

★ THE PREMADASA PRESIDENCY — Mick Moore ★

LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 15 No. 3 June 1, 1992 Price Rs. 7.50 Registered at GPO, Sri Lanka QD/43/NEWS/92



THE TIGER AS TARGET

... and Premadasa too ?

— Mervyn de Silva

Cyanide, the ultimate weapon

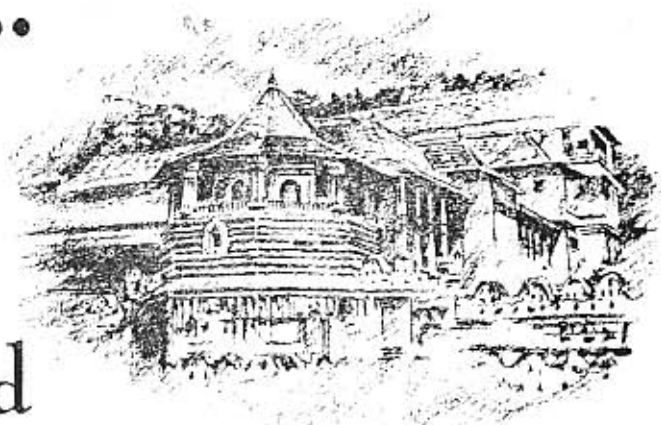
— D. P. Sivaram

Planning "Operation Assassination"

— V. Jayanth

AIR LANKA REGIONAL OFFICE KANDY...

...a boon
to tourists and
residents in
and around
the hill capital



The popularity of Air Lanka's first ever regional office at Temple Street, Kandy already a hive of activity, shows what a boon it has become. This office allows travellers the welcome convenience of attending to all the preliminaries regarding their flights, eliminating the need for tiresome trips all the way down to Colombo.

So, if you are thinking of flying anywhere, consider the convenience. Choose to fly Air Lanka and enjoy the inflight service that has earned a worldwide reputation.

60 Air Lanka flights leave Colombo every week to 33 destinations in 24 countries. Check the Air Lanka schedule and take your pick.

Get in touch with your Travel Agent or call -
Regional Office, Kandy Tel: 08-32494-5
Colombo Office Tel: 421161

Air Lanka. Taking Sri Lanka to the world.



FLA/DBSN 11/106

AIRLANKA
It's a taste of Paradise

AIRLANKA

TRENDS

STATE BANKS: AUTONOMY

The Bank of Ceylon and the People's Bank have been exempted from Treasury and Public Administration circulars and also freed from certain provisions of the Finance Act No. 38 of 1971. The banks will be given operational autonomy, free of government control to enable them to conduct their lending operations on a commercial basis. This follows a government decision to "restructure" the two state banks to bring them up to international banking standards.

PRIVILEGE ISSUE

Following an uproar in parliament when the Government and the Opposition refused to co-operate with any move in the conduct of parliamentary business, the Acting Leader of the House Wijepala Mendis raised a breach of privilege issue naming six Opposition MPs. The MPs are Richard Pathirana, M. K. A. D. S. Gunawardena, Amarasiri Dodangoda S. A. R. Madumabandara, T. A. K. Thevarapperuma and Dr. Neville Fernando. They are all of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

Briefly . . .

Opposition satyakriya

Forty eight Opposition MPs squatted in front of parliament to protest "the suppression of freedom of expression in the House." They were protesting specifically the refusal of the Government to permit debates called by the Opposition.

The satyakriya was led by Hambantota District SLFP MP Mahinda Rajapakse, along with Chief SLFP Organiser Anura Bandaranaike MP, Chief Opposition Whip Richard Pathirana MP, MEP leader Dinesh Gunawardena MP and USA Members Athauda Seneviratne and Raja Collure. Mr Anura Bandaranaike said that they would also boycott meetings of the Parliamentary Select Committee on the ethnic issue until the Government permitted debates.

No unilateral action

Prime Minister D. B. Wijetunga told Parliament that

the Government would not take "precipitate unilateral action" when a Select Committee was carefully going into the whole North-East crisis. The Prime Minister was referring to India's ban on the LTTE and local demands for similar action.

He said that the High Commissioner for India in Sri Lanka had in a recent interview in the Sunday Times (May 17) stated that "the ban is a symbolic gesture." Sri Lanka's fight with the terrorists was not a symbolic fight, it was a serious fight, he said.

Trained in India

The Lankan LTTE guerilla who allegedly masterminded Rajiv Gandhi's assassination was originally trained by Indian intelligence services, the Indian news magazine *India Today* said.

Quoting a police charge sheet the magazine said Sivasaran, a Lankan Tamil, "was trained in handling sophisticated arms and ammunition, explosives and telecommunication work and close-combat warfare at a training camp in Tamil Nadu during 1983 by certain intelligence organisations."

No opposition views

Mr A. J. Ranasinghe, State Minister for Information, said in Parliament that he will

(Continued on page 5)

LANKA GUARDIAN

Vol. 15 No. 3 June 1, 1992

Price Rs. 7.50

Published fortnightly by
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd.

No. 246, Union Place,
Colombo - 2.

Editor: Mervyn de Silva
Telephone: 447584

Printed by Ananda Press
82/5, Sri Ratnajothe Saravanamuttu
Mawatha, Colombo 13.
Telephone: 435975

CONTENTS

News Background	3
Aids	8
Gandhi Assassination	9
Tamil Militarism (2)	13
The Premadasa Presidency	16
Women and Human Rights Violation	21

LION SHIPPING LTD

AGENTS FOR

GOLD STAR (HONGKONG) LTD

REGULAR AND EFFICIENT SERVICES

To and From:- EAST AND SOUTH AFRICA

**P. O. BOX 812
3rd FLOOR, ASSOCIATED MOTORWAYS BLDG,
185 3/1 UNION PLACE
COLOMBO 2**

Telephone :- **434066, 431394, 449133
447543**

Fax :- **448974**

Telex :- **21255 A/B LIONSHIP CE**

Cable : **LIONSHIP.**

Political Pressures and Regional Policy

Mervyn de Silva

"I am under pressure" Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao had confessed to a member of the Sri Lankan team that participated in a seminar in Delhi recently. Or so Prof. Shelton Kodikara, one of the participants, informed us the other day. Yes, Mr. Rao was under pressure, and continues to be under pressure, not just from Tamilnadu Chief Minister, Ms. Jayalalitha, who is running scared of LTTE infiltration and the steady growth of Tamil militancy in her state. The two explosions, one at the TV relay station, in Madras recently may be a sign of things to come.

But the pressure is not from Jayalalitha and the AI DMK alone. The whole political situation in India, and Mr. Rao's own position in the Congress party, are indeed cause for concern. K. Shankar Bajpai, one of India's most distinguished diplomats and now a visiting Prof. at Berkeley observes:

"The ghastly assassination of Rajiv Gandhi added to the sense of drift, which the choice of P. V. Narasimha Rao as prime minister heading the third minority government in a row, hardly diminished. Versatile as an intellectual but with no political base, and an unfortunate reputation for rationalising indecision, he had virtually withdrawn from politics by choosing not to contest the general election. He hardly seemed the man to cope with India's challenges. Yet, he started by initiating the boldest changes

attempted in the ways of thinking and functioning that India has seen since independence".

But the LTTE issue is both domestic and foreign or regional policy. On this, the same writer notes:

"The substantial Left groups could be relied on support for secular policies, but they were increasingly critical of foreign policy as well as economic changes. The BJP was generally supportive of the latter, but at the same time, increasingly tempted to criticise the economic policies on populist grounds. The same was true of the Janata Dal of V. P. Singh and Lok Dal of Chandra Sekhar. The greatest difficulty however was within the Congress where the close supporters of Rajiv Gandhi went along on economic issues but not on foreign policy...."

While his strength lay in the public's longing for stability, "national problems of divisiveness on development remained awesome. He notes three issues — the quarrel between Tamilnadu and Karnataka on the sharing of Cauveri waters; the Punjab tragedy, and the violence in Kashmir and Assam, and the "hotting up" of the Ayodhya problem.

Finally there is the direct challenge within the party from leaders with strong powerbases in their own states — Sharad Pawar in Maharashtra, and Arjun Singh in Madhya Pradesh.

These tensions within party and government surfaced on two recent occasions — the nominations to the powerful Working Committee of the party (CWC) and on the LTTE. As Jagpreet Luthra reported from Delhi for the DH News Service: "The most obvious blunder, as some Congress (I) leaders put it, is the dropping of union ministers Arjun Singh and Sharad Pawar from the **elected** lists and their inclusion in the **nominated** list. . . Mr. Singh and Mr. Pawar were conspicuous among those who did not resign from the CWC as a show of loyalty to the party president. . . . Mr. Rao's behaviour is "an acknowledgement of the insecurity that Mr. Rao feels. . . ."

All this happened in the month of May. . . leading up to May 21, the first anniversary of the Rajiv assassination, a particularly important event to Rajiv loyalists, about 70 to 80, in the party that look to Sonia Gandhi for guidance. This then was the build-up before May 21, and Prime Minister Rao's admission about "pressure".

All that however is domestic. The LTTE ban involves Sri Lanka. The proscription is being used as an instrument for sustained pressure on the Premadasa Presidency, another move in the game-plan which surfaced in the (abortive) impeachment motion and the SAARC "boycott" by the Indian Premier. Quite clearly. The veteran Indian diplomat, Shankar Bajpai, does not buy the "Bhutan excuse" He says: "the hostility between President Premadasa and the

Indian leaders was widely blamed as the reason for India refusing to attend the SAARC summit in December on the pretext that since the King of Bhutan could not come, another date should be fixed."

It was, in short diplomatic pressure, a punitive manoeuvre to bring Sri Lanka to its senses. When the King of Nepal, a country strategically vital to India, particularly in the context of the Sino-Indian conflict, took decisions that Delhi interpreted as 'hostile', such punitive measures were also adopted. The most obvious was the refusal to renew the trade-and-transit treaties when these expired in 1988. Land-locked Nepal is totally dependent on access to India. The transit routes are in fact choke-points which Delhi can use for coercive diplomacy. In July 1988, the King of Nepal bought arms, including anti-aircraft guns from China, at that time India's main enemy. Nepal's panicky purchase of Chinese arms, says Dilip Mukerjee in an article in the Far Eastern Economic Review, was "the immediate fall-out" from the "Indian intrusion into Sri Lankan airspace", and the Indo-Sri Lanka Treaty which "Colombo was cowed into signing". It took, he notes, a change of government in both capitals for good relations to be restored i. e. V. P. Singh in Delhi and Koirala in Kathmandu.

