 15 July demanding the Sri Lanka Government to provide them with permanent employment. Demonstrators carried placards and shouted slogans against Minister of Education and the Government. United People Freedom Alliance government promised to provide 42,000 jobs for unemployed graduates, but one year later has created only 3,000 new positions, protesters said.

The protest organized by the Graduate Employment Union, started in front of the Fort railway and proceeding towards the Financial Ministry but was stopped by the police at the boundary of High security zone. Heavily armed Special Task Force soldiers and policemen barricaded the main street and provided security around the Presidential residence.

Armed forces chiefs visit Trincomalee: July 16 - High-level defence team headed by Rear Admiral Daya Sandagiri, Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy and the Joint Chief of Staff of three armed forces on Friday (15) evening visited Trincomalee on the instructions of President Chandrika Kumaratunge and held discussions with top officials of the Army, Navy and Air Force and Police based in the eastern port town to bring the tense situation under control. Defence team comprised Commanders of the Sri Lanka Army, Sri Lanka Air Force the Sri Lanka's Inspector General of

Police, security sources said. Ms.Chandrika Kumaratunge briefed the high level defence team Friday morning before it left Colombo to Trincomalee, Colombo sources said.

Rear Admiral Daya Sandagiri later met with religious leaders of all faiths in the naval headquarters and discussed ways and means to bring back normalcy in the east port town. Press persons were not allowed to cover the discussion, sources said.

Navy men fire back and kills one Tiger: At least one LTTE cadre was shot dead and another two captured, when Navy personnel retaliated after coming under gunfire from a group of LTTE cadres at Kamburupiddy in Trincomalee on Thursday (14) night, police said.

Trincomalee ASP G. Stanislaus said around 7.30 p.m. the Navy post came under fire from a group of LTTE men and Navy personnel at the post had to retaliate in self-defence. At the time of the incident there were three Navy personnel at the post, he said. Later the security forces were able to capture two LTTE cadres, one with injuries along with a weapon and a communication set. The injured cadre had been admitted to the Trincomale hospital and the captured cadre handed over to the police. The dead man identified as Muthiah Rasa (20) of Kumburupiddy village and the injured as Thangarajah Ketheeswaran (25).

Man shot dead in Chilaw: July 17 - Arumugam Kuhendran, 28, an alleged member of Karuna Group, was shot and killed by a suspected LTTE gunman while he was visiting a hotel in Chilaw, a town located in the West coast 50km south of Puttalam Saturday (16) around 12:30 pm, Police said. Police apprehended a man with a revolver fleeing the scene after the shooting incident. After killing Kuhendran, the gunman tried to flee the scene in a three-wheeler. He stopped the three-wheeler half way and boarded a bus. Chilaw Police gave chase to the bus and arrested the man and recovered a revolver he was carrying, according to Police sources.

A Sinhala youth also injured in the shooting, was rushed to Chilaw Hospital and later transferred to Colombo Hospital, hospital sources said. The Hotel where the shooting incident took place, is situated near a police check point.

SLA soldier shot and killed: July 17 - A Sri Lanka Army (SLA) soldier, Lance Corporal Sumith Kumara, 25, was shot and killed by suspected Tamil Tiger gunmen Saturday (16) around 5:30 pm. at Vantharumoolai Main Road in eastern Batticaloa, Police said. The soldier, attached to Kommanthurai Army Camp in Eravur, was deployed on duty about 900 meters from the camp. Two gunmen who came in a motorbike shot the soldier on his chest and abdomen from close range using 9 mm handgun, said Eravur Police conducting investigations into the killing.

Seven arrested with mines and explosives: July 18 - Mannar Police Sunday (17) early morning around 1:45 am. seized two plastic boats and a three-wheeler with a consignment of claymore mines and explosives. Police arrested four persons while being landed at Konthaipiddy shore with explosives and another person with his three-wheeler waiting to remove the consignment, according to the Police.

Following interrogation of the suspects, all claimed by the police to be Tamil Tiger cadres, the Police rushed to Thalvupadu, raided a house and arrested a woman and his son with a quantity of explosives alleged to have been brought earlier, Police said.

