

October-November 99

Hot Spring

A Journal of Commitment

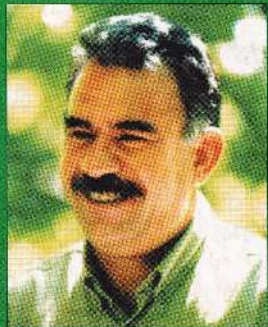
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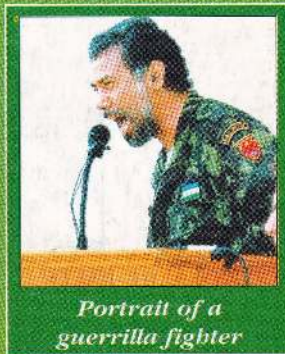


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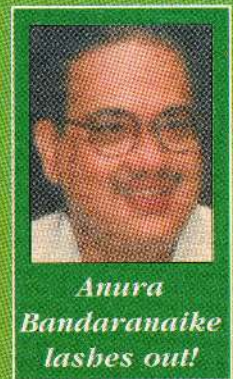
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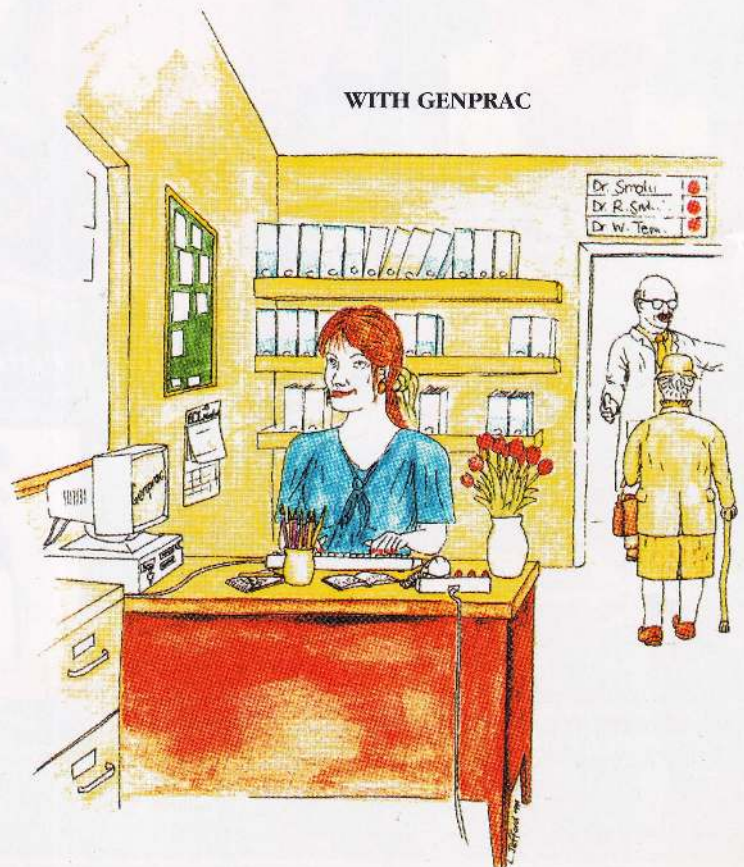
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Hot Spring

A Journal of commitment

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THE BIRTH THROBS OF A NEW NATION STATE !

Those four days of Tamil Tiger blitzkrieg in the first week of November when nine military camps fell like nine pins and nearly 500 square miles of Tamil territory were recovered from Sinhala military occupation had already left a devastating dent on the morale of the Sri Lankan armed forces. That was obvious by the way the soldiers deserted their positions and fled by the hundreds, reportedly leaving behind armoured cars, sensitive communication equipment and more than sixty tractor/truck loads of other expensive military hardware as a parting gift for the Tigers. But that is not the end of the story. As we write this, the LTTE's "Operation Unceasing Waves III" continues to pound positions with mortar barrages and battering their defences and acquiring new territory.

So swift and fierce was the Tiger offensive leaving the Sri Lankan generals themselves in awed surprise that "even the ranks of Tuscany could scarce forbear to cheer". "Years of gains lost in days", lamented Colombo's best known commentator on military affairs, Iqbal Athas.

"Army in disarray", said the *Sunday Leader*.

Even *The Island's* "Defence Correspondent" pocketed his pride

and announced: "Military in worst debacle in nine years".

The Times, London, known for its unjournalistic antipathy towards the Tigers yet ran a 6-column headline which said: "TAMIL RAID KILLS 1,000 TROOPS (Nov.4). "MAJOR VICTORY FOR TAMIL TIGERS", said *The Scotsman*, UK, in a 7-column headline (Nov.4)

While it is easy to interpret the consequences of what happened in the battlefield in pure military terms, there is a far deeper political implication that has yet to seep into the popular mind. Does the idea of a separate Tamil homeland forced out of the hands of the Sri Lankan state seem as remote a possibility NOW, as it looked last year, last month, or even the day before the Tigers

launched "Operation Unceasing Waves III"? Doubting Thomases, even among the Tamils, might take longer to grasp the true significance of what has been happening in the Vanni Tamil heartland now. The fact is, HISTORY IS IN THE MAKING: HISTORY THAT IS GOING TO DEFINE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO PEOPLES, TWO NATIONS, FOR ALL TIME TO COME. What is happening in the battlefields today are not mere battles, but the birth

Contd. overleaf



EDITORIAL COMMENT

Continued from page 1

throbs of a new nation state. To phrase it in chess parlance, we are now coming to the end game.

From Sri Lanka's point of view what are the portents? Given the inadequate strength of the army, given the impossibility of further large-scale recruitment, given the increasing number of desertions, given the regular loss of expensive weaponry passing into the hands of the Tigers, given the black record of her 5-year rule in which the armed forces have suffered some 15,000 dead and 30,000 injured, how does the President hope to wrest back Tamil territory which her own forces have virtually abandoned?

Is it not clear that neither she nor any future government can ever hope to establish a land route to Jaffna when the entire terrain from Vavuniya to Killinochchi including the A9 highway has been cleared of all the military installations?

How then does she hope to maintain a permanent military presence in a peninsula access to which is wholly dependent on sea and air, neither of which could be considered safe from LTTE attacks?

Is she prepared to leave thirty thousand troops, even three thousand, cooped up in the peninsula, unable to fight, unable to run away, unable to be evacuated in a hurry, and eventually to end up as prisoners of war? If she cannot find sensible answers to these questions, the whole country could end up in a bloodbath and a state of anarchy.

If Sri Lanka today is a fractured island, in all senses, except the legal, it is not entirely of Madame Chandrika's making.

The genesis goes back from daughter to mother, and from the — mother to the father. No Tamil wanted Tamil Eelam when her father Bandaranaike brought in the Sinhala Only Act in 1956. All that they wanted was the freedom to sit in silent protest in one corner of Galle Face Green overlooking the Parliament building. Was that too much to ask? Even that freedom was denied when pro-government mobs set upon the silent pro-

testers under the gleeful eyes of the police themselves. The protesters were no ordinary people. Many of them were elected members of parliament, headed by the pacifist Tamil



Not all her foreign trained four-star generals have any clue as how to fathom the military genius of one man - Velupillai Prabhakaran. Who is he? Which foreign military academy trained him? Does he hold the rank of a Field Marshal? The answer is simple. He has justice on his side. What is more, HISTORY IS ON HIS SIDE.

leader of that time, S.J.V.Chelvanayakam. From that symbolic attack on a whole people's right to protest, there began over the years a series of mob attacks on the Tamils themselves. Where the mobs left off, the State took over. There was hate in the air. Tamils were being suffocated in the very land of their birth. They had to have safe living space. **If the four-footed living beings and our feathered friends need sanctuaries like Wilpattu and Yala and Kumana to breathe freely**

and live in peace in a land supposedly visited by the Buddha, why do you deny the same to your fellow human beings?

Today, President Chandrika Bandaranaike is paying the price for that terrible legacy of racist intolerance her parents themselves left her, and which in her foolishness she thought she must perpetuate with greater viciousness. Depriving the Tamils of their birthright must have seemed to her the Ratwatte family's feudal heirloom which she was called upon to safeguard. **Not all her foreign trained four-star generals have any clue as how to fathom the military genius of one man - Velupillai Prabhakaran. Who is he? Which foreign military academy trained him? Does he hold the rank of a Field Marshal? The answer is simple. He has justice on his side. What is more, HISTORY IS ON HIS SIDE.**

Armies are useless unless the soldiers have a worthy cause to fight for. If all that they are fighting for is to get over the wretched unemployment problem in the country, or to build a house for the mother who has been living in a village shack all her life, or to give a sister a good dowry for marriage, then they are going to run away from the battlefield when things get too hot. To say that the average Sinhalese soldier is on the battlefield because he is imbued with a hefty dose of patriotism as some newspaper hacks in Colombo try to make out is pretentious nonsense.

"Men and nations behave wisely", said Israel's former Foreign Minister Abba Eban, "once they have exhausted all other alternatives." To Madame President and the Sri Lanka government, this should be the time for wisdom. **War has ceased to be an option. If they are wise enough, the Sinhalese people too should know that there is no God-given law that an island shall support just a single state, nor does the United Nations impose limits on the size of nation-states for eligibility of membership. If living together in peace is so hard, nations, like people could be better off living separately.**

S.Sivanayagam

Sri Lanka's military Failure **THE REAL REASONS**

1. This paper is written in the immediate aftermath of the events on the Wanni battlefield which commenced on 1st November 1999. Those events will produce undoubtedly a surge of post-mortems both official and unofficial. All of them will assume the national consensus which cannot be questioned in Sinhala society. In addition they will avoid "no-go" areas such as the competence of the incumbent President in all three of her vital roles - President, Defence Minister and Finance Minister. The object of this paper is to deal with these untouchable things, to say the unsayable and to think the unthinkable. Only then can our adversity be turned to profit.

2. First and foremost is the unquestioned and unquestionable assumption that the war can be won. It is an assumption held throughout the length and breadth of Sinhala society, throughout the entire spectrum of Sinhala political parties and from the most erudite to the near illiterate. To question it is as sacrilegious as to question the virtue of motherhood. Yet it is disastrously and flagrantly wrong because it ignores the basic and fundamental requirements of modern warfare against a nationalist guerilla adversary fighting on his home ground. This is a very specific and different kind of war on which the now-standard text was written by Stanley Karnow in his magisterial "VIETNAM - a HISTORY". The pronouncements of the President, General A.Ratwatte and other majors-general, the commentaries of defence analysts, the ruminations of savants in "think - tanks" of every stripe convince this writer that not one of them has read this indispensable book. This book explains graphically and clearly why not even a superpower can pre-



ADRIAN WIJEMANNE

vail over a small nationalist adversary fighting on his home ground. Equally importantly it explains the paradox of why the longer such wars last (and invariably they last long) the stronger the state's adversary becomes, not the weaker. Events in the last quarter of this century since this book was writ-

"The long series of battlefield reverses from Pooneryn(1993) through Mullaitivu(1996) and Kilinochchi (1998) does not seem to have made the slightest difference to her ignorance on which her continued reliance on a ridiculous "War for Peace is based"

ten have confirmed its conclusions over and over again in a wide variety of environments and circumstances. The war in Sri Lanka and its progress both past and present is a classic affirmation of the validity of Karnow's conclusions.

3. Sri Lanka is not a superpower. It lacks the basic elements needed for even a modest battlefield performance. The inadequacy of the Sri Lankan government's annual military expenditure has been dealt with extensively in a separate, published paper by this writer. **The proposed allocation of Sri Lanka Rupees 52- billion for the year 2000 is abysmally inadequate even for the existing troop strength.** Even if the totality of annual revenue and borrowings (excluding only debt servicing costs) is devoted to the war closing down civil government, schools, civilian hospitals, social services etc. the needed sum of around Rs. 250- billion per year cannot be found. Raising tax rates will produce a lower yield of tax revenue, not a higher. Borrowing abroad for warfare is out of the question for nobody will lend for a venture which destroys, rather than produces, repayment capability. The Sinhala diaspora is too small numerically to make even a small impact on closing the yawning gap of need. The Sinhala discourse on the war is unable to recognise that the entire national annual expenditure budget of the government, including both debt servicing and all military costs, is a minuscule £ 3- billion per year.

4. All of this is compounded by the fact that this particular type of war requires far higher ratios of troops to guerillas than the 10 to 1 currently prevailing in Sri Lanka.. In the Sri Lankan conditions even 100 to 1 will not suffice due to the nature and

sheer size of the terrain and the proven military capability of the state's adversary. If the existing low and wholly inadequate level of troops to guerillas cannot be adequately funded, it is no more than idle speculation to consider an increase of troop strength even by conscription.

5. The conclusion is inescapable that the basic assumption of the whole of Sinhala society as to the winnability of the war is devoid of foundation in reality. It is nothing more than the magnitudinarian dream that size will prevail in the long run. What happened to the dinosaurs has yet to register in the Sinhala consciousness and consensus.

6. Now for the other "no-go" areas such as the incumbent President. In all conscience it must be said for her that she is no different from any of her three predecessors in relying on what is euphemistically called "the military option". Indeed that reliance goes much further back to all the Prime Ministers without exception from the days of Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike. The difference is that after the Karnow thesis was written in 1983 there was no excuse for presidential ignorance. Her immediate predecessor may not have been able to grasp the Karnow thesis and his immediate predecessor paraded his contempt for the written word. Junius Richard Jayawardene came to power in 1977 and the Karnow thesis appeared half way during his period nor did he have the hindsight of its validity that we have now. But for Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga there is no excuse - she is a literate human being, well able to read and understand in an instant how the Karnow thesis applies a fortiori to

the Sri Lankan situation. The incumbent President's frequent pronouncements that the LTTE can be debilitated by military pressure into compliance with a constitutional offer shows vividly the true extent of her ignorance of the Karnow thesis and its proven validity in conflicts of the kind in which she is engaged as Commander-in-Chief of the Sri Lankan forces. The long series



(Her) appointment of a grossly unqualified relative... A.Ratwatte(left)

of battlefield reverses from Pooneryn (1993) through Mullaivivu (1996) and Kilinochchi (1998) does not seem to have made the slightest difference to her ignorance on which her continued reliance on a ridiculous "War for Peace" is based.

7. Her performance as Defence Minister is so egregious as to beggar belief. Starting with the appointment of a grossly unqualified relative (A.Ratwatte) as her deputy, then encouraging him in the absurd role of a mediaeval sanna-bearer after the capture of Jaffna and finally exalting him to full General status, all along it has been a case of reliance on the unspeakably ignorant. When Ratwatte stated the war was 96% victoriously concluded she gave every indication of support for that view. The encouragement of abject sycophancy in all her military advisors sealed her

off hermetically from military reality on the ground. The inability to sift good advice from bad in the military sphere was so glaringly evident throughout. **Keeping 35,000 troops fed, fuelled and idle in the Jaffna Peninsula, supplied by long sea and air routes at enormous cost is by itself enough to cripple the war effort of a robust economy.** The utter impossibility of this has still not dawned on her - hollow considerations of prestige overwhelm the realities of military necessity. For such a powerful combination of ignorance and obtuseness the price for our people has come very high indeed.

8. The performance as Minister of Finance is even more distressing. There seems to be no knowledge of comparative magnitudes in world terms. An absurd triumphalism seems to obscure the paucity of the country's financial resources, the narrowness of its tax base and the sheer poverty of the general population. With an average annual per capita g.n.p. of US\$ 900- the Minister of Finance considers it possible to finance a modern army, navy and air force facing up to a formidable, battle-hardened military adversary. A remorseless triumphalistic hype attempts to throw a smoke-screen over the catastrophic decline in the exchange rate of the Sri Lankan currency, a decline which directly debilitates the war effort. Conversely the Tamil diaspora, which finances its national war effort, exists in a financial environment with the world's hardest currencies and finances its war effort in those currencies.

9. These shortcomings are compounded by a total lack of knowledge of what is adequate for financing the war effort. The best she can say is a regular lament on the

opportunity cost of the current financial provision for the war -i.e. that it deprives education, health services, infrastructure investment etc. of this sum. Never does a word appear as to whether the amount provided annually for the war is adequate for it. There is ample, well-documented, published evidence which demonstrates clearly the abysmal inadequacy of current provision as well as the proposed provision for the year 2000. The Minister of Finance is blissfully unaware of all this. **She is supported by a deputy who of late "has gone all goofy" advancing prolix solutions to problems which are said not to exist.** Just feeding the shredder is not serious, responsible management of the country's finances in a time of desperate warfare.

