

# TAMIL NATION

Vol 1

August 1-15, 1991

Nos:22 & 23

UK Price: 60p

Published in the United Kingdom by Tamil Forum Ltd., P.O.Box 373, Croydon, Surrey, CR9 6AB

## AN APOLOGY AND A RESOLVE

We apologise to our readers for the delay in bringing out this issue of the Tamil Nation. Subscribers who do not receive their copies are kindly requested to contact our London office.

During the past eleven months the paper was edited and printed in India but, now, we have been compelled to shift these operations to the United Kingdom. In the short term, this has caused some considerable time and resource constraints in relation to the production of the paper, which will, in the changed circumstances, come out once a month. We have been encouraged by the several calls of support that we have received during recent weeks and we state our resolve that the Tamil Nation will continue to fearlessly and honestly campaign for that which is both just and lawful - the right of self determination of the people of Tamil Eelam.

# RELEASE SIVANAYAGAM

Tamil Nation has called for the immediate release of Mr. Subramaniam Sivanayagam, who has been detained without trial under the Indian National Security Act. Mr. Sivanayagam has functioned as the Editor of the Tamil Nation since its start in September last year.

On July 18, at about 9.30 p.m., a police party visited Mr. Sivanayagam's simple two room flat in Besant Nagar. He lived there with his wife and two daughters. The police officials informed Mr. Sivanayagam that he was being taken in for questioning. They said nothing about the National Security Act.

Mr. Sivanayagam accompanied the police officers in the belief that he would be back home, later that night. He did not even take a change of clothes.

Mr. Sivanayagam whose health had been of increasing concern during recent months, and who needs regular medication, was forced to spend the night in the Mylapore Police Station. Mr. Kuhadasan who assisted Mr. Sivanayagam in his work at the Tamil Nation was also taken into custody.

Neither of them were released even on the following day. Instead, on the July 19, Mr. Sivanayagam was taken from Mylapore to the Adyar Police Station again in the night, this time at about 9 p.m.

On July 20, for the first time, he was taken before the Saidpet Magistrates Court at about 4 p.m. and from there to the Central Jail. July 21 was a public holiday and a bail application was filed in the Magistrates Court on July 22.

It appears that it was whilst the bail application was pending, that the authorities belatedly decided to act under the National Security Act - an Act which enables an individual to be detained without charges being framed for a maximum period of 12 months.

What are the grounds on which the Indian authorities have decided to incarcerate a journalist with Mr. Sivanayagam's unsullied reputation for integrity and honesty, and separate him from his wife and children? If the decision was made on the ground of 'national security' when was it made? Was it made after the bail application was filed or before?

Strangely, a police press note issued on Saturday July 19 made no

mention of 'national security'. The press note which was published in the Madras Hindu stated that two Sri Lankan Tamils, Sivanayagam and Kuhadasan, were arrested from separate houses for reportedly staying without valid documents.

But is it the position that Mr. Sivanayagam should be arrested because he was an over stayer? But then, it is well known that thousands of Tamils from Sri Lanka have been permitted to stay 'without valid documents'.

Again, surely, the Indian authorities have been well aware for a number of years that Mr. Sivanayagam was a Tamil from Sri Lanka without valid documents. After all, what sort of documents do the Indian

*"Tamil Nation is nobody's mouthpiece and is proud of its individuality and independence. If an Indian newspaper supports the Palestinian cause, it does not become a PLO mouthpiece does it?"*

Mr. S. Sivanayagam  
Arujna Column, Tamil Nation, June 15, 1991

authorities expect from a journalist who fled with his wife and two children from the wrath of the Sri Lankan Government? It was only the other day, that Mr. Sivanayagam cheerfully joked on the phone that he was a well known Kallathoni - so well known that he even had a registered telephone! But behind the joke was the grim reality that this honest human, who is today in his late fifties, left his home in Jaffna in 1983, in a boat, with his wife and children to Tamil Nadu where he hoped that he may live with a measure of dignity and some security.

Or is it the case for the Indian authorities that Mr. Sivanayagam was arrested because he had not complied with the latest request of the Tamil Nadu government that Sri Lankan Tamil refugees should register themselves with the State authorities?

The purpose of such registration was presumably to identify those who were Sri Lankan Tamils. Unless this recent measure was intended to harass and intimidate, then surely it could not have been the intention that Tamils who were known to the state authorities to be

denied. He regretted that between 1984 and now, India's policy towards Tamil militancy had been one of drift and ad hoc approaches."

This was the Editor, who, the police press note would have the public believe, was engaged in a 'clandestine' publication. The publication was so 'clandestine' that the Madras Hindu, the Centre for South-East Asian Studies, the Madras University, the Madras Chapter for the Society for Indian Ocean Studies and the Island Trust, Coimbatore were all into the 'secret'!

There was nothing secretive about the Tamil Nation and there was nothing secretive about the stand that Mr. Sivanayagam took as Editor of the Tamil Nation. Mr. Sivanayagam was a journalist who was widely respected for his fearless independence and his commitment to the cause of the people of Tamil Eelam. His declaration in the June 15 issue of the Tamil Nation was a typical assertion of that independence and that commitment: "Tamil Nation is nobody's mouthpiece and is proud of its individuality and independence. If an Indian newspaper supports the Palestinian cause, it does not become a PLO mouthpiece does it?"

The conclusion appears inescapable that the reasons given by the Indian authorities for the detention of Mr. Sivanayagam, without trial, do not stand up to the test of reason. What is more, the Indian authorities, have by their actions, denied Mr. Sivanayagam his fundamental right to freedom of speech and due process.

Tamil Nation is not unmindful of India's national security concerns but believes that such concerns should not lead to actions which flout the rule of law. Tamil Nation urges Prime Minister Narasimha Rao to intervene and secure the release of a journalist who is innocent of any wrong doing except that of asserting his right to freedom of expression.

Nation? It was printed and edited in Madras quite openly. It was published in the United Kingdom - again quite openly. Mr. Sivanayagam as the Editor, interacted openly with a large cross section of persons from all walks of life in Madras. It was not so long ago, on March 28, that the prestigious Madras Hindu reported on a Seminar organised by the Centre for South-East Asian Studies, the Madras University, the Madras Chapter for the Society for Indian Ocean Studies and the Island Trust, Coimbatore. Mr. Sivanayagam played a prominent role at the Seminar and the Hindu reported his contribution in the following terms:

"Mr. S. Sivanayagam, Editor, Tamil Nation, said India's foreign policy under Mrs. Gandhi had a mind of its own and Colombo was always kept on its toes. If the present situation on the island continued, the Sri Lanka government might reach a point where it could push itself into a dead end, politically, economically, and militarily, leading to anarchy. Out of this chaos might emerge a solution that could satisfy the Tamil aspirations and give the LTTE an official recognition that India had so far



# TAMIL NATION

## U.K. TAMIL ASSOCIATIONS CALL FOR JAYALALITHA'S INTERVENTION

"Truth and knowledge are an idle gleam if they do not bring power to change the world."

Sri Aurobindo

Recognising that to change anything it is necessary to understand that which we seek to change, the TAMIL NATION is concerned, not only with providing information but also, with furthering an understanding of the issues that confront the Tamil national movement. Recognising that, in the end, we truly understand anything only to the extent that we have been able to change it, the TAMIL NATION is concerned with changing those material conditions of existence which continue to oppress and discriminate against the people of Tamil Eelam. The Tamil Nation is rooted in the growing togetherness of the Tamil people and it seeks to participate in the effort to strengthen that togetherness. The TAMIL NATION seeks to focus attention on the unjust relationship between nations without a state and nations that have attained state-hood. And, the TAMIL NATION exists to debate and campaign for the radical changes necessary, both amongst the Tamil people and outside, if the struggle of the Tamil people for national self determination is to be won.

The TAMIL NATION is published by Tamil Forum Ltd, a company registered in the United Kingdom and the entirety of whose profits will go to a registered charity established to help Tamil refugees, to advance education amongst the Tamil people and to alleviate poverty and hardship amongst them.

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

U.S.A - 30 US\$;  
Australia - 40 AU\$;  
UK & Other Countries...£15  
cheques/drafts in favour of  
Tamil Nation

Representatives from the London Tamil Forum, the International Federation of Tamils, Tamil Information Centre, Ganapathy Temple Trust, Catholic Association of Tamils UK and the Tamil Congregation, London, met with Mr.K.M.Ratnakara, Minister at the Indian High Commission in London on the 29th of July for about an hour to express their grave concern at the detention of Mr.Sivanayagam. They called for the intervention of the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narasimha Rao to secure the urgent release of Mr.Sivanayagam. They also handed over a letter addressed to the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. The text of the letter was

Hon. Jayalalitha Jayaram,  
Chief Minister,  
Tamil Nadu,  
India.

Dear Chief Minister,

We write to appeal for your urgent intervention to secure the release of Subramaniam Sivanayagam, the Editor of the Tamil Nation, who was taken into custody in Madras on Friday the 19th of July 1991.

Mr.Sivanayagam is a Tamil from Sri Lanka. Prior to 1983, he served for several years as the Editor of the independent weekly, the Saturday Review in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. In 1983, he was compelled to leave his homeland in fear of persecution by the Government of Sri Lanka and he sought refuge in Madras with his wife and two children. Mr.Sivanayagam has always been

grateful for the asylum granted to him by the then Tamil Nadu government which was headed by the late Puratchi Thalavar, M.G.Ramachandran. Since September last year, he has functioned as the Editor of fortnightly, Tamil Nation which was published from London.

Mr.Sivanayagam is a dedicated journalist with an unsullied international reputation for his integrity and sturdy independence. Those of us who have been privileged to know him, know him as an honourable and honest human being. We know that Mr. Sivanayagam is incapable of any wrong doing which would warrant his being incarcerated in jail.

Mr.Sivanayagam is in his late fifties. Mr.Sivanayagam is a diabetic. He suffers from hypertension. The few days in jail has already adversely affected his health. We know that you will understand, and sympathise with, the genuine concern and anguish that his wife and two children have for his safety and health - a wife and two children who are themselves refugees and who today, have to suffer, in addition, the ignominy of having a couple of policemen posted in front of their house.

We respectfully urge you to act to stop this suffering and this injustice. As expatriate Tamils, who are conscious of, and grateful for, the unreserved and unstinted support that the late much loved leader of Tamil Nadu, Mr.M.G.Ramachandran extended to Tamils of Sri Lankan origin in their time of need, we appeal to you to use your good offices to secure the release of Mr.Sivanayagam.

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As we go to press, we have received news that the Tamil leader, Mr.Sathasivam Krishnakumar, has been asked to leave England by the British Home Secretary. We publish here excerpts from a report in the Independent of the 6th of August by its Asia Editor Raymond Whitaker....

## Britain asks Tamil leader to leave

Mr.Krishnakumar, 31, a Central Committee member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam - the Tamil Tigers - has been given until tomorrow to leave the country voluntarily, or face possible detention and expulsion to Sri Lanka, where his movement is fighting a bitter civil war against the governing Sinhalese majority.

Mr.Krishnakumar led Tiger forces in the northern stronghold of Jaffna under the nom DE ger of 'Commander Kittu', until he lost a leg in fighting. He was allowed to come to Britain in October 1989 for treatment, and had a number of extensions of his stay on medical grounds.

Last August, Mr.Krishnakumar sought political asylum in Britain, but was told last week that the Home Secretary, Kenneth Baker, was "minded to refuse" the application, because the Tiger leader did not have a well founded fear of persecution if he was returned to Sri Lanka.

At the same time he was informed that a deportation order had been issued against him in support of "the international fight against terrorism".

Under the 1971 Immigration Act, Mr.Krishnakumar has no right of judicial appeal against the deportation order, but can make representations to a panel of advisers appointed by the Home Secretary. The procedure, which was heavily criticised when used against alleged Iraqi sympathisers during the Gulf war, does not allow the person facing expulsion to learn the evidence against him, or to have a lawyer with him when he appears before

the advisory panel. Nor is he entitled to know the panel's recommendations.

David Burgess, a leading immigration solicitor acting for Mr.Krishnakumar, said it was extremely unusual for the authorities to announce in advance that they were considering detaining some one regarded as undesirable. "If he is a dangerous person, why is there a timetable for him to remain at liberty?" asked Mr.Burgess.