The recovered explosives included 16 claymore mines, 2 remote control circuits, 105 feet flexible wire, 33 feet electric wire, a detonator, 9-volt battery and three cellphones, Police said.

The suspects, Thangiah Sahayanathan, Sourimuthu Selvam, Atputhasingham Suganthan, Gurusamy Kamalawathie, Gurusamy Sritharan, Karuppaiah Maniam Prakash and Siththiravel Gunaseelan are now the police custody, police said.

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ABOUT PEOPLE AND EVENTS

OBITUARY

Mr. Ponniah Govindasamy



Govindasamy, beloved husband of Mrs Govindasamy (UK); son of (late) Mr. & Mrs Ponniah; loving father of (late) Shanthy, Dha-

ksha (Germany), Sriharan (UK) & Easan (Germany) and beloved grandfather of Kalyani (Canada), Sanjeev (Aust), Jeshan (Germany) and great grandfather of Ajay (Canada) passed away in UK on 15th June 2005. The funeral took place on 21st June at West Sussex.

The members of the family wish to thank all friends and relatives who attended the funeral, sent floral tributes and messages of sympathy and assisted in several ways during the period of great sorrow.

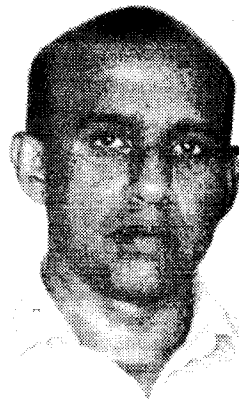
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nada tel; + 9052736961); precious father of Vithiyayini (Canada); treasured brother of Hyma (Sri Lanka tel + 2584472), Anandarupan (Saudi Arabia), Sakthirupan (UK), Nirtharupan (Sri Lanka), and Urmila (Sydney, Australia Tel + 296078209); loving brother-in-law of Jeyakumaran (Sydney, Australia), Jeyanthi (UK), Rajendra (Sri Lanka), Mahendra (UK), Mallika (Sri Lanka) and Subudhini (Canada); uncle of Krishanthi, Sakthitharan, Gowthaman and Lavanayan; Perriappa of Akshala and Shiyam Rabeesan; Sittappa of Gayani passed away in Canada on 8th June 2005 and the funeral took place in Canada on 16th June 2005.

- Sakthirupan, 18 Harvey Road, Ilford, Essex IG1 2NL
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IN MEMORIAMs

In memory of
Mr Justice Aiyadurai Sivanandan
 on the fourth anniversary
 of his passing away on 25th July 2001



Greatly missed and fondly remembered by his loving wife Pushpavathy; children Sivaraman, Sri Lakshmanan and Umayal; daughters-in-law Bahirathy and Kumuthiny; son-in-law Sam; grandchildren Aarabhi, Krishna, Akhilesh, Abhilash and Kanna; sisters Pathmavathy Jayaseelan,, Thilakavathy Wijayaratnam and Ankaikatanni Sivapiragasapillai.

First Year Sraddha Remembrance

Mr. Thirunavukkarasu Nadesamoorthy B.Sc; M.Sc.; C.Eng; M.I.Struct.E; M.C.I.O.B.; M.C..I.Arb; F.G.S.; former Principal Consultant Civil Engineer, Foster Wheeler Energy Ltd.; Shinfield Park, Reading, Berks RG2 9FM, UK; son of late Arunasalam Thirunavukkarasu and Parvathipillai of Atchuvaley, Jaffna, Sri Lanka passed away on 6th August 2004 and the first anniversary according to the Hindu calendar falls on 26th July 2005.



Remembered with love and affection by his beloved wife Vijeyaluxmi

Mrs. Mangai Sivasampu



In loving memory of **Mrs. Mangai Sivasampu** on the fifteenth anniversary of her passing away on 2nd August 1990.

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by her two sons.
 -15 Wolsey Way, Chessington, Surrey KT9 1XG.

