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Hindu Organ

(The Only Newspaper in Ceylon for the Hindus) PUBLISHED EVERY TUESDAY AND FRIDAY



Supplement to the "INTHUSATHANAM"

INSIST ON C. S. R. ROSE WATER LAVANDER BETEL MASALA

CEYLON CHEMICAL WORKS

SAGE — EMBODIMENT OF FREEDOM IDEAL OF HUMANITY

A SAGE is he who is no journeyman of nature. He is master of nature and embodiment of freedom.

of nature. We are all men, yet different from one another as Mr. so-and-so and Mrs. so-and-so.

Storehouse of Energy

It is through the power of the spirit man liveth. Not knowing this eternal and immortal truth "Know Thyself" man tries to depend upon physical strength.

Mighty Ideal

Thought at present, due to delusion, we might seem to have fallen short of such a mighty ideal of life.

No man seems to be without an ideal, fair or foul. This world has been spoken of as a lunatic asylum in which each is made after some ideal or other.

Shrine of Bliss

If we go spiritually out of order, restlessness results. We step out of our real nature from the eternal into the ephemeral.

Let us see what is the ideal among the animals. Perhaps, a mighty lion. Among buffaloes, the ideal may be a mighty buffalo.

Plan of Nature

Thus we see a gradual evolution of nature and manifestation of self. A wise man is the ideal of the ignorant.

JAFFNA MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Nomination Papers for Wards 6 to 10

Present Chairman Also Contesting

Nomination Papers for Ward 6 to 10 were received on last Tuesday by Mr. S. N. Rajah Returning Officer.

Mr. C. Ponnampalam, Chairman of the Urban Council, is contesting the Nayanmarkardu Ward.

The candidates nominated for the various Wards were:

Ariatalai Ward: Mr. A. M. Brodie (Independent) and Mr. S. Nadarajah (Tamil Congress).

Nayanmarkardu Ward: Mr. C. Ponnampalam (Independent), Mr. K. Thuraisingham (Tamil Con-

gress) and Mr. N. Chinnappah (Independent).

Nallur Ward: Mr. S. Visuvanalingam (Tamil Congress), Mr. C. T. Navaratnam (Independent) and Mr. S. Thurairajasingham (Sama Samajist).

Kantharmadam Ward: Mr. R. C. Manmatharayan and Mr. S. S. Navaratnam (Tamil Congress) and Mr. K. Aiyadurai (Independent).

Vannarponnai Ward: Mr. T. S. Durairaj (Tamil Congress) and Mr. M. Karthigesu (Communist).

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Nehruji Impresses King George King's personal letter to Mountbatten

I may reveal now that King George VI wrote a personal letter to Lord Mountbatten from Buckingham Palace immediately after Pandit Nehru had an interview with His Majesty. The King said that he was impressed by the great personality of Panditji.

Before leaving London Lord Mountbatten could not hold expressing his feelings about Panditji's visit to London. He said: "Panditji has made a tremendous impression on Commonwealth statesmen and others who came in close contact with him during the fortnight.

FORGED CURRENCY NOTES

Man Arrested

The existence of forged one-rupee notes has come to the notice of the police, who have been successful in arresting a man alleged to be in possession of several such notes, together with some papers and trappings to counterfeit currency notes of various sums as well as ink and other counterfeiting materials.

The suspect is a man named Lorenzo Ekkala, of Heddalia, who was arrested by the Gampaha police.

He was produced in the Gampaha Magistrate's Court and remanded.

UNITED NATIONS' APPEAL FOR CHILDREN

JAFFNA TARGET IS Rs. 50,000

A Rs. 50,000-target was fixed as Jaffna district's contribution to the United Nations' Appeal for Children, at a public meeting held in the Jaffna Town Hall, presided over by Mr. P. J. Hudson, Government Agent, Northern Province (states a Department of Information communique).

