

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 6 No. 4 14th February 1987

AMPARAI	- 37
MANNAR	- 50
KUMPURUPITTY	- 12
KILINOCHCHI	- ?

WHO'S GUMMING UP THE WORKS?

The Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, Mr. J. N. Dixit, returned to Colombo last Saturday after a hurried visit to New Delhi for consultations regarding the recent developments in the island, particularly the increase in violence in the North and the imposition of economic sanctions against Jaffna.

Among those Mr. Dixit met were the Minister of External Affairs, Mr. N. D. Tiwari, and the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Natwar Singh.

His visit to India is regarded as very significant by political observers in Colombo who believe it was connected with a re-appraisal of India's role in the on-going ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka.

There is a yearning among many Tamil people for Indian intervention, militarily, to resolve the conflict.

The common hope is that Indian troops would come in to hold the "border" between the "North" and the "South", enforce a settlement and then leave after handing over the

LTTE at Kankesanthurai in Jaffna peninsula. If true, this goes well beyond the significance of the visit by a predominantly Sinhala delegation to the peninsula, which is itself considerable. Indeed, such a meeting would represent the first attempt at direct negotiations between the Tamil guerillas and the Sri Lanka Government, the possibility of which some ministers of the government had been hinting at for the past few weeks.

Secondly, Mr. Ronnie de Mel, the influential Sri Lanka Minister for Finance and Planning, has been quoted in Dubai as saying that there has been a softening of the Tamils' stand on the demand for merger of the Northern and Eastern Provinces and that he expects a

MATTER TO AN INTERNATIONAL PEACE-KEEPING FORCE.

According to our perception, India would intervene militarily only if its "vital national interests" are threatened.

The strategic Trincomalee naval base looms large in this scenario. India would not like its southern flank also being under the control of hostile forces.

That is why it has been so keen to see an early settlement of the ethnic problem.

The prolongation of the conflict would only aid those foreign powers which wish to gain hegemony over Sri Lanka.

We wonder what part the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is playing in this power game.

The CIA acts in mysterious ways, usually in concert with other pro-US countries, notably Israel.

Locals in many other countries have been manipulated by one or other Big Power to serve their own interests. Is the same thing happening in Sri Lanka as well?

We tend to think so. There is no other explanation for what has been happening over what is basically an internal problem. Near settlement is reached when some force or other throws a spanner in the works. This has happened several times since Thimpu I.

India has done its best to bring about peace among the warring parties in Sri Lanka — with a big eye on its "vital national interests" as well.

What more can India do? We wonder. And wonder yet again.

Long Way To Go

Vicious circle of reprisals — this was what we have said on several earlier occasions.

When the society gets militarised the finer element of being humane has no meaning. Everyone wants to justify everything by saying this or quoting that.

Dogs took away the whole thing; skeletons sometimes remain.

The massacres in Kokatticholai, Amparai, Mannar, Kilinochchi and Kumpurupitty bear testimony to this.

Getting killed, whether he is a Tamil, Sinhalese or Muslim, has become the norm.

A small Atomic bomb named LITTLE BOY killed millions in a minute in Hiroshima.

We witness killings only in hundreds. We have to go a long way.

Let us kill.

A MAJOR REALIGNMENT?

This editorial, under the above headline, appeared in The Times of India of 30th December 1986—that is, before the tragic events in Batticaloa and Amparai—but it is still relevant because it reflects Indian perception on Sri Lanka's ethnic problem.

The numerous, and often conflicting, reports that have appeared on recent developments in Sri Lanka and on related events in Tamil Nadu suggest that a significant realignment of political forces may be under way in the island state.

First, it has been reported that a closed-door meeting took place over the weekend between a Sri Lanka Government-sponsored peace delegation and militants of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

settlement with the militants "very soon" since "we have moved now almost 85 per cent" towards an agreement.

It is not clear if this can square numerous reports of backtracking by President Jayewardene's Government on its latest set of proposals involving the retention of the Eastern Province as a single entity as distinct from the earlier proposal for its division into three.

More important, it is far from clear if the LTTE militants in Jaffna led by their field commander, Mr. S. Krishnakumar (alias Kittu), has been working in unison with the Tiger chief, Mr. V. Prabhakaran, who is based in Madras. It has been alleged that they have not been

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Release All Political Prisoners In Sri Lankan Jails

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Protest Demonstration

108 organisations, including the Gurunagar Fishermen's Society comprising about 5,000 people combined under the banner of the Mass Movement for Human Rights to stage a demonstration on 11th February condemning the fuel embargo as well as the atrocities perpetrated by the Security Forces in the North and East. Shops and business houses put up their shutters to show their solidarity with the demonstration.

