

TAMIL VOICE INTERNATIONAL

TVI

Vol. 2 No. 16
1st November, 1989

Is he en route to London?



Sathasivam Krishnakumar (Kittu), former LTTE Commander of Jaffna, now in Colombo for third round of talks.

Is he too much of an embarrassment?



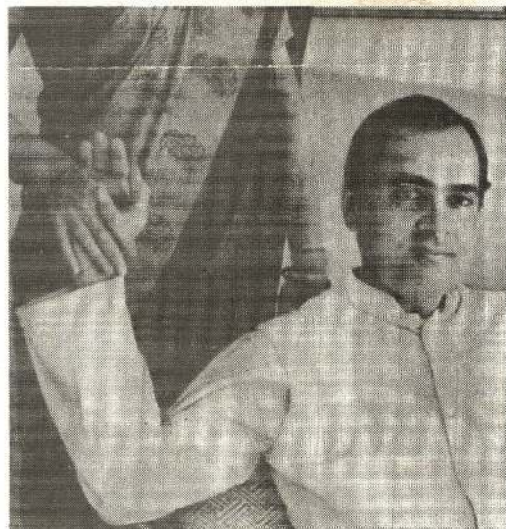
Former President Jayewardene has resigned from the UNP. "No divergence of opinion" says he.

Will he unseat Gandhi?



V P Singh, leader of India's Opposition, at next month's Lok Sabha elections.

What card has he up his sleeve this time?



Rajiv Gandhi with no sympathy vote, battered by Bofors and bruised by Tigers!

YOUR VOICE

TELF CONGRATULATES LTTE

M K Eelaventhana

The strategy of the LTTE has brought the desired result. To become an ally of your arch enemy at a crucial moment, when the confluence of twin interests is driving away an alien force, is a task worthy of the praise of the suffering Tamil people.

The LTTE has been prophetic - all along - that the Tamils will win their independence through their own effort. The futurologists claim of a vacuum after the departure of the IPKF does not arise, as the LTTE has demonstrated on previous occasions to be an organisation equal to the task of governing a country - Tamil Eelam.

Let us repose our faith in ourselves, the very requirement of our independence. If we cannot do, who else can? If not now, when?

TELF appeals to the Tamil militants to avoid any blood bath, that may arise out of inter group rivalry in the near future. Let us hope and pray that better sense will prevail and that there will be Tamils to live and see the fruits of our great sacrifice in our liberation struggle.

WHO KILLED AMIR? LTTE OR RAW?

A.K.Nathan, Negombo

Who had the political motivation? Amir alive posed no challenge to the popularity of the boys in the Tamil country. The TULF had become a dead force, a non-party. The Tigers did not consider Amir or the other two as a threat to their own influence. Why kill them?

It would have been the wrong timing too. The LTTE was then negotiating with the government of Sri Lanka. The Tigers had a very strong reason against the killing. Their enemies would certainly attribute the crime to the Tigers to blacken their good name: and that is what the Rajiv government has done.

India alone had the motive, the men and the money. All that the Indian army could show for their two year savagery in the North-East, has been a build up of anger and hatred in the hearts of the Tamil people and increasing support for the Tigers. The RAW, the secret service men who advise Rajiv and carry out India's under-cover operations, could have contrived the murders. Who but a gang of sinister, soulless henchmen who live by political skulduggery, could have planned and carried out such a dirty deal? Their aim was to brand the Tigers as the assassins.

India did not lose any time making massive propaganda out of their slaying. May be they had prior knowledge and were prepared to release their media barrage.

The assassination of Uma Maheswaran only days after the Amir killings, provides further evidence of India's guilt. He had long played the stooge to India's expansionist ambitions in Sri Lanka, and was later used as their puppet in the Maldivian melodrama. He could have provided the hit-men

in Colombo. To ensure that Uma would neither betray nor blackmail, the RAW thought it prudent to silence him. Dead men tell no tales.

Mrs Amirthalingam's story could only be hearsay evidence, an echo of what she was told by her husband. She is as much a dupe as he. Mr Sivasithamparam's version has not been published yet.

There is an element of bathos in this India-inspired tragedy. While the Sri Lankan government was holding talks with well-known LTTE men, like Anton Balasingam and Yogi, these TULF leaders were engaged in talks with three faceless men who pretended to represent Prabakaran. Long divorced from power, they were ready to clutch at any straw, and paid the price of their own credulity. The old politicians appear to have been too naive to trust and negotiate with any three nobodies who professed to be Prabakaran's emissaries.

TAMILS, UNITE !

Eeswaran, Madras

I find that people read either the *Tamil Voice International* or the *Tamil Times*, while a majority of Tamil expatriates do not read either. At least, can't they afford a subscription to one of the two? Elderly, mature, so-called educated people, who keep on moaning that the militant groups are unable to unite, are themselves unable to unite with one another. So, why blame the boys who are in the thick of the action?

Monthlies like TVI and TT cannot cope with the rapid developments. London is the only place where one can write with freedom and it would be the ideal hub in the West from where we can popularise our cause. But, to achieve that - a task not beyond the capacity of the Tamils in the West - there should be a joint effort from all of them. In fact such a paper could even bring the Tamils together instead of working separately and speaking with many voices. I don't know who can take the lead in the matter. Or, in the alternative, TT or TVI must convert itself into a weekly. I don't think they have the financial resources for it. Once a month periodicity is good enough only to chronicle events, not to propagate the cause.



A PEACE THAT PASSETH ALL UNDERSTANDING

The Sinhalese are busy putting their house in order. The Foreign Minister, Ranjan Wijeratne, has claimed that with the negotiations at Belgrade completed, New Delhi has now agreed to "make all out efforts" to withdraw the last IPKF man from the North-East by December 31. So far so good.

Three developments however have arisen to cause doubt in our minds. First, does "all out efforts" include a promise of unconditional withdrawal? A clarification is necessary. Secondly, we are disappointed that Colombo has not pressed the case of the "My Lai" massacre at Valvettiturai and other places at international fora. Neither in Belgrade nor in the ensuing negotiations in New Delhi nor in the recent CHOGM in Kuala Lumpur did the Sri Lanka government raise this serious question with the Indian government. To our knowledge nothing has been done even though the brutalities of the IPKF are a clear violation of Sri Lankan sovereignty. Thirdly, we regret that no action has been taken by Colombo to stop the forcible conscription of Tamil youth for military training in a future war against the Sri Lankan army or the LTTE or both. To our minds the North-East is in danger of becoming a bloody battle field and without any proper devolution of powers or of devolved police security, we fear to contemplate what the consequences could be.

Our regret is that not enough is being done by Colombo to settle the Tamil problem. We have constantly cautioned that a running sore in the body politic is perilous to the entire island. One concrete step that the government has taken recently could help to improve the situation. A Commission to investigate youth unrest has been appointed. It comprises new blood, and in a new mould, pertaining to such appointments. We expect that this body will bring out a constructive report which will set the pace for some return to normalcy. But the government is also involved in two other exercises which in our view may not provide the desired results.

Will the second APC go the way of the first? We are well aware that such devices are intended to postpone rather than resolve. The government has in its possession a plethora of opinions to need to consult afresh with the public. What does the Peace Committee in the North-East mean with 22 odd parties (most of which are without any following in that region) involved in restoring normal conditions? The situation in the North-East can be resolved best in negotiations between Colombo, New Delhi and the LTTE. Have we been placed in the back burner now that the Sinhalese have begun to sort out their problems? India has always insisted that Colombo should keep to its promises of devolving powers before a complete withdrawal. Now with India getting out by December 31 will Colombo backtrack? That has been the record of all Sinhala governments. This time, however, we caution Colombo that it is not worth their while dilly-dallying with the Tamil people. It is this confused picture that compels us to make the statement that is the caption of this editorial.

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TAMIL VOICE International

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Volume 2 No 16
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Contents	
Your Voice	2
Editorial	3
The Intransigence of Rajiv	4
Monthly Musings	5
Thirukkural	6
Will India Leave Sri Lanka	7
Media Reports	8-9
Eelam is non-negotiable	10-11
Eelam Thoughts	12-13
People & Events	14-15
Tamil Eelam News	16-17
Sri Lankan News	19
WFT Appeals	20
Ceasefire with other Groups	21
Folk Tales by Thaatha	22
Tamil Page	23
Tamilar Resurgence	
Conference	24

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THE INTRANSIGENCE OF RAJIV GANDHI CAUSES INDIA HEAVY LOSS

Chandran, Mylapore, Madras

Rajiv Gandhi took it on himself as a prestige issue, when the LTTE alone opposed the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, while all the other groups in Tamil Eelam towed his line and accepted it in toto. Hence, instead of giving priority to implementing the agreement signed by him, he gave full attention to wreaking vengeance on the Tigers and annihilating them.

But, afterwards the Tigers announced that though they did not accept the agreement they would not oppose it and would also co-operate in implementing it. They stopped their war with the Sinhala military and handed over their arms in the presence of the Indian army. But Rajiv Gandhi did not keep his word. His Government delayed the setting-up of an interim council as promised by Rajiv.

When Dileepan started an indefinite fast, demanding that the Indian Government should stop the Sri Lankan Government violating the terms of the agreement and take steps to speed up the process of implementing the terms because it was the Indian Government which had signed the peace agreement on behalf of the Eelam Tamils, the Indian Government made light of his martyrdom. It let loose a mischievous propaganda campaign calling his fast as anti-Gandhian. Dileepan was simply "killed" by Rajiv's Government.

When the Sri Lankan Government arrested 17 Tigers, including some of its top ranking lieutenants on the high seas, the Indian Government in violation of the peace agreement permitted the Sri Lankan Government to take all the Tigers to Colombo. The intention of the Rajiv Government was to cow-down the Tigers, holding these 17 persons as hostages.

The intention of the Rajiv Government was well understood by the Tigers. To make others understand that no powers, however mighty they may be, can make them surrender, by threat, 12 of the arrested members of the LTTE movement sacrificed their lives.

Because of this, the Tigers announced

that they were rejecting the peace agreement and taking up arms once again. Following this, on the pretext of disarming the Tigers, the Rajiv Government set all its forces - army, navy and air - on the Tigers and fought a full-fledged war.

The sands of Tamil Eelam became blood-red once again, when thousands of innocent people were killed in senseless attacks by the Indian military. The atrocities committed by the Indian Army, in the last two years, exceeded all others. It is worse than the Sri Lankan army's atrocities.

The fervent appeals of the people all over the world to Rajiv Gandhi to stop the war on the Tigers and start a dialogue with them to find a solution to the problem fell on deaf ears. He adamantly asserted that until the Tigers accept the peace agreement in toto after surrendering all their arms, the attacks on them would not be stopped.

Even though the Tigers expressed their goodwill towards India and its great people on several occasions, by unconditionally releasing the Indian army personnel captured alive by the Tigers in the war, the Rajiv Government continued to abuse them as terrorists and power-mongers, through its propaganda organs.

Today, however, by entering into a second agreement with the Sri Lankan government, the government of Rajiv Gandhi is placed in the unenviable position of announcing cease-fire without any conditions and withdrawing the Indian army.

Had Rajiv Gandhi come forward to a dialogue with the Tigers after announcing a cease-fire on the appeals of the Tigers and the people he would not have suffered such humiliation.

Had Rajiv Gandhi accepted the appeals of Dileepan and taken a neutral stand, had he made the Sri Lankan Government to implement the agreement sincerely, he would not have had to enter into a new agreement, and to return with shame, and a sense of failure.

The price that India had to pay to satisfy the senseless ego of one man, Rajiv Gandhi, is enormous. More than three thousand (3000) Indian troops have been killed and four times that number have been maimed and are invalid. Many thousands of crores of rupees have been wasted.

Today, after the Valvettiturai massacre, the murderous and barbarous nature of the Indian army has been exposed to the whole world. Alas! this is the profit gained by India after paying such a heavy price!

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MONTHLY MUSINGS

DEMOCRACY'S BIGGEST SHOW

It was an unexpected move. Prime Minister Gandhi took most people, particularly the opposition parties, by surprise in calling for elections in November. Not even the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Kuala Lumpur, where the Prime Minister would have played his usual prima donna role, proved enough of an attraction. But he really had little choice when his government suffered two defeats in the Rajya Sabha over constitutional amendments. Whether he will lose the election is another matter. The defeats in parliament have provided the ideal excuse to go to the polls early and thereby wrongfoot the opposition. The snap poll is a clear attempt to undermine the divided opposition, and give it 10 days to allocate, among its various squabbling parties, candidates for 542 constituencies.

The *de facto* leader of the opposition, Mr V P Singh, optimistically welcomed the elections on the basis that: "The day of final reckoning has come and the people will give their verdict." With little ideological substance to separate the main factions headed by Mr Gandhi and Mr Singh, the campaign will focus on personality and style. Mr Singh fired the first salvo that reflected the nature of the contest to come when he said that his Janata Dal party was prepared to meet "the challenge posed to the future of the nation by a corrupt, inept and treacherous regime headed by a totally venal and amoral individual."