The following suggestions for a plan of campaign were mooted for consideration: A flag day, district concerts, amateur dramatic performances, benefit cinema shows.

The chairman mentioned that it had been decided by the National Committee set up in Ceylon that 75 per cent. of the collections would be made use for the relief of distress among children and adolescents in Ceylon.

It was decided to form a district committee for the revenue district of Jaffna, and to include as its members all present at that meeting, with power to co-opt additional members.

It was also decided that the D. R. Os. should form local committees and report progress to the general committee, and that a separate committee should be set up for the Jaffna Manigara's Division, including the urban council area.

Colombo South Election Petition Sequel

Impersonators and Abettors Reported

The names of 15 impersonators and five who abetted impersonations at the Colombo South Parliamentary election are contained in a report sent by the Election Judge to the Governor-General according to a notification in a Gazette extraordinary issued Tuesday night.

The following are the names of impersonators:—H. D. Veronica Peris, W. Caroline Perera, R. A. Roslin Nona, E. A. Jane Nona, T. Gimarathana, M. A. Abraham Gunawardana, M. Ransohamy, D. Kusumawathie, D. Roslin Nona, M. Cecelia Perera, V. Hendrick Erin Brenda Rodrigo (Mrs. M. I. L. Rodrigo), Luwina Hamy (minor), aged 18, N. Norman and U. Justin.

The following are those who abetted:—Milli Nona alias Aslin Nona, R. M. G. Amarasingha, Ekman Seneviratne, Ebert alias Wilson Peris and Oliver of "Olive's Servants Agency."

Air Ceylon Colombo-Karachi Service

The Colombo-Karachi service operated by Air Ceylon will commence on November 20. The route will be via Trinchnopoly and Bombay. For the present there will be only one service a week, probably on Saturdays.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S LAST DAYS

POIGNANT MEMORIES

POIGNANT memories of Mahatma Gandhi's last days were recalled by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, when she unveiled a bust of Bapu in the marble hall of the Council House at Lucknow on Gandhi Jayanti day. She said:

Two days before his death Bapu gave a loving interview to a group of young friends, Pandit Nehru's daughter, Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi's daughter, my own daughter and Pandit Motilal Nehru's youngest daughter. He had worn a most peculiar coolie's hat he used to wear when he was sun-bathing and somebody had brought him a little mata which was bound on his foot. The girl asked him lovingly: 'Bapu you have no clothes on you'! He laughed and he laughed and promptly said: 'You wanted a private interview with me. Well, you are having what you wanted, a private interview'. Then he turned round to the group of girls and said: 'Today is the last time that you will see me like this. The next time when you will see me, it will be in the midst of great crowds'.

because he was wise. He needed to laugh because he was called upon to bear the world's burden. Everyone went to him, to consult him, to ask his help, to lay their burden on his already burdened shoulders. He refused to see. Even a child that went to him found him full of humour and fun and went away fully satisfied. He played with children as though he was a child. He gave counsel to those who had the destiny of the whole country in their hands. He talked to strangers and to friends, and no stranger remained a stranger in the first moment of coming into his presence.

I realise more and more every day how it was not an individual that killed him but the whole lot of us. Day after day and hour after hour, it is we who loved him, who say that they followed him and who say that he was their father, it is we who crucified him day after day and finally on January 30 this year, it was all through our ignorance, folly, and lack of understanding Christ was killed on the cross. Gandhiji was crucified day after day. He still was being crucified by the witting or unwitting follies of millions and millions and millions of his fellowmen who gave him lip service. We are celebrating Gandhiji Jayanti, but the heart of the faithful is weeping. Why is that? Is it that confusion in our minds? Is it for some unconscious knowledge that we had betrayed him? How should we make amends, how should we cleanse ourselves, how should we still redeem ourselves, from our past follies and become worthy of being called interpreters of Mahatma Gandhi.

