

TAMIL VOICE INTERNATIONAL

TVI

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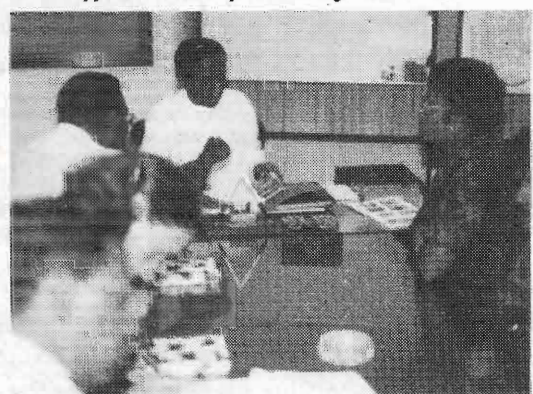
*"We love peace
But not peace at any price"*



Preliminary talks with Government officials - friendly banter



President Premadasa drops in at the Hilton Hotel for a chat.



*A blow for peace -
Anton making a point.*



*A close view of Yogi
with the President.*



LTTE team with the press

YOUR VOICE

LTTE BE WARY

Navamany, Kankesanturai

While the Tamils welcome the talks between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government, I will have to express the concern in many Tamil minds. Talks and pacts are not new us. The Sinhalese have no record of having implemented a single pact made with the Tamils. President Premadasa is a Sinhala Buddhist. Further, it is learnt that he is also trying to invent a solution to the problem within the present unitary constitution. While feeling sorry for the President, I have to caution the Tigers not to trust the Sinhalese. Tamil Eelam is the ONLY solution for the Tamils and if for any reason anything less is to be accepted, it should be under a constitution similar to that of either Canada or Switzerland.

INTERNATIONAL TAMIL CONFERENCE, 1989

S. Ratnam, Wembley, UK

The first international Tamil conference held in 1988 was considered to be one of the best conferences ever held by Tamils. I am pleased to know that the second conference held recently was even better than the previous one. I am really proud of the Tamils who organised it. Through your columns, let me congratulate the World Federation of Tamils for their dedication and ability to organise. The resolutions adopted have been well thought out. Implementation of the resolutions is very important. I wish the Federation every success in its activities to support the Tamil National Struggle.

WE ARE DENIED EVEN SUNLIGHT

Paramu, IPKF Detention Camp

I am one of those confined to the IPKF camp at for the crime of having fought under the leadership of our great leader Prabaharan for the emancipation of the Tamil people. Even sunlight is prevented from reaching us. But, we rejoice reading the TVI which we somehow get. The poem in Tamil appearing in the issue of April 1, 1989 gave us great strength and hope. We believe that the Tamils living abroad are doing much for our cause and TVI is certainly a part of our struggle. We salute you and wish TVI to continue with its service. *(translated from Tamil)*

INDIAN LEADERS AT CONFERENCE

K S Rajah, Kenton, UK

May I use your columns to congratulate the World Federation of Tamils for having held the International Conference for the second time very successfully, and in particular to have secured the participation of Indian leaders like A P Venkateswaran, K P Unnikrishnan, P Upendra, K Veeramani, Aladi Aruna, N V N Somu and T Alagirisamy. Mr Sunanda K Datta-Ray, Editor of The Statesman made a significant contribution as did Ms Karen Parker and Prof Wilson. On the whole the conference and the public meeting that followed were well organised and great credit should go to the Federation. Well done.

INDIAN ARMY INTENSIFIES OPERATIONS IN THE NORTH

In a hostile response to the ongoing peace talks between the LTTE and the Government of Sri Lanka, the Indian army has intensified military repression and terror against the Tamil-speaking people in the occupied North-Eastern region of the Island. During the course of the week ended May 20, more than 50 innocent civilians have been killed by the rampaging Indian soldiers in the Jaffna peninsula.

Search-and-destroy missions and cordon-off operations by the Indian army have increased in several parts of the peninsula and the civilian population is constantly subjected to harassment, intimidation, assault and indiscriminate shooting. More than hundred people have been admitted to local hospitals with serious injuries. What has angered the Jaffna population was the mass scale rape of young women by the Indian soldiers.

Indian forces are patrolling the roads and lanes with tanks, armoured vehicles and heavy weaponry as a show of formidable force intimidating and terrorising the Tamil population in the peninsula. This hostile behaviour towards a peaceful civilian population and the collective punishment inflicted on them was the consequential reaction to the Colombo peace talks between the LTTE and the government of Sri Lanka in which the Tiger delegation had revealed the atrocities of the army of occupation. The successful students' protest in the peninsula against the behaviour of the Indian army has also irritated the Indian soldiers.

The Indian military operations have also been intensified in other areas of the North and East. In the Nedunkerni area, where the LTTE delegates were picked up by Sri Lankan helicopters, the Indian army mounted major operations in which 9 civilians were killed and 13 seriously injured and several houses were set on fire. In one of the clashes between the LTTE and the Indian forces in the area Lt Col Navam, LTTE's Area Commander of Mullaitivu, was killed.

In the Sammanthurai and Kalmunai areas of the Eastern province the Indian-backed Tamil armed groups were responsible for the spread of communal violence.

In the meantime, the Indian military authorities are setting up new army camps in the North and East. New military camps have been established recently at Sarasalai, Ithavil, Varani and Mirusuvil in the Jaffna peninsula.

BOYCOTT INDIAN GOODS, SAYS JVP

JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera, in a letter dated May 14 (the JVP anniversary), has called for a boycott of Indian goods and asked those having business connections with India to stop them by June 14.

The warning is given not only to those having distinguished citizenship but also to the EPRLF who are described as India's fifth column by the JVP.

In the letter there is a warning to the people to be vigilant and beware of a plot by the EPRLF and Sinhalese who wear leftist masks to explode bombs in Colombo.

The JVP has called for support and cooperation to rid the country of the occupying army, the Indian Peace Keeping Force.

The statement congratulates the Northern Unit of the Patriotic People's Front (Eastern Province) for killing an Indian Major and 12 IPKF men last week in Trincomalee.

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT PREMADASA'S FIRST HUNDRED DAYS

It is now customary to assess the performance of a government after its first hundred days. The conventional wisdom is that this initial testing time provides clues and insights to future governmental behaviour. President Premadasa completed this period towards the end of March.

The omens are not quite clear. The President wants peace and his government therefore is in search of that holy grail. Talks, dialogues, overtures, promises of amnesty and offers of seats in Parliament have still to bring the JVP and the LTTE into the mainstream of electoral politics. The President however misses the point. Fundamental demands have first to be requested. There is a failure to understand the basic issues.

Moreover, the President has not been able to keep to his undertaking to send back the IPKF. His administration now proffers excuses. This provides some evidence of the future which could well be procrastination and postponement.

Such a pattern has emerged in the President's Poverty Alleviation Programme. Because of obvious constraints, the scheme has had to be revised. And the Sinhalese poor complain, *Denawa kiyala denna na* (having said it will be given, it is not being given). We hope that this will be avoided in other spheres.

President Premadasa has streamlined and transformed his office into a highly centralised and omnipotent Leviathan. He has tightened his hold over Parliament. The position of Prime Minister has been diminished so that there will be no challenges to the power of the chief executive. Are these changes good for democracy? However, the President has devolved a modicum of power to the provincial councils. We await the full devolution package. We also introduce a note of caution. Sinhala governments have been known to retreat to a familiar tactic. Since the B-C Pact and successive agreements and legislation, governments have blamed the bureaucracy for being obstructionist in the implementation. While there could be a small bit of truth, ministers and bureaucrats have increasingly conspired to conserve power in Colombo. The civil servants are made the willing scapegoats. Given such a dismal record, we urge that the President campaign for a change in attitudes.

President Premadasa has important tasks. He has to formulate a foreign policy which will not run counter to the interests of India's geopolitical estate which now extends from Khatmandu to Tissamaharama. India seeks the role that Viscount Curzon, Britain's Viceroy at the turn of the century, dreamed of - for the Imperial Raj to secure dominance over the Indian Ocean, especially over all the immediate states within India's security radius. We dare say that the ghost of Curzon presently walks the corridors of New Delhi's South Block. Colombo does not seem to take this factor into account. Consequently there is no planned strategy to deal with India's encroachments on the island's sovereignty. India has had some of its best diplomats posted to Colombo. Colombo, on the other hand, does not view the office of High Commissioner in New Delhi with seriousness. Again procrastination and a lack of urgency to reach finality characterise Colombo's thinking. The withdrawal of a few IPKF battalions, to-ing and fro-ing over the proposed 5 July referendum on the future of the merged north-east, dilly-dallying on the draft treaty with India are evidence of a foreign policy which has no finesse.

An equally important imperative for the new President is to be decisive in the current negotiations with the LTTE. These drag, and we hope not interminably. That talks have commenced between the two parties is evidence of the President's desire for peace. Peace can be obtained now that a correct atmosphere has been created. The dialogue, we urge, should continue until a lasting settlement is forged. The next few months will therefore tell us whether the new incumbent will make substantial progress in his "peace in our time" approach and in his design to improve the condition of the poor.

TAMIL VOICE International

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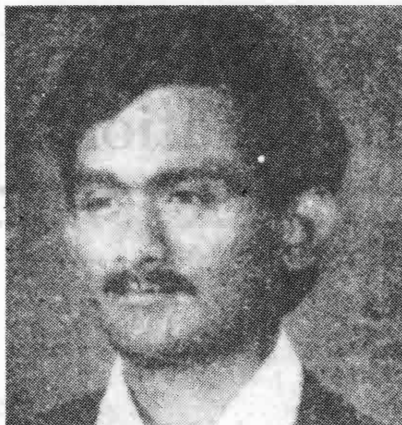
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Journalist's Son Killed



Ahilan Tiruchelvam, the only son of the *Murosoli* Editor, Sin-nadurai Tiruchelvam, was killed in Jaffna on May 10. He was nineteen and was a senior Prefect of St John's College and the vice captain of the school's cricket team.

Looking down from the upstairs house, Mr Tiruchelvam saw a man standing nearby asking Mr Thiruchelvam to come down. Right then he noticed three other men and wondered why they had come. They replied that it was an "important"

matter and again asked him to come down. Then one of them began climbing the stairs.

Then he noticed one of the other men who had remained below taking out a pistol and unwrapping the paper that covered it. Quietly he went inside the house, went out through the kitchen and moved into the next house.