There is little doubt that Mr Gandhi will be struggling to defend his five year term which has seen a drastic reversal in his image, what with the Bofors scandal, his Sri Lankan forays and general incompetence. According to the Guardian, Mr Gandhi has changed from being seen as a decent, well-meaning individual committed to healthy change, to "Now with his Mercedes, his lavish trips by jet and helicopter, his retinue of sycophants and security men, he has thoroughly dispelled that image, and substituted another of remoteness and arrogance." In spite of all this however, unless the

opposition parties can get their act together, the political pundits are forecasting a close-run affair in Mr Gandhi's favour.

Whatever the outcome, the elections will be the biggest exercise in democracy ever with nearly half a billion Indians qualified to vote. Voting will be held on two or three days between November 22 and 24 at 593,414 polling stations. The result is likely to be known on the night of 25 November.

PROMISE OF OTHER ELECTIONS

It seems likely that elections will be held in Sri Lanka as well, if the LTTE has its way with President Premadasa. Mr Anton Balasingam has called for the dissolution of the North-East Provincial Council and the holding of new elections once the IPKF leaves, hopefully by the end of the year. He said that if these conditions are met, the LTTE will definitely enter the political mainstream. "In the past we did boycott the provincial and parliamentary election because at that time we were under conditions of war," he explained.

Mr Balasingam expressed his fears of a bloodbath if the Sri Lankan government continues to turn a blind eye to the formation of the Tamil National Army, reported to be around 30,000 strong, by the EPRLF with the help of the IPKF.

The Island ponders that the scenario with the departure of the Indian troops will indeed be a bloody battle between the EPRLF and the LTTE, despite assurances to the contrary, with the Sri Lankan security forces once again in the north-east, and the Indian forces returning in one form or another.

YET ANOTHER PARTY IS BORN

Should elections be forthcoming, there is a new contender in the already long list of Tamil parties vying for power. A Marxist-Leninist political party calling itself the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) has sought legal recognition from the Commissioner of Elections. The party comprises breakaway factions from the EPRLF and PLOTE which merged under the

ENDLF banner. In its document titled "Immediate tasks" the EPDP calls for the mobilisation of the masses to actively participate in the social, economic and cultural liberation struggles of the Tamil-speaking people with Marxism-Leninism as its guiding ideological instrument. One is compelled to ask as to when we are going to abandon the tired clichés of another era and ethos and come up with new ideas based on the needs and aspirations of the Tamil people.

BACK TO SQUARE ONE?

The second round of the All-Party Conference (APC) ended on something of an anti-climax. High hopes had been generated when it was announced that the Government, after meeting with the SLFP, was ready to consider holding a referendum on the acceptability of the executive presidential system, and forming an interim government once peace and normalcy were restored. When the APC adjourned, the most notable announcement by President Premadasa was that a commission of enquiry would be appointed to consider the problem of youth unrest.

As *The Island* rightly asked, since the whole purpose of the APC was to restore peace and normalcy, what was the point of making them conditionalities, instead of getting the proposal for a referendum and the formation of an interim government off the ground. "If any such exercise and for that matter any worthwhile scheme of reform is dependent on the restoration of peace and normalcy, then Sri Lanka might well be in for a long wait and a lot more blood letting."

Even as the Government awaited the arrival of a delegation from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), there were more corpses floating down rivers and lying on the roadside in the south. President Premadasa would do well to send the ICRC team to the north-east to judge the horrendous situation there as well. Among the services provided by the ICRC are the tracing of missing persons and visiting places of detention.



THIRUKKURAL

S. Srikandarajah

சமன்செய்து சீர்தாக்குங் கோல்போல் அமைந்தொருபால்
கோடாமை சான்றோர்க் கணி.

"Saman Seithu Seer Thookum Koalpoal
Amynthu Orupaal Kodaamai Saantroatku Ani" (Transliteration 118)

*"To incline to neither side, but to rest impartial as the even fixed scale is the
ornament of the wise" (Translation)*

This Kural is commonplace; so common that it could be called a household Kural. It is oft uttered when people want others to be fair and square. The Alpha and Omega of righteous life is propriety; and propriety requires that one must give each person his due whether he be stranger, a friend or an enemy.

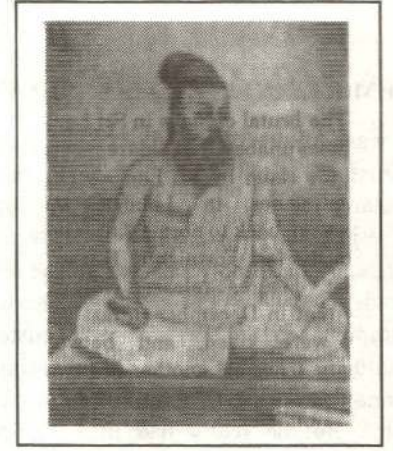
A balancing scale is so impartial that it registers and records the correct weight of anything that has been put in the scale. Whatever be the object that has been put in the scale to be weighed it indicates the weight properly. Be it gold or copper, pearl or gem, chaff or grain it records the weight impartially.

Thiruvalluvar says that a righteous person should behave in the same fashion when he is called upon to make decisions or express opinions. It is common knowledge that selfishness is blind and that the decisions of men are discoloured by passion and dimmed by wickedness.

During the course of ordinary human activity it may be possible for ordinary mortals like us to follow the path of rectitude without swerving. But during critical times it becomes difficult to walk without faltering on this narrow path of righteousness. Our ancient literature provides us ample instances to illustrate this point. In the Ramayana, Kumpakarnan's partiality for his brother Ravana got the better of him and he abandoned reasoned justice and took the erring side of the brother. Kaikeyi herself, gripped by the selfish desire to crown her son Bharathan, lost her sense of justice and fairplay.

Such is the gripping force of selfishness. If a person gives himself or herself up to such passions and desires, then such person would be said to have forsaken the path of righteousness. Such persons are not persons of exemplary character worthy of emulation.

The Mahabharata provides a commendable example of a person who steadfastly resisted all temptations to be swayed from the path of *Dharma*, except in one instance. He is Yudhisthira. It was a trying time where gods themselves might have slipped. But Yudhisthira the eldest and the jewel among the Pandavas managed to be above board. This trying hour was during the end of the twelve years period when the Pandavas were living in the forest incognito. One day, worn out by the futile chase of a deer which they could not capture, the five brothers were resting under a banyan tree. As thirst tormented them Yudhisthira sent his brother Nakula to fetch some water from a nearby pool. The pool belonged to a Yaksha. When Nakula attempted to drink water from the pool the Yaksha said that the pool belonged to him and that he could not drink the water until he had answered a couple of his questions. When Nakula defied the commands of the Yaksha and dipped the cupped palm of his hand into the water an inexplicable drowsiness overpowered him and he fell down, to all appearances, dead. Shocked by the nonreturn of Nakula, Yudhisthira sent Sahadevan to find out what the matter was. Sahadevan also met the same fate as Nakula. Puzzled that Sahadevan also did not return he sent Arjuna who also succumbed to the magical spell of the Yaksha. Anxiety of Bhima knew



no bounds and he set out to find the whereabouts of his dear brothers. When Bhima went there he saw his brothers lying dead. Undaunted by what had happened to his brothers he defied the orders of the Yaksha and as is to be expected, he fell dead too.

Unable to understand the mystery, Yudhisthira himself went to the pool. But he acted wisely by agreeing to answer the questions plied by the Yaksha. He answered the questions so superbly that the Yaksha said "O King, one and only one of your dead brothers can be revived. Whom do you want revived?" Yudhisthira thought hard for a while and then replied "May Nakula arise". The Yaksha was pleased at this and asked Yudhisthira; "Why did you choose Nakula in preference to Bhima who is your real strength, hope and confidence". Then Yudhisthira replied "O, Yaksha, *Dharma* is the only shield of man and not Bhima or Arjuna. If *Dharma* is set at naught, man will be ruined. Kunti and Madri were the two wives of my father Pandu. I am a son of Kunti and I am surviving and therefore my mother is not bereaved. As it is Madri is bereaved. In order that the scales of justice be even, I ask that Madri's son Nakula may revive".

The story goes that the Yaksha was so pleased with Yudhisthira's impartiality that he restored life to all his brothers. It is this kind of impartiality that the Kural under review speaks of.

Even if we cannot emulate this example, it would do us a lot of good if we could at least appreciate such conduct.

WILL INDIA LEAVE ON NEW YEAR'S EVE?

Wakeley Paul

The Indian promise to leave our shores by December 31 is embroiled in snags which will allow them easy excuses to abrogate both the ceasefire and the consequent obligation to leave. The reason why they will resort to these devices is their underlying desire not to let go the toe hold they have on the island which they regard as strategically important to them.

The letters attached to the Accord and those exchanged between the two leaders before July 29 this year make the following truisms transparently clear.

1. India does not want any other foreign power exercising control over Trincomalee Harbour, its security forces or alliances.
2. India engineered the Accord to ensure its military presence in the island.

3. India will use the Accord to argue that they have the unilateral power to determine when they should leave.

4. India will stage conditions to ensure an arguable right to stay.

The turmoil in the south presents a danger that any vulnerable Sri Lankan government may be looking for outside help, which India must prevent. They looked on very nervously as President Jayewardene edged toward the West and the US and manoeuvred conditions to allow for their intercession. Like Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal in the North which are under India's thumb, Sri Lanka is the nearest southern neighbour whose control is devoutly to be wished.

They have opened five new camps between the date of agreement and the date of its operation. They have not

wavered from their obligation to build a civilian volunteer force ostensibly to combat Sri Lankan forces but in fact as a ploy to beef up their surrogates. They will use every strategy to goad the LTTE to retaliate against their or their surrogates violations to abrogate their obligations.

Time alone will tell whether the writer's sceptical analysis or India's bona fides will prove true. The writer can but hope that he will be wrong but warns that we must all guard against the hideous reality that he may be right.

They will use the world press to argue that it is the others who violated the agreement forcing them to remain, and there will be many willing to believe their rhetoric. I hope this will serve as a warning against that possibility as well.

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NO ARMED CONFLICT WITH EPRLF

"We can assure everybody that the LTTE will not go for an armed conflict with the EPRLF. At the same time we wish to warn the EPRLF cadres to refrain

from violence and cease all armed hostilities against the LTTE cadres and against the civilians. The only way to resolve the conflict is to face a fair and

free election in which the people will decide their representatives."
- A S Balasingam said at a recent interview with the BBC.

EXCERPTS FROM MEDIA

**RECALCITRANT SCHOOLBOYS OR
COMMITTED FREEDOM FIGHTERS?**N J Nanporia, Ex-editor, *The Times of India*

Whatever the outcome of the current negotiations on the withdrawal of the IPKF from Sri Lanka, they have once again helped to underline a central factor New Delhi has persistently overlooked or belittled. That is, that no decision on the future of the Tamils on the island or on the IPKF withdrawal or on the EPRLF-controlled government in the north-east can have any relevance without the consent and co-operation of the LTTE. Yet, the entire Indo-Sri Lankan story from day one of the Gandhi-Jayewardene "accord" has had India treating the LTTE either as a *chamcha* from whom instant obedience can be expected, or as a parish to whom no concessions need be made. To begin with, South Block, as it were, extended its patronage to the LTTE in mandarin style and under pressure from MGR even endorsed the line at a SAARC meeting that the LTTE was the principal, if not the exclusive, voice of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Yet New Delhi had not bothered to consult the LTTE before rushing an "accord" which later events have emptied of any significance it might have had. Despite the snub, the LTTE adopted a policy not of opposition, but of waiting and seeing. The underestimation of the LTTE was further compounded by the assumption that any dissatisfaction could be promptly removed by handing over a sum of money ostensibly as compensation for the "displacement" of some Tamils under the accord. This was followed by the further assumption that, confronted by the IPKF, the LTTE would meekly surrender their arms.

The arms the LTTE holds are their only assurance of survival in a ruthless

struggle for what they believe to be their political integrity. The belief that they would surrender their weapons on request speaks volumes for the staggering ineptitude of the Indian estimate of Sri Lankan realities. Thereafter, the IPKF's inability to disarm the LTTE was plain for all to see. Yet, New Delhi continued to prescribe terms in the tone and style of a victor to the vanquished, much as though the LTTE were a delinquent in need of a lesson on how to behave. Ironically, India, supposedly the friend and sponsor of the Tamils on the island, had taken on a dismissive, even contemptuous attitude to the only truly organised Tamil force on the island.