The procession commenced from Nallur Kandasamy Kovil and from St. James Church, Gurunagar and passed through the principal streets of the town and reached the Jaffna Kachcheri around 11 a.m. where a memorandum was handed over to the Government Agent by Dr. Sebastiampillai for transmission to President Jayewardene. A bullock-cart headed the procession symbolising the difficulties experienced by the people by the acute shortage of fuel. Numerous posters and banners called upon the Government to alleviate travails of the people in the North.

Swiss Scene: A Bishop Pleads

The seven Tamils who are fasting since Friday 30th January at the Parish of la Servette in Switzerland, to obtain — among other things — the right to see their wives barred at the airport, received the visit of the Right Reverend Ambalavanar, Bishop of the Diocese of Jaffna (their city of origin in Sri Lanka). After a short interview with those taking part in the fast, the Bishop, during a brief press conference, manifested his surprise at the prohibitions hitting these applicants for asylum and the optimistic evaluation of the situation in Sri Lanka by the Swiss authorities.

It is in his capacity as a member of the committee for the preparation of the world consultation on the sharing of resources, created by the World Council of Churches, that Bishop Ambalavanar is in Geneva.

Having arrived at Cointrin, he learnt with stupefaction that the wives, fiancées, sisters and infants of the seven Tamils are held in the reception hall of the airport.

More fully informed of the situation, he decides to visit the Protestant Parish of la Servette to talk with his countrymen.

After having interviewed them, the Bishop agreed to respond to questions from the press. He expressed his surprise at the policy of the Swiss government "which does not allow the Tamils to be able to meet their families from which they have been separated for several years."

He asked for more compassion on the part of the Swiss authorities and was astonished that they claim there is no danger for his countrymen in returning to their country. As a matter of fact, he points out that "more than 3000 persons are interned, without any charges, in the camps in the South of Sri Lanka and that there is no guarantee in the present situation that repatriation is without danger on the contrary!"

In Geneva until Friday, Bishop Ambalavanar said that he did not have time to see the authorities, but hoped "that a solution can be made quickly."

If the situation is clarified for the seven applicants (they have the guarantee that they will not be repatriated as long as a solution has not been found), the Bishop is anxious about the fate of the 15 persons barred, who can be forced to leave Swiss soil at any moment.

Finally, questioned about the possibility of a welcome in South India, the Bishop pointed out that "even if the Church is active in this region, there are more than 150,000 refugees down there. The Indian government — alone entitled to determine their fate would not respond, a priori, favourably to such a request."

His dearest wish is therefore that the wives, children, sisters and fiancées may meet their relatives (up to the present contact has been

made through intermediaries) so that the fast may be broken. It is necessary to recall that one of the Tamils became victim of an illness on Sunday and that those responsible have a great deal of difficulty in supplying water to those fasting, whose health has waned.

(Based on a report which appeared in the Swiss newspaper La Suisse of 4th February)

FLAG WEEK

The Jaffna District Rover Scout Crew will hold a flag week from 15th February to 22nd February 1987, in the Scout District of Jaffna.

From the proceeds of this flag week, a portion of the fund will be utilized for the upliftment of the Jaffna District Scout Movement, Rover Scout Development, to promote the studies of orphans; to establish planned social service; to render first aid facilities through the branches; to promote and foster scout movement, girl guides movement and social service movement.

Lectures On Comparative Religion

Dr. Peter Schalk, Professor of Comparative Religion, University of Uppsala, Sweden, will deliver a series of three lectures on Religion and society at the Evelyn Rutnam Institute for Inter cultural studies.

The lectures are scheduled in the following order:

Tuesday, February 17th.

The encounter between Buddhism and Hinduism in Buddhist ritual. (With illustrations of Bellan Vihara in Colombo).

Thursday, February 19th.

State and Religion in China: Politics of religion and religiosity in China after Mao.

Friday, February 20th.

Religion and Ideology of State power in Angkor (Cambodia).

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MALAYSIA has taken an ominous step down the path to totalitarian rule. In a move aimed explicitly at restricting the independence of the country's judges and silencing public criticism of government scandals, the Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, pushed an amended Official Secrets Act through the docile parliament.

The result is a new concentration of power in the executive, and particularly in Mahathir's hands, which many thoughtful Malaysians consider dangerous to the continued political stability of the federation. Their fear is that the serious problems facing the government—an economic crisis, evidence of financial mismanagement with allegations of corruption, and growing antagonism between ethnic Malays and Chinese—will lead Mahathir to protect his position by exercising emergency powers.

They recall his extraordinary attempt three years ago to amend the constitution so that the Prime Minister alone could proclaim a state of emergency, by passing the parliament and ignoring the head of state (the king). Although he was forced to compromise, he retains virtually unfettered power through his total control of cabinet, his four-fifths majority in parliament, and the un-

Malaysia Slides Towards Totalitarianism

likelihood of the king rejecting his advice.