When Gandhi died, millions and millions of words were uttered. Millions and millions of tears were shed that would surpass in quantity the seven oceans of the world. The statues that were made, put together would (Continued on page 4)

Premonition of Death

And two days earlier, in a similar vein Bapu spoke to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur who was a great disciple of his. It was nearly prayer time and of course everyone was very anxious about him after the bomb incident. Naturally she asked him: 'Bapu why don't you take more care? Why don't you have more protection?' He laughed and sighed; tears and laughter flowed from him at one and the same moment. He said: 'Protection! Who will protect me? Who can protect me? I know that soon one evening at prayer time, I should vacate this world.' He had a premonition of death. I believe that not only during the last but for more than a year Bapu felt the wings of death blowing over the ocean of his life. Just four days before I came to the United Provinces as your chief servant, I had gone very early one morning to see Bapu. He said: 'Well, you have not been to see me for several days now.' I said, 'No, Bapu, I have not been to you because I have been practising self-defending ordinance. I know how heavily burdened you are and that the pressure of even a familiar face is almost too heavy a burden for you.' He kept quiet for a little while and said nothing. Then he said to me something that was most unpleasant, most unforgettable of the news. He said—and at that time it sounded all in vain—"I know you are very jealous regarding my time. I know you never come to ask me for anything or to hold conversation with me." I said, "No. Why should I want to consult you? For 30 years you and I have known each other. If after 30 years I did not adore what is in your mind and spirit, what kind of a disciple have I been? I do not need to speak to you, because I know all your answers." Then he said, "Can't you come and make me laugh at least once in the day?" I smiled and went away. It struck me each time I think of it how terrible it must have been for him. How deeply it strikes me now that I could be of some help to him in the matter of evoking laughter and keep his nerves in good order.

Police Force to be better looked after

Welfare Officer Appointed

The men in the Police Force serving in stations scattered all over the Island will be better looked after in the future, when the welfare scheme that has been set afoot is in full operation.

Sir Richard Aluvihare, Inspector-General of Police, who is keen on providing better living conditions to the men in the Force, has appointed Mr. Vernon C. Schokman, A.S.P., to the newly created post of Welfare Officer for the Force.

The Welfare Scheme contemplated envisages a Mess for every Police Station in the Island and, wherever possible, its own canteen. The main object in providing canteens is to enable unmarried officers to have wholesome food at cheap rates.

To make this scheme a success, a proposal has been made to establish a Central Cooperative Stores for the Police Force.

Nobel Peace Prize

Ghandhiji a Candidate

Mahatma Gandhi, was among a list of candidates proposed for this year's Nobel Peace Prize.

Other candidates were: Stalin, the Pope, President Truman, President Karl Renner of Austria and President Benes of Czechoslovakia and Molotov. So far the Norwegian Parliamentary Nobel Committee has not yet decided and it was thought that the prize money totalling £11,000 might be carried forward to next year.

Few people realised, few people of the world still realise, that Mahatma Gandhi's laughter was the only relieving factor in his life and he needed to laugh because he was wise. He needed to laugh because he was called upon to bear the world's burden.



Hindu Organ

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1948

Treasure These Thoughts

Whose works are all free from the mauling of desire, whose actions are burned up by the fire of wisdom, him the wise have called a Sage.

