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 NO. 39, FUSSELS LANE,  
 COLOMBO-06,  
 SRI LANKA.

**THE MORNING STAR**

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*Righteousness Exalteth A Nation But Sin is a Reproach to any people.*

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**VISIT TO JAFFNA - ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ENTIRE PROGRAMME SAYS DR. KONRAD RAISER**

In a letter written to the Rt. Revd Dr. S. Jebanesan, Bishop in Jaffna, JDCSI, the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches has expressed his great joy that his visit to Jaffna was one of the highlights of his entire programme in Sri Lanka.

The letter states, "Dear Bishop, More than four weeks have already passed since our visit to Sri Lanka. It is therefore high time that I should send you a word of appreciation for your warm and generous hospitality during our visit. As you know, I left Sri Lanka for another period of ten days visiting churches in the Pacific. The weeks after my return to Geneva on 31 March were filled with so many pressing responsibilities that I had to postpone the wish to send you a word of appreciation to the quiet time of Easter break. I trust that you understand the reasons for this delay in hearing from me.

The programme which had been prepared for our visit to Sri Lanka was demanding but at the same time it provided us with a unique opportunity to gain insight into the situation of the country at this particularly crucial time and to experience the life and the vitality of the witness of the churches forming part of the National Council of Churches in Sri Lanka. We are extremely grateful for the great care with which the programme had been prepared and for all the generous and attentive welcome which we received throughout the visit. The trips to Jaffna and Vavuniya, the encounters in Kandy, the public events and moments of worship and celebration in Colombo, and the many opportunities for encounters and exchanges with different groups of leaders from public life, civil society and the Christian community have helped us to understand better the nature of the internal struggles in your country and the challenges to the Christian witness in the predominantly Buddhist society.

Our visit to Jaffna was one of the highlights of the entire programme. I realize that we have been one of the first groups from the wider ecumenical community to visit you and the Christian community in the peninsula, and it was important for us to gain a first-hand experience of the precarious situation under which you live and witness. We deeply appreciated your personal participation in the final act of worship with the co-celebration of the Lima Liturgy by all the leaders of member churches of the National Council. I

want to assure you of our continued prayers and solidarity as you seek to bring an end to the conflict which has torn the communities apart.

We have left Sri Lanka greatly enriched, not least by the many precious gifts which were offered to us for which we express our sincere appreciation. After this visit we will follow the further developments in Sri Lanka with deepened understanding, and I hope and pray that the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement may be able to contribute to strengthening your common witness in your beautiful country. May the joy and the peace of the Easter message continue to accompany and inspire you in your ministry. Thanking you again and with warm regards. Sincerely yours in Christ, Konrad Raiser, General Secretary,

**EASTER WORSHIP AT TELLIPPALAI CHURCH**

[Mrs. Selvaratnam, who is affectionately called as 'Theyy Teacher' writes to express the joy the Parishoners had in worshipping in their own church on Easter Sunday. For the sake of the readers, especially the expatriate community who are of Tellippalai, we give below the extracts of her letter].

"The Living Lord gave us another chance to go to our Tellippalai Church and worship there on Easter, 15th of April. Prior permission was obtained from the Tellippalai-Kankesanturai Brigade to conduct our worship at the Tellippalai Church. Rev.Sis. Daisy Asirvadam(our Pastor), Rev. Solomon Milton (our Circuit Pastor) and Rev. D.R. Ampalavanar led us in the worship service.

A private van was arranged by the church to take the members from the Women's Centre Chapel. Sixty two including children part took in the worship. The van took us up to a certain point (Anai Kutty Lane) from where we had to walk on the KK road to the army sentry point. There, individual body checking was done and later we had to surrender our army identity cards and collect a number from them. On our return journey, our identity cards were given after collecting the numbers from us.

The army bus stand is in a barren land, just opposite the check point. They were kind enough to take us in their bus to the church entrance, which

**Valedictory Service**

The Valedictory Service of the Christian Theological Seminary, Maruthanamadam was held at the Chapel of Christa Seva Ashram on Saturday the 21st April 2001. The Rev. K. Karunasekera, Superintending Minister - North East Synod of the Methodist Conference gave the valedictory address based on the text 2 Timothy 4.7.