Lawyers point out that the emergency proclaimed in May 1969 after bloody race riots swept Kuala Lumpur has never been officially revoked. A further outbreak of racial violence could justify the Prime Minister assuming sweeping powers.

While no sensible Malaysian goes around forecasting race riots (such statements are understandably illegal, anyway), one perceptive critic of the current political scene, Dr. Chandra Musaffar, has written of the government's potential for "the crafty manipulation of ethnic fears which could lead to ethnic tensions and the eventual breakdown of ethnic relations".

Other Malaysians say bluntly, though privately, that factions within

the ruling United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) would incite racial violence to preserve their power. Asked if such action would have the approval of the Prime Minister, they shrug and say, "Well, Mahathir leaves no doubt that he's in charge".

The amendments to the Official Secrets Act (OSA) are the latest demonstration of Mahathir's muscle. In essence, they punish anyone who communicates or publishes any document that the government decrees to be "classified", ie. top secret, secret, confidential or restricted. While most Malaysians see the need to protect legitimate secrets of national security and defence, there are three aspects of the new act which have provoked widespread concern and increasingly vocal opposition. These are the arbitrary nature of the classification system that allows virtually any government information to be certified "officially secret; the fact that this certification shall not be questioned in any court on any ground whatsoever"; and the replacement of a range of punishments from fines to imprisonment in the old act with a mandatory one to 14 year jail sentence.

The removal of discretionary powers from judges is seen as sinister evidence of Mahathir's intention to erode the independence of the judiciary. Recent decisions by the Malaysian Supreme Court, including the reversal of a government ban on two reporters for the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, have angered Mahathir.

One of the most respected public figures in Malasiya, the recently retired Auditor-General Tan Sri Ahmad Noordin, described the OSA amendments as repugnant".

"They are desinged to undermine the foundations of democracy, they are contrary to the constitutional principle of public accountability and the right of the people to be informed," said Ahmad Noordin.

The former auditor, known as Malaysia's "Mr. Clean", then voiced the accusation that is increasingly heard in whispers in the Chinese coffee shops: "The Mahathir government will use this law to hide inefficiently and corruption. It is noth-

ing but a big deodorant to cover the bad smells in the government."

He was speaking to a multi-racial audience of 2500 people who crammed into a Penang hall at 8 p.m. on a stifling night (there had been no rain for a week) to hear four eminent speakers—a Malay, a Chinese, and two Indians— inveigh against the OSA amendments.

The president of the Malaysian Bar Council, Param Cumaraswamy, said they were "a coverup of high-level mismanagement and corruption". Attacking the government's restrictions of the free flow of information, he declared:

"In Malaysia, a rumour is true until proven false."

A placard on the speakers' lectern said: OSA: THE DOC'S CURE FOR SCANDALS. It's a sign of Mahathir's unpopularity that his medical degree, normally a status symbol, is increasingly being used in jibes against him. Veteran journalist K.Das, who also did a stint in government service as Malaysia's press attache in Canberra, says: "The general feeling among commentators is that no prime minister of Malaysia has ever been as unpopular as Mahathir is now."

by William Pinwill

The nation's two living former prime ministers, Tunku Abdul Rahman and Tun Hussein Onn, both conservative stalwarts of UMNO, have expressed unprecedented criticism of the new law. They were joined by Tun Tan Siew Sin, a former finance minister and now high priest of the Malaysian commercial world who was quoted as saying: "Even corruption can now be classified as officially secret."

Public opposition has also come from the National Union of Journalists, the Confederation of ASEAN Journalists, public service unions, and a range of "public interest groups" led by the Penang-based Aliran, which is organising protest meetings around the country.

The so-called scandals and corruption have two things in common—they were initially brought to light by the foreign press (particularly the Far Eastern Economic Review and the Asian Wall Street Journal), and they remain publicly unexplained. The tightly controlled local media steer well clear of such controversy

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RESCUERS IN SEARCH OF A VICTIM!



Introducing our young cartoonist **NOYASAPPU**

While the island's attention is riveted on the North—the testing of political wills and military might—some crucial happenings in the South go unnoticed. The Daily News of 21st January carried under banner headlines the indictment of 23 persons (20 Sinhalese and 3 Tamils under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). Some well known names were found — many young left intellectuals, human right activists and a woman activist. Many of us remember them as forthright critics of Government policy on all fronts—especially on the nationality question, human rights violations in Tamil areas and the open economy policy. They were activists who have openly written and spoken trying to penetrate the monolith of Sinhala chauvinism in the South for the last ten years and worked diligently for a political solution of the ethnic problem. The Island correspondent writes that special units of police were created to handle these cases. It is most interesting that while the Government is deeply involved in an expensive war in the Tamil areas, it concurrently creates special elite units to start a witch hunt on 'left' youth in the South. Moreover, it has used the PTA—ostensibly created for controlling "terrorism" in the Tamil areas—now for the first time against the left groups in the South on this scale.