Actually, it was more than a change of regime. It was a change of system. His Majesty had banned all parties and political activities in 1960.

Pro-Democracy

In buying Chinese arms, he has violated the 1950 and 1965 treaties, Delhi argued. This view is contested by Nepalese officials as well as scholars like Dr. Chaitanya Mishra, Reader in Asian studies at the Tribubhavan Univ. India, he says refused to sign new trade and transit treaties or to renew the old one for even short interregnum. India closed down 13 of the 15 transit points, thus choking-off all trade. An increasingly

harsh economic situation led to mass agitation which in turn produced a pro-democracy movement. India's intelligence services were actively engaged in this "benign intervention." The final outcome was a dramatic weakening of the monarchy, parliamentary elections and a pro-India Prime Minister, Mr. B. P. Koirala, who now faces a not too stable situation.

For reasons that are patently clear, land-locked Nepal is of immense strategic importance to India. Indian geo-strategy, says Mishra, "demanded a security perimeter along the entire Himalayan chain including the central Himalayas. Thus, the 1950 treaty, signed by a hereditary prime ministerial regime which was rapidly weakening internally, held substantial investments and property in India and derived part of its legitimacy from British India and during '47-'49, Independent India. In 1965, India and Nepal signed a comprehensive military assistance program under which India agreed to meet ALL of Nepal's defence needs, with US and UK allowed to do so, if India was unable to meet a particular need!

It is when Nepal, seeking to free itself from total reliance on India, and from Sino-Indian rivalries, produced its own "Peace Zone Proposal" which was endorsed by 115 UN members, that India was provoked. It refused to support the Peace Zone idea. By the late 80's relations were "extremely stressful" (Mishra). In March '88, India shut down 13 out of 15 transit points. No goods could flow. This included fuel. Mass unrest was accompanied by the pro-democracy movement, and violent agitation against the King. King soon yielded, power passed to the pro-Delhi Koirala and the Nepali Congress.

The pressure was economic, its result mass unrest. Indian support to the Congress and anti-King groups and personalities was material. . . money mainly and a propaganda campaign mounted in Delhi. The open diplomacy was reinforced by

others forms of pressure exerted by India's covert agencies, led by R. A. W. Democracy was the instrument, not the central objective. Indian security interests came first.

With the reversal in Afghanistan (pro-Pakistan and pro-Iranian groups have forged the governing alliance) has disturbed Delhi, about its northern flank where Islamic groups are engaged in the long-standing revolt in Kashmir. What of the southern flank — the Indian ocean? Sri Lanka is not subservient. Far from it. The SAARC episode showed that the President Premadasa could be bloody-minded and troublesome. He is also quite close to the Muslim community, and the Arab-Islamic states. A Muslim Speaker "saved" him on an impeachment motion that its local authors and foreign supporters were certain would be passed. That was the first round. Is this the second; Round Two?

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Air Mail

Canada/U. S. A. for 1 copy L/G
 US\$ 50.00 for 1 year
 US\$ 30.00 for 6 months

* * *

U.K., Germany, New Zealand, Australia, Netherlands, France, Japan, Holland, Philippines, Austria, Norway, Sweden, China, Ireland, Switzerland, Nigeria, Belgium, Denmark, Paris, London.

US\$ 40.00 for 1 year,
 US\$ 25.00 for 6 months

* * *

Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Baharain, Arabian Gulf, Syria, Singapore.

US\$ 35.00 for 1 year
 US\$ 20.00 for 6 months

* * *

India, Pakistan.

US\$ 30.00 for 1 year
 US\$ 17.00 for 6 months

* * *

Local

Rs. 200/- for 1 year
 Rs. 120/- for 6 months

T. B. Ilangaratne dies

T. B. Ilangaratne, hated and reviled by vested interests when he was a minister in SLFP governments, died in quiet retirement on May 20. He died a poor man, at age 79, giving the lie to the vicious stories spread about him by capitalists and their hangers-on who could not stomach his socialism.

Ajit Samaranayake writing about T. B. Ilangaratne in the Sunday Island, on his death, said: 'He was one of the outstanding patriots and proponents of an indigenous socialism which

would address itself to the social disparities and inequities of society, a man who made a formidable contribution to bridging the gulf between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'.

'His contribution as a cabinet minister was monumental. As the first minister of Labour in the S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike Government he introduced the Employees' Provident Fund and a wide array of such progressive legislation. As Minister of Trade in the two governments of Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike he nationalised the petroleum indus-

try in the teeth of fierce opposition from the United States of America which threatened to suspend aid; nationalised the insurance business and established the People's Bank and the Co-operative Wholesale Establishment. . . . As a result he was the favourite hate figure of conservatives of all shades. He was derided and ridiculed by the right-wing press and all kinds of base calumnies were thrown at his head''.

Briefly . . .

(Continued from page 1)

piracies" to be given publicity on television.

Mr Bandula Gunawardena (MEP): Is this your democracy?

Mr Ranasinghe: "Yes. As long as I am here I won't give publicity on television to Opposition conspiracies."

No going back — Anura

The SLFP's National Organiser, Mr Anura Bandaranaike MP told a seminar at Kurunegala that the SLFP could not to back to the earlier policy of a closed economy again. "I don't say that the existing open economy is good, but we can't go back

to a closed economy again," he said.

Mr Bandaranaike said that 37 years after the triumphs of 1956, social trends and the aspirations of the people were different. If the SLFP did not understand this it would have to be in the Opposition forever, he said.

Abducted

A candidate in the Colombo university Law Faculty student union elections was abducted on the eve of the elections. He was released two days later, and he withdrew from contest, D. Jayaweera was contesting the post of President.

A Student Council statement said that the disappearance of Jayaweera was the

initial step towards the suppression of youth once again. "It is an attempt to bring back terrorism to the campuses", the statement said. Meanwhile the police were continuing investigations to identify the abductors.

SLFP urged to continue in committee

The All Ceylon Tamil Congress and the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress in separate appeals urged the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) to continue participating in the parliamentary Select Committee on the North-East conflict. The SLFP boycott meetings of the committee as a protest against the Government's alleged denial of free speech in the House.

South Asian Seminar on "new world"

NEW DELHI

I concede there has been a reduction in India's defence budget in recent times. But it does not represent her demilitarisation". This statement was made by Mr. Javed Jabbar, Pakistan's former minister for information, science and technology, at an international seminar on "South Asia in the changing world order."

Mr. Jabbar said this in reply to the statement of Mr. K. Subrahmanyam, former director, Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, that "India's defence expenditure has fallen by 20 per cent in the last 15 years". At the outset, while speaking on the dimensions of the new world order. Mr. Jabbar had rejected the world "order" calling it "intellectually restrictive and authoritarian in its meaning". In a democratic world the appropriate expression should be "new world community", he suggested.

The seminar organised by the Indian Council for South Asian Cooperation is attempting to analyse and understand the situation in the world after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and its impact on the South Asian region. Participants at the seminar included political and public figures and civil servants from India and the neighbouring south Asian countries. The four-day seminar began on May 4, 1992.

According to Mr. Jabbar, the new world situation will be marked by "a period of consolidation of economic multiplicity.

The military unipolarity of the United States of America will be increasingly circumscribed". This will happen "due to internal social contradiction in America for example Los Angeles. Besides Americans cannot financially afford to intervene frequently across the world."

'Cooperation Unlikely'

He was not very optimistic about cooperation among south Asian countries. Most countries suffer from "straight jacket stereo-type views. And the idea of regional cooperation among sought Asian countries will remain a romantic one." Nevertheless he felt that fresh bilateral relationship would be the order of the day between these countries.

Dr. Mizanur Rahman Shelley, Chairman of Center for Development Research at Dhaka, was positive in his approach and even appealed to the countries of this region to come together to tackle their problem of poverty, illiteracy and disease. Borrowing the clarion call of Karl Marx and Engels, he said, "leaders and people of South Asia unite, for you have nothing to lose but your poverty."

"While the world has changed in the north (a conceptual term representing all the western developed countries), the south (term representing developing nations) still remains unchanged. Now that the Americans and Russians have come to the same type of understanding they will cooperate for their own development. This, in other words,

means that the countries of the south will be neglected and continue with their problems of poverty and underdevelopment. Hence it is in the interest of this region, that the countries get together and help solve each others problems."

Multi-Polar World

"The dimensions of the emerging world order seem to point to a multipolar world with several power centres. While the configuration of this world cannot be predicted with certainty it seems most likely that China, Japan, Europe and India will emerge as the new power centres. The US and Russia will continue to have the monopoly of strategic nuclear power but several new nuclear powers (India, Pakistan, Japan and possibly Korea) are looming on the horizon", said Mr. Shelton U. Kodikara, a professor of international relations from Sri Lanka.

Prof Kodikara said, the post-cold war period is characterised by a shift from military-strategic issue to economic issues as the determinants of the foreign policies of states. "There is a greater linkage between economic and security issues that obtained in the cold war years", he stressed.

Mr K. Subrahmanyam, also said that "nuclear capability is no more the international issue". In this context he said that Americans were not interested any more in making India sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty (NPT). "Nobody wants India to sign the NPT. Yet every politician is going hoarse saying "we shall not sign the NPT".

Military Spending

He further said military investment had declined in many countries. In India by 20 per cent in the last 15 years. So much so that it had come to the level of defence allocation of 1962. He also said "despite the fact that Pakistan announced that they had all the components to make a bomb, the world remained unruffled." This he said was an indication that economic criteria was the main issue in the world. "The raising of oil prices by the oil producing and exporting countries ultimately ensures that the money goes into the banks of the developed countries and not in their own," he added.

Mr Eric Gonsalves, a former foreign secretary, pointed out that there was nothing new about the present power situation in the world. He said it was the alliance of the same powers led by the USA which had dictated terms to the rest of the world after the Second World War. He ridiculed the idea of the world community saying. "There is no world community but only self-help within the regional powers."

Professor S. D. Muni, of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), disagreed with Mr Subrahmanyam on the issue of signing the NPT. He said "Let us make no mistake that the west and the USA are not interested in imposing their will on making us sign it. But they are not pressing it right now due to strategic reasons. They are trying to find new ways to trap us in it (NPT), maybe in a round about way."

— Times of India

'India should win neighbours' trust

NEW DELHI

India is delaying finalisation of a water accord with Bangladesh for augmentation of Ganga waters during the dry season, according to Mr Atiur Rahman, from the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies. He was taking part in the discussion on bilateral problems faced by the South Asian nations at the four-day international seminar on "South Asia in the changing world order".

Mr Rahman said Bangladesh, as a lower riparian state, is dependent on the goodwill of India for a fair share of the water flowing through it. Tensions over the crossing of the Chakmas, handing over of Tin Bigha corridor, dispute over a small island Talpatty, in the Bay of Bengal, also need to be resolved, he added.