He could still see his wife arguing with the men. At that point, his son Ahilan, hearing the argument came out. The man on the balcony then asked who Ahilan was. When Ahilan identified himself they got together, dragged him out and put him in a blue Ford Prefect car and drove off with the boy.

Immediately Mr Tiruchelvam rushed in his car to a friend's place from where he telephoned the IPKF Commander and told him what had happened. **He said he was able to identify one of the abductors and also that they belonged to a former militant group and appealed**

to the IPKF to help find his son.

The IPKF officer assured him not to worry and that he would inform all the camps to be on the look-out. Next Mr Tiruchelvam telephoned the office of the ex-militant group, related what had happened and pleaded that his son be freed, saying that he was ready to give himself up. A senior journalist from another newspaper in Jaffna also made a similar request. The militant group's office said they'll check.

But by about 6.40 a.m word spread that Ahilan had been killed. His body was found with gunshot wounds at the Brown Road-Arasadi Road junction, barely a mile from his home. So far neither the IPKF nor the ex-militant group has inquired from the family about what happened. Only a post mortem has been done. The talk in Jaffna is that **the ex-militant group had been unhappy with the *Murosoli's* coverage of the LTTE's talks with the Government and had wanted to hit back.**

A Cowardly Act

Among the many brutal killings recently reported from the North in a new upsurge of violence, we single out the slaying of the only son of the editor of *Murosoli*, because, among the many other rights which are lost to the people of the North and East, this particular act points to the constant threat to the right of publication and disclosure.

In the recent weeks his newspaper thought it fit to give the readers of the North details of human rights violations in the North and more news and views about the LTTE and its decision to enter into negotiations with the Government. **This certainly did not lend to the pleasure of those now wielding power in the North.**

In fact, the circumstances of this killing so far known indicate that the real target was the editor of *Murosoli* himself. The gang that took his son away had first called the father to come out, to hand over a press

release. The father escaped. But it was the accidental arrival of the son on the scene which made him the victim.

Killings of this nature are today common, both in the North and South. The killing of the close kin of those who displease the particular power prevailing, whether terrorist, subversive or vigilante, has now become common practice that it is hardly questioned, like so many other threats to civil liberty. But in this instance the person killed has been the victim of the courage of his father in standing for the right to publish news of public interest.

While the tragedy is greater in this instance, this is not the first time the *Murosoli* has been attacked. Shortly after the IPKF launched its offensive in the North in 1987, the offices of the paper were bombed by the Indian forces. The editor himself was detained for 35 days by the IPKF with no reasons given, and no compensa-

tion was paid for the damage to building and machinery, or for the work lost by the employees of the newspaper. **Protests and appeals to the IPKF were shrugged off.**

As to how much longer the *Murosoli* and other individuals, organisations and publications which dare speak out the inconvenient truth about conditions in the North and East could survive under the current threats, is no more a matter of conjecture.

These are days when there are claims of a special mandate for the IPKF. Such mandate is for the restoration of peace, and not to turn a blind eye to threats to the democratic right of free expression, under whatever difficult circumstances.

Whether one agrees with the views of *Murosoli* or not is another matter. But newspapers must have the right to print news. [Editorial, *Sunday Times* (Colombo) May 21, 1989]

FORTNIGHTLY FORUM

The talks continue between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE. It now seems that they will be a long drawn out and tortuous affair, and could go on for about two to three months according to a member of the government delegation. During initial discussions it was decided that only agreed statements on the meetings should be released for public consumption. But that is a bit much to expect in Asia where "unofficial" versions have always carried more weight.

India has told Sri Lanka - according to "highly placed sources" - that "sooner or later" it would have to involve New Delhi in the peace parleys. It is hard to imagine that the visit of Indian Foreign Secretary, Mr S K Singh, to Colombo was sheer coincidence though an Indian spokesperson denied that it had anything to do with the talks. The more likely story is that India wanted to make its position and its presence clear. Singh did say that India welcomed the attempts for a peaceful settlement within the parameters of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord.

New Delhi means three things when it talks of negotiations within the framework of the Accord. The first is that the settlement should be based on the unity and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka and at the same time meet the aspirations of the Tamil-speaking people through the effective devolution of power. Second, that the LTTE joins the political mainstream, implying that the North-East provincial council should not be dismantled. Third, that the LTTE be required to hand over its arms. In regard to the last point, it is interesting to note President Premadasa's recent words: "Everyone thought that the LTTE would lay down pre-conditions for the talks. But they did not. We, on our part too did not lay down any conditions. Do you think we should, for example, have asked them to lay down their arms before the talks? We had realised the folly and futility of such a request. Do you know what would normally happen in

such a situation? The person having 10 firearms would hide eight and surrender only the balance two." Perhaps there is hope for peace after all.

WHAT THE PEOPLE SAY

In an effort to find out what the people thought of the talks, the *Sunday Times* spent many frustrating hours trying to "get through to the far ends of the country." Only one of the newspaper's lines was working, and many lines in the provincial areas were out of order. The newspaper got through to 71 people on the telephone but they refused to comment for fear of their lives. In desperation, the newspaper staff went on to the streets of Colombo and stopped passers-by to ask their opinions. Of the 41 people interviewed on the record, 27 were in favour of the talks, six against, and eight wished to know the contents of the talks before they made any comments. The shortcomings of the sampling procedure notwithstanding, the survey indicates that in percentage terms 24 per cent are in favour of talks, five per cent against, seven per cent require more information, and a staggering 64 per cent do not want to comment. Does freedom of expression even exist in a country where people are afraid to venture an opinion on a subject that is relatively innocuous and yet so important?

QUISLINGS BY ANY OTHER NAME

The EPRLF is particularly keen to keep up with the talks especially as the differences between the Sri Lanka government and the provincial administration appear to be widening into chasm. The latest disagreement is over the term used to describe the provincial administration. While Chief Minister Varadaraja Perumal insists that it should be called the provincial government, authorities in Colombo say that it is a provincial council and not a government. Minister of State for Provincial Councils,

Rupa Karunatilake, is resolute that no provincial council can call itself a government, adding that: "The provincial council bill and the 13th amendment are very clear on this matter." According to the Chief Minister, however, there is nothing wrong in describing his administration as the provincial government: "We have a government and a board of Ministers. We have legislative and administrative powers. So there is nothing wrong in using the word 'government'." One must admit to feeling just a wee bit of sympathy for a man suffering under such delusions of grandeur.

TEMPORARY REPRIEVE FOR REFUGEES

Nearly a year after being branded cheats and liars by a Home Office minister and various conservative MPs, an independent adjudicator has found that five Tamil refugees forcibly returned to Sri Lanka from Britain in February 1988 were refugees within the meaning of the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees. The formula set out in the convention, well founded fear of persecution on the basis of "race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular group, or political opinion", had not been accepted by the Home Office on the perverse grounds that Sri Lanka was in a state of civil war and all Tamils were therefore in equal danger.

The adjudicator said: *I have little difficulty in accepting that each of these appellants left Sri Lanka as claimed because they were afraid that as young Tamils every minute they remained they were at risk. The nature of the risk also I have little difficulty in being satisfied about. For those living in and around Jaffna by the end of 1986 and beginning of 1987 it could be no forecast what the day would bring by way of tension, interrogation, detention, and even physical harm and destruction of property. The tragedy is that not much has changed since then in Jaffna, but hopefully the plight of refugees may ease a bit.*

THIRUKKURAL

S Srisikandarajah

அரம்போலும் கூர்மைய ரேனும் மரம்போல்வர்
மக்கட்பண்பு இல்லா தவர்.

"Aram poalum koormayarenum maram poalvar
makka pannpu illaathavar" - Transliteration (1997)

Though they are sharp as files the men that are devoid
of human culture are no better than wooden stakes - Translation

In one of our articles in this column we made an attempt to show that wisdom is different from knowledge, that wisdom is essential for the sustenance of this world and that wisdom is inseparable from culture and virtue. The above Kural tries to show this distinction without much difference, in a subtle way. Bertrand Russel explained this difference between knowledge and wisdom in the following words: "With every increase of knowledge and skill wisdom becomes more necessary, for every such increase augments our capacity of realising our purposes and therefore augments our capacity for evil if our purposes are unwise. The world needs wisdom as it has never needed it before and, if knowledge continues to increase, the world will need wisdom in the future even more than it does now."

The term wisdom is very wide. It connotes comprehensive vision; it also includes intellect and necessarily encompasses human feeling or fellow-feeling. Thiruvalluvar, while illustrating wisdom, says, *There are people whose intellect is sharp, knowledge is all-pervasive, but fellow-feeling is nil.* Such people lack wisdom of the kind the Kural under review speaks of. Such men did wreak and continue to wreak havoc among people. Adolf Hitler is a classic example of such a class of people. In the context of what is happening in Tamil Eelam, one wonders whether we who claim to be the cream of the intelligentsia in Sri Lanka are crassly insensitive to the plight of the wounded Tamils.

If media reports are anything to go by, many Tamil civilians and even combatants are languishing in Eelam hospitals and dispensaries moaning and groaning. Many of them have lost their limbs; some of them have lost

their sight and hearing. A few of them have lost their all, kith and kin. But their plight has escaped our attention somehow. The hospitals and dispensaries are so ill-equipped, deliberately, that the maimed and the butchered are not receiving proper medical care. Many of the wounded whose condition worsens day by day for want of proper nursing have made attempts to end their lives, unable to bear the pain and agony caused by the gaping wounds that are allowed to fester. Some of these wounded civilians, who were denied treatment by the Indian forces in Sri Lanka, have managed to be smuggled into Tamil Nadu. But their lot has not improved there either because of the deplorable sanitary conditions in the areas where these ill-fated are living stealthily and hopelessly; they appear to have fallen from the frying pan into the fire.

Even the laws of war require that the captives, wounded or otherwise, should be treated with human dignity. Prisoners, including the Tigers, have all the rights of an ordinary citizen. But the heads of Lanka and India do not appear to know what is obtaining in the civilised world in regard to the wounded and the maimed.

If the governments are complacent it may be understandable. But can one justify the apathetic attitude of those of us who are in this country? Should those Tamil academics and professionals living outside Tamil Eelam, firmly perched in positions of great wealth and power, turn a blind eye to the plight of their brethren who are in the throes of death and danger?