Since 1971 successive Governments have increased military spending to gigantic proportions. When the present Government came to power 10 years ago putting forward a definite economic objective, it evol-

ution in Mindanao against the Moros and on the pretext of eradicating the New People's Army (NPA) devastated rural areas and grabbed land from the tribals. In return, Philippines had some 500 multinationals vying with each other for land, sea and cheap labour, large FTZ in Baatan, the biggest U.S base outside the USA at Subic bay and a Nuclear power plant in Morong.

THE SOUTH: PRISON-HOUSE OF CONSCIENCES

While Sri Lanka's attempt at an open economy was a flop and the penetration of neocolonialism not so successful, in its violence against national minorities and popular movements, Sri Lanka is not far behind. However, the most disturbing aspect is the acceptance of the rule of force by Sri Lankan Society. Its insidious and pervasive influence is well seen in the social structure all over the island. Whether on the streets of Colombo or the villages in the South, there is an uneasiness, suspicion and a well orchestrated campaign by the media to increase tension and blind fear legitimising and creating a want in the people for men bristling with arms.

by

Indira

ved a well-organised power structure. This power structure was upped by a disproportionate increase in the Armed Forces, accretion by the State of wide and sweeping legal powers through draconian measures such as the PTA and by the wresting of civilian control in institutions like the intelligence services and the creation of Home Guards. All these were passed without dissent and propagated with impunity using the national conflict as a scapegoat.

Though not entirely similar to our situation, a striking contemporary analogy is Marcos' Philippines. A classic example of a neocolony, the former military State in Philippines used many dimensions of control to suppress its people. Armed violence both state and paramilitary, was used indiscriminately on the Moros in Mindanao, popular movements and the Church in other areas and on other nationalities. It continued the implementation of large scale coloni-

It is not surprising in such a climate that the State could sweep away any legitimate opposition and start a witch hunt without fear of drawing a word of protest. However it will not be too long before the Sinhala nation will witness another purge, a purge more systematic and slow but efficient. It will find its younger generation strangled and gagged and the conscience of the nation languish in its own prison.

A handful of intellectuals who were trying to develop a rational component in the thinking of the Sinhala nation are being called terrorists. It is no wonder that creators of the Home Guards and those who bend over backwards to legitimise the military massacres of the civilians, feel that any form of rational discourse between the Tamil and Sinhala people is a threat to their existence. For such a long period they were dwelling on Sinhala chauvinism and allowed the 'ordinary' Sinhala people to become aware of

the legitimate demands of the Tamil people.

The myths and concepts developed by the Sinhala and Tamil politicians for their political existence are hard to break unless the Sinhala people realise that the interests of the Sinhala nation are basically dependent on an awareness of the nature of their State and its

politics; otherwise they are in grave danger. In this respect it is the duty of intellectuals in South to have courage enough to carry through the struggle to counter the prevalence of Sinhala chauvinism.

An indictment against 23 persons on 14 counts including 'conspiracy' to overthrow the state through violence has been reportedly prepared and yet to be filed before a High Court. However, according to some reports the Attorney General had already filed the indictment. Here is the full list of persons:

Dayan Jayatileke de Silva, alias K. K.; Susil George "Joe" Seneviratne; Dayapala Thiranaganama, alias Loku Silva; Pulsara Liyanage, alias Pulsie; Chinthana de Silva, alias Kamal; Purnaka de Silva, alias Lalith; Periyaswamy Muthulingam alias Muthu; K. Padmanabha, alias Ranjan; R. Manikkalingam, alias Mohan; R.A. Jayaratne, alias Jegan; K.I.Sarath Gamini, alias Stanley; Piyadasa Gallege, alias Cyril; L. Caldera, alias Dickie; G.M. Dharmasena, alias Ralahamy; H.K. Dayananda, alias Shantha; K. Karundasa, alias Leo; M.K. Karunaratne, alias Suda; C.R.K. Henry; Iqbal, alias Ibba; T. Sarath Silva, alias Podi Silva; K. Piyadasa, alias manager; Ariyadasa, alias Ari; and W. Chitrasena, alias Michael.

Here are some details about some of the leading members.