Several problems exist within Bangladesh itself. The "separatist" movement in the Chittagong hill tracts, originating mainly from the economic and cultural deprivations of the tribals, was a major one.

However, he said a number of disputes in the region could be resolved through substantive cooperation. The SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) meets should em-

phasise this. And while resolving the issues, care should be taken to preserve the territorial integrity and political independence of all states. India should present a lowprofile and win confidence of its smaller neighbours, he said.

MILITARY SPENDING

Expressing concern over the military expenditure in South Asia, he said it is not only "unproductive but also redundant in the present global context." By cutting 25 per cent of military expenditure, South Asian governments can release \$ 3.18 billion a year. This could go towards poverty alleviation programmes, he added.

Mr C. Gunasingham, economic adviser to the Sri Lanka president, said for a proper economic growth of the region one had to start with the political and bureaucratic elite. "Most of the impediments lie here." Growth is "interactive." For this, countries have to work together, he added.

Talking about South-South cooperation (between developing countries), he said there is very little of it at the regional level. This aspect should have been the easiest, most logical and ecologically the most natural.

STD director baffled, questions the motives...

Interested parties blow up AIDS scare

Ivor Milhuisen

Sri Lanka is rapidly acquiring an image abroad as hotbed of AIDS. We could have problems and we are taking measures to prevent it. But this is being interpreted by some interested parties, as though we are having an enormous problem, said Dr. Gamini Jayekurs, Director Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

'I don't know why they are blowing it out of all proportions' he said adding that he has all the data. 'I can tell you it's a local problem and there is a potential that it can get out of hand. But you can't incriminate the entire tourist industry. It is ridiculous to do that.'

Dr. Jayakuru, citing some recent developments which he said was too much of a coincidence

said: 'First there was the protest by the clergy in Chilaw against the proposed Iranawila hotel where the government finally capitulated and decided to scrap the project.

"Then there was this incident in Negombo where a blind tourist was assaulted. That's what really activated the police and they cracked down hard. What happened was that they were trying to create an awareness about HIV and AIDS but they may have left a wrong impression which was taken up by interested parties.

'This is the unwanted result of wrong impressions given to the public blaming the 'Suddha' for the disease.

'The other incident was when a rumour took hold, that about

30 girls from a particular garment factory in the FTZ were infected with AIDS. This put these girls in a severe predicament. They were thrown out of their lodgings. Whatever transport they used refused to take them to their factory. This was all totally unfounded. I went there myself and tested these girls. It was evidently instigated by interested parties", Jayakuru said.

He gave another instance of how this AIDS scare is being spread. There is a book now circulating in Negombo costing Rs. 25 a copy. The author is a *vedamahatya* who says he has seen the AIDS virus. You need an electron microscope to see the AIDS virus but he says he has seen the virus. He has drawn the virus which is a modification of what is published.

AIDS : New Questions

Neville Hodgkinson

Life is looking up for Professor Luc Montagnier. After eight years and numerous inquiries, the world scientific community has finally accepted that he was the first scientist to discover the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and not Dr Robert Gallo of the US National Institutes of Health.

While Gallo now faces a federal inquiry into allegations of perjury and patent fraud, Montagnier has moved into a new Aids research wing at the Institut Pasteur in Paris, where he is direc-

tor of cancer research. The institute is suing the American government for millions of dollars in lost royalties arising from the test for detecting the virus.

However, another battle, which Montagnier considers much more important, has yet to be resolved: that of determining exactly how HIV can bring about the conditions in the body that lead to Aids.

Unlike some American critics of the "HIV equals Aids" theory, Montagnier accepts there is "a very strong case that HIV has

something to do with Aids, without HIV, I don't think we would have Aids epidemics. There are obvious cases of transmission of Aids from one person to another where HIV was the only risk factor."

But he says some people develop the symptoms of Aids — the immune system failing, and infections taking the body over as a result — without HIV being present or playing any part in their illness.

Even when the virus is in the body. It may remain "benign", becoming dangerous only in the presence of other organisms.

(Continued on page 22)

A year after the Gandhi assassination

May 21, — it is a year since former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by militants. Much water has flowed under the bridge and a whole gamut of clandestine anti-national activities of the LTTE in Tamil Nadu has been uncovered. V. JAYANTH sums up "operation assassination."

The filing of the charge sheet, the launching of a movement against terrorism and a decision on the banning of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) will be the only homage the nation will pay to its former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, who was assassinated at the temple town of Sriperumbudur, near Madras a year ago.

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) which went into the assassination has almost completed its investigation here and has drafted the charge sheet. Legal experts in Delhi are scrutinizing it, before it is presented in the special court.

By listing the LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran and his intelligence chief Pottu Amman among the accused, the SIT has laid the blame squarely at the door of the Tigers. As the hearing begins the intricate details of the conspiracy will come to light.

Much water has flowed under the bridge in this one year. The whole gamut of illegal, clandestine and anti-national activities of the LTTE on and off the Tamil Nadu shores have been segmented, and is to be dealt with separately by the Central and State agencies.

While the SIT deals with just the investigation into the assassination, the State Government constituted a similar agency, the Tamil Nadu Special Investigation Team, to go into the major offences of the Tigers here, especially the gunning down of the EPRLF leaders, including Padmanabha in June 1990 and the killing of a TSP constable and a

civilian off Ramanathapuram in February 1990.

After the DMK Government in Tamil Nadu was dismissed on January 30, 1991, a crack down on militant activities here and the tracking down of the LTTE network was taken up systematically.

A grenades factory was unearthed in Coimbatore, an arms dump in Tiruchi district and clandestine operations through Vedaranyam. A shocking discovery was the emergence of a Tamil National Retrieval Force — of youth from Tamil Nadu trained in Jaffna and indoctrinated in the militant culture and sent back with gold and money to create a solid base for the Tigers here, besides establishing a communication network.

To sum up "operation assassination," the LTTE rehearsed the killing first on a TSP constable in Ramanathapuram and then on a larger scale in Madras, of the EPRLF men in Kodambakkam. The SIT has evidence to establish that "one-eyed-Jack" Sivarasam, came on the Padmanabha mission.

Having ensured that they left no trace and were not even identified or wanted by the Tamil Nadu police after these two escapades, the LTTE moved to take on Rajiv Gandhi, their prime target. The reason, it appears, was the IPKF operation, the agreement with Sri Lanka and the killing of both civilians and a large number of cadres during the IPKF days. The Tigers were carrying out a "death sentence."

Between November 1990 and January 1991, Sivarasam and his friends travelled into and out of Tamil Nadu at will, according to TANSIT sources and worked out the modus operandi of the assassination. The dismissal of the DMK Government and simultaneous elections to parliament and the State Assembly in Tamil Nadu, provided them the opportunity they were looking for.

Though the intelligence agencies came to know of the "landing" of One-eyed-Jack in India, they thought that the target was likely to be the former Chief Minister of the North Eastern Province, Varadaraja Perumal, who was kept under tight security then in Madhya Pradesh. There was no clue that the LTTE was after Rajiv Gandhi, who anyway headed the hit list of other militant organisations in the Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

After the Rajiv assassination, it became apparent that it was the handiwork of the LTTE. The ingenuity of the operation and the innovative explosive device used by the belt-bomb woman pointed to the hand of the LTTE. Subsequent investigations and the arrest of over 20 persons, both LTTE hands and their local accomplices, have unravelled the plot.

Though India has asked for the extradition of Prabhakaran and Pottu Amman, the Sri Lankan Government makes it appear that it has not received any formal request to this effect. Even if the island Government agrees in principle to extradite the militant leaders, the security agencies here believe that the Premadasa Government's writ does not run in the North and East and so it cannot be expected to carry out the task.

On the question of banning the Tigers, the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Ms. Jayalalitha has been demanding this step from the Centre for the past six months.

(Continued on page 11)

A different kind of probe

Mr. Jagdish Sharan Verma and his team have created a record of sorts. The 59-year-old sitting Judge of the Supreme Court, inquiring into the security lapses that led to Rajiv Gandhi's assassination at Sriperumbudur on May 21 last year, has gone about the task with diligence absent in other public fora.

The inquiry commission, which will submit its report to the President before June 15 (according to the Judge's own statement), has many firsts to its credit, including keeping to a time-schedule.

Having spent a little under Rs. 24 lakhs in its nearly one-year long existence, the Commission has more than justified it—it has gone about its work in a business-like fashion, putting in shade several panels set up much before it.

Apart from inquiring into the security lapses that led to the Sriperumbudur incident, the commission was also told to suggest improvements in the security system as a whole.

To the credit of the commission, it stoutly resisted pressures to enlarge its terms of reference to include within its framework the conspiracy angle that had been left out by the Chandra Shekhar Government.

The notification issued by the Union Home Ministry asked the commission to find out "whether the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi could have been averted and whether there were lapses or dereliction of duty on the part of individuals responsible for his security."

Further, it was asked to inquire into the "deficiencies, if any, in the security system and arrangements as prescribed or operated in practice which might have contributed to the assassination". Also included in the terms of reference were the corrective

measures required to remedy the matters specified.

Following the chaos that led from the "famous" Thakkar Commission that probed all aspects of the Indira Gandhi assassination, Justice Verma was convinced that there was need to separate the criminal investigation from the work of an inquiry panel.

For nearly three months (with Rajiv Gandhi's party having taken power at the Centre), the Government tried its best to enlarge the terms of reference—only to give up and then appoint another commission headed by a retired Judge of the Delhi High Court to probe the "conspiracy" aspects.

Mr. M. S. A. Siddiqui, secretary to the Verma Commission, said that till May 5 this year the panel had held 104 sittings on a total of 74 days, which included holidays.

On seven days hearings were held completely in camera, another 30 were partially public while the remaining 37 were fully open to the press-giving it an open status.

While officials were allowed to submit statements of fact under Rule 52(A) of the regulations governing commissions of inquiry till November 1, 1991, non-officials were given time till as late as November 23.

Probably for the first time a commission of inquiry used videos in evidence—four from the Special Investigating Team (SIT) and six from the Tamil Nadu Congress (I) Committee. A total of 113 documents were exhibited before the panel.

Apart from preparing a site plan of the Sriperumbudur public meeting, Mr. A. P. Bhatnagar, security adviser to the commission, also surveyed

three public meetings—those of the Prime Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. L. K. Advani and the former Prime Minister, Mr. V. P. Singh. All these persons fall in the "Z" category as far as the "threat perception" is concerned.