Yesterday, Anton Rajah, the Tigers spokesman in Britain, denied the claims against Mr.Krishnakumar, saying that he had engaged purely in political activity aimed at promoting a peaceful settlement in Sri Lanka.

The government's denial of Mr.Krishnakumar faces persecution in Sri Lanka contrasts with its decision last month to freeze aid to Colombo and restrict arms sales in protest at the country's human rights record. The move was in retaliation for the Sri Lanka's expulsion of the British High Commissioner, David Gladstone, in May which Britain said was due to his criticism of human rights violations.

With relations between London and Colombo still cool, some sources believe Mr.Krishnakumar's deportation might be due more to pressure from India, which has accused the Tamil Tigers of responsibility for Rajiv Gandhi's assassination near Madras in May. Since then large numbers of Sri Lankan Tamils have been detained, and many face forcible return to their homeland.

## Tamil Welfare and Human Rights Committee, Washington, campaigns for Sivanayagam's release

The Tamil Welfare and Human Rights Committee based in Washington, U.S.A. have called upon all the foreign embassies in the U.S.A. to bring to bear pressure upon the Prime Minister of India to secure the release of Mr.Sivanayagam. The following is the text of a letter that has been sent:

Dear Ambassador,  
Editor of Newspaper in  
Police Custody

We enclose herewith a copy of a letter sent to the Prime Minister of India, the Chief Minister and the Governor of Tamil Nadu.

"We are distressed to learn from press reports that Mr.Sivanayagam, an independent journalist of international acclaim and the Editor of the Tamil Nation, a publication of the expatriate Tamil community, was arrested on made-up charges

and kept in solitary confinement by Madras police since July 19.

We are fully aware of Mr.Sivanayagam's credentials and are confident that he would not offend the rule of law under any circumstances.

Mr. Sivanayagam is of frail health and suffers from hypertension and acute diabetes. We are afraid that continued detention would lead to irreparable damage to his health.

We therefore appeal to you to have Mr. Sivanayagam released from police custody immediately to prevent an avoidable calamity and international repercussions. A copy of this letter is being sent to foreign embassies."

Please bring pressure to bear upon the Prime Minister of India to secure the release of Mr.Sivanayagam.



# Tamil Eelam - A Nation without a State

# Sacramento Conference

report from our special correspondent at the Tamil Eelam Research Conference

The Research Conference on 'Tamil Eelam - A Nation without a State' opened at the Sacramento Campus of the State University of California on Saturday, the 20th of July 1991.

Around 175 participants from Australia, Canada, India, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom and from many states of U.S.A. attended the two day Conference which was co-sponsored by the University and the International Federation of the Tamils.

Visitors to the Conference included the Canadian Consul (prompted by the publicity surrounding the conference generated by the Sri Lanka media and its supporters in the U.S.) and Mr. Nariansamy Naicker of the African National Congress. Requests for the Conference proceedings were received from Vice President Quayle's Office and from former President Carter's Peace Foundation.

## Background to the Conference

The International Federation of Tamils announced in April this year that the Tamil Eelam Research Conference would be held in July in Sacramento. This was the signal for the Sri Lankan government to start pressurising the California State University authorities to stop the Conference. But the request to extend Sri Lanka's censorship to the U.S. was politely declined by the University authorities. Threats by Sinhala individuals resident in California followed. The initial threat was that the Conference will be disrupted by 5000 demonstrators. When these threats were ignored, the organisers of the Conference were threatened with physical violence. Undeterred by these threats, the Organising Committee headed by Professor Balachandra went ahead with its plans for the Conference - a conference, which in the event turned out to be successful - reflected not only in the large number of participants that it attracted but also in influencing the international community to confront the issues relating to the national liberation struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam.

The key note speech was delivered by Mr. Thasam Gunanayagam. The two morning sessions on the first day, were chaired by Dr. John Balachandra of the State University of California and Chairman of the Organising Committee of the Conference. These sessions focused on the back ground to the Tamil struggle for self-determination and examined both the pre-colonial and postcolonial history of the people of Tamil Eelam and the growth of their distinct national identity.

Amongst the papers presented were those by Dr. Brian Pfaffenberger of the University of Virginia and Professor Peter Schalk of the Department of History of the Uppsala University, Sweden.

Dr. Pfaffenberger's paper began with the assertion that the Tamils of Eelam were a distinct ethnic community of people, occupying the North and East of Sri Lanka. His presentation was a summary of a paper to be included in the Encyclopedia of World Cultures in recognition of the separate ethnic identity of the people of Tamil Eelam.

Professor Schalk's paper was on the phenomena of Tamil Buddhism - an aspect of particular relevance, because of the attempts made by successive Sri Lankan Governments to claim parts of Tamil Eelam, on the ground that Buddhism had been practiced in these parts. Professor Schalk referred to the efforts of Cyril Mathew, the Minister for Industry and Scientific Affairs (1977 to 1983), who had identified 276 places where Buddhism had been practiced in Tamil Eelam and who had thereupon sought to contend that this showed that 'all this was Sinhala country'. Professor Schalk

commented that this was nothing more than an attempt to legitimize Sinhala colonisation of Tamil Eelam, whereas the reality was that the Tamils themselves had practised Buddhism.

## Death Threats at Tamil Parley

reports Batuk Vora in India Abroad of the 26th of July

After receiving dozens of death threat letters and phone calls, heavy security measures were initiated by organisers at the start of an international conference on Tamil Eelam held here on July 20-21.

The event was sponsored by the Britain based International Federation of Tamils and the department of government, California State University, Sacramento.

Dr. John Balachandra, professor of electrical and electronic engineering at the State University, Sacramento, and one of the main organisers of the meeting, told India Abroad: "We received about 86 letters and 200 telephone calls threatening the lives of the organisers." He said the threats came from people trying to disrupt what he described as an entirely academic conference to discuss issues relating to the Tamil people. New Jersey-based attorney Wakely Paul, press relations officer of the conference, said, "The Sri Lankan government had put pressure on the university to prevent the conference for being held, but their attempt to extend their censorship to an American university has miserably failed. However, the threat from some elements resulted in an extra \$3,600 expense on security."

Mr. Wakely Paul, Attorney at Law and Vice President of the Ilankai Thamil Sangam, U.S.A., and Dr. Selvanathan, of Griffith University, Australia, made presentations on the post-colonial history of the Tamils. The papers highlighted the attempt of the Sri Lankan state to destroy the distinct Tamil identity through legislative and administrative means. In a forceful speech, Mr. Wakely Paul asserted that the Conference was not concerned with individual groups such as but that 'it was about whether the people of Tamil Eelam have a right to determine their destiny.' Dr. Selvanathan's paper dealt with the planned and determined efforts by the Sinhala Government to change the demography of the East in order to destroy the contiguity of the Tamil homeland.

The afternoon session on the first day began with Dr. George Hart of the Department of South Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley commencing his address in impeccable Tamil. He said: 'Tamils were the most literate people in the world, comparable only to the ancient Greeks.' Dr. Hart's went onto describe Tamil literature as being one of the 'best kept secrets of the world' and that it was time that Tamil literature came under serious study by universities in the western world.

The next session, which focussed on the Tamil right to self determination was chaired by Mr. Wakely Paul. Papers were presented by Justice Satchi Ponnambalam of the Supreme Court of Belize, by Mr. Visuvanathan Rudrakumar (a resident of Harvard Law School) and by a Professor of Law who wished to remain anonymous. Justice Ponnambalam, author of 'Sri Lanka: The Tamil Liberation Struggle' began by identifying the parties to the conflict, as the Sri Lankan Government under the leadership of President Premadasa on the one hand and the Tamils of the Northeast

whose interests were advanced and protected by the Liberation of Tigers of Tamil Eelam under the leadership of Vellupillai Prabhakaran, on the other. The paper made a strong case for the Tamil right to self determination under international law by quoting from the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (General Assembly Resolution 2200 of 1966 and ratified by the Sri Lankan Governments) and the UN Declaration on the International Status of 'Peoples' and their right to Self Determination (General Assembly Resolution 2625 of 1970). Justice Ponnambalam concluded that Tamil freedom fighters today assert and bear arms in pursuance of their internationally recognised right to self determination and in practical terms it was necessary to develop a constitutional formula for secession.

The presentation by the anonymous Professor of Law was read out to Conference. It began by pointing out that there was an accumulation of authority supporting the view that the right to self determination extends to ethnic minorities within states. In the end, it was this right which provides the minority with the means of preserving its basic human rights. The paper concluded that the only meaningful way in which the rights of Tamils can now be addressed is through the right to secession.

The paper by Mr. V. Rudrakumar of the Harvard Law School was, perhaps, the most interesting as it sought to examine directly, the question of the legitimacy of the claim to the right of self-determination of the people of Tamil Eelam. Mr. Rudrakumar pointed out that self-determination had today become the battle cry of several nations across the globe such as the Tamils of Sri Lanka, Eriterians

continued on page 6

Wakely Paul, a member of the Conference Organising Committee and the Press Relations Officer to the Conference writes:

*Saturday the 20th of July was a bright, beautiful California morning. We were greeted by three Sinhala protesters before we reached the parking lot and another 20 in front of the Theatre where the conference was scheduled. This was a sharp decline from the 5000 they threatened to bring! The posters, some ungrammatical, included one that demanded that EELAMITES GO HOME. I will refrain from publishing my silent reaction to this. A matter of major moment on the eve of the conference was the \$3500 needed for extra security to meet the threats of the government's SINHALA supporters to disrupt the event. Many in the organising committee recommended suing the government for making us incur this added expense because of their opposition to FREE SPEECH.*

BY AIR TO U.S.A. & CANADA -

## TAMIL NATION

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# International Federation of Tamils

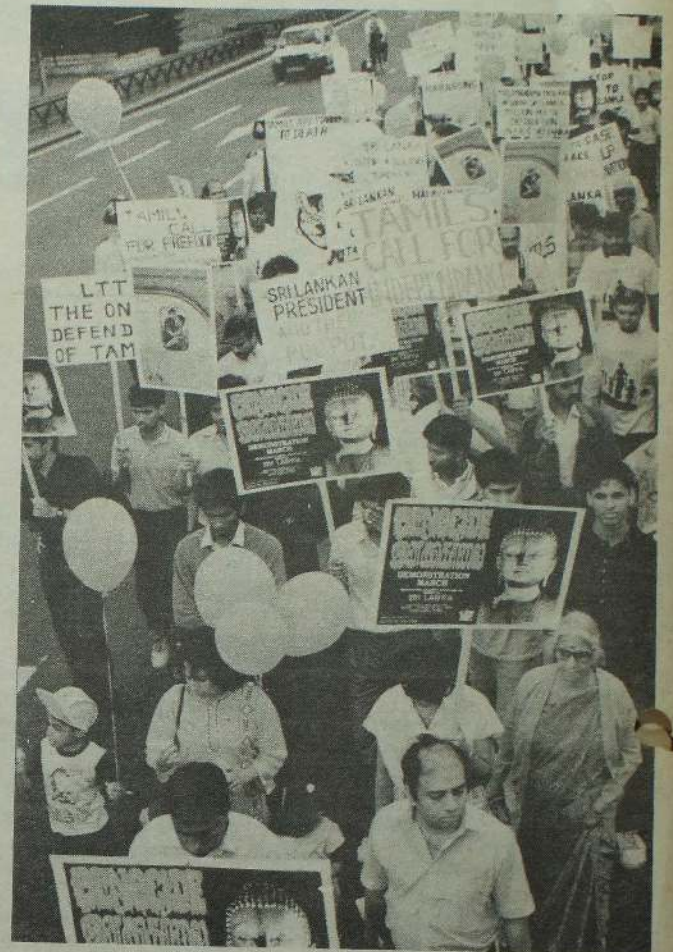


## marches in protest in London

On the 20th of July 1991, thousands of Tamils joined a demonstration march on the streets of London. It was the 8th anniversary of the July 83 massacre. The march was organised by the International Federation of Tamils. It commenced at Aldwych near the Indian High Commission, continued down the Strand, past Westminster and ended in Hyde Park. The marchers protested against Sri Lanka's sustained genocidal attack on the Tamil people and demanded: 'Lift blockade of essential supplies to Tamil Eelam'; 'Stop aerial bombardment of hospitals, temples, churches and Tamil civilians' and 'End colonisation of Tamil homelands by armed Sinhala settlers'.