THE UNTHINKABLE

10. So much for the untouchable and the unsayable. Now for the unthinkable.

11. The single all-island state stretching from sea to sea, north and south, east and west, is regarded by the Sinhala people as their ancient heritage for the preservation of which no price in human terms is too high. Both lives and treasure are well sacrificed for its preservation in this form. This is a mediaeval, sacramental, attitude towards a state. The erosion in size or the diminution of the land extent of such a state is a fit and proper ground for war. These were assumptions widely held and valid in mediaeval times but which are of little relevance to the utilitarian concept of the state as but a means towards important human ends, and changeable as those ends change over time. Today the people of the island live not in mediaeval times but, like all other people everywhere, in modern times. The values of modern life are widely adopted by most persons on the island. In education, life-style, consumer preference, leisure, sport, amusement, food, clothing, housing, customs, manners, world-view, trade, communications, human rights, legal systems right up to and including constitutional form it is the norms and values of the modern world that prevail.

The only deviation is the mythical sanctity attached to a particular concept of the state, an aberration as great as if we desired the rajakariya form of government rather than the universally accepted western constitutional form. No one in Sinhala society, no worshipper at the altar of the past wishes to revert to the rajakariya system today. In all aspects of our lives change has been, is now and will continue to be all pervasive. It is the one single, solitary, deviation from this norm that has plunged us into war and all its predictable disasters.

12. Historically too the single all-island state is more myth than reality. The state itself is only a recent concept after the disappearance of kingdoms a few centuries ago. The single all-island state of today is a purely colonial structure imposed by the force of foreign imperial arms. Immediately prior to its creation in 1833, the island was the arena for the ebb and flow of many monarchical entities, a platform on which constant change was wrought by power-plays, dynastic alliances, foreign incursions etc.. **The mythical, sacramental single all-island state is a recent construction necessary for justifying a particular form of power wielding. It stands or falls purely and simply on the ability to wield the necessary power to prop it up. It is devoid of ethical or moral foundation. It is this fragile, narrowly conceptual entity that fell to pieces in the first week of November 1999 on the Wannu battlefield.**

13. Many things are now clear; many errors lie exposed. For the Sinhala people the tragic price just exacted from them is second only to the unspeakable horrors heaped upon the Tamil nation in its homeland. Now it is absolutely clear, beyond the slightest vestige of doubt, that the war is unwinnable. Equally important and equally beyond a vestige of doubt is the certainty that the longer the war lasts the stronger the LTTE will become. **The unquestioned assumption that by war the LTTE can be weakened has been stood upon its head - the very opposite has happened.** In this the LTTE is not

unique - it has been the case in all other theatres of this particular type of conflict. The LTTE is unique in the rapidity of the increase of its terrestrial strength and in its acquisition and build up of naval power.

14. This is the inescapable reality that the Sinhala people now face. It is not within their power to reverse it and return to the exclusive wielding of power within the single all-island state. It is in this context that peace has to be sought. It has to come from an agreement between the two powers that the long war has thrown up - the existing power which has failed to preserve the colonial entity and the new power of an emerging state. The way forward is a negotiation between them on the basis of complete equality in all respects - with or without a ceasefire, with or without a mediator, with or without a "time frame".

CLOUD CUCKOO LAND

15. It is not going to be easy especially for the Sinhala side. **Across the table they face the LTTE, standing four square on the Vaddokoddai Resolution and the enormous democratic mandate received electorally for it.** The Sinhala side, with the slimmest of electoral majorities and bleating sheepishly for support from its opposition, enters the unfamiliar world of reality after its recent unceremonious ejection from cloud cuckoo-land. It will be a fascinating encounter and behind both sides stand ravaged populations expecting salvation after the purgatory through which they have been dragged. A return to the status quo ante bellum is obviously beyond the bounds of possibility but a rational, humane relationship between the two states is both necessary and eminently attainable. Can the Sinhala side slip the "dead hand of the past" and advance confidently into a new future as the Sinhala people have done already in all other walks of life? That is the all-important question.

ADRIAN WIJEMANNE
9TH NOVEMBER 1999
CAMBRIDGE
U.K.

No Harvest This

*Tamil Eelam poet Kasi Ananthan
on Abdullah Ocalan*
(Translated from Tamil by Watson & Nirmal)

It seems...

capital punishment
for Ocalan

We don't worry

that is
his worry

Because...

The leader
of Kurdish race
knows
death
is natural
to mankind
and even more natural
to a warrior

Unbowed he stands

The coming

death
of Ocalan
is harvest
says Turkey
and sowing
says Kurdistan

In truth

As the seed

of Kurdish liberation
I see
Ocalan

Today's

bloody wolves
could have forgotten

France

that stood straight
after burning
Joan of Arc

Libya

that won
after hanging
Omar Muktar

Hungary

that dawned
after shooting down
Nagi

South Africa

that became free
after beating to death
Biko

Stop

O wolves!
certainly
I do say

Tomorrow

Kurdistan
will bury
your forgetfulness

Try finishing off

Ocalan!

Arrogantly

may you shut him in
your harvest chest

But

remember

History

will repeat itself

When the new sun

blooms
tomorrow
in the soil of Kurdistan
where will you bury
your dark faces?

That day

your harvest chest
will be empty

You will see for yourself

In the soil of Kurdistan

will ripen
the lush green
crop,
Ocalan

PORTRAIT OF A GUERRILLA FIGHTER NOW A NATION'S LEADER !

East Timorese independence leader Xanana Gusmao returned to a tumultuous and emotional welcome in his devastated homeland on October 22, and told his people - "We are independent now and forever"

Timorese are a very brave people", he said, to volleys of "Viva East Timor, Viva Falintil" from the young the elderly and the sick. In an emotional speech, in which his voice cracked as he held back tears, Mr.Gusmao said East Timor would recover from the

President of an independent East Timor.

"They won't destroy us. There will be sorrow, but today we are more confident because tomorrow is ours. We East Timorese people have fought for 25 years. Today we finally find our lib-



An emotional Xanana Gusmao addressing some 5,000 East Timorese upon his return to Dili after seven years in a Jakarta jail

Dressed in Falintin battle fatigues, Mr.Gusmao told a cheering, sobbing crowd from a podium in front of the old governor's residence that East Timor no longer needed Indonesia.

"We don't need Indonesia. East

devastation and violence that followed its August 30 vote for independence.

"They tried to kill us, but we are still here, crying and suffering

but still alive", said

the man tipped to be the first

eration .

The 53-year old Gusmao was slipped into East Timor on the 21st night by the UN-mandated forces of the Interfet. Crowds flocked from all corners of the capital Dili to the white-washed governor's residence, stand-

ing like a beacon in a sea of charred shells of buildings, to hear him. "Our homeland is ours. We will develop our new country. We know what we want and we will recover from the damage", Mr.Gusmao told them. "We meet again in very sorrowful circumstances but from today nothing can stop us. Mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, be happy".

Arrested in November 1992 after 17 years in the forests and arid hills of East Timor battling for an end to Indonesian rule, Mr.Gustamo was released by Jakarta on September 7, eight days after East Timorese opted massively for independence from Indonesia in a UN-organised vote.

Regarded as the rightful leader of the new nation of "Timor Lorosae" (Rising Sun of Timor), his devotion to the cause has earned him recognition worldwide and the title of "Asia's Nelson Mandela". Mr.Mandela himself made a request, which was unusually granted, to meet the jailed leader during the former South African President's visit to Jakarta in 1997.

A symbol of hope for years for the 800,000-strong population of East

Timor, Mr.Gusmao's portrait was prominently displayed by supporters in the days of euphoria that followed the August 30 vote.

That was before the campaign of terror by Indonesian army-backed pro-Jakarta militias that forced half the population of East Timor from their homes and left unknown numbers dead.



Once one of Indonesia's most wanted men, Mr.Gusmao from his prison cell became a key figure in the search for a peaceful settlement in East Timor.

Affectionately known as Ze, Gusmao was arrested in November 1992 and jailed for plotting against the state and illegal possession of weapons.

His original life sentence was commuted to 20 years by former President Suharto.

Mr.Gusmao was born on June 20, 1946, as Jose Alejandro Gusmao, the son of a school teacher and the second eldest of seven children growing up in Laleia village near the township of Manatuto.

After briefly attending a Roman Catholic seminary outside Dili, he joined the Portuguese civil service in the 1970s, but by 1974 he was caught up in politics as a member of the Associacao Social Democratical Timor - a new independence political party.

Although married to Amelia Baptista Gusmao, with whom he has two children, he left to join the guerrillas two days after the Fretilin - Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor - proclaimed a free East Timor on November 28, 1975 after Portugal had hastily pulled out.

A week later, Indonesian soldiers invaded Dili. The following year Jakarta unilaterally annexed the territory..

Greetings from Tamil Eelam to East-Timor

East Timorese leader Xanana Gusmao was presented with a chain and medallion on behalf of the Eelam Tamils at a reception held in Melbourne, Australia on October 11. The reception was organised by solidarity groups and trade unions in honour of Mr.Gusmao's visit.

Mr.Gusmao was travelling many countries thanking governments and organisations that had supported East Timorese in their fight for self-rule.

The coin medallion, depicting the Tamil homeland embossed on one side and the emblem of the Liberation Tigers on the other, was presented to the appreciative East Timorese leader by Mr.Jeya Kumar, the LTTE representative in Australia and New

Zealand.

Mrs. Manoj Navaratnam, speaking on behalf of the Eelam Tamils, expressed the Tamil people's solidarity with the people of East Timor and congratulated them on their victory in their struggle for self-determination.

She said Eelam Tamils could understand the pain that East Timorese had suffered, because of their own experiences under successive governments in Sri Lanka

Mr.Gusmao was earlier welcomed



Mr.Jeya kumar presenting the coin

in the Australian Parliament with ovation from both sides of the House.

“LAW AND ORDER HAS TOTALLY COLLAPSED”

- Anura Bandaranaike

Sri Lankan Parliamentary Debates Hansard October 7 1999

Hon. Speaker, I am speaking on the Emergency Debate after about six or seven months. I am thankful to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition for allocating 45 minutes to me, but I will try my level best not to take the full time allocated to me and try to wind up earlier.

Sir, before I begin my speech I would like to reply to the Hon. Member who spoke before me whose name I still do not know. He made a reference saying that the Government is totally against foreign intervention. I must thank Mr. Ronnie de Mel for reminding me of this point. That is that in 1987, when we were all together in Parliament, we in the SLFP were totally opposed to the arrival of the IPKF, so much so that we, in conjunction with the MEP and the Maha Sanga - I think you were also there, Sir - we all had a huge Sathyakriya in Pettah, which was unfortunately tear-gassed by my current friends in the UNP. But then what did the SLMP do, led by Mr. Vijaya Kumaratunga and Her Excellency the President? They fully supported the arrival of the IPKF in Sri Lanka. -[Interruption]. They fully supported it, Mr. Vijaya Kumaratunga, my late brother-in-law, in particular, fully supported the arrival of the IPKF and gave maximum support to Mr. J. R. Jayewardene. These people come to Parliament and talk rubbish.

Sir, I will now get on to my speech.



Within the last few months, Sir, as you will admit, the law and order situation in this country has greatly deteriorated beyond redemption. This is in the last few months. I am not talking only about the North and the East. I am talking of the whole of Sri Lanka, where the whole concept of governance and of law and order has total-

been done about that, Sir, this is the situation that we have unfortunately reached in the last few months.

Now, Sir, we all know this war is unwinnable, whatever my good relation - he is very friendly with me now the Hon. General Anuruddha Ratwatte, my worthy uncle, may say. He is very friendly with me now, Sir. I do not want to attack him. He is doing his best and trying to do a good job. But he is always making wrong predictions, unfortunately. Every month he says that they are winning the war. But the war is unwinnable. “Jayasikuru” did not succeed. It failed. It has stopped. “Ranagosa” went through the first stage. They thought they had won. When they went through the second stage they thought they had won by an innings. When they went to the fourth stage they got thrashed, and unfortunately the army had to withdraw back to base. So

“The war is unwinnable”
“Jaffna is ungovernable”

ly collapsed. This is unprecedented in the history of Sri Lanka done under any government from the time of Mr. D. S. Senanayake. Now they are attacking women, attacking photographers. We also got tear-gassed by the UNP, Sir. Many times we got tear-gassed. But none of us got hammered by the Presidential Security, which was admitted by the Hon. Mangala Samaraweera. Nothing has

there is no hope, even no light at the end of the tunnel, as far as winning the war is concerned. I am not saying this to attack the Government. Even under us, if we form a government, it would be unwinnable. Our strategy would be different. We may have more successes than you all have had. But it is unwinnable. That is quite clear from what has happened.

Now, Sir, they talk about the capture of Jaffna. Jaffna is ungovernable. You ask Members of Parliament who have come from Jaffna. They killed

two Mayors of Jaffna including Mrs. Yogeswaran. Not a single pradeshiya sabha is functioning. All the members who were elected to the pradeshiya sabhas in the North have refused to take their oaths under LTTE pressure. There is no civil administration in the North except the administration of the army and the LTTE.



Lakshman Kadirgamar

Sir, the LTTE today has demonstrated that they can hit anybody any time anywhere they choose. The death of Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam is the latest and the best example of what I am saying. Nobody in this country is safe. We are being told daily by the press that there are 70 suicide bombers, 80 suicide bombers, and now added to the LTTE there are contract killers who are killing for money.....

Now Sir, I am not dealing with the General Ratwatta. I am dealing with the Hon. Kadirgamar. The Hon. Foreign Minister is talking utter rubbish. He is talking utter rubbish and I am telling you why. The vital thing is, we all know that we cannot win this war easily. Have we been able to win the war on our own? We have been unable to win even with the hundred thousand Indian troops who were stationed here when Rajiv Gandhi was Prime

Minister. Then Sir, even with the Indian support we were unable to contain the LTTE or capture Prabhakaran, The Indian army plus the Sri Lankan army. Thousands of Sri Lankan and Indian soldiers have paid with their lives during those years. **Have we been able to defeat the LTTE? No. Have we been able to capture Prabhakaran? No. Have we been able to destroy the LTTE organization? The answer is an emphatic No.** Have you succeeded in your talks which you began in 1994 and 1995? No. Your talks have all failed. There were times when there were things called "Chandrika bangles" and "Chandrika necklaces" sold in Jaffna. There was so much hope but those hopes have all withered into dust. Have your peace proposal worked? No. If you are going for an election early next year or whenever you are going for it, you cannot pass this peace package proposal without the support of the United National Party. The Hon. Leader of the Opposition has said that he will not support it.

Now, Sir, have you been able to stop the suicide bombers from acting in Colombo and other areas? No. Then what do we do? What is the alternative that is left? To all the questions I raised, the answer is an emphatic "no". What do we do? If we cannot sit down and talk with the LTTE, there is no peace in this country. With all due respect to the Tamil Members who are here, it is useless talking to them. They are living in mor-

"If we cannot sit down and talk with the LTTE there is no peace in this country"

tal fear of their lives. Naturally. Therefore, talk to the LTTE. This is like having the play, Hamlet, without the Prince of Denmark. You have to talk to the LTTE, you have to bring them to the negotiating table and if we cannot do it on our own, let some acceptable mediator or a facilitator, as the UNP calls it, or call it what you will by whatever name but let us agree on a com-

mon country, agreeable to the Government, agreeable to us, agreeable to the LTTE. There are plenty of countries that are available, there are plenty of countries that are independent and neutral who offered their good services. I do not want to mention the names of those countries. Bring them in. If we cannot settle our



Anuruddha Ratwatta

own problem, let there be somebody else to help us to talk.

What happened in the Middle East? The Palestinians and the Israelis had been at war for 40 years. They could not be in peace. It was Norway, an independent country who intervened and brought Arafat and Netanyahu together and signed the agreement. I am sorry, it was not Netanyahu but Yitzhak Rabin who was behind it, who was earlier the Prime Minister. They were taken to Washington and in

Washington on the lawns of the "White House" they signed the Peace Accord before the whole world and the United States of America, the most powerful country in the world stood as guarantor of that Accord. Today I am glad that the new Prime Minister of Israel Mubarak has been able to move away from the right wing extreme positions of Benjamin Netanyahu and bring

about peace. Look at that. That looked an unwinnable situation at first sight, but they have come to a peace agreement.