Expert advice was invited from leading lights of the security establishment—Mr. K. F. Rustomji, Mr. R. N. Kaw, Mr. K. P. S. Gill and Mr. M. K. Narayanan. Security systems in select countries were also studied for the purpose of arriving at conclusions—especially on subjects like "access control".

One of the more complicated issues before the Commission is: the role played by activists and leaders of a political party during the course of a VIP function,

Undeniably, the principal role in providing security, to the VIPs is that of the police—but don't party activists have the responsibility in cooperating with the authorities in such situations?

Mr. R. K. Raghavan, IG who was the overall in charge of Rajiv Gandhi's security during the Tamil Nadu visit, raised the subject in his affidavit before the commission. "The unfortunate event (assassination) happened in spite of this (security arrangements) mainly because of an obvious lack of appreciation on the part of the organisers of the public meeting of the gravity of the threat to the VIP and the need therefore for extreme cooperation with the police in providing the highest level of security."

The organisers, in turn, alleged that the police had made inadequate security arrangements with differences remaining on the number of persons cleared to garland Rajiv Gandhi. All these issues will be dealt with in the commission's report.

The prescribed level of security and what was operated on the ground level, the role of organisations like the Intelligence Bureau in directing the security system, the role of the Centre in a State (Tamil Nadu) under President's rule, the withdrawal of the Special Protection Group from Rajiv Gandhi and its implications — all this and more will be the subject matter of the report.

And what about the near perfect fashion in which the fascist Liberation Tiger of Tamil Eelam struck at Sriperumbudur?

A year . . .

(Continued from page 9)

But the Government of India is taking its own time to take such an extreme step. It may well be a decision to be announced on the death anniversary of the former Prime Minister. The Janatha Party President, Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, who deserves as much credit as Mr. K. Ramamurthy, for consistently gunning for the LTTE right from the days it was spreading its tentacles in Tamil Nadu in 1989-90, wonders why the country and the Narasimha Rao Government do not take the assassination by a foreign based militant outfit as an "affront to national honour and sovereignty." The Centre obviously is in no hurry to answer these questions.

The interesting question at the trial, when it begins, will be if

some of the accused turn approvers and make the job easy for the prosecution and how far the case will proceed.

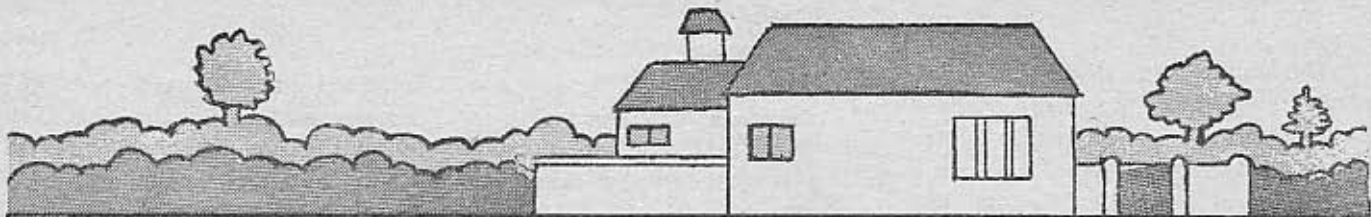
The Verma Commission, which went into the security lapses, if any, at Sriperumbudur, is to submit its report next month. It should have a lot to say on the role of the AICC(I), the TNCC(I), the Central agencies, the State police and the local organisers, including the candidates in making arrangements for the visit of VVIPs.

The Jain Commission, constituted to go into the possibility of a larger conspiracy, is just about to begin its work and will take quite some time to throw more light on this intriguing question, especially if it is to look for a possible connection beyond the involvement of the LTTE.

VASA OPTICIANS

207, 2nd Cross Street,
Colombo - 11.

Telephone : 4 2 1 6 3 1



The Finance Company Real Estate Guide

Water and Electricity. Within easy reach of bus routes, Schools and other facilities. Unique easy payment terms.

AREA	PROJECT	BRANCH & ADDRESS
Kottawa	Polgasowita	City Office
Moratuwa	Gorakana	Real Estate Division
Malabe	Kotalawala	3rd Floor Ceylinco House
Wattala	Promise Gardens	Colombo 1.
Veyangoda	Naiwala	Tel: 440787, 422954
Minuwangoda	Minuwangoda Town	
Athurugiriya	M.D.H. Jayawardena Mw:	
Gampaha	Gampaha Town	
Mirigama	Asiri Gardens	
Weliweriya	Wilimbula	
Gampaha	Maathammana	
Minuwangoda	Horampella	
Divulapitiya	Divulapitiya	
Bandaragama	Welimilla	
Kuliyapitiya	Kuliyapitiya Town	
Malwana	Ulhitimala	
Nittambuwa	Wathupitiwela	
Homagama	Mahinda Mawatha	Homagama
Homagama	Katuwana	96/2, High Level Road,
Kesbewa	Jambureliya	Homagama.
Weliweriya	Helens Estate	Kadawata
		142, Kandy Road,
		Kadawata.
Battaramulla	Sethsiri Uyana	Ja-Ela
Wennappuwa	Wennappuwa	136, Negombo Road,
Maharagama	Maharagama	Ja-Ela.



THE FINANCE CO. LTD.,

3rd Floor, Ceylinco House,
69, Janadhipathi Mawatha, Colombo 1.
Tel: 440787, 23861-2

The Finance. Your Real Estate Partners for Life

Tamil Militarism – The Code of Suicide

“ rooted in Tamil martial traditions’ ” — The L.T.T.E. May, 1991

D. P. Sivaram

“ You are to know that in this land of Malabar, there is another caste of people called the Nayres who have no other duty than to serve in war, and they always carry their arms wither so ever they go. . . they all live with the King and the other great lords; nevertheless all receive stipends from the King or from the great lords with whom they dwell. None may become a Nayre save he who is of Nayre lineage. They will not touch anyone of low caste. . . The most part of these Nayres when they are seven years of age are sent to schools where they are taught many tricks of nimbleness and dexterity. . . and when they are fully accomplished in this they teach them to play with weapons to which they are most inclined. All Nayres are mighty warriors.”¹ Observes Duarte Barbosa in his account of the Zamorin's domain (a division of the old chera Kingdom) — one of the earliest records made by the Portuguese within a few years of their entry into the Indian ocean. The feudal military system described by Barbosa was common to those parts of South India known to the Portuguese as Malabar. In its southern and south eastern parts the military castes were known as Maravar, Kallar and Ahampadiyar; Of these the Kallar and Maravar had kingship traditions. This feudal military system was found in Jaffna as well when the Portuguese arrived. The Palk Strait was known to them as the Marava bay.

The Tamil country was divided into a number of feudal domains, called Palayams which literally means military camps,² the chief of which was the Palayakarar — the commander of the camp. Most of the Tamil Palayakarar

were Maravar. Each maintained a body of Kallar, Maravar and Ahampadiyar warriors who “served on the battle field and in times of peace engaged in hunting and training in the military arts, nourishing a rugged and practical character”, and serving as village guards (kaval) for a contribution.³ In Jaffna “the Maravar had to learn the art of war from the age of sixteen till they were twenty four years of age; then they had to become village kaval karar live on land given by the King and return to military service whenever the king required them to do so”.⁴

The military system of the Tamil country was yet a dream in eighteenth century Europe; its armies were in the process of developing methods and regulations which “got rid of the peasant” in the new recruit and “gave him the air of a soldier.” J. Servan an 18th century French military theoretician wrote a treatise on the ‘soldier citizen’ (1780). He “dreamt of a military machine that would cover the whole territory of the nation and in which each individual would be occupied without interruption, but in a different way according to the evolutive segment, the genetic sequence in which he finds himself. Military life would begin in childhood, when young children would be taught the profession of arms in military manors; it would end in these same manors when the veterans right up to their last day would teach the children, exercise the recruits, preside over the soldier's exercises . . . and finally make order resign in the country, when troops were fighting at the frontiers.”⁵ The ideal Palayam was Servan's military machine; the Kallar, Maravar, Ahampadiyar

and Nayar were its ‘oldest citizen’. The Palayam was sustained by a codified martial culture. As we shall see later the practice of martial suicide, was most prevalent in the Kongu region of Tamil nadu, which had a very large number of Palayams.

Early Europeans who studied the military system of the Tamil country were inclined to read therein, some of the ideals embodied in the celebrated regulations of the Prussian infantry that the whole of Europe imitated after the victories of Frederick II. The 18th century British military historian Robert Orme's description of the military castes of the Tamil country is typical. He says “They are tall, well made and well featured. Their arms are lances and pikes, bows and arrows, rockets and matchlocks, but whether with or without other weapons every man constantly wears a sword and shield. In battle the different arms move in distinct bodies, but the lancemen are rated the most eminent, and lead all attacks. This weapon is eighteen feet long. They tie under the point a tuft of scarlet horse hair, and when they attack horse, add a small bell. Without previous exercise, they assemble in a deep column, pressing close together and advance at a long steady step, in some degree of time, their lances inclining forward but aloft, of which the elasticity and vibration, with the jingle and dazzle scare, the cavalry; and their approach is scarcely less formidable to infantry not disciplined with fire arms.”⁶

The boomerang or Valai Thadi in Tamil — was another weapon that “played a considerable part in the Poligar (Palayakarar)

wars". The Kallan and Maravan warriors plied it with deadly effect and "could at one stroke despatch small game and even man".⁷ Like the Japanese Bakuhan system the Palayam system was based on a feudal class structure of warriors, farmers, artisans and merchants where the distinctions between the caste statuses of the constituent classes were strictly enforced. To symbolize this society the Tamil warriors, like the Japanese Samurai wore swords in everyday life because the system was maintained by their military power. Mr. Lushington who was sent as collector to Palayakarar (Poligar) country in 1799, desirous of wresting control of the vast revenues of the land, described the Palayam (Pollam) system of Tamil feudal militarism as extremely evil. "When this contribution (Kaval dues) is not quietly submitted to, torture and the whip are applied, the whole people of the villags [put into confinement, every occupation interdicted, the cattle pounded, the inhabitants taken captive to, and not unfrequently murdered in, the Pollams. . . and such is the dread which they have inspired into the cultivators of the circar lands by remaining armed in the midst of a country otherwise in profound peace, that these requisitions are never resisted."⁷ A fierce and ancient martial culture and religion was nurtured by the military castes. As in the other martial regions of India traditional militarism permeated several levels of society. Therefore, despite the great temple centres, the heros and godlings of Tamil martial culture were worshipped widely throughout rural Tamilnadu. In Japan the Samurai nurtured the values or Kyuba-no-michi (the way of the bow and horse). In the Tamil country Maram was the martial ethos of the warrior castes. There are three characteristics of Tamil feudal militarism which set it apart from other pre-modern military cultures. They are —

(a) the detailed codification of the modes of war, the

warriors' martial life, and rituals etc. Known as Purath thinai.