Rt. Rev. Dr. S. Jebanesan the Bishop gave away the certificates. The following were given the Diplomas in Christian Theology of the Seminary: Brothers Sathees Daniel, S.J. Thurairatnam, K.J. Andrew and I. Rajkumar (completed in the year 2000). Large number of well wishers and friends of the seminary participated at the valedictory service. They also joined in a fellowship tea at the Periyannan Hall.

is on the Pannalai road. Some of the elders walked into the church to have the altar table ready for the Holy Sacrament. Things wanted for the altar and plastic mats were taken in the van. The mats were spread for the congregation to sit. A long bench too was carried for the elders to sit in comfort. Rev. Ampalavanar gave the message. The congregation with lighted candles sang "Karthhaathi Karththan Uyirthaar" and walked solemnly into the church, while 25-30 army and police stood on either side watching the service start. They were there till the end of the service.

At the end of the service there was pouring rain. The structure of the church is there, but no doors and windows. They are covered with ply wood. Rain water dripped into the church from the holes on the roof. The railings on the altar are missing. God Almighty made it possible for us to have the service just before the rain. Everything went off well. Praise be to our Lord.

On our return journey, we stopped at Mr. Rajagunananayagam Chellappah's house. They were kind enough to entertain us with 'Milk Rice,' gravy and sambol. The church gave cake and hot-buns with tea to refresh the tired congregation. We, as the church distributed easter eggs to the inmates of "Vallvagam" (where the blind children live at Manipay) and some eatables and other items such as soaps, tooth paste and chocolates to them with the generous contribution made by some members. We sang songs and prayed with them."



Tellippalai Church Entrance



Those who participated in the Easter Sunday worship at Tellippalai (Note: the badminton court inside the Church)

# உதய தாரகை தந்தை செல்வா

தந்தை செல்வா தீவம் 26-04-2001 வியாழக்கிழமை யாழ்ப்பாணத்தில் அறைக்கப்பட்டது. அன்னாரை நினைவுக்கும் முகமாக முக்கியமான சிந்தனைகளை அவருடைய சொற்பொழிவுகளில் இருந்து தீர்மானித்து தகுதிக்குரியவர்களுக்கு அளிப்போம்.

### திரை விஸ்கிழை

(யாழ்ப்பாண முற்றவெளியில் நடைபெற்ற பொதுக்கூட்டத்தில் நிகழ்த்திய சொற்பொழிவு, 24 ஏப்ரல் 1956)

திரு. பண்டாரநாயக்காவின் அமைச்சர் சபையில் தமிழர் அடியேரு ஒதுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளனர். தமிழர் அமைச்சர்களுக்கு குறைபாடுகள் காணாமல்லை. இப்போது தான் இந்நாட்டில் தமிழரின் உண்மையான நிலைமை வெளியாகியுள்ளது. இப்போதைய அரசியல் முறையில் சிங்களவர் ஆள்பவரையும் தமிழர் ஆள்பவரையும் உள்வாங்கிவைக்க அதிக கூட்டியுள்ளது.

### தீயாகத்திற்கு முந்துங்கள்

விடுதலை என்பது கேட்டவுடன் கிடைப்பதன்று. கடும் போராட்டத்தின் பின்னரே அது கிடைப்பதாகும். யாராவது இந்த நிலைமையை மாற்றும் முயற்சி எடுக்காமல், மக்களும், அவர்களின் பிரதிநிதிகளும் சேர்ந்து நமது இலட்சியங்களைச் சாதிக்க ஓர் இயக்கத்தை ஆரம்பிக்க வேண்டிய தருணம் வந்துவிட்டது. ஆகவே தமிழர் பேசும் மக்கள் அவைவரும் அடுத்துவரும் போராட்டத்திற்குத் தயாராக வேண்டுகிறோம் என்றும் எந்தத் தீயாகத்திற்கும் ஆயத்தஞ்செய்து கொள்ள வேண்டுகிறோம் என்றும் கேட்டுக்கொள்கிறேன்.

### உயிர்ப்பிரச்சனை இது

(கொழும்பு நகர மண்டலத்தில் நடைபெற்ற தமிழர்க்குக் கூட்டிப் பொதுக்கூட்டத்தில் பேசியது ( 20 மே, 1956)

இது ஒரு மொழிப்பிரச்சனை மட்டுமல்ல, கொள்கை, அக்கல்கை, கயமரியாதை பற்றிய ஒரு பிரச்சனையாகும். தமிழர் பேசும் மக்களின் மொழி இந்நாட்டின் அரசுகளும் மொழியாகாவிட்டால், அவர்கள் தமது மொழியில் அரசாங்கத்துடன் தொடர்பு கொள்ள முடியாவிட்டால், தமது சொந்த இடங்களில் கூடப் பதிவுப் பத்திரங்களை வைத்தல் கொள்ள முடியாவிட்டால் அவர்கள் இந்நாட்டிலே இருக்கமாண ஒரு இனத்தவராக முடிவில் அழிந்துபோயிருந்து விடுவர்.