Now, Sir, we have a similar situation. The circumstances may be different but the situation is very similar. So in the same way, why is anybody opposed to a facilitator or a mediator coming? I just cannot understand this. Lakshman Kadirgamar being a Tamil, who should be most interested in settling this problem - because Tamils are the ones who have suffered the most, the innocent Tamils says, "no mediator". I cannot understand this.

Sir, the LTTE in response to the Hon. Lakshman Kadirgamar's statement has categorically stated that they want a mediator and they have lashed out at Minister Kadirgamar. It was published in our local newspapers I think it was published in "The Island". All the Tamil parties are asking for a mediator, - [Interruption] Mr. Ronnie de Mel says that the Hon. Foreign Minister was completely "hamashed" and torn to pieces in the American and the British press. He was torn to pieces by the press.

This man is doing irreparable damage to our foreign policy. He comes in suits, looking very smart and he bungles his foreign policy left, right and centre and puts everybody in jeopardy. Does he realize that there are massacres going on in Ampara and everywhere else? There are innocent Tamils who are dying in Mullaitivu, Innocent Sinhalese are being butchered and innocent Muslims are getting butchered. He is staying in Waldorf Astoria in New York, one of the finest hotels in the world, like a lord in his suite and making statements while poor Sinhalese and Tamils are getting massacred here. What kind of a Foreign Minister have we got?

Sir, if there is any will on the part of the Government and on the part of President, this carnage will only stop if you get a mediator and bring the LTTE into the peace process. Unless and until then, whatever package whether it be Picris' package or anybody else's

package - will not succeed under either Government. It applies to the SLFP as well as to the UNP.

Sir, by this statement Lakshman Kadirgamar has done irreparable

"The Hon. Foreign Minister is talking utter rubbish"

damage to the entire peace process. He had placed obstacle after obstacle on the only road to peace, which is to bring the LTTE to the negotiating table. They are prepared to come. They have categorically said that they are prepared to come if there is an acceptable mediator. This is a long way the LTTE has come. I do not think India is an acceptable mediator, because India is an interested party, nor will India be interested in getting involved now that they have got a stable Government after a long time. What I am telling is that the Hon. Foreign Minister without

realizing or realizing - I do not know what it is - or through sheer foolhardiness, has placed obstacle after obstacle on the only way we can have peace in this country.

He lives under heavy security, behind huge cement bunkers at Mccarthy Road, now Wijerama Mawatha. All the roads are closed and barricaded. Nobody can go anywhere near that place. But what about the security of the poor innocent Sinhalese who got murdered at Gonagala? What about the security of the poor Tamils who got bombed in Mullaitivu? Kadirgamar does not realize that. He is under heavy security, travelling around the world, living in the best hotels, drinking the finest wines and eating the finest food, while these poor people are dying like dogs on the road. He does not realize this.....

* * *

A London Tamil's letter to the Sri Lanka High Commissioner

**High Commissioner of
Sri Lanka in Britain
13 Hyde Park Gardens
London W2**

Re: Your Propaganda Material

I refer to the propaganda booklet you have sent me without invitation. I am returning this back to you and I ask you not to send any such propaganda items to me in the future.

I note that you are spending huge sums of money in printing such booklets in the hope that you can win the support of the Tamil expatriates to go against those who are fighting on behalf of the Tamils against the oppressive regime of your Government.

You are simply wasting precious

money of your poor Sinhalese government in producing these materials. The money spent on these could well be spent on the poor Sinhalese people back home in your country. Or, on the other hand, instead of shedding crocodile tears, you could use this money to supply essential medicine and food to those Tamils suffering in the Wannai and other northern areas.

You are not likely to win the hearts of any Tamil with this kind of publication. Please forward this letter to the President of your people. I also enclose a copy of selected writings, which will convey to your leaders what the bulk of Tamils have resolved in their minds.

Don't waste your precious little money on these silly propaganda materials. I don't want to receive any more of your rubbish.

Thank you very much

Sri Lankan army - Battle fatigue at fifty

NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN

At the grandly named General Sir John Kotelawala Defence Academy on the outskirts of Colombo, cadet officers are swotting in class, still at least a couple of years away from the fighting that awaits them when they graduate. Every year, there is a virtual scramble for admission to the academy as more than 4,000 men and women apply for the 150 seats for a military education which leads to a university degree and for which the cadets are paid a monthly salary.

Though there seems to be no dearth of people waiting to become military officers in Sri Lanka, the fact is that the quality of the applicants falls far below expected standards.

"Because of the ongoing war and the high casualties, we are finding it difficult to attract the kind of people we want. Many parents are afraid to send their children here," says Academy Commandant Brigadier Gamini Hettiarachchi.

But as the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) prepared to celebrate its 50th anniversary on October 10, the quality of officers is a minor issue compared to more pressing problems. On the one hand is battle fatigue, desertions and a dire shortage of rank and file soldiers. On the other, a well-equipped and committed enemy. Result: a stalemate that threatens to continue indefinitely.

The 120,000-strong army needs at least 20,000 more men if the current war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is to be conducted with any degree of success and at least twice its present number for a decisive victory.

Though the army's territorial gains in the north-east since 1995 — like the Jaffna peninsula — have been important successes, soldiers have become

tied down to the newly acquired real estate, leaving hardly any manpower for more operations.

The very reason for the army's failure to attract quality officers also accounts for the low recruitment of soldiers: a 900-page book on the history of SLA to be released today contains a roll of honour running into 220 pages.

Just last month, more than 100 soldiers were killed and over 500 wounded in a fierce battle with the LTTE in north-western Sri Lanka. But the higher the casualties, the more desperate the SLA's commanders become for manpower, making it **the only army in the world which welcomes deserters back.**

"The only army in the world which welcomes deserters back!"

A high level of fatigue has been the inevitable result of the severe manpower crunch. **"This is possibly the only army in the world that has deployed its entire fighting strength in combat without a break for the last 15 years, except for the short ceasefires,"** says General Gerry de Silva, former army commander. Even when the Indian Army was deployed in north-east Sri Lanka between 1987 and 1990, the Sri Lankan forces were busy quelling an armed insurrection in the south.

Nevertheless, the last 15 years have seen the Sri Lankan army expand rapidly from a puny force of around 10,000 to its present strength. "It is now a professional force with experience of combat which it did not have before," said General Denis Perera, who retired as army chief in 1981.

After peace talks with the LTTE broke down in 1995, leading to a full-scale war, the army was given a virtual carte blanche to equip itself with all the hardware it required.

But the LTTE has been able to match it almost piece for piece, some of it stolen from the army itself in deadly attacks. At times, the Tigers have even been one step ahead of the army in this department.

"The first time they fired an RPG at us, we did not know what it was," says de Silva. **The army was similarly puzzled when a tank went up in flames during a recent battle. It is now suspected that it may have fallen to a surface-to-surface missile. The LTTE arsenal is suspected to include such weapons.**

For now, the two sides seem to be evenly matched, even though one is a conventional army and the other a guerrilla force. Even though the military stalemate has prompted demands for peace talks to end what is described by many as an "unwinnable war", opinion in the army is divided on this issue.

One section believes that given time, political patience and "technological assistance" by friendly countries, they can still bring the LTTE to its knees and to stop now would be "foolish".

"A political solution for the Tamils, by all means, but it has to be a military solution for the LTTE," says one senior officer, warning that a ceasefire at this stage may only lead to a repetition of history, with the LTTE rearming and regrouping to attack with renewed strength. "We are the first to want peace, but if we have to fight again, don't expect magic," the officer adds.

The other, less vocal section believes that negotiations with the LTTE must begin soon. The ultimate decision will be made by politicians and could be greatly influenced by elections, which are due next year. That might make the Sri Lanka army's 51st year perhaps one of its most crucial.

(INDIAN EXPRESS, OCTOBER 10)

witnessed efforts of many powerful institutions in falsifying these evidence. The fourth estate in particular is guilty of losing all sense of perspective and objective reporting.

The publication in The Times (UK) on Saturday the 16th. of October 99 implicating the loss of ninety thousand lives on the LTTE, is not only cynical but a heartless deception to show the Sri Lankan Government, in good light.

Dr.N.Sachithananthan

17th. October. 99.

Dear
Mr Sivanayagam,

There have been few editorials written with such assertive strength, in defence of the oppressed Tamil people of Sri Lanka. They were made to feel guilty by many influential agencies for their indifference at the assassination of Neelan Tiruchelvam. **The editorial in the Hot Spring of Aug-Sep 99. is one of those bold and robust rebuttals in the defence of the Tamil people.**

The Sri Lankan Tamils have suffered violations of their Human rights for decades. There is copious documented evidence of this by reputed international agencies spanning many decades. Food and Essential medicine were deprived. Discrimination, torture, rape, and arbitrary arrest, is the order of the day. The Sri Lankan state has committed grievous crimes against the Tamil people and is responsible for the second largest recorded disappearances in the world.

It is to this state that Neelan was slavish, it is with this state that he collaborated, in undermining the struggle and the democratic aspirations of the Tamil people. While pursuing this agenda, he never tried to persuade or explain his position to the Tamil people.

For the past few years we have

Cover Picture, Title, and the Editorial - Neelan Tiruchelvam

Neelan's efforts has been to tarnish the LTTE's image in the international arena and thereby subvert the aspirations of our people. The LTTE should grasp the significance of this ploy and mobilise the resources of the Tamil Diaspora to challenge these inaccuracies as they occur.

The gradually developing perception of a poor international image cannot be a good thing for the Tamil aspirations. A mood of frustration exist within the Tamil expatriate community at their helplessness to meaningfully challenge these deceptive propa-

ganda and change the international image.

The Hot Spring Cover picture, the caption, and the editorial came to lift us all. It was a very powerful message based on universal norms of justice and truth. A laudable piece of work, as if emerging from the very ancestral roots and ideals of the Tamil people - to be just and truthful - the themes of Kannagi and Natkeeran.

The Cover Picture, The Title, and the Editorial are all together a piece of History in the making. Well done Mr. Sivanayagam.

Please accept our appreciation.

Yours sincerely,
Dr. N. Satchithananthan.
General Secretary.
The Federation of Tamil Associations, united Kingdom.



CIA agents in Sri Lanka and UN

Dear Sir

The allegation of being a CIA agent in Sri Lanka is a serious one to tag to any individual. Thus, one sentence in G. G. Ponnambalam (Jr.)'s excellent commentary on the political career of late Neelan Tiruchelvam deserves further analysis (Hot Spring, Aug-Sept. 99). This particular sentence states, "...Tamils who now charge that Tiruchelvam, with his 'international connections' as was evidenced by the outpourings that came from abroad and specifically from America, had a hand in the designation of the LTTE [as a "terrorist organization"] and that Tiruchelvam was indeed a CIA agent." Is there any proverbial 'smoking gun' for the charge that Neelan could have been a CIA agent?

Before I read G. G. Ponnambalam (Jr.)'s commentary in the Hot Spring, I was intrigued by a couple of tid-bits which appeared in the eulogy of Celia Dugger to Neelan, published in the New York Times of Aug. 24. In it, she had written as follows:

"Tiruchelvam's elder son, Nirgunan, 26, an investment banker in Singapore, became almost obsessed with his father's security. He begged his father to stay inside their house, or to wear a bullet proof vest and travel in a bomb-proof car. The son tracked down an aging bomb-proof Jaguar that had carried the Queen of England when she visited Sri Lanka in the early of 1980's. But when his father used the car, it broke down. The one garage that could fix it always seemed to be busy."

I feel that some vital information is missing in the above passage. How Nirgunan was able to locate the bomb-proof Jaguar which carried the Queen of England for his

dad? Did he receive any extraordinary help from 'foreign-hands' to purchase this car? Why "only one garage" could fix this bullet-proof car? Why this "one garage" was always "busy?" How many months (or years) did Neelan use this car?

In addition, the condolence message of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to Neelan's untimely death

SACHI SRI KANTHA

writes from 5-16-305, Tsukimicho, Fukuroi city 437-0126, Japan

needs to be taken with a pinch of salt. I wish to elaborate a little. Early this year, *New York Times* (Feb. 23, 1999) published an article by Philip Shenon

"Tiruchelvam's elder son, Nirgunan, 26, an investment banker in Singapore, became almost obsessed with his father's security. He begged his father to stay inside their house, or to wear a bullet proof vest and travel in a bomb-proof car.

with the title, "C.I.A. was with U.N. in Iraq for Years, Ex-Inspector says". First two sentences of this article is very relevant to the readers, I believe. Thus I reproduce them below:

"The CIA began placing American spies among UN weapons inspectors in Iraq only a year after the end of the Persian Gulf War of 1991 and worked closely with the United Nations to organize the inspections, a former arms inspector says. The former inspector, Scott Ritter, said in a new book that he and a senior CIA official operating

under an assumed name had planned some of the largest and most complex inspections undertaken by the United Nations and that the United Nations inspection teams had included "CIA paramilitary covert operatives."

This exposure revealed to neutral observers that CIA has infiltrated the United Nations, and even the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan seems to behave like a person on CIA's pay roll. It is a pity that Kofi Annan is being fooled by the CIA and he has a lot to learn from the master-statesman Nelson Mandela. In his autography, 'Long Walk to Freedom', **Mandela did not mince his words about the nefarious role played by the CIA. He had written explicitly**

that "the CIA has been responsible for many contemptible activities in its support of American imperialism." One should also note that during President Reagan's regime, quite a segment of those who posed as the 'human rights activists' in the USA did not criticise the then prevailing apartheid system in South Africa strongly,

while Mandela was in prison. They just believed the "doctored version" of the CIA-supplied "truth" that Mandela and those who supported him in the international scene (such as Libya's leader Muammar Qaddafi) were "terrorists".

Thus, unless evidence to the contrary is revealed publicly, messages of condolences offered by Kofi Annan as well as President Bill Clinton on Neelan's untimely death have to be taken as circumstantial evidence of a link between Neelan Tiruchelvam and CIA.

LETTERS

Bouquets to Hot Spring

by e-mail
October 6

(name and address of sender withheld)

Dear Mr.Sivanayagam,

Thank you for that superb editorial and picture. (H.S.Aug/Sept). The picture with the sub-title "Authority and Obsequiousness" speaks volumes about a whole generation of Tamil English-educated elites - many of them Christians too. The Tamil reaction to Neelan's case must open the eyes of many Kadirs of the future. I am very much taken up by that picture - the pose, the look of hanging by the lips of CK, the hands of a paid betrayer, the slave before the smiling Mistress with fisted hand....".

Doctor S.Mahendran writes from U.K.

Editor
Hot Spring

Dear Sir,

Your editorial was a breath of fresh air. I was tormented by the one-sided representation of Neelan's assassination. As you rightly pointed out he did not lose his life for all his positive qualities. He lost his right to live because of the scant regard he showed for his people's yearning liberation from decades of servitude.

*"New Insights...
Thought provoking"*

Mr.K.Chidambaram,
Room 13, Law Chambers, Sampath Nagar,
Erode 638 011, Thamizhnaadu, India,
writes:

Editor HOT SPRING
Dear Sir,

HOT SPRING is doing yeoman service in highlighting political and social problems of Tamils all over the world. The plight of Eelam Tamils is vividly and graphically portrayed. New insights and novelty of approach distinguishes **HOT SPRING** from most other journals of this kind.... Keep up your noble endeavour Tamils all over the world will join you in solidarity, and the day is not far away when Tamils all over the world will rejoice in the birth of Tamil Eelam.

To Readers in Canada, U.S.A. Australia, New Zealand

Do you wish to send articles or letters to Hot Spring? Do you wish to advertise in its columns? Have snippets and social events publicised through Hot Spring. To make things easy for you, we have now our own contact addresses in Canada and Australia. Avail yourself of this facility. Remember from now on Hot Spring reaches fellow Tamils in many parts of the world.

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SRI LANKAN TAMIL NATIONALISM

A Study of its Origins

by

Dr.Murugar Gunasingam

(University of Western Sydney)

"... a pathbreaking and pioneering study of the Eelam Tamil quest for self-determination... Dr.Gunasingam brings us to this threshold point in the evolution of Sri Lankan Tamil nationalism, leaving his readers asking for more".