Meanwhile, it was evident that the LTTE had a standing and influence among the Tamils which none of the other factions could hope to rival. Yet at no stage did New Delhi even grant it due dignity by holding serious talks with it; instead, the centre confined itself to sending a motley crew of "envoys" air dashing on missions that were never accomplished. Rajiv Gandhi confessed that he was getting a "little tired" with the LTTE but he might have done better to check up on the assessments of the LTTE his so-called advisers had been feeding him. Thereafter, we had another bout of self-deception, this time on the lines that the LTTE did not matter and could be bypassed by holding elections to the North-East Council. Again it was plain for all to see that these elections were no more than a painful farce without the participation of the LTTE.

Over the years, the LTTE has confirmed that it has the military and political skills appropriate to an organisa-

tion which refuses to see India as a "sponsor" to whom it is expected to submit on any issue. Yet we have had the astonishing spectacle of India insisting on a "conditional" IPKF withdrawal depending on the LTTE's "behaviour on the ground". Note that the tone is unchanged, more suited to admonishing a recalcitrant schoolboy than to serious talks with a fully matured organisation. As for the EPRLF government, placed in office through an election that never had any credibility under an "accord" which had even less, the sooner it is recognised as an unmitigated farce, the sooner will India's Sri Lankan policy be restored to some semblance of reality.

The upshot is that New Delhi has manoeuvred itself into the position of having to justify a provincial government that is an empty shell and ignore a Tamil organisation that has already more than proved its worth and with which even the Sri Lankans have begun talking. The feeble expedient of arming the EPRLF people is unlikely to work, besides attracting the charge of interference, and promoting further disaffection. Note that Anton Balasingam of the LTTE said the other day that "the war with LTTE could have been averted if matters had been sorted out before the signing of the accord" and that what LTTE wants is talks with India "officially and at the proper level." In short, he is asking, on behalf of the LTTE, for the respect which Delhi's superior mandarins have refused to concede. But unless this mulishness is dropped and there is a confession of error in the past, there can be no easy way out for India. (By courtesy of: *Gentleman*, August 31, 1989)

INDIAN INTERFERENCE AGAIN !

Today we carry a *Lankapuvath* story which quoting the Indian newspaper *Sunday Observer* says that officers of the elite Indian National Security Guard had been despatched to Sri Lanka as Indian troops are feverishly continuing with their training of hun-

dreds of youths in the northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka ahead of the December 31 departure deadline of the IPKF.

The report goes on to say that several Indian army officers drawn from different units had been sent to these prov-

inces to beef up the training. These include officers of the National Security Guard.

In spite of New Delhi's protestations about a ceasefire and its professed willingness to withdraw by the end of the year, exercises such as training young

people conscripted for the Citizens' Volunteer Force smack of odious Indian interference in Sri Lanka's affairs. What is even more reprehensible is that the CVF is virtually a private army of the EPRLF which runs the Provincial Council of the North-East. Therefore India is not only blatantly interfering in Sri Lanka's affairs by giving weapons training to Sri Lankan nationals but also taking sides in the contest between the LTTE and the EPRLF in the northern and eastern provinces.

The dangers inherent in this situation are only too obvious. It is no secret that there is growing hostility between the LTTE and the EPRLF in the northern and eastern provinces. Readers of this newspaper know that we have never been admirers of the LTTE but the fact is that the LTTE has more clout than the EPRLF in these areas and certainly in the northern province. There is a growing contest for power between these two groups once the IPKF withdraws.

What India is doing in essence is arming and training the EPRLF to look after India's interests in the north and east of Sri Lanka once the IPKF is withdrawn. It will be recalled that the EPRLF has repeatedly warned that it will seek Indian help to establish a separate state in the north and the east in the event of the Sri Lanka government dissolving the north-east provincial council and calling for fresh elections. It is this outfit which labours under the grand delusion that it has a divine right to rule the North-East which India is arming and training.

When there is a demand to even amend the Sri Lanka Constitution in response to the growing national crisis, no political party, and certainly not the EPRLF, can take any fact as given or valid for all time. Nobody can predict which way things will evolve once the IPKF leaves Sri Lanka. In such a context it will be absolutely dangerous to have an Indian fifth column flourishing in the north and east in the form of an Indian trained army masquerading as a citizens volunteer force. This is not merely a gross violation of the Indo-Lanka agreement but also a diabolical attempt by India to perpetuate her interests in a part of Sri Lanka even if the IPKF is withdrawn. Sri Lanka must recognise it for what it is, an attempt to

plant a Trojan horse within Sri Lanka's shores.

It is incumbent upon the Sri Lankan government to ask New Delhi about the veracity of the Indian News report and take this issue up at the highest levels. [The Island. International, Oct 4, 1989]

IPKF RESPECTS LTTE SKILLS

In two years, the LTTE seems to have demonstrated to the world's fourth largest army its dedication, its measure of public sympathy at least in Jaffna, and its command over guerrilla tactics.

"The LTTE has a very good system of establishing camps," General Malik told a group of reporters from New Delhi. "They have perfected booby traps and claymore mines..."

Malik should know better than any one else since he commands the sprawling Vavuniya sector comprising the districts of Vavuniya, Mannar and Mullaitivu which has seen the worst fighting between the Indians and the LTTE.

Nearly 70 percent of the area comprises thick jungles in which LTTE leaders, including its supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran, are known to be holed up. Repeated forays into the forests have only resulted in more casualties to the Indian Army, which has lost 1,109 officers and men in Sri Lanka. Another 2,854 have been wounded.

Questions about the usefulness of the military involvement in the island nation brought vague replies. Malik, who arrived in Sri Lanka in December 1987, perhaps voiced the feeling of the average Indian soldier deployed in the island when he described the problems of fighting a motivated guerilla. "It is terribly frustrating when you cannot see the enemy," he said, speaking in a board room adorned with photographs of wanted and dead LTTE militants, including the elusive Prabhakaran.

"You cannot make out who is the LTTE," he said. "It is frustrating." The General, like his other colleagues, conceded that there were good reasons why the LTTE could not be crushed.

"The Tiger is a motivated fighter," he said. "He (Tiger) is prepared to die for his cause, right or wrong," he added, and pointed out how LTTE activists of

ten preferred cyanide to capture. "They have been able to put up a fairly good fight," he said.

Added Major General Jameel Mehmood, Commanding Officer in eastern Trincomalee district: "Give the devil his due. It is good. It (LTTE) is a band of dedicated guerillas." He also said: "We have learnt our lessons. It will stand us in good stead."

When fighting began on Oct. 10, 1987, many had thought it would be a cake-walk operation for the IPKF. But two years of fighting has proved that conventional armies cannot defeat guerilla forces.

"When the guerilla does not lose, he wins. When the army does not win, it loses," said Major General Ashok Kumar Mehta, who commands the eastern Batticaloa district and is from the famed 57 Mountain Division.

IPKF commanders, however, claimed credit for forcing the LTTE into negotiations with Colombo and added that Indian soldiers had given the Tigers the battle of their life. [M R Narayan Swamy - India Abroad, October 13, 1989]

IMPORTED ARMS FOR EPRLF

Indian intelligence agencies have for sometime secretly run a major operation importing arms, mainly Kalashnikovs, rocket-launchers and grenades of Soviet/Chinese origin from Afghanistan to arm pro-Indian Tamil groups. That and the desire for vengeance will ensure that the real battle for supremacy in the Tamil belt will begin only after the last Indian soldier leaves for home. [Shekhar Gupta with P Jayaram - India Today, October 15, 1989]

COLLEGES NIGHT

Get together of Tamil Colleges

Date: Saturday, Nov 11, 1989
6.30pm

Venue: Copland High School
High Road, Wembley.
In aid of: Socio - Economic development of Tamil Homeland

Ticket: Single £10.00

Family £15.00

Contact: Phone 01-252 1274
01-359 2834

EELAM IS NON - NEGOTIABLE

V Navaratnam, Former MP for Kayts

Little did I imagine in 1968 when, from the floor of the House in Parliament, I called upon the Tamil youth to rise up and struggle for the establishment of a separate independent state for the Tamils, that New Delhi would stab us in the back just when victory was in sight. Even my colleagues in Parliament who had been fighting shoulder to shoulder with me in many a non-violent battle, including S J V Chelvanayagam who in earlier days had the capacity for political forethought, laughed at and ridiculed the idea just as New Delhi is doing now.

Still earlier, thirty two years ago in 1957, when I wrote "Ceylon faces crisis" and issued it as a Federal Party publication little did I dream that the crisis I was forecasting would explode into the disastrous catastrophe that has now befallen our ancient land.

Nobody in politics at that time had reason to anticipate that a time would come when big states would deny small states the right to exist under the sun. Nobody had any reason to believe that, however unconcerned and non-interfering they may be in the affairs of other countries, small states would never be permitted to be independent. Nobody ever thought that the alliance of Non-Aligned States, conceived by Nehru, Tito and Nasser, would in course of time be turned into a hoax.

I sometimes wonder what madness has come over the land which we have always been accustomed to look up to for international morality and correct international behaviour. It is hard to understand how the rulers of a land that produced such paragons of noble-mindedness and pillars of the freedom struggle like Bala Gangadhara Tilak and Gokhale, Lala Rajpat Rai the Lion of Punjab, Bhagat Singh and Rajguru and Sukhdev, Vallabhai Patel brothers, Subhas Chandra Bose and Aravindha Ghosh, Andhra Kesari Prakasam, V V S Iyer and Subramania Bharathiyar, Kamaraj and Satyamoothy and Rajagopalachariar, the late lamented Indra Priyadharshini Nehru, could bring their minds to send armed soldiers to rape Tamil women of Eelam and kill by the thousands infants and children, men and women, young and old. It is like

New Delhi has devised a new way to keeping peace which the earlier contingents of Indian forces, which Nehru sent to Korea and other international arenas, did not know. I have not mentioned Mohandas K Gandhi, the Mahatma and dreamer of Ram Raj for his people, because for all intents and purposes New Delhi seems to have repudiated him and his ideals.

But why should the rulers of Ceylon bring about a situation that permitted the perpetration of such a tragedy ?

Shortly after the signing of the so-called "accord" between New Delhi and Colombo, Indian combat troops and military hardware poured into Ceylon. The Prime Minister of India was reported to have justified the extraordinary action and explained that his troops were there at the invitation of the legitimate government of Ceylon. This is legalism, and a reckless treading on the uncharted territory of international law. And it was quite unnecessary, for nobody took the Prime Minister's explanation seriously, and nobody was talking law whether tenable or not. If law had to be invoked, surely the advisers in New Delhi could not have been unaware that there was an ongoing armed Revolution in Ceylon started by Sirimavo Bandaranaike, that Bandaranaike and her friends publicly declared to the world that they were subverting the Constitution of Ceylon through a Revolution, that the last lawfully elected Parliament and legitimate government came to an end on June 2, 1972, that the Revolution escalated into civil war and the issues of the Revolution have still not yet been resolved, that the persons they were dealing with in Colombo were in law usurpers of power and constituted an illegitimate government. They should have known that diplomatic recognition is no criterion of the legitimacy of a government.

The reality is, New Delhi took sides in the Revolution and Civil War in Ceylon, Mr Jayewardene asked for help to crush the Tamils and the LTTE, and New Delhi obliged. Mr Jayewardene has himself put it in a quite dramatic form in a recently reported interview to the Sunday Times. "It is something out

of the ordinary" said Mr Jayewardene, "It is like the referee (Mr Gandhi) entering the ring in the Jayewardene-LTTE fight and taking the place of one combatant (JR)". He is only confirming a truth which the Tamils have known all along. Dropping the figurative language, in plain English the fact is, what Jayewardene could not achieve through his own Army he got the Indian Army to do it for him. The Tamils are not fooled when the Prime Minister of India tells them two years after the "accord" that he is protecting the Tamils and wants to get powers devolved to the farce of a so-called provincial council.

It would be more correct to say that the managers who run India's foreign policy from New Delhi do not seem to know, or care to know, who India's friends are and who are not. And for this ignorance or miscalculation, call it what you will, more than one thousand Indian soldiers had to pay with their lives, perhaps many more than officially admitted.

Even after a lapse of more than forty years after coming out of the colonial era, we are still struggling to clutch at the benign fruits of real freedom and to rediscover our identity. The British technique of wielding power seems to have left behind a legacy of imperialism-psychosis which is pervasively corrupting and polluting even the best of minds. The victims of past imperialism do not seem to have any qualms about practising it on others.