- (b) the rejection of divine participation and perfidy sanctioned by religion in the conduct of war. The great medieval Tamil commentator Naccinarkinyar says that norms which sanction "killing through perfidy and by virtue of divine powers given by gods" are to be disregarded and that modes of war involving gods are to be rejected and refuted as modes not belonging to the Tamil speaking good world".⁸
- (c) the classification of war with flowers; and the practice of wearing a particular flower when engaging in the mode of war denoted by that flower. The author of Ramayana had noted that "the southerners wore flowers for war".

Codified Tamil feudal militarism was nurtured and transmitted as the Purath thinai division of high Tamil Senthamizh poetics and grammar. Tolkappiyam, the earliest Tamil grammar, the Buddhist grammatical treatise Vearasoliyam, the saivite Ilakkana Vilakkam (17th century) and Swaminatham written in early part of the last century are works which contain treatises in which Tamil martial culture is codified and annotated. The perfection and codification of Tamil martial culture through the ages was paralalled by the thematization of several narratives of military glory in Tamil culture through epics, inscriptions, minor forms of poetry etc.

An observation is made in the British Indian army's recruitment handbook on the Sikhs that "all sikh traditions whether national or religious are martial; in times of political excitement the martial spirit reasserts itself".⁹ The culture and class interests of Japanese feudal militarism which survived the Meiji restoration partly impelled and characterized Japan's mili-

tarist nationalism and its growth as a modern military power. Similarly it can be said that the culture and structures of codified 'high Tamil' and folk forms of Tamil feudal militarism partly impelled and characterized Tamil nationalism when it became militant. Therefore two aspects of Tamil feudal militarism which has been reasserted in Tamil revivalism and militarism will be briefly examined here. They are —

- (a) narratives of Tamil military might thematized in Tamil culture. The most important of these can be reduced to the basic form — Tamil King defeats the Aryans of north India and causes his emblem to be carved on the Himalayas. The Pandyan King Nedunchelivan bore the title 'He who overran the Aryan army'. All three Tamil dynasties — chera, chola, and Pandya — are distinguished by this feat in a wide range of texts and inscriptions.

These narratives like the Kamikaze — divine wind — legend of Japan's war with Mongols, have played an important role in the growth of Tamil nationalism.

- (b) Codified practices of Tamil martial life.

1. Moothinmullai: the duty of the warrior mother to inculcate the martial ethos and to urge her sons to attain martyrdom in heroic battle. The concept of the warrior mother's duty was central to the genesis of Tamil militarism and later in militant Tamil nationalism. It is a salient theme in L. T. T. E's current literature as well.

2. Avippali, Thannai Verttal, Vallan pakkam, Pun Kilithu Mudiyum Maram and Marakkanchi: the forms of martial suicide and suicidal battle of the warrior as the ultimate expression of his loyalty to his commander. These six forms

of Martial suicide are defined and described by the works referred to above.

Pulla Vazhkai Vallan Pakkam — the martial attitude of the warrior who goes forth into suicidal battle is mentioned by Tholkappiyam. The other works refer to it as Thannai Verttal. Duarte Barbosa describes the practice among the Nayar (of the chera kingdom). It was later noticed by British officials as well. It was also prevalent among the Maravar (of the Pandya kingdom) from whom the suicidal Apathuthavi body-guard was selected. Thannai Verttal also refers to the suicide of a warrior on hearing that his king or commander has died. (Purapporul Venpamalai), Punkilithu Mudiym Maram is the martial act of a warrior who commits suicide by tearing apart his battle wound.

Another form of martial suicide mentioned by all the works except Veera soliyam is Avippali. Tamil inscriptions speak of it as Navakandam. Inscriptions found in many parts of Tamilnadu provide greater information on the practice. Navakandam is the act of a warrior who slices his own neck to fulfil the vow made to korraivai — the Tamil goddess of war — for his commanders' victory in battle. The Kalingathuparani,¹⁰ — a work which celebrates the victory of the chola king kulotunga and his general Thondaman in the battle for kalinga describes the practice in detail. "The temple of korraivai is decorated with lotus flowers which boomed when the warriors sliced their own necks" (106) they slice the base of their necks; the severed heads are given to the goddess" (111) "when the neck is sliced and the head in severed, the headless body jumps with joy for having fulfilled the vow" (113) The epics chilapadikaram (5: 79-86) and Manimekalai (6: 50-51) mention the practice. To ensure the complete severing of the head the warrior tied his hair to a bamboo bent taut before he cut his neck. Hero stones

depicting this practice are found all over Tamil nadu, and are called Saavan Kallu by locals. The warriors who thus committed suicide were not only deified in Hero stones (savan kallu) and worshiped but their relatives were given lands which were exempted from tax.¹¹

An area handbook (Tharamangalam) of the Tamilnadu archaeology department notes that "the Nava Kandam sculpture which is found widely all over Kongunadu (Coimbatore, Salem) is to be seen at the Tharamangalam Kailasanathar kovil also. The people call it Saavan Kallu. "The practice of Navakandam existed in Kongu nadu till the early part of this century."¹² A Saavan Kallu at Thenkarai Moolanathasami kovil in Madurai, depicting the act of a warrior holding his hair with his left hand and slicing his neck with his right — 14th century — is said to be annually worshipped by the Conjeevaram Mudaliyars.¹³

The conjeevaram mudaliyars are Kaikolar, a weaving caste which was militarized under the Chola empire and was made into a special military body; there are indications that Kaikolar warriors practiced Nava Kandam.¹⁴ The founder of the D. M. K. C. N. Annadurai was a Conjeevaram mudaliyar of the Kaikolar caste.

Apart from these codified forms of martial suicide a method called Vadakkiruththal is mentioned in Tamil heroic poetry. It is the act of a warrior king fasting to death if some dire dishonour were to come upon him.¹⁵ The Tamil teacher, and the Dravidian propagandist turned the song of the legendary chera king Irumborai who committed suicide when he was taken captive by his enemies into a compelling theme in Tamil renaissance.

The Avippali form of martial suicide as the ultimate expression of loyalty to one's commander is deeply embedded in the Tamil psyche. Senchorrukadan (the debt of redrice) is

a phrase that is widely used today by Tamils as an expression of loyalty. One frequently hears of it in a popular Tamil song. The phrase stands for the ritual of partaking of rice by which Maravar and other Tamil military caste warriors bound themselves to their king or commander to die in suicidal battle for him or to commit suicide on the day he was slain. Of Avippali the Purapporul Venpamalai (92) says "thinking of nothing but the red (blood) rice the Maravar give their life as offering in battle." The ritual of red or blood rice was described by two Muslim travellers who had visited the Tamil country in the 9th century. "A quantity of cooked rice was spread before the king, and some three or four hundred persons came of their own accord and received each a small quantity of rice from the king's own hands after he himself had eaten some. By eating of this rice they all engage themselves to burn themselves on the day the king dies or is slain; and they punctually fulfill their promise."¹⁶ In modern times it has been observed that "when a Maravar takes food in the house of a stranger, he will take a pinch of earth and put it on the food before he commences his meal."¹⁷ This act freed him from the debt of blood rice.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Book of Duarte Barbosa, 1518, first published 1812 English trans. Mansel Longworth Dames, 1921. Hakluyt Society, 1866. Reproduced by Asian Educational services, New Delhi: 1989. Vol. II pp. 38-40.
2. R. P. Sethupillai 1946. Thamilaham Oorum Perum. Palaniyappa Bros. Madras p. 76.
3. Robert Caldwell 1881. History of Tinnevely, reproduced by A. E. S: New Delhi 1989 p. 104.
4. A. Mootootamby Pillai, 1912. Jaffna History Naval Press, Jaffna p. 104.
5. Michel Foucault 1991. Discipline and Punish, Penguin Books trans. Alan Sheridan pp. 135, 165.

(Continued on page 24)

Is Democracy in peril?

Mick Moore

Intro: The Significance of Elections

During the first three decades after independence in 1948, the pattern of politics in Sri Lanka diverged from the typical Third World variety in three significant respects:

1. External agents and international geo-political issues impinged on the domestic political arena only to a limited extent — and to a very small degree considering the high external orientation of the economy, its consequent vulnerability to international events and processes, and the very cosmopolitan and Western orientation of the Sri Lankan elite. The major reason lay in Sri Lanka's position *vis-a-vis* India. India was uninterested in Sri Lanka provided other global and regional powers took the same view. There was thus a tacit agreement, policed by India in the last resort, that everyone would keep their hands off Sri Lanka.

2. More directly relevant to the topic at hand, Sri Lanka functioned very much like a liberal democracy of the classic parliamentary type; organised 'membership' political parties contested local and national elections in coherent patterns one of two main national party blocs replaced one another in government after almost every general election; rates of voter registration and turn-out were among the highest in the world; the various apparatuses of government — administrative, legislative, judicial, accounting

and so on — were separate and in some degree autonomous. At a less tangible level, state-society relations were also to an important degree supportive of liberal democracy: societal and state institutions were to an important degree autonomous in relation to each other; associational life was vigorous, and liberal democratic values were widely acknowledged.

3. Consistent with the two previous points, not only was resort to organised violence rare in the public domain in general, but the national armed forces were weak and insignificant by any criterion or measure — budget, equipment training, experience, power or status.

Within the past dozen years or so, this situation has changed. Sri Lanka has visibly joined the Third World: the linkages between 'domestic' and 'international' politics strengthened considerably; while remaining formally in place, the institutions of liberal democracy are currently serving a regime that may loosely (and imprecisely — see below) be described as neo-patrimonial; and the armed forces have both grown enormously in size and become significant in national politics.

This paper attempts to examine the current prospects for democracy in Sri Lanka. More specifically, it focuses on three sets of issues: (a) the reasons why Sri Lanka was formerly so deviant as to have a functioning liberal democracy; (b) the causes of the breakdown of the liberal democratic polity; and (c) the nature of the current governmental system and of the 'politics of re-democratisation'. For obvious reasons, the approach is very 'broad-brush'; few chronological details or references are given.