*"We launched our struggle for self determination and political independence because of the systematic oppression of our people by the Sri Lankan state"*

Velupillai Prabhakaran,  
Leader of Tamil Eelam



*"The impact of the communal violence (of July 1983) on the Tamils was shattering. More than 100,000 people sought refuge in 27 temporary camps set up across the country. ... A government spokesman has denied that the destruction and killing of Tamils amounted to genocide. Under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, acts of murder committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group as such are considered as acts of genocide. The evidence points clearly to the conclusion that the violence of the Sinhala rioters on the Tamils amounted to acts of genocide. Surprisingly, President Jayawardene in his first public comment made three days after the riots had begun, did not condemn the violence against the Tamils. In trying to placate the majority Sinhalese, he seemed by implication to justify the atrocities against the Tamils.."*

- The Review, International Commission of Jurists, edited by Niall MacDermot, December 1983



"We are a nation" proclaims the T shirt whilst the Kollattam revives memories of an ancient tradition and arich culture



and, some came in prams as well



# GOGGLES by C.P.GOLIARD

## Bernard Shaw and Tamils

What is common with the names Dr. Blenkinsop, Sir Bemrose Hotsport, Sir Exter Rightside, Eliza Boolittle, Epiphany Fitzfassen, Prof. Henry Higgins, Mrs. Kitty Warren and Sir Jafna Pandranath? All these are fictional characters created by that inimitable wit, iconoclast and distinguished dramatist George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950).

While Eliza Doolittle and Prof. Henry Higgins have become popular worldwide due to the 1964 movie *My Fair Lady*, not many know that Shaw also immortalized the name of Jaffna by using it to one of his characters in the political comedy, *On the Rocks*, written in 1933.

It has been appraised that Shaw framed the character of Sir Jafna Pandranath after the 19th century Tamil intellectual Sir Muthucomaraswamy (1834-1879), who was the father of reputed orientalist Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (1877-1947). Sir Muthucomaraswamy moved among the elite circles of Victorian England and counted Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881) as one of his friends.

When Shaw arrived in London from Dublin in 1876, Disraeli was the prime minister of Britain. In that year, Disraeli also conferred on Queen Victoria, the new title of Empress of India. In the play *On the Rocks*, the character of prime minister Sir Arthur Chavender seems modelled after prime minister Disraeli.

The plot of *On the Rocks* is set in two acts at the Cabinet room in No.10, Downing Street. The Act 1 takes place in mid July. The prime minister Sir Arthur Chavender is worried about the increasing rowdiness of street demonstrations by the unemployed and wants the Chief Commissioner of Police to use stern methods. The Police Commissioner suggests that the best way to keep the unemployed occupied is with terrific speeches. Then one member of a delegation from the Isle of Cats which visited the Cabinet room advises the prime minister to read Karl Marx. This he does and later delivers a fiery socialistic speech.

Act 2 of the play takes place in November at the Cabinet room again. Five Britons engaged in a discussion were, Sir Arthur Chavender, Sir Dexter Rightside (Foreign Secretary), Sir Broadfoot Basham (Chief Commissioner of Police), Sir Bemrose Hotsport (First Lord of the Admiralty) and Mr Glenmorison (President of the Board of Trade). Sir Jafna Pandranath comes to congratulate the prime minister on his new program of reform, about the nationalisation of land. I will allow Shaw to introduce his Tamil character Sir Jafna.

**Sir Jafna:** Hello! Am I breaking into a Cabinet meeting?

**Sir Arthur:** No. Not a bit. Only a few friendly callers. Pray sit down.

**Sir Dexter:** You are welcome, Sir Jafna: most welcome. You represent

**Historically, goliards were the medieval poets, who wandered from place to place engaging in intellectual duels and bawdy bar room fights. The initials C.P. stands for the place from which this particular Goliard comes from - Parithu Thurai/Cotton Port.....**

**money; and money brings fools to their senses.**

**Sir Jafna:** Money! Not at all. I am a poor man. I never know from one moment to another whether I am worth thirteen millions or only three.

**Sir Bemrose:** I happen to know, Sir Jafna, that you enterprises stand at twenty millions today at the very least.

**Glenmorison:** Fifty.

**Sir Jafna:** How do you know? How do you know? The way I am plundered at every turn! (To Sir Dexter) Your people take the shirt off my back.

**Sir Dexter:** My people! What on earth do you mean?

**Sir Jafna:** Your Land monopolists. Your blackmailers. Your robber barons... You were quite right at the Guildhall last night, Arthur: you must nationalize the land and put a stop to this shameless exploitation of the financiers and entrepreneurs by a useless, idle, predatory landed class....

Sir Dexter Rightside becomes enraged by the prime minister Sir Arthur Chavender's radical reform proposal and the support given by Sir Jafna Pandranath. He loses his temper and calls Sir Jafna, "a silly nigger pretending to be an English gentleman". This derisive comment makes Sir Jafna to explode with indignation and Shaw put in Sir Jafna's mouth what Tamils pride about themselves. Let me quote Shaw, in the words of Sir Jafna:

**"I am despised. I am called nigger by this dirty faced barbarian whose forefathers were naked savages worshipping acorns and mistletoe in the woods whilst my people were spreading the highest enlightenment yet reached by the human race from the temples of Brahma the thousands fold who is all the gods in one. This primitive savage dares to accuse me of imitating him; me, with the blood in my veins of conquerors who have swept through continents vaster than a million dogholes like this island of yours. They founded a civilization compared to which your little kingdom is no better than a concentration camp.**

**What you have of religion came from the east; yet no Hindu, no Parsee, No Jain, would stoop to its crudities. Is there a mirror here? Look at your faces and look at the faces of my people in Ceylon, the cradles of the human race. There you see Man as he came from the hand of God, who has left on every feature the unmistakable stamp of the great original creative artist. There you see Woman with eyes in her head that mirror the universe instead of little peepholes filled with faded pebbles... you call me nigger, sneering at my colour because you have none.... I should dishonour my country and my race by remaining here where both have been insulted... But I now cast you off. I return to India to detach it wholly from England, and leave you to perish in your ignorance, your vain conceit, and your abominable manners..."**

After the exit of Sir Jafna, the other British characters continue the conversation, in which Shaw brings forth the snobbery of colonial rulers.

**Sir Arthur:** That one word nigger will cost us India. How could Dexty be such a fool as to let it slip?

**Sir Bemrose:** Arthur! I feel I cannot overlook a speech like that. After all we are white men.

**Sir Arthur:** You are not, Rosy, I assure you. You are walnut colour, with a touch of claret on the nose. Glenmorison is the colour of his native oatmeal: not a touch of white on him. The fairest man present is the Duke. He's as yellow as a Malayan headhunter. The Chinese call us Pinks. They flatter us.

**Sir Bemrose:** I must tell you, Arthur, that frivolity on a vital point like this is in very bad taste. And you know very well that the country cannot do without Dexty... I must go and see him at once.

**Sir Arthur:** Make my apologies to Sir Jafna if you overtake him. How are we to hold the empire together if we insult a man who represents nearly seventy percent of its population.

**Sir Bemrose:** I don't agree with you, Arthur. It is for Pandy to apologize. Dexty really shares the premiership with you; and if a Conservative Prime Minister of England may not take down a heathen native when he forgets himself there is an end of British supremacy.

**Sir Arthur:** For Heaven's sake don't call him a native. You are a native.

**Sir Bemrose:** Of Kent, Arthur: of Kent. Not of Ceylon.

Shaw ends the play with Sir Arthur Chavender deciding to give up politics, after discovering that Britain needs a revolution, but he is not the man to lead one. An excited unemployed mob breaks into Downing Street and windows of the Colonial Office are being stoned. Then police, mounted in horses arrive at the scene and disperse the crowd.

## GOVERNMENT HAS TO TALK TO THE LTTE AT SOME POINT OF TIME

The government has to talk to the LTTE at some point in time, although no one can predict who will be blown up next. Despite the continuing hostilities this is now a premise fundamental to the government's approach to the Tamil problem.

A spokesman of the Tigers told the press in Jaffna some time after the assassination of Gandhi, that they (the LTTE) have been in touch with the government through the good offices of some concerned parties. The spokesman even mentioned the name of a senior government official, as the person who would arrive in Jaffna to begin negotiations.

These stories aside, there are some questions that would have to be countenanced by the government in holding talks with the LTTE. In such a dialogue does it accept the Tigers with their military assets intact?

Would the thirteenth amendment, which provides for the Provincial Council system, be relevant in the envisaged dialogue in view of the LTTE's position on the Northeastern Provincial Council?

Would the preliminary agenda include the question of the merger of the north and eastern Provinces, colonisation and district boundaries?

Would it also include the status of the other groups and political parties both Tamil and Sinhalese in the north and east if and when any agreement on the prospect of holding elections is reached?

And finally does the state, if it is earnest about holding talks, have an idea worth placing before the general public as to how a mechanism for supervising and/or inducing the inevitable process of disarming could be worked out?

politically sensitive problem of setting up a system of security in the north and east which would be a sufficient incentive for the staggered dismantling of the LTTE's military organisation.

The government it appears is thinking in terms of a system of security which would be 'indigenous'. But again the question is, in the context of a 'peaceful dialogue' envisaged, can this idea of indigenous security - which means that law and order would predominantly be in the hands of the Tamils in the north and east - be a sufficient incentive to convince the LTTE to agree to voluntary and real disarmament?

The crux of the matter however is this: that when everything has been said and done, it would transpire that the LTTE would not allow anyone else to be part of an indigenous security arrangement and that inducing disarmament would mean in that case, another protracted war. The very essence of LTTE's argument for physically eliminating the other groups is that they cannot be entrusted with the security of the Tamils. They have systematically and frantically endeavoured over the years to arrogate the right of ensuring the safety and security of the Tamils from Sri Lanka, India and the other groups. Hence any solution envisaged by the government has to consider the LTTE and its military assets and potential as comprising the law and order system proposed to be set up under the terms of that solution.

If not, it means war. The whole thing has taken on the nature of a pointless conundrum. If the government ruthlessly pursues the war while uselessly dragging on the

### SAYS TARAKI

IN THE SUNDAY ISLAND OF THE 9TH OF JUNE

These questions beg to be answered and answered in detail. The essence of any possible settlement to the Tamil question is the future of the LTTE's military assets. It has become integral to the Tamil problem. The failure of the IPKF'S effort to disarm the LTTE and the unprecedented military build up before the war began in June have brought a new and perhaps confounding factor into the idea of finding a solution to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka.

This has also given rise to the notion of finding an 'alternative' system of security in the north and east. The military assets of the LTTE cannot be ignored for too long in the event of there being any talks between the government and the Tigers, for the status of the other groups and political parties, including the UNP will figure crucially, may presume even in the preliminary stages.

This time the political and military leadership of the country cannot but address the dual problem of alternative security and the mechanism of supervising and/or inducing the process of disarming. This can be the critical area in which the intractable difficulties of dealing with the Tamil question now will arise. If the desired method on the part of the government is a peaceful one then it has to inevitably countenance the constitutional and

APC then it stands in danger of losing the other groups and ultimately being left only with the LTTE to hold talks; an LTTE which would still retain its potential to re-establish a better organised and resourceful military system to wage a more successful war.

On the other hand if the government talks to the LTTE now and earnestly pursues the process of drawing and setting up a suitable form of autonomy including a security arrangement which would be indigenous it would be again faced with the LTTE as the sole political and military reality in the north and east, because even if the LTTE agrees in principle even at a later stage to the idea of holding elections in the north and east it would be a stage in which the government accepts them as they are; with their military assets, which in turn would mean that other groups will be nonentities in the LTTE dominated areas.

These seem to be the reasons why the Tigers feel that it is easier to advance towards their goal through the studied and calculated alternation of war and peace. The front page comment by the Editor in the latest issue of the pro LTTE 'Tamil Nation' will throw some light on these matters that inform the Tigers' approach to the military and political methods for achieving their goal.

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The respected journalist, William Safire writing in the International Herald Tribune of July 9 comments:

## A zeal for self determination has replaced the drive for empire as the spirit of the age

Mikhail Gorbachev has it almost right: The breakup of Yugoslavia is a portent of the dissolution now inexorably under way in the Soviet Union. But his warning should not be directed at patriots who want to break free; it should be sent to tyrants who would enforce with guns the crumbling pretensions of imperialism.