—BHAGAVAD-GITA

A GREAT VICTORY

PRESIDENT TRUMAN HAS won in the contest for the highest office in America. The expectations of so called political observers in the U. S. A. who predicted victory for Governor Dewey have been falsified and the man who unostentatiously followed the *via media* has been returned. It has been said of President Truman that he comes from the middle-of-the-Middle West and largely owes his political advancement to the middle of the road position which he has firmly taken on national issues. He has been also described as a man of the dead centre politically, just as he is geographically, but he gets there not by plotting his course that way, but by a kind of zig-zag operation in which he moves back and forth between extremes, and is consequently sighted more often in the centre than any place. He belongs to the middle class. On the demise of President Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman who was vice-President, without any contest or political stir became successor in office to the late Roosevelt. During his term of office President Truman was criticised for the policy he followed on matters relating to controls, racial discrimination, civil liberties and State support for farmers. The Democrats were becoming unpopular and the Republicans were gaining ground. For thoroughness and efficiency Governor Dewey had no equal; he was also very popular among the masses. President Truman's Victory against such a formidable opponent as Governor Dewey is significant. America has preferred the man who is reputed to follow the middle-of-the-road policy. So far as U. S. Foreign Policy is concerned there is practically no difference, between the Republican and Democratic parties and it would not have made any difference whether Governor Dewey or President Truman succeeded in the contest. There would have been a great difference indeed had Henry Wallace been successful but it was well known that Wallace had no chance of success. The U. S. A. is one of the most powerful countries in the world and great importance is attached to the person who holds the office of President. President Truman can truly contribute in great measure towards the achievement of enduring peace. Governor Dewey has while congratulating President Truman on his victory promised the support of the Republican party to the re-elected President. The contest was keen but conducted in accordance with the best traditions. It is to be hoped that President Truman will during the next four years be will function as President promote world peace.

Pandit Nehru Creates U. N. O. History

Special Address to General Assembly

PRIME Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India created United Nations history (writes Fraser Wighton, Reuter's Political Correspondent.)

He is the first Prime Minister other than the constitutional head of a State, who has been honoured by an invitation specially to address the General Assembly.

High United Nations quarters consider that the United Nations, in creating this precedent, was fully justified by Pandit Nehru's personal appearance.

The Assembly, in attentive silence, followed the Indian Prime Minister's closely reasoned discourse to its close before expressing its appreciation in cordial applause.

Intricate Problems

Pandit Nehru said he was grateful for the opportunity they had given him to address that great Assembly.

"I feel a little embarrassed and a little overwhelmed by this occasion, because this Assembly represents the world community, and whether we who are present here are big men and women or small we represent a mighty cause, and something of the greatness of that cause falls upon us and makes us for the moment greater than we are.

Main Objectives

"Your aim is clear, and yet, in looking at that aim, we lose ourselves often in smaller matters and forget the main objectives. Sometimes it seems that the objective itself gets a little clouded and lesser objectives are before us.

"I come from a country which, after a long struggle, though that struggle was peaceful, attained her freedom and her independence. "In these long years of struggle we were taught by our great leader never to forget not only the objectives but also the methods by which we achieved them. Always he laid stress on the fact that it was not enough

merely for the objective to be good, it was equally important that the means to attain those objectives should be good. Men were always as important as things.

Lesson of the Wars

"It is important we should remember that the best of objectives may not be reached if our eyes are bloodshot and our minds are clouded with passion.

"Therefore, it becomes essential for a while to think more of how we are doing things rather than what we are aiming at.

"This Assembly took shape after two mighty wars and as a consequence of those wars. What has been the lesson of these wars? Surely, it has been that out of hatred and violence you will not build peace. It is a contradiction in terms.

"The lesson of history and especially of the two Great Wars that have devastated humanity has been that out of hatred and violence only hatred and violence can come.

Cycle of Hatred

"We have got into a cycle of hatred and violence and not the most brilliant debate will get you out of it unless you find other ways and means.

"If you continue in this cycle the result will be not only tremendous devastation all over the world, but also the non-achievement by any individual power or group of its objectives."

Dr. Herbert Evatt, President of the General Assembly, who was the moving spirit in arranging the Indian Prime Minister's appearance, afterwards told Reuter: "It has been a privilege for the Assembly to hear so great a man, so great a lover of peace, so eloquent a speaker not only for Asia but for the world."

Dr. Evatt added that he was assured that Pandit Nehru's address had created a deep impression upon the Assembly.

Careers Opened to Ceylon Youths in R. A. F.