Forthcoming Events

- Aug 1 Feast of St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori
- 2 Pirathosam; Aadi Sevvai (3)
- 4 Aadi Amavasai
- 6 Feast of The Transfiguration of The Lord Jesus Christ
- 7 Aadi Pooram
- 8 Chathurthi; Feast of St. Dominic
- 9 Aadi Chevvai (4) last
- 10 Shashti; Feast of St. Lawrence
- 11 Saint Sundaramoorthy Nayanar Guru Pooja
- 14 Shree Ghanapathy Temple Ther Thiruvizha
- 15 Shree Ghanapathy Temple Theertham; Eekathasi
- 16 Shree Ghanapathy Temple Vairavar Madai
- 17 Shree Ghanapathy Temple Poongavanam; Pirathosam
- 19 Full Moon; Varaluxmy Viratham
- 20 Feast of St. Bernard
- 21 Aavani Sunday (1)
- 22 Sankatahara Chathurthi
- 24 Feast of St.

- Bartholomew
- 25 Karthigai
- 26 Krishna Jayanthi
- 27 Feast of St. Monica
- 28 Aavani Sunday (2)
- 29 Feast of St. John the Baptist
- 30 Eekathasi
- 31 Pirathosam
- At Bhavan Centre, 4A Castletown Road, London W14 9HQ. Tel: 020 7381 3086/4608.
- Website:www.bhavan.net.
- Aug 4 8 p.m. Kathak by Aditi Mangaldas from India
- Aug 5 6.30 p.m. India's Independence Day Celebration. Chief Guests His Excellency Sri Kamaladesh Sharma with Smt Babli Sharma. Message, Cultural Programme & Snacks. All Welcome.
- Aug. 6 & Aug.7 4 p.m. Bhavan's Summer School Finale
- Aug 11 7 p.m. Vaastu Science – a talk by Mr. Ajay Poddar. All Welcome.



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Book Review

Abirami Andhathi

*What colour! What glow! What texture!
Thy face and form, O Abirami!*

Recently, Abirami Pattar's *Abirami Andhathi* was published with English translations – an effort which should be appreciated and admired especially by the Tamil community at large. This text, like most of the religious verses in Tamil, has remained seemingly impenetrable and remote to the younger generation. Unless they are taught in schools, or studied in universities, or passed orally in temples, they remained inaccessible to the young contemporary reader. The poetic quality of these Tamil verses was so profound that they needed, first of all, a Tamil translation. At last, Prof. Ram and Mrs. Sagi Kanthiah have made a precious contribution not only to the Tamil community but also to the world by translating Pattar's *Andhathi*. The book includes Pattar's verse, an in-depth explanation, and an English translation. Since they have considered each poem as an organic structure, their translation has become exceptionally balanced.

This work can be seen as an effort to bring together the widely spread Tamil community in general and the younger generation in particular. Members of the younger generation are becoming increasingly drawn towards their studies and jobs. They have no time or patience to read and understand a work like *Abirami Andhathi*. Unless these works are made simple and interesting to read, they will remain untouched in libraries and temples in the future. This situation would be a serious threat to our culture, language and religion. Further, due to the proliferation of science and technology, the belief in God and religion is dwindling away. As a result, Translation has become more and more important than ever before. Those who are involved in this project have considered it their duty to instil this belief into our community.

In his *Homage to Sextus Propertius*, Ezra Pound claims that his purpose in writing the poem was to bring a dead man to life. In short, it was for him a kind of literary resurrection. Abirami Pattar, lived about 300 years ago. The main problem when translating a text from a remote period is that the poet and his contemporaries are dead. The significance of the poem in its context is also dead. The genre, we could say, is dead too. In this sense, showing intense fidelity to the original shape, form or tone is not going to help the rebirth of a new *English Andhathi*. The other problem is, since Pattar's verses are religious poems, the Source Language text is regarded as being of a higher status. In addition, the formal literary elements such as texture, rhythm, syntax, metre and resonance of these Tamil verses are extremely rich and complex, but, unfortunately, incomprehensible to a young contemporary reader. Obviously, the original and the translation are very different from each other, visually different in terms of shape, length, organization of lines, and of course in tone. Each verse consists of four lines, a consistent element in the original having a certain intrinsic significance, to understand which we have to resort to our knowledge of Tamil poetry; but the translations vary in the number of lines, bracketing off the form and concentrating on the actual content. It is humanly impossible to focus on form given the intense, condensed, twisted and telescoped nature of Pattar's poetry. His skill de-

pends on compressing a large amount of information into a short frame, of composing a verse that is simultaneously poetic and pious. The translators have done their work with new vigilance, neither obscuring the meaning nor blunting the sharpness of the source text. It seems that they had clearly decided on what constitutes the total structure and on what to do when translating a type of poetry which relies on a series of rules that are non-existent in the Target Language.