The conglomeration of distinctly different peoples called Yugoslavia will break up peaceably or bloodily, next week or next year. Serbia is no longer in charge; time is on the side of unimpeded nationalism.

The glue of Communist dictatorship has hardened and cracked, and no outside threat forces the parts together. A zeal for self-determination has replaced the drive for empire as the spirit of the age.

Mr Gorbachev, whose symbol is a weather vane, surely sees this march towards disunion. The assertion of national identity of the long-suppressed Slovenians was accompanied by two other signs of the times:

Last week, the Warsaw Pact - Moscow's grand alliance of puppet regimes and satellites - formally dissolved itself.

And last week the Kremlin learned of the end of its own enforced political unity, as Alexander Yakovlev and Eduard Shevardnadze, architects of perestroika, joined with the reformist mayors of Moscow and Leningrad to let it be known that a fresh political party will soon compete with the sclerotic Communists.

Think of that: Yugoslavia breaks apart, the Warsaw Pact dissolves and the Soviet one-party system gets a competitor - all around America's Independence Day. Great days for believers in one people, one country.

But an opposing thought intrudes.

Don't Americans, of all peoples, illustrate the ability of peoples in different cultures to build a nation? Didn't Americans fight a civil war to prevent their own disunion?

Yes, but. We Americans were unified by a common language and a revolutionary heritage; we were geographically isolated; and we annealed our unity by adopting a majority rule for human freedom and against slavery.

Majority rule with individual rights protected is the essence of democracy; the notion of a minority losing and separating to set up shop for itself

would make democracy, in Lincoln's word, "absurd."

But that absurdity ends when individual or minority rights are trampled by the majority, or by a tyrannical clique. Then it becomes absurd to stay together. That is when empires, especially of different cultures, split.

So it is necessary to react with moral and diplomatic consistency to the realignment of parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The dissolution of Yugoslavia is the dissolution of the Soviet empire in microcosm.

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## Sacramento Conference

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of Ethiopia, Lithuanians of the Soviet Union, Slovenians of Yugoslavia and others. At the same time, he pointed out that an independent Tamil Eelam was also justified in international law, under the concept of reversion to sovereignty.

The afternoon sessions on the right to self determination concluded with a "question and answer" session where the seeming reluctance of the International Community to recognise the Tamil right to self determination, while appearing to concede this right to other minority nations in the Baltic and Yugoslavia was explored.

The penultimate session on the first day, discussed a paper presented by Professor Wilson of the University of Brunswick, Canada who looked at the various constitutional models under which Sri Lanka could exist as a single country by taking on President Premadasa's offer to give "elam". Professor Wilson referred to the Provincial Council arrangement under the Indo-Sri Lanka accord as an exercise in deceit and explored other arrangements that would enable the two sides to arrive at a political solution. In the question and answer session, Professor Wilson reiterated his

position that the conflict was one between the LTTE (whom he identified to be the authentic representatives of the Tamil People) and the Sri Lankan Government and that the other Tamil Groups had no role to play.

The first days proceedings concluded with a discussion on the actions to be taken in regard to Tamil refugees who were the 'consequence of No Homeland'. The Chairman of the session, Mr. Wakely Paul noted that the solution was not to 'salve' the problem but to solve it.

The second days proceedings commenced with a morning session chaired by Mr. Ana Pararajasingham, a member of the Conference Organising Committee, Secretary of the Australasian Federation of Tamil Associations and a member of the advisory editorial board of the "Tamil Nation". The session looked at the need to counter the propaganda war by the Sri Lankan Government, and the significance of the humanitarian law of armed conflict in relation to the Tamil national liberation struggle.

Ms. Deana Hodgins, Bureau Chief of Washington D.C.'s Insight magazine, gave a graphic and moving account of the war in Tamil

Eelam. She showed to the conference slides of photographs taken by her last September in Tamil populated areas of Sri Lanka. She said that she had worked as a foreign correspondent in many trouble spots in the world including Cambodia, Kashmir, Lebanon and Afghanistan but the brutality in the Sri Lankan

from the lagoon because the large number of dead bodies floating there. A health care worker in Batticaloa says she has never seen such brutality: he whispered about his difficult 12 hour drive to transport a 15 year old boy whose larynx had been punctured - his larynx was damaged when two army officers cut his neck

1970s to 1980s and the third the open suppression of the Tamil population since the 1980s.

Karen Parker, an International Human Rights lawyer said "it is that international opinion is not yet in favour of Tamil Eelam, but Tamils as a separate people, deserve their right to self determination." Referring to

*'Heli, Heli' he shouted as he fell and dragged himself to the side of the road." Dianna Hodgins broke down at this point overcome by the selfless spirit of that young Tamil boy and many in the auditorium, on that clear California day, felt the agony and the pain of a people who struggle so that they may live in freedom and with dignity.*

conflict was the "most inhuman I have seen". She went on to give an account of her meeting with the late Ranjan Wijeyeratna and his callous disregard for Tamil lives and his regret that Deana had survived her visit to the North! Deana's moving account of the war accompanied the slide show was a sensitive portrayal of a war in which the Tamil civilian population had suffered immensely and which had, despite the brutal attacks, had managed to preserve its humanity. "In Batticaloa, the villagers had stopped eating fish

from ear to ear." She said: "In Manipay Hospital the halls were flooded with the injured and the dying. Doctors showed us the burned victims of barrel bombs, shattered victims of mines. They pointed to holes in the ceilings and floors where Government planes had fired at the Hospital." She went on: "The saddest of all were the children who have become accustomed to living in a war. One little boy was running an errand for his mother, driving a bike much too big for him. Suddenly the helicopters appeared. Schooled in the etiquette of survival, the boy sounded the alarm for his neighbourhood to let others know to clear the street. 'Heli, Heli' he shouted as he fell and dragged himself to the side of the road." Dianna Hodgins broke down at this point overcome by the selfless spirit of that young Tamil boy and many in the auditorium, on that clear California day, felt the agony and the pain of a people who struggle so that they may live in freedom and with dignity.

Ms. Diane Alexander, representative of International Alert, said that the Sri Lankan Government propaganda must be countered by the Tamils engaging the services of a full time lobbyist in the US and other power centres. Mr. Robert Oberst of the Nebraska Wesleyan University identified the three stages through which the Government had lost its legitimacy vis a vis the Tamils. The first being the re-establishment of Sinhala hegemony between 1948 and 1970. The second, the control of Tamil society from

India's role, she said: "What India did by sending its troops to Sri Lanka under the late Rajiv Gandhi's regime exactly matched the wishes of the State Department of the United States. The U.S. could not do that but they welcomed India's intervention in glowing terms. But this began a period of brutal repression and blood shed never before seen in that part of the world. Rajiv Gandhi was terribly misguided in taking such interventionist action." She declared that an armed conflict against a racist regime becomes a legitimate struggle for self determination in conformity with universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Principles set out in Humanitarian Law.

The final session chaired by Mr. J.M. Rajaratnam, President of the Illankai Tamil Sangam of the USA, focused on the economic future of Tamil Eelam. Papers were presented by Dr. Sachi Sri Kantha, Bio Statistics Institute, Osaka and by Mr. K. Salchithanathan, a former UN Consultant. Speakers included Professor Kopan Mahadeva of the UK, Dr. Sriskantharaja of Australia, and Dr. K. Sivarajah, Fisheries Advisor, Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries. Professor Kopan Mahadeva giving a detailed account of the death and destruction of Tamil Eelam said that the "estimated total cost of reconstruction after establishing peace would be around \$3 billion." The broad consensus view that emerged was that the "Sinhala leaders should redefine and restructure their relationship with the Tamil people and seek new approaches to old problems".

## MAY DAY DEMONSTRATION IN NORWAY



The Thamilar Coordinating Committee of Trondheim in Norway marching in a May Day demonstration this year



## a point of view

# LTTE'S WAR WITH THE INDIAN ARMY

Sachi Sri Kantha

George Kohn, the compiler of the standard reference book, *Dictionary of Wars* (Facts on File Publications, New York, 1986) wrote in his introductions, "War has a long and intriguing history and has been a prominent feature of human existence ever since the day when rival men - or women - decided to settle their differences by use of force. In many instances, this history of a people is the history of its wars". Only the naive can doubt the truth of these statements.

India's first military encounter against a foreign adversary was recorded as that of Alexander's Asiatic campaign (329 - 325 BC). The Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka became the battle field for India's latest military encounter in 1987.

Since the Indian army's war against Prabhakaran's Tamil Tigers lasted almost two and a half years (October 1987 to March 1990), it is time to review the outcome this war. Already so many military experts, political pundits and journalists from India have presented "India's version" of the most unexpected military encounter the Indian army had to face in its post-independence era.

The performance of the Indian army in Sri Lanka was no better than the performances of India's hundreds of athletes who have participated in the Olympic games since 1948. Both the athletes and the Indian army men in Sri Lanka shared one common denominator. They failed to produce gold, silver or even bronze-medalwinning performances. But the lack-luster performances of India's athletes and army men have never deterred the post-mortem specialists in India to offer face-saving excuses, reasons etc. etc. to hide their agony.

To analyse the performance of the Indian army (I prefer this usage than the euphemistic, Indian Peace Keeping Force!) in Sri Lanka, we first have to reminisce on how this army fared in the earlier wars it faced since 1947. A capsule summary of India's wars, culled from the authoritative book, *War in Peace; Conventional and Guerrilla Warfare since 1945* (edited by Sir Robert Thompson, 1985) is given below.

### 1) Sino-Indian War

**date:** October - November 1962  
**outcome:** Chinese seizure of disputed border region.  
**casualties:** India, 1400 killed and 4013 captured. China unknown.

### 2) Indo-Pakistan War of 1965

**date:** April - 27 September 1965  
**main engagements:** Lahore  
**outcome:** UN policed ceasefire  
**casualties:** India, 2212 dead, 7636 wounded and 1500 missing. Pakistan, estimated 5800 plus dead.

3) Indo-Pakistan War of 1971  
**date:** 3 - 16 December 1971  
**main engagements:** Decca  
**outcome:** Independence for Bangladesh  
**casualties:** India, 1426 dead, 3611 wounded and 2149 missing. Pakistan, unknown.

To these three, should be added the Siege of Sikh Golden Temple, which occurred on June 6, 1984. **Casualties:** Indian troops, 55 killed. Sikh militants 500 plus killed and 1500 plus captured.

Compared to these short military encounters of the Indian army, their mission against Prabhakaran's Tamil Tigers became the most protracted one. Though it is a bitter pill to swallow for many, Prabhakaran emerged as a victorious military commander in the most vigorous and mentally bruising battle he faced till 1989.

Between October and December 1987 (the first three months of the war), after a bloody fighting, the Indian forces took military control of the Jaffna region and the Tamil Tigers retreated to the jungle hideouts in the Mullaitivu, Vavuniya, Mannar and Tincomalee districts. Yves de Saint-Jacob's AFP news - report from New Delhi published in the *Mainichi Daily News* of Japan (27 January 1988), informed that by January 1988, 350 troops had died and that the war against Tamil Tigers was costing India "some 4 million dollars a day". After another 15 months of war, Barbara Crossette of the *New York Times* (May 10, 1989) informed the world that, "more than 900 Indians have been killed and many thousands wounded". And these were the "official figures" released from Indian side.

The secret of Prabhakaran's survival in times of turbulence (against mind-numbing odds stacked against him), was dependent on three important factors. These are,

1. his uncanny knack of out-smarting the adversaries in most unpredictable ways.
2. patronage of former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MGR
3. his support and rapport from the Tamil masses in the Northern and Eastern provinces.

Let me expand on these three factors which helped Prabhakaran

to fight the Indian army with confidence.

### 1. Outsmarting the adversaries

Only outstanding leaders are blessed with this character trait. In this century, leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Mao Tse Tung, Marshal Tito, Fidel Castro and Yaser Arafat had this character trait. They were able to survive so many depressing moments (which would have sapped the vigour of ordinary mortals) because they were blessed with this trait.

When fighting a war with an adversary, one has to bring the enemy to your own terms to manipulate the events thereby turning the disadvantages to one's strengths. Imagine, if Mahatmaji had played according to the rules set by the British high command in London, he would never had won independence for India. Instead, Mahatmaji set his own rules of combat with his adversaries and out-smarted the mighty fire-power of the British army.