-Professor A.J.Wilson

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Sri Lanka

"FAILS THE TEST OF FREEDOM"

Sri Lanka is one of four countries that could face expulsion from the Commonwealth under proposals for tough new membership criteria based on democracy and human rights. A report by the London-based Foreign Policy Centre - whose president is Robin Cook and whose patron is Tony Blair - calls for Zimbabwe, Kenya, Zambia and SRI LANKA to be expelled if they do not improve the treatment of their citizens.

Pakistan has already been suspended following the recent military coup.

Although the Foreign Policy Centre is an independent think-tank, the report has a semi-official status because it has been written in consultation with the Commonwealth's own human rights advisers.

The report calls for the Commonwealth to adopt new powers against countries that fail to live up to its standards with the appointment of a "Good Governance Commissioner" to police member states.

Members would be expelled if they refused to maintain an independent judiciary, tackle corruption and promote civil society.

The 1991 Harare Declaration, which contains a much more vague commitment to democracy is condemned as leaving "loopholes for abuse" and would be rewritten.

□□□

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TIRUCHELVAM

To The Editor, New York Times

Mr Tiruchelvam was always described adoringly as a moderate in a struggle between parties who were polls apart. The Tamils wanted to be freed from SINHALA domination, while the Sinhalese were determined to maintain it. MR TIRUCHELVAM, was a "Colombo 7 Tamil" a phrase used to describe an elitist group of Tamils who were born and lived in the most exclusive residential area of the nation's capital. He was educated in Colombo's prestigious Royal College, Colombo and later abroad at Harvard. He never lived amongst his TAMIL counterparts in the North or East, and was never a heartfelt advocate of separation. He was an advocate of concessions to the Tamils while retaining SINHALA supremacy. **The problem with such compromises was that it always ensured SINHALA domination over the Tamils.** The concessions made to the Tamils were subject to withdrawal by a displeased SINHALA government. This provision was necessary in order to preserve the UNITARY NATURE of the CONSTITUTION. The uninvolved, who did not discern this, praised the government for being conciliatory for making concessions subject to this proviso. The Tamils were characterized as obstreperous for turning such concessions down. The architects [always agents of the government] were hailed as moderates with a neutral bent.

Mr Thiruchelvam, was made a nominated member of Parliament by the T.U.L.F. in 1995. He was never elected to Parliament. From the date of his nomination to this, not one peace proposal of constitutional dimension has been presented to the L.T.T.E.. The government has published a host of proposals none of which have been submitted to the other party to the conflict. They have been presented to

those cooperating with the government. Of what use is that in bringing about a peaceful solution to the war.

The T.U.L.F. swept every ELECTION in the North & East in 1977 on a platform DEMANDING AN INDEPENDENT STATE.

WAKELEY PAUL
(FORMER PRESIDENT, ILANKAI THAMIL SANGAM, U.S.A.)

No meaningful elections have been held in this region since. Just before his sad demise, Mr Tiruchelvam was invited BY THE PRESIDENT to prepare a new constitutional proposal with the Minister of Constitutional Affairs, Mr G.L. Peiris. The T.U.L.F. now seeks to find a solution working with, rather than against the SINHALA government. What then can one expect. A perpetuation of the "UNITARY CONSTITUTION" by which the Sinhalese with a commanding

When moderates work with the government against the Tamil fighting forces, are they collaborators or neutral interveners?

majority in the CENTRAL PARLIAMENT can dominate the Tamils. The Tamils demand a FEDERAL CONSTITUTION [analogous to that of the United States] whereby they will control much of their own destiny through their regional government. They will then be freed of SINHALA control in areas of government that matter to them most. **For them to submit to an UNITARY CONSTITUTION would be to revert to square one. This whole violent struggle to attain goals they could not win by constitutional means because they were a permanent minority in the central parliament, would be made meaningless.** Lives would have been lost and property devastated in vain. They

would in fact be conceding the right of the Sinhalese to rule them on any terms the Sinhalese desired. Is that a compromise or a total surrender to end the conflict?

These are a people who saw one million of their Indian counterparts denied their franchise and citizenship within a year of Independence. These are people who were denied equality of access to jobs with the introduction of the SINHALA Only Act. These are people who were denied equal access to the Universities. **These are people who were massacred at the hands of SINHALA mobs in 56,58,62,77,79, 81,83 when they engaged in non violent protests over these compounding inequities.** These are a people who saw agreements with the government torn up at the behest of Buddhist monks, who openly advocated, and continue to advocate, discrimination as a policy to be pursued. Can any moderate find a solution to ease the Tamils of their fear and suspicion of the SINHALA politician.

after these experiences? Can any moderate, at the other end of the spectrum, convince a SINHALA government to let go the reins of power over a dissatisfied and disgruntled segment of the population who are a majority in their region of the island? The moderates can devise academic alternatives which will never satisfy the aspirations of a people hungering for Independence, struggling to control their own destinies, ready to suffer physical assaults on their people and property to attain these ends. They have reached the end of their patience, their tolerance has evaporated. All they ask is to be left alone to look after themselves, just as the Sinhalese did when they sought independence from the British.

The international community has to develop a more finely tuned understanding of Tamil resentment and suspicion before jumping to characterize

them as extremists. What after all is an extremist? A person with a strong and unbendable commitment to alter the inequities of history?. What is a moderate? One without such a commitment, who hopes to placate both side? Does the latter deserve more plaudits than the former?.

The press has to open its eyes and aim its viscous pointed claws to burrow under the rubble to see what is going on. When moderates work with the government against the Tamil fighting forces, are they collaborators or neutral interveners.?

Mr Thiruchelvam was a well intentioned man. So are many others involved in this conflict. The question is, who can solve it? Are partisan moderates the answer? Can the opposition be expected to have faith in such a government appointed intermediary.? Is an alternative intermediary necessary?. Is an observer to be present at unconditional negotiations an answer.? Will the Sinhalese government ever consent to this. If not, why not. Sovereign states have been subject to International INTERVENTION when human rights are violated.

KOSOVO is an example.The UN charter permits it. Can we do this without military intervention. The answer is yes, as neither party seeks that .Can we have an intervention short of a military onslaught? Yes, if the government does not object .. But they have and will.

So why blame the L.T.T. E. for failure to negotiate? There has not been a single proposal put on their plate since 1995. They have offered to negotiate with international observers present. The government has turned this down. Who is fearful of exposure and why? What can be expected of the proposals yet to come? The press should lift up its socks or skirts and look at the situation anew. Praising the well intentioned is to be applauded. Looking for better answers, on the other hand is the way to go.It should be evident that the stalemate has lasted too long for the status quo to remain. A rash of fresh intermediaries is needed, before we can even dream of any prospect of success in ending this everlasting conflict. We have to reach for the roots to find a solution, to discover if one is possible ■

TO MY RETIRED COLLEAGUES

*1. Just a line to say I'm living
That I'm not among the dead
Though I'm getting more forgetful
And mixed up on my head.*

*2. I've got used to Arthritis To
my dentures I'm resigned I
can manage my bi-focal But
God, I miss my mind*

*3. Sometimes I can't remember
When I'm standing by the
stair, If I should be going up
them Or I've just come down
from there*

*4. Before the fridge too often
My mind is filled with doubt
Now should I just put food
away Or come to take it out.*

*5. I'm standing by the letter
box And has my face turned
red Instead of mailing this to
you I've opened it.*

Anonymous.

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East Timor & Tamil Eelam

After a twenty-four year struggle, East Timor is about to emerge as an independent state. Despite the genocidal violence unleashed against the East Timorese and the covert and overt support extended to the Indonesian Government, the will of the East Timorese nation has finally prevailed. The East Timorese people have shown their indomitable spirit by braving the Indonesian backed militia to vote for independence. It is now up to the International Governments to back this show of courage by supporting the Timorese people in this hour of their greatest need.

The East Timorese story is the story of all oppressed people whose quest for freedom can never be suppressed. Governments may well try to beat the population into submission and for a time may even succeed in keeping the rebellion in check through collaborators, mercenaries, 'moderates' and to use a term that has come into vogue in the East Timorese context-integrationists.

The East Timorese tale is a testimony to the power of the human spirit. It is also a tale of human depravity, greed and hypocrisy.

Within two months of the occupation of East Timor by Indonesia in 1975, 60,000 East Timorese were killed and thousands of young women were raped. In the last twenty-four years more than 200,000 East Timorese have died as a result of this occupation during which massacres and 'disappearances' had become everyday occurrences. Western countries not only failed to condemn these

atrocities but, instead, have provided overt and covert support to the Indonesian regime while professing and preaching human rights to the rest of the world..

US President Ford was in Jakarta two days before Indonesia's occupation of East Timor and there is little doubt had given his approval to the Indonesian action.

ANA PARAJASINGHAM

Editor, Tamil Monitor, Australasia Federation of Tamil Associations

Canada has either abstained from voting on UN General Assembly resolutions on East Timor or has voted No in support of Indonesia. Indonesia has been one of Canada's top recipients of country-to country aid for a very long time.

The West's rationale was best articulated by an official of the Australian Foreign Affairs in the mid 1970's, who had this to say,

"I don't see what you are getting excited about! The plain fact is that there are only 700,000 Timorese; what we are really concerned about is our relationship with 130,000,000 Indonesians." (East Timor: Genocide in Paradise, Odonian Press, Arizona, 1995)

THE FOURTH WORLD NATIONS WITHOUT A STATE

Like the East Timorese, the Tamil people too have suffered much. They have been driven out of their homes and almost a million have been made internal refugees, half a million have

fled the Island, at least 60,000 Tamil civilians have been killed, their main city (Jaffna) has been occupied by the Sri Lankan army and is now an "open prison" and a "hell hole" (ABC's Foreign Correspondent 28 June 1999).

Mass graves, massacres and disappearances continue to occur. Yet, the Sri Lankan Government has been unable to beat the Tamils into submission. On the contrary, the Tamil people have shown their defiance by silently enduring their suffering while boldly exposing the Government's atrocities. The Sri Lankan Government, has been unable to suppress the news of mass graves in Jaffna or the disappearances of Tamil youth in the hundreds. The use of mercenaries to suppress the only free newspaper in Jaffna has been thwarted because the Tamils have defied the army's presence to protest.

The role of the West in respect of the situation in Tamil Eelam has not been any different to that in respect of the East Timorese. The Tamil rebels have been deemed "terrorist" by the US State department and the "Green Berets" have been dispatched to provide training to the Sri Lankan military.

The Australian Government's policy has been to support the Sri Lankan Government in that the atrocities committed by the Sri Lankan regime are pointedly ignored while the Tamil rebels are condemned for acts of violence. This is so despite mounting evidence of the genocidal nature of the Sri Lankan Government's actions.

Canada and the UK are more cir-

cumspicuous but their policies are no different. The West European countries (Germany, France and Switzerland) home to over 250,000 Tamil refugees have remained aloof despite having to pay an economic price. Meanwhile, the West in general is bankrolling the war by providing aid and loans through various institutions.

The Tamil quest for independence began twenty-two years ago when they voted overwhelmingly for the party that stood for the restoration of Tamil sovereignty by electing 18 of the 22 members to parliament at the general elections held in August 1977. The TULF manifesto read:

"The General election of 1977 is a crucial one to the Tamil Nation. ... In the Tamil territory, the question to be resolved is whether the Tamils want their freedom or continued servitude ... What is the alternative now left to the Nation that has lost its rights to its language, rights to its citizenship, rights to its religions and continues day by day to lose its traditional homeland to Sinhalese colonisation? What is the alternative now left to a Nation that has lost its opportunities to higher education through standardisation and its equality in opportunities in the sphere of employment? What is the alternative to a Nation that lies helpless as it is being assaulted, looted and killed by hooligans instigated by the ruling race and by the security forces of the State? Where else is an alternative to the Tamil Nation that gropes in the dark for its identity and finds itself driven to the brink of devastation? There is only one alternative and that is to proclaim with the stamp of finality and fortitude that 'we alone shall rule over our land that our forefathers ruled. Sinhalese imperialism shall quit our Homeland'...

Almost seventy percent of the Tamils in Tamil Eelam cast their vote for independence.

But that mandate was ignored by the Government which sought to 'solve' the problem by beating the Tamils into submission. The result was the state-sponsored massacre of 1977. The democratically elected TULF was helpless and despite its readiness to accept even limited

autonomy its plea was ignored. In 1981, the Jaffna Public Library with a collection of over 95,000 books (including several rare manuscripts and books) was burnt down by the Police running amok in a further attempt to beat the Tamils into submission by destroying their cultural heritage. In July 1983, Tamils living in the South were subject to the worst pogrom in years. Over 3,000 Tamils were killed within a fortnight and property belonging to the Tamils destroyed by squads armed with electoral lists which enabled the "goons" to identify Tamil homes. Since then the Tamil death toll has mounted.

The parallels between Tamil Eelam and East Timor are many and varied.

Both people have been treated by the dominant nation as 'minorities' to be integrated into the dominant nations.

In February 1990, Indonesian Foreign Minister at that time, Benny Murdani, had this to say: *"there is no such nation as a Timtim nation (the Indonesian name for East Timor), there is only an Indonesian nation.. If you try to make your own state it will be crushed"*

In February 1994, D B Wijetunge, Sri Lanka's President at that time had this to say *"The majority community in this country are the Sinhalese. Therefore the Sinhalese should govern the country. They governed the country in the past and will do so in the future"*

Both the Indonesian Government and the Sri Lankan Government have sought to impose their dominance by changing the demography of the region which they have sought to control.

Indonesian authorities over the last twenty-four years have actively encouraged Indonesians to migrate to East Timor under the guise of relieving population pressures. Land given to the Indonesians is land formerly owned by East Timorese who were forcibly relocated or land declared 'underutilized'. As a result by 1992 almost one seventh of the population of East Timor was made up of Indonesians.

Similarly Planned state sponsored settlement of landless Sinhala peasants in the Tamil Homeland has been the policy of all of the Sri Lankan Governments since the 1950's. According to Dr. Selvanathan of the School of International Business Relations at Griffith University, Nathan, Queensland:

"One of the most vicious forms of oppression of Tamils by successive Sri Lankan Governments is the destruction of the national identity of the Tamils through government-sponsored aggressive colonisation schemes....(Selvanathan E A, The Oppression of Tamils in Sri Lanka, Sacramento: Proceedings of the Tamil Eelam Research Conference, 1991)

It is a view supported by the observations of two British parliamentarians (Robert Kilroy Silk MP and Roger Simms MP) who visited Sri Lanka as members of the UK Parliamentary Humans Rights Group in 1985 who had this to say:

"We can say, without much doubt, that the government is driving the Tamils from their homes and does intend to settle Sinhalese People in these areas".

However, in one crucial aspect the Tamil people have been fortunate. Whereas, Indonesia with its superior fire-power and huge Western support was able to militarily crush the FRETILIN (The East Timorese rebel forces), the Sri Lankan Government has not been able to crush the Tamil resistance militarily. On the contrary, the LTTE has become even more capable of resisting the attacks and defending their people. The defeat of the FRETILIN was made partly possible because Indonesia's success in weakening the FRETILIN by encouraging a rival faction (UDT) to take up arms against the FRETILIN. The major reason of course was Indonesia's superior firepower and utter ruthlessness in massacring anyone suspected to be a FRETILIN fighter or even a potential fighter.

The LTTE has not only survived but has emerged even stronger because of its ability to be acutely

aware of the dangers posed by collaborators in the guise of 'moderates' and its leader's politico/military capabilities. **The LTTE's decision to withdraw into the Vanni along with 400,000 people in the face of Sri Lanka's superior fire-power in 1995 was indeed a decision which has, today, saved thousands of young Tamils from a fate similar to the East Timorese in 1975.**

The current situation in East Timor is a powerful reminder that despite all the goodwill and sympathy of decent people, no nation can afford to rely on goodwill alone. The East Timorese who are being hunted down like animals by Indonesian backed thugs have no army to defend them. Those who are so anxious to preach to the oppressed about the virtues of non violence (like our Foreign Minister) can only wring their hands while East Timorese are being slaughtered or express hollow sympathy and concern while the massacres continue unabated.