Dayan Jayatileke: a political journalist. Got a first class in political science at Peradeniya winning the C.C. Wickremasinghe Award and was a visiting lecturer at Colombo University. Fulbright scholar at State University of New York, working under well-known Marxist academics like Immanuel Wallerstein and James Petras. Has been missing for more than a year.

Joe Seneviratne: former National Organiser and General Secretary of the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality. Joined the CP (Peking) at 15. Was a full time trade unionist and actively responsible for instigating the railway strike of 1976, which led to the general strike. Also edited various trade union newspapers. Taught sometime at Carey College. Married with three

children. Arrested in Wennappuwa last April.

Dayapala Thiranaganama: graduate of Kelaniya University and the Asian Institute of technology. Former Lecturer at the Dept. of Geography, Kelaniya and Vice-President, Kelaniya University Teachers' Association. Joined the JVP in 1968 and broke away with G.I.D. Dharmasekera in 1970. Arrested in 1971 over the attempt to blow up the U.S. embassy and spent six years in jail. Was re-arrested before the NAM conference as a security threat.

Pulsara Liyanage: educated at St. Paul's Milagiriya, Kelaniya and Peradeniya Universities. Well known women's activist. Asst-Lecturer in Classics at Kelaniya University. Was arrested at her home last November. Close personal friend and cousin of Dayan Jayatileke.

Chinthana de Silva: educated at Trinity and St. Thomas' Colleges. Was an executive at Apothecaries and Hotel Inter-Continental. Contested the Colombo DDC elections in 1980 on the JVP ticket, then left it. Active in Christian circles, Missing.

Purnaka de Silva: son of a well known businessman. Educated at St. Thomas' College. Was formerly a money broker at one of Colombo's leading establishments. Missing.

Ramanujan Manikkalingam: son of a former Sri Lankan diplomat, whose "disappearance" was much high-lighted last year. Subsequently, the authorities admitted before the PTA Advisory Board that he was not arrested in the eastern province but in Colombo and that he was taken on the day he "disappeared", 28th March, and not 11th April as originally claimed. He got 8 distinctions at his O'levels and 4 A's at his A'levels at Royal College, where he also was a sportsman. Studied physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

(Courtesy: THE ISLAND)

WORLDWIDE PRESSURE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The pressure on governments to respect human rights is mounting. Human rights groups are growing in strength and influence worldwide. International human rights law is being strengthened. These extracts from the introduction to the most recent Amnesty International Report outline the progress that has been made and AI's efforts to secure further improvements.

A remarkable panorama of worldwide activity has been generated by the rapid growth of the human rights movement. Today the world has over a thousand independent domestic human rights groups and other national, regional and international organizations campaigning for human rights or promoting human rights as part of their programs.

Trade unions and other national organizations have made human rights a key issue. Individual journalists, lawyers, politicians, trade unionists and human rights activists have all played their role in bringing human rights into the headlines. This has intensified the pressure on officialdom and shifted the balance in favour of the protection of human rights. One consequence has been the acceleration of activity at the inter-governmental level, resulting in new human rights treaties and mechanisms.

The protection available under international law has increased significantly. When AI was launched in 1961, apart from the Geneva Conventions that apply in time of war, there was not a single universal treaty obliging states to prohibit torture or protect the very right to life. Now more than 80 nations have ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. This is legally binding and subject to an international monitoring body. It affirms, among other things, freedom of conscience, expression and association and the right of peaceful assembly as well as freedom from torture and from arbitrary killing.

Twenty-five years ago there was no international convention against torture. Now more than 40 governments have signed a United Nations torture convention which goes far beyond simply expressing revulsion at the practice. It spells out detailed provisions for the prosecution of alleged torturers, investigation of torture complaints and compensation for the victims.

So far approximately 70 countries have reported to and been questioned by the Human Rights Committee established under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Working Group on Disappearances set up by the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1980 has taken action and reported on more than 10,000 cases in 38 countries. Similar action at UN level is now getting under way to combat torture.

The process is slow, but it is central to an international strategy for the protection of human rights. Governments have been forced to negotiate with each other to establish common binding standards. It is now

delayed ratifying international human rights treaties and have tried to ignore complaints raised within the UN. Some of these governments have systematically sabotaged the international procedures for the protection of freedom and rights.

Although AI works within a politically sensitive area—human rights violations are rightly seen as burning political matters—it does not take any position on differing political ideologies or economic systems. It is not for or against any government, nor does it support or oppose political parties or opposition groups.

A key aspect is independence. AI is a non-governmental organization and avoids any political, financial, or other relationship which might create—or be seen to create—even the slightest dependence. It must maintain this independence even from those governments who nowadays praise the organization and express su-

situation in its country. Such information is then examined and evaluated in the same way as all other information. When possible, the organization also makes public the replies it has received from governments on its reports.