Why can't they for a moment think of what Thiruvalluvar says? This is not the time for any of us to discuss and debate the whys and wherefores of



what has happened and who has been responsible for this or that. The fact remains that our brethren in Eelam are suffering untold hardships. This is the time when they need our help. There are ways and means. We can help them politically without aligning ourselves with any group; we can help them materially; we can help them professionally. But what is lacking is the will, the heart, to help. If we don't show our humanity now, then our learning is worth nothing and we should feel ashamed of our intellect. An intellectual of high order bereft of compassion and fellow-feeling, is like dead wood, says Thiruvalluvar.

Thiruvalluvar likens those intellectuals who are sharp as a file but devoid of human culture to the tree which is said to possess only one of the six senses. By implication he compares such barren intellectuals to a file. He says that they are like a file functionally. As we all know, a file is a hard steel abrading tool with ridged cutting edges. It does the work of disintegrating any object it comes in contact with. If the intellectuals of our community do not combine culture and wisdom to round off the angularities and the ridges that surround them, then they will do the same thing which a file does, namely disintegrate others. Disintegrating others is not constructive work. Let us for a moment give a rest to our intellect by desisting from condemning and criticising others and activate our wisdom and culture by contributing our mite towards the amelioration of the disabled, disowned and dispossessed. This is the time for us to act. Otherwise, we will become perfect examples of the Kural of Thiruvalluvar. **Let each one start today, to give till it hurts. "He gives twice who gives promptly."**

Ask Rani

WHO IS TALKING PEACE?

Dear Rani,

We Eelam Tamils should be glad that talks are now taking place between our liberation fighters and the Sri Lankan government. After all the years of suffering that our people have undergone there seems to be some hope that may be it will come to an end very soon. What I am not sure about is who is speaking for the government, and also who issues statements? **Shantini Rajah, Lyon, France.**

A I find it difficult to answer your question with any sense of accuracy, but from various reports it seems that at the ministerial level, the team which met the LTTE comprised A C S Hameed, Ranil Wickremasinghe, Ranjan Wijeratne and Sirisena Coorey, none of whom had been previously involved in negotiations with any group on the ethnic issue. Other government officials involved in the official talks, before they were upgraded to ministerial level, were the Defence Secretary General Sepala Attygalle, Foreign Secretary Bernard Tilakaratna and four other senior officials.

I understand that the procedure insofar as statements are concerned is that after a round of talks, the government drafts a communique which is amended by the LTTE in concurrence with the government, and then released as a joint statement. It is interesting that LTTE has insisted that the word "Indian army" be used, and not "Indian Peace Keeping Force" on the basis that the Indians are not playing a peace keeping role.

ANYONE FOR DISCUSSION

Dear Rani,

In the interest of knowledge, I wish to start a ball rolling about a formulation that is three or more million years old which I call the "define declension in Tamil" but which has remained unanalysed up to now. Though academically I have only an elementary education, an inner urge

within has made me present this formulation to the world. Thus I am writing a Tamil verse composition, with an English preface and a supplement that you may care to read. I believe that knowledge of the Tamil language may not be necessary to understand these science layers of the ancients. May I seek your comments and your co-operation, and ask you to enable me to contact those who may be interested in assessing my findings. **K Palasingham, No 43, S S Sungei Way, 47300 Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia.**

A I am afraid I had to drastically re-word your letter and abridge it, and hope that in so doing I have not changed the meaning of your letter. I must also confess that I had difficulty comprehending the 58 page text that you sent me, but that is perhaps a reflection of my own shortcomings. Consequently I am in no position to comment on your formulation. Readers who are interested will no doubt contact you direct as, contrary to our normal practice, I have given your full address.

INDIAN REALITIES

Dear Rani

Now that the Sri Lankan government is holding talks with the LTTE, does that mean that India will pull out the troops from our homelands? It seems to me that may be India feels that it cannot win the war in the jungles, and also wants to get out without more loss of life. The government and the LTTE have a common enemy in the Indian troops, and it would be best that they leave as soon as possible. What do you have to say on the matter? **Eswaran Navaratnam, Newcastle, UK.**

A Yes, the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE share a common objective - the withdrawal of the IPKF. The IPKF commander, Lt Gen Kalkat has gone on record as saying that the purely military task assigned to them is more or less completed. This assertion, however, does not indicate a conclusive military victory. In an effort to



deliver a concerted knock-out blow to the LTTE last year, the IPKF followed military doctrine which calls for a 10:1 superiority when battling guerillas, and shipped in two more divisions. The Indians, however, were taught that well known military lesson that it is impossible to subdue a guerilla force that has popular support. There are other reasons as well. According to Lt Col P C Katoch of the 1 Para Commandos, the LTTE cadres have the best rifles in the world - the AK47 compared with the heavier, slower loading rifles of the IPKF. In fact many of the Indian soldiers prefer to use captured weapons which is the reverse of the usual practice where guerilla forces covet the weaponry of the conventional forces and not the other way around. Apparently the Indian army is now convinced that the conflict in Sri Lanka is a lost cause, and could end up as India's Vietnam. Army experts estimate that it will take at least another decade to wipe out the LTTE - whether India will wait around for that long is doubtful.

CITIZENS FAIL TO VOLUNTEER

Dear Rani,

Not very long ago Mr Varadaraja Perumal, the North-East Chief Minister said that the IPKF should stay in Jaffna and other areas until a volunteer army is in place. Can you tell me more about this army and if anything has been done about it? **M S Sathananthan, Doncaster.**

A The volunteer army you refer to is the Citizens Volunteer Force (CVF) that began operations on 27 March. It is an armed police force regarded as an alternative force to the IPKF, supposedly to maintain public order but understood to be training to take on the LTTE in the future. So far the IPKF has managed to raise 2000 volunteers - much less than expected.

SRI LANKA HIT BY RISING CRIME AND KILLINGS

After their arrival in the city with attendant publicity, the Tigers called on the President and held another round of talks with a seven-member official team, nominated by the President. Despite the seemingly irreconcilable public postures adopted by the government and the LTTE, the two sides are understood to have reached an agreement on the agenda for a full-fledged peace conference. But whether the LTTE is willing to give up violence and enter the democratic mainstream is the question uppermost in everybody's minds. [By courtesy of *India Today* - May 31, 1989]

TIGERS ON THE TRAIL

The LTTE is apparently broaching the subject of a Canadian type of a constitution, which grants considerable autonomy to the French-speaking province of Quebec. According to a 1987 'Special Arrangement' made in the Canadian constitution, the French-speaking population of Quebec were recognised as a distinct ethnic group, within Canada.

Another important issue that will be raised by the Tigers is the colonisation of the eastern province. All Tamil groups are unanimous in their demand for an immediate halt to colonisation. According to the Tamils of the north-east, successive governments in Colombo have deliberately settled Sinhalese in their areas to change the demographic pattern of the province, which had traditionally tilted towards the Tamil and Muslim sections. The Indo-Sri Lanka Accord promises a Referendum. However if a plebiscite is held, the Muslims are unlikely to vote for the present linkage between the north and east. The Tigers are likely to press for an indefinite postponement of the Referendum.

While it may suit the LTTE leadership to forego their claim for Eelam for the moment, it is doubtful whether President Premadasa,

plagued as he is by the JVP, is in a position to give them anything more than what the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987 promised. The President's hope at the moment is to come to an agreement with the LTTE and thereby reduce the IPKF presence in the north-east. He feels that once the bulk of the Indian army is out, he can placate the JVP or at least prevent them from gaining political mileage from the IPKF presence.

However, the President's position, or for that matter of any Sinhala politician, to hammer out an understanding with the Tamils, exposes their flank to the Opposition. No President, least of all Premadasa, who is not quite settled in his new job, can afford to even seem to go against majority interest. There is also the fear among the senior echelons of the government, including the security forces that the LTTE may just be buying time. They feel that if an agreement is reached, and the IPKF is sent packing and fresh elections held to the provincial council, the LTTE may regain its overall position of supremacy in the north-east and once again be in a position to take on the Sri Lankan army.

The negotiations will be successful only if the Tigers for tactical reasons

pitch their demands to a reasonable level, because of their need to get rid of the IPKF and the EPRLF.

The other factor is the Government of India. Though New Delhi has publicly approved of the Sri Lankan Government's talks with the LTTE, it will insist that the discussions are within the ambit of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. There will also be an enormous pressure from India to ensure that the EPRLF-led provincial council government is not dismissed. While India is as keen as Colombo to get its army out of the north-east, the IPKF will not leave before a suitable law enforcing machinery takes charge of the north-east. Whatever New Delhi says in public, it is unlikely that it is pleased at being by-passed in the discussion.

The LTTE do not wish to begin negotiations till their leaders from the north arrive. Meanwhile the LTTE will have to pass the IPKF cordons to reach Sri Lankan camps from where they will be air-lifted to Colombo. But with the IPKF cordon spread out and search operations continuing, it will not be easy for the LTTE leaders to reach the camps. [By courtesy of *The Illustrated Weekly of India* - May 14-20, 1989]

LTTE'S GAMEPLAN FOR PEACE

By A S Panneerselvan in Madras

Tamil Tigers in their talks with Colombo will demand permanent merger of the Northern and Eastern Provinces in Sri Lanka, withdrawal of the IPKF, moratorium on Sinhala colonisation, and the dismissal of the Indian-backed EPRLF ministry in the North-Eastern Province.

Shankar, chief of the EROS, told *India Week* in an exclusive interview: "Top priority will be given to altering the 6th and 13th Amendments to the Sri Lankan Constitution. An expert committee will be set up to look into centre-state relations (like the Justice Sarkaria commission) to work out a meaningful devolution package. The Quebec, Turkish Cypriot and Baluch models will be considered for

evolving the devolution package."

The Lankan team comprises, besides President's Secretary Wijedasa, Gen. Sepala Attygalle (Secretary to the Defence Minister), Felix Dias Abeysinghe (former Secretary to the Political Parties Conference), Bernard Tillakaratne (Foreign Secretary), Bradman Weerakoon (Chairman of Air Lanka), W T Jayasinghe (former Foreign Secretary) and Gen. Cyril Ranatunge (former Army Chief).

For its part, India has welcomed the Tiger-Lankan talks but has made it clear that any settlement should be within the framework of the accord. Its intentions were made clear by the new Indian High Commissioner,

Lakhan Lal Mehrotra, in an interview with the government-controlled Daily News. Mehrotra said the IPKF had a mandate to function under the accord. He averred that till India had guaranteed peace among the different ethnic groups in the North-Eastern Province, it would maintain a minimum number of troops.