Pattar's verses abound with alliteration and assonance. The translators have paid much attention to this element too:

*"The sentient, the supersentient, and the supernal"
"Melting into the vibrant mix of the vermilion pasts"*

At times, in some of the translations, some words are deliberately and consciously archaic but not obscure or awkward. The translators seem to have been truly concerned about conveying the remoteness of the source text in time and place:

*"With damsels with skin as smooth as bamboo"
"Thou art the sparkling jewel set with the gem"*

Even though some say that archaizing is not fashionable these days, it is extremely important to keep in mind that there are meaningful theoretical principles for its employment by translators. It is interesting to remember Fitzgerald's remark that it was better to have a live sparrow than a stuffed eagle.

In the line "Decked with laburnum (Kondrai) golden" in Verse 34, the bracketed word hinders the spontaneous flow of the poem.

The translators have also focused on the pious tone of the source text, on the devout relationship between the speaker and the addressee that emerges from the poems. The elegance of diction shows that the translators wanted to ensure that the characterization of the Goddess Ambikai predominates over all the other elements.

*Mother Superior! The ground of the Universal Spirit,
I see You not, yet I feel You in the core of my being;
To slow the weathervane mind caught in the gusty senses,
I have to figure You and fix You, macrocosm of ebullient energy!*

It is very rare to see many collections like this getting published in our era. The effect of reading this text is in fact a heightened experience of our spiritual life. I sincerely hope that the translators and all those who were engaged in this project will continue their proud work to make our literature and culture known to the outside world and to us.

- Parthiban Vadivelu

(This book is available free and only the postage from Canada has to be paid.)

Please contact the co-ordinator Mrs Tharmaseelan on (905) 238 2922

Wedding Bells

We congratulate the following couples on their recent wedding
Raj, son of Mr. & Mrs M.Aru-mugam of 'Gala Knowe', 8 Ardrossan Road, West Kilbride, Scotland KA 23 9LR and **Nimai** had their Hindu Wedding Ceremony on 1st July 2005 at The Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh and their Poruwa Wedding Ceremony

on 2nd July 2005 at Stirling Castle, Edinburgh.

Shahendra, son of Dr. & Mrs. Rajasekeran of 4, Short Clough Close, Reedsholme Village, Rossendale, Lancs. BB4 8PT and **Bamini**, daughter of Mr. & Mrs Balendra of 4, Demesne Road, Wallington, Surrey SM6 8PP on 2nd July 2005 at The Café Royal, 68 Regent Street, London W1 5EL

MIOT sponsored Institute of Family Medicine in North and East Sri Lanka

Medical Institute of Tamils (MIOT) was formed by a group of medical/dental professionals in 1998, to work towards the welfare and betterment of Tamils in our homeland and abroad. MIOT at their 2002 AGM decided to form forces groups in different specialities of healthcare viz: (a) Primary care; (b) Obstetrics and Gynaecology; (c) Medicine; (d) Paediatrics; (e) Psychiatry and (f) Surgery. These focus groups could concentrate towards providing better medical care and education in their chosen specialty. By coordinating specialists worldwide MIOT plans to co-ordinate work in our homeland in a planned and structured way. This process would enable Tamil people in Sri Lanka to gain maximum benefit from the visiting dignitaries.

MIOT's Primary care focus group visits Sri Lanka.

Dr Sivananthan (MIOT's primary care focus group's chair), Dr. Rajayogeswaran, Dr Poologanathan (MIOT's President) and Dr. Kukathasan (MIOT's secretary), visited Sri Lanka in April 2005 to initiate MIOT's Institute of Family Medicine (IOFM), which aims to provide high standards in primary medical care.

Formation of IOFM.

On 16th April 2005, the IOFM inaugural session took place in the medical college auditorium, chaired by the Dean, Dr Sivapalan. There was a good turn out, over 250 medical students, teachers, professors, heads of departments and others were there.