AI is firm in substance and polite in style. It does not seek polemical confrontations with governments, but is prepared to discuss its concerns with the authorities in all countries. It bases its approaches on the facts of specific cases and reference to agreed international standards. Its operations are open and it sends no clandestine mission; at the same time it must respect the confidentiality of all those who submit information to—it often at great personal risk.

No bargains are made in the course of meetings with government representatives. AI has nothing to "give" in return for the release of prisoners of conscience or any other positive step. Those governments who have tried to persuade or induce the organization not to publish its findings have not succeeded; AI sees itself as accountable publicly and cannot agree to any secret deals. This does not mean that every element in a dialogue is publicized; discussions with governments often take place without publicity. But sooner or later AI makes a public report of such contacts. If any mistake has been made in a report, AI is always ready to issue a correction.

Governments are obliged not only to respect human rights standards at home, they also have a duty to monitor the human rights performance of other governments. Enforcement of international treaties is a concern for all contracting parties. AI therefore encourages governments to intercede with other governments on behalf of victims. To that end the organization is ready to make the facts available to governments willing to intercede but it does not use governments as its "agents". It recognizes that governments themselves are responsible for any initiatives they may decide to take in pursuing human rights questions with other nations.

To protect the organization's impartiality, and its emphasis on the international protection of human rights, AI sections do not approach their own governments on human rights violations in their own countries. Exceptions to this rule may be allowed in such areas as promotion

Government responses to Amnesty International

Government reactions to AI vary. A few try to give the impression of ignoring the organization's existence. They may refuse to reply to letters or to meet representatives. One has an annual ritual: it returns by mail the copy of the Amnesty International Report it has received from the organization—but after making a photocopy. Other governments respond with denunciations: "Amnesty Lies International" and "a tool of propaganda". Some governments, still seeking to keep the organization at arm's length, respond in a bureaucratic and formalistic manner, refusing to address the content of AI's appeals; one or two have even organized special offices to deal with letters from AI. But a growing number of governments do respond to information about violations in their own countries by taking steps to improve matters and have made human rights an important element in their foreign policies.

up to the governments, and the bodies they have established, to monitor and enforce the standards they have set for themselves. The pressure of public opinion is essential to ensure that they do.

Those who want to deny AI the right to take action in defence of human rights have not understood that human rights are in fact an international responsibility, and recognized as such in international law.

This is the basis of AI's fact-finding, reporting and campaigning. It is significant that often the same governments which have not come to terms with these activities have also

support for its goals in their own national or foreign policy. AI must be seen to be independent; to that end the organization has adopted strict internal rules on, for instance the sources from which it can accept money. It accepts no money from governments for its program budget.

This political independence does not mean that AI does not seek dialogue with governments. Not only are they the ones who have the power to respect or violate human rights, they are party to each dispute about individuals' human rights. As a matter of policy, AI seeks each government's version of the human rights

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ABORTED SPORTSMEN

The minorities, especially the Tamils have been discriminated against not only in the fields of education, employment and lands but also in the field of sports. Many in the South do not appear to see this flagrant discrimination, as they are too engrossed in Test Cricket, while the sports authorities are there only to ensure a foreign trip for themselves at others' expense.

The question that looms large in one's mind when one thinks about supposedly National Teams is whether they have been chosen with circumspection and with due regard to talents and abilities.

Gone are days of the pre-Republican era when a truly national team was chosen—Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers were chosen. One conjures up the big names of Sathasivam, Makin Salih, Malcolm Spittel, B.R. Heyn in Cricket; Mylvaganam, the juggler in Hockey; Ethirveerasingham, the High Jumper who wrote his name in gold at the Asian Games and Duncan White who won the Silver Medal at the

World Olympics. For some inexplicable reasons, a so-called National Team now does not seem to take into account the talents of the minorities in its selection.

We note that there are two Ministers in charge of Sports. One is a Minister of Sports and the other is in addition to his portfolio as Minister of Mahaweli Affairs, the President of the Board of Control for Cricket. There is also a great all-round sportsman in his collegiate days at Royal in the person of

In the North and East there are many schools and colleges which have produced sportsmen of distinction in the past. St. Michael's College, Batticaloa in Basket Ball, St. Joseph's College, Trincomalee in Football, St. Patrick's, St. John's Jaffna Hindu, Jaffna Central and many other schools which have produced sportsmen who could vie with the best in the South. Vigneswara College, Karaveddy, a village school in the Peninsula, won the much coveted Championship Cup at the Colombo

had the enviable distinction of producing Gonsales and Anthony for the National Football eleven.

The situation has now changed under the Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka. There were few who were chosen for the respective Sports' Pools to have the distinction of being coached by renowned players like Sir Garfield Sobers.