### அகண்ட சிறையில் நாம் !

போராட்டத்தில் ஈடுபட்டால் நம்மை மொலிசர் கைது செய்வார்களே என்ற பலர் கேட்கிறார்கள். நாங்கள் கைதியாக வாழ்வது புதிய விஷயமல்ல. இந்த நாட்டில் நாங்கள் இப்பொழுதும் அரசியல், பொருளாதார, மொழி உரிமைபற்றி கைதிகளாகவே சிங்கள ஆட்சியின் கீழ் இருந்து வருகிறோம். கைது செய்யப்பட்டால் அகண்ட சிறையிலிருந்து குறுகிய சிறையின் தள்ளப்படுவோம் ! அவ்வளவு தான் வித்தியாசம் !

### உரிமைப் போராட்டத்தில் முஸ்லீம்கள்

(யாழ்ப்பாண முற்றவெளியில் மைதானத்தில் நடைபெற்ற சிறி எதிர்ப்புக் கூட்டத்தின்போது நிகழ்த்திய சொற்பொழிவு, 21 ஏப்ரல் 1958)

நாம் இன ஒருமைப் போராட்டத்தில் தமிழர் முஸ்லீம் என்ற வேறுபாடின்றி ஒருமுகமாக எல்லாகும் போராட வேண்டும். ஆனால் கிழக்கு மாகாணத்து முஸ்லீம்களை பொறுத்தவரை இந்த ஐக்கிய மனோபாவம் ஏற்பட்டிருப்பதாக தெரியவில்லை. அவர்களிடத்து அரசியல் உணர்ச்சி மிகவும் குறைந்தது காணப்படுகிறது. எம்முடன் சேர்ந்து உழைக்கும்படி அம்மக்களுக்குப் பலதடவை வேண்டுகிறோம் விடுதலம் பயனில்லாத போய்விட்டது. எங்கள் கூட்சியிலிருந்து போட்டியிட்டும் யாராவது இந்த நிலைமைக்குச் சென்ற முஸ்லீம் பிரதிநிதிகள் கூட நெருக்கடியான கூட்டத்தில் எங்கள் கூட்சியைக் கைவிட்டு விட்டார்கள். இருந்தாலும் தமிழர்க்குக் கூட்சி அவர்கள் எப்போதும் நோக்கவில்லை. நேச வேண்டிய சந்தர்ப்பம் இனிமும் ஏற்படாது.

### அரசாங்கமே பொறுப்பு

அகதிகள் முகாமிலிருந்து மக்கள் தங்கள் வாழ்க்கையில் பலாத்காரமான மாறுதல்களுக்குட்பட்டிருக்கிறார்கள். முன்பேரல் அவர்களால் வேலை செய்யவது சாத்தியமில்லை. இதற்கான பொறுப்பு அரசாங்கத்தையே சாரும் யு. என். பி யும், எம். ச. பி யும் தமிழர்கள், இந்நாட்டில் கீழ்த்தரமான ஒரு அந்தஸ்தில் இருக்க வேண்டுமென்று விரும்புகின்றனர். சமஷ்டி அமைப்பில் அமைந்த அரசியல் திட்டமொன்று வேண்டுமென்று கேட்டதற்காக எதிர்க்கட்சித் தலைவர் எவ்வாறு சமஷ்டிக் கூட்சியை கண்டிக்க முடியுமென்று எனக்கு விளக்கவில்லை. நாம் ஒரு அரசியல் திட்ட அமைப்பையிட்டு யோசனை கூறியுள்ளோம்.

### அடக்குமுறைக்குத் தயார்

அடக்குமுறை நடவடிக்கைகளுக்கு நாம் தயாராக இருக்கின்றோம். ஆனால் சமஷ்டிக்கூட்சி நாட்டின் சட்டத்தை மீறி நடந்திருந்தால் நீதிமன்றங்கள் அதன்மீது நடவடிக்கை எடுக்கும் கொள்ளலாம். கூட்சியை பொறுமனே தடை செய்யவதால் அது பிரதிநிதித்துவம் செய்யும் இயக்கத்தைக் கொண்டுவிட முடியாது.