Eminent specialists, professors of family medicine from the southern universities' like Dennis Aloysious, Antonette Periera, Heen Nilane, Dr Prethi Wijeyagunawardane (President Ceylon College of GP) and Dr Sri Ranjan MRCGP (Int.) Examiner participated in the morning session. They were very impressed by the planned IOFM formation in Northern Sri Lanka and pledged their full support and gave their blessing for its success.

MIOT's IOFM aims to provide top class; evidence based medical care in primary care setting, similar to general practice in the UK. We plan to set up about 10 centres in different areas in North-East Sri Lanka (with the blessing of the local administration). Patients will be examined by an IOFM doctor, who will then discuss management plans with them, for the best mode of treatment to be a joint decision between clinician and patient.

IOFM is affiliated to Jaffna Medical College's Department of Community medicine which is why MIOT's project will be known as the Department of Community and Family Medicine. Medical students will attend IOFM clinics and lectures by IOFM doctors. When these students qualify, they will have a clear vision of evidence based primary care medicine.

MIOT is thus helping (through IOFM) to raise the quality of primary medicine care to our people in their homeland. We aim to achieve the following objectives:

- The incorporation of evidence based medicine into tradition based care,
- Professional-centred decisions being shifted towards the patient having more input.
- To help develop skills of staff (medical officer/nurse/healthcare worker) so are properly equipped and fit for the job.

- high quality patient care, and
- for partnership with like minded organisations..

MIOT's IOFM is looking for well-wishers (as individuals and in groups) to identify buildings (e.g. un/underused houses) in their home villages which could be refurbished to meet IOFM's medical standards, and for funding for its running costs. IOFM would provide the expert know-how and a medical doctor (part-time).

Such a well wisher would be making a valuable contribution to the well being of people in their own village including relatives. If anyone is interested in projects of this nature, please contact MIOT at admin@miot.org.uk. Also, there are positions for voluntary primary care physicians (GPs) wishing to work for 2-3 weeks in the IOFM centre while on holiday in Sri Lanka.

At present, we have a primary care centre where patients are seen by an IOFM doctor. Necessary prescriptions are given so that patients can then go and buy their prescribed medication.

The MIOT's focus group on primary care later visited various hospitals and was inspired by the dedicated work done by Dr Kalhiravetpillai at base hospital, Point Pedro. Dr Mylerumperumal, at the district hospital Point Pedro; and Dr Gangatharan at Ponnampalam memorable hospital in Kilonochi. They continue to render their full hearted services to our nation even in their 70's-80's. We should all follow their foot steps of full-hearted sincere dedication to deliver a high standard of medical care, in spite of the odds against their good work. The three hospitals were scrupulously clean, ran with high quality care given 24 hours a day throughout the year, matching western medical standards.

MIOT wholeheartedly congratulates these dedicated doctors, may God give them good health to continue to heal others.

The team also visited Moolai cooperative hospital which is being revamped to meet the modern medical standards and to bring it back its former glory. The dedicated management team for this is headed by Mr Velupillai (in Moolai) and Mr Sivananthan (in the UK). For further details about Moolai Hospital, telephone: Mr. Velupillai 0094 212225494 or Mr. Sarvananthan 0923 223987. They are currently in urgent need of a Gynaecologist to start up the Obstetrics and Gynaecology department where new high cost instruments are not being used due lack of a qualified gynaecologist.

The IOFM team also visited centres like Annai Illam, in Kilonochi, where Father Reginald and his team of 20 dedicated counsellors were seen to be delivering a high standard of counselling care for victims of Post Tsunami Stress Disorder. Many outreach clinics have been set up by them for Vanni victims of War and Tsunami. Incidence of suicidal ideation; anxiety and depression has increased, as has the incidence of alcohol abuse. Psychologists/ Psychiatrists/Community Psychologist nurses in helping please contact MIOT office 01708 722303.

MIOT's Primary care focus group travelled to Trinco, Batti, and Amparai. They also met with the doctors of Kilinochi, Batticalo Medical Association.