SONYA PLEADS FOR NALINI

Congress Party president Sonia Gandhi has urged Indian President K R Narayanan to commute the death sentence awarded to Nalini, one of the four convicted for the Rajiv Gandhi assassination, according to the former National Commission for Women chairperson, Mohini Giri. Sonia has sought that the death sentence of the other three should also be reduced to life imprisonment.

Dr Giri told a press conference in New Delhi on November 18 that she met Sonia Gandhi last week to ascertain her views on the matter and was told that Sonia had already written to the President in this regard.

"Mrs Gandhi categorically said that neither she nor her son or daughter wanted any of the four convicts to be hanged. Mrs Gandhi specially expressed the view that no child should be orphaned by an act of the state," Dr Giri added.

DEMO IN DURBAN

More than 1,000 men and women of all walks of life staged a demonstration opposite the International Convention Centre in Durban, South Africa,, the venue of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting. The demo held on 13th November demanding - among other things, a call to bring President Chandrika to trial before the International Court of Justice for war crimes, received extensive coverage in the electronic and print media in South Africa.

A memorandum of appeal addressed to the Commonwealth Conference for urgent Commonwealth intervention in Sri Lanka was delivered to the South African Foreign Office officials at the site of the demonstration and copies sent to the High Commissions of UK, Canada, Australia and India.

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The New York cabbie with a heart

"IF YOU DON'T GIVE, YOU DON'T GET!"

New York: Every day, lawyer-turned-taxi driver Shri Om Dutta Sharma delivers more than just his passengers to their stops the kind-hearted cabbie delivers hope and health to poor children in India.

Sharma founded a school, clinic and a free dispensary in his hometown - all paid for out of the 35,000 dollars a year he earns steering his yellow cab through New York city.

"If you don't give, you don't get", says Sharma, a father of four.

Sharma grew up in the small village of Doobher Kishanpur, 60 miles north of New Delhi, where most kids' schooling ended in fifth grade. But a distant uncle made it possible for him to get an education.

"To this day, I don't know why he did it, but I've never forgotten", Sharma says.

But after coming to America in 1974, law degree in hand, Sharma only found seasonal work as an insurance salesman. Then one day, while standing on Broadway, watching its endless bustle of people hopping into cabs, it hit him.

He jumped into a checkered car himself and asked the driver how he could get his license. "By evening", Sharma recalls, "I had the license in hand".



Everything was going well for the cabbie and his wife Krishna. So when Sharma inherited his family's farm after his mother's death four years ago, he knew instantly it was the perfect time to give something back. He flew to India and called on villagers to come listen to him.

"If you become active participants in your children's education and see them study at home", he told them, "I

will give them books, uniforms and a free education".

Today, 210 children attend the school he named after his mother. Sharma then contacted a town doctor and asked how much it cost each month to run his practice.

"He said about 4,000 rupees or about 100 American dollars", he says. "I told him I would give him 4,000 rupees every month if he'd provide care for all the children, for free".

The doctor agreed and Sharma made the same deal with a local pharmacist to supply medication.

Thinking ahead, Sharma hopes to offer his hometown two of his most precious gifts. His sons are pre-med students at St. John's University in Queen's, N.Y. Once they become doctors, they'll practice medicine in India.

After 22 years, Sharma still loves his work. His cab is a home to him, and his passengers are more than just fares.

"People ask me if I have family here in America" "And I say, "Aren't you my family?"

, he says,

"Whether you're from India, America, Africa, what difference does it make?" □

A Tamil is among Britain's top internet tycoons!

The name is THURAISAMY PATHMANABHAN. He is one among Britain's top 100 e-millionaires, according to a survey made by the SUNDAY TIMES, London.

Pathmanabhan who ranks 39 among the first 100 tycoons with a personal value of E25M, supplies digital telecommunications products for

the net, through his company UNITED NETWORKS.

Aged 50 among the hundreds whose ages rank from Keith Young (61) to Benjamin Cohen (17) who founded a £5m web site for the Jewish community with just £150, Pathmanabhan is an Eelam Tamil from Jaffna.

According to inquiries made by HOT SPRING, Pathmanabhan had qualified in UK as an electronic engineer and worked as a "Development Engineer for THORN-EMI. An old boy of Mahajana College, Jaffna, he is known among his friends for his kindness. hard work and business acumen.

NEELAN TIRUCELVAM

as seen by a foreign academic

The assassination of Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam has met with an undivided echo: his death has been mourned as the severe loss to Sri Lanka in particular, to the defenders of human rights the world over in general.

Thus, President Clinton made the extraordinary gesture to express his shock, mourn the loss of this voice for reconciliation¹, the UN Sub-Commission on Human Rights paid tribute to his memory² and included his name in a special resolution resolutely condemning the assassination of human rights defenders³.

The Sri Lankan government in its turn as much as the US delegation at the United Nations⁴ along with international human rights organisations such as Amnesty International⁵ and the international press, e.g. the International Herald Tribune of 25 August, were quick to identify the authors of the murder, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Tamil military organisation engaged in a war against the Sinhalese Buddhist government in Colombo.

No doubt, Neelan Tiruchelvam displayed by all accounts a highly likeable character, was an internationally known scholar in constitutional affairs, and fought for the rights of minorities elsewhere. They explain this expression of sorrow and outrage. At the same time they have, however, tended to obscure the fact that Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam was not just a 'defender of human rights' and 'peace activist', but a prominent politician in a war-torn society.

His role in the Sri Lankan political context has to be illuminated in order to fully appreciate not least Neelan Tiruchelvam himself and to better understand why the Tamils



Neelan Tiruchelvam

of Sri Lanka did not share in this grief.

The following text seeks to provide some such background information.

1) Whatever its formal credentials as to a democratic society, Sri Lanka has - long before the confrontation with

DR. JOHN P. NEELSEN

Professor, Institute of Sociology, University of Tübingen Germany

the Tamils turned to armed conflict - been characterized by an increasingly authoritarian regime, characterized by a concentration of power in the hands of an 'executive presidency' (since 1978), a rule by emergency (almost uninterrupted for over 20 years) and an institutionalisation of political violence, accompanied by large-scale human rights violations for which the

reports of the UN-Human Rights (Sub-) Commission, Amnesty International and Human Rights' watch bear ample witness. This includes extrajudicial killings of innocent people by the security forces, instigation of ethnic hatred and pogroms by political parties, including those in government. **As far as the assassination of prominent politicians is concerned, it has been resorted to by all major Sinhalese parties (UNP, SLFP, JVP) in their fight for power and also by both sides in the war raging in the North-East of the country.** Thus as many as 13 candidates, all of them from the then opposition, were killed during the six weeks election-campaign of 1989⁶. To these may be added the murders of the army chief of staff, General Kobekaduwa in August 1992, of the defense minister Lalith Athulathmudali in 1993, of Prime Minister Premadasa in May 1994, and of the opposition candidate for the presidency G. Dissanayake in October 1994.

Responsibility for all these assassinations was instantly and invariably blamed by the Sri Lankan government and the media on the LTTE as were the more recent cases of the Pannali massacre of 9 Tamil civilians in January 1997 or the crash of a Lion Air plane in 1998. Later investigations revealed these accusations as either not tenable or outright false. Thus, lack of evidence (Premadasa and Dissanayake, the latter's family does not believe in the LTTE's culpability and complains about the government's desinterest in an official inquiry although this was announced by President Kumaratunga herself immediately after the murder), a contract killing by an underworld figure accompanied by planted evidence and lack

of security provisions (Athulathmudali), army responsibility (Pannali massacre), internal explosion (Lion Air crash), and, finally, murder on demand of the president himself (Kobekaduwa) were established.⁷

These few examples illustrate that murder and assassinations are not only commonly resorted to means of politics among the Sinhalese, but that they are, furthermore, readily sought to be exploited as propaganda tools in the ongoing civil war with the aim to denounce the adversary nationally and internationally as terrorist, to rally the Sinhalese electorate, to instill fear of the LTTE specifically, and hatred against the Tamil population in general.

Against this background, a responsible government that came to power with the promise to return to the rule of law and to end the war through reconciliation, would have expressed its shock over the assassination of Neelan Tiruchelvam, but absolutely refrained from assigning responsibility without having any proofs. The Sri Lankan authorities having decided otherwise, are not just irresponsible, they are guilty of instrumentalizing for narrow political ends the death of the very person over whose dead body they shed tears.⁸

A POLITICIAN

2) Neelan Tiruchelvam has been hailed as a human rights activist, a moderate, a peace-maker and a bridge between the different warring ethnic groups. **But Neelan Tiruchelvam was not a powerful voice of civil society, a moderate and voice of reason in a war-torn society. On the contrary, he was a politician who had taken sides in a military conflict conducted by the security forces in the North-East of the country against the Tamils, a war that has claimed over the last 15 years the lives of over 60,000 people, over 90 % of them Tamil civilians, produced 450,000 expatriates and 800,000 internally displaced against whom the government uses food and medicine as weapons of war. It is against this background that Neelan**

Tiruchelvam, the Tamil politician and vice-president of a party has to be judged in order to appreciate his role in the Sri Lankan polity and to better understand why by all accounts the Tamils of Colombo did not mourn his death and abstained from attending his funeral.

“By turning to active collaboration with a Sinhalese government engaged in a war against the Tamils, the party(TULF) has turned into an enemy of the people it claims to represent.”

The People's Alliance (PA), a coalition of four parties, had obtained 105 out of a total of 225 seats in the August 1994 General Election. As such, it could not have formed a government but for the active support of three minor Tamil parties which together had polled less than 2 % of the vote. The biggest one of them is the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) of which Neelan Tiruchelvam, himself only a nominated member of parliament, was the vice-president. In the 1994 general election the party had obtained altogether five seats on the strength of 31,246 votes or 1,67% of the total vote⁹, a clear manifestation that neither this party, nor the other Tamil political parties, nor all three together which entered into the government, could by any means claim to represent the Tamil electorate and its aspirations.

This has not always been the case! For it was the very same TULF that had obtained overwhelming support from the Tamil electorate in the general election of 1977 based on a manifesto that solemnly committed itself to the constitution of an independent Tamil Eelam 'either by peaceful means or by direct action or struggle'. It was against this commitment that the TULF representatives preferred to forfeit their parliamentary seats in 1983 rather than swear an oath on the recently amended constitution prohibiting even the peaceful advocacy of separatism and threatening draconian penalties (forfeiture of property, loss of civic rights, etc.).

Against this background, today's TULF has not only betrayed its original programme. By turning to active collaboration with a Sinhalese government engaged in a war against the Tamils, the party has turned into an enemy of the people it claims to represent. Year after year it voted for the government budget, i.e. the war effort, that included ever higher defense outlays of finally 750 million US \$ p.a. or 20-25% of total government spending¹⁰.

3) Neelan Tiruchelvam as recently elected Chairman of the London-based Minority Rights Group must have been fully aware that according to international law a minority has eo ipso no right to self-determination. There is not only no commonly agreed set of criteria to determine a minority, it is also up to the individual state to recognize a social group as a distinct minority¹¹, as the negative examples of France or Turkey amply demonstrate. Moreover, the rights of a minority extend primarily to its individual members (essentially protection against discrimination) in contrast to 'peoples' who alone are conceived of as collective holders of human rights. As far as the Sri Lankan Tamils are concerned such a minority status, presenting no safeguard against collective oppression, does no longer satisfy their aspirations. The history of independent Sri Lanka, namely had shown them a continuous deterioration of their condition vis-a-vis the majority community on the one hand,

and the impossibility of coming to a negotiated settlement on the other hand. Having exhausted all peaceful means, a radicalisation of demands and of the means of struggle on the part of the Tamils has evolved.¹² It was their concrete and repeated experience over the last decades which convinced them that their only hope for survival lies on the battlefield, however asymmetrical the struggle; that only when the Sri Lankan government realizes the military, economic and political cost of an unwinnable war will it finally see reason.

SINHALISATION

To enumerate but the most important stages of socio-economic and political discrimination of Tamils, as a process of increasing Sinhalaization of state and society: In 1956 Sinhala (spoken by 74% of the pop.) was declared the sole official language of the country, followed by 'the foremost place' being constitutionally accorded to Buddhism (69% of the pop.) ever since 1972, two acts which conferred on the Tamil speaking population (18%), the Hindus (15%), Muslims (7%) and Christians (7%), at best a secondary status. In the economic sphere, not only were the minor ethnic communities discriminated against in terms of access to government employment and alienated state land. The introduction of 'standardization' in higher education openly favoured the admission of Sinhala youth at the detriment of students educated in the Tamil language.¹³ The government sponsored policy of sending Sinhalese in the Northern and Eastern provinces which Tamils consider their traditional homeland, finally, was aimed not only to change the ethnic balance but calculated to disrupt the demographic continuity of the Tamil population in the two provinces.

This policy of discrimination was accompanied by riots and politically inspired pogroms with generalised arson, murder and mayhem against the Tamils, including those in the capital, and on the plantations. The worst occurred in 1956/58, 1977 and 1983. This bloodshed and terror sealed the hopes in the success of peaceful

means to end the conflict (the war began in 1984) and marginalized those in the Tamil community who had advocated a negotiated settlement within the existing Sri Lankan state. Not that there had been a lack of initiatives in this direction. About 20, mainly coming from inside the country, have been launched over the decades, the most important being the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayagam Pact of 1957, the Senanayake-Chelvanayagam Pact of 1965, the All-Party Conference of 1984 and the Thimpu-Conference of 1985 to which the TULF was a party and where once more the basic demands

He neither spoke out, nor did he attempt to dissociate his party from the governing coalition. On the contrary, he came repeatedly to the defense of the government. the president herself.

of the Tamil people were laid down. All of them eventually foundered because the respective Sinhalese party in opposition, supported by the Buddhist clergy, regularly denounced any attempt at accommodation as a sell-out to the Tamils.¹⁴ Meanwhile, every offer of outside mediation (e.g. Sweden, South Africa) have been rejected by Sri Lanka as intervention in an internal affair, the government preferring a military solution.¹⁵

4) Neelan Tiruchelvam, the constitutional lawyer and human rights' activist, saw it fit to enter the Sri

Lankan parliament and take the oath under the 6th amendment of the constitution which defines already the peaceful advocacy of separatism as a crime, a clause which the international Commission of Jurists in 1984¹⁶ and again the government appointed 'Committee to Advise on Reform of Laws affecting Media Freedom and Freedom of Expression' in 1996 qualified as limitation of the freedom of expression, and thus a violation of basic civil and political rights. The PA government came to power massively supported by the Tamil people with the political promises of seeking a solution to the Sinhalese-Tamil-conflict by entering into negotiations with the LTTE, of more democracy by abolishing the executive presidency, of reestablishing the rule of law and respect for human rights. All these promises have been deceived.

CHEMMANI GRAVES

The question must be asked where has been Dr. Tiruchelvam's voice for the reinstatement of human rights, for the immediate and independent investigation of mass graves in Chemmani and elsewhere, for the abolition of the obnoxious Emergency Regulations, the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the frequent reports of murder in detention, of disappearances, of an end to impunity of security personnel implicated in human rights violations, of the use of food and medicine as weapons of war against the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced Tamil people in the Vanni.¹⁷

As an important member of the government, reputedly close to the president, and one who pretended being a voice for the downtrodden minority, he could and should have raised his voice against the violation of human rights and against the institutionalized mistreatment and discrimination of his people. **He neither spoke out, nor did he attempt to dissociate his party from the governing coalition. On the contrary, he came repeatedly to the defense of the**

government. the president herself. As such he carries part of the collective responsibility of the government and its acts.

5) Neelan Tiruchelvam, the constitutional lawyer, served on the parliamentary select committee on constitutional reforms, and is reputed one of the architects of the 'devolution package' that has been hailed in UN-Subcommission meetings not only as a solution for the conflict in Sri Lanka but as a universal model in similar situations of interethnic war.¹⁸ It must be clearly stated that

(a) the devolution proposed not only falls far short of the aspirations of the Tamils, by allowing only for administrative regional decentralisation but no power sharing or legislative authority; on the contrary, the unitary nature of the Sri Lankan state has been reconfirmed, the relevant articles from earlier constitutions, including the primacy of buddhism, had been retained.