### ஒன்றாக வாழவே முடியுமா?

இப்போது இந்நாடு எதிர்நோக்கியுள்ள பிரச்சனை மிக முக்கியத்துவம் வாய்ந்ததாகும். இந்நாட்டில் வாழும் பல்வேறு சமூகங்களும் உன்றாக வாழ முடியுமா? முடியுமா? என்பதே அந்தப் பிரச்சனையாகும்.

### நல்லதொரு பிரதமரை நாடு இழந்தது !!

(தமிழர்க்குக் கூட்சியின் சார்பில் மறைந்த பிரதமர் திரு. எஸ். டபிள்யூ. அர். டி. பண்டாரநாயக்காவுக்குப் பாராளுமன்றத்தில் அமைதாயம் தெரிவித்த ஆற்றிய சொற்பொழிவு 28, ஒக்டோபர், 1959)

தமிழர்க்குக் கூட்சியின் சார்பில் மறைந்த பிரதமருக்குப் பாராட்டுரை வழங்குவதில் கவந்து கொள்ளுகிறேன். காலஞ்சென்ற பிரதமர் கொல்லப்பட்ட விந்தையைக் கண்டித்து கொள்கை அங்கத்தவர்கள் வேசுவற்றை நானும் ஆம் ஒதுகிறேன். மந்திரியாகும் அரசியல்வாதிகளும் கடைபிடிக்கும் கொள்கைகளுக்கும், வைத்திருக்கும் கருத்துக்களுக்கும் பரிசு காலஞ்சென்ற பிரதமருக்குக் கிடைத்தது போன்றதுதான் என்றால் நாட்டின் எதிர்காலம் இருண்டிருக்கிறது என்றே சொல்ல வேண்டும்.

### எமது கடிதம் !

திரு. பண்டாரநாயக்கா யு. என். பி யிலிருந்து விலகியபோது நான் அவருக்கு ஒரு கடிதம் எழுதினேன். அதில் இவ்வாறு குறிப்பிட்டிருந்தேன்.

“ நொந்து போய் தாக்கத்திலிருக்கும் வேளையில் ஓரே ஒரு உற்சாக வார்த்தை ! மர்ம அரகாங்கம் இருக்கக்கூடிய சாத்தியக்கூறு இல்லாத இடத்து ஐயநாயகம் செயல்பட முடியாது. மக்களின் பெரும்பகுதியினர் அந்த மாற்று அரசாங்கத்தை நீங்கள் தரவேண்டுமென்று எதிர்பார்ப்பர். பொருளாதாரமும் தைரியமும் இருங்கள். என்னதான் நேர்ந்தபொழுதும், நீங்கள் அவர்களுடைய பிடியிலிருந்து தாங்கி விளையே வர சாமர்த்தியமாக நடந்து கொள்ளுங்கள். அல்லாவிட்டால் அவர்கள் உங்களைச் “சம்பல்” போட்டிருப்பார்கள்.

### பண்டாரநாயக்கா தந்த பதில்

திரு. பண்டாரநாயக்கா தமது கைப்பட்ட பதில் எழுதியிருந்தார். அதில் அவர் பின்வருமாறு குறிப்பிட்டிருந்தார்.

“ அன்புள்ள செல்வா, உங்கள் அன்பான கடிதத்திற்கு நன்றி. அந்தக் கடிதம் எனக்கு மிக்க உற்சாகம் உண்டாகியது.”

யு. என். பி. பதவியிலிருந்தபோது அமை யாராவும் தோற்கடிக்க முடியாதபோல் தோன்றியது. திரு. பண்டாரநாயக்காவால் தான் அது முடிந்தது. அவர் ஒருவரால் தான் முடியக்கூடியதாகவும் இருந்தது. சிங்கள மக்களை அவர் கவர்ந்தார். அவர்கள் உதவியால் யு. என். பி யைக் கவிழ்த்தார்.



### மணிக்கோபுரம்

வந்தணை தென் இந்திய தீவுச்சபைக்கென வந்தணை ஆலயக் கோபுரத்துடன் இணைக்கப்பட்டு ஒரு மணிக்கோபுரம் வந்தணை சபையைச் சேர்ந்த திருமதி. சுருணா அன்டன் இரவீந்திரன் அவர்களின் செலவில் கட்டப்பட கடவுள் சித்தம் கொண்டார்.