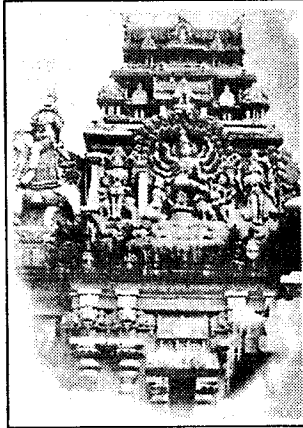
They worked with pleasure in two Deepalan Medical Centres, where they realized the efficiency of locally trained paramedical officers who were capable of suturing wounds, checking blood pressure, testing blood sugar, dispersing medicines etc. Many of these people render their services free.

Overall it was an eye opening, soul-searching trip which we all gained so much, in spite of being exhausted.

Dr. Kukathasan. MIOT's General Secretary.

RESTORING NAGULESWARAM - A SACRED DUTY

Of the five hallowed Siva temples (pancha ishwarams) in Srilanka Naguleswaram once stood supreme in the Jaffna peninsula. Hindu shrines attain a unique status when blessed with three special attributes moorthy (deity), thalam (temple and its precincts) and theertham (source of water). Endowed with all three, Naguleswaram has been regarded from ancient times a pre-eminent place of worship. **Curative properties of Keerimalai**



Popularly called Keerimalai (nagulam - keeri - mongoose), the place has its name wonderfully preserved in numerous legends. Previously it had been called Tiruthambaleswaram. The curative value of its waters is the theme around which many legends have emanated. Ancient texts refer to the confluence of fresh water from the springs on the coast, with brackish water from the sea, ganga samudra sangamam, as the union of the powers of Siva and Sakthi. The sage Nagulamuni found a cave nearby a haven for meditating and "faced the rising and setting suns with equal facility and had the summer and winter solstices directly overhead, when they occurred" (Dr.R.Vigneswaran in Naguleswaram, 2003). In his treatise, Tamil Culture in Ceylon (1950), MD Raghavan refers to the "sacred spring of Keerimalai - its very name signifies the hill of Nagula muni, the sage who was shrunken with austerities, that was likened to the Kiri (mongoose)". Maruthapuraveehavalli, a Pandiyan princess, cured of her equine facial features by the waters, built Maviddapuram Kandaswamy temple nearby.

There are numerous puranic references to the historic temple, notably in Dhakshina Kailaya puranam. Suta Samhita, a Sanskrit work on Saivism and part of Skanda Purana, refers to Naguleswaram among ancient sites of pilgrimage, an indication of the antiquity of Saivism in Jaffna.

(A Short History of Hinduism in Ceylon, CS Navaratnam 1964).

Temple buildings

The Yalpana Vaipava Maalai, credits Prince Vijaya as the one who restored the Siva temple. However the historian and Cambridge scholar, Paul Pieris asserts, "Long before the arrival of Prince Vijaya, there were in Srilanka five recognised Iswarams of Siva which claimed and received the adoration of all India. These were Tiruketheeswaram near Mahtitha; Munneswaram dominating Salwatte and the pearl fishery; Tondeswaram near Mantota; Tirukoneswaram near the great bay of Kottiyar and Naguleswaram near Kankesanturai. The situation of the shrines close to these ports cannot be the result of accident or caprice and was probably determined by the concourse of a wealthy mercantile population whose religious wants called for attention..."

The impressive Hindu temple on the northern coast did not escape the envy of Portuguese invaders in the early 17th century. In 1621 Naguleswaram was razed to the ground by marauding forces. Yalpana Vaipava Maalai refers to a Brahmin priest fleeing the temple but ensuring that at least some of the valuables were preserved, by hiding them in a near by well.

Srilasri Arumuga Navalar

It was not any easier under subsequent rulers. In 1878, the savant Sri Arumuga Navalar who led the revival of public inter-

est in Saivism, campaigned for the restoration of the temple, urging every one to donate in kind or cash for this work. Seventeen years later a consecration ceremony took place. However in 1918 the temple suffered severe damage due to an accidental fire.

Bombing by the Srilankan armed forces

On the 18th of October 1990, while the auspicious Kedara Gowri fast was being observed in the temple by hundreds of devotees, the Srilankan forces carried out an indiscriminate aerial attack. This resulted in extensive damage to the temple buildings and priest's quarters. The chief priest and members of the public had to flee for safety. The area was completely out of bounds for seven years. In 1997 the chief priest who was allowed to visit the area with the Additional GA and others discovered the extent of the sacrilege (Case of the missing idols - vandalism or sacrilege? -Weekend Express May 10th 1997). The reparations so far by successive Governments have been far from adequate.