Is it not time that the Government sent some 'talent scouts' to pick out young sportsmen in the making in the North and East of the country.

K. Kandasamy

by

President Jayewardene. But what have they done to foster sport in the North and East or the Plantation areas? Incidentally, we have two Cabinet Ministers representing the Plantation areas who do not seem to take an interest in promoting sports in plantation areas where we are sure to find youths who have innate talent to be long distance runners.

Plan Exhibition Tournament in 1952 which was held under the direct patronage and presence of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Many of these sportsmen are now forgotten and some of them are with begging bowls in the streets of Jaffna.

There are many others who achieved national prominence. In the '50's Old Centralites V. Rajendra and the last Suriyakumaran were leading off-spinners in the Tamil Union. There were Jeyaratnam, Kunaratnam and Rajaratnam, brothers of Jaffna Hindu College, who played Hockey in the National team. Dr. C. Balakrishnan was an opening batsman for Ceylon in 'unofficial tests'. There was J. B. Francis, an all-rounder who played for Tamil Union and later captained the Army Cricket eleven in the Sara Trophy matches. T. Perinpanayagam, President of the Referees' Association of Sri Lanka was a product of Parameshwara College. St. Patrick's

In the South we hear of Ministers from the Prime Minister downwards opening stadiums for the youths in those areas but precious little has been done in the North and East except on paper, like all other development plans. Here in the North and East Security Forces do not even permit school children to play in their own school grounds and in other cases we see the sorry spectacle of the forces themselves occupying the playing fields. For example, the Jaffna Central College esplanade is in the line of fire of army cannons and there have been not infrequent instances of shells fired from the Fort landing on the grounds.

If the Government is interested in fostering sport at a national level, it is time it did some re-thinking and wakes up from its apathy so that the youth in the North, East and the Plantations are given ample opportunities to develop their talents.

Worldwide...

(Continued from page 5)

of legislation and the protection of refugees.

AI opposes the transfer from one government to another of military and security equipment and expertise used in human rights violations of concern to AI. AI sections campaign for legislation in their home countries against such transfers.

Any policy on relations with governments raises questions about how opposition groups are dealt with.

AI does not favour or oppose any such group. It has taken a position of principle: it condemns the torture and killing of prisoners by anyone including opposition groups.

However, it is governments who are responsible for dealing with such abuses. In doing so, governments must respect the human rights standards set down in international law.

Some opposition groups have obtained such control over territory and population that, in effect, they exercise governmental functions. AI may approach such groups in its work for the protection of human rights, but this does not constitute "recognition".

In its reporting the organization makes no comparison between the various practices of opposition groups, governments, or groups, exercising governmental functions.

This non-political approach to highly political matters is deliberate. It is based on experience. What matters to AI is that prisoners get the practical help they need.

A factual and independent line is more effective in securing this goal than sensationalism and politicization.

There is another dimension as well: the style with which one works for human rights is part of the message of respect for human rights.

If human rights are to be treated seriously, then accusations must be based on facts. Similarly, those believed to be responsible for abuses must be given the opportunity to present their case before final conclusions are drawn.

Governments should be approached correctly, not only because that is more effective, but also because they have the right to be heard.

If the authorities choose not to take that opportunity, if they decline to answer questions or to decide to spread disinformation instead, this response will be noted.

RUBASHOV SPEAKS

"You have prevented the distribution of our material; you have suppressed the Party's voice. You have distributed pamphlets in which every word was harmful and false. You wrote: 'The remains of the revolutionary movement must be gathered together and all powers hostile to tyranny must unite; we must stop our old internal struggles and start the common fight afresh'. That is wrong. The Party must not join the Moderates. It is they who in all good faith have countless times betrayed the movement, and they will do it again next time, and the time after next. He who compromises with them buries the revolution. You wrote: 'When the

house is on fire, all must help to quench it; if we go on quarrelling about doctrines, we will all be burnt to ashes.' That is wrong. We fight against the fire with water; the others do with oil. Therefore we must first decide which is the right method, water or oil, before uniting the fire-brigades. One cannot conduct politics that way. It is impossible to form a policy with passion and despair. The Party's course is sharply defined, like a narrow path in the mountains. The slightest false step, right or left, taken one down the precipice. The air is thin; he who becomes dizzy is lost."

—Rubashov a character in the novel *Darkness At Noon* by Arthur Koestler.

REFUGEES SHOT DEAD IN TEMPLE

Who cares for a political solution to the on-going ethnic strife in Sri Lanka which so far has claimed 15,565 lives?

The manoeuvres of the Security Forces in the North and East last week, clearly indicates that the Government is hell-bent on solving the problem by the "breaking of heads".