Witness New Delhi vying with Washington for the global mantle of Imperial London. It is so obsessed with this quest that it finds no time to ponder over the fact that there was never a politically unified one-India before the British, that the unified India of British-make was inherited by New Delhi as a result of the united struggle of all the peoples and all the regions of India, and it is therefore in duty bound to share it with all the others eschewing domination. But New Delhi nowadays behaves as though it alone is the sole recipient and inheritor of the British Raj. It is here that what Janardhana Thakur of Calcutta once wrote assumes a meaningful significance - that all

roads to New Delhi lie through Uttar Pradesh. The perception and thinking behind the cryptic remark is pregnant with all manner of implications in Indian politics with which we are not concerned. What concerns us, however, is, it is exactly identical with what governments in Ceylon believe and enforce - that the Sinhalese alone are the sole inheritors of British Rule in the island. In Ceylon it ignited the Tamil War of Independence in the Revolution started by Bandaranaike.

The military intervention by New Delhi is regrettable, but it has also opened our eyes to a new factor in Indian foreign policy. It is not only Trincomalee in which New Delhi is interested; it is also interested in ensuring that New Delhi and Colombo pursue a common domestic policy towards peoples different from those of the Capitals. In other words, with reference to the Gandhi-Jayewardene "accord", New Delhi and Colombo seek to give themselves the sole right to decide what is good for the Tamils of Ceylon: if the Tamils of Ceylon show signs of questioning this right New Delhi would not hesitate to wield the big stick on them to assist Colombo. This is the clear message sent out by the "accord". **Velupillai Prabaharan deserves a temple to be built for him and the LTTE for refusing to put his signature to this Kautilyan document. It would have heaped a mountain of shame on the Tamils and further enslaved them for generations to come.**

Wisdom should persuade New Delhi that India's security interests would be far better served by having friendly states and people in the southern island neighbour than by harbours for ships and broadcasting stations on foreign soils. They are accoutrements for aspirants to imperial power. That is the policy which Jawaharlal Nehru formulated and New Delhi has always followed since independence, and it can never be served by stationing troops to rape women and kill large numbers of the population.

Each generation should draw lessons from the experience of the previous generation, and the one previous to that, and so on - that is, from history. Otherwise learning history becomes a useless exercise. Thereby you avoid unnecessary hardships to the people you are trying to serve and to lead, and

save them from the disastrous feeling of helplessness and frustration. What is the point in repeating what has been tried before and found to be a blunder? Learning lessons from past experience and avoiding similar mistakes, pitfalls and traps is the only path to progressive wisdom. In the affairs of a people, and to persons providing leadership, it is vital and fundamental.

From the beginning of this century generation after generation of Tamil leaders have tried various formulae for a peaceful resolution of the Tamil-Sinhala problem so that the two peoples may co-exist honourably and on equal terms without dividing the country. Reserved seats for legislative representation, balanced representation, federalism, regional councils, district councils, provincial councils, you name it, every formula that human ingenuity could devise was discussed and negotiated. **Agreements, pacts, and accords were solemnly entered into under the signatures of the leaders of both peoples of the time. Every one of them was broken by the Sinhalese after using them for their side of the bargain.** Anyone interested may refer to the Ceylon Hansard and look up my speech in the debate on the White Paper on District Councils in 1956 for a detailed account of these pacts. It was then that I declared, let us have no more pacts, and called upon the youth to fight for a separate Tamil state. It took more than eight years for even a man like Chelvanayakam to veer round and come to my view. While I was narrating the story of the long line of broken pacts and dealing with the last of them, the Dudley-Chelvanayakam Pact of 1965, I was able to note from the heckling and interruptions that the Prime Minister and his deputy, Mr J R Jayewardene, were obviously conscience-pricked and uncomfortable.

It is a mistake to think that all Sinhalese leaders are incapable of conscientious remorse. It is only that some men do not feel free in politics to yield to the dictates of conscience. My being tempted to recall this occasion now, twenty-one years after the event, is only because, while spending old age in a sort of self-imposed exile, it is agonising to watch responsible men still wanting to waste their time and resources talking about provincial councils, accords, and parliamentary solu-

tions.

Ceylon has had a surfeit of bloodshed, traumas, travails and suffering. How long should it be allowed to continue? Is it not time for the Sinhalese and the Tamils to accept the historical fact that Ceylon is the common motherland of both the peoples and that as far back as history could be traced the two peoples had lived their separate lives in their respective homelands amicably, until the European powers arrived and disturbed the pattern? Of course, like every other human society in the world, we too have had our share of wars and conflicts, but that did not prevent us from settling down to normal friendly lives after the conflicts ended. Reason tells us that we must resume that pattern for the well-being of both the peoples.

President Premadasa is a reasonable man, always responsive to the hardships of the common man, the underdog, and the under-privileged; he abhors bloodshed. I have personal experience with his capacity for mental responsiveness to the Tamil problem. When he was Junior Minister for Local Government in the Dudley Senanayake Government I invited him to visit the islands in my electorate. He casually told me in a conversation that he could understand my stand on the question of a separate Tamil state, and then asked, "Nava, what is your economy? Do you seriously think that you have the resources to sustain a state?" What impressed me then was that Mr Premadasa's doubts were not about the principle of a separate state for the Tamils, but about its economic viability. This does not mean to say that President Premadasa will be prepared to hand over Eelam on a platter and risk his political survival. For that the Sinhalese people at large will have to be militarily convinced that Eelam is inevitable, that Eelam and the Sinhalese state can be trusted to put up a common defence together for the protection of Ceylon as a whole in the event of any external attack on either state from whichever quarter it comes, and that Eelam can be trusted never to allow or tolerate any outside interference or elements on its soil. This reminds me of a conversation I had almost forty years ago with the late Mr Athulathmudali, senior, (father of the present Minister

Continued on page 18

EELAM thoughts

Kurushetran

THE INEVITABILITY OF TAMIL EELAM - 11

What Martin Luther King said about his own people, the American Negroes, (quoted in the previous issue) is in every way applicable to the Eelam Tamils as well. We have our own share of those who "co-operate with the oppressor", "opportunists, profiteers, free-loaders and escapists". But can we like Martin Luther King afford to relax and say: "These facts should distress no one"? Such men can in their own different ways slow down a liberation struggle, damage it by changing its direction, even sell the pass to the adversary in the event of their becoming powerful enough. If today, despite heavy odds, we are able to sustain the liberation struggle, it only indicates that these elements are yet not powerful enough to halt it. In the case of Martin Luther King, his was a non-violent struggle for Negro emancipation. He was able to carry on his mission in life while accepting these weaknesses in his own people. As for the Eelam Tamils, rightly or wrongly, we have embarked on an armed struggle. Going back on it at this stage is not going to help us achieve our independent homeland. That might not help us even to secure Peace with honour. Besides that, the disabilities that the Negroes suffered in America are nowhere in comparison with the near-genocidal experiences that we as a people have been going through. It has also to be remembered that both Martin Luther King as well as his path-finder, Mahatma Gandhi, apostles of non-violence as they were, suffered violent deaths.

There is no disputing the fact that even in an armed struggle guns are meant to be used against the oppressor. But it is equally important that those who are engaged in political or public life have to bear in mind that they are functioning in the midst of a violent struggle; and that those who are involved in it (what for them is a life-and-death struggle) cannot afford the luxury of a Martin Luther King in saying that the presence of those who co-operate with

the oppressor "should distress no one". **This is not an argument for justifying killings of fellow Tamils. It is an argument for political wisdom, both on the part of those who kill as well as those who become victims.** Not all victims fall into this category, but many of them do. They invite their own fate either through greed for power; or greed for mundane benefits; or through an inability to let go what they have; or sometimes because of their poor assessments of given situations.

As to the question asked by my expatriate friend as to when Tamil Eelam is achievable, the first truth that we have to recognise is that we ourselves have delayed that process through our own past failures; that we continue to do it by our present failures; through our own share of political opportunism on the part of some; through profiteering by the struggle on the part of others; and through debilitating the cause in various ways, by yet others. Why some of us do it has much to do with our own inherent weaknesses as a people. Individual as well as group intolerance being one. Two: Irresponsibility in asserting one's point of view in the absence of adequate information or knowledge on the subject. Living as we do through turbulent times where there is a dearth of proper information, and what is worse, exposed as we are to calculated misinformation and disinformation where governments, government-controlled media and even partisan non-government newspapers deliberately distort the Truth, there is a greater responsibility on the part of every Eelam Tamil not to jump to conclusions, or issue peremptory verdicts without making an honest attempt to discover the truth. As Britain's war-time Prime Minister Winston Churchill, talking about disinformation, once cynically observed: "The truth in a conflict is so important that it must always be accompanied by a bodyguard of lies". Eelam Tamils have to guard against accepting the more visible "bodyguard of lies"; instead must search for the largely invisible Truth on

every happening and every development that is reported. Reading through some views expressed by readers in newspapers and publications, even in those which expressly cover the Tamil cause, one feels disappointed at the tendency on the part of some to rush into print without doing adequate "homework". In short, each one of us, whether in big or small ways, is responsible either in speeding the process of liberation, or in slowing it down, or checking the process. It is one thing to stay within the struggle and criticise (which is a democratic right and a healthy one), but quite another to distance oneself from the struggle and make carping comments. That would be escapism.

In discussing the time-frame within which a Tamil Eelam is achievable, there is another aspect that has to be remembered: that objective need not necessarily be realised through our own efforts: Indian involvement in our problem (that has now come to stay whether we like it or not) can cut both ways; to our disadvantage or to our benefit. **Do many people realise that five years ago - in April 1984 - the Indian government under the late Mrs. Indira Gandhi very nearly ventured on a course of action that would have eventually led to the partitioning of Sri Lanka?** Let me quote from two Indian sources, one a Defence expert and the other a knowledgeable Editor. In his book on "India's Strategic Failures" - **THE WAR THAT NEVER WAS**, Ravi Rikhye makes this incidental reference:

"In 1984, Mrs Gandhi had decided on intervention in Sri Lanka. Troop ships began loading out 54 Division from Vishakapatnam for the sea borne invasion, and 50(1) Parachute Brigade was ready for a combined parachute and air landed insertion. Mrs Gandhi hesitated, again losing the moment. Later, problems in the Punjab and her death put an end to all hopes for an effective Indian intervention. The result: escalating ethnic violence, increased foreign intervention on our borders, a real possibility that Sri Lanka will break up,

and an increase in the tensions in Tamil Nadu in particular and the south in general..."

Writing in *India Weekly* (July 21, 1989), Editor Bharat Karnad says:-

"India was all set to partition Sri Lanka in April 1984. People in the know recall how one Infantry division had already embarked on ships out of Visakapatnam and other eastern ports, how an Independent Para Brigade was readied at Trivandrum for an assault across the Palk straits, and how a co-ordinated sea-landing and air-borne operation to seal off the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka to create a Tamil Eelam was aborted just short of launch by the stern warning issued by the United States..."

There is a certain poignancy in discussing the inevitability of Tamil Eelam at this point of time in late 1989 when one recalls that fleeting moment of history five years earlier when we came very near to achieving it; under Indian auspices, yes, but was not Bangladesh created the same way? There is a mind-set that prevails among commentators of Sri Lankan affairs, and even among Eelam Tamils, that India will **never** accept a dismemberment of Sri Lanka (Bangladesh was a different matter altogether, they argue) and hence Tamil Eelam is an unlikely proposition. They quote various reasons that are cogent and logical on the face of it, but I am afraid not based either on historical insight or on a study of behaviour patterns of nations and governments.

What happened (or nearly happened) in April 1984 was not a sudden whim on the part of Mrs Gandhi. In order to establish its historical context, one has to go back to the Sri Lankan state's ethnic nosedive into barbarism in July-August 1983; and trace the developments from then on. July 1983 marked the direct entry of India into Sri Lankan affairs. Although armed Tamil Eelam militancy had begun in the '70s, it was essentially an underground movement even at that point of time. Mrs Gandhi who never liked Mr Jayewardene's "Yankee Dick" image, or his style of politics, saw in the fast-emerging Tamil militancy a useful handle to keep Jayewardene in check. As far as Indian intervention went it was obvious that

Mrs Gandhi had in mind a series of options - both soft options as well as hard ones. The softest and the first option was to offer India's "good offices" in solving the ethnic problem; and for which purpose she used the services of the mild-mannered but seasoned diplomat, Mr G Parthasarathy. She also promoted a dialogue (in Colombo) between the once-elected TULF leadership living in exile in India and the Jayewardene government. But while initiating this process she also quietly went about getting ready - should that become necessary at some point of time - with the extreme option. Shorn of frills, what was envisaged was a Bangladesh-style of operation, pure and simple.