வந்தணை சபையினர் கடந்த இரண்டு வருடமாக இத்தேவைக்காக ஐயிரித்து வந்தனர். கர்த்தர் ஜெபத்தைக் கேட்டு பதில் தந்தார்.

இந்த மணிக்கோபுரம் 15-04-2001 சூரிய காலை 8.00 மணிக்கு சபையப்போதகர் வை. எ.க. வேறமன்ஸ் அவர்களின் ஜெபத்துடன் பிதா, குமாரன் பரிசுத்த ஆவியின் நாமத்தில் கட்டவுருடைய நாம மகிமைக்காக பரிதிஷ்டை செய்யப்பட்டது.

இந்த மணிக்கோபுரத்தை கட்டி முடிக்க பண உதவி செய்த திருமதி சுருணா அன்டன் இரவீந்திரன் அவர்களுக்கு நன்றி உரித்தாகுக.

**D. T. நைல்ஸ் சீர்த்த தினம்**

முதுபெரும் அறிஞரும் இறையியலாளருமான டாக்டர் D.T நைல்ஸ் அவர்களின் 31வது சீர்த்த தினம் இவ்வருடம் ஜூலை மாதம் 17ம் திகதி அனுஷ்டிக்கப்பட விருக்கின்றது. யாழ். பென் பீற்றர்ஸ் ஆலயத்தில் அத்தினம் ஒரு சூபகார்த்த ஆராதனை நடைபெறும். டாக்டர் D. T. நைல்ஸ் 1970ம் ஆண்டு ஜூலைமாதம் 17ம் திகதி தமது 62வது வயதில் காலமானார்.

**சாம் அண்ணன் சூபகார்த்த விடுதி**

இம்மாதம் 5ம் திகதி கூடிய கிறிஸ்த சேவ ஆர்ச்சீரம் ஆளுனர் சபை சாம் அண்ணன் நினைவு மன்றவர் விடுதிக்கு கட்டிட வேலையை உடனடியாக ஆரம்பிப்பதென்று தீர்மானிக்கது. இந்த விடுதிச்சாலை சாம் அண்ணனின் ழுன்றாவது சீர்த்த தினமாகிய 2002ம் ஆண்டு ஜனவரி மாதம் 26ம் திகதி திறந்து வைப்பதென்றும் தீர்மானிக்கப்பட்டது. பின்வருவோரைக் கொண்ட ஒரு நிர்மாணக்குழுவுள் நியமிக்கப்பட்டது. பேராயர் எஸ். ஜெயநேசன் (தலைவர்)

- திரு. ஆ. இராஜசிங்கம்
- சேவக் பிஸி. அண்ணன் (பெயலாளர்)
- திரு. பென். குணரத்தினம்
- வண. S. P. நேசகுமார்
- திரு. வேதநாயகம் சில்வா
- வண. கே. சுதுணசேகர

**Mr. K. Pooranampillai**

[The following is the text of the sermon preached by Bishop S. Jebanesan at the service of thanksgiving for the life and witness of the late K. Pooranampillai in St. John's Church on Saturday the 28th April 2001]

"And behold this day I am going the way of all the earth, and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing have failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you all, are come to pass unto you and not one thing has failed thereof" Joshua 23 : 14.

In a few minutes time the mortal remains of Mr. Pooranampillai will be interred in a cemetery in Kent, U.K. It will be in his city of residence by his own children and grandchildren that he will be at rest. But here in a church at Chundikulai, Jaffna we all feel the immediacy of his loss which makes us partners in grief of Mrs. Pooranampillai and their children.

When I was reflecting on the long life of Mr. Pooranampillai the words of Joshua to his contemporaries and survivors came to my mind. Joshua was General of the Israelite army. He was in charge of a small detachment to deal with the Amalekites who were proving to be menace in the desert, before his death, Moses before his death had made Joshua the supreme Commander of the army. Joshua led many campaigns and had made Palestine safe for the Israelites.

Now General Joshua is a tired old man. He is over 100 years old. He is weak and feeble. The strong body which led many military campaigns is now depending on others for its existence. Joshua knew that his end was near. He called the leaders of the community and the military officers and gave a farewell address. In his words we see the calmness of a philosopher.

