



SEND ISADUR
NEWS
TO

THE EDITOR
THE MORNING STAR
NO. 39, FUSSELS LANE,
COLOMBO-06.
SRI LANKA.

THE MORNING STAR

Registered as a News Paper at the General Post Office, Sri Lanka

Established 1841 A Christian weekly Published Every Friday

Vol. 1 - Jaffna - Friday 5th JANUARY 2001 No. 1

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

MORNING STAR RATES:

Annual Subscription Foreign	\$ 10.00
Life Subscription Foreign	\$100.00
Annual Subscription Local	Rs. 100.00
Life Subscription Local	Rs.1000.00

THE MORNING STAR

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

New General Secretary CCA

The General Committee of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), at its meeting on December 1-3, 2000, in Hongkong SAR, elected Dr. Ahn Jae Woong of Korea, as its new General Secretary. Dr. Ahn is elected for a regular term of five years, with effect from January 1, 2001.

Dr. Ahn is known in the ecumenical movement. A member of the Presbyterian Church in Korea, he has had wide experience in various levels of the ecumenical movement in Asia and worldwide. He served as Secretary for Asia and the Pacific of the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) and as Executive Secretary for Urban Rural Mission (URM) of the CCA.

Dr. Ahn holds an M. Div. degree from Harvard University, and an L.H.D. (honoris causa) from Mary Holmes College. He is a candidate for a Ph.D at the University of Utrecht.

SYNOD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Synod of the Church of South India is scheduled to take place from 8th to 12th January. Bishop Jebanesan, Rev. A. Jeyakumaran and Mr. A. Gnanathasan will be attending this meeting.

FOUNDATION LAID

Our Bishop laid the foundation stone for the New Church Centre at Mudalikulady, Vaddukoddai on Wednesday the 3rd January. Hopefully this centre will be declared open on the 9th of March 2001.

THEY INCLUDED THE NAMES OF OUR MISSIONARIES

The publishers of calendars in Colombo have included the names of our former missionaries among the important dates. Dates connected with Dr. Daniel Poor, Dr. John Scudder, Mrs. Harriet Winslow and Dr. Samuel Fiske Green are now found in these calendars.

DROP IN LAND PRICES

Price of land in Jaffna has dropped sharply. Land at Chankana is being sold for Rs. 1000/= (Rupees One thousand) per lacham. Land at Vaddukoddai has a better demand. The price being Rs. 10,000/= per lacham.

C. S. I. Youth Festival 2000.

The CSI Youth rally was conducted at Kasan Agricultural Institute, Vellore from the 2nd to 5th November 2000. It was a combined activity of the Pastoral aid department and the Youth department of the CSI. "Lord make us channels of your peace" was the theme of this youth conference.

From the Jaffna diocese the assistant pastor of Colombo Rev. Daniel Ranjit Thanarajasingam and five other youth leaders participated. Rt. Rev. Dr. James Srinivasan the bishop of Trichy, made the necessary arrangements. Accommodation was arranged at St. John's Vestry School. The chairman of the synod department Rt. Rev. Dr. George Issac expressed his happiness over the presence of the Jaffna diocese delegates. The proceedings started with the bible study conducted by Rev. G. Dyvaseervatham and Rt. Rev. Dr. J. W. Gladstone. The singing was led by Rt. Rev. Dr. George Issac.

The youth who came for the conference were divided into forty different commissions based on Social, Religious and Economic issues. It was decided to release a manifesto at the end of the group discussions and the plenary sessions. Opportunity was given to Sri Lankan delegates to express the problems caused by the ongoing civil war. We spoke about the need for a lasting solution by a third party mediation. We also expressed our feeling that the CSI should play a vital role in bringing about peace in our war-torn country. The General Secretary of the Synod, the Director of the pastoral aid department and the director of the youth department said that they would do whatever possible in this matter. The youth also said that they would pray to God to solve the problem in Sri Lanka. We participated in the Holy Communion Service on Sunday the 5th of November. Our Programme in Madras was arranged by Revd. Vinoth Victor, Paul Francis, and Rev. G. Dyvaseervatham. On the 10th November we flew back to Colombo with pleasant memories of the conference and South India tour.

J.D.C.S.I. Youth Delegation.



Dedication of St. Andrews Church, Gandhijikiramam
Parishioners welcome the Bishop



St. Andrews Church, Gandhijikiramam, Kokuvil East, Kokuvil.
Dedicated on 5/12/2000 Worker-in-Charge : Bro. I. Rajkumar

With Gratitude We Remember

With grateful hearts we remember you.
The great pioneers from the distant West
You dared the perils of the deep.
To come to "Oodooville" in the East.