All India Radio is beaming three programmes every day into Sri Lanka. The common theme is: if the IPKF quits, the Sinhalese would finish off the Tamils. Many here view this as a last ditch Indian attempt to control the emerging situation in Sri Lanka. [By courtesy of *India Week* - May 5-11, 1989]

EELAM thoughts

Kurushetran

A harsh reality that oppressed peoples face everywhere is the entrenched hypocrisy behind the behaviour of most governments. In the case of President Junius Richard Jayewardene, the Eelam Tamils found no difficulty in seeing through his deceit. The persuasive manner in which he invoked the names of Gauthama the Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi fooled no one except the Indians. But the duplicity that the Rajiv Gandhi government practised at their expense, beginning May 1987, was something that the Eelam Tamils learnt the hard way, and learnt it too late.

The game plan was hatched in New Delhi around end of May. On June 1 it was announced that a convoy of 20 Indian unarmed ships would set sail from Rameswaram carrying *humanitarian* food aid for the besieged Jaffna population. There was nothing that was *humanitarian* about it. It was the first act in a rough-house drama that was to be staged for the benefit of the world at the expense of both the Tamils and the Sinhalese. On June 3, a miserable-looking flotilla of 19 fishing boats, hurriedly assembled, complete with Red Cross flags and a few unsuspecting newspapermen, on board a Coast Guard vessel, set sail, and was, as expected by the Delhi game-planners, turned back by a solitary Sri Lankan gunboat. **'Operation fiasco for food flotilla'**, screamed a London newspaper headline. The poor sub-editor who gave the headline could not have had an inkling of suspicion that the flotilla was *intended* to be a fiasco! How? Even before the fishing boats were assembled, five Russian-built transport planes and four Mirage jet fighters were ready for take-off at Bangalore! A perceptive Western correspondent, Derek Brown of *The Guardian*, London, saw through the game early. His dispatch to his paper (June 4) said:

"The loading bay doors gaping open, the canvas ripcords flapping wildly in the slipstream. We are banking and climbing from the drop zone, heading from Jaffna city to the north

THE INEVITABILITY OF TAMIL EELAM - 5

coast, slicing through Sri Lanka's air space where we have utterly no right to be. We have just sent 4.5 tonnes of food, medicine and other assorted relief supplies whooshing out of the rear doors

"Near us are four more Antonov 32 transports, and four Mirage 2000 fighters, wheeling and swooping. But there is no opposition..... Already it is plain that the mission is a spectacular success. Not a relief operation, for 22 tonnes of supplies won't feed or succour many needy folk, but rather as a message to Colombo that it can no longer defy the regional super-power..."

Colombo was understandably angry. The Jayewardene Cabinet met in emergency session and called it a "naked violation of our integrity and sovereignty", and shot off a protest note to the United Nations. Michael Hamlyn, reporting to *The Times London*, quoted the exasperated remark of a Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry official who said, "There was not much we could do about the raid. We were hoping the sacks of salt would fall on the terrorists. May be next time they will be kind enough to drop coconuts." Back in Delhi, the official statement was prim and proper. It spoke of the "continuing deterioration in the condition of the civilian population of the Jaffna peninsula" and of the "legitimate concern of the Government and people of India." Now that is what I meant by **hypocrisy**! The "concern" was wholly **illegitimate**! (Only the Liberation Tigers were able to see the writing on the wall. What the Indian planes did was, not invade Sri Lankan air space, but "Tamil Eelam" air space!) The difference between the exasperated comment by the Sri Lankan Ministry official about sacks of salt and dropping coconuts, and the prim and proper comment made by the Indian official was that the former meant what he said, while the latter did not! I am inclined to think that honest anger is preferable to hypocritical grief.

The Eelam Tamils however, having conditioned themselves emotionally for centuries on a pathetic dependence on India for succour and protection (a mother-child symbiosis) failed to make the vital distinction

between a country on the one hand and the government on the other. It did not occur to them that most governments, even Indian, rarely act through altruistic motives. While one feels sorry for the Sinhalese people because they saw in India a **permanent** enemy and conqueror, the tragedy of the Tamils was worse; they saw in India a **permanent** friend! Both perceptions were ingrained through historical memories.

The Sinhalese at least have no reason to retract their belief, however irrational it may be. They see the same continuity in the first South Indian intrusion three centuries before Christ, the Pandyan invasion nine centuries after Christ, the Chola invasion two centuries later, and the IPKF "invasion" nine centuries after that. They are prepared to erase out of their memory the intervening European invasions of the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British - but not the Indian. But as far as the Eelam Tamils are concerned, they had never any historical memory of facing an Indian invasion; in fact, at least some of them are probably descendants of the invaders themselves. Tamil kings like Ellaalan (Elara, to the Sinhalese) ruled over the Sinhalese as well. When the Portuguese invaders came in the 16th century, the Jaffna kingdom battled independently, as did the Sinhalese kingdom in Kotte in the south. It has to be remembered about the Tamils that their only experience of resisting aggression from outside the island was first when they faced Portuguese cannon in the 16th century, and now against the Indians in the 20th. From the 1540s to the end of the century, the Jaffna kingdom, with the help of the Tamil Vanniyar chiefs, resisted Portuguese conquest, until 1591 when the last king of Jaffna was killed and a Portuguese protegee was placed on the throne (*K M de Silva, 'A History of Sri Lanka' - Oxford University Press, 1981, pp.99, 102, 103*). Another Sinhala historian, in a reference to the Jaffna kingdom, says, "Ceylon had direct relations also with Yemen, Egypt and Pegu. The king of Jaffna, who was an ally of the Sultan of Coromandel, was also an ally of the king of Yemen, in Arabia, with which country Ceylon

had trade relations. Bhuvanekavahu I sought an alliance with Egypt in A.D.1283, probably because Yemen was friendly with the Jaffna kingdom, and offered to export precious stones, elephants and cinnamon" (G.C.Mendis, *The Early History of Ceylon*, 1932 - *Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, reprint 1985* - pp.78, 79). A half a century after the fall of the Jaffna kingdom, the Dutch wrested the land from the Portuguese, who were in turn driven out by the British at the beginning of the 19th century.

The struggle for Tamil independence therefore is not a new struggle in terms of historical tradition; nor is the concept of an independent Tamil Eelam state something that came out of a Pandora's box. If armed Tamil resistance to Sinhala hegemony began only in the early seventies, it did not mean that **unarmed** resistance was not there. With the advent of Sinhala- Buddhist chauvinism in the mid-fifties, also began Tamil resistance; but because it took the form of democratic, parliamentary protests, recourse to courts of law, and non-violent Gandhian satyagraha, the world did not take notice. But the longer the Tamils persisted with their non-violent protests, the more **violent** became the Government repression, which phase of Tamil resistance does not seem to have been registered in the minds of even neighbouring Indians. With one, happy, solitary exception - the late C Rajagopalachari (Rajaji), no Indian leader ever exhibited any interest in the Tamil struggle for their rights in the fifties and sixties. Rajaji kept pressing for a Federal Constitution as the only solution for a reconciliation of differences in a multiethnic, multi-religious, multi-lingual country like Ceylon. And that was exactly what the *Ilankai Thamil Arasu Kadchi* (the Federal Party) under the benign leadership of SJV Chelvanayakam kept agitating for. In fact, the suggestion that Ceylon should have 9 regional governments within a federal framework was made by no less a person than SWRD Bandaranaike in his youthful wisdom, thirty years before he himself unleashed the forces of Sinhala chauvinism in 1956. This happens to politicians and Prime Ministers often - their attempts to grasp power or

retain it often dims their vision and diminishes their wisdom.

The word "Tamil Eelam" did not gain political currency until the seventies, but the demand for an independent Tamil state was not wholly unanticipated. The General Secretary of the LSSP, Leslie Goonawardene, speaking in the language debate, virtually accepted the position that there was no consciousness of a Ceylonese nationality in the country. What was evident was a Sinhalese nationality and a Tamil nationality. He said: *There is the graver danger ... if those people (Tamils)... feel that a grave and irreparable injustice is done to them, there is a possibility of their deciding even to break away from the rest of the country.*" (Hansard, 8 June 1958). That was a time when Tamil militancy was unthinkable. Tamil youths' singular attachment to studies, their hankering for higher education, their sense of self-denial in shouldering family responsibilities, and their very passiveness, were qualities that were known even to Sinhala society. How then did a whole new generation come to undergo a sudden transformation in thinking, to drop their traditional values, forsake parents, homes, family attachments and schools, throw their text-books and take to guns? Whatever the causes that led to this (even the Sinhalese people know what they are, although most of them find it difficult to admit them), and however tragic the development has been, there is no point in imagining that it is now possible for those two nations to retrace their steps back on a common Sri Lankan path that for over 30 years has been littered with thousands of Tamil skulls and bones. After all it was a Sinhalese journalist, one of the rare perceptive ones, who ended his book about the frightening story of the anti-Tamil riots of 1958 with the following words, "**What are we left with? A nation in ruins, some grim lessons which we cannot afford to forget and a momentous question: Have the Sinhalese and the Tamils reached the parting of the ways?**" (Tarzie Vittachi, *Emergency '58 - The Story of the Ceylon Race Riots* - Andre Deutsch, London, 1958).

(To continue)

THREE TRUTHS

Direct dialogue between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE has commenced. Whether this will succeed may be a question mark; But three truths have emerged clear.

India went as an arbitrator in the Sri Lankan issue. Now, those battled have rejected the arbitrator and have started to negotiate directly. This situation has proved that this diplomacy of arbitration has woefully failed.

Secondly, the propaganda of India that the LTTE has lost people's support and has become a weak movement has been refuted. If the LTTE has been weakened, would the Sri-Lankan Government under the presidency of Premadasa who was described as a Sinhalese Chaunist have extended a hand of peace towards the LTTE.

Thirdly, the Tamil Provincial Council of Varatharaja Perumal which was eulogized by the media of Indian Government as one that was installed in power with the support of the people has not found a place in the ongoing dialogue! This is because it is an administration that lacks people's support but was installed in power by the grace of the IPKF. That is why it has now been exposed. [Translation of the Editorial from *Ananda Vikatan* appearing at page 19]

APPEAL FROM EELAM : INDIRECT VICTORY FOR TIGERS?