"I am going the way of all the earth". It is not a strange or avoidable road. It was Studdert Kennedy who wrote, "My body needs its bed". The preacher in the book of Ecclesiastics said, "The dust returns to the earth as it was and the spirit returns to God who gave it." Joshua the great General accepts this gracefully. Secondly Joshua was perfectly satisfied with God. For him God promised good things and fulfilled all of them. He had experienced joy and anguish, success and failure, gratitude and treachery. But like King David he was saying oh taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man who puts his trust on Him.

Thirdly we see Joshua having spiritual interest in his survivors. He wants them to continue to serve the Lord and got His blessings. He warns them against going to false Gods and rituals.

Mr. Pooranampillai lived like a soldier. He believed in discipline and instant obedience. When the end came he was philosophically calm, deeply religious and spiritually philanthropic.

When we think of Mr. Pooranampillai, the thing that comes uppermost in our minds is the discipline which marked his life. Self discipline, discipline in the family, discipline in the school, church and community. He believed that discipline was the only avenue to all kinds of progress. Every body who studied under him is somebody today because of the self discipline instilled in them by their Principal. He was also a skilled administrator. During his principalship at Hartly (1944 - 1967) and St. John's (1967 - 1976) the institutions reached great heights. In an article on Mr. K. A. Selliah a former Principal of Jaffna College, Mr. Pooranampillai wrote that a Principal must have four important traits: a) A good classroom teacher (b) A capable organizer (c) A firm and tactful administrator (d) A kind Pastor. Persons who moved closely with Mr. Pooranampillai will know that he had all these qualities in abundance.

He was a teacher of English par excellence and a talented speaker. It can be safely said that Mr. Pooranampillai was one of the best Orators of Sri Lanka. His diction and debating skills were remarkable. It has been said "Oratory rules".

Mr. Pooranampillai became the natural leader of the Head Masters' Conference of Ceylon - a position he held for many years. He also became the Vice President of the Ceylon Methodist Conference, the highest honour given to a layman in the Methodist Church.

Mr. Pooranampillai walked humbly before God. Christianity in Vadamardachy was mainly a Methodist enterprise. In the laity of Vadamardachy one could see the honest perseverance of Vadamardachy people and the rigorous discipline and deep piety of Methodism. Mr. Pooranampillai was the finest product of the Methodist Church of Point Pedro.

His services were not confined to the school and Church. John Wesley had taught the Methodists:

"Do all the good you can;  
In all the ways you can;  
To all the souls you can;  
In every way you can;  
With all the zeal you can;  
As long ever you can."

Mr. Pooranampillai faithfully followed John Wesley's command till the time of his death. K.P. was interested in politics (A great admirer of SJV). He was a keen social worker and a lover of the down trodden.

Mr. Pooranampillai leaves the field of his labours with his work well done and amidst the sincere regrets of all those who have known him.

**New Constitution, devolution of power**

Senior political sources have voiced their concern and views that the constitutional reforms in whatever form would not see the light of day in this generation. The Opposition prefers the present set up, so that at the next elections, they are hopeful one of them would be elected President, though at present they are shouting hoarse from the roof tops for the abolition of the Executive Presidency. The present incumbent is not entitled to run for a third term.

**Compensation from Minister**

Mr. A. Parameswaran, a father from Chunnakam has sent letters of demand through his Attorney - at - Law Mr. S.P. Sivagnanam to the officers of the Department of Education for failing to provide sufficient text books to school children in the North. The letters of demand were forwarded on April 12th. Even though one school term is over, many children do not have textbooks, which are provided by the government.

**No telephone to the North**

Senior Departmental Officials state that it would take at least another six months to bring the service to normalcy. The public however is able to obtain emergency service through the I.C.R.C., especially funeral notices & sickness, Such messages are conveyed on their internal radio network.

**Catholic Bishops**

Rt. Rev. Malcom Ranjit has been re-elected President of the all Sri Lanka Justice & Peace Commission. The Rt. Rev. Rayappu Joseph of Mannar has been elected Vice President and the Rev. Fr. Devarajah the Secretary. Bishop Soundaranayagam of Jaffna has been elected Vice President of the Bishops Conference of Sri Lanka.

The ten Catholic Bishops have last week visited the Vanni, the uncleared areas to see for themselves the conditions under which the folks are living there. They have met senior members of the LTTE with a view to starting the peace talks with the government. It is known that they have met and had talks with the Political Leader Thamil Chelvam.