Perhaps it is still too early to go into the details of the various "invisible" developments that took place between July 1983 and April 1984, but it is no longer a secret anyway that the task of organising arms training for Sri Lankan Tamil youths and drawing up a blueprint for Tamil Eelam was entrusted to the same body that is now alleged to be involved in skulduggery of sorts in the Sri Lankan Tamil question. The parallel role of the Bangladesh Mukti Bahini was cast on the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) functioning under Indian control. The TELO leadership was frank enough to admit that its cadres were only "soldiers for Tamil Eelam", and once Tamil Eelam was achieved they would retire into private lives; which meant that they had no political ambitions. This apolitical attitude and a total dependence on India did not seem to matter at that point of time, because there was complete convergence of interests between the Eelam Tamils and the Indian government under Mrs Gandhi. Had the Eelam scenario proceeded as scheduled, it was a matter for conjecture whether we would have ended up as a sovereign state like Bangladesh or as a "protectorate" of India, but in the mood that the Tamils were in, it would not have mattered to them either way. But unfortunately Mrs Gandhi let that moment slip out.

Mr Bharat Karnad (quoted above) speaks of a "stern warning" issued by the United States that stopped Mrs Gandhi on her tracks. Could be. But it

must be realised that Mrs Gandhi dur-

ing her third and last term in office (1980-1984) was not the same supremely self-confident ruler that she was during her post-Bangladesh years in office beginning 1971. Those who were close to her remember how she had begun to be indecisive and developed a tendency to postpone decisions as long as she could. This was most evident in the case of two burning issues - Punjab and Sri Lanka. She hesitated on both, and her belated action in sending the army into the Golden Temple in June the same year was even to cost Mrs Gandhi her life in October. Her lack of resolution apart, what is relevant to note is that until her death, Mrs Gandhi did not completely abandon the Tamil Eelam option. What is more germane from the Tamil point of view is that the Eelam "baby" is there in the womb of history. What we are going through are the "pains" that are part of every birth.

To understand why these "pains" are getting prolonged we have to trace the events in historical perspective. If the July 1983 State violence against Tamils brought the prospect of Tamil Eelam nearer, the Rajiv Gandhi-Jayewardene Agreement of July 1987 pushed the process well behind. **The real thrust behind the Agreement was not to ensure a devolution of powers to the Tamil provinces (as some expatriate Tamils believe) but to disarm the Liberation Tigers and crush the Tamil Eelam struggle.** While it must be said to the credit of the IPKF High Command at that time that it did not think it prudent to take the war into the Tiger camp, the Delhi government found itself forced to act under pressure from President Jayewardene. In effect, the attack on Jaffna that began on the night of October 9, 1987, was a knee-jerk reaction to the threat held out by Mr Jayewardene that if the IPKF did not restore order immediately in Trincomalee, he would have to ask the IPKF to withdraw from that area, and allow the Sri Lankan security forces and the Police to do the needful. The *Daily News* of October 5, while carrying a facsimile of the order given by Mr Jayewardene on the Presidential letterhead under his signature (dated 4.10.87) also published an account of the proceedings of a high-level confer-

Continued on page 18

THE GREAT PON SIVAKUMARAN

Anyone who fears not death is great. Greater is one who defies death for the purpose of a noble objective. In that sense late Pon Sivakumaran of Urumpirai who laid down his precious life at the prime of his youth when he was barely 24 years is truly great.

It is nearly sixteen years since Sivakumaran attained martyrdom and a good lot of water has run under the bridge. But our admiration and respect for Sivakumaran has not diminished a bit.

Though the liberation struggle for Tamil Eelam has been speedily and cautiously taken forward by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, yet it cannot be gainsaid that Sivakumaran was one of those very few who gave impetus, resurgence and respectability to the movement during the embryonic stages. Sivakumaran was the first Tamil who attained martyrdom in the course of armed struggle for the liberation of Tamil Eelam. He was also the first Tamil Veeran who breathed his last by consuming cyanide when he, at the point of being arrested after being cordoned off, knew for certain that he would be arrested and tortured to reveal the secrets of the organisation.

Sivakumaran should be remembered as one of the founder members of the Tamil Students' Front which rejected the satyagraha movement and advocated armed struggle for the liberation of Tamil Eelam.

Sivakumaran was not a freak. He was one, perhaps the foremost, of the many Tamil Tigers whom Jaffna Hindu College has proudly produced. It may be interesting to recall that martyrs like Thileepan, Ponnammam and Radha were also products of this institution from the portals of which many have emerged as great personages.

Many may not know that Sivakumaran spent more than three years of his life in various prisons. His confinement taught him many lessons and they stood him in good stead. He learnt during his detentions that the Sri Lankan police and armed forces were the most indisciplined lot in the world, that they would stoop down to any mean level to dehumanise the Tamils, that they

would practise the most inhuman torture to extract truth from the prisoner, that the revealing of the movement's secrets would lead to the disintegration of the movement and that it was essential for a combatant to carry always on his person a cyanide capsule to end his



life in the event of his being forced into a situation where he cannot escape divulging secrets pertaining to his organisation. The difficult-to-emulate example of Sivakumaran left an indelible mark in the minds of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and it is part of history that the Tigers took a leaf from Sivakumaran's book. Pulendran and 11 others who found themselves in a similar situation swallowed the capsules and ended their lives as did Sivakumaran.

In spite of the fact that Sivakumaran was a pure and complete patriot yet he could not build a stable and enduring organisation to carry forward his aims and objectives. This may be ascribed to the fact that others who appeared to share his views and policies were not so dedicated, single-minded, courageous, honest and pure as he himself was. Disappointed by this situation, he was hungering to meet yet another honest, fearless, sagacious and resourceful lad, Prabakaran by name. Prabakaran also had heard of Sivakumaran's selfless activities and wanted to compare notes with him. But the fate of the Eelam Tamils was such that the two giants could not meet to plan their strategies for a liberated Eelam.

It is pertinent to record here an incident in the colourful but fateful life of Sivakumaran. Sivakumaran was charged with the attempted murder of Duraiyappa and was languishing in jail. He was in remand prison for about two and a half years. His mother and others approached the then TULF leaders to help him in his case. Despite the fact that about 75% of the TULF MPs were lawyers yet no member came forward to help fight the case against him. But the pitiful mother of Sivakumaran did not stop. She spent all her wealth to save her son. Such was the dedication of the then Tamil leaders! The years that rolled by have taught us that the path chalked out by our revered and honoured veteran Sivakumaran is the way forward for the Tamils. Tamil Eelam is not far away. Let us not relent; let us not lose confidence. Let us remember that freedom is not something that is doled out; it is something that has to be snatched, something wrested from the tyrant.

Let Sivakumaran continue to inspire us and keep us on the path of liberation eventually to realize Tamil Eelam.

FOR YOUR DIARY

2.11.89	Chathurthi Utsavam
3.11.89	Ayppasi Velli (3)
4.11.89	Soora Samhaaram
10.11.89	Pirathosha Viratham
	Ayppasi Velli (4)
12.11.89	Pournami
13.11.89	Kaarthikai Viratham
20.11.89	Somavaaram
25.11.89	Sani Pirathosham
27.11.89	Kaarthikai Somavaaram
28.11.89	Amaavasai
2.12.89	Chathurthi Viratham
4.12.89	Kaarthikai Somavaaram
	Sashdi Viratham
10.12.89	Pirathosha Viratham
11.12.89	Kaarthikai Somavaram
	Thirukkaarthikai
13.12.89	Shri Vinayagar Viratham
25.12.89	Pirathosha Viratham
27.12.89	Amaavasai Viratham
31.12.89	Chathurthi Utsavam

BHARATHA NATYAM FEAST

Lovers of Bharatha Natyam were entertained to a Natya Manjari by the Lakshmi Arts Centre of London on 16th September, 1989, at the Commonwealth Institute. Councillor Ranjit Dheer, Deputy Leader of the London Borough of Ealing, graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

The programme commenced with the Aranga Sthuthi, an invocatory song to Lord Ganesha, performed by the talented trio Chithra Satkunanathan, Vanathi Nithianathan and Sapna Billimoria. This was followed by Alarippu, by Kavitha Thevarajah and Parul Mandavia who are very skilled performers. The next item was the Jatheeswaram well performed by a group of five students, Leena Pandit, Thushara Gopalaratnam, Sowmya Sreeharan, Kumudhini Visuvaratnam and Thenuha Thiagarajan.

The next item was the dance by Sumathy Ponnambalam, another talented student of the centre, to a song in Thiruvembavai followed by a Keerthanam in Vasantha raga set to the rhythm Aathi. This song depicts the cosmic dance of Shiva which has attracted the sages and the learned. Even Albert Einstein, the famous physicist, had commented that Lord Shiva's dance signifies the movements of the whole universe including the atoms. The Thiruvembavai songs express the communion of the soul with the Paramaathma.

The third item in the sequence was the Dasa Avataram dance by Vanathi and Chithra. This dance depicted the ten incarnations (avatars) of Lord Vishnu.

Sapna Billimoria performed the dance for the 'Patham' to the musical mode Senchurthy set to the rhythm Aathi.

The next item was Thillana in the mode Mohana Kalyani set to the rhythm Aathi performed by Chithra and Vanathi who are well talented and experienced.

After the interval the Chief Guest, ad-

ressed the audience, and congratulated the performers, the artistes, the Tamil community and the Lakshmi Arts Centre for their interest in and promotion of their culture. He mentioned that the London Borough of Ealing would continue to extend its support to all cultural organisations. Then a group of young students, Vani Sreeskandarajah, Aharani Sothiratham, Vaishnavi Sree-



haran, Meera Sivanesan, Krishni Kumaranayakam, Meena Shanmuganathan and Ramya Ramakrishnan splendidly performed the 'Krishna Gopi' dance sequence.

Then followed the Pinnal Kolaattam dance by a group of students Leena Pandit, Kumuthini Visuvaratnam, Abarna Sarma, Arrthy Sivakumar, Thenuha Thiagarajan, Thushara Gopalaratnam, Sowmya Sreeharan and Natasha Karunakaran.

A dance drama entitled 'Thiru Sakthi' with the characters Mother Tamil, Saraswathi, Lakshmi and Durga was the last item in the programme in which each of the deities, Saraswathi, Lakshmi and Dhurga compete with one another to bless the children of Mother Tamil. However, the drama ended with a conciliation from Mother Tamil that the dynamism of the whole universe depends on the Supreme Shakthi, the 'Para-Shakthi' and that her children be blessed with the synthesis of learning, wealth and valour. Mother Tamil, Saraswathi, Lakshmi and Dhurga were portrayed by Chithra, Vaanathi, Sapna and Sumathy respectively. Their presentation was absolutely splendid.

Ambika Thamotheram, an experienced vocalist and exponent in Nattuvangam, supported by her daughter Dr Kanjana Sivalingam, captivated the audience with their melodious rendering of the songs. Thirumalai M Sivarajah, the Mirudanga artist, rendered with devotion and dedication. The violinist was Dr Lakshmi Jayan, well experienced and talented. Dr T Nimalraj, a former

Radio and Television artiste in Sri Lanka, played the flute with purity of technique. Mrs Selvaluxumy Ramakrishnan directed the whole programme with consummate skill. She has devoted her time and energy to the success of her students.

Mr Vimal Sockanathan, the talented and experienced compere, deserves the thanks of all for his eloquent compering of the programme. The pro-

gramme came to an end with the Mangalam song sung by all the performers.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

தம்பி ஜெயத்துக்கு

(TO YOUNGER BROTHER JEYAM)

By Tamil Poet Kasi Ananthan

Though written in memory of his younger brother, Major Chandran (Sivajeyam) who attained martyrdom on September 10, 1988, it is the history of a freedom-fighter, of a freedom struggle, and of a freedom movement.

Publishers: Cholan Publishers, 9, Lady Mathavanayar Road, Mahalingapuram, Madras 24.

Price : Rs 8.00 exclusive of

CEASE - FIRE VIOLATIONS

Two civilians were shot dead close to the Vavuniya Railway Station by suspected anti-LTTE terrorists on the 21st Sept, after the cease-fire came into effect in the North-Eastern Province. In a search and destroy operation launched by the Indian army two of the LTTE cadres were arrested and one killed. On Oct 3, three girls were kidnapped by ENDLF at Thampalakamam in the Trincomalee district. Asst. Govt Agent of Thampalakamam was abducted by ENDLF and his whereabouts are not known.

An LTTE cadre named Kutty was arrested in a round-up in Manipay. The IPKF rounded up and launched an attack on the LTTE base at Pandiruppu in the Amparai district. In this attack LTTE cadre Balan was killed. On Oct 5, at Eachilamthivu in the Trincomalee district several civilians were arrested and taken to the Indian army camp. On Oct 6, ENDLF gang attacked unarmed LTTE cadre Ragu who was pasting posters with two other helpers, Ravi and Kumar, at Uruthirapuram in Kilinochchi district and all three cadres died. On Oct 7, a LTTE hide-out was rounded up in Point Pedro. LTTE cadre Mohan was arrested. Without returning fire LTTE cadres withdrew.