(b) The whole process, i.e. since 1995 three different versions. dependent on the situation on the battlefield, have been publicized, none of them official in the sense having been debated and passed the relevant parliamentary hurdles; and, finally, the government has done nothing either to have a common mandate within the coalition (the Tamil parties in the coalition have reportedly never been consulted, only informed), nor to come to an agreement with the major opposition a step absolutely vital in view of the fact that a 2/3rd majority in parliament followed by a referendum of the whole population (!) is required if such constitutional changes are to become law.

(c) Any proposal with a chance of success must be based on the active and equal participation of the three main actors: the government, the major Sinhala opposition party and the LTTE, as was recognized by Mr. Peiris, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, and Chairman of the parliamentary Select Committee on Constitutional Reforms' in an interview in early 1997. This admission notwithstanding, the LTTE was outlawed and declared a terrorist organization a few months later with the result that any

(Continued)

¹ *US News Wire of July 30, 1999.*

² *E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/SR.2, p.7.*

³ *HR/SC/3 1.*

⁴ *HR SC19913 (French edition).*

⁵ *AI INDEX: ASA 37/19/99, 37120199, 37121199.*

⁶ *Piyasena Parmanand, Chandrika and the Electoral Revolution in Sri Lanka, New Delhi 1995, p 53.*

⁷ *Cf. Kulendiren, P., The reporting Culture and the Media Dynasties in Sri Lanka, pp. 138-148, esp. 140-142.*

in: International Tamil Conference, Ottawa, June 1999.

⁸ *The President talked of a despical 'terrorist' act pointing clearly to the LTTE, without mentioning the organisation explicitly; the message, however, was understood by the national media, most of which are under government control, and taken up by the international press (IHT, Indian Express, e.g.). Many of the respective interventions in the Human Rights Commission in Geneva in the first days after of August went in the same direction.*

⁹ *Piyasena Parmanand, 1995, p.79 (Fn.6)*

¹⁰ *US Government, Country Commercial Guide: Sri Lanka 1999, p.6.*

¹¹ *UN, HR/SC/99/19.*

¹² *On the history and evolution of the conflict cf K. Jayawardena, Ethnic and Class Conflicts in Sri Lanka, Center for Social Consciousness, Dehiwala 1985; K.M.de Silva, Managing Ethnic Tensions in Multi-Ethnic Societies, Sri Lanka 1880-1985, New York 1986; A.J. Wilson, The Break-Up of Sri Lanka, London 1988.*

¹³ *A. Lamballe, Le Problème Tamoul a Sri Lanka, Paris 1985, Appendices 24, 29-32.*

¹⁴ *On the evolution and background of the conflict see also: H.P. Chauopadhyaya, Ethnic Unrest in Modern Sri Lanka, New Delhi 1994; A. Lamballe, Le Problème Tamoul (see Fn.13); S.S. Misra, Ethnic Conflict and Security Crisis in Sri Lanka, Delhi 1995; J. Rosel, Der Bürgerkrieg auf Sri Lanka, Baden-Baden 1997; L. Paul, La Question Tamoul a Sri Lanka 1977-1994, Paris/Montreal 1997.*

¹⁵ *Cf also Mouvement for interracial Justice and Equality, Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka. Peptuary 1999, sp. (5*

¹⁶ *P. Sieghart, Sri Lanka. A Mounting Tragedy of Errors. Report of a Mission to Sri Lanka in January 1984 on behalf of the international Commission of Jurists and its British Section, Justice, March 1984. Cf. e.g. Amnesty international ASA 37104198; 37/05199, 37/10/99; 37/14199. Asian Human Rights Commission, Sri Lanka: Disappearances, March 1999. UN Commission on Human Rights*

E/CN.4/1999/39/add.1; E/CN.4/1999/61, E/CN.4/1999/62, E/CN.4/1999/68/Add.1., E/CN.4/1998/38 & Add.1. E/CN.4/1998/43; E/CN.4/1998/68&Add.1.2. US. Dept. of State, Sri Lanka Report on Human Rights Practices for 1998, February 1999.

¹⁸ *UN Press Release, Geneva August 18, 1999: 18HR SC/99/20 and 21.*

¹⁹ *Even financial support is being persecuted with 7 to 12 years imprisonment Public Security Ordinance of 27 January 1998.*

²⁰ *Daily News August 25, 1995.*

kind of dealings with it are a criminal offence.¹⁹

The whole process underlines the fact that the so-called devolution is not conceived as a means to accommodate the rightful demands of the Tamils, but is the calculated part of a two-edged strategy that is being fought on two levels the military and the political front, whereby victory on the battlefield is by all accounts given absolute priority over a negotiated settlement. **The role of the 'devolution' proposals and constitutional reforms is not just subordinated to the war effort but a political ploy to split the Tamil population and isolate the Tamil fighters. It is moreover aimed at the international community, On whose goodwill Sri Lanka vitally depends**

for military supply as well as economic and financial support, intended to persuade it of its peaceful intentions vis-a-vis an implacable enemy. Minister Peiris frankly admitted this strategy.²⁰ The Vice-President of a party that is partner in this government shares the responsibility for this policy of 'war for peace'. It was precisely Neelan Tiruchelvam, moreover, who sought to sell the 'devolution package' at home and abroad as a viable and equitable solution to the war and to the just demands of the various communities.

Every premature loss of life is deplorable: the violent death of innocent people even more so in the on-going war in Sri Lanka that has caused so many dead and

wounded and displaced, Neelan Tiruchelvam was not an innocent bystander, a tireless worker for a peaceful and equitable solution. Subjectively he might have been convinced to work for the best of his nation and country; objectively he sided with the oppressor at a prominent position and actively supported one side in an armed conflict.

May the above contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex and dramatic situation in Sri Lanka in general, the different perspectives within and outside the country that have been observed with regard to still another of its victims, Dr. Tiruchelvam, in particular.

WHAT'S "EATING" YOU LAKSHMAN 'KADIRIGAMA'?

Lt.Col. Anton Selvadurai Writes:-

I agree with Anura Bandaranaike's accusation that you are talking utter rubbish. You are also being very childish! You are not even agreeable to a FACILITATOR!!

Are you so afraid that the stopping of the war will affect your security and jet-flying life-style? As you know, nothing is permanent in this world, and some day the war will stop. It may even stop sooner than you think, even before you reach your 70 birthday. You will be lucky if you die before that. But karmic forces will surely keep you alive, poor chap!

Even fanatic Sinhala Buddhist Chauvinists are wondering why. As Anura says, you are living it up and exploiting the present situation that favours you. Maybe because C.B.K. too wants the war to go on, so that her cronies could go on making money on the side with arms sales and illegal contracts. Maybe there is something for her too, as she is now not beyond suspicion, after the TV Channel 9 affair. After all, she is human too, though not of the same calibre of Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson

Mandela.

Anura says "Lakshman Kadirigamar being a Tamil who should be most interested in settling this problem because Tamils are the ones who have suffered most, says "no mediation". I cannot understand this He is staying in The Waldorf Astoria in New York one of the finest in the world, Lord in his suite, and making statements while poor Sinhalese and Tamils are getting massacred here. What kind of Foreign Minister have we got?"

So Lakshman what is "eating" you?

Why do you do such dastardly things against your own people? Things that you may not do against an enemy. Have you tried seeing a psychiatrist? I suggest you do. You have lost touch with reality and are probably hallucinating. Maybe, Prabhakaran would forgive you if you are diagnosed "insane".

Even the Sinhalese are so amused that some think you are really a spy planted by Prabhakaran. Come to think of it, its not impossible. You might as well change your name to "Kadirigama" as Buddhist Tamils have done before to become Sinhalesed.

As a last resort, may be you will have to resort to the trick of claiming that you have been of "unsound mind". Judging from your past it would sound credible.

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TAMIL CHILDREN MAIN LOSERS IN CHANDRIKA'S WAR

Life in the northern Sri Lankan enclave of Jaffna - which is cut off from the rest of the country by fighting - is, says the army, improving. But on the meagre rations supplied by the government to the peninsula's shattered economy many children are going hungry.

Aid agencies monitoring the supplies the government can bring only by sea to the area freed from the clutches of the Tamil Tiger guerrillas in 1995 have discovered malnourished and listless children.

No studies have been conducted to determine the problem's scale, but **doctors' accounts reveal almost every child examined is undersize, a damning indictment of the Sri Lanka government which sets so much store in the restoration of "normalcy" for the Tamil minority.**

"The government has been lacking", said one senior aid worker. "With the unemployment and poverty it's a breeding ground for the Tigers. It's just a time bomb ticking away".

With much fanfare the Sri Lankan army retook control of the Jaffna peninsula in ferocious fighting four years ago, but efforts to reopen roads from the south of the country have been repulsed by determined cadres of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and commanders concede further attempts are on the back burner.

It represents a high-intensity stalemate between the 120,000 strong army and the Tigers who may number as few as 5,000, but have become highly organised and well-supplied during the 17-year ethnic conflict with its southern Sinhalese majority.

Since the collapse of the last attempt to find political settlement by President Chandrika Kumaratunga's new administration four years ago, the

IAN MAC KINNON in Jaffna

government adopted a twin-track strategy of trying to win militarily in the hope of pressuring the Tamil Tiger leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran to sue for peace.



A Tamil child talks to Sri Lankan soldiers in Wannu region

Both sides are circling, but appear in no real mood for compromise.

"Jaffna : The biggest open-air prison camp in the world"

Under pressure from business, which sees the economy hobbled by the war's 130 million dollar annual cost, the government has sought agreement for a devolution package to put to the Tamil Tigers.

Lalith Kotelawala, a founder of the Business Coalition for Peace has vowed that if the government can reach agreement for the necessary constitutional changes he would take them to Mr. Prabhakaran personally. A

victim of the 1997 LTTE bombing of the capital Colombo's business district which killed 18 people, Mr. Kotelawala passionately believes a compromise must be found. "I realised that the hate had gone on for too long, and that someone had to break the cycle", he said.

But indications from the LTTE suggest little hope of peace emerging soon. The Catholic Bishop of Mannar, Rayappu Joseph, was among a delegation which has just returned from meeting Tamil Tiger political leaders in the jungles of their Wannu area stronghold.

"For them the government's talk of peace is empty words", said the bishop. "While the government is going pell-mell with its military campaign they see no sign that it is ready to take any other approach".

In Jaffna, "The government makes sweeping statements about improvements", said one aid worker. "Sure, electricity is getting better, but the biggest problem is transport. There is no regular shipping and the farmers can't get their produce to markets. Unless this is resolved this place is going nowhere".

Major General Lohan Goonewardene, the area's army chief, recognises the critical nature of the problem, and says the govern-

ment plans to buy two more ships. "Development has not been affected by the security situation", he said. Yet, for most refugees who returned from the surrounding region after the fighting the prospects are grim. **One worker said: "Not for nothing do people call it "the biggest open-air prison camp in the world". Tamils can get in, but it's virtually impossible for them to get out".**

(COURTESY: THE SCOTSMAN, 11 OCTOBER 1999)

A 12-year old penportrait

THONDAMAN

A MASTER OF REALPOLITIK

How he won citizenship to 94,000 "stateless" persons by threatening to "pray and meditate"!

On 10th December 1985, President Jayawardene was hosting visiting Pakistan President Zia at dinner. All Cabinet Ministers were invited. Before they sat down to dine, the two Presidents, along with some Ministers were chatting informally. At one point in the conversation - according to a Colombo report - President Zia asked Mr. Jayawardene when he proposed to visit Yugoslavia. President J replied: Not in the immediate future. There are important matters at home. And then he waved a hand at Rural Industrial Development Minister Thondaman who was in the group and said: He is also giving me problems. That needs looking after!

Apparently everyone chuckled with good humour, but in point of fact, Minister Thondaman's announcement of a 3-month programme of "MEDITATION AND PRAYER" in the Tea country had given the government a big jolt. The most succinct reaction - expressive of Government and Sinhala opinion - appeared in the SUN WEEKEND of 29th December (1985) which ran the banner headline - "PRAY AND BE DAMNED - Govt's answer to Thondaman's prayer".

Apart from the publicity build-up in the Sri Lankan Press that came in the wake of



With the passing away of Mr. Sauviamoorthy Thondaman, the Ceylon Workers' Congress leader and Cabinet Minister on October 30, an epoch has seemingly come to an end. With his unique style of leadership and as a dominant figure in Sri Lankan politics, the void created by his death can surely never be filled. We publish here an article written nearly 13 years ago which now recalls one of Mr. Thondaman's greatest achievements in the course of his public life. (Sri Lanka Background Briefing, a Tamil Information and Research Unit (TIRU) publication, on behalf of Tamil Information Centre. S. Sivanayagam, 25 January 1986)

Thondaman's move, the Ceylon Workers' Congress bought full page advertising space in the INDIAN EXPRESS of December 13, carrying the full text of the CWC "declaration". (THE HINDU had declined for unknown reasons to accept the advertisement)

While calling upon the CWC membership to observe the period from Thai Pongal Day (January 14) to Tamil and Sinhala New Year Day (April 15) as a period of "prayer and meditation" and "meaningful preparation for our campaign to achieve national reconciliation through non-violence and peaceful dialogues" from morning to forenoon. Mr. Thondaman was in reality threatening a half-day strike in the plantations lasting 3 months, but to which in language and content no one could take objection, least of all President Jayawardene who is a known practitioner of deceptive semantics!

The first tough reaction to the half-day "prayers" was the Govt. announcement that only half-day's wages would be paid to those taking part. At which, the CWC dropped the hint that it might become necessary to hold FULL DAY PRAYERS! It was getting obvious by that time that despite warnings to Mr. Thondaman by "undisclosed government sources" not to rock the Govt. boat too much, and editorial sermons by the Colombo

Press, the initiative had passed into the hands of the CWC leader.

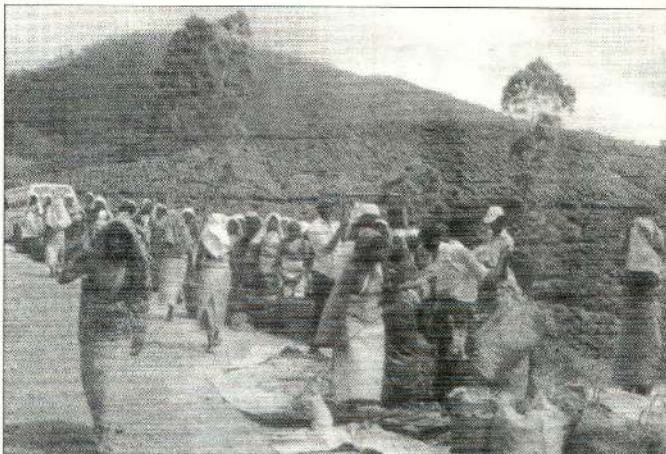
Meanwhile, Mr.Thondaman had arrived in India, and had a meeting with Rajiv Gandhi in the privacy of the Prime Ministerial plane from Madras to Delhi on 7th January. Since it was not known what the tenor of the discussion was, it gave Colombo additional food for thought. By the time Mr.Thondaman flew back to Colombo on the 10th, it was obvious that the Jayawardene government had taken a hard decision to climb down from the mountain tops on the question of the 94,000 "stateless".

The spotlight then turned on the plush Nawaloka Hospital where Mr.Thondaman had sought admission for a medical check-up.Minister in charge of "War" Lalith Athulathmudali, who apparently did not relish the idea of opening a "second front" in the plantations, held various emergency sessions with Thondaman and Indian High Commissioner Dixit on behalf of President Jayawardene. But nothing could dislodge the plantation leader from his set course.

With the government coming out with the announcement - the decision to grant Sri Lankan citizenship to 94,000 "stateless" persons and to their children born after October 30, 1964 - (the government of India itself becoming a party to the agreement), President Jayawardene proved to be a greater advocate for the "stateless" than the CWC leader himself. Speaking at a function in Gampaha on the 18th, he said: "If a child without parents is handed over to me, what am I to do? Am I to throw it into the sea, bury it, burn it, or kill it? No person with human feelings could condone itwhichever government is in power, these persons will have to remain in Sri Lanka. Could they be allowed to remain without jobs and without civic rights.... it will only drive them to the folds of the terrorists".