Aadi Amavaasai

The new moon or amavaasai is a significant day in any calendar. According to Hindu astrologers, in the month of Aadi, the moon is in the ascendant in Kataka rasi, which is occupied by Sun, and this concurrence is reminiscent of Siva and Sakthi. Hence the special significance of Aadi Amavaasai as a day when children remember their departed parents, notably their late father. It is customary for them to perform ablutions, offer prayers to the departed souls with the help of a priest (dharpanam) and attend a temple of Siva. In Srilanka, Keerimalai continues as the foremost shrine for Aadi amavaasai.

Sri K Naguleswara Kurrukul

The present Chief Priest Sri Naguleswara Kurrukul took over the mantle when only 22 years of age, after the passing away of his father in 1947. Hence, for an unbroken period of nearly six decades he has carried out this function with great dedication and devotion. Many of his children are abroad as leading priests in their respective countries, returning home to help their father during important festivals. Sri Naguleswara Kurrukul himself has visited the UK five times, the last one following an invitation to officiate in the consecration ceremony of the London Murugan Temple. He has been afforded this honour in several other countries including India, Australia and South Africa. Instead of choosing a comfortable existence in an affluent abode, he toils with singularity of purpose for the restoration of Naguleswaram. Despite the trying circumstances under which he works, he has slowly but surely rebuilt the temple with donations received, to an extent where nearly 70% of the work is complete. The political situation permitting a Maha Kumabhishekam is being mooted within a couple of years. A pre-requisite for this is a raja gopuram or temple tower.

Raja Gopuram and the Keerimalai Sivan Temple Trust (UK)

There is a Hindu belief that praying at the grand tower of a temple brings benefits that accrue with a million virtuous deeds. The KSST (UK) was established following the first visit to the UK by Sri Naguleswara Kurrukul in July 1989, and has helped with the reconstruction of the temple. One of the main objectives has been the manufacture of a large bell for the temple, in a foundry in UK. However following a request from Sri Naguleswara Kurrukul, emphasising the necessity for a Raja Gopuram, KSTT has embarked on a fund raising project for that purpose.

With the help of devotees worldwide there are plans to complete the 108-foot Raja Gopuram with seven storeys. The project, which began in 1982, came to a standstill after the first stage. Work was recommenced on Aani Uthiram day on the 12th of July 2005 and funds are urgently needed.

Contributions however small are welcome. The details of the Bank account are as follows: KSTT, National Westminster Bank, Dartford Branch Sort Code 60-06-33 Account No: 00347949.

For further details please contact Dr. S. Navaratnam (President) 01277 223981, Dr. K. Sivakumar (Secretary) 0208 468 7181 Or Mr. V.R. Ramanathan (Treasurer) 01268 560522

- Dr. Kandiah Sivakumar

8th ANNUAL SAIVA CONFERENCE

organised by
THE FEDERATION OF SAIVA (HINDU) TEMPLES UK

The venue of the above conference shall be as follows:-
Saturday, 20th August 2005 from 9 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. at Shree Ganapathy Temple, 122-133, Effra Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 8PU. Tel: 0208 542 4141

Sunday, 21st August 2005 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at Highgatehill Murugan Temple, 200A Archway Road, Highgate, London N6 5BA. Tel: 0208 348 9835

The Federation has invited the following distinguished Saiva dignitaries from South India and Sri Lanka to grace the occasion and address the conference on both days

Thavathiru Kumaraswamy Thambiran Swamigal M.A., Ph.D., Kattalai Visaranai, Tharmapuram Aadeenam; Tamilnadu.

Senthamil Sivaneri Chelvar Mr. Arumugam; Thiru Manthira Chelvar Mr. T.V. Vekataraman, former Chief Secretary, Tamilnadu; Mr. N. Manmatharajah, Principal, Colombo Hindu College

Sivasri Jegatheesa Sarma, Thirukanitha Sothida Nilayam, Madduvil, Sri Lanka
20th August, the first day

Maheswara Poosai

Presentation of Prizes: Children's Speech and Thirumurai Competition

Women's Forum: Discussion of challenges facing mothers and teachers of Saiva Education

Bramasri Jegatheeswara Sarma: Question & Answer session: Important Festivals, Viratha Days and Astrology

Group Discussion and debate: Teaching Saiva Education.