IPKF SOLDIERS KILLED

Four IPKF soldiers were killed on Sept 17 when the jeep they were travelling in hit a land mine at Walthapitiya. The soldiers were travelling from Samanthurai to Amparai at the time of the explosion. Another soldier is reported to have been critically injured. The jeep after hitting the land mine was thrown against an electric post setting itself on fire. Of the four soldiers three died of burn injuries while the other was gunned down. Four guns which were in the possession of the Indian soldiers were later found missing.

SCHOOLS RE - OPEN

All schools in Tamil Eelam have reopened on August 8 after a long vacation and the attendance was said to be very poor due to the forced conscription by the quisling groups. According to reliable information received from Jaffna, the government is planning to repeat the academic year for the stu-

dents; so there will be no new admissions for Grade One next year.

ESTATE YOUTH CONSCRIPTED

Youths from the Nuwara Eliya District have gone for training with the Citizens' Volunteer Force in the North and East. Some of these young men who have left several estates in Agrapatana, Talawakele, Ragala, Hatton, Kotagala and Madukeliya areas have been manning road blocks along with the IPKF.

TERROR CAMPAIGN

The Indian armed forces and their mainly the EPRLF gangs went on a rampage attacking crowds of civilians who were paying homage to LTTE martyr Thileepan on his second death anniversary on the 26th September. Vast sections of the Tamil speaking masses in the North and East paid their respect to Thileepan ignoring the death threats by the IPKF and the EPRLF. In Vallaveli and Kaluvanchikudi people were beaten and harassed by the IPKF. Mr Chelliah Joseph, aged 30 who attended Thileepan's death anniversary was shot dead at his house by the EPRLF.

GIRLS CONSCRIPTED

Young girls aged between 10 and 18 were conscripted by EPRLF women members at Muthur in the Trincomalee district on Sept 27. Miss Vadivel who contested the parliamentary election for the Trincomalee district in February also joined the EPRLF women engaged in the conscription of young girls.

LTTE READY FOR ELECTIONS

The Political Committee of the LTTE announced that it is prepared to face fresh elections if the NE Provincial Council is dissolved. The following statement was issued by the LTTE on 1st October:

"We have the solid support of the popular masses. Our political strength derives from the power of the people. We will prove very soon that the Tamil Tigers are the authentic representatives of our people. But, for the LTTE to return to democratic politics, appropriate conditions should prevail. The Indian troops must be completely withdrawn removing the condition of alien occupation. The NE Provincial Council, which was constituted unde-



mocratically and fraudulently, should be dissolved. Congenial atmosphere should be created so that our people can exercise their democratic rights in a free and fair election. We are ready to face elections only when the IPKF is fully withdrawn. Our people are not prepared for fresh elections at the point of a gun under the Indian military umbrella.

WILL PERUMAL RESIGN ?

In between bouts of bravado and anger at the Sri Lankan government's failure to live up to its promises on the power devolution issue, Mr Varatharaja Perumal offered to step down from office provided the LTTE surrendered arms and joined the democratic process. He has also said that 30,000 Tamils must be inducted into the Sri Lankan army and police force, that the control of the Citizen Volunteer Force must rest with the provincial government, that the Sri Lankan army must be confined to barracks and that law and order responsibilities must be handed over to the provincial government.

KALKAT'S FIGURES

Gen. Kalkat disclosed the latest casualty figures at his press conference. He said the IPKF had suffered 1,109 killed and 2,854 wounded. He admitted that compared to other battles fought by the Indian army, the number of officers killed (42) was high, but it was entirely in keeping with the tradition of the Indian army.

YOUTH FLEE JAFFNA

Conscription to a controversial Tamil private army has sent hundreds of youths into hiding and others sneaking out of Sri Lanka's Northern peninsula. Day after day, teenagers line up outside the Sri Lankan Air Force base at Pal-

aly, trying to get a flight to freedom from EPRLF. Although the EPRLF cadres deny forcing the youngsters to join the CVF, Jaffna residents say that EPRLF cadres drive into villages and force boys into vans. On the roads leading to Colombo, young men are pulled out of the buses and taken away.

TULF PICKS NEW M.P.

The General Council of the TULF and its politburo have resolved that Mavai Senathirajah be nominated to Parliament to fill the vacancy arising out of the death of the TULF leader Amirthalingam. Senathiraja has been for many years the Secretary of the youth wing of the party and was actively engaged in party affairs. He was a candidate for Jaffna district in the last elections.

BAN ON TAMIL DAILIES

A full page portrait of Thileepan was displayed in the *Eelanadu* Tamil daily on 15th September. The next day's issue was consequently banned. Publication resumed on the 17th, but *Eelanadu*, *Murasoli*, and *Uthayan* ceased publication from September 21. That is how IPKF is keeping the peace in Eelam.

Thileepan Commemoration activity

sparked off an incident on September 25 at Pandateruppu market with the loss of six lives. Thileepan's portraits were being put up in the market when the IPKF who came on the scene fired indiscriminately killing six including a woman. However, the commemoration events went on in several places in the North and East.

The *Virakesari*, published in Colombo, is constrained to observe a self-imposed censorship in respect of news from North-East after its circulation had been banned in the North-east for nearly two months from mid-June. *The Island* too has been banned in the North since August 24. *The Daily News* has not been allowed in since September 26. *The Sun* was banned in the North for a long time. These bans have resulted in a near news black-out and hence the paucity of reports of incidents.

VARSITY STUDENTS DEFY

Students of the Jaffna University defied army patrols during the last week of September to protest at the murder of Rajani Thiranagama, who campaigned against human rights violations committed by the EPRLF and IPKF.

ICRC TO SRI LANKA

On a directive from President Premadasa the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued an invitation to the International Committee of the Red Cross to extend its traditional humanitarian services to Sri Lanka. Whether the team from the ICRC will be allowed by the IPKF into the North-East is not known. The invitation follows from requests by Human Rights groups such as Amnesty International and Asia Watch.

SRI LANKA PROTESTS

Sri Lanka has protested to India against its alleged involvement in training and arming cadres of certain Tamil groups. Sri Lankan security sources said that Indian army instructors were involved in training hundreds of Tamil youths in their camps with a view to helping the EPRLF-led provincial council to form a Tamil National Army. EPRLF leaders have said that they were ready to train and arm 30,000 Tamil youths before the end of this year.

Some sources strongly suspect EPRLF's involvement in a dozen terrorist activities in the province, including firing at Sri Lankan forces' detachments and planting bombs among civilians.

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EELAM THOUGHTS

(Continued from page 13)

ence under the 9-column lead headline; **PRESIDENT TELLS IPKF**; work with us ... or leave Trinco. *The Sun* headline was more forthright. It said: **PRESIDENT ISSUES ULTIMATUM TO INDIAN GOVERNMENT - DO YOUR DUTY OR QUIT**. The President's order read: "*I direct Gen Depinder Singh to work in co-operation with Gen Ranatunga to restore law and order immediately in Trincomalee Town and the district*".

The verbal threat that on failure to do the above he would direct the withdrawal of the IPKF from Trincomalee came at the high level conference at which were present, among others, Gen Depinder Singh himself and Indian Deputy High Commissioner Nirupan Sen. Mr Jayewardene also got Gen Depinder Singh to commit himself formally to the position that the IPKF was under the direction of the President of Sri Lanka and not under that of the Indian government. The unhappy General had to comply, because the Agreement bound him to that position. This happened on October 4. The Jaye-

wardene government continued to apply pressure on India. On the previous day, two LTTE commanders Kumarappa and Pulendran and 15 other LTTE cadres along with the 55-foot mechanised trawler "Kadal Pura" were siezed by the Sri Lankan Navy off the northern coast. While the LTTE High Command was negotiating with IPKF commander Gen Harkirat Singh to have them released (the amnesty offered to Tamil militants under the accord was in operation), the Jayewardene government insisted that it had the right (despite the amnesty) to fly them to Colombo for investigation. Even High Commissioner Dixit was reported to have advised National Security Minister Lalith Atulathmudali against the move. But New Delhi caved in, and another unhappy Indian General was left with no choice. The loss of the LTTE top men, including Prabakaran's personal bodyguard Raghu through mass suicide, quite naturally angered the LTTE against what they thought "perfidy" by the Rajiv Gandhi administration. Anyway, the era of confrontation, thanks to Jayewardene's cunning,

had already begun. On the 8th, India's army chief General Krishnaswamy Sundarji toured the north and east, and according to Sri Lanka government reports a new plan of operation was put into effect at 5pm the same day. Sri Lanka government sources claimed that **a 48-hour deadline had been set to ensure that the LTTE was effectively dealt with and the implementation of the accord was carried out smoothly**. On October 9, Indian Defence Minister K C Pant himself flew in. The headline in the government-controlled *Daily News* said: **INDIA'S DEFENCE MINISTER, ARMY CHIEF HERE FOR FINAL ANTI-TIGER THRUST**. On October 10, a news item in the same paper said: "The amnesty declared under the Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord to separatist Tamil militants will no longer be applicable to the LTTE and its leader Velupillai Prabakaran, President Jayewardene said yesterday". **That represented the second breach of the accord within four days, by one of the co-signatories with the tacit consent of the other co-signatory.**

(To be continued)

EELAM IS NON-NEGOTIABLE

(Continued from page 11)

Lalith Athulathmudali). He was a stalwart of the UNP then, just as his son is today, and I General-Secretary of the Federal Party campaigning for a federal constitution. I asked him why the UNP was objecting to federalism when even S W R D Bandaranaike had written advocating a federal set up for Ceylon. His reply was brutally frank and blunt: "Because we fear that you will open the floodgates to a calamitous influx from South India." I laughed. The current events and attitudes in Ceylon and India, and the LTTE's armed resistance to the Indian forces, will explain the meaning of my laughter forty years ago when, probably, the entire LTTE cadre were not even born.

The point I am trying to make is that the two peoples have gone through enough bloodshed and turbulence to make them realise that for better or for worse Nature and History have put them together in the same island, and, sink or swim, they have to agree be-

tween themselves, without the need for a referee, to pick up the thread of the pattern of existence from where it was broken by the European colonial powers, and to live in harmony and friendship in our historical homelands as before. Enough has happened to persuade the Sinhalese people to dismiss any doubts or fears about Eelam's friendship and goodwill. What is the message they get when President Premadasa and the LTTE leader Prabakaran unite to demand that New Delhi leave us alone?

Obviously peace and the future of Ceylon depend largely on the extent to which both peoples have realised by now, from the steadfastness and determination with which the leadership of the Tamil people has carried on the struggle, that Eelam is non-negotiable, and it is now time that the leaders of both peoples pool all their energies to the task of peace and rehabilitation.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

இந்தியப்படை யே வெளியேறு

(MURDEROUS INDIAN ARMY, GET OUT OF TAMIL EELAM)

By P Nedumaran, President, Tamil National Movement

PAGE 23: "A WAR CRIMES COMMISSION should be appointed to try all IPKF officers under whose responsibility the Indian soldiers committed the heinous crimes in the North of Sri Lanka. Some of these crimes, to quote, would be the massacre of doctors, nurses and patients in the Jaffna General Hospital in Nov 1987 and the rash and unprovoked killings of scores of innocent civilians in Pt. Pedro on 26.7.87 and in Valvettithurai on 2.8.89.

Available : 48, Melai Masi Street, Madurai

Price : Rs 2.00, excluding postage

CALL TO JVP

The All Party Conference has invited the JVP to participate in or appoint representatives to attend. Convinced of the urgency to restore peace and normalcy the Conference called upon all groups who are outside the mainstream of the democratic process to eschew violence and achieve their goals through democratic means.

UNP FOR FRESH POLL

In a move that could help resolve Sri Lanka's internal political crisis, the UNP has recommended fresh parliamentary elections, and a caretaker government if this could help restore peace. This partly meets the demands of the opposition parties for fresh elections, to restore parliament's "legitimacy" and to allow the JVP to enter the democratic process. The JVP has described the parliamentary elections held earlier this year as fraudulent, and one of its demands has been fresh elections under an impartial body.

40 DISAPPEARANCES A DAY

More than 3200 arrests and disappearances of people have been reported to the Parliamentary Committee for Human Rights since its inception. The number of recent arrests and disappearances reported has exceeded 40 a day. Most of the complaints came from Kandy, Kurunegala, Embilipitiya, Galle and Colombo. The spokesman said that it was difficult to compile accurate figures of the number of people killed because they had been burnt to ashes, making identification impossible.

DAMAGE TO GOVT PROPERTY

Subversives inflicted heavy losses amounting to over Rs200m by destroying government buildings as well as important documents. The Polonnaruwa Paddy Marketing Board and the Govt Seed Centre were razed to the ground by subversives, causing damage of over Rs 150m. The worst affected areas are Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Moneragala, Kandy and areas in the South. Other govt buildings which were set on fire were offices of the Govt Agent and the Asst Govt Agent, Grama Sevakas' offices and Post Offices.