To have pushed a government with its seven and a half year obduracy to make such a major commitment

reveals a mastery of realpolitik which no other Tamil leader in Sri Lanka had ever shown. Realpolitik has been defined as politics based on realities and material needs, rather than on morals or ideals. Savumiammoorthy Thondaman, in this respect is a leader



in the mould of the late Indian Congress leader K.Kamaraj. Totally innocent of any theoretical flourishes, very down to earth, practical and pragmatic, Mr.Thondaman often gets a clearer grasp of problems and issues, because he thinks and acts very close to the bone. If there is one thing he despises, it is the habit of lawyer-politicians' argumentativeness, their tendency to make speeches and to score debating points.

When a newspaper correspondent asked him: "You have said that the Prayer campaign was organised to focus attention on the plight of the stateless, while National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali has said

the government's decision was not due to CWC pressure. Do you maintain that it was because of the CWC pressure through the Prayer campaign that the government decided to concede citizenship to the stateless?". The reply was: "Mr.Athulathmudali is a lawyer. I am not. The fact whether CWC pressure was answered or this happened on the magnanimity of a circumstantial situation, I leave it to the people to decide. After all, they are the best judges".

"Are you satisfied with the manner in which the government is handling the ethnic issue?", he was asked. The Minister said: "I am not very happy about it. It should not have been allowed to come to the present situation. Both sides have good lawyers and are arguing their case like all good lawyers. As a result the people are suffering..".

A leading Sri Lankan journalist once asked Mr.Thondaman a question that is in the lips of many people."How do you perform your role of a Cabinet Minister, a Trade Union leader and an espouser of the cause of Tamil rights, all at the same time?". The answer was typical of the man. "Take the case of a woman. Can't she be a mother, a sister and a wife at the same time?". A complicated question answered without any complication, but more convincing than any other answer one could think of!

S.Sivanayagam

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Obituaries

T.S.Mann



The death occurred in Chavakachcheri, Jaffna on 22nd October of Mr. Thuraiappah Seevaratnam Mann, retired Irrigation Officer. Born in Uduvil, Jaffna, Mr. Mann who spent sixty years of his life in Kilinochchi, had been living in Chavakachcheri for the past five years.

He was the husband of Ponnamah Thangamuttu of Kantherodai, the father of Sivasubramaniam (India), Margaret Thevamalar (Ceylon), Mary Thevarani (India), Eliza Mann (London), the late Elizabeth Selvamany, Moses Thevathasan Mann (London), the late Solomon Ilankarkon (Kilinochchi), Theresa Inbakumari (Canada), Philomena Thanalakshmy (Canada) and Victoria Iswarianayagam (London).

Burial, Chavakachcheri Cemetery on 27 October, 1999.

Rev. P.R. Navendranugoolan, Presbyter of the Colombo Church of the Jaffna C.S.I. in a tribute to the late Mr. Mann has spoken of his generous contribution to the Church as well as his popularity among the people in Kilinochchi because of his social work.

P.Sivalingam

Peethamparam Sivalingam, formerly of Shell and Deputy General Manager, Ceylon Petroleum Corporation, husband of Saradha, and father of Shankari (UK), Narayani (USA), Ramana (Canada) and Anantha (UK), father-in-law of

Vembadi Teacher remembered



Miss Grace Vadivelu, one-time head of the Lower School at Vembadi Girls' College, Jaffna, was remembered at a Service of Thanksgiving held on 18th September. Miss Vadivelu passed away on June 10, 1999. The Service held at the Rivercourt Methodist Church, Hammersmith, was organised by the Vembadi Old Girls' Association and members of Miss Vadivelu's family.

The service comprised the singing of much loved Tamil lyrics, a thevaram, tributes and an address. The tributes (delivered in person or read out) were by Selvaranee Kiruvanayagam, Thayalam Chelliah, Kiruba Paramanathan and Sherina Niles. These brought out Miss Vadivelu's excellence as a teacher, who expected and maintained high standards, and efficiency and impartiality as Head of the Lower School at Vembadi which post she held till retirement in 1977. Former students who were in awe of this martinet of a teacher discovered in adulthood her humility and genuine pleasure at the success of others.

S.T.A.

Easwara Rupan, Suthakar October. 70, Layards Road, Colombo 5.
Vamadevan, Prasanna and Varuna 5.
Thirunathan, died in Colombo on 16th

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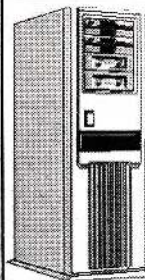
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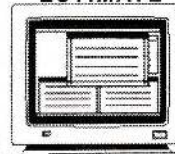
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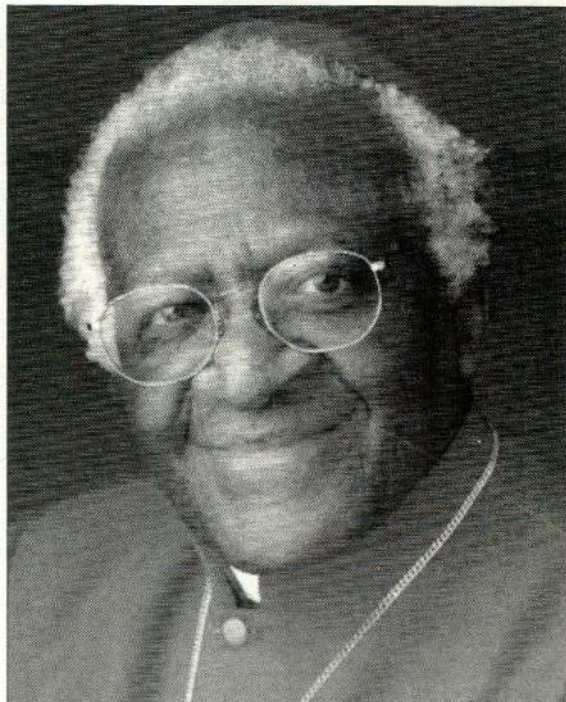
ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU IN LONDON

Human Rights and Justice was the theme of a talk given by Archbishop Desmond Tutu at St. Paul's Cathedral, London on All Saints Day, November 1. An introduction by Sir Sidney Kentridge Q.C. preceded the talk.

Archbishop Tutu said that while many feared bloodshed and mayhem in South Africa in the early part of this decade, they narrowly avoided it and arrived at a peace process. That led to democratic elections in 1994 and they had people queuing to take part in the process.

While there was the need to deal with those who perpetrated human rights violations, they did not want to give a general amnesty to let the perpetrators off the hook, but at the same time they did not want to go down the route of the Nazi trials. They chose a third way of pardoning those who com-

mitted crimes as part of their respective political objectives and within the guidelines of their organisations and who were prepared to tell and seek forgiveness. This work was carried out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. They had moving confessions and amazing pardons from both sides. There were similar problems in many parts of the world, Archbishop Tutu said, mainly in the form of civil wars within existing states as in Bosnia, Rwanda, Northern Ireland and SRI LANKA. He hoped that other troubled areas like the ones he mentioned would make the transformations as they had done.



Talking to Miss Eliza Mann at the end of the meeting who was present along with Mr. N. Sidamparapillai and

Mr. I. A. Sivananthan, Archbishop Tutu said he hoped that a similar peace settlement would happen in Sri Lanka.



Cheri Blair goes Indian for Deepavali

Cheri Blair, wife of British Prime Minister Tony Blair believes in going in Indian dress for Indian functions. More than once she has worn saree and blouse, but this time attending a Diwali (as the North Indians spell it), function, she chose a specially gifted "churidar kameez" along with a jewelled "bindi" on her forehead. The "namaskar" with folded hands was of course part of the ensemble!

THE TIMES, London, said in its report: "Cherie Blair impressed guests at a party to celebrate Diwali, the Indian festival of light when she wore a traditional outfit of silk and organza. The Prime Minister and his wife were guests of the billionaire Hinduja brothers, whose £1.3 billion fortune makes them the eighth richest people in Britain and the wealthiest Indians in the country...."



Is anyone listening?



Is anyone listening?

I have long dried my tears,
And the ashes I heaped upon my head
I have forgotten -
But this non-ending day and this night that will not dawn,
Sees my baby boy -
Oh, was it ordy yesterday that he was nursing at my breast? -
To-day forced to be a man at thirteen -
Dragged, dragged, dragged by men in green
Across the night - to where? To where?
Why will not the dark hide the darkness of my home -
Dark, dark, dark, -
Bereft of my lord, my husband,
Gunned down even as he ran home to feed our nestlings!

Is anyone /listening?

I went to see my baby girl today.
The prison walls were not bleak.
No they were not bleak.
But I looked into the eyes of my baby girl.
Were those the eyes of my baby girl,
Standing in the cell with her mates naked,
Her gentle breasts just beginning to swell -
O Army guard, does my daughter's body please you?
Does she relieve your long night ?
Does she please you
With the shame, the degradation, the stone of pain
That you have thrust into her gentle form?

Is anyone listening?

My womb lies degraded.
My thighs untouched by any but one
Ravaged by a man -or was it men? -
In mossy jungle green -
Even as my infant girls, themselves women shamed -
Watched an animal litter his roused hate
Upon a mother accustomed only to love?
Is there a dawn for us?
Is there an end to this ravishment of flesh?
Show me, O woman of the world
Show me a way out of these closing walls
Of my people's shame!

Is anyone, out there, listening ?

From: The collection:
"Remembering Eelam" (TEWO)

J.Y.Pillay: A Singaporean Tamil visionary

FROM OUR SINGAPORE CORRESPONDENT

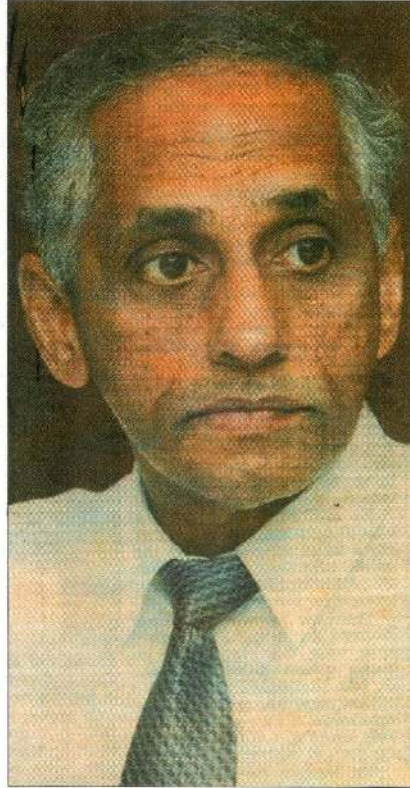
Mr.J.Y.Pillay, a Singaporean Tamil has been named the chairman of the new Singapore Exchange, which will be formed following the merger of the Stock Exchange of Singapore and the Singapore International Monetary Exchange.

Mr.Pillay now heads the pro-tem committee overseeing the merger of the two exchanges.

Mr.Pillay, 65, was formerly the High Commissioner to Britain and a former managing director of the Monetary Authority of Singapore

The new Singapore Exchange, which comes into existence on December 1, will become more business-oriented and customerdriven.

Mr.Pillay had the reputation of building Singapore Airlines into one of the world's most profitable airlines. When he retired from the Civil Service in 1995, the STRAITS TIMES, carried a prominent feature on him titled : J.Y.Pillay: VISIONARY



J.Y.Pillay

WITH A CLEAR FOCUS. Introducing the feature written by Zuraidah Ibrahim, the Straits Times said: "Top bureaucrat, no-nonsense regulator, entrepreneur extraordinaire, the man who made Singapore Airlines a great way to fly, Mr.J.Y.Pillay is all of these and more. With his retirement from the Civil Service, a chapter on an outstanding band of pioneering mandarins who helped to shape Singapore comes to a close....."

Assessing the educational performance of Indian children in Singapore, Mr.Pillay once exhorted them to build a model Indian expatriate community. Indians, he said, can be found all over the world and many are leaving their mark where they are living.

He illustrated it by holding out the example of a CEYLON TAMIL; He said: "There is a Ceylon Tamil chap who operates in the far reaches of northern Canada, supplying equipment to explorers going to the Arctic. I don't know how he found his way there, but he is there !".

BJP victory celebrated in London

"Overseas Friends of BJP"(UK) recently organised a function in London to mark the electoral victory of the BJP in India. Labour M.P. Barry Gardiner was the chief guest on the occasion. BJP General Secretary Narendra Modi who was on a 5-day visit to UK was the Guest of Honour.

Cultural events included Bharata Natyam by Miss.D.Arulmoli Sivagunam, student of Srimathi Premaladevi Ravindran, Teacher at Kingsbury Tamil School and a Flute recital by Master Sathananthan who evoked much appreciation from the audience when he played "Ragupathi Raghava Raja Ram".

Mr.Narendra Modi, a close associate of Prime Minister Vajpayee. He delivered 20 out of Gujarat's 26 Lok Sabha seats to the party in the recent elections.



PRE-VIJAYAN SAIVAISM IN LANKA: FAMED "KALAKSHETRA" DANCE TROUPE IN LONDON

President Chandrika Bandaranaike who tried to falsify Lanka's history on her visit to South Africa last year by saying that Tamils were not the original inhabitants of the island, should have been present at the University of London's Logan Hall on the 16th October. Not that it would have improved her knowledge of the island's history, but it would have certainly

the Sinhala race arrived in the island along with his outlawed followers !

The erudite scholar and historian, Dr.Paul E.Pieris declared at a meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon branch) in 1917:

"Long before the arrival of Vijaya, there were in Lanka five recognised Ishwarams of Shiva which claimed and received adoration of all India. These were Thiruketheeshwaram which was

The specially commissioned dance drama by the famed "Kalakshetra" dance troupe of Chennai, brought to the London audience by "Shruthi Laya Sangam" portrays the historical legacy of the cultural bonding of ancient Ceylon and Mother India. The production takes one back to the pre-Vijaya era when the Tamil kings of South India ruled this historical and geographically united region through centuries. Due to terrestrial upheaval and



kalasethra Students

made her wonder what five ancient Tamil Hindu temples - the "Pancha Iswarams" (temples dedicated to Lord Siva), were doing in the island long before Vijaya, the reputed founder of

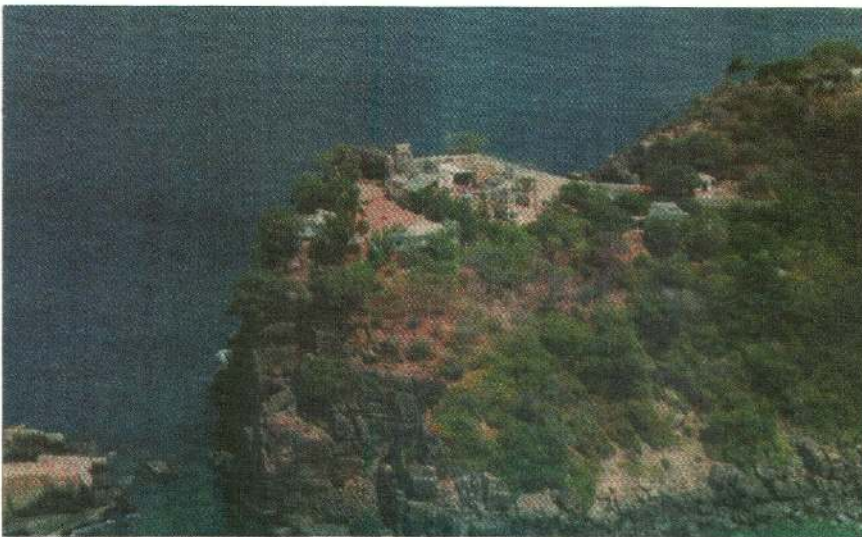
near Mahatiitha, Muneshwaram domisating Salawatte and the pearl fishery, Thondeshwaram near Mantota, ThiruRoneshwaram near the great Bay of Kottiyar and Naguleshwaram near Kankesanturai".

continental drift, a part of southern India got separated to emerge as the island of Ceylon.

The five ancient Iswarams are believed to have built on all four sides



Padmashree Lalgudi Jayaraman with Krishnan and Vijayalakshmi at the violin concert.



An aerial view of Koneswaram on Swami Rock, Trincomalee, entry to which is controlled by a Sri Lankan army unit.

of the island by the Hindu rishis and devotees to safeguard the island from further oceanic upheavals and other natural disasters. While they have certainly helped the island survive Nature's fury, the Iswarams themselves were first looted and

destroyed by the Portuguese invaders of the 16th century and later desecrated by Sinhala invaders of the 20th, thus bringing the aurrent ruin and human destruction that the island is going through..