Prabhakaran dictated his own terms of combat in dealing with his adversaries. As a result, he was able to bruise the bloated egos of so many politicians as well as career soldiers during the past 7 years. Who have not bitten the dust against the tactical manoeuvres of Prabhakaran? - Rajiv Gandhi, J.R. Jayewardene, J.N. Dixit (ex-Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka), Lalith Athulathmudali, Gen. K. Sundarji (India's Chief of Army staff), Maj Gen. Harkirat Singh (Commander of the Indian troops in Oct. 1987), Lt. Gen. Depinder Singh, the manipulating officers of the Indian intelligence (Research and Analysis Wing), the Chiefs of Sri Lankan Armed Forces and the

support provided by MGR. Regarding MGR's critical support for Prabhakaran, one of the reliable Indian journalists, Salam Ali wrote in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (4 February 1988) as follows:

"While supporting New Delhi's policies, MGR continued to back the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, much to the dismay of the Indian Government... MGR also persuaded New Delhi that because of its size the LTTE should not be totally ignored. In carrying out New Delhi's instructions on the militant groups, MGR went far beyond his brief in the local handling of the LTTE. However, the central government did not consider it prudent to antagonise MGR over the issue of his special favours to the LTTE.

"When MGR learned that the July 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan peace accord was nearing completion, he tipped of the LTTE which moved most of its arsenal to secret hideouts in northern Sri Lanka. MGR also told the LTTE that all militant groups would be disarmed by the Indian Peace-Keeping Force, so they too hid their arms, which later had to be searched out by the Indian troops after a prolonged campaign.

"Although the LTTE has been engaged in combat with Indian troops since October, MGR kept his close links with it. His statements on India's Sri Lanka policy were deliberated vague enough to yield differing interpretations by the LTTE and New Delhi. Until MGR's death, the LTTE's speed boats used to hurtle between Tamil Nadu and Jaffna's northern coast with

failing health within a couple of days prior to his death on December 24, 1987. The death of MGR was indeed a major blow to Prabhakaran.

Following MGR's death, even J.R. Jayewardene cocksurely predicted the demise of Tamil Tigers. The *Time* (January 11, 1988) reported that, "he (Jayewardene) is confident that the 35,000 Indian troops brought in under a joint accord with India will soon 'finish' the Tigers". But Prabhakaran's rebels recovered from the loss of MGR and they survived the whole of 1988, while Jayewardene retired in disgrace.

### 3) Support and Tamil people

How much support and rapport, Prabhakaran and his youthful rebels had among the Tamils of Northern and Eastern provinces is distinctly visible when we compare the two reports published, one at the beginning of the war (October 1987) and the second one after 18 months, in March 1989.

Angus Deming and Ron Moreau reporting for *Newsweek* (October 26, 1987) wrote, "... they (Tamil Tigers) may also have lost the battle for the hearts and minds of Jaffna Tamils, many of whom support the peace accord and have grown weary of the Tigers' violent ways. As a result, says one Western diplomat in Colombo, "the Tigers don't have a long-term defensible position in Jaffna city. It's only a matter of days before they either have to surrender or try to escape". That was the view of the Indian military tacticians. But, their expectations did not materialise even after pounding the lives and limbs of tens of thousands of non-combatant Tamils living in the Eelam territory.

Barbara Crossette's article entitled, "If the War has ended, why are so many dying?", published in the *New York Times* of March 9, 1989, told the continued support Prabhakaran's rebels enjoyed amongst the Tamils.

"... The Tigers, almost unbelievably, have not lost public sympathy, despite their terrorist tactics and the destructions that came in their wake. Over and over again, a visitor to Jaffna hears the Tigers complimented for 'never letting us down'. Quietly, the Tigers are still a presence in Jaffna town, in villages elsewhere on the peninsula and on surrounding islands. If Indians control the roads by day, Tigers have the ability to cut them by night... Indian troops, fearful of driving alone on the peninsula's road, roar along in convoys, scattering local people

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**"Barbara Crossette's article entitled, 'If the War has ended, why are so many dying?', published in the New York Times of March 9, 1989, told of the continued support Prabhakaran's rebels enjoyed amongst the Tamils."**

Officers of the Sri Lankan Intelligence Service.

### 2) Patronage of MGR

MGR's patronage was vital for Prabhakaran's strategy against his Sri Lankan adversaries and Indian army. During the first three months of the intense combat against the Indian army, the Tamil Tigers fought valiantly with the moral

impunity almost every night".

All the parties involved in the Eelam conflict (Tamil Tigers, Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils, UNP politicians and the Indian decision-makers) were aware that MGR would not last long following his debilitating stroke in October 1984. But they also did not anticipate the unexpected turn of events in MGR's



## LTTE's War with the Indian Army

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with angry glares and the brandishing of automatic weapons".

### The Outcome

Prabhakaran and his rebels had to tackle the Indian army in three phases.

- open warfare
- guerrilla operations
- a political campaign for popular support

Based on the initial outcome of the open warfare (October - November 1987), the Indian army and Indian news media announced "victories" and now it is apparent that their

boast was premature and a hollow one. Once the Indian army gained military control during day time (while

losing the popular support of the Tamil masses) in the Jaffna region by fire power and air-strike, they were lost about their next move. They presumed that mere show of tank strength could cage the Tamil Tigers but they were sadly mistaken. On paper, it looked like that the Indian army would have disarmed the Tamil Tigers within five days (that was the original estimate of Rajiv Gandhi!). The Indian military brains estimated that on the duration of their Indo-Pakistan Wars of 1965 and 1971.

The strength of Tamil Tigers, on paper, amounted to 5,000 plus. Hence the initial landing of 15,000 Indian soldiers in August 1987. This was based on the accepted rules of conventional war that the Indian army needed a 3:1 advantage in man power and equipment to take on a garrison in prepared positions. Then the agony of the Indian military tacticians became evident when they had to bring reinforcement in excess of 100,000 men. Even this proved futile.

What Rajiv Gandhi's military advisers failed to calculate was that Prabhakaran's hard-core army of 5000 plus was given solid cover by more than one million non-combatant Tamils of Northern and Eastern provinces. Prabhakaran also followed another maxim of Mao's guerrilla warfare: "strategy is to pit one man against ten but the tactics are to pit ten men against one".

In the final analysis, the Indian army was outwitted and out-fought by Prabhakaran's Tigers. Who will disagree with the comments of one

**"Tigers are not alone in believing that one day they will get their Tamil Eelam. Some of the Indian officers fighting them believe so too. They have experienced the Tigers' tenacity in battle ..."**

Theepan, a Tamil Tiger field commander, "We are related to fight the Indians: the whole world admired us for the fight we have given the world's fourth largest armed forces" (*Time*, Dec. 19, 1988).

The British weekly *Economist* harbours no love for the Tamil Tigers. It's Sri Lankan correspondent always reports with contempt about the mission on which Prabhakaran has embarked. However, on the first anniversary of the LTTE Indian war, *The Economist* (Oct. 22, 1988) came to its senses and presented a somewhat accurate appraisal of the result. Otherwise it would have lost its credibility as a critical commentator of contemporary events. The title of the story was, "Rajiv gets lost on a Tiger hunt". Some excerpts are worth recording for the benefit of those who have not read it.

"More than 500 of its (India's) 50,000 soldiers have been killed,

almost all of them by the Tamil Tiger guerrillas. Three times that number have been wounded. ... And there is the incalculable damage to the army's pride from its failure, despite more than a year of effort and a vast superiority of arms, to subdue the Tigers... The Tigers have lost some 350 men since the fighting resumed in earnest last October, and now have around 2,000 in the field...

"Tigers are not alone in believing that one day they will get their Tamil Eelam. Some of the Indian officers fighting them believe so too. They have experienced the Tigers' tenacity in battle and have interrogated Tiger prisoners. They reckon the guerrillas could go on fighting indefinitely.

The *Economist* continued its analysis further. "Even those who do not accept that bleak view now suspect that the Tigers cannot simply be wiped out, as it was once thought they could be. If the Indians cannot do it, the Sri Lankan army, which is half the size of the Indian force in Sri Lanka, seems unlikely to."

In recent decades (if not centuries), no military general from Sri Lanka had the courage to take on the might of an Indian army. But Prabhakaran took the challenge in a most daring manner and had surprised many of his critics. The *Time* magazine (April 3, 1989) had written the non-partisan verdict of this war. In its cover story on "Super India; The next military power", there appeared a box-feature, with the caption, "Sri Lanka; Case Study of a Disaster". The last three sentences of the analysis read:

"Some 800 Indian soldiers have died at the hands of the Tigers. India still has 100,000 troops and paramilitary forces committed to the Sri Lanka operation, yet it has failed to put down the guerrillas. The simmering conflict may not be India's Viet Nam, but it provides the lesson for New Delhi that even an emerging superpower must recognize its limits". That certainly was grudging acknowledgement of the victory for Prabhakaran's army.

Almost a year later, when India withdrew the last of its troops from Sri Lanka on March 24, 1990, Barbara Crossette of the *New York Times* openly acknowledged the LTTE's victory over the Indian Army (March 25, 1990).

She wrote, "The defeat of New Delhi's policy is now complete. Not only has India lost the battle with the Tamil Tigers, at the cost of about 1200 Indian lives, but it has also lost any hope of direct influence over the Sri Lankan northeast, particularly the strategic port of Trincomalee, where an Indian-installed provincial government, intended to blunt the Tigers' political potential, collapsed this month".

So, in the final verdict, of the three phases which consisted the Indo-LTTE war (1987-90), the LTTE won the two phases (guerrilla campaign and the popular support for political campaign) after back-tracking in the first phase (open warfare). It was the longest war the Indian army has fought since India's independence.

However, the Tamils cannot feel happy about the victory, since it has been achieved at too great cost. The tragedy of the Indo-LTTE war summed up in statistics (only a partial one) should read as follows - casualties:

- (1) India, 1200 plus killed and many thousands injured ("official estimate")
- (2) LTTE, 1000 plus killed and an equal number injured; Tamil civilians, 5000 plus killed and injured.

## Briefs

### Parliamentary Select Committee to recommend a solution to the ethnic conflict

Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe, leader of the House and Cabinet spokesman announced on July 25 that the private members motion by the SLFP Kalutara District MP Mangala Moonesinghe asking for the appointment of a Parliamentary Select Committee to recommend ways and means of finding a solution to the ethnic conflict has been accepted by the Government and is to be given top priority.

### Army Commander says that the Tigers can no longer be considered as guerrillas

The Army Commander, Lt General Wanasinghe said that the LTTE can no longer be considered only as a guerrilla outfit and are now a more conventional army. According to him, the Tigers can field large numbers of men, re-deploy fighters from elsewhere in the war zones and when they wish and are armed with weapons to match the Army's own armour and field artillery.

### Government not trying to achieve a military solution, says General Cyril Ranatunga

General Cyril Ranatunga, the Defence Secretary, told Robert Karniol of the internationally reputed *Janes Defence Weekly* that the Government is not trying to achieve a military solution to the ethnic conflict and that they are well aware that this is a political problem requiring a political solution.

### Maximum alert in hill country

Sri Lanka police in the districts of Badulla, Matale, Kandy and Nuwara Eliya have gone on maximum alert alleging that separatists are moving into area. 260 Tamil youth were arrested in the past month in this area and most of them were released as no evidence could be found against them.

### Sri Lankan Army scrapping the bottom of the barrel

A big talking media man, who had been foolishly recruited as an Army Volunteer is now going berserk, say insiders who are familiar with his antics. It is said that he has now become an embarrassment to the Sri Lankan

Army. He poses off as a Captain or Major when he is only a fledgling two bit Lieutenant.

LTTE using radar to detect vessels  
The Sri Lankan Navy Commander, Vice Admiral Ananda Silva says that the Tigers may be using sea or land based radar stations to monitor the activity of the Sri Lanka Navy in the Palk Strait.

### Power fails its Minister

Power and Energy Minister Chandra Bandura was powerfully enlightening a group of journalists about the Government's objective of providing electricity to every household in the country when suddenly the building was hit by power failure.

### 17 Check points in the Nuwara Eliya District

Nuwara Eliya Police have set up 17 checkpoints in the district to apprehend Tigers who they believe may be in contact with plantation Tamils in the estates.

### MSF to operate in the South

the Medicines Sans Frontiers, the Paris based medical aid organisation is likely to begin relief operations in the Southern Provinces of Sri Lanka within the next few weeks after the conclusion of a new agreement with the Government.