The United Kingdom Air Council has extended to Ceylon a scheme whereby Commonwealth candidates who wish to obtain Permanent Commissions in the General Duties Branch of the Royal Air Force may be admitted as Cadets to the Royal Air Force College Cranwell, according to a Press Communique issued by the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs.

Candidates who will be nominated by the Ceylon Government in consultation with the Air Officer Commanding, R. A. F. Ceylon will be sent to the United Kingdom at the United Kingdom Government's expense. No fees are payable in respect of training and residence at the College. Acceptance of a candidate for Cadetship will be conditional upon enlistment for a regular engagement in the Royal Air Force for a period of five years. The total length of the course will normally be two years and seven months and after the successful completion of this course a candidate is granted a Commission in the Royal Air Force, after obtaining the Commission, a Candidate is required to serve for three years as an Officer.

To be considered for nomination, candidates must be British subjects and members of families established and resident of Ceylon. They should be unmarried

Colombo South By Election

All candidates to address in same meeting

For the first time in the history of local politics the four candidates contesting the Colombo South parliamentary By-election will address a public meeting from a common platform. The candidates are Mr. P. Saravanamuthu (Independent Socialist), Mr. Freddie Jayawardene (U.N.P.), Mr. Bernard Soysa (B.L.P.L.), and Dr. A. P. de Zoysa (Ind.).

The public meeting will be held at the Colombo Town Hall at 6 p. m. on Saturday, November 6, presided over by Professor A. W. Mailvaganam, Professor of Physics, University of Ceylon. The speeches will be in English.

and be within the age limits of 17 and 19 years, on January 1 of the year of entry into Cadet training. Candidates should also have reached a standard of general education equal to that which is normally required for admission to a degree course at a University.

The Ministry of Defence will very shortly call for applications from candidates.

News in Brief

A new Hindu temple costing Rs. 54,000 was opened in South Africa by Mr. S. R. Naidu, Vice-President of the South African Hindu Maha Sabha.

Telephone links between Germany, Pakistan, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, cut off on the outbreak of war, were restored on Tuesday.

Without a doubt the oldest pollster in the United States, 107 year old James A. Harm, a veteran of the Civil War, voted in his 22nd consecutive Presidential Election. He was discharged from hospital only last week after pneumonia. He said he voted for Governor Dewey.

Mr. V. S. Gunawardane, the Negombo Magistrate, imposed a fine of Rs. 100 on Mr. E. L. Gunsekera, landed proprietor Andiamblama, whom Detective Inspector G. O. Buysar of the Negombo Police accused of having used a loud-speaker at the Andiamblama Fair, on October 12, in such a manner as to constitute a statutory offense.

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, Minister for Home Affairs, during a recent official visit to Anuradhapura told a deputation of temperance workers, who met him in connexion with the request to have the arrack tavern and toddy taverns in the town removed to an area outside the Atamasthana area, and also to protest against an application, for another foreign liquor licence for the town, that arrangements would be made with a view to shift the two taverns to Nuwaraewela near the Jaffna Road junction.

The Co-operative Wholesale Establishment will handle all poonac returned to the Island by India and Pakistan. India and Pakistan have agreed to return the poonac from the copra shipped to the two countries, which should normally have been exported in terms of coconut oil. Nearly 1,000 tons of poonac were returned to the Island by India and Pakistan last month. The distribution of poonac to consumers through the Co-operatives will be at controlled prices. It is expected however that the market price of poonac will drop somewhat as a result of this poonac from abroad being available for local distribution. The annual requirements of poonac of local consumption is estimated at about 30,000 tons.

Mr. A. S. Basanayake, vice-chairman, of the Bandarawela Urban Council, has given notice of a motion to be moved at the council's next meeting, urging that black-market dealers be punished with death. The motion says that in view of the alarming increase in the price of controlled rice and other essentials of life in the country, consequent on the impending food shortage, the council strongly recommends to the Minister for food in particular and the Cabinet in general, the desirability of amending the existing law relating to food control. It adds that the legislation should be re-enacted whereby the death penalty may be meted out on black-market dealers found guilty in a court of law of profiteering in keeping with the practice now followed in several Eastern and European countries.