By Sunanda K Datta-Ray

[This is an abridged version of the reply by the Editor of The Statesman (Calcutta and Dehli), who was one of the guest speakers at the Second International Tamil Conference, to comments and criticism by four Congress (I) members]

The four Congress (I) MPs who were so wroth over a conference in London allegedly attended by Khalistan rebels, Kashmir Liberation Front activists and the Afghan Mujahideen might have been even more perturbed if they had had a full report of the two-day proceedings in a Wembley School followed by a public meeting in Brent Town Hall. But their anger should rightly have been directed not at the Indian participants, who did their best to salvage national dignity, but at a government whose actions seem so thoroughly to have alienated a docile people who were looked upon as Indian proteges until only the other day, and who still look for India's support in their struggles but now address their appeal to Indians rather than their Government. ...

Propagation of the Eelam cause at the Second International Tamil Conference organised by the World Federation of Tamils seemed in deadly earnest, with Sri Lankan Tamil speakers from places as far as Norway and New Zealand, Malaysia, Canada and the USA. The tide of their eloquence left our own four MPs - K P Unnikrishnan, P Upendra, Aladi Aruna and N V N Somu - floundering in the shallows, broadly sympathetic to the historic injustice suffered by the Sri Lankan minority but, on the whole, not prepared to concede that the only answer lies in a breakaway republic ruled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam...

Two aspects of the conference's psyche deserve stressing. First, Sri Lankan Tamils are angry with the Government of India not because they are anti-Indian but because they feel betrayed by their natural protector and because, by all accounts, the IPKF treats even innocent villagers as India's enemies. It emerged in answer to a question that there was not one delegate present in that hall of more than 300 people whose family had not suffered some violence at the IPKF's hands.

Secondly, their anguish owed nothing to Khalistani, KLF or Mujahideen mischief. Apart from one or two representatives of British and Scandinavian refugee organisations, the only outsiders were an ethnic Indian observer from the African National Con-

gress, and Karen Parker, a young blonde lawyer from San Francisco, veteran of many a human rights battle, who confided in private that she had conclusive evidence that it is the USA that is really financing, training and arming the Khalistani rebels. Both would be eminently acceptable to India's political establishment.

But they were peripheral to a theme that was laid down last year when the first international conference adopted five resolutions upholding the Tamil right of self-determination, recognising the LTTE as the struggle's true leader, and claiming that Velupillai Prabhakaran "has today become the living symbol of the Tamil national struggle and... that living symbols will not die." In short, he should be granted immunity.

Reaffirming those resolutions, this year's conference outlined a number of concrete steps - UN consultative status for the WFT, a Tamil Eelam Cultural Centre and a Human Rights Commission of Tamil Eelam - to rally all Sri Lankan Tamils under a single banner and win the widest possible publicity for a cause that is now vigorously served by the WFT periodical, 'Tamil Voice International'...

The fact that the London conference coincided with tentative moves towards a rapprochement in Colombo lent special interest to the event. Noting that the talks have started, Resolution 2 emphasised that the conference "most strongly supports the LTTE negotiators" and "urges all other governments to assist and support in whatever way they deem appropriate, in the achievement of a just and lasting settlement."

That, in fact, was the hub of the exercise, the groping for settlement through outbursts of fierce passion. As speaker after speaker rose to demand that the North-Eastern Provincial Council should be dissolved, the EPRLF regime dismissed and that there should be no further talk of a July 7 referendum, it was clear enough that hope was still pinned on a negotiated power-sharing formula. The conference would not otherwise have reaffirmed the Thimpu Declaration, called for an end to the emergency or demanded that Colombo should abandon its policy of settling Sinhalese

colonists in Seruwillla, Amparai, Wali Oya and other traditional Tamil areas.

More realistic participants admitted that harsh though the IPFF might be, a direct confrontation with the Sri Lankan army would mean certain annihilation "unless India gives us missiles." That touching faith survives all the instances of betrayal and cruelty that are constantly paraded.

But no one is really looking for a fight to the finish, not the elderly patriot who once made history by storming the UN or the dentist who had taken time off from Harley Street or the slim young girl who became Oxford Union president after Benazir Bhutto. Their demand "that an interim administration in conformity with the agreement of September 1987 between the Indian High Commissioner and the LTTE be installed until such time as there are properly constituted elections agreed to by all parties" defined the limits of militancy and underlined the compromise Mr Prabhakaran is prepared to make.

The conference agreed that this conciliatory approach, which has taken the LTTE to the negotiating table reflects wisdom rather than weakness. For, as David B S Jayaraj, a Sri Lankan Tamil journalist and Nieman Fellow at Harvard, said, quoting Sun Tzu, "there has never been a protracted war from which a country has benefited."

His comments evoked visions of Afghanistan and Vietnam and reaching further back into history of "the running sore" of Napoleon's star-crossed Peninsular campaign. "Continuing with military measures will only alienate the Tamil people further and enhance support for the Tigers", Mr Jayaraj warned. India needs to win the war. "On the other hand, the Tigers do not seek to defeat India militarily but politically. Every day that the war continues is an indirect victory for the Tigers."

President Premadasa has put the seal on that victory - and acknowledged the LTTE's supremacy over other Tamil groups - by inviting it to talks, leaving Indians to wonder why exactly our soldiers are dying in a foreign country. *[Courtesy - The Sunday Statesman, May 21, 1989]*

GROUND SITUATION IN NORTH AND EAST

By J S Tissanayagam

On the eve of the Government-LTTE talks certain assumptions were being entertained by a significant proportion of the Tamil public. The Indian Peace Keeping Force was here to stay. The EPRLF (and its allies) were there to rule. These emerging certainties were disrupted and thrown into confusion with direct talks beginning between Sri Lanka and the LTTE, circumventing India. This situation understandably rekindled hopes among the Tamils that the LTTE could be brought into the political process. This resulted in a resurgence of public confidence as well as of rejuvenating the LTTE in certain areas, according to reports from the Tamil areas.

Last week a delegation of Jaffna University students met the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Mr A C S Hameed, to protest against the threat to their lives and the situation of insecurity prevailing within the University and its environs. Recently a campus student Prabhakaran was killed. Allegations were made against the EPRLF and the IPKF. At the same time in Thirunelveli, where the University is situated, IPKF operations recently intensified with the intention of flushing out the Tigers. The public which has been accused of harbouring the Tigers has been put through a lot of hardship which has resulted in an exodus to the adjoining villages in that area.

Similar type of operations also took place in Neervely, Pandatheruppu and Erlalai. But for a delegation to make protests to the Minister last week was significant in that no such moves were made in January this year when two students were shot near the University during a demonstration and the IPKF entered the premises and opened fire.

Similarly, the public's new found courage was demonstrated in the 'White-flag Day' which from reports had been a success. Buildings, schools and motorists had flown white flags and processions of school children bearing this symbol of peace had marched under the eyes of the

IPKF. One of the slogans said, **"God's wrath unto those who try to break the peace."** This is reminiscent of the activities of the 'Mothers Front' in Batticaloa last year where support to the cause of the LTTE was demonstrated by the starving mothers, in the name of the public.

Thirdly, there is the hartal in Jaffna by school children protesting the murder of the Tamil regional newspaper *Murasoli* editor's son, Ahilan Thiruchelvam. Though the exact motive of the killing has not been established, it seemed that it was the *Murasoli*'s fearless reporting of the case of a young boy who was taken in on suspicion as a Tiger and tortured. The accusation for this crime fell on one of the groups.

A *Lankapuwath* report claims that the killing of Ahilan Thiruchelvam was perpetrated by the ENDLF. Others are prepared to swear that it is one of ENDLF's allies. The *Murasoli* had been a paper which on occasions criticised the IPKF.

The public, both in the North and in the East, in spite of their beleaguered status, has begun to show new hopes for a lasting peace and begun to articulate its sentiments through organisations not intrinsically connected with the formal political structure. This would not have been possible a couple of months ago. The same kind of optimism though more muted was seen when the EROS won thirteen seats in the North-East at the Parliamentary elections.

Meanwhile, these events have had a significant impact on the destinies and functioning of other political groups too. The EPRLF and TELO who came together with the ENDLF and TULF for the general election are showing signs of strain. With the Indian Government seeking to prop up the EPRLF, other groups have begun to express resentment.

The EPRLF was also not amused at the creditable performance in the Eastern Province by TELO at the general election. Furthermore, TELO in India requested that the LTTE be brought into negotiations

in March this year which was resented by the EPRLF.

At the same time, even the IPKF has expressed its dissatisfaction with TELO for their non-cooperation in Tiger hunting. Moreover, many TELO members in Jaffna have deserted their organisation with arms. This caused their cadres to be detained which included Rajani, the TELO political leader in Jaffna. These symptoms are a result perhaps of a lack of a strong central leadership. In other words the group seems to be slowly disintegrating. On the other hand, Chetty, an important member of TELO, has under his arm one faction which is keen on leaving the organisation for their personal security and finding new pastures abroad. Secondly, there is another group which has already defected to the LTTE.

Hence the ire of the IPKF. Today, with Rajani in the hands of the IPKF, Mr Selvam, the official leader of the TELO, has gone to seek his release. The TELO cadres in Jaffna also, though not under detention anymore, have been disarmed, which in a society that has taken on the characteristics of the Wild West means staying at home for the erstwhile gun-toting youths. The reactions of Mr Selvam if his negotiations with the IPKF fail cannot be predicted. Though pushed back to a secondary position in Tamil politics the TELO too cannot just abandon the Indian favour just like that. They too have been under Indian patronage for so long.

Meanwhile, desertions by the TELO, and in certain areas of Jaffna the EPRLF, have either been to LTTE ranks, or for refuge in Colombo and eventual (hopefully) safe passage abroad. But for this the funding has to come from somewhere. Their ruse has been to sell their arms; thus the IPKF's decision to disarm the TELO. Of these arms however a part goes into the hands of the LTTE, the rest finds its way into the black-market on the Western sea board of Sri Lanka. As to who

continued on page 18

TENSION IN NORTH

By Neville de Silva

Jaffna is bracing itself for possible violence between armed Tamil groups. While most residents hope that the current talks between the Government and the Tamil Tigers will be productive and bring normalcy to an area beset with major problems, they fear that **some Tamil groups and their supporters and benefactors** might attempt to spike the ongoing discussions by direct military confrontations with the Tigers or provoking other kinds of violence. These residents articulated their fears in private conversations in which they spoke of possible confrontations between the EPRLF and the LTTE and the role of the IPKF in any such clashes.