### Why no Vice President JR Explains

Speaking at a YMCA forum in Colombo, the former President J.R. Jayawardene said that the Constitution of 1978 did not provide for an executive Vice President as it would be an additional expenditure to the State.

### Delay in solving the ethnic crisis will be a disaster - LSSP General Secretary

The LSSP General Secretary, Bernard Soysa stated in a press release that the country has reached a point where any further delay in solving the ethnic problem will spell disaster to all the communities alike.

### Tamil PS members in a dilemma

Tamil members elected to Pradesha Sabhas in the Badulla District have not been issued with a code of conduct in their mother tongue. The Seminar conducted for them was in Sinhala.

## Zeal for self determination - spirit of the age

continued from page 6

The United States must not stand for stability and the status quo against new births of freedom. On the contrary, where individual and ethnic rights are not respected, America must stand for self-determination against the power of empire.

It is fine to urge Serbs and Slovenians to resolve their differences peacefully; it is proper for international institutions to offer good offices in mediation. But America's diplomats must not intervene economically on a central power's behalf, or threaten to not recognise withdrawing nations, in the sterile name of stability and order.

President George Bush started to make that mistake in recent weeks, but then wisely drew back; a don't you-dare message to Slovenia would be read a support of the Kremlin's dominance in Georgia, Byelorussia, Moldavia, even the Baltic states.

It the extension of freedom with the avoidance of bloodshed is

Washington's aim, it should be creative: American diplomats should stop mumbling vaguely about "loose confederation" and propose serious global talks on semi-sovereignty.

This idea could be a transition to separate nationhood, or to free association in a commonwealth, or to confederation that might lead to eventual, uncoerced reunion.

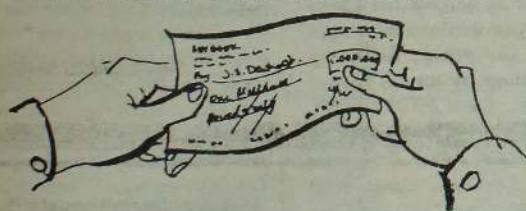
We can enforce semi-sovereignty in Iraqi Kurdistan; we can suggest it from Quebec to Northern Ireland, Tibet to Puerto Rico; we can urge it in Israel's West Bank, where it goes by the name of autonomy.

Not the Baltics; they are independent, though captive. But throughout the disintegrating Soviet empire, America should support semi-sovereignty as a form of trial separation - thus breaking up the dangerous monolith without breaking out the nukes. (Courtesy *The New York Times*.)

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# Sri Lanka - The Crisis and Struggle for Fundamental Change

Dr. Ramani Chelliah

*The Indian sub continent is perhaps in its most explosive period of history: the rapid rise and impact of communalism with popular support in India; the growing strength and power of religious fundamentalism in Afghanistan; and the nationalist, separatist and autonomous struggles in Kashmir, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, and Sri Lanka all raise numerous problematic questions - questions which engaged the attention of participants, including Tariq Ali, Achin Vaniak and Romilla Thapar at a two day Conference on "Asia - The Crisis and Struggle for Fundamental Social Change" at the University of London on the 25th and 26th of May 1991. We publish here the presentation made in relation to Sri Lanka.*

I have been invited to talk to you about the present situation in Sri Lanka.

The first point that needs to be borne in mind is that there are two units of analysis involved - the Tamil nation of Eelam and the associated Tamil national liberation struggle; and the Sinhala nation of Sri Lanka and the struggle of the oppressed there against the ruling regime. These two national entities are quite distinct, representing two different social formations, the dynamics of each being driven by different political, social and economic forces.

What I intend doing today, is to provide an outline of the present reality in Eelam and situate it in relation to Sri Lanka.

The backdrop to the emergence of the Tamil national liberation struggle in Eelam is provided by the national chauvinism of the Sinhala ruling elite, which over the past 40 years has dictated a persistent policy aimed at destroying the Tamil nation. It is the consequences of this disastrous policy that made a revolutionary rupture from joint existence an inevitable alternative.

What are the features of Tamil National oppression?

The first act of the independent Ceylonese government was the inhuman Citizenship Act of 1948 which robbed 1.2 million Tamil plantation workers of their basic human rights and reduced them to an appalling condition of statelessness. In one stroke, this Act deprived almost 50% of the Tamil population of its basic fundamental rights.

The Tamil language which represented an aspect of the identity of the Tamil nation was another target for attack. In 1956 the Sinhala language was declared the only official language of the country. The Sinhala only policy, coupled with open discrimination, has resulted in the almost complete drying up of employment opportunities for Tamil speaking people. Today a Tamil employee in the public sector is a rare find although Tamils constitute almost 30% of the population.

In education, the norm of open competition was abandoned in favour of various standardization and regional quota systems, the sole result of which was to exclude well qualified Tamil students from higher education - this in a country where education is highly valued and the literacy rate is 97%.

A most sinister threat to Tamil nationhood was posed by the state-aided colonisation schemes that have been carried out vigorously since independence. Aimed at destroying the geographical unity of the Tamil nation, it was also used to reduce the Tamils to a minority in their own homelands. As a direct result of colonisation, two new

Sinhala electorates were created and more than one third of the land area in the Eastern province was taken over by Sinhala settlers.

The traditional Tamil homelands were starved of investment and development. Of government investment from 1948 to the present day, less than .01% was for the benefit of Tamil people. Aid projects and industrial development projects were exclusively sited in

oppression and betrayal by the dominant powers in Sri Lanka, goes back over four decades, yet the cry for an independent Eelam is relatively recent. It is important to remember that the Tamils have travelled the path of peaceful agitation and parliamentary participation, asked for minimum autonomy and federal status - only to be met with betrayal at best, and total dismissal at worst, as the foundations were laid to create a Sinhala Sri Lanka.

*"The point is, that amongst the Tamils at home and abroad, there is a wide consensus of support for national liberation, as an essential goal which takes primacy over internal contradictions and problems within the liberation movement itself. These internal contradictions and problems have to be resolved within the context of national liberation - not outside it."*

Sinhala areas. As a result, while the rest of Sri Lanka prospered, the Tamil nation was impoverished and made dependent on the Sinhala master nation.

Various acts of cultural barbarity were carried out, such as the police disruption of an International Tamil Research Conference in 1974 (resulting in 9 dead and 100s wounded) and the burning down of the Jaffna Public Library in 1981 with its collection of rare and irreplaceable archives. In neither case, was a public inquiry ever held.

Periodic pogroms occurred in which thousands of innocent lives were brutally sacrificed at the altar of national chauvinistic hatred. On every occasion the state and the armed forces colluded with thugs and vandals in their sadistic orgy of arson, rape and mass murder.

Various laws have been rushed through parliament aimed at crushing Tamil resistance. The PTA Act of 1979 denied trial by jury, enabled detention without charge for a period of 18 months, and permitted confessions extracted under torture, to be admitted as evidence in court proceedings.

The brutality of the Sri Lankan army of occupation in the Tamil homelands is an everyday threat to the life and livelihood of ordinary citizens in the Tamil homelands.

It is out of a history of oppression that the struggle for national liberation emerged. The point was eventually reached when it became evident that the only solution was the establishment of an independent state of Eelam in the traditional Tamil homelands of the North and East. While the history of

This explains the almost universal support for the national liberation struggle amongst Tamils today - a support which cuts across class, caste and gender barriers. This is not to say that all or any of the particular liberation organisations leading the struggle enjoy universal, unconditional support. The point is, that amongst the Tamils at home and abroad, there is a wide consensus of support for national liberation, as an essential goal which takes primacy over internal contradictions and problems within the liberation movement itself. These internal problems have to be resolved within the context of national liberation - not outside it.

It is now almost 20 years since the inception of the armed struggle for national liberation. It is a struggle that has been fought against great odds.

The Sri Lankan state has refused to consider seriously anything other than a military solution to the problem. It has imported massive arms supplies from several countries including the USA, Britain, Pakistan, South Africa, Taiwan and Israel. Israeli secret service personnel and British mercenaries have been used in combat operations. All resources have been directed to the massive programme of militarisation with enormous increases in defence expenditure. Then, there was the Indian adventure in 1987, when Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi took the decision to send in Indian troops to bail out the then President Jayawardene's tottering regime in Sri Lanka, and in the process exacted a handsome price in terms of economic and political rights within Sri

Lanka. The infamous Peace Accord signed in 1987, met none of the Tamil demands, was negotiated over the heads of Tamil representatives, and in the face of Sinhala opposition. The only way of enforcing the problem-ridden accord was to impose it by force. The precondition of crushing Tamil resistance was a required step in the process of India gaining control, not only over the Tamil nation, but the entire island of Sri Lanka.

At the height of the Indian invasion, over 120,000 troops were stationed in the Tamil homelands of Eelam. The concentration of these troops in the northern province was such that for every 10 people in that region one was an occupying enemy soldier. In spite of the power and might of the Indian army and the large scale loss of civilian lives that it inflicted on the Tamil population (a conservative estimate has been put at 100,000), Tamil resistance could not be crushed. The Indian Peace Keeping Force, dubbed the Innocent People Killing Force had to withdraw two and a half years later, defeated and disgraced.

Currently, the Sri Lankan army is back on the offensive. But, the army of occupation in Eelam is, in fact, confined to army and navy barracks in certain towns - the rest of the country is under the control of the LTTE. Nonetheless, the army is able to inflict havoc and heavy civilian casualties through its daily indiscriminate bombing - using napalm bombs over densely populated areas and indiscriminate shooting from helicopters. They are implementing a policy of levelling to the ground entire villages.

Since June of last year, when the latest offensive began, to the present day, all electricity supply to the northern province has been cut off. The transport of petrol, kerosene, batteries and matches have been banned. In addition there is an embargo on sugar, milk, paper and money. The cash economy is collapsing due to lack of paper money with elements of a bartering system emerging. As fuel shortage rules out transport, more and more people of Eelam are being pushed back into a primitive, self-sustaining form of life, reminiscent of the last century.

Over 4,000 civilian have been killed since June. The effects of the bombing are compounded by lack of medicines and trained medical personnel. The transport of medical supplies, including life-saving medicines into Eelam is banned. The region's biggest hospital in Jaffna has been evacuated. Other small, working hospitals have been bombed. In an effort to dent civilian morale, they have even been showering the area with human and animal excrement - which speaks volumes about the psychological underpinnings of this war.

Over the last decade of the struggle, the Tamil people of Eelam have paid a heavy price. Those who have been forced to flee the country as refugees amount to about 125,000 in Europe (including UK), 200,000 in India and a sizeable number in Canada and other parts of the world. Within Eelam itself, the havoc and destruction of war means that about 1 million people have been displaced.

*Continued on next page*

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continued from page 5

## TARAKI

"It must be said to the credit of President Premadasa, that unlike his predecessor, he is a politician with his ears to the ground; and hence has the perspicacity to understand and respect the nature of the new Tamil phenomenon. This is what perhaps gave him the courage in May 1989 to admit armed Tigers into the city of Colombo and host them in 5-star hotels, over which his Sinhala critics have not stopped taunting him. If his recent convincing win in the local bodies election has given him the confidence to go back to his original track. He now has the added benefit of two experiences - a one year old pointless dialogue between May 1989 and May 1990 that came to nothing, and the one year old fruitless war between June 1990 and now, which had come to nothing either, but had left the country weaker economically, and more exposed to strong-arm pressures from western donor countries. In fact, he has few options now than what he had in May 1989.

President Premadasa is reported to have told a Sinhala audience recently, - in a bilingual flourish - that while he was not prepared to concede Eelam but short of it he was prepared to give "ellam" (all, in Tamil). That we think is a good beginning. After all, one should be pragmatic enough to understand that no ruler anywhere can concede anything that is not in his power to give. New nation states are never given, they are always taken. The General Yahya Khans and Bhuttos could not have given Bangladesh it was taken from them."



## BOOK REVIEW

This is an important book. The back cover of the book states, "This study - the first comprehensive survey of the history and sociology of genocide - presents over two dozen examples of the one-sided mass slaughter of peoples, spanning the centuries from antiquity to the present".

I am sure that the mandarins in charge of the Sri Lankan Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the Ministry of (Dis)Information will certainly not like to see what has been printed on page 456 of this book. It confirms that the world is waking up to the genocide of Tamils currently occurring in Sri Lanka.