Jaffna Municipal Elections

Two T. C. Nominees Elected Unopposed

Mr. Sam A. S. Babapathy former Chairman, Urban Council and Mr. S. M. M. Abdul Cader, Tamil Congress nominees for Bazaar and Old Mosque Wards respectively, were elected unopposed.

Mr. S. N. Rajah, Returning Officer received nominations for the Jaffna Municipal Elections for wards eleven to fifteen. Mr. P. O. Fernando, Commissioner of Elections was also present.

The candidates nominated for the various wards were:

Old Mosque Ward: Mr. S. M. M. Abdul Cader (Tamil Congress) elected unopposed.

New Mosque Ward: Kathi S. M. Aboobucker (Tamil Congress) and Janap S. M. Habel Mohamed (Independent).

Bazaar Ward: Mr. Sam A. Babapathy (Tamil Congress) elected unopposed.

Station Ward: Mr. K. V. Sinnadurai and Mr. S. R. Thalayasingham (Tamil Congress) and Mr. M. K. Subramaniam (Communist).

Chund kuli Ward: Mr. P. Mortimer and Mr. E. T. Hitchcock (Tamil Congress).

Both Mr. Sam A. Babapathy and Mr. S. M. M. Abdul Cader who are sitting members of the Urban Council, on emerging from the Committee room, were profusely garlanded. Mr. Abdul Cader is the first Muslim to be elected to the Municipal Council.

Used Dynamite For Fishing

The case came up for hearing before Mr. F. Conrad Perera, Jaffna Magistrate, in which sub-Inspector A. D. Rodrigo of the Jaffna police, charged Pavulu Piragasam and three others with having used dynamite in the Jaffna lagoon for the purpose of fishing.

Pavulu Piragasam pleaded guilty. He was fined Rs. 250. The other two accused were acquitted.

Another man, L. Sebastianpillai, pleaded guilty to a similar charge and was fined Rs. 200.

Cable and wireless deal

The question of the Ceylon Government buying the local assets of Cable and Wireless Ltd. has been taken a step further by talks between Mr. C. Sittampalam, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Mr. A. J. Whiteside, the Local Manager and Mr. G. Small, Chief Engineer of Cable and Wireless Ltd.

It is gathered that the cost of the purchase would amount to Rs. 3 million.

The policy of the Ceylon Government buying over the local assets of Cable and Wireless Ltd. is gathered, is in keeping with the policy adopted by Great Britain and the Dominions who have the supreme control of the working of this Company in the respective countries.

With Ceylon's attainment of Dominion Status, it is felt that this country, too, should follow the policy of other Dominions.

Certain outstanding questions relating to the present staff and other technical details have yet to be settled.

With the taking over of Cable and Wireless Ltd., Ceylon is entitled to become a member of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board.

The money for the deal is to be released from Loan Funds.

Gampola Election Petition

Inquiry Begun

The petition of Mr. B. L. Saimon Silva, of Atabage, Pallegama, challenging the election of Mr. R. S. Pelpola, of Mahara, Gampola, to the Gampola Seat in the House of Representatives was taken up for inquiry on Tuesday before Mr. Justice Windham.

In his petition, Mr. Silva alleged that Mr. Pelpola, was not duly elected or returned and that his election was void for the following reasons:

(a) That he or others with his consent and knowledge committed the corrupt practice of undue influence;

(b) that before and during the election, the respondent or others with his consent and knowledge published false statements of facts in relation to the personal character or conduct of Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardene, one of the candidates, and thereby committed a corrupt practice;

(c) that he or his agents committed the corrupt practice of bribery in connexion with the election.

The petitioner therefore prayed that it be determined that the respondent was not duly elected or returned and that his election was null and void.