Their fears have been heightened by a statement made in India by the Secretary General of the EPRLF, K Pathmanabha, that his party would unilaterally declare independence for a Tamil homeland if the Sri Lanka Government scrapped the 1987 peace accord.

"The EPRLF knows well where public sympathy in Jaffna lies and knows equally well that once the IPKF withdraws it will be the end of the line for them. So this is their way of trying to stay in the political game", the source said. A

keen observer of the Tamil political scene said that Tamil groups opposed to the LTTE would be doing their best to abort the talks between the Government and the Tigers before they can get down to substantive issues that could lead to a solution.

The talks are yet to get down to the nitty-gritty and the first moves toward taking on the topics that have been identified as priority items, are likely to happen when the discussions resume next Tuesday after they recessed on Thursday. Sensing that the two sides are inching forward slowly and cautiously, those groups and others who feel they might miss out in the end, believe they have time to map out a strategy to spike the discussions.

Some sources believe that last week's outbreak of violence in the East, particularly Muttur and Samanthurai, could be part of a larger game plan to create tensions between racial groups, make residents of one racial group feel insecure and drive them away from the region. Sources said that by keeping the north and east on boil, those who have a stake in keeping the IPKF deployed in that region could show how necessary the presence of Indian troops is in that situation.

Analysts also pointed to the fact that it was not only EPRLF General-Secretary Pathmanabha who met with Indian authorities including those from RAW, the Indian intelligence outfit, but also an individual named Dr Kandiah, a leading light of TELO. The series of recent meetings between anti-LTTE groups and Indian authorities from around April has drawn the attention of many diplomats who feel that India is annoyed that it has no perceivable role right now in the Government-LTTE talks. Diplomats also say that anti-LTTE groups who want the IPKF's continued presence in the north and east to ensure their own survival are worried about the growing political chorus in India demanding that Mr Gandhi orders the withdrawal of Indian troops.

Last week a major opposition party, Janata Dal, called for the immediate withdrawal of the IPKF saying India's position in Sri Lanka had become completely untenable. In a statement the General Secretary of the party said that New Delhi appeared to have been 'totally isolated' in Sri Lanka with Colombo and the LTTE engaged in direct talks that sidelined India. [Courtesy: *Sunday Observer*, May 21, 1989]

Samanthurai - Thousands flee homes for fear

The Indian Army yesterday declared a curfew in Periyaniawanai in Kalmunai as a security measure and political sources in Samanthurai said that nearly fifteen thousand Muslims and three thousand Tamils had moved into government schools and places of worship, in the strife-torn Samanthurai police area where at least 300 houses belonging to both communities were set on fire during the past few days.

A top Sri Lankan administrative official in Amparai confirmed the reports of thousands of civilians fleeing the area. "They were not directly affected by clashes but had sought refuge in schools through fear of reprisals", he said. At least twenty persons including eighteen Muslims were killed in violence allegedly inspired by members of a former Tamil terrorist group operating in the area, sources said.

Meanwhile, a member of a former Tamil terrorist group was killed when Muslim youths opened fire at a group of looters, sources said. The dead person was identified as 28 year old Perumal Sebastian from Kalmunai. The IPKF has taken full control of the situation in the area and were seen firing at a group of persons who tried to set fire to some houses belonging to Muslims sources said. [Courtesy: *The Island* - May 21, 1989]

Perumal Asks For More, Padmanabha Threatens to Secede

It all began when Chief Minister of the North-East province, Varadarajah Perumal of the EPRLF, went to New Delhi to complain to Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi that sufficient powers had not been properly devolved to the Provincial Councils. Mr Perumal is a man with many complaints, ranging from the lack of respect to him by Air Force personnel to state sponsored schemes to re-settle Sinhala refugees

in the Trincomalee district.

Then came the visit of Indian Foreign Minister S K Singh who urged the Sri Lankan government to make available executive and legislative powers to the North-East Provincial Government without further delay. To the Indians, it is essential that the North-East Provincial Government (not Provincial Council) takes root, before the IPKF withdraws.

With EPRLF chief K Padmanabha threatening to secede and the Indians increasing diplomatic pressure, it is quite understandable that the Sri Lankan government decided to go ahead with the Provincial Councils (Consequential Provisions) Act despite strong protest from the SLFP and the MEP. [Courtesy: *The Island* - May 21, 1989]

PEOPLE AND EVENTS

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

LONDON VEENA GROUP RECITALS

June 3: Longest Community Hall, Manchester, M 14

June 17: Beñ Hall, Rugby

June 18: Trinity Arts Centre, Gainsborough

June 25: Spring St Theatre, Hull

ALL PERFORMANCES
COMMENCE AT 7.30 p m

June 10: London Tamil Congregation - 17th Anniversary celebrations at Putney Methodist Church 6 p.m. Concert, 7.30 p m Dinner

June 24: Children's Variety Entertainment in aid of Tamil Orphans Trust at Copland Community School, Cecil Avenue, Wembley - 6.30 p m

OBITUARIES

Somasundaram Sabapathipillai



Born 27.12.1910 Died 17.5.1989

The cremation took place at Golders Green, London NW11 on Sunday 28th May before one of the largest gatherings ever seen in living memory. Mr Sabapathipillai leaves behind his wife Maheswary and three children, S.M. Srikantha, S.M. Sathanathan, Mrs Sarojini Ramanathan.

20 Fairways, Raynes Park, London SW20 9DN.

[In volume 1 No 23 we paid tribute to Mr Sabapathipillai and the unique position he occupied as the leader of British Saivism. We hope to publish a fuller obituary in the next issue of TVI. Ed.]

S SELVADURAI, Retired Chief Inspector, Telecommunications Dept, son of late Mr & Mrs N Sinnathamby of Tellipallai East, husband of Nagaratnam, father of Siva Selvathurai (Director, Personnel, Hotel Inter Continental) and Sivakumaran (Australia). Funeral Colombo 7th May. 4/1 Vivekananda Avenue, Wellawatte.

S KARTHIGESU, Retired Surveyor General, husband of Ketheravully, father of Sita Selvadurai, Lakshmi Jeganathan and Dr Rama Karthigesu (New Zealand). Funeral Colombo 7th May. 5 Sumner Place, Borella.



Born 5.3.1923 Died 23.4.1989

MANKAYARKARASI, wife of Emmanuel Sandrasegara (formerly of Bank of Ceylon), mother of Mrs Ratneswary Xavier (Croydon), Ravi Sandrasegara (Croydon) and Pulendran (East Ham), and daughter of the late Mr Thomas (Customs), died at Mathagal, after a brief illness, on 23 April, 1989.

James Mahima Kanagasooriam HENSMAN, Chartered Architect (formerly of PWD, Colombo, and till recently of the Dept. of Housing, Lagos), husband of Shirley nee Stork, father of Malcolm, Johann, Cedric, Roger and Mark, brother of Kamala de Mel (Australia), Saraswathy Ariyanayakam (Germany), Dr John Kanagasooriam (UK) and Vijayalakshmi (SLBC), grandson of the revered James Hensman (Principal, Kumbakonam College), died May 3. 392 Upper Elmers End Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 3HG.

Somasunderam SELVARAJAH of Alvai, Managing Director of Lively

Motor Stores (Colombo) and formerly of Overseas Service, Husband of Saroja, father of Hariharan (UK), Livintha (Canada), Manoharan, brother of Thurairaja (Botswana), Rajeswari (Trinidad), Jeyarajah (UK). Funeral - Colombo, May 15. 27, 40th Lane, Wellawatte.

K V MYLVAGANAM, (born July 8, 1902) died on May 10, 1989. Educated at Kingswood College, Kandy where he also taught for a while before qualifying as an English Trained Teacher, Mr Mylvaganam joined the staff of Jaffna Hindu College in 1929. He retired in 1962 full of honours and with the lasting acclaim of countless numbers of grateful old pupils. In his 33 years at Jaffna Hindu he was known not only as a brilliant teacher of English but also as a successful sports administrator. He held high office in both the Northern Province Teachers Association and Jaffna Schools Sports Association. He was also a very respected member of the All Ceylon Union of Teachers.

Mr Mylvaganam spent the last 18 years of his life in England living with his son Pathmanathan in Oxford. His wife Alagamuttu died in April last year. He passed away on a visit to his second son Manoharanathan in Trichy. He also leaves behind two daughters, Radha Perinpanayagam and Chandra Jahn. 10, Harefields, Oxford OX2 8NS

MARRIAGES

NADARAJAH - GNANASOORIAN :: Harindran, son of Mr & Mrs P Nadarajah of Kokuvil, and **Jeyahini**, daughter of Mr & Mrs K Gnanasoorian of 72 King Edward Road, Walthamstow, London E17, at the London Highgate Temple on May 14. Mr Gnanasoorian is widely known and respected as a Tamil savant and a devout Saivite Hindu.

SATKUNAM - THAMOTHERAM :: Ajith, son of Mr & Mrs S Satkunam of 42 Taunton Drive, Bundoora, Victoria 3083, and **Kumudini**, daughter of late Mr N G Thamotheram and of Mrs Nancy Thamotheram of 6 Millan Court, Glen Waverly, Victoria 3150 at St Peter's Church, Murrumbena, on May 20.

LTTE - SRI LANKA PEACE TALKS

[A summary of the joint statements issued by the LTTE and the Government of Sri Lanka is provided below]

May 4:

The LTTE delegation comprising Mr A S Balasingam, Mr Yogaratnam Yogi, Mr Paramu Moorthy, Mr Panchadcharam Lawrence and Mrs Adele Balasingam, made a courtesy call on His Excellency the President at his residence at Sucharitha Mawatha in Colombo at 5.00 p.m.

President Premadasa said that the first stage of the talks would be with the officials nominated by him to decide on the modalities and to identify the issues. Thereafter, he would nominate a team to discuss all issues. He also stressed the need to know the truthfulness of all issues in order to arrive at a meaningful solution. He added that his mandate from the people of Sri Lanka was to restore peace through a process of consultation, compromise and consensus. This was the reason that he extended an open invitation to the LTTE, he said.