What happened at Logan Hall was not of course meant to be a lesson in history. It was really an exhilarating evening of soothing music and danoe - exhilarating bause-the artistesthat evening were excellent exponents in their respective fields coming from the cradle of Tamil classical arts - Chennai in Tamil Nadu. The dance drama on the theme of "Pancha Iswarams" was presented by "Kalakshetra", that famed institution of dance in Besant Nagar, while the first part of the programme saw Violin maestro Padmashree Lalgudi Jayaraman in a violin recital in tandem with his son G.J.R.Krishnan and daughter Vijayalakshmi. It was Lalqudi Jayaraman himself who composed the lyrics and music for the dance drama.

The choreography for the dance drama was composed by Srimathi Vijayalakshmi Krishnaswamy, once a vivacious dancer herself and now the Professor in charge of Dance at the Rukmini Devi College of Fine Arts, Kalakshetra.



The sad plight of Naguleswaram Temple, near Keerimalai in Jaffna shelled by the Sri Lankan army and later looted and desecrated by Sinhala armed forces.



Eelam Tamil women band together in Melbourne

A band of committed Eelam Tamil women have got together to form the TAMIL EELAM WOMEN'S ORGANISATION (TEWO) in Melbourne, the first of its kind in Australia. The organisation was formally launched on October 3, and is dedicated to supporting women's projects in Tamil Eelam.

The launch began with a prayer followed by a formal welcome of the Tamil women to her land by Leanne Miller, a member of the Yorta Yorta tribe of Australian Aborigines, as the First Nation people of the country. The President of TEWO, Mrs. Nesa Eliezer outlined the ideals of TEWO and its aim in raising funds to support women's projects in Tamil Eelam. "It is a vision of the New Dawn for us, where we work towards building a bridge between us and Women in Eelam in a more meaningful way", she said.

A dance depicting women in the Tamil homeland, where women are subjected to fear from violent attack by Sri Lankan armed forces and at the same time displaying the greatest courage in the battlefield as "Freedom Birds" was staged, which ended in an expression of joy, the return to peace and normalcy and hope for a New Dawn in their lives.

Robyn Kilpatrick, a member of Amnesty International spoke encouragingly of the way in which TEWO seemed to have its heart in the right place. "Women in many parts of the world, including Northern Ireland and Chile, have effected much change in attitudes and events by their solidarity, and I can see Tamil women doing the same", she said.

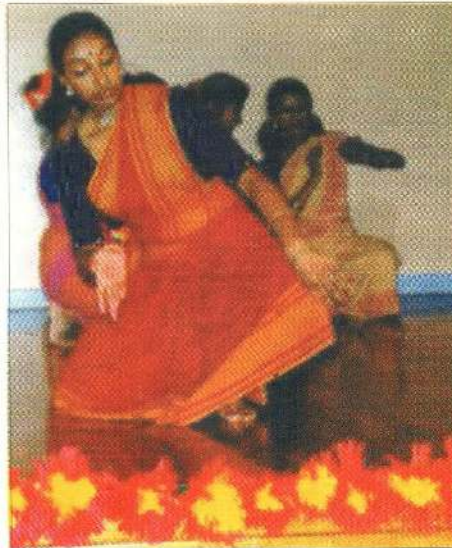


Tamil Eelam Women's Organisation

தமிழீழ மகளிர் அமைப்பு

God-fearing, courageous, cheerful and free

Towards a "New Dawn"!



Mano Navaratnam, the Vice-President of TEWO outlined the longterm goals of the organisation in the rehabilitation and support of the women in the years ahead. "There is much work to be done", she said, "this day is only a start of our hopes for helping our people in Eelam in a more positive and planned way".

A short video showed projects already in place in the Tamil homeland, putting at rest any doubts anyone could had of the viability of supporting such projects.

The Organisation was dedicated and launched by Dure Dara, the Convenor of the Viatorian Women's Trust and president of the Restaurant and Catering Association of Victoria. Having been involved in women's issues for several years, she was an inspiration for all. "It is important for all of us to make connection with who we are and what we are by returning in spirit to the lands of our heritage", she said. "Tamil

women are tenacious and very beautiful", she said, drawing much applause from men and women alike who were present. "I am full of hope for this organisation because they have a strategy - a strategy not for a day or for a year. They are planning for years to come in an independent Eelam. We shall all work towards that with all our hearts and all our faith", she concluded.

She lit the candle of the New Dawn, as compere Yasodha Navaratnam sang Peter Yarrow's beautiful song, "Light One Candle".

"The whole afternoon was moving and inspiring", said Wendy Lake, one of the guests. "It brought tears to my eyes".

The guests were treated to a sumptuous tea organised by TEWO ladies and seemed absolutely thrilled with the event. "Now our real work starts", quipped one of the committee members of the organisation.



2-Day 'Vanavil' Cultural Festival in Canada

The 2-day "Vanavil" (Rainbow) Cultural Festival was held for the eleventh time this year in Canada on October 2 and 3. It turned out to be a delightful pot-pourri of Song, Dance, Drama, Debate Fun and Laughs.

Photographs show two of the several items.



Kokuvil Hindu alumni meet

The 7th Annual General Meeting of the Kokuvil Hindu College Old Students' Association (UK) was held on 19 September '99 at Colston Primary School, Greenford. The Chief Guest of the day was Mr.N.Bhavan, accompanied by his wife Maev Bhavan.

The following were elected to serve in the executive committee for the 1999/2000 year:

President: Mr.S.Kanagasundaram;
Vice-Presidents: Dr.P.Arumugarasa
Mr.R.Guganesawaran and Mr.N.Ranjit Kumar.

Secretary: Mr.S.Selvaratnam;

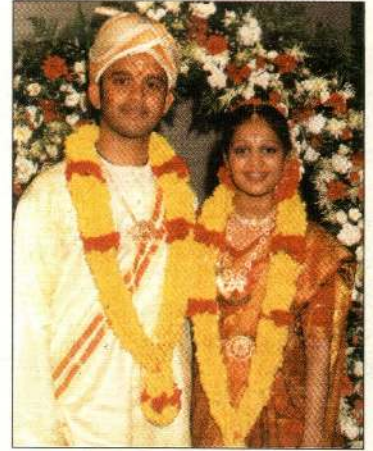
Asst.Secretary: Mr.K.Kukendrarajah;
Treasurer: Mr.V.Tharmarajah;
Asst.Treasurer: Mr.S.K.Chetti; Sports
Secretary: Mr.A.Prabaharan; Asst.
Sports Secretary: Mrs.D.Suthenthiran.

The following were elected Committee members: Mr.K.Kantha pillai, Mrs.G.Balasubramaniam, Mr.P.Ananthasivadas, Mr.K.Kugat hasan, Mr.S.Sri Ranjan, Mr.G.Parameswaran, Mrs.K.Selva ratnam, Mr.S.Vijayan and Mr.A.Thivaharan. Mr.P.N.Yoganathan was elected Auditor.

The AGM concluded with a delightful vocal and veena music by Selvi Janani Arunachalam.

MARRIED

SIVAKUMAR - RATHIKA



SIVAKUMAR, son of Mr and Mrs K Kumaravel of 6 Holme Close, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9QL to RATHIKA, daughter of Dr V and Mrs M Balasegaram of "Annai Illam", 54 Marlborough Drive, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex, IG5 OJW on 29 August at Thurrock Civic Hall, Blackshots Lane, Grays, Essex, U.K.



RAHULAN - MALINI



Rahulana, son of Mr. and Mrs. C.Tyagaraja of Murugesar Lane, Nallur, Jaffna, and now of 5, Fishers Crescent, Pendle Hill, NSW 2145, and Malini, daughter of Dr. Packianathan, one-time Chief Librarian, Jaffna Library and Mrs.Packianathan of 15, Calla Grove, Pendle Hill, NSW 2145 on 12th September at Civic Hall. Ryde City Council, Sydney, Australia.

In Italy - a CD on Tiger heroism

“**T**iger heroism - the Sky is the Limit”. That is the theme of a compact disc launched by the Eelam Tamils in Italy. The CD fashioned by the Cultural Unit of the Liberation Tigers in Palermo, Italy was released at an eventful function held in Palermo on 31st October.

Leading LTTE activist in Switzerland Anton Ponrasa was the chief guest for the evening. the LTTE functionary in Italy Mr.T.Mehta released the first CD to Mr.Easan, the LTTE representative in Napoli, Italy.



Out of the 12 songs in the CD, eight were sung on the occasion. Eelam Tamils from other Italian towns too gathered at Palermo while pupils of the Malathi Dance school performed "abhinaya" to many of the patriotic songs.

MARRIED

USHA - DAVID



Usha, Systems Engineering Manager of T & D (Rotheram) Ltd and daughter of Professor Kopan Mahadeva & Dr. Seetha Mahadeva, married Mr. David Moran, Bradford City Council's Senior Building Surveyor on 11-09-99 according to Hindu rites. The rites were performed in Tamil by Guru Dr. K.N. Ratnavel of Ilford, Essex with Mathini Sriskandarajah's Thevaarams, in a simple ceremony.

Bharata Natyam in New Zealand

Suganthy Sunderam Aiyar in a Bharata Natyam item which she performed at the Festival of Asia held recently in Auckland, the commercial capital of New Zealand.

Suganthy is the youngest daughter of Mr.R.Sunderam Aiyar and Nagalakshmy Ammal of Karanavai, Karaveddy, Jaffna, and a student of Suganthy Thayaseelan of "Kalapavanam", Auckland.



Sister, 29, Graduated in Computer Systems engineering from UK university, currently in good employment as a Programmer in UK, seeks suitable partner. Please send details. Ref: MPG230 Hot Spring

Brother, 33, Engineer, 6' tall, PhD qualified and working in a senior position in UK, seeks professional/graduate preferably with UK background. Please forward details in confidence. Ref: MPB113 Hot Spring

Daughter, 29, graduate, High School teacher in Canada, 5ft 6in tall, vegetarian, Jaffna Hindu, seeks professionally qualified partner. Please send horoscope and details. Ref: MPG221 Hot Spring

Engineer, 42, divorced, 5 ft 4 in tall, in good management position in UK, Hindu, originally from Jaffna, now British, seeks Hindu lady aged about 35 single, divorced or widowed. Please send details. Ref: MPB112 Hot Spring

Daughter, 22, attractive, with traditional cultural background, recently moved to UK from Sri Lanka, parents both doctors in the UK, seek suitable professional partner. Please send details and horoscope in confidence. Ref: MPG229 Hot Spring

Daughter, 27, Roman Catholic, of Jaffna origin, graduate, qualified in the accountancy field, currently working in London, seeks suitable professionally qualified Roman catholic or Christian partner, aged between 28 to 35. Please forward details. Ref: MPG227 Hot Spring



Respondents are invited to write to
THE MEETING POINT, PO Box 24360,
London SW17 7FF, United Kingdom.

Tel: 0181 767 1230, Fax: 0181 672 6433

Please ensure that you quote the appropriate Ref.No. given at the end of the proposal in which you are interested.

Jaffna Hindu Daughter, 29, graduate, currently teaching in Madurai, South India, with brothers and sisters settled in European countries, seeks suitable partner. Willing to move. Please forward horoscope and details. Ref: MPG219 Hot Spring

Brother, 32, Hindu, UK resident, ACCA, working in an accountancy firm in London, seeks a good looking Hindu girl, preferably with resident visa in UK. Please send horoscope and other details in confidence. Ref: MPB114 Hot Spring

Niece, 30, Christian, educated throughout in Colombo, presently in London, doctor father practicing in Colombo, seeks suitable Christian professional preferably employed in the UK. Please forward details. Ref: MPG228 Hot Spring

Daughter, 28, Jaffna Hindu, 5ft 9in tall, vegetarian, Graduate, currently

employed as a Software Engineer in the US; parents in Canada, seeks a suitable Jaffna Hindu professional. Please send details and horoscope. Ref: MPG220 Hot Spring

Jaffna Hindu Son, 27, MSc, Management Consultant in computing in London, seeks suitable partner, Hindu with university education. Horoscope essential. Please forward details. Ref: MPB107 Hot Spring

Son, 30, Hindu, British born, Masters degree holder, currently working as an Academic research Assistant in a London teaching hospital seeks suitable partner. Please send horoscope and details in confidence. Ref: MPB110 Hot Spring

Jaffna Hindu daughter, 28, now British, vegetarian, graduate, with traditional cultural background including dancing, a Sai Baba devotee, seeks suitable partner. Please send horoscope and other details. Thank you. Ref: MPG209 Hot Spring

Daughter, 39, Tamil Roman Catholic, Masters degree holder, settled and employed in USA, divorced with two children, seeks understanding partner. Please send background details in confidence. Ref: MPG204 Hot Spring

Ceylon Tamil Roman Catholic mother (father Sinhalese, deceased) now resident in Canada, seeks partner for 28yrs daughter, 5' 2" tall, Canadian citizen and working for a prestigious bank. Catholic or Christian, aged 28 - 33 preferred. Please provide details in strict confidence. Ref: MPG 232 Hot Spring

The Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora has in recent years spread to many different countries in the World - to the UK and other European Countries, to America, to Canada and Australia. As a result contacts between those who were previously friends and neighbours back in Sri Lanka have become almost non-existent. The hardships and pressures in trying to establish ourselves in the new country of residence have made matters even more difficult.

Many young men and women of marriageable age are therefore faced with difficulties in finding suitable

The Meeting Point

Tel: 0181 767 1230 Fax: 0181 672 6433

partners in their own community.

The Meeting Point was inaugurated in London on 17th May 98, at a meeting attended by a large number of Tamil parents. The Meeting Point will operate as a voluntary organisation manned by a few respectable retired persons who are keen to serve the community by helping parents find suitable marriage partners for their sons/daughters. These volunteers understand the nature of this exercise

and will ensure utmost care and discretion in divulging information of individuals.

The Meeting Point also organises events such as parties and forums where young people will have opportunities to meet and get to know each other in a leisurely atmosphere. Suggestions, help and contributions are most welcome.

Parents/guardians/friends, desiring to seek a partner for a girl/boy, are welcome to make an application to The Meeting Point. Applicants are also welcome to visit the office of The Meeting Point by prior appointment.

TAMIL EELAM MARTYRS' DAY '99

SATURDAY 27 NOVEMBER 1999



*Come, hear Tamil Leader Velupillai
Prabhakaran's message for yourself*

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From Central London - Follow the Embankment and take Lower Thames Street, join the high way (A1203) at Tower Bridge. Proceed via the Limehouse link and follow signs to the Isle of Dogs or Canary Wharf.

From The North - Take the M11 and follow signs to the A13 and the Isle of Dogs or the city.

From the South and South East - Take the M2, A2, OR A20. Proceed Via the Blackwall tunnel taking the first left towards the Isle of Dogs.

The Arena is clearly sign posted on all approaches to the venue and you will be directed to the nearest convenient parking area.

For more information:

UTO, Eelam House, 202 Long Lane
London SE1 4QB
Tel: 0171 403 4554 Fax: 0171 403 1653
0956 314 370, 0956 329 660

at
LONDON ARENA

Limeharbour
London E14 9TH

How to get to London Arena

Docklands Light Railway

Take the DLR to **Crossharbour and London Arena** station - just 15 minutes from central London. The station is directly outside the main entrance. The DLR connects with the London underground network at :

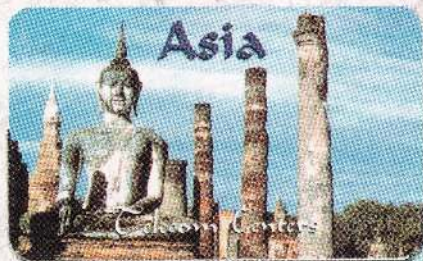
**Bank, Tower Gateway, Stratford,
Bow Church**

By Bus

D1 - Waterloo - London Bridge - Tower Hill - London Arena
D5 - Mile End - London Arena - Lime House
D6 - Hackney - Bethnal Green - Mile End - London Arena
D8 - Stratford - Canary Wharf - London Arena
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Austria	5p	Ghana	23p
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Denmark	4p	Somalia	21p
France	4p	Tanzania	21p
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