The Establishment of Liberal Democracy

The main reason why Sri Lanka was so deviant (in comparative Third World context) as to have a functioning liberal democracy appears remarkably clear once one adopts a comparative perspective on the issue. Liberal democracy is relatively rare in the Third World for a range of reasons. It is likely to be found, in the two-party (or blocs), alternating-power variety, where there is a coherent elite group which (a) spans both parties and (b) is able to mobilise support across ethnic or similar significant divisions. Sri Lanka exactly fits this model:

... under colonial rule ... (Sri Lanka) ... developed an active indigenous capitalist class. Ceylonese become owners of large estates in the later stages of the plantation boom, and profited widely from transport, liquor distilling, urban development and graphite mining, as well as the more predictable activities of landlordship and commerce. This capitalist class was eventually to move in relatively smoothly to replace British capital. But it was not purely a capitalist class. For a key feature of the modern Sri Lankan polity is that this class has played a broader role than that of capitalist bourgeoisie. It also occupied leading positions in public administration, the professions and, politics and through socialisation in a few British model Colombo Schools, relatively through Anglicisation, and concentrated residence and social interaction in one Colombo locality, developed a degree of self-consciousness which has made it probably the most developed class in the country in the Marxian sense of that

Mick Moore is with the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex

Journal of Commonwealth & Comparative Politics, Vol. 30, No. 1, March 1992, pp. 64-84 PUBLISHED BY FRANK CASS, LONDON

term. It can usefully be labelled the elite. The political significance of this elite was enhanced by the diversity of its social and economic roots, and the fact that it continued to nourish and exploit those roots. They lay in most significant sectors of the country; all ethnic, caste, regional and religious categories; and both 'traditional' and 'modern' sources of wealth and status. The residential base of the elite was Colombo. Its productive assets were either in Colombo or (by the 1920s) within a few hours drive in the Low Country. Second residences were maintained near these Low Country plantations, share-cropped rice estates, graphite mines and distilleries. These were to provide the patronage resources which gave members of the elite individual local electoral bases. Members of the elite were thus able to participate actively and simultaneously in two different political arenas: 'their own' localities and Colombo.

Liberal democracy in Sri Lanka developed along 'classic' (European) lines on the basis of the colonial system of representation of local interests in the legislature. The procedure for selection shifted from nomination to election as the influence of representatives increased in relation to state officials, and as the electorate was widened. The representation system thus initially scored much higher on the *contestation* than on the *inclusion* criteria of democracy. The procedures and norms of parliamentarism were institutionalised. As the system expanded to become highly inclusive, new political publics were inducted through political parties which, in classic 'European' style, were created by 'notables' already established in the national political arena as prominent members of the legislature.

One could go on providing detail without much enriching the analytic picture. It is perhaps important to point out that universal adult suffrage was introduced as early as 1931,

and that the governments elected under adult suffrage in 1931 and 1935 were given substantial autonomy in the management of domestic affairs, subject always to the final veto of the colonial administration.

I am not suggesting that the establishment of liberal or parliamentary democracy in Sri Lanka was inevitable. It is rather that it is easily explicable given the interaction between (a) the socio-economic character of the elite and (b) the British colonial preference for gradually handing over position and power to such a 'responsible' successor within a framework of liberal democratic institutions. Democracy like independence, was *handed over* to Sri Lankans by the British to a greater extent than in India where both were attained through mass political mobilisation and struggle. As a result, in Sri Lanka democracy lacks the degree of *nationalist* legitimisation which it has attained in India. Democracy did not lack legitimacy in Sri Lanka, but that legitimacy perhaps had more distinct *class* bases than in India: the socialisation of the elite into a variant of British culture and the transmission of democratic norms, perceived as an adjunct to 'class struggle' to large sections of the 'white collar' middle classes and organised labour through the labour movement and the leftist political parties organised by 'dissident' scions of the elite. The decline of democracy has been intertwined with the decline, in different senses, of both of these groups.

The Decline of Liberal Democracy

The attainment of independence and the decline of liberal democracy are closely interrelated processes. There never was a 'golden age' of liberal democracy in Sri Lanka because colonial rule, which was in some respects anti-democratic, was also to some degree the guarantor of some important dimensions of liberal democracy

notably (a) the autonomy of the public service from the intervention of politicians in routine administrative, personnel judicial, and such matters and (b) consideration of the interests of ethnic minorities — especially the most articulate and militant of them, the Sri Lanka Tamils in major political and constitutional decisions. The ending of colonial rule was to lead to a substantial expansion of what one might loosely term 'social democracy'. An elaborate and well-funded British-model welfare state had already been established in the late colonial period. While this was to be expanded, the main advances in 'social democracy' in the post-independence period were largely in the areas of culture, language, and political and civil rights: improvements in voting procedures to guarantee individual autonomy; the ending of the colonial practice of granting low-level administrative authority to local 'notables' by virtue of their position in the putatively indigenous and traditional status hierarchy; the major extension of employees' rights, especially in the public service; some security of tenure for agricultural tenants; increased 'public' influence, through political intermediaries, on the routine activities of the public service; the widening of access to state employment; the ending of the privileges of private education; and the widening of the use of local languages, especially Sinhala, in place of English. Many of these processes could also be explained in terms of the 'Sinhalisation' of the state — the creation of a polity that in both symbolic and material terms appeared designed primarily to serve the Sinhalese Buddhist majority. The expansion of 'social democracy', as defined here, was in many respects a zero-sum game.

These preambles and qualifications aside, a useful perspective on the history of the Sri Lankan polity since 1948 is provided by the notion of the decline of liberal democracy. In analytic, rather than chrono-

loical terms, this decline may be seen as comprising three main sets of processes:

1. The increasing domination by politicians (associated with the parties in power) over other elements of the state apparatus and over society generally, and a declining regard for legal and procedural formality. A very large number of specific processes are involved. Some of the more significant were: close self-interested involvement of politicians in routine administrative issues; the allocation of virtually all public sector recruitment — and many transfer and promotion — decisions to politicians; the termination of the autonomy of the judiciary; control of mass media through nationalisation or indirect coercion and pressure; the introduction of new constitutions or constitutional amendments for

reasons of short-term political expediency; the use of procedures of doubtful constitutionality to prolong the life of the legislature, placing supporters of the ruling party (or parties) in (discretionary) charge of a very wide range of state and public organisations — universities, co-operatives, newspapers, broadcasting organisations, public corporations, local administration and, increasingly, statutory bodies created for 'development' purposes; the appointment of supporters of the ruling party to senior positions in the administrative, judicial, police and foreign services and in the armed forces; the widespread illegal use of state power and resources for the benefit of those in power; and, most especially in the more recent period, the simple use of physical intimidation against opponents of the regime.

2. The sharpening of ethnic conflict, above all — although the complete picture is of course more complex — between the majority Sinhalese, especially the Sinhalese Buddhists, and the largest of several minorities, the Sri Lanka Tamils. A series of outbreaks of violence — in fact involving mainly attacks on Tamils by Sinhalese thugs — be-

gan in 1958, and culminated in a small pogrom in 1983. This provided Tamil separatism with unstoppable momentum. Despite enormous human and material costs and frequent changes of alignments among the several armed parties involved, the fight for a separate Tamil state continues.

3. Increasing resort to arms in the attempt to attain state power, and the consequent physical and political strengthening of the armed forces — who have so far successfully protected the integrity of the state. Leaving aside a number of minor conspiracies, four main attempts have been made to take state power by force: the coup conspiracy of 1962; the insurrection of the leftist JVP movement of Sinhalese youth in 1971; the Tamil separatist movement mentioned above; and a repeated, and far more deep-rooted insurrection by a reconstituted JVP in 1987-89. As is explained below, the joint impact of the last two movements on the polity has been far-reaching.

The Causes of Decline

There is considerable scope to debate the causes of the decline of liberal democracy in Sri Lanka. My own tentative formulation is as follows. In the first place, one can identify two, related background processes which, while not being directly responsible for the decline of liberal democracy, contributed in some way by placing the polity under continuous stress, especially in more recent decades:

1. The polity became the victim of the interaction of the following three factors:

(i) A modest rate of economic growth, and thus a modest rate of increase in the volume of material resources available for appropriation and distribution through the political system.

(ii) A high demand for material resources stimulated by (a) the dominant welfarist-redistributivist style of political discov-

urse and (b) the continual induction of new, low-status groups as effective participants in this system as a result of electoral competition.

(ii) The fact that the 'welfare state' (to use a shorthand term) had been established in the late colonial period and largely 'completed' in the 1950s and 1960s — especially in more symbolic, cultural and political dimensions (see above) — meant that it was increasingly difficult to find credible new welfareist platforms to attract electoral support, especially the support of poorer, low-status groups. In this sense, the Sri Lankan polity faced some of the same kinds of stress as the polities of the advanced capitalist countries at around the same time.

The tension resulting from effective (new) politicisation which was not followed by anticipated material rewards appears to have affected in particular the 'low castes' among the Sinhalese, who number about a third of the Sinhalese population and about a quarter of the total population. They were politicised relatively late and, despite advances in representation, are still very much under-represented, to the benefit of the dominant Goigama caste. As is explained below, until very recently, increases in parliamentary and Cabinet representation of these low-caste groups were not followed by commensurate increases in access to power and resources. Low-caste resentment at political and social subordination has been one of the underlying bases of support for the JVP in its insurrectionary activities in both 1971 and more recently.

2. Similarly, and closely related, support for the JVP's insurrectionary path has been forthcoming from lower-status groups of all kinds in part because of the continued domination of political leadership positions in all parties by members of the elite, or persons with elite connections. There was some-

thing of a disjuncture between (a) the radicalisation of the political agenda and political discourse and (b) the social composition of political leadership. The JVP was able to exploit this disjuncture; along with the armed Tamil separatist groups, it was the only substantial political movement to be created and led by people of middle or lower-middle-class backgrounds — and people who spoke little or no English.

These tensions between mass politicisation and relatively exclusive political leadership are found to some degree in almost any polity. The Sri Lankan leadership was insufficiently active in co-opting low-status leaders to diffuse the tensions, although substantial moves were in fact made in this direction by president-to-be J. R. Jayawardene after he assumed the leadership of the United National Party (UNP) in 1973. The more direct causes of the breakdown of liberal democracy appear, however, to lie elsewhere.

The most direct and visible cause of the breakdown of liberal democracy lies in the gradual disappearance of the factor which, it is argued above, underlay the emergence of liberal democracy in the first place: the near-monopoly of political leadership by members of a relatively homogenous elite who (a) had been thoroughly socialised into the mores of parliamentary democracy; (b) had sufficient 'independent' income that they did not depend entirely on money earned from politics, did not feel strongly pressured to earn in this way, and could contemplate the loss of power to rivals without feeling anxious about losing the very bases of their livelihoods and status. The existence of liberal democracy depended on a balance between the political leadership of the elite and various pressures, mentioned above, which constrained the elite from adopting conservative or reactionary policies which would have resulted in the withdrawal of broader public support for the parlia-

mentary system. These various 'other pressures' have become stronger, and the balance has been lost. With mass politicisation and an increasingly (material) transactionalist basis of political support, politics has become a full-time job. Professional politicians, mainly from 'middling' status backgrounds, have replaced the 'gentleman'. All political leaders are now professionals.