You laboured with Love, Faith, Sacrifice,
Roused our forefathers from dreamy sleep
Midst trials and tribulations untold,
With indomitable Spirit, unmindful and bold.

In answer to His call from above
You lived and toiled with Fortitude
With great vision and foresightedness
You led the way in cheerfulness.

The sweltering heat of the arid North
Hindered not your zeal for His work
You held aloft the touch of Truth
Teaching "The Truth Shall Make You Free"

Strides you made in Arts, Sciences and Crafts
Music, Sports and Religion flowered free
Though the winds of late are blowing very hard
Your efforts have not been in vain.

The Lamp you lit, Christ's Lamp of Love
Will not flicker or ever fail
But shine resplendent, wiping all tears
Guiding us through all life's fears.

You are not dead, your presence felt
Your Love, Faith and Sacrifice, seen where'er we went
Be mothers of many a thousand daughters
In this haven God chose for His own.

As U.G.C Celebrates its 176th anniversary this year,
We remember its founder, Harriet Winslow dear
And all the pioneers, their Faith, Dedication and Love.
Thank you Lord for all your blessings from above.

Suganthi D. Virasinghe.

JAFFNA DIOCESE OF THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

IMPORTANT EVENTS OF THE YEAR 2000

Jan	01	Ecumenical Service at Christa Seva Ashram, Maruthanamadam
	03	Manipay Vocational Training Centre exhibition and distribution of certificates
	04	Inuvil Vocational Training Centre exhibition and distribution of certificates
Jan	12-16	Synod of the Church of South India Secunderabad
	26	Installation of Philip Annan as Sevak of Ashram
Jan	30	H.A. Krishnapillai festival at Bishop Kulandran Hall, Jaffna
Feb	13	Confirmation Service at Thevakiramam Church
	15	Bishop's visit to Nainativu
	16	Exhibition and distribution of certificates at Delft Vocational Training Centre
	20	Confirmation Service at Inuvil Church
	21	Installation of Rev. A.A. Paul as Principal of Jaffna College
	25	Opening of new administration block at St. John's College, Jaffna
	27	Confirmation Service at Moolai Church
	29	Ecumenical meeting with Bishops Savundaranayagam and Kenneth Fernando at St. John's College
March 2 - 4		Diocesan Council at Vaddukodai
	05	Confirmation service at Nunavil Church
	07	Visit of Rev. Pon Anandarajah, Director of SLCCCA to Jaffna
	16	Bishop's visit to Nuwara Eliya
	18	Confirmation service at Batticaloa and opening of Batticaloa Vocational Training Centre
	23	Visit of Udo Prinz of Germany and Frank Boshwald of KNH
	24	Bishop's visit to Vavuniya Counselling Centre
March 25 to April 4		Lectures at Minor Seminary, Jeyapuram
	26	Confirmation service at Jeyapuram Church
		Confirmation service at Visvamadu Church
	28	Confirmation service at Samathanapuram Church, Akkarayan
	31	Confirmation service at Konavil Church
Apr	02	Confirmation service at Mallavi Church
	09	Confirmation service at Colombo Church
	15	Bishop's visit to Vavuniya and Cheddikulam
	20	Bishop conducts Maundy Thursday service in Nuwara Eliya
	21	Bishop conducts Good Friday service in Labookelle

May	05	Meeting with the Ambassador of the United States
	14	Presbyterial ordination service in Colombo - Rev. Paul Suresh, Rev. John S. Selvam and Rev. S. Pathmathayalan
May 23 to 25		Bishop's retreat at Manahalli, Andrapradesh
May 30 to June 5th		C.C.A. General Assembly, Tomohan, Indonesia
Jun	18	Confirmation Service at Nuwara Eliya Church
Jul	08	Alaveddy Vocational Training Centre exhibition & award of certificates
	14	Laying of foundation stone for St. Andrew's Church, Gandhijikiramam
	16	Confirmation service at Gandhijikiramam Church
	23	Confirmation service at Alaveddy Church
Aug	03	Dedication of Sathiyapuram St. Paul's Church
	06	Confirmation service at Sathiyapuram Church
	14	Children's rally at Vaddukodai
	15	Shramadana at Manipay cemetery
Aug	24 to 26	Youth Camp at Vaddukodai
	31	Deacons ordination in Colombo - Rev. Daniel Ranjit Thanarajasingam
Sep	08	Meeting of the Synod Ecumenical relations Committee in Madras
	16	Visit of Rev. Dr. Clement John of W C C
	17	Confirmation service at Wattala Church
	23	Bishop Kulandran's 100th birthday celebration
	27	JDCSI Festival & Deacons ordination of Rev. Antony Suthahar & Rev. T.S. Joshua
	29	Jaffna College Prize Giving
Oct	01	Communion Service with Nunavil congregation at Uduvil
	7	Meeting of Board of Directors of Jaffna College
	9	Bishop D.J. Ambalavanar memorial service at Manipay
	12	Meeting of Uduvil Girls' College Board
	22	Confirmation service at Vaddukodai Church
Oct	29 to 30	Jaffna College Board of Trustees meeting
	29	Confirmation service at Delft Church
	30	Delft Vocational Training Centre exhibition and distribution of certificates
Nov-01		Silent protest in Jaffna on Mr. N. Nimalarajan's killing