Cultural Programme

21st August, the second day.

Saiva Education Curriculum: Presentation by Saiva Munnete Sangam, London

Youth Forum: "What do the Youth want from Saiva Education?"

Panel Discussion: Saiva Education for the Next Generation

Bramasri Jegatheeswara Sarma: Question & Answer session: Saivaism and Astrology

Dr. S. Sritharan

Chairman

Tel: 01622 693 938

Dr. S. Maheswaran

Secretary

Tel.: 0208 946 7890

Australian Newsletter

Australia is anxious in the aftermath of July 7 bomb blasts in London and its Prime Minister even went on record that his country could face suicide bombings despite the government having no intelligence of an imminent attack. The general mood is sombre while the fear that such attacks was a possibility in Australia, though not as high a risk as in Britain is beginning to be acknowledged as a reality. Prime Minister even points that the British government had no specific intelligence about what happened in London and urges that Australia shouldn't complacently imagine that there aren't potentially suicide bombers in this country.

Australia is well-known for its tough stance on asylum seekers and its policy of immigration detention has been a thorny issue for many years now. Immigration department's handling of onshore asylum claims and their management of detention facilities have also come under increasing criticism. But, what is new now is an inquiry commissioned by immigration minister has come up with damning findings on the operational style of immigration department. Former federal police commissioner Mick Palmer's inquiry on immigra-

tion department's handling of two Australians, one Ms Cornelia Rau a 38-year-old Australian resident of German decent and the other Ms Vivian Alvarez an Australian citizen of Philippine origin. On the suspicion of being an illegal immigrant, Ms Rau was detained in prison in Queensland for six months and then at the Baxter immigration detention facility in South Australia for four months while Ms Alvarez was wrongfully deported to The Philippines in 2001. It would appear that Rau and Alvarez are just the tip of the iceberg and what happened to these two Australians who are with a particular medical history is an appalling denial of the individual liberty of two of its citizens, along with a failure to provide them with the special care of which they stood in need, which resulted from bureaucratic incompetence, enabled by systemic weaknesses in various institutions.

Australian Tamils watch these developments with bewilderment as many of their fellow Tamils who escaped persecution in Sri Lanka are struggling to convince the authorities of their genuine claims. Not just it, what happened to Rau and Alvarez could happen to any Australian for that matter and no doubt, it is a specific concern for Australian Tamils who have a history of suffering in their native Ceylon.

-Sivasupramaniam Sitsabesan

Dr. Lakshman Sinnadurai

- An Appreciation

Dr. Lakshman Sinnadurai, son of Dr. Namasivayagam Sinnadurai, Ceylon's Judicial Medical Officer in Colombo (1930's), was born in Borella, Colombo. Lakshman was educated at St. Joseph's College, Colombo, where he played cricket, took part in athletics and was a good sportsman.

Unfortunately, his father died in a car accident when Lakshman was quite young and so the family migrated to the U.K. Lakshman won a scholarship to University College, London, where he read Mathematics. He was a brilliant student, obtained a First Class Honours degree and was appointed lecturer in the Department of Mathematics at Birkbeck College, University of London.

Lakshman remained unmarried for a long time, looking after his aged mother, Maisey Heyn. Ultimately he proposed to one of his students Gabrielle, and the couple were later married. They were a devoted couple and Gabrielle helped to look after Maisey, who was ailing and was largely confined to a wheel chair. She passed away soon afterwards.

Lakshman was diagnosed with cancer and with Gabrielle's help, endured his condition until the end. Lakshman died at the age of 64 on the 21st of June 2005. His kind and lovable ways endeared him to the large Namasivayagam family, the Heyn family and his father's first wife's relatives, the Abrahams. Lakshman was a popular senior lecturer and a large number of his students attended his funeral, which took place in Woking, Surrey.

May his soul rest in peace!

- K. Raviraj

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