One may crudely classify political leaders of, say, the last ten years into three different categories:

(i) Older leaders of elite backgrounds who occupy leadership positions by virtue of age and party seniority, and who remain personally honest and uncorrupt because they are able to live on accumulated family resources. The two prime examples are Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike, who remains the leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) — the main opposition party — and J. R. Jayawardene, who was leader of the UNP from 1973, became Prime Minister in 1977, and made himself executive president in 1978 — a post he was to occupy for ten years. Few leaders in this category remain active.

(ii) Highly educated scions of elite families who were able to move very rapidly to leading ministerial positions, which were used for capital accumulation, by virtue of personal backgrounds and connections (as well as competence). The category includes in particular a number of leading ministers under J. R. Jayawardene's prime ministership and presidency (1978–88). While having greater personal material stake in occupying governmental position than Mrs Bandaranaike or J. R. Jayawardene, such people, when faced with political difficulties, tend to have the options, which some have exercised, of switching political allegiance (in the realistic hope of position in a future government) or of taking rewarding jobs outside the country. As is explained below, the present govern-

ment includes scarcely any people in this category.

(iii) Professional politicians proper who have few connections with elite families, but start mainly from 'middle' social positions, often from families who own land and are in business. Politics is for them the main mode of capital accumulation and route to social mobility. They are an increasingly dominant category, and exactly the kinds of people who have most to fear from loss of political power, for they have few attractive alternative sources of income.

The changing social composition of Sri Lankan political leadership has been explored in great statistical detail by Coomaraswamy for the period from 1931 to 1986. She documents the gradual shift from elite to more middle-class status, and also explores how this has been associated with a drastic decline in standards of behaviour within Parliament itself. Coomaraswamy also provides the detailed background to an event which happened after her research was completed, and which is central to the analysis below: the sudden drastic change in the social background of governmental leadership at the end of 1988 when J. R. Jayawardene's term as president expired and he was succeeded by R. Premadasa, also a UNPer, but a professional politician *par excellence*, who was from a poor, low-caste family and had fought his way up through the murky municipal politics of central Colombo. Premadasa constructed a government from which members of the old elite were either excluded or incorporated in very subordinate roles. He has since waged a continual if low-key campaign of attrition against the remnants of elite presence within the top ranks of his own party.

Coomaraswamy's data permit us to understand how such a rapid change was possible without more upheaval within the ruling party. For under previous governments the response, whether conscious or unconscious, of the

elite leadership to increased low-caste representation in Parliament and then in the Cabinet had been to restrict real power to 'inner groups' of elite backgrounds. There was thus an association between the increasing concentration of political power observed in the polity generally and the social broadening of political representation. This was most evident in the composition of J. R. Jayawardene's government of 1977-88. While non-elite and low-caste people were relatively well represented in Parliament and in his Cabinet, real power was restricted to a handful of younger ministers of elite status who were closely connected to Jayawardene himself. The real power holders did not include his successor, Premadasa, despite his being Prime Minister and thus nominally second in rank. The tactic of keeping non-elite politicians from the actual centers of power while according them formal position could not however, succeed forever. At the end of 1988, polity was in major crisis, with an 'Indian peacekeeping force' occupying Tamil areas in north and east, to the irritation and anger of much of the population; and the (Sinhalese) JVP, taking a 'patriotic', anti-Indian line, engaged in an insurrection which appeared to be coming close to overthrowing the government. Premadasa was chosen to be the UNP's presidential nominee as the only man able to compete with the JVP for popular (especially low-caste) electoral support and marshal the muscle, organisation and ruthlessness necessary to arrange a favourable election result and deal with the JVP by force. It performed as hoped, and at the same time put a rapid end to elite dominance of political leadership.

Two other factors contributed to the decline of liberal democracy. was the ethnic issue, about which a great deal has been written. Indeed, one could argue that the liberal democratic system whose decline we are lamenting barely ever encompassed the Tamil minorities at

all. Save the odd token, Sri Lanka Tamils have not been represented in government at any point since the first administration was elected under universal suffrage in 1931. Not only have Sri Lanka Tamils been excluded from the benefits of state patronage, but they have been unable to resist a whole series of policies, termed above the 'Sinhalese of the state' which have directly undermined their economy. The population of the demographic cultural and political heartland of the Sri Lanka Tamil population, Jaffna peninsula, tended to specialise in education and in white-collar employment elsewhere in the island, including in the public sector. A long series of legislative and administrative measures relating to language policy, public sector recruitment and university admission, spiced with the occasional outburst of mob violence against Tamils had largely succeeded by the late 1970s in excluding new Tamil entrants from the public sector. It was in the early 1970s that a handful of Tamil separatists first turned to armed struggle. This degenerated into near civil war in the mid-1980s, partly, as is explained below, because of political mismanagement by President Jayawardene.

While much has been written about the ethnic conflict, the central issue appears surprisingly simple. Drawing an instructive contrast with Malaysia, Horowitz explains that the Sri Lankan electoral system has simply been inimical to ethnic accommodation between Sinhalese and Sri Lanka Tamils. The latter were a minority concentrated in a small area. Given the first-past-the-post system of elections to Parliament, governments were regularly elected and then overthrown as a result of relatively small shifts in electoral preference in mainly Sinhalese electorates. Governments could almost always be constructed on the basis of clear parliamentary majorities for one or other of the two main Sinhalese-dominated party blocs. Not only was there no incentive

for these major parties to compete for Tamil votes, but there was a clear incentive for them to outbid one another, as they regularly did, in Sinhalese chauvinism.

The other factor contributing to the decline of liberal democracy is much more contingent; the personalities and behaviour of the leaders of the two main political parties at the time when democracy began to disappear and, eventually, the whole polity threatened to dissolve — the late 1970s and 1980s, I have discussed these processes at more length elsewhere. The main elements are:

(i) The fact that J. R. Jayawardene, who absolutely dominated the political stage after his party took almost all parliamentary seats in the 1977 general elections, permitted or perhaps encouraged his leading ministers to build up private armies with the state resources they controlled and use them to intimidate opponents of all kinds. This was practised to a far greater extent than ever before.

(ii) Relatedly, the extent to which Jayawardene seemed determined to undermine the democratic opposition parties among both Tamil (the Tamil United Liberation Front) and Sinhalese (the SLFP). By harassing and discrediting democratic opposition, and giving the impression that his party would never share or relinquish power, Jayawardene helped open the way for the emergence of armed opposition, first among the Tamil (separatists) and then among the Sinhalese (the JVP).

(iii) The determination of Mrs Sirmavo Bandaranaike to retain for herself (and eventually, her children) the leadership of the SLFP, discouraged and drove away political talent, divided both the SLFP and the democratic opposition generally, exposed, the party's cadres to harassment from the governing UNP and those elements in the police which worked for it, and thus helped drive youth into the arms of the more organised JVP.

(To be continued)

HUMAN RIGHTS

WOMAN AS VICTIM

By Amnesty International

The world's torturers, executioners and jailers do not discriminate on grounds of sex. Women are as likely as men to suffer brutal abuses if they question the status quo, defy their governments or insist on their rights. In different countries with differing ideologies women have been judicially executed or murdered by government agents.

At least 24 of the 36 people stoned to death in Iran in 1989 were women, sentenced to this particularly cruel punishment for offences such as adultery or prostitution. Death by stoning is intended to cause the maximum suffering to the victim. The Islamic Penal Code stipulates that the stones should not be so large that 'the person dies on being hit by one or two of them'.

Nonyanzelo Victoria Mxenge, a prominent human rights lawyer, was shot dead near Durban South Africa in August 1985 by four men believed to be acting on behalf of the authorities. Victoria Mxenge was representing 16 leading members of the United Democratic Front charged with treason when she was killed.

Unfair trials and convictions

Women as well as men spend years in prison after being convicted in unfair trials. Carole Richardson of Britain was arrested when she was 17 in 1975 and sentenced to life imprisonment for two bombings. She was released in 1989, when it emerged that she and her three co-defendants, known as the 'Guildford Four', had been wrongly convicted because of police malpractice which inclu-

Women the world over who oppose their governments are not spared from unfair trials and wrongful imprisonment. In addition, they are subject to cruel torture such as rape or other forms of sexual abuse.

ded lying to the court about the confession statements. At the trial in 1975 the judge stated that they would have received the death penalty if it was still on the statute books.

Hundreds, if not thousands of women are prisoners of conscience, detained for their peaceful opposition to the authorities, sometimes without having been charged or brought to trial. After a military coup brought the National Salvation Revolution Command Council to power in Sudan in June 1989, a number of women were imprisoned because of their association with the deposed government.

Three were prominent members of the Umma Party, one of the major parties in the former government: Sara al-Fadil Mahmoud, wife of the former Prime Minister and party President; Sara Abdullahi Nagdullah, daughter of a former Secretary General; and Rashida Ibrahim Abdul-Karim, Minister of State for Education before the coup. They were arrested on 5 September, released for two days in October, and re-imprisoned for another month when they refused to sign a statement confessing to opposition to the military government.

When it comes to torture, women also suffer brutal extremes of abuse. Maria Juana Medina was one of 64 trade unionists detained during a demonstration in El Salvador on 18 September 1989. She was reportedly severely tortured for three days and then released without charge.

She claimed that she had been raped and repeatedly kicked in the abdomen, as a result of which she haemorrhaged. She was hung by her feet over a stairwell and threatened with immersion in an electrified pool and with having her teeth pulled out unless she confessed to being a member of a Salvadorian guerrilla group.

Rape as torture

The rape or sexual abuse of women in custody by law enforcement officials is an international infliction of pain and suffering, both physical and mental, on the victim. As such, it is a form of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and clearly prohibited by international standards. Yet rape is widespread and in some countries it is effectively condoned by the authorities to elicit information or a confession during interrogation.

In the Peruvian Andes, in areas of conflict between government forces and insurrectionist guerrillas, rape of women is widespread. Legal officials told AI representatives visiting Ayacucho in 1986 that rape was to be expected when troops were based in the rural areas. They said it was 'natural' and that prosecutions could not be expected.

In India around 1,000 of the women officially estimated to have been raped each year belong to the Scheduled Castes (formerly 'Untouchables') and Tribes. Many of the victims were reportedly raped by police officers but these allegations are rarely investigated and even more rarely result in conviction. Police have also failed to press charges of rape when the accused are influential local figures with close links to the police.