Day of Rejoicing

By the children of New Church.

Children are the most vulnerable in a war torn country. In their childhood they experience sorrow and anguish instead of joy and happiness. The children in our villages are undergoing much hardship due to lack of food, clothing and shelter. There are thousands of children in the areas around our church centres. We set apart a day to be a day of rejoicing for these frightened children. The celebration took place on the 19th of December 2000 at the Christian Theological Seminary Maruthanamadam, Chunnakam. This day of rejoicing was organised by the members of the Vaddukodai Church. The financial support came from different sources. We are greatly indebted to our bishop and especially to Bishop ammah Mrs. V. Jebanesan who supported us through the Women's Fellowship of the diocese. Bartlette Rajasingam's family in Australia and Robyn Poole and Edith Mullins of the Trinity Christian School and St. Matthew's church in Canberra supported us with enormous gifts. So did Sam Seevarathnam family, Wesley family and Anandarajah family made their contributions to make this a success. The members of the Vaddukodai Church also contributed their mite. In this day of rejoicing 800 children and 200 adults participated. 500 poor children were given new dresses at the function. These were stitched at the Vocational Training Centre, Vaddukodai. From 8 a.m. to 12 noon fun and games for the children were organised by Mr. Stephen Sunthararaj. Project director of the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India. Simultaneously a retreat was conducted for the adults in the Chapel of the Christa Seva Ashram, Maruthanamadam. The retreat was conducted by Rev. Rajkumar of Navaly Church. At 12.30 p.m. Lunch was served to all those who attended the day of rejoicing. At 2 O'clock the children wore their new dresses and participated in the Christmas Carol service which took place in the Periyannan Hall in the Ashram. This function was attended by the new churches in Inpacholai, Samathanakottai, Tholpuram, Sathiyapuram, Gandhijikiramam and Thevakiramam.

EDITORIAL

2001-Dawns with Rays of Hope

Hope springs eternal from the human breast
Man never is but always for the blessed

The year witnessed some of the fiercest battles in the long ethnic war in Sri Lanka. East Jaffna was totally destroyed. A peace loving industrious group of people were uprooted and were made paupers overnight. There was a stampede for air tickets to run away from the Peninsula. Prices of goods rose beyond the reach of ordinary people.

How long Oh Lord? How Long? was the question upper most in the minds of the people.

But now a feeling of optimism pervades the country. Will the efforts of Norway succeed? They fondly ask.

It has been wisely said that the darkest hours are just before dawn.

Can we believe the darkest hour has passed. The mood in Sri Lanka is exhaustion, humiliation and ruin. But we need not despair. In this world created by God, we do not know what is around the corner. Even though there are many hawks, there are peace-loving doves in this world.

Let us hope and pray that at the end of the year peace is ultimately restored and we will be able to sing in unison.

"To Him our Land shall listen
To Him our peoples kneel
All rule be on His shoulders
All wrong beneath His heel".

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT OF SRI LANKA**THE KILLING OF DETAINEES AND SURRENDEES****massacre at the Bindunuwewa rehabilitation centre**

Once again persons held in a place of detention authorised by the state have been brutally put to death. The victims are some 28 inmates of the Youth Rehabilitation Centre at Bindunuwewa. The Civil Rights Movement (CRM) expresses its shock and deep concern at this appalling event. It urges the government to ensure that the facts will be properly ascertained and revealed to the public and that all those responsible are identified and brought to book.

At the present stage many aspects are unclear. CRM nevertheless makes the following observations.