Mr. C. S. Barr Kumarakulasingham with Messrs. A. I. Rajasingham and K. C. de Silva, instructed by Mr. Gunsekera appeared for the petitioner.

Mr. S. Nadesan with Messrs. Geo. Chitty and Bernard Aluwibare, instructed by Messrs. G. A. Nissanka and B. S. C. Ratwatte, appeared for the respondent.

Bribery Charge Withdrawn

When the inquiry was taken up, Mr. C. S. Barr Kumarakulasingham, senior counsel for the petitioner, moved to strike out the charge of bribery. The inquiry then proceeded on the other two charges.

Cost of Living Index Number for October

The working class Cost of Living Index number, Colombo town for the month of October 1948 was 259, according to a Press communique issued by the Director of Statistics. This represents a drop of two points from the September figure which was 261.

Truman Re-Elected President of the United States

Governor Dewey Congratulates him

Mr. Harry S. Truman was Re-elected President of the United States for four years, and the democrats were also swept into power in both Houses of Congress in one of history's greatest political upsets.

Republican Governor Thomas E. Dewey conceded Truman's Victory in this photo-finish election at 4.15 p.m. on Tuesday after the world had been kept waiting for nearly Twelve hours.

The chances of 64-year-old democrat Truman had been rated as hopeless by all the political prophets, but he himself had always professed complete confidence in the result.

The Congress results were still not final, but the latest returns indicated this line-up:

Senate: 54 democrats and 45 republicans—required majority 49.

House of Representatives: 246 democrats, 188 republicans and 1 American Labour—required majority 218.

The republicans had been in the majority in both Houses of Congress since 1916.

Governor Dewey, who saw his White House hopes dwindle for the second time as election results poured in through the night, conceded the election in a telegram to Mr. Truman saying:

"My heartiest congratulations to you on your election and every good wish for a successful administration, and I urge all Americans to unite behind you in support of every effort to keep the nation strong and establish peace in the world."

FUNERAL PYRE MYSTERY

Suicide or Murder?

Police investigations are being conducted in an attempt to discover whether the body of a man, found burning on a pile of wood behind the Catholic Convent, indicated a case of suicide or murder.

Hundreds of people were attracted to the spot when they saw the body burning on a large pile of firewood. By the time the police arrived only a portion of the head and a hip-bone remained.

Close-by were a hatchet, a bus conductor's licence and a bunch of keys.

The body, it is surmised, was that of Saradiel, an employee of the Jaffna Bus Company. The conductor's licence and the keys were identified as his.

Later, the police discovered letters written by Saradiel saying that he was committing suicide in that manner: as he was a poor man and that there would be none to bury his body.

But a number of people have given a different story to the police.

One of them, Mr. H. B. Disanayake Bandaramahatmaya, of Abayagiriya said that two days earlier, when he was passing Abayagiri road, he had seen Saradiel and another man also an employee of the Jaffna Bus Company, stacking firewood at the spot from a cart.

When questioned they had told him that the firewood was for burning some bus tyres. He saw them busy again on the same task the following day.

John the carter, said that he was asked to bring the firewood by Saradiel and Banda as they wanted to set fire to some bus tyres. He was paid six rupees for the load of firewood.

The theory under investigation is that Saradiel was not the victim. It is stated that a day prior to the incident he had sold a bicycle for Rs. 200 recovered a loan and withdrawn his Savings Bank deposit.

Indications are that the victim, whoever he be, may have been backed to death and then burnt.

The Anuradhapura Magistrate, Mr. A. W. Nadarajah, has asked the police for a full report. Earlier he had ordered the police to summon the District Medical Officer and get him to report on the remains. As the report was not forthcoming, even after the inquest proceedings, the magistrate drew the attention of the police to the matter again.

The coroner, Mr. K. Subramaniam who held the inquest, gave a verdict of suicide.