**Journalist Sinnathamby**

Mr. V. Sinnathamby a senior journalist, author and socialist passed away on 17th April 2001 at the age of 62. According to his wishes his eyes were donated and his body handed over to the Jaffna Medical Faculty. His eyes have been successfully transplanted to a 38 year old man of Kumara Koddam, Kondavil who lost his eyes due to brain malaria.

**An Easter Bajanai**

The Christian Tamil Drama & Music Society with 27 member churches in and around the city of Colombo presented an Easter program of songs on 15th April, Easter Sunday at the Methodist Church, Colpetty.

The churches represented were the Anglican, the Methodist and the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India. It was a very well attended program, and the signing reached the high standards as usual.

**"Jesus Calls" Founder in Colombo**

Dr. D.G.S. Dhinakaran was in Colombo in the first week of April to conduct a series of seminars for Christian believers at the People's Church at Narahenpitiya.

Public meetings were held every day in the afternoons and evenings. All meetings were packed to capacity. During his stay he also opened and dedicated the new "Jesus calls" office at Joseph Lane, Bambalapitiya. He is the founder of the "Jesus Calls" International Ministries based in Chennai, South India.

**Colombo a clean city**

With all the unauthorised structures & pavement hawkers removed, people are able to move freely without obstructions in the city. Colombo had been dubbed as a slum city, a few years ago in a study made by an international agency. The streets too are clean swept by private companies twice a day in Pettah and daily in the residential areas. This is indeed a welcome relief.

**Children's Rally & Youth Camp**

The Religious Education Board of the Diocese which met on Monday the 30th of April resolved to conduct the Children's Rally on Saturday the 7th July at Manipay and the Youth Camp on the 7th, 8th & 9th of September at Inuvil.

**14 th Bishop of Colombo**

Rev. Duleep Chickera will be consecrated Bishop of Colombo (Anglican) on Ascension Day on 24th May 2001. He had his education at Royal College and theological studies at Pilimatalawa. He was Chaplain and Sub Warden of St. Thomas College, Mount Lavinia. He read for his M.Sc. in Education at Keble College, Oxford.

He served as Vicar of St. Michael's Polwatta and also took charge of parishes in Maharagama, Liyanawal & Malkawa. He has been Co-ordinator of Reconciliation & Peace Desk at the Diocese of Colombo. He is married and has three children.

"Morning Star" wishes the new bishop all success in his new role as leader of the Anglican Church, Diocese of Colombo.

## THE EDITORIAL

## PEACE TALKS IMMINENT?

It is heartening to read the news of some positive signals for the commencement of 'Peace Talks' between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). "I can confirm that the peace process is still very much on the track," said the Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar at an exclusive interview he had with a government website on May 9, 2001.

The LTTE announced a unilateral Ceasation of Hostilities on 24 December 2000 and they kept on extending it until they terminated it after four months mainly due to the refusal to reciprocate their gesture by the Peoples Alliance Coalition Government. Perhaps anticipating the end of the cessation of hostilities, the government unleashed the military the day before and an operation code-named "Agni Khiela," a name that evokes images of an all-consuming flame-power. However, this massive attempt was thwarted by the LTTE within four days. This, in fact, gave a clear message to the government as well as those who were of the opinion that the LTTE could be weakened before such peace talks could begin that the only avenue open for a solution was a negotiated settlement. It was in this context took place the visit of the Norwegian facilitator Mr. Erik Solheim.

The media focussed on a statement released by the Foreign Ministry to the effect that an agreement has been reached between the Government and the LTTE on "several matters." While on the one hand the news itself gave a deep sigh to the ordinary masses, conflicting reports began to pour in on the other. The LTTE in a statement said, "It is premature and irresponsible on the part of the Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry to falsely project to the world media that an agreement has been reached." However their statement added, "We wish to state that substantial progress has been made on the Norwegian proposal of the 'Memorandum of Understanding' after intense discussions for a considerable time with the Norwegian facilitators. This Norwegian project, which calls for goodwill measures of mutual reciprocity, aims at de-escalation of the conflict and the creation of a congenial atmosphere conducive for talks. We hope an agreement can be reached soon on the Norwegian proposal after further discussions and clarifications on certain matters. The Norwegian facilitators have also suggested a programme for bilateral cessation of hostilities. It was only last Wednesday 8th May, that the proposal was submitted to our chief negotiator, Mr. Anton Balasingham. We consider this as a constructive proposal, which requires further clarifications and discussions before final agreement, is reached. Though normalisation of civilian life in the Tamil homeland and cessation of armed hostilities are crucial for the resumption of peace negotiations, we have also called upon the Sri Lanka Government through the Norwegian facilitators to lift the ban on our liberation organisation so that we can participate in the peace negotiations as the authentic political organisation representing the people of Tamil Eelam."