1. It is clear that the victims were held in the custody of the state and therefore entitled to its special protection.
2. An immediate priority must be ensuring the safety of the survivors, reportedly 13 in number who are injured and in hospital. There is reason to believe that the second massacre at the Welikade jail (on 27th July 1983) was an attempt to destroy the survivors of the first massacre (on 25th July 1983) thus eliminating crucial eyewitnesses.
3. It is a shocking fact that in 1983 not only were Tamil political prisoners butchered in quick succession on two separate occasions in the same jail, but also that not a single prosecution was instituted against anyone in this connection, nor was public inquiry held. (The inquests brought in a verdict of homicide and the police ordered to make further investigations.) Subsequently there have been other attacks on prisoners at Welikade, at Mahara, at Kalutara. A relevant factor to be considered in examining the horrific events at Bindunuwewa must be the impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of custodial killings in particular, and the general climate of impunity that has characterised human rights violations in Sri Lanka.
4. In the present instance the victims were being held in a camp established by the commissioner General of Rehabilitation and inquests were held under the normal law. If, however, they had been in police or military custody, then the normal law would be by-passed and a much less satisfactory inquiry held. This is due to a change in the emergency regulations in May this year. It is essential that the normal law relating to inquests be restored in respect of all deaths that occur while in the custody of the state or its agencies.
5. The Bindunuwewa Centre in Bandarawela is one of the Centres established under emergency regulations. These regulations provide for rehabilitation of detainees and persons who surrender. Most if not all persons under rehabilitation are neither convicted nor under trial for any offence. Some may not be even suspected. For this reason being held in such a centre constitutes a form of detention without trial. These emergency regulations, which have several other unsatisfactory features, need to be reviewed and amended in the light of international human rights standards as a matter of urgency.
6. It is essential that this crime be inquired into thoroughly and efficiently by an independent body. Justice must not only be done but must manifestly be seen to be done. In this regard, it is crucial that the investigation be such as to command the confidence of the public, with special consideration to the ethnic dimensions involved.

Uduvil Girl's College - 176th Anniversary

The Past Pupils of Uduvil Girl's College (Colombo Branch) had a service of Praise and Thanksgiving to commemorate the 176th anniversary of their Alma Mater.

The College was founded on Nov. 24th 1824. The founder principal was Mrs. Harriet Winslow. A service was held at C.S.I. Church, Colombo on Sunday Nov. 26th. The message was given by Mrs. Priyani Fernando, Principal, Methodist College, Colombo. Special songs both in English and Tamil were sung by the Old Girls. There was a "bring in buy sale" organised by them, soon after the service.

"Uduvil Girls' College has been an integral part of the life of the Mission and the Jaffna Diocese, and as she looks forward to the future, we are confident that it will continue to be a Handmaid of the Church in raising many children to be conformed to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Uduvil with its motto "The Truth Shall Make you Free" has had a surer grasp of the Springs of Liberation, and it is our prayer and hope, that it will continue to bear witness to the Truth, which alone can make men free." The Rt. Rev. Dr. D.J. Ambalavanar (Bishop J.D.C.S.I)

The Annual Carol Service of Drieberg College

The Annual Carol Service and the Cultural Programme of Drieberg College was held on Wednesday the 6th December 2000 at the Niru Tuition Centre at Kondavil.

It commenced with the opening prayer by Mrs. R. Vasanthakumar. The President of the Christian Students Association welcomed the gathering. Christmas Carols were sung by the children and it was followed with a skit by the little ones. Rev. T.H. Vasanthakumar delivered the Christmas Message. Mr. M. Nagendrarajah, the Principal also addressed the gathering. The Secretary of the Association proposed the vote of thanks. The Programme ended with the benediction.

Suriya Wickramasinghe
Secretary

Tribute to Sivaguru Aunty

Last night Indra called me to pay a tribute to her mother; and I gladly consented because all that need to be said was going to be pleasant and true. This pleasant lady deserved a good tribute.

As far as I know her, she never fretted or fumed or worried her poor head over something she thought was unsurmountable. She was always as happy as a lark.

I do not know anything about her early days, but her children used to say that she was always with her friends. The friendly person that she was, was able to have friends because of her wonderful husband. She boasted about him saying that he took upon himself all the serious work-load of the family and gave her all the freedom she wanted.

Her boast was not about his achievement (although he was a successful and popular lawyer from Chavakachcheri) but about who he was.

One could see her wonderful traits in her son Bala, who is always there to extend a helping hand when one needs help. He must have inherited this quality from her. It was this helpful attitude of hers that attracted her to people.

It is only with the help of God that we can discover the extent of our responsibility and that of our brothers and sisters in all that we do. Very often people devote time, energy, intelligence and money to entertain themselves. Sivaguru Aunty entertained herself in seeing others happy. She lived the abundant life and was always full of joy.