In January 1986 Kaushalya Devi, aged 50, and her daughter from Tarwadih village in Palamu district, Bihar, were allegedly raped by local Rajput landlords apparently in retaliation for male relatives having refused the landlord the use of the family's bullocks. Although some police officers were initially suspended for refusing to take the victims to hospital and for refusing to start proceeding against the landlords, one year later the police had still not filed charges against the landlords.

The local police superintendent apparently took steps against the landlords and the negligent police officers. He was transferred to another district after speaking to the press about the incident.

—Third World Network Features

AIDS : . .

(Continued from page 8)

"HIV infection doesn't necessarily lead to Aids," he said. "There are some people who could escape that. It may be a minority, but we can hope by treatments to increase this number".

Montagnier's theory is that HIV works by triggering changes in the body that may subsequently lead to Aids when other "co-factors" are present. At that point-HIV would not necessarily still be involved. This has important consequences. If he is right, it means a cure is unlikely to be found in the anti-viral programmes, which are the focus of most contemporary Aids research.

But other factors involved in the disease process may offer vital leads for treatment and prevention.

Montagnier insists that contrary to what was originally thought, HIV does not attack cells of the immune system directly.

Instead, he believes that when the virus infects the body in the presence of other microbes it appears to spark a process in which some of the cells contributing to immune defences against microbial invaders become wrongly "programmed".

Faced with further attack, the immune cells fail to recognise the invaders as foreign. Rather than countering them, they regard themselves as redundant and "commit suicide".

The ability to self-destruct, called apoptosis, is natural to many cells. It forms part of a system of checks and balances that enables the body to maintain itself in good repair.

But in people with Aids, the process has gone haywire. Immune cells are destroying themselves faster than they can be replaced, so eventually the patient is left helpless against a variety of germs [that in healthy people do not cause any harm.

Laboratory tests have shown that about 10-20% of the immune cells in HIV-positive people demonstrate a readiness to react in the abnormal way when challenged by other microbes, com-

pared with almost none in healthy people.

That still does not prove HIV is to blame; people infected with HIV may have been infected with a lot of other "foreign" agents as well. But it puts it under strong suspicion of playing a part.

Now Montagnier is planning a series of trials to test a variety of strategies for reducing the abnormal reaction.

"From our new ideas we can derive some advice. If not some strong proposals, for treating HIV-infected individuals to prevent evolution towards the Aids stage", he said.

"If activation by micro-organisms is important, I think they should reduce their risks of being exposed to such microbes, and have long-term antibiotic treatment."

Other strategies are likely to include dietary advice and vitamin supplements, aimed at easing chemical stresses in the body, which have also been seen to provoke apoptosis.

In good health, the body has its own methods for controlling the process and several new drug treatments, which may make good a deficiency in these control, are also being explored.

Another possibility is that individual HIV-positive people are vulnerable to specific microbes, depending on what they were harbouring when they first became exposed to HIV. By identifying those in the laboratory, doctors would be able, Montagnier believes, to give very precise prophylactic treatment to prevent the destruction of immune cells.

This new way of looking at Aids also implies there should be caution over the therapeutic use of any conventionally designed anti-HIV vaccine, Montagnier says, as the vaccine might trigger the very process it should be preventing. "It would be a very small danger for people who haven't seen HIV before, the correct way of using a vaccine, but for people who are HIV-infected I don't think it would be very good to inject them again with the virus protein. That could make them worse."

Ace Radio Cab

- Computerised meters • Can be summoned to your doorstep
- No call up charge within city limits • Vehicle access from selected stands
- Receipts issued on request • Company credit available

Call 501502, 501503 or 501504



Aset Ltd



Another Aitken Spence Service



WAR A Dress Rehearsal ?

Thomas Abraham

Heavy fighting continued in the northern part of Jaffna peninsula, as the Army continued its operations to expand its area of control against heavy LTTE resistance.

The Defence Ministry said that troops backed by artillery and air cover had overrun LTTE positions at Tellipalai, just south of the Palaly base camp, after a daylong battle. The Army claimed that between 75 and 100 LTTE men had been killed in the fighting and put its own losses at 10 dead, including a Major and a Lieutenant. The Ministry said the Air Force had destroyed two LTTE command vehicles and a jeep.

The LTTE launched a brief but symbolic counter attack against the Army's forward defence lines in Vavuniya, about 6 km outside the town. The attack was repulsed after a fierce fight which left two police constables and a soldier dead.

The attack came when the President, Mr. R. Premadasa, and most of his Cabinet colleagues were on a well-pub-

licised visit to the town as part of an effort to bring the administration closer to the people. The President was in Colombo during the pre-dawn attack, but flew into Vavuniya a few hours after it was over. There was no threat to his life.

The incident must have embarrassed the military which had thrown a heavy cordon around the town to ensure the President's security. For Mr. Premadasa, must have come as an uncomfortable reminder of how far the war is from being won.

The Defence Ministry said that a simultaneous operation in Mullaitivu, in the northern province was continuing and that troops were about one and a half kilometres short of their objective, an LTTE jungle base in Alampil.

The operations in Jaffna are concentrated on expanding the Army's area of control around the Palaly camp. The Army's main foothold in Jaffna peninsula is a 10-12 sq.km. enclave in the northern part of the peninsula stretching east from the naval harbour at Kankesanthurai till a little beyond the Palaly airbase. Over the last two days, troops have pushed eastwa-

ards up to Thondaimannaru, the gateway to Vadamarachi, and southward to Tellipalai, adding several square kilometres to their area of control at Thondaimannaru. The LTTE retreated after blasting the bridge leading to Vadamarachi.

The Army has used its new T-56 tank for the first time in the peninsula and analysts see this as a possible dress rehearsal for a larger offensive to gain control of Jaffna, where the same combination of armour, artillery, infantry and sea and air bombardment are likely to be used.

By going on the offensive in Mullaitivu as well, the Army has demonstrated its ability to fight on two fronts simultaneously for the first time. The small Sri Lankan Army (strength around 70,000) has a limited number of frontline troops, who are usually all committed to battle in a single area. This has allowed the LTTE to move its forces and counter-attack in other areas.

The new military command structure which was created recently giving the commanders of the three services more responsibility has also been tested for the first time. The three service chiefs were present in the North guiding the operations, while the Joint Operations Command, which earlier was responsible for military planning, played a very low key role.

Repaying the masters thro' acts of violence

Madras

Sporadic blasts and other acts of sabotage witnessed in Tamil Nadu in last few days in the wake of the Government of India clamping the ban on the LTTE have not come as a surprise to the law enforcing authorities in the State.

As perceived by the police, the most active among the local extremist groups is the Tamil National Retrieval Force (TNRFF). Unearthed by the "Q" Branch in December last year, this subversive outfit, generously financed by the LTTE, is well trained

in the use of arms and explosives to work for the creation of an independent Tamil Nadu to be the main base for the Sri Lankan Tamils, fight for Tamil Eelam. To achieve this goal, the members of the force were assigned to carry out acts of sabotage, disturbance and lawlessness in Tamil Nadu so as to divert the attention of the authorities from the illegal activities of the LTTE like smuggling out essential commodities and fuel to Jaffna.

The other front organisations of CPI(ML) and Tamil chauvinist

groups out to glorify the LTTE and its supremo, Prabhakaran, are the Radical Youth League (RYL), Radical Students Union (RSU), Indian People's Front, some assorted groups of the People's War Group of Kondapalli Seetharamiah faction (banned recently by the Andhra Pradesh Government). World Tamizh Ina Munnetra Kazhagam led by Mr M. Perunchithiranar, Tamil Desiya Iyakkam led by Mr P. Nedumaran and Pattali Makkal Katchi led by Dr S. Ramadas.

Tamil Militarism. . . .

(Continued from page 15)

6. Quoted in R. Caldwell op. cit.; p. 103.
7. Thurston op. cit; vol. III p. 71.
8. Tolkappiyam Porulathikaram Naccinarkinyar's commentary on verse No. 68 & 90.
9. Maj. A. E. Barstow, 1928. Sikhs. Handbook for the Indian Army; Calcutta Central Publications Branch p. 40.
10. Parani — "A poem about a hero who destroyed 1000 elephants in war". Tamil Lexicon. Vol. IV.
11. South Indian Inscriptions, 1943. Madras Vol. XII No. 106.

12. R. Poonkunran 1979. Tharamangalam publication No. 58. Tamilnadu Dept. of Archeaology. No. pagination. "Kongunadu was well known for its palayams" R. P. Sethupillai op. cit; p. 76.
13. M. Chandramoorthy. 'Kalvettu' Quarterly of the Tamilnadu Dept. of Archeaology No. 8. January 1975. pp. 21-22.
14. South Indian Inscriptions 1967 Vol. XIX No. 3.
15. Purananooru: 212-223. Kopperuncholan who thus committed suicide was apotheosized. K. P. Aravanan examines this practice in relation

to the 'Sallehana' form of fasting unto death among Jain Saints. The other side of Tamils, 1989. Paari Nilayam, Madras, Cheraman Peruncheralatham committed suicide thus when he accidentally received a wound on his back in battle which was considered a great dishonour to a warrior. (Purananooru: 65).

16. Thurston. op. cit; Vol. V. p. 287.

17. Thurston. op. cit; Vol. V. p. 32.

Note: Swaminatham was first published in full in 1975, by S. V. Shanmugam Annamalai University, based on a manuscript found in the British museum library. It refers to Avippali as Poar Avikoduthal. Verse 141. p. 233.

COLOMBO

The Pivotal Port of South Asia


Ideally located to cater to the region's transshipment trade and the world's maritime industry.

- The best turn-around times in the Region for all traffic.
- A streamlined fully-computerised operation.
- A Net-work of Container Depots & Freight Stations.
- A consolidated Rates Structure.
- Attractive rebates for transshipment.
- Safe handling by skilled personnel.



SRI LANKA PORTS AUTHORITY

19, Church Street, P. O. Box 595, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka.

 421231 421201 Telex: 21805 Ports CE Fax: 540651

PEOPLE'S BANK

Celebrating Three Decades of Dynamic Growth

In 1961 Peoples Bank ventured out in the challenging world of Banking with a staff of only 46...and a few hundred customers.

Today, just 30 years later

*People Resource exceeds 10,000
Customer Listings at a staggering 5.5 Million
Branch Network in excess of 328, THE LARGEST
in Sri Lanka*

In just three decades People's Bank has grown to become a highly respected leader in the Sri Lankan Banking scene. Their spectacular growth is a reflection of the massive resources at their command dedicated to the service of the common man - a dedication that has earned them the title "Banker to the Millions"

PEOPLE'S BANK

Banker to the **M**illions