FOREIGNERS OVER-STAY VISAS

About 2,000 visitors to Sri Lanka are reported to be over-staying their visas.

Most of them are from India. This situation has arisen because no reliable records are available with the Immigration authorities on over-stayers. Police assistance is normally called for to track down the culprits, but the current situation had made it difficult to take action against such persons.

TV PRESENTER FOUND DEAD

Miss Sagarika Gomes (32), a television presenter was found slashed to death by armed persons at the Mt Lavinia beach on Sept 15. She had been cut and chopped to death after a gang of heavily armed men abducted her from her Dehiwela residence. Miss Gomez had been involved in various state media programmes apart from her duties at ITN.

THE WAY OF PARADISE

Air Lanka, they say, is the way to paradise, but for security reasons those using Air Lanka find it more arduous to reach paradise than by other airlines. Passengers are advised to arrive at the airport three hours before the time of departure. Those who travelled on Air Lanka's flight London-Dubai-Colombo on Sept 14 found that despite their early arrival, there was no one present at the Gatwick airport counter to check them in. After a near 45 minutes wait,

SRI LANKAN NEWS

they were asked to go down one floor to get their baggage checked in. A passenger who purchased a bottle of whisky and a carton of cigarettes was told by a steward: "Sorry sir, we do not have bags". The passenger returned the goods saying that he did not want it spread round town that he arrived from London with 'a bottle in hand'.

NEW DETAINEES

All army camps which were erected to house "terrorists" from the North and East, including the Boosa camp in Galle, are now being used to house the families of the Sri Lankan Army. Due to the activities of the JVP these families are forced to lead the life of the detainees. Earlier, if a soldier was sent to the North or the East on duty it was considered as sad event as the Sinhalese thought that he might be killed

by the Tigers. Now all the Sinhala soldiers are trying to get transfers to the North or the East due to the JVP activities in the South.

PROMINENT MONK KILLED

Ven. Thiranagama Ratnasara Thera, a prominent Buddhist monk in the south, was shot dead by an unidentified gang in the Hambantota district on Sept 30. A letter found near the body of the slain monk claimed he was killed for political reasons. The monk was engaged in archaeological work in many parts of the country and was author of many books on Sri Lanka's archaeological sites.

DYING IS CHEAPER

In Sri Lanka's dilemma of ever-increasing consumer prices, only the cost of dying has come down. Undertakers have reduced their prices sharply because the dead are no more in coffins, but on roadsides or rivers. The country is facing an economic crisis that is hitting the middle classes more than the poor.

LANKAN ARMY IN POLITICS

The Sri Lankan army also appears to be taking an increasingly visible part in politics. Its chiefs now regularly sit in on cabinet and political meetings. The JVP has not responded positively to the offer of a cease fire and there seems little chance of an end to the daily killings. But the brutal army and police offensive against the Front since July has taken its toll on the organisation. The airforce planes dropped 200,000 leaflets around the country with a "kind request" to the "subversives" to stop the killing and give themselves up.

NSSP LEADERS ABDUCTED

On September 15 about 8 p.m some armed persons in civilian dress broke into the headquarters of the Janaraja Saukya Seva Sangamaya (JSSS) and of the Govt. United Federation of Labour (GUFL) and abducted Comrades W A D Wimalaratne, President of the JSSS, Mahinda Silva, a leader of the Local Govt Clerical Service Union and another named Duminda Dharmasena. All three of them are also members of the Nava Sama Samaja Party.

INDIAN TROOPS OUT OF SRI LANKA

"Indian troops out of Sri Lanka" was the theme of a fringe meeting held on October 3 at Brighton, UK, on the eve of the Labour Party (UK) Conference. It was organised by The World Federation of Tamils. The High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in London was one of the participants. The handouts distributed to the delegates of the Labour Party conference contained the following:

* The Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) came to the North-East of Sri Lanka in July 1987. Since then, according to evidence presented to the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva in August 1989, over 6,000 Tamil civilians have been killed in the name of "peace keeping."

* The merciless massacre of civilians in the village of Valvettiturai in August was given wide international coverage. At least 71 civilians, including six women and seven children, were slaughtered. Several badly-wounded people needed to have their limbs amputated. Insofar as property was concerned, 123 houses, 43 shops, four

cinemas, a library, 69 vehicles, 12 fishing boats and 129 fishing nets were set on fire.

* The carnage at Valvettiturai, comparable to the My Lai massacre in Vietnam, is not an isolated event but an everyday occurrence in villages across the North-East of Sri Lanka. Under the guise of protecting and guaranteeing the security of Tamil people the IPKF has killed Tamil people, raped Tamil women, and burned and looted Tamil property. Worse still, the IPKF has deliberately set Tamils against Tamils by arming them and in other ways assisting the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) and the Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front (ENDLF).

* Amnesty International in a news release on 17 August stated that it had received reports of the forcible detention of over 4000 young men (and some women) by EPRLF and the ENDLF. These young people are forced to participate in the Citizens' Volunteer Force, a special security

force that works closely with the IPKF. There is no legal or moral basis for these detentions, yet those who have escaped have been killed or had relatives killed in reprisal.

* The physical and psychological damage inflicted on innocent civilians, particularly on children, as a result of the Indian occupation is incalculable. The international community has a responsibility to ensure that the Indian government is not absolved from its failure to respect and protect fundamental human rights, nor its reluctance to withdraw from Sri Lanka as requested by the President of Sri Lanka.

* The agreement by India to make "all efforts" to withdraw its troops by the end of this year, still leaves open the option of relaxing such efforts should a withdrawal prove to be politically or militarily unacceptable to India.

IN THE NAME OF JUSTICE AND PEACE, WE DEMAND THAT THE IPKF LEAVE SRI LANKA IMMEDIATELY.

TAMILS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO EXERCISE THEIR INALIENABLE RIGHT TO SELF DETERMINATION, LIKE ANY OTHER NATION.

TAMILS APPEAL TO CHOGM

[The letter addressed by the Secretary-General of the World Federation of Tamils to the Meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government held in Kuala Lumpur is reproduced.]

The World Federation of Tamils (WFT) presents its compliments to The Commonwealth Heads Of Government Meeting in Kuala Lumpur and submits respectfully the under-mentioned concerns of the Tamils of Sri Lanka, drawing particular attention to the brutal Human Rights violations that Tamil civilians are continuously suffering in north-east Sri Lanka at the hands of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF).

The atrocities committed on Tamil civilians by the IPKF are well-documented and published by Amnesty International. The Tamils, as citizens of a Commonwealth member-state, have the right to expect that the CHOGM will look into the question of human rights violations at its Kuala Lumpur meeting especially because the Vancouver CHOGM had endorsed the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord. Thereby Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had obtained Commonwealth support to employ the IPKF in a Commonwealth state "to restore peace and normalcy in that state". However the

IPKF's brutalities such as the massacre of doctors, nurses and patients in the Jaffna General Hospital in October, 1987, culminating in the massacres at Point Pedro and Valvettiturai in the last week of July and first week of August, 1989, with further continuing massacres reported regularly in the media have shocked the conscience of the world. We appeal to the CHOGM to address its mind to this serious problem and to take steps to halt forthwith further atrocities on Tamil civilians perpetrated by the IPKF and its locally-recruited agents.

The WFT, therefore, urges the Kuala Lumpur CHOGM to ensure the following:

- a) India to effectively observe ceasefire immediately with the LTTE in compliance with the joint agreement between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Government of India,
- b) to cause immediate stoppage of the conscription of Tamil youths by the Indian forces and their surrogates,
- c) to effect the withdrawal of the

IPKF from all areas of Sri Lanka also in compliance with the above said agreement,

d) to replace the IPKF with a Commonwealth Peace-Keeping Force in Sri Lanka until such time as a political solution is found,

e) to cause appointment of a Commonwealth Commission for the Rehabilitation of Tamils Refugees and the payment of compensation for the loss to Tamils' properties etc, and

f) to facilitate the International Committee of the Red Cross, international news media etc. to visit the areas that are under the occupation of the IPKF.

The modalities of implementation of such resolutions have to be worked out in co-operation with all the parties concerned. With an effective ceasefire now in force between the Colombo Government and the LTTE, such resolutions would not be difficult to implement and would definitely help break of the cycle of violence now bleeding this Commonwealth country.

LTTE READY TO OBSERVE CEASEFIRE WITH OTHER ARMED GROUPS - Anton Balasingam, Spokesman for the LTTE

Q: Why did the LTTE decide to reject the proposed peace committee?

A: The Peace Committee is not going to help to restore peace and normalcy in the north-east. How can you have a peace committee with 20 odd defunct political parties and groups, unknown to our people and with no relevance to the present struggle, to talk about security? They have no authority to talk about the safety and security of our people. As such we will only talk to the Sri Lankan Government. If we participate in the peace committee, our direct talks with the government will be automatically negated. We don't want that to happen.

Q: Have you intimated your decision to the government?

A: No, we have not refused to join the peace committee. Our position is that the leadership has not taken a decision whether to participate or not. We have asked for more time to examine all its aspects and implications.

Q: Do you agree that your refusal to join the peace committee will, probably, delay the departure of the Indian troops?

A: Nobody has put forward any condition on the LTTE. Originally India suggested a 15-day ceasefire stipulating a condition that LTTE should participate. That particular precondition has been removed from the latest document signed by India and Sri Lanka. Now India cannot claim that the troops withdrawal cannot be carried out unless the LTTE joins the peace committee.

Q: If they do claim what will be your reaction?

A: Indians came and occupied our land. We feel the IPKF has no grounds to stay as they have failed to keep the peace. They have failed to ensure the safety and security of our people. They must withdraw. If they don't withdraw we are prepared to fight for another decade.

Q: What are your suggestions for restoration of peace and normalcy in the north east?

A: a) First of all Indians should withdraw within an agreed time frame. b) Secondly we are prepared to observe a

ceasefire with other armed groups. c) The EPRLF and other Indian quislings should stop the forceful campaign of conscription and should release all school going boys. d) There are 3000 to 5000 Tamil policemen in the Sri Lankan Police Force and they should be sent to the north east to maintain law and order for an interim period before elections. Once a credible provincial administration is established, we can think in terms of creating an authentic provincial police force in which the LTTE also can play a role. e) The illegal and unrepresentative provincial council of the north east must be dissolved and a credible council should be elected in a free and fair election.

Q: Do you accept the provincial council system?

A: The Tigers have to emerge and enter into the political mainstream. The provincial council has been given legal and constitutional form by the 13th amendment. It is extremely limited and inadequate. All powers are vested with the Centre. But we accept it because it is the only structure available. We accept it as an interim administrative structure. The elections must be held without the presence of alien forces. Indians will have to leave and the Sri Lankan government has to create appropriate conditions for us to go for democratic elections.

Q: What steps are necessary to avoid a bloodbath when the Indians leave?

A: We are ready to observe a ceasefire with other armed groups. We will co-operate with the Sri Lankan police in maintaining law and order. It is India and the EPRLF who are creating conditions for a bloodbath by forceful conscription of youths and training them. The government of India, even at this stage, prior to their withdrawal, is trying to create an illegal and unconstitutional army, a so-called Tamil National Army.

Q: Do you demand that fresh parliamentary elections should be held in the north-east?

A: Parliamentary elections too were fraudulent. But parliamentary repre-

sentation is not going to solve our problems. (Pointing a finger at the old Parliament across the road) Sri Lankan Parliament is structured on tyranny of the majority. The parliament was the institution in which all discriminatory legislation against our people was enacted. A solution has to be found by recognising a Tamil homeland. The right to self determination and other essential aspects of our problem.

Q: Have you not given up the Thimpu formula of four cardinal principles?

A: A Tamil homeland has been recognised even in the Indo-Lanka Agreement. Self determination does not necessarily mean separation. It can be articulated in different models and frameworks within a united Sri Lanka.

Q: What are the main achievements in your talks with the government? You cannot still say the talks are of an exploratory nature now that you have entered the third round.

A: The most important result as well as the most crucial political development is our decision to enter the electoral process and the political mainstream. The other important achievement is the ceasefire. We have announced a ceasefire with the government of Sri Lanka and it is holding on. Now we do not have a military conflict between the LTTE and Sri Lankan forces. So we can talk and work out a solution.

Q: What are the chances of a lasting solution?