Every time I visited her, we would have the usual exchange of greetings, and after that she would take me by the hand and say "Kitchie, come and see what I have done", and she would spread out her handwork of pillow cases, table centres, and lases of varying sizes and lengths. Then she would say "Choose something for yourself", and would insist that I take at least two of her items. She took great delight in not only making them, but also giving them to her friends and relations.

She was childlike in many ways and had great pleasure in playing the piano. She would say, "Shall I play a hymn for you?", and when I replied in the affirmative, she would sit on the piano stool with a beaming smile on her face, and play and sing, and enjoy every minute of it.

She was very proud of her children, grand children and great grand children. One could have a light hearted conversation with her. She never spoke a hard word about anybody, nor was there a trace of malice in her conversation. She always seemed to be seeing the best in everybody. Her vision filtered all the bad and evil, and only made the good and beautiful visible to her. I always thought of her as one in whom there was no guile. Old age can be a severe trial. Even though life is often difficult, many of us hold on it, when it begins to slip away. The worst suffering is to feel that one is useless, and putting other people into trouble, when one would like to be a service to others.

Though she was old, she was young at heart, and in her own simple way, until she fell really ill, demonstrated that all surpassing gift of God's love, is with us always, and our suffering though not a good thing in itself, can help through Jesus Christ, to make us aware of His saving love.

Her chair is empty, her room is vacant, her voice stilled, but the memory of her will live on! in the hearts of her loved ones.

Kanagamany Thurairatnam

What the Morning Star wrote106 years ago.

OUR RAILWAY

Since the prospects of a Railway from Jaffna to the South seemed to be so blighted by the unfavourable Report of the Commissioners, there has been much talk of an Indo-Ceylon railway across Adams Bridge, with a branch to Jaffna, and perhaps Trincomalie. Such a railway would suit the people of Jaffna even better than the other. It would furnish easy communication with South India, which in many respects would be a great boon. The Tamils of North Ceylon have naturally more interests in common with the Tamils of South India, then with the Sinhalese of South Ceylon. Language and Religion being the same in one case and different in the other, they naturally go to the celebrated sacred places of South India for festivals. Also nearly half of the staple food of the people comes from the adjoining continent, while a good part of their chief product, tobacco is sent there. All the cart cattle come from there and many ploughing cattle are exported thither. If there were equally convenient communication there is no doubt that there would be quiet as much intercourse with India as with the South.

A Mr. Shelford with others has been active for some months past in developing public interest in an Indo-Ceylon railway, with the object of forming a company for the purpose of constructing such a road. He has had on exhibition in London a model of Adam's Bridge, some six feet in length giving all the islands, channels, etc. in proportion, also indicating sand bars, depths of water etc. A new survey has also been made in part, of the approaches to the place both by land and water. The Indian Government has expressed itself as favourable to the project and ready to help it on. Mr. Shelford himself was planning to come out in a few months and settle everything definitely. Meanwhile the answer of the Ceylon Government has been anxiously awaited with the hope that substantial concessions would be granted in addition to the requisite permission. Now that answer has been received and it is unfavourable. This is quite a disappointment to many, and many are the surmises as to the reasons for such a refusal. We may add our surmises.

We believe that the Ceylon Government does not favour the Indo-Ceylon railway for two reasons, the first being that it is prepared to proceed itself with the railway to Jaffna without further delay. Our Governor has said almost as much as this on several occasions. We believe that there is a strong sentiment throughout the Island in favor of this railway's being built especially for the purpose of developing the uninhabited portions. The Ceylon railway's being in a handsome revenue to Government, and the profits in other parts might well go towards the deficit in a part where so much benefit would follow. But the private railway would make that deficit greater. Further more a few years of railway to Colombo would bind Jaffna more closely to the South and do much to unify the colony, whereas the other railway would undoubtedly bind Jaffna more to India than to South Ceylon. The other reason, which we think acts as a deterrent, is the liability of introduction of cholera. Over and over again every year the dreaded scourge is introduced from the continent, and sometimes only stamped out after it has claimed its thousands of victims. While the only communication is by ships, quarantine can be imposed and thus the dread plague stayed. But with the railway no quarantine would be possible, and Ceylon would be equally liable to the pestilence with all the places of South India. In time the Indo-Ceylon railway must come, but if our Government will give us the other road at once, we shall rejoice, and wait patiently. Some have recommended a steam tramway on the central road, as sufficient to answer the purpose, but it would not be nearly as effective for opening up the country. It would practically spoil the road, and be but a little better than the horse coach, and would attract but little traffic. It would postpone indefinitely the railroad, while giving a very inadequate substitute. We ask for, and expect, a railway to Jaffna, begun within our present progressive Governor's regime.

Morning Star Editorial 7th June 1894