The LTTE delegation conveyed to the President and the Government their appreciation for affording them the opportunity to talk to the President and the Government direct without any preconditions. The delegation said that they had with them all the information regarding the plight and the predicament of the Tamil people and that their sufferings should be brought to light. It is only by understanding the fundamental problems of the Tamil people that durable solutions could be found. They emphasised the need for the restoration of peace and normalcy before such solutions could be worked out.

May 5

The LTTE delegation highlighted the enormous sufferings of the Tamil-speaking people in the North and East. They identified particular issues as topics for further discussion.

It was agreed that both sides would be responsible only for what would appear in the official communiques issued by them from time to time. Therefore, the public and the media are kindly requested to be guided only by such official communiques.

May 11

The President met the delegation of the LTTE, Mr A S Balasingam, Mr Yogaratnam Yogi and Mr Paramu Moorthy, at his residence at Sucharitha Mawatha this morning. Mr A C S Hameed, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Mr Ranil Wickremasinghe, Minister of Industries, Mr Ranjan Wijeratne, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mr Sirisena Cooray, Minister of Housing and Construction were present.

The President emphasized the need for a full and frank discussion to enable a clear understanding of the issues involved. He also informed the LTTE delegation that the ministers would now continue the discussions and that other ministers would participate as and when necessary.

At the talks this morning with ministers, the LTTE delegation presented an exposition of the role and functions of the IPKF and argued that, in their opinion, the Indian army in the North and East did not constitute itself as a peace-keeping force. They also disclosed the casualty figures of the Tamil-speaking civilians so far.

May 12

The LTTE delegation further elaborated on the immense problems faced by the people of the North and East. They focussed primarily on human rights issues. They emphasized the urgency of restoring peace and normalcy in the North and East and urged that appropriate conditions be created to bring to light the plight of the Tamil-speaking people. The ministerial delegation said that the matters raised by the LTTE would receive careful consideration.

May 16

At today's discussions the LTTE referred to a press interview purported to have been given by a representative of the Indian Government and given wide publicity in the national press yesterday. They maintained that it was a total misrepresentation of the exact situation in the North-East province. They asserted that the

IPKF's role today is that of an occupying army and that it has brought about untold hardships and suffering to the people of the North and East; it had escalated violence and intensified the conflict. They also pointed out that since the arrival of the IPKF nearly 5,000 civilians in the North and East have lost their lives and that normal activities in these two provinces had been disturbed.

They stated that they were in Colombo not to engage themselves in charges and counter-charges but for the specific purpose of exploring all possibilities to bring about peace, stability and normalcy in the North-Eastern province. They stressed that at this juncture responsible persons should not seek to promote controversies and divert the attention of the people from the burning issues facing the country.

The talks today centered round the destruction of all economic activities - agriculture, fishing, industry and trade in the North and East.

May 18

At the talks today the LTTE delegation said that there seemed to be misunderstanding in certain quarters about their mission. They reiterated that they were in Colombo to seek an end to violence that is devastating the North and East, causing untold hardships to the people. The purpose of their mission is to seek a negotiated political settlement which should take into consideration the aspirations and hopes of the Tamil-speaking people. They said that they did not want to use this forum for propaganda or to create a rift between Sri Lanka and India, and that they did not want to cause any embarrassment to Sri Lanka. They saw two roles for the Government of Sri Lanka - one, to negotiate with the LTTE, and two, to ensure that justice is done and a settlement reached that is acceptable to all. They pointed out that both parties - Sri Lanka and the LTTE - were talking without any pre-conditions with one determined goal, that is, to achieve peace and security for the North and East.

continued on page 18

JAFFNA GOVT. AGENT SHOT DEAD

Mr M Panchalingam, Govt. Agent of Jaffna for the last five years, was shot dead in Jaffna on 1st May. The LTTE is said to have claimed responsibility.

LTTE - PLOTE CLASH

42 members of PLOTE and 11 members of LTTE have been killed in a clash between the two groups at Mullikulam in Mannar on May 20. The deaths are believed to be linked with the peace talks now going on between the Tamil Tigers and the Government. PLOTE had been careful not to antagonise the more powerful Tigers in the past. But, in recent weeks, it has been strengthening its links with the Tigers' main enemy, the Indian Force. The Tiger attack is seen as retaliation.

STUDENT LEADER SHOT DEAD

Muthukumar Gopalakrishnan (19), a student in G.C.E (A/L) class at Jaffna Central College, was taken from his home at Uduvil in Chunakam on the night of May 13 by unidentified armed young men. Gopalakrishnan was purportedly taken for an inquiry but his dead body was found the following morning 2 km away from his home. Gopalakrishnan was a student leader of the General Union of Youths and Students. It is believed that Gopalakrishnan was instrumental in organising the school closure consequent on the killing of Ahilan Thiruchelvam, another student.

THE N.E CHIEF MINISTER ON COLONISATION

North-East Chief Minister Varatharaja Perumal has urged the Central Government to stop colonisation in the Weli-Oya (former Manal-Aru) area and to withdraw the army stationed there. In the same communique the Chief Minister went on to state that before the riots in 1983 there were only a few Sinhala families. He now had information that there were 7,000 Sinhala families. He warned that Sri Lanka's existence as a unified country depended on finding a solution to the colonisation problem. Meanwhile, it is reported that Sinhala families are being brought in and settled in Thanikal and Erukampulavu which are villages on the outskirts of Vavuniya - Mullaitivu in the North-East. The settlement is being supervised by the Lankan Army.

DIARY OF INCIDENTS IN THE NORTH AND EAST

At Kaluwanchikudi, R Neethinathan, a 2nd year 'Dental' student of the Peradeniya University, was arrested by the IPKF on February 20. His wife was assured that Neethinathan would be released after inquiries. When the wife called at the IPKF camp on the following day she was chased away. EPRLF men informed her that her husband had been killed by the IPKF and that his body was lying at the local police station. Later a Magisterial order for the OIC of the IPKF camp to be present at the Batticaloa courts for an inquiry to be held on 31.3.89 was ignored.

28.4.89 - Jaffna - Jegathiswaran, an Arts undergraduate of the Jaffna University who was wanted by the IPKF, was handed over at the IPKF camp on 28.4.89 by a lecturer. The students union has made demands for his early release.

30.4.89 - Thirunelveli in Jaffna - 2 male and 2 female undergraduates of the Jaffna University and 2 G.C.E (A/L) students boarded in a house were picked up as terrorist suspects. All of them were later released. The University Students Organisation in a statement alleged that the 4 undergraduates were tortured after arrest and that the 2 girls had also been subjected to electric shocks during torture.

30.4.89 - Thirunelveli - Consequent on S Prabakaran a final year Arts undergraduate being shot dead by the IPKF, the Jaffna university was closed for one week due to students' boycott. Undergraduates also staged a 3-day token fast. The university students in a statement condemned the atrocities committed on university students and alleged that since the IPKF offensive of Oct '87 nine undergraduates had been killed by the IPKF.

2.5.89 - Point Pedro - An IPKF convoy was attacked. Consequently, 2 persons aged 45 and 50 years were killed. Several were injured; several houses and shops were damaged by shells. Several houses were set ablaze. The partially burnt body of S Velupillai aged 60, a retired Government employee was later found in one of the burnt buildings.

2.5.89 - Kaithady - Consequent on an IPKF sentry post being attacked (no casualties reported) a passenger bus which arrived at the place later was stopped. The women folk were ordered to disembark and pro-

ceeded on foot. All the male passengers and crew were severely assaulted. Seven of them were hospitalised.

2.5.89 - Vavuniya - IPKF entered the hall of the Suddhananda Young Men's Hindu Association in the night and opened fire at random. C Ganeshamoorthy aged 55 of Sandilipay and Kamalavathany a 12 year old girl from Kilinochchi were killed. 6 others were injured and hospitalised.

2.5.89 - Iranaimadu - K. Nandakumar, aged 34 years, a government employee attached to the Agricultural Research Centre and father of 3 children, was shot dead by the IPKF in front of IPKF camp. IPKF later explained that a firearm had accidentally gone off!

4.5.89 - Mirusuvil and Kodikamam - IPKF personnel on patrol at Mirusuvil to give protection for the passenger train was attacked at about 11.15 a.m. by some youths who arrived in a lorry. 7 IPKF personnel are believed to have been killed. The attackers escaped abandoning the lorry. A body of a youth killed in the counter attack was found in the lorry. About an hour later a Government passenger bus fully packed with commuters and proceeding to Mullaitivu was fired on by IPKF stationed at the Kodikamam camp, 2 km away from Mirusuvil. Sugirtha a 12 year old girl was killed. Over 10 passengers were grievously injured and hospitalised.

9.5.89 - Periyamadu, Mannar - Ten Indian soldiers were killed and several injured in a clash between the LTTE and the Indian army. One LTTE fighter, Murali, was injured.

12.5.89 - China Bay in Trincomalee - An IPKF jeep hit a landmine near the Prima Jetty. An IPKF Major was killed and 7 other IPKF men seriously injured. Though JVP claimed responsibility Indian military authorities in Trincomalee are trying to implicate the LTTE. LTTE has denied involvement.



Ground Situation in North and East

continued from page 13

purchases them is an open question, but arms are available in the black market.

While these reactions have begun in the Tamil areas, even in Colombo's intellectual circles, political structures, constitutions, legislative and political compromises whereby militant ethnic minorities have been accommodated within the larger political process are being seriously discussed. At one of Sri Lanka's better known research centres, the Canadian constitution and provisions whereby the rebel Quebecois were accommodated within the democratic framework was the subject of a talk given by the Canadian High Commissioner. Among the participants was the Minister of State Mr Chandra Bandara, the former MP for Kalkudah, Mr K W Devanayagam, Mr Bradman Weerakoon who negotiated with the LTTE on behalf of the President, with opposition figures such as Mr Mangala Moonasinghe MP (SLFP) and Mr Y P de Silva (USA). Figuring prominently in the discussion were the Meech Lake Accords, the last of a series of Amendments to the Canadian Constitution giving the Provinces greater power than before. Two main principles are embodied in the Accord, i.e. that Canada becomes officially bilingual (English and French) and Quebec be recognised as a distinct region in Canada. The con-

cessions also include the right of the Provincial legislature to promote Quebec as a distinct region within Canada and the right of Provinces to opt out of National financial programmes, decide immigration policy and hold regular constitutional conferences.