Last year, even the prestigious *New York Times* in its editorial entitled, "Preventing Genocide in Liberia" (Sept. 13, 1990) referred to the current situation in Sri Lanka as follows, without naming the culprits:

From Sri Lanka to the Balkans, political opportunists have exploited ethnic rivalries in the quest for short-term advantage. Too often, their efforts have drowned their countries in blood".

Authors Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, who are professors at Concordia University in Canada, where they also direct the Montreal Institute for Genocide Studies, have classified the past and present genocides into five types, according to the motives: (1) to eliminate a real or potential threat; (2) to spread terror among real or potential enemies; (3) to acquire economic

**The History and Sociology of Genocide; Analyses and Case Studies,** by Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 1990, 461 pages. (ISBN 0-300-04446-1)

wealth; (4) to implement a belief, a theory or an ideology; or (5) to abort secession movements. What happened to Bangladesh in 1971 and what is currently happening in Ethiopia, Sri Lanka and Sudan are classified under the last category.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I provides the conceptual framework, including the origins of the concept of genocide, definition of genocide, some preconditions for genocide, typology of genocide, historical summary and appendixes detailing the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and definitions of genocide in the criminal code of Canada and the United States.

Part II, the lengthiest section of the book, provide 22 selected case histories of genocide which have occurred since 3000 B.C. These include, Rome's war with Carthage in 146 B.C., Mongolian Conquests and Albigensian Crusades of the 13th century, Anti-Christian movement in Japan in early 17th century, witch hunts in Europe (16th and 17th century), Conquest of Native Indians in the Americas (1492 to 19th century). Other 19th century examples of genocides covered are the extinction of native Tasmanians and the Conquest

of Shaka Zulu in South Africa between 1818 and 1828.

The book also provide crisp accounts of the genocides recorded so far in this century. In chronological order, these being, Hereros in German South West Africa, currently Namibia (1904-07); Armenians in Turkey (1915-16); Stalin's mass murders in the USSR (1930-40); Jewish and Gypsy holocaust in Europe (1939-45); Mass slaughter of Communist Party sympathizers in Indonesia (1965); Pakistan's military excess in Bangladesh (1971); Elimination of Hutu tribe by Tutsi tribe in Burundi (1972); Invasion of East Timor by Indonesia (1975); Khmer Rouge massacre in Kampuchea (1975-78); and, decimation of Amazon basin natives in Brazil (since 1973).

The precarious plight of Tamils in Sri Lanka has not been covered in the case histories. One has to accept the following explanation of authors for this omission. "The particular cases of genocide presented in part II are not intended to be either exhaustive or representative. They simply are the cases that we have selected to illustrate different types of genocide. A further limitation has been imposed by the available literature. For obvious reasons, we have limited ourselves to materials available in English".

The part III of the book provides selected bibliographies, relating to the examples of genocides which have occurred around the world. Page 456 lists 9 titles, relating to the Tamil genocide in Sri Lanka. The 9 titles listed were published between 1979 and 1986; they include the contributions of Amnesty International, Tissa Fernando and Robert Kearney, Virginia Leary, Dennis McGilvray, Walter Schwarz, Paul Sieghat, S.J. Tambiah and A. Jeyaratnam Wilson. Authors have noted that, they have excluded the "literature by deniers and revisionists". Perhaps, Prof. K.M. de Silva and his coterie will be disappointed that their "intellectual contributions" have not been recognized in this reference book.

The only demerit of this extremely useful reference book is the absence of subject and author indexes at the end. The price has not been mentioned on the book cover, but the copy I bought at Osaka from a well known book dealer had an inserted price tag of US\$ 22.95.

Sachi Sri Kantha

## Sri Lanka - The Crisis and Struggle for Fundamental Change

Continued from page 9

The loss of life, mostly among civilians, runs into several hundreds of thousands. In fact, the situation facing the Tamils is one of genocide and I use the term advisedly.

In spite of all this, the iron will of the people as a whole to win their freedom has been tested through fire and found to be unshakable. Civilian casualties are high, but so is their spirit. The net outcome is that those who are fighting against the state are heralded as protectors, and saviours from the otherwise certain fate of genocide. The fundamental basis for the Tamil national struggle for liberation has only been reinforced. Having been conceived in the womb of national oppression, it is impossible for that struggle to be aborted by that very same oppression, however intense. If anything, it is sustained by it.

That is the current situation in Eelam. Let us turn now, very briefly to the situation in Sri Lanka.

Economically, the country is in tatters. According to a recent, confidential World Bank report, Sri Lanka is on the brink of a "disaster scenario". Defence spending accounts for almost 20% of the budget, mostly spent in hard currency needed to import arms. Domestic inflation is at 20%. The official figure for unemployment is 22% (the real figure is much higher). The 1991 budget deficit stands at Rs. 60 billion. External debt service ration is 20.3%.

The recent Gulf crisis has added to the problems. Middle Eastern earnings was the second largest export earner for Sri Lanka, second only to tea. Its benefits were enjoyed by large sections of the lower middle classes, as opposed to being concentrated within the few hands of the very wealthy. The sudden drying up of these earnings, as a spin off effect of George Bush acting out his Rambo fantasy as "ass kicker", means that there is not only increased economic hardship in Sri Lanka, but also a serious destabilising force, given the class character of the people who have been adversely affected.

**"For the Tamils of Eelam, national liberation is the only solution...Unity between the leading forces in Eelam and Sri Lanka can only come about on a basis of equality. The precondition for this basis of equality is the liberation of Eelam."**

The degree of state repression has been steadily increasing and human rights violations have been condemned internationally. A four member team from the European Parliament who visited Sri Lanka at the end of last year have reported that at least 60,000 people have been killed or have disappeared in central and southern Sri Lanka in the past 3 years ie 1 in every 250 people. These developments are related to the brutal suppression by the state of the violent Sinhalese anti-government uprising over the past few years led by the JVP. Accounts of barbarity abound - such as the incident,

when uniformed police publicly lined up, shot in cold blood, and beheaded 6 boys for the alleged crime of taking part in a bank raid.

These killings and 'disappearances' are mostly carried out by paramilitary and vigilante groups, representing a new layer of institutionalised violence, beyond the army and police force, and which is unaccountable and unidentifiable. Parallel to this, is the militarisation process that has been taking place within the state apparatus itself. Recent years have seen a massive multiplication of "security" ministries and the proliferation of security-related

ministerial posts with the creation of new departments for "defence", "internal security", "national security", "commercial security" and "manpower mobilisation".

The methods used to crush the JVP, have taken on a momentum of their own, placing under severe threat democratic structures in the country. Trade Unions are often not allowed to function properly, lawyers who file habeas corpus applications on behalf of the disappeared are threatened, and local journalists have had to exercise extreme caution. Organisation such as Amnesty International were banned from the country for several years.

Leading the struggle against the repressive state in Sri Lanka is the JVP. It is the only radical force of any significance, which in spite of its brutal means and utter ruthlessness, poses the question of seizure of state power and its radical transformation. It is however, rabidly chauvinistic and under the slogan of "defence of the motherland" makes a direct appeal to Sinhala national chauvinism. It represents a sizeable proportion of the most oppressed section of the Sri Lankan nation. Its support base is provided by the poor, students, unemployed youth

For the Tamils of Eelam, national liberation is the only solution. The social, economic and political contradictions within the Tamil nation have to be resolved and can only be resolved within the context of national liberation.

For the Sinhalese in the South of Sri Lanka, the points and sites of confrontation between the people and the regime are multiplying. As the state resorts to increasingly repressive tactics, it is creating the conditions for an imminent revolutionary upheaval there.

Unity between the leading forces in Eelam and Sri Lanka can only come about on a basis of equality. The precondition for this basis of equality is the liberation of Eelam. It cannot be otherwise, given the effect of 40 years of rampant Sinhala national chauvinism which has struck deep roots in the psyche and fabric of the Sinhala nation, coupled with the unparalleled oppression and sacrifices imposed upon the Tamil nation.

At present, the only common feature between the Tamil national liberation struggle in Eelam and the struggle against the state in Sri Lanka by the oppressed Sinhalese is that neither will tolerate super-power intervention, or any external influence for that matter. National consciousness and the right to self-determination are pivotal factors for both struggles.

and recently they have begun drawing support from a sizeable section of the intelligentsia and have made inroads into the organised urban workers movements.

Although the entire top and second ranking leadership of the JVP was systematically and brutally wiped out over the last two years by the Sri Lankan regime, the JVP still remains the only significant radical challenge to the state.

To conclude my presentation, I will sum up with the following points.



# PEOPLE & EVENTS

## London Arangetram



The Bharata Natya Arangetram of Sumangala, daughter of Dr.S. Sooriyakumaran, FRCS, Consultant in Rehabilitation, & Mrs. Umaiyal Sooriyakumaran, former teacher, Vembadi Girls School, Jaffna took place at the Commonwealth Institute in London on June 22. Sumangala who is a student of Smt. Girija Varothayasingham delighted a

distinguished audience with her consummate skill and artistry. The Chief Guest was Mr. William Crawley, Head of the Eastern Division, British Broadcasting Corporation and the speakers included Mr. A.T.S. Ratnasingham, Chief Co-ordinator & Administrator, Shree Ganapathy Temple, Wimbledon.

## Deaths

Prof.S.Kandiah of the Agricultural Faculty of the Jaffna University who recently accepted responsibility as Head of the Faculty now being opened at Kilinochi, died suddenly on March 23. He was cycling to Kilinochi when he succumbed to a heart attack. He devoted his time and energy to building up the new faculty as a worthy institution of higher education. His untimely death is an irreparable loss to the whole community.

Dr. Karunadevi Balasanthiran, wife of Alex Balasanthiran (Commonwealth Secretariat) and mother of Shormila, passed away peacefully on June 22 at her home, 5 Cavendish Drive, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 7NR. She was a daughter of the late Dr. J.M. (Babu) Chittambalam of Tellipallai.

Samuel Manoranjan Chanmugam, (76) son of the late Mr. & Mrs. J.K. Chanmugam, husband of Pathmasini nee Saverimuttu and father of Tania Smith died June 7. Sam was a Chemistry graduate and taught at Royal College, Colombo. For some years he worked as a Public Analyst (Messrs Bramber & Bruce) and came to reside in the U.K. in 1973.

Of the 10 children of the distinguished Chanmugam family only two survive, J.C. Chanmugam (retired Surveyor General) and Mrs. Karuna Gurusamy (till recently of Kandy).

Kanakeswary Sabapathy, relict of Sam A. Sabapathy, Proctor and First Mayor of Jaffna, beloved mother of Padmini (U.K.), mother in law of Dr. C.K. Thuraiatnam (U.K.) and much loved grandmother of Sumathie, Malathi and Sudharshan (all of U.K.), Udishtra and Vishnumohan (of Australia), passed away peacefully in Jaffna on July 3.

### CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENT

#### Matrimonial

Uncle is looking for partners for his nephew, Chartered Civil Engineer (London), 38 years and his niece B.Sc., Dip in Ed, 34 years, from a highly respectable family in Jaffna. Any suitable proposals please write to K101, c/o Tamil Forum Ltd., P.O. Box 373, Croydon, Surrey CR9 6AB, U.K.

## West London Tamil School Prize Day

The 13th Annual Prize Giving took place on July 13 at Greenford Hall, Ruislip Road, Greenford with Councillor Tom Taylor, Mayor of Brent, as Chief Guest. The hall was packed with parents and well wishers of the School in addition to the near 200 pupils of both the parent school in Greenford and the branch school in Wembley.

Dr. W.T. Maheswaran, Chairman of Governors, in his welcome speech referred to the changed attitude of Government and Local Authorities towards ethnic minority language teaching. Grants have been drastically slashed and it was now incumbent on parents to contribute more by way of fees and special donations to maintain the prime position occupied by the School in London.

He paid a tribute to the highly qualified staff - language teachers as well as fine arts teachers - and appealed to the Tamil community of West London to rally round the School and help to make it a centre of excellence and rich cultural activity.