A: Sri Lanka has undergone so much turmoil and turbulence. The whole economy is in shambles today. It is not simply because of the JVP. It is because of the failure of the Sri Lankan leadership, to accommodate the Tamils for the last four decades. Now, having suffered so much, there is some element of re-thinking with regard to the ethnic friction. We have to wait and see whether this will bring about a real change in the minds of the Sinhalese. We are determined to work out a solution through negotiations with President Premadasa. We have complete confidence in him. [Courtesy: *The Sunday Times*, October 15, 1989]

FOLK TALES AND HISTORICAL STORIES

by Thaatha

HOW A PRINCESS REGAINED HER PRETTY FACE

The story is told in the Maha-Bharatha of an Indian princess named Jamatha Kiri. She suffered from an affliction due to a curse which made her face appear like that of a mongoose. Pituku Munivar was a sage; he had been invited for the observance of ancestral ceremonies; but he was not well received on his arrival. He became infuriated. For this act of indiscretion he had cursed her. The princess begged to be pardoned; but the sage could not be placated. However, in recompense, she was told that the curse would be lifted when she performs ablutionary bathing in the waters of the spring that flows near Naguleswaram, Keerimalai, Jaffna.

She did this and the cool medicinal waters that flow, even today, near Naguleswaram, miraculously cured her of her affliction. The princess regained her beautiful face.

Ever since, the rocky cliff through which the spring is flowing has become known as "Keerimalai", or the Mongoose Hill. The location is a well-frequented bathing place today.

THE VANISHED SEA PORT

The main gateway of Jaffna to and from India, during the early Christian era, was Samputhurai. It was situated along the Northern Coast, quite close to where Mathakal is today. Samputhurai, also known as Jambukavalam, has an interesting history.

It was here that Princess Sangamitha, daughter of Emperor Asoka, landed. She brought with her a sapling from the sacred Bo-Tree in India, under which Lord Buddha had received enlightenment.

Two centuries later, it was here that King Gaja Bahu landed bringing ceremoniously the relics of Kannakai Amman. Thus originated the veneration of Pattini Devi in Lanka.

The celebrated sea port of Samputhurai has vanished and in its proximity is found Mathakal, today. It was here that a stone statue of a Goddess (Ambal or Matha) was found cast

ashore. The village folks revere the Goddess as their deity today, calling the village "Matha-Kal", or the location where the stone of Matha was found.

HOW A CITY CAME TO BE FOUNDED

Limestone cliffs or rocks are found in the north of Jaffna. Some of these are over thirty feet high. Refreshing cool waters flow out from these as springs. These waters are of medicinal value, as they contain minerals found within the rocks.

Once upon a time there lived a Chola princess named Marutha Pura Valli. She suffered from a facial affliction, from birth. Various remedies had been tried but with no effect. At last a wise sage prescribed an uncommon medicine. He asked her to go to Jaffna, and there to bathe daily in the waters of the rocky cliff. So, she arrived with her retinue and camped close to the spring and bathed there regularly. The horse-like facial appearance left her.

Her father, the King, was overjoyed. He founded a city where the Princess had camped and called it "Mavidda-Puram", meaning the city where the horse-likeness was cast off.

A NEW NAME FOR AN OLD SEA PORT

Kasa Thurai was a seaport in the north of Jaffna. It was the landing place of the Chola princess Marutha Pura Valli and was close to her new city of Mavidda Puram. In her daily walks to the spring for bathing, the princess had noticed a humble mendicant venerating in a wayside shrine. She had then made a mental resolve that should she be cured of her affliction, she would build a temple for the mendicant.

So when she was cured she told her father of her resolution. The father was highly pleased. He engaged many artisans; granite stones were brought from India. A magnificent temple was erected at the spot. Amidst great rejoicing, a statue of "Kankeyar" or God Skanda was brought from India and ceremoniously installed in the new temple - now known as Maviddapuram

Kandaswamy Kovil.

To commemorate the event, the port was named "Kankeyan Thurai" or Kankesanthurai as it is known today.

HOW DEVI ARRIVED IN MUCH SPLENDOUR

In the early days of history there lived a king named Gaja Bahu. He had been to the Chera Kingdom in India. There he had seen reverence to Pattini. The Devi's (Kannakai Amman's) purity, love and devotion to her husband Kovalan was very much eulogised. So the King decided to bring to Lanka a relic of the Devi, for enshrining in his country also.

The party landed at the northern sea-port of Samputhurai (Jambukavalam), in Jaffna. It then moved ceremoniously in a large procession inland. Wherever the party halted, a shrine was founded to commemorate the event. A very special shrine was founded at Kathirimalai (present name Kantharodai), as King Gaja Bahu's Naga queen was from there. Wending its way to several places in Lanka, the spectacular procession finally reached Kandy. There the relic was enshrined.

Many of these shrines can yet be found in Jaffna, known mostly as Kannakai Amman Temples; several have, however, become temples of other deities.

ONCE AN ANCIENT CAPITAL

Kantharodai is now a humble village off Chunnakam in the heart of the Jaffna Peninsula. There is of course a leading educational establishment now. It was, however, a place of great importance in the olden days. It was then known as Kathirimalai; It was the seat of the Naga Kings. The Nagas brought "nagareeham" or civilisation to the Southern regions.

Several Kings of Lanka are said to have visited the place. They probably came to pay homage at the Pattini shrine built during the Gaja Bahu days. Monasteries were founded and even dagobas erected there.

Later, however, with the dwindling of the Nagas, Kathirimalai also ceased to be a capital city. Now there are only the ruins. Excavation is in progress; the remnants of these can be seen even today.

இலக்கியக்காட்சி

இனிய காண்க Distil its sweetness

வாழ்க்கையின் நோக்கமும் இலக்கும் எப்படி இருக்க வேண்டும் என்று காட்டுகின்ற நூல்களே உண்மையான நூல்கள். பண்டைக்காலத் தமிழ் மக்கள் எம்முடைய இலக்கு எதுவாக இருக்க வேண்டும் என்று காட்டுகின்ற நூல்கள் பலவற்றை எமக்காக ஆக்கித் தந்திருக்கின்றார்கள். வாழ்க்கையின் இலக்கினை இயம்புவதால் அவற்றை 'இலக்கியம்' என்கின்றோம். அத்தகைய இலக்கியங்களுள் ஒன்று புறநானூறு. அந்தப் புறநானூறு காட்டுகின்ற காட்சி ஒன்றை மேற்படி பாடல் படம் பிடித்துக் காட்டுகின்றது.

துன்பத்தைக் கண்ட போது நாம் துவள்கிறோம்; கவல்கிறோம். இன்பத்தைக் கண்டபோது நாம் இறும்பூது எய்துகிறோம்; இறுகத் தழுவிக்கொள்கிறோம். இது உலக இயற்கை. இன்பமும் துன்பமும் இயல்பு; இன்பம் இருந்தால் துன்பமும் இருக்கும்; துன்பம் இருந்தால் இன்பமும் இருக்கும். இன்பமும் துன்பமும் மாறிமாறி வரும்; அவை சகடைக்கால் போல வரும். ஆனாலும் இந்த இயற்கையை நாம் புரிந்து கொள்வதில்லை. இதைப் புரிந்து கொள்ளாமையினால் தான் நாம் துன்பம் வரும் போது துவண்டு போகிறோம். 'இயற்கையின் இயல்பை உணர்ந்து துன்பத்திலும் இன்பம் காண வேண்டும்; துன்பத்தையும் இன்பமாக மாற்றிக்கொள்ள வேண்டும்; தீதும் நன்றும் பிறர் தந்து வருவதில்லை. இன்பத்தையும் துன்பத்தையும் சம்பாதித்துக் கொள்பவர்கள் நாங்கள் தான்' என்று கூறுகின்றது இந்தப் பழம்பாடல். மேற்படி உண்மையை உணர்த்த நாட்டிலே நிகழும் ஒரு சாதாரண காட்சியை நம்முடைய கண்ணின் முன்னே கொண்டு வந்து நிறுத்துகின்றார் புலவர். 'இந்த வீட்டைப் பாருங்கள். அங்கே கேட்கும் பறைமேளச் சத்தத்தைக் கேளுங்கள். மக்கள் கூடியிருந்து ஒலமிட்டு, வயிற்றில் அடித்து ஒப்பாரி வைத்து, விம்மி அழுகின்ற பரிதாப நிலையைப் பாருங்கள். அது துன்பக் காட்சி. அதோ அந்த வேப்ப மரத்துக்குப் பின்னால் இருக்கின்ற வீட்டையும் பாருங்கள். அங்கே மங்கல ஒலி கேட்கின்றது; இன்னிசை முழங்குகின்றது. சிறுவரும், குமரரும் கும்மாளம் அடித்துக் குதூகலிக்கின்ற காட்சி அந்தக் காட்சி. ஒரே தெருவில் இரண்டு காட்சிகள். ஒன்று அமங்கலக் காட்சி, மற்றது மங்கலக்காட்சி. அந்த வீட்டில் கண்ணீரும் கம்பலையுமாய்க் கதறி அழும் பெண்களின் கூட்டம். இந்த வீட்டிலே கூறை உடுத்துக் குங்குமப் பொட்டு இட்டு கும்மாளம் கொட்டும் குமர்ப் பெண்களின் சிரிப்பொலியும் சிங்கார நடமாட்டமும். இது இயற்கை. அந்த இயற்கை உலகத்தை இவ்வாறு படைத்து விட்டது. இன்ப துன்பம் சுழல்சக்கரம் என்பதை உணர்த்துகின்ற வகையில் உலகத்தைப் படைத்து விட்டது. இவற்றை நாம் உணர வேண்டும். உணர்ந்து துன்பத்திலும் இன்பம் காண வேண்டும்'.

ஓர் இல் நெய்தல் கறங்க, ஓர் இல்
ஈர்ந் தண் முழுவின் பாணி ததும்ப;
புணர்ந்தோர் பூ அணி அணிய, பிரிந்தோர்
பைதல் உண்கண் பனி வார்பு உறைப்ப,
படைத்தோன் மன்ற, அப்பண்பிலாளன்!
இன்னாது அம்ம, இவ் உலகம்;
இனிய காண்க,
இதன் இயல்பு உணர்ந்தோரே

புறநானூறு-194: பல்குடுக்கை நன்கணியார்

In this house
a funeral drum harshly, dolefully beats;
In that house the pleasing notes of a wedding tabor
ripples through sweetly.
Here brides adorn themselves with flowers.
And there the weeping eyes of mourning women
overflow with tears.
Thus, perversely has He fashioned things.
Bitter is this world. Alas!
Knowing all this, learn to distil its sweet.

(இவ்வாறு சொல்கிறது அன்றைய தமிழர்க்கெனப் பாடப்பட்ட பாடல். ஆனால் இன்றைய இலங்கைத் தமிழர்க்கும் அது பொருந்தும். சொல்ல முடியாத அளவுக்குத் துன்பப்பட்டுக் கொண்டிருக்கும் ஈழத் தமிழரை எண்ணிக் கவல்கின்ற அதே வேளையில் மேற்படி பாடல் அல்லல்பட்டு ஆற்றாது விடுகின்ற அவர்களது கண்ணீர் பெரும்படைகளை அழிக்க வல்ல ஆயுதமாக மாறும் என்றும் துன்பத்தில் இன்பம் காணவும் உதவும் என்றும் நம்புகிறோம். ஆசிரியர்).

Tamilar Resurgence Conference in Tirupatur (TN) - September 2 - 3



George Fernandes, Janata Dal leader & former Union Minister, speaks, with Elaventhana interpreting.



Giving to the Eelam Liberation cause.

INDIA TRAINS A BOY ARMY TO PROTECT SRI LANKAN TAMILS

Chris Nuttall in Trincomalee

As India begins its "final" pull-out from this north-eastern port, the troops left behind are helping to train a new army of Sri Lankan boy soldiers to carry on their war.

The Indian Government made a pact with the Sri Lankan Government in Colombo last month to guarantee a peace as its forces departed, but it also appears to have reached a rogue agreement with Tamil groups which will ensure a continuance of the conflict it began two years ago.

The evidence of this duplicitous accord is at Nilaveli, a former beach resort 10 miles north of Trincomalee's vast harbour, where troops ships are slowly arriving to ferry men and equipment back home.

The Indians have built a training camp right in the centre of Nilaveli village, where high civilian casualties would result from any attack by the Tamil Tiger separatist guerrillas.

It was opened three months ago, with training for conscripts of the ENDLF, an organisation created by Indian

military intelligence - the RAW. Now it has been expanded to take in recruits of two other Indian-backed Tamil groups: the EPRLF and the TELO.

The forced conscription of thousands of Tamil youths over the past few months is well documented. Families have reported their sons, some as young as 12, being snatched from their homes or taken off trains. Residents in Trincomalee say they have seen Indian officers training these boys, who belong in school, in armed warfare.



They are not even being trained to defend the Tamil people and fight for Eelam - the idealised concept of a separate state in the north and east. They are instead press-ganged to fight for the Indian-backed groups who fear annihilation at the hands of their enemies, the Tigers, when their protectors leave.

But there is a cynical method in India's madness. It does not want to remove its 40,000 men from Sri Lanka knowing that the Tigers will quickly recapture the territory hard won at a cost of the lives of more than 1,100 Indian soldiers over the past two years.

Excerpts from The Guardian Oct 24

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