But the external factor to the equation - India - has also to be taken serious note of. Though the IPKF permitted the Sri Lanka Air Force helicopters to ferry members of the Tiger negotiating team from the war-torn jungles of Mullaitivu, the IPKF operations in Mullaitivu continue. Furthermore, the operations in Jaffna too after a period of lull have begun to intensify. These operations are being conducted while the LTTE is engaged in talks with the government. It is this that has induced the LTTE to describe the IPKF as not being a peace-keeping force. The LTTE strategy is to plug this line till the government accepts this as a fact and makes moves to do something about it. Only then will the LTTE put forward concrete proposals.

The Sri Lankan and Indian Governments too do not see eye to eye on the framework of the negotiations, the Indians insisting that it be within the Indo-Lanka Peace Accord and the Sri Lanka Government refusing to be dictated to as to within what framework the talks should be conducted. Similarly, India has not been exactly tickled by the government press releases on the talks which have highlighted the LTTE insistence that

the IPKF has been the cause of suffering and misery of the Tamils. Criticism, though not directly from the Government against the IPKF, is getting wider publicity today than a couple of months ago.

Meanwhile, in international forums, Sri Lanka has been locking horns (unsuccessfully) with India over a place in the International Court of Justice recently. More significantly it has decided to run against India for the seat in the Security Council in the United Nations. The very tone of the report on the issue and the exchange of words between the Indian and Sri Lankan diplomats portends a possible confrontation.

As the Sri Lankan expression goes, "Who knows what will happen?" [Courtesy - *The Island* - 21 May, 1989]

LTTE - Sri Lanka Peace Talks

continued from page 16

May 23

The LTTE expressed their concern on the recent developments in Sammanthurai area and urged that a full and free investigation should be conducted to determine the cause for the unrest and to flush out those responsible.

The main talks centered round colonization, particularly in the Eastern province. The LTTE delegation maintained that since independence there had been continued colonization in the Eastern province and that those colonization schemes were state-sponsored. They were of the view that colonization had changed the social pattern and ethnic composition in some of the Tamil-speaking areas.

They also said that since the beginning of the talks, the IPKF had intensified its operations which brought untold hardships to innocent Tamil civilians. They also pointed out that since the emergency had been lifted, the proscription placed on the LTTE organisation had lapsed, but unfortunately this fact had not been brought to the notice of the people yet.

Talks are continuing.

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மூன்று உண்மைகள்!

இலங்கை அரசுக்கும் எல்.டி.டி.ஈ. இயக்கத்துக்கும் இடையே நேரடியான பேச்சுவார்த்தை தொடங்கியிருக்கிறது. இது வெற்றி பெறுமா என்பது கேள்விக்குறியாக இருக்கலாம். ஆனால், மூன்று உண்மைகள் தெளிவாகின்றன.

ஈழப் பிரச்சனையில் 'மத்தியஸ்தம்' செய்யும் பங்கை வகிக்கச் சென்றது இந்தியா. ஆனால், இப்போது 'இந்த மத்தியஸ்தரே வேண்டாம்' என்று தள்ளிவிட்டு, சண்டை போட்டவர்களே நேரடியாகப் பேசிக் கொள்ள ஆரம்பித்துவிட்டார்கள்! நமது 'மத்தியஸ்த ராஜதந்திரம்' படுதோல்வி அடைந்ததைத்தான் இந்த நிலைமை நிரூபித்திருக்கிறது.

அடுத்து, எல்.டி.டி.ஈ. மக்கள் ஆதரவை இழந்து பலவீனமான இயக்கமாகிவிட்டது என்று இந்திய அரசு செய்த பிரசாரம் பொய் என்றும் ஆகிவிட்டது! பலவீனமாயிருந்தால், சிங்கள ஆதரவாளர் என்று வர்ணிக்கப்பட்ட ஜனாதிபதி பிரேமதாசா தலைமையில் இயங்கும் இலங்கை அரசு, விடுதலைப்புலிகளை நோக்கிச் சமாதானத்துக்குக் கை நீட்டுமா?

மூன்றாவதாக, 'மக்கள் ஆதரவோடு தேர்தலில் ஜெயித்து ஆட்சி அமைத்ததாக' இந்திய அரசு செய்தி ஸ்தாபனங்களால் துதி பாடப்பட்ட வரதராஜப்பெருமானின் தமிழ் மாகாண அரசு பேச்சுவார்த்தையில் காணாமல் போய்விட்டது! ஏனென்றால், மக்கள் ஆதரவு இல்லாமல் இந்திய சமாதானப் படையின் தயவால் கால் ஊன்றிய ஆட்சி அது! அதனாலேயே இப்போது அதன் சாயம் வெளுத்துவிட்டது!

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இலக்கியக்காட்சி பொடியன் என இகழாதீர்

தமிழ் மன்னன் ஒருவன் இருந்தான்; அவன் பெயர் அதியமான் நெடுமான் அஞ்சி. அவன் வயதால் இளையவனாக இருந்தான். அவனுடைய அப்பன் போரிலே இறந்தமையினால் இவன் பன்னிரண்டு வயதுப் பையனாக இருந்தபோதே அந்த நாட்டு மக்கள் இந்தப்பையனை மன்னனாக முடி சூட்டினார்கள். வயதிலே சின்னனாக இருந்தபோதிலும் இவன் எல்லாப் பண்புகளும் நிறைந்தவனாக விளங்கினான். போராளும் சரி கொடையாளனும் சரி நீதியாளனும் சரி இவன் ஒப்பாரும் மிக்காரும் இல்லாதவனாக விளங்கினான்: நாட்டு மக்களுக்கு இவனுடைய ஆற்றலும் ஆண்மையும் தெரிந்தது; புரிந்தது. ஆனால் வேற்று நாட்டு மன்னருக்கும் அயல் நாட்டு அரசருக்கும் இவனை விளங்கிக்கொள்ள முடியவில்லை. பையன் என்றே எண்ணினர்; பாலகன் என்றே பேசினர். பாவை போல இருக்கும் அரசன் என்றே நினைத்தனர். எனவே படை எடுத்துப் பையனின் நாட்டினை வெற்றி கொள்ளலாம் என்ற ஆசை எழுந்தது.

இப்படி ஓர் ஆசை அயல் நாட்டு மன்னருக்கு எழுந்து விட்டது என்ற செய்தி ஓளவைப் பாட்டிக்குத் தெரிய வந்தது. ஓளவையார் உலகம் தெரிந்தவர், உண்மை உணர்ந்தவர். போர் தொடுப்பதால் இந்தப்பாலகனை வெல்வது இயலாது என்பதை அயல்நாட்டு மன்னருக்கு விளக்க விரும்பி அந்த மன்னனிடம் போனார். ஓளவையாரின் வரவைக் கண்ட மன்னனும் மற்றையோரும் அவருக்கு மரியாதை செய்தனர். வரிசைக்கு நன்றி கூறி விட்டு வந்த விடயத்தைச் சொன்னான் ஓளவை. தனது செய்தியைப் பாட்டாகவே சொன்னான் அந்தப்பாட்டி.

மன்னா! சிந்தித்துச் செயல்படுங்கள். நீங்கள் செய்யத் திட்டமிட்டுள்ள செயல் விவேகமான செயல் அல்ல. ஆகவே உங்களை நான் எச்சரிக்க வந்திருக்கிறேன். உன்னுடைய நாட்டின் காடுகளிலே குட்டைகளும், குளங்களும் இருக்கின்றன. அவற்றுள்ளே பல முதலைகள் இருக்கின்றன. அப்படி இருந்தும் உன்னுடைய நாட்டின் வீரம் மிக்க சிறுவர் அக்குட்டைகளுக்குள் இறங்கிக் குட்டையைக் குழப்பி விளையாடுவர். அச்சமான செயல்தான். இருந்தாலும் உயிருக்கு அஞ்சாத உன் நாட்டுச் சிறுவர் அத்தகைய வீர விளையாட்டுக்களில் ஈடுபடுவார்கள். அத்தகைய குட்டைகளில் வாழ்கின்ற முதலைகளின் பிடியிலிருந்து உனது வீரச்சிறுவர்கள் தப்பி விடுகிறார்கள் என்பது உண்மைதான். ஆனால், தண்ணீர் குடிக்கவென அந்தக் குட்டைக்குப் போகின்ற மாபெரும் யானையைக்கூட அந்தமுதலை மடக்கிப் பிடித்து நீருக்குள் இழுத்துச் செல்கின்ற காட்சியையும் நீ கண்டிருப்பாய். முதலை சிறியது தான்; யானை பெரியது தான்; ஆனாலும் சிறிய முதலை பெரிய யானையை வென்று விடுகின்றது.

என்னுடைய நாட்டு மன்னனாகிய அதியமான் நெடுமான் அஞ்சியும் அந்த முதலையைப் போன்றவனே. அவனை உங்களுக்குப் புரியவில்லை, அவனை ஒரு பாலகனாகவே நீங்கள் நினைக்கின்றீர்கள். அவனுடைய வீரதீரச் செயல்களை நீங்கள் எண்ணிப்பார்க்கவில்லை. கடுகு சிறிது காரம் பெரிது என்பார்களே. எமது மன்னனைப் பொறுத்த வரையில் அது உண்மை. உருவு கண்டு நகையாடக் கூடாது. எனது புத்தியைக் கேட்கா விட்டால் உங்களுக்கு நாசம் உண்டாகும். ஆகவே போரைத் தவிர்த்து, உங்களைப் பாதுகாத்துக் கொள்ளுங்கள். இவ்வாறு கூறிவிட்டு ஓளவை விடைபெற்றுச் சென்றான். ஓளவை பாடிய பாடலைக் கீழே தருகின்றோம்:

போற்றுமின், மறவீர்! சாற்றுவும் நும்மை
ஊர்க்குறு மாக்கள் ஆடக் கலங்கும்
தாள்படு சிலநீர்க் களிறு அட்டு வீழ்க்கும்
ஈர்ப்புடைக் கதா அத்து அன்ன என்னை
நுண்பல் கருமம் நினையாது
'இளையன்' என்று இகழின் பெறல் அரிது ஆடே.

(தமிழீழத்தில் இன்று நடைபெற்றுவரும்
ஈழத்தமிழ்ப் புலிகளுக்கும் இந்தியப்
படையினர்க்கும் இடையிலான போரில்
வேங்கைத் தலைவனின் சிறப்பை இந்தியப்
படைக்கு விளக்கிக் கூற ஓர் ஓளவை இல்லாது
போனாளே) (ஆசிரியர்)