The Headmaster, Mr. C.J.T. Thamotheram, appealed to parents to help their children with their Tamil studies by maintaining a 'climate of Tamil' in the home. It is imperative that parents talk to their children in Tamil and help them with their homework since only limited progress can be made in learning the language by just coming to school on a Saturday or Sunday morning. There was a time when families here visited their villages in the North-East of Sri Lanka and children picked up the language very quickly by conversing in Tamil with their grandparents and neighbours but all this has sadly come to an end. Unless a determined effort is made by parents very soon, the one thing that brings us together - the Tamil language - not religion, not even, our traditional culture - would have snapped and our 'Tamilness' lost for ever.

Mrs. Thamotheram gave away the prizes and the evening concluded with the children delighting the large audience with a varied programme of singing, dancing and music.

## Weddings

### ALAGARATNAM - SATHANANTHAN

The marriage was solemnised on July 27, at Purley Baptist Church in London, of Darshan, son of Mr. & Mrs. K. Alagaratnam of St. Albans, Herts and Chrisha, daughter of Dr. & Mrs. K. Sathananthan of 15 Rose Walk, Purley, Surrey. The bridegroom is a grandson of the late Mr. & Mrs. J.H.A. Alagaratnam and of the late Mr. Gregory Richards and of Mrs. Kirubai Richards. The bride's grand parents are Mr. & Mrs. A.S. Kanagaratnam.

### KANAGARAJAH - KATHIRKAMASEKARAM

The marriage of Ashok, son of Dr. & Mrs. M. Kanagarajah to Shanthini, daughter of Dr. & Mrs. Kathirkamasekaram took place on July 13 at Rosela Community Centre, Carlingford, New South Wales, Australia.

### SIVASOOTHY - MURUGANANDAN

The marriage of Sivakumar, son of Dr. & Mrs. T. Sivasothy, of Tamworth, England to Dharshiga, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. C. Muruganandan of Sri Lanka took place on June 27 at Ealing Town Hall, in London.

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

August 24 at 6.30 p.m.

Sri Matha Sruthi Laya Kshetram presents a Carnatic Vocal Recital by Lakshmi Rangarajan from Madras, trained by Sangitha Kalanidhi Sri T.M. Thiagarajan for more than 15 years and a Veena Recital by Dr. Suma Sudhindra from Bangalore, a disciple of Chittibabu, at Mountbatten Auditorium, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 4A Castle Town Road, London W14 9HQ.

September 21 at 4.30 p.m.

Service in commemoration of 175th Anniversary of the arrival of the first American Missionaries in Jaffna, at Putney Methodist Church. Speakers: Bishop Leslie Newbiggin & Dr. Preman Niles. Coordinator: Dr. Dayalan Ambalavanar.

September 21, evening

Chundikull - St. Johns Past Pupils Association A.G.M. and Dinner at Woodhouse 6th Form College, Woodhouse Road, London N12. For tickets, call 081 366 5137 or 081 368 2129 or 081 642 5598

September 28 at 7 p.m.

West London Tamil School presents Mira Balachandran-Gokul (graduate of Kalakshetra) in a Spectrum of Bharata Natyam with live Orchestra, in aid of School funds. For tickets, call 081 743 8289 or 081 567 3221

## Letter to the Editor from a fifteen year old Tamil student

Dear Sir

Today, while I was watching the news of the plight of the Kurdish community in Iraq, I noticed how much it resembled the problems of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka.

Saddam Hussein is intent on destroying the Kurds in Iraq, while the Sinhala Government in Sri Lanka is trying to destroy the Tamils in North and East Sri Lanka.

The Kurds are seeking refuge with their "brothers" in Syria, Iran and Turkey. The Sri Lankan Tamil refugees are seeking shelter with their brother Tamils in Tamil Nadu, India.

The Turkish Government is reluctant to allow the Iraqi Kurds in as it might spark off a national uprising by the Kurds in Turkey. The Indian authorities are afraid to let in the Tamils as that might start another uprising by the Tamils, but this time in Tamil Nadu.

As I see it, there is very little difference between the problem of the Kurds and the Sri Lankan Tamils, except that the Kurds are fleeing from Saddam Hussein, an enemy of the U.S.A. and its allies, meanwhile the Tamils are fleeing from the Sri Lankan Government, a supporter of the U.S.A. and its allies.

If the U.N. does pass a resolution condemning the severe breach of human rights by Saddam Hussein, I suggest they look all over the world where there are Ethnic problems, not just in Sri Lanka, but in the Soviet Union and others, where human rights are being breached and start passing resolutions condemning the Governments of those countries.

Yours sincerely  
Kuntran Kumaralingam  
34 Lushington Road, Maidstone  
KENT, ME14 2QS



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# TAMIL NATION

## CHRISTIAN WORKER QUARTERLY HARDFACTS

*The Joint Issue for the 4th Quarter of 1990 and the 1st 1st Quarter of 1991 has commented on the hard facts of the conflict for Tamil Eelam. It states:*

"If the Comment in our last issue showed the difficulties in conducting a war of the type that is even now dragging on in the North and East of the island, more recent events and the present ground situation have amply demonstrated the futility of seeking to achieve a 'military solution' to a problem that cries out for resolution at the political level.

In this connection, Tamil Nation of April 15 (published in the United Kingdom with an Editor based in Madras) has pointed out that six years ago, ie. in 1985, there were in the north, 26 army camps, 4 naval bases, 23 police commando posts and two airforce bases. Today there is not a single police commando post: what we have are 6 army camps, 1 naval base and 2 air force bases, all on the fringes of the Northern Province. (The Elephant Pass Camp is not exactly at a border but on the isthmus that connects the peninsula to the mainland). In fact the biggest Air Force base and helipads are tucked away safely in the predominantly Sinhala populated area of Anuradhapura.

At least 3 of the 6 army camps have been constantly under threat by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The three others that have some defensive capacity but yet incapable of making any deep thrust into the Northern areas are at three ends - Palaly in the north of the Province, Thaladi in the west, and Vavuniya in the South; the first two being sustained only because of the fire support from both the air force and the navy - but at heavy cost since reinforcements, supplies and evacuation of casualties have to be done mostly by air.

It is clear that apart from a few military camps there is not much that the Government can claim to control in the north, even though Defence Ministry sources have stated that 7 new army posts had been established in the north by March 17.

In so far as the eastern Province is concerned, an ethnically mixed area enables the government to have an image of authority especially in the towns. But in the jungles the Tigers have their cadres and at night especially they are able to move around notwithstanding the security forces. How else is one to explain their mobility and manoeuvrability along the narrow stretch between Mulaitivu in the north-east to the deep end in the Amparai district, with even forays into

predominantly Sinhala populated areas like Polonnaruwa and further south into Moneragala?

There is a difference however in the way the LTTE operates in the north and in the east. While in the North the LTTE has begun to function as a regular army, over running military camps in fierce open combat or mounting ferocious attacks as was recently seen in the attack on the Silaveturai army camp in Mannar, the Tiger operations in the east are mainly of a guerilla nature - ambushes and forays into border villages and even more, of the territory that is claimed as 'Tamil Eelam'.

Significantly, ambushes effected by the Tigers in even the well fortified Trincomalee district are said to have kept nearly a third of the armed forces and the Special Task Force (STF) tied up in the Eastern Province.

Although the Government forces have been strengthened some six times over since the early 1980s, from 12,000 soldiers to over 70,000 today, (State Minister for Defence, Ranjan Wijeratne stating at a press conference on January 13 that the security forces totalled 60,000 and would by the end of 1991 be 100,000), they yet lack the number needed to 'saturate' the affected areas, or equal the Tigers in their knowledge of the terrain or sense of commitment to a cause, that could enable them to either effectively hold territory in the East or recover it in the North.

Morale boosting statements issued for the benefit of the public must not therefore be confused with an ability to effect a 'military solution' to the conflict by winning the war...

## Five British M.P.s call for 'immediate and unconditional negotiations on equal terms'

In the House of Commons, in London, Dr Dafydd Elis Thomas M.P., Dr. Norman A. Goodman M.P., Mr. Thomas Graham M.P., Mr. Keith Bradley M.P., Mr. Alan Meale M.P., and Mr. Harry Barnes M.P. have given notice of an early day motion which calls for 'immediate and unconditional negotiations on equal terms to achieve a viable political solution in the Sinhalese-Tamil conflict, and to end the killings'.

# Army struggles to lift Elephant Pass siege

reports Julian West in The Independent of August 2, 1991

An estimated 10,000 Sri Lankan government troops were yesterday within half a mile of a besieged garrison that has been surrounded by thousands of Tamil Tiger guerrillas for 23 days, according to military officials.

The army column continued to meet fierce resistance from the Liberation tigers of Tamil Eelam, a Tamil group which has been fighting for eight years for an independent homeland in the predominantly Sinhalese Sri Lanka, as it battled to lift the siege of the garrison at Elephant Pass, 185 miles north-east of Colombo.

Until now the Tigers have used hit-and-run tactics but wounded soldiers, returning from the front, say Tigers, estimated at 7,000 are now fighting as a conventional force exchanging fire at close range and engaging in hand-to-hand combat at times...

Residents in Colombo have been woken at intervals throughout the night by the wail of ambulance sirens, bringing wounded from the military airfield south of the capital. It is believed that 1,000 government troops have been wounded. The Jaffna hospital, with 800 beds, is full to overflowing with patients in the corridors.

Planes bombed the guerilla positions yesterday in an attempt to flush out snipers from underground bunkers and tunnels...

The army source said that the

Tigers, some of whom are women, were well trained and equipped, attacking and retreating in skilful delaying manoeuvres. Troops have been hindered by the unfamiliar terrain - thorny scrub and sand, laced with mines...

Elephant Pass camp... controls a causeway linking the mainland with the Jaffna peninsula - northern stronghold of the rebels. The troop reinforcements made an amphibious landing six miles from the camp on 14 July, four days after it was surrounded by the Tigers.

About 800 soldiers, including more than 50 wounded, are trapped in the camp. 18 are in a serious condition, officials said.

Lawrence Thilaker, a Tamil rebel leader in Paris, said that the Tigers were confident of overrunning the camp. He said it was only a matter of time before the rebels launched another onslaught on Elephant Pass.

At least 7,000 people have been killed in last 13 months since Tamil Tigers resumed their campaign for independence.

Tamils make up 18 per cent of the country's 17 million population and say that they are discriminated against by the Sinhalese. Sinhalese make up 75 per cent of the population and control the government and the military.

The battle, which began with a Tiger attack on the Elephant Pass camp, has been compared to the

100 day siege of the Jaffna Fort, which ended when the army evacuated....

As the opposing forces test each other's strength, in what one military analyst has described as "Sri Lanka's mother of all battles", many observers believe this conflict may be decisive. "History will decide if this is the turning point of the Eelam war", said Major General Denzil Kobbekaduwa, commander of the (Sri Lankan) operation.

### What is a nation?

*"People are proud of their national identity... You have to identify with something which has been part of your life, part of your experience, your memory, your ceremony, your culture."*

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (as she then was) in an interview reported in Newsweek in October 1990.

# Britain blocks £13 million aid package

Britain has frozen a £13 million aid package to Sri Lanka in the face of continuing human rights abuses and the expulsion of British High Commissioner David Gladstone, last month says the Sri Lanka Monitor, a publication of the British Refugee Council. The June 1991 Sri Lanka Monitor continues:

"A Foreign Office spokesman in London said a new High Commissioner would shortly be appointed to ensure an effective voice on human rights and that all subsequent aid commitments would

be linked to Sri Lanka's human rights record. Mr. Gladstone has been a persistent critic of human rights in Sri Lanka especially in the south, where NGOs estimated over 60,000 people have disappeared since 1987...

A European Community (EC) statement released earlier this month described Mr. Gladstone's expulsion as 'unacceptable' and said there was continuing concern over human rights in Sri Lanka. In October EC donor governments attending the annual World Bank meeting in Sri Lanka in Paris,

highlighted a resolution linking future aid to Sri Lanka's human rights record and Britain immediately suspended £3 million of programme aid.

Mr. Premadasa's government claims measures such as a Presidential Commission on Missing Persons introduced last January will stamp out extra judicial killings and disappearances which continue at the rate 100 per week. Critics say the Commission has no retroactive powers and is merely a palliative to allay international

concern. Of 425 complaints made to the commission since January, only 35 fall within its limited terms of reference...

This year's World Bank meeting is postponed till next February while Sri Lanka bolsters its balance of payments position through an IMF \$300 million Extended Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF). In return, Sri Lanka must reduce import tariffs and privatise all state corporations by the end of the year - an increasingly unlikely undertaking."