In the meantime, there have been attempts by the major opposition party to move a no confidence motion against the Government and the political analysts do not fail to predict whether the sudden change of 'mood' was indirectly linked to this! The only concern for the peace loving people of the Island is that it is too long for the Tamils to continue to experience hardships. Therefore every step should be taken to find a negotiated settlement to the ongoing struggle. People cannot be taken to a 'ride' any longer by way of 'mere words.' Former President of South Africa Nelson Mandela once said, "It is a pity that even the design of the struggle is being determined by the oppressor." People's yearnings and aspirations have to be taken into consideration. Their basic rights have to be ascertained. Any meaningful talks could happen only when the 'suffering party' participates as an equal partner with the right to determine the course of events for themselves. They should have their rights to decide for themselves than being a party that 'simply gathers and eats the crumbs that fall from the table.'

It is an imperative that the talks should be held without any pre-conditions. However a 'time limit' for such talks is a must. Perhaps, a mutually acceptable third-party to play the role of mediation will help this process go a second mile since history shows that almost 65% of about 280 conflicts in the world between 1980 and 1990 have been resolved with the help of third party mediation.

## Reflections

*"Anything truly revolutionary is created  
by a few who see what is true  
and are willing to live according to that truth;  
but to discover what is true demands  
freedom from tradition,  
which means freedom from all fears..."*



## Rev. Dr. Eric A. Gass thanks

To: The Rt. Rev. Dr. S. Jebanesan

Dear Bishop,

First, let us wish you and yours a very Blessed Easter. Secondly, we trust your pastoral visit to the Wannai was a safe one, and I am certain it was a joyous occasion for the flock in that area. We are happy that Mr. Thampoe could accompany you. He is such a valuable asset to the diocese and the many ways in which the diocese must function outside of the peninsula. We were certainly beneficiaries of his efficient, gracious and happily rendered ministrations.

Thirdly, Patricia and I wish to express to you, your wife and all the members of the Jaffna Diocese our deep gratitude for a joyous time in your midst in March. We have wanted to do this earlier, but since leaving Sri Lanka we have not only been travelling, but immersed in settling back in the United States after an extended sojourn in South Asia.

Our gratitude begins with the warm welcome we were extended even prior to our arrival in Sri Lanka. On arrival in Colombo there was the welcome of Mr. Thampoe, and the next day that of the Colombo church. And then there was the wonderful welcome of you and Bishop Amma at Palaly airport. Not only was it a joy to see you on Jaffna soil after so many years, but you made the formalities easy and the refreshments that Vimala had brought were like nectar to our parched throats. The welcomes, of course, continued throughout our stay, and we were overwhelmed by the out-pouring of love and affection through words, garlands, flowers and gifts.

Something which was such pleasure was the feeling that we were back among friends. For Patricia and me, it was similar to a homecoming as we knew so many friends from previous visits, including, of course, those of you who have graced our Trustees meetings with your presence. The way in which we were received as "extended family" was so moving.

It was so gratifying to see the vitality of the life and work of Diocese, beginning with the wonderful program at Ashram and culminating with an ordination service which bore testimony to the faith and hope of the people of God in the peninsula. Bishop, all of this also testifies to the quality of leadership with authority, but not an authority that controls. Rather one that enables, encourages and elicits willing cooperation and engenders collegiality. It is leadership with intelligence and wisdom, and we are grateful to God for that.

We would be remiss if we didn't mention the lavish hospitality on so many occasions. There was food rivaling the best of cuisine anywhere, and pleasant surroundings for rest and recuperation from our invigorating schedules. Please convey a special word of thanks to those who both organized the hospitality and those who served.

A special word of thanks needs expressing for the many gifts we received. We were grateful for both the gifts and the gifts of intention and thought behind them. Our only regret was that we didn't have more weight allowance to carry everything with us. As it was we had to send a separate shipment. But we were so touched by the generosity.

Finally, we must say a very big "thank you" just for the opportunity to fellowship with you and to see and experience how we are privileged to share with you in God's mission in Sri Lanka and particularly in Jaffna. May God continue to bless you and the Diocese as you continue in that mission, hopefully in an increasing environment of tranquility.

Your grateful friends in Christ,  
Eric and Patricia Gass