Despite fictitious statements and claims by the Government media, truths, however, continue to emerge from various quarters.

Mannar, Point Pedro, Valvettiturai, Kilinochchi, Kumpurupity (in Trincomalee) were some of the major areas of direct confrontation between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Security Forces.

The Security Forces, assisted by several helicopters and Italian-made light aircrafts mounted a heavy offensive from 7th February.

In Mannar, the Security Forces from Thallady, 4th milepost, Murungan, Silavathurai and Cheddikulam camps jointly staged an operation in the areas comprising Adampan, Manthai, Madhu, Parappankandal and Pandivirichchan simultaneously. At the same time several airborne divisions were engaged in Kilinochchi particularly in the Uruthirapuram, Iranamadu and Parathi areas. According

to Government reports eight soldiers—six at Uruthirapuram, one at Arantalawa in Amparai, one at Parappankandal—were killed besides the six wounded last week. Eight "tigers" were killed according to the LTTE Press Release.

Heavy civilian casualties were also reported from Mannar and Kilinochchi.

Mannar was the scene of a four-day combat between the Security Forces and LTTE from 6th February. Troops from Murungan and Thallady camps joined forces in armoured cars, bull-dozers with air cover and engaged the LTTE in a struggle which lasted for several hours. Four of the forces were reported killed. In another development on the 9th the Security Forces entered the Church of Our Lady of Madhu and arrested 22 youths who were among the people who had taken refuge. It was only a day prior to the incident that the State Radio made repeated broadcasts that the "terrorists" were hiding in churches and other places of worship and that the Government would take immediate steps to flush them out.

Many persons including women who had taken refuge in the historic Thiruketheeswaram Temple at Manthai in the Mannar district, due to this week's military action by the Security Forces, were shot and killed, on 10th February. It is reported that 10 died on the spot. The soldiers were also reported to have taken many women with them who were not released thereafter.

Security Forces and the LTTE met in direct confrontation on 6th February at Palaly, Vasavilan, and Punnalaikadduvan. In a ten-hour battle that ensued, the forces with air cover and armoured cars could not make any headway and were reported to have suffered heavy losses with many injured. The LTTE stated that three from their ranks were killed.

Security Forces from camps at Thondamanaru and Valvettiturai also tried to venture out for a direct confrontation with the LTTE militants. This confrontation lasted for nearly eight hours. In the shelling and bombing that ensued, 20 civilians were injured and many houses damaged.

Shell fire from the army camp at Point Pedro on 10th February caus-

ed severe injuries to three persons who were admitted to the Jaffna Hospital. Those injured were—Pillaiyar (26) of Puloly, S.Rahu (19) of Puloly and Saverimuttu (55) of 3rd Cross Street, Point Pedro.

Kaleidoscope

I remember

*My childhood in the village.
Buried deep, the years send shoots
Through years of sub-urban living.*

I remember

*The smell of coffee percolating
In my grandmother's kitchen.
How it mingled with the wood-smoke
Warming the chilly air.*

I remember

*The noisiness of chickens let loose
at dawn.*

*Cocks crowing. Goats bleating.
The raw smell of dung on wet earth.
The creaking of the well-sweep.*

I remember people.

*The postman pedalling through the
dusty lanes;
The baker, bread-basket cushioned
on his head,
The turtle-flesh seller. Her coorg-
drape and voluble speech,
Matching the vigour of her stride.*

*And of course the palmyrah palms
At sunset. Silhouetted against a
flaming sky
They stood like sentinels
Behind our home.*

— NIRMALA LOUIS

Malaysia...

(Continued from page 3)

with the notable exception of a Chinese-owned paper, *The Star*, and the monthly journal of the courageous Aliran group of Penang.

Chandra Muzaffar, president of Aliran (who is due to make a speaking tour of Australia next year), described the nature of the problem in a recent issue of his journal: "Political interference in business is one of the causes of our present economic stagnation. It has eroded the confidence of local and foreign investors in our economy. It has resulted in the making of politically-motivated decisions which are economically unsound. It has led to the growth of corruption, nepotism and other malpractices—corruption perpetrated by politicians through their business cronies.

If the echoes of the Philippines under Marcos and Indonesia under Suharto are resounding, no Malaysian has dared to link the Prime Minister with charges of corruption. Critics point out, however, that the worst cases of government mismana-

gement have occurred since he took office in 1981.

These include: The BMF scandal, in which a finance company under the government's Bank Bumiputra lost an estimated Dollars US 1 billion in shonky loans in Hong Kong...the Maminco fiasco, a futile attempt by the Mahathir government in 1982 to corner the world tin market, believed to have cost taxpayers nearly Dollars US 500 million, kept secret till Mahathir revealed it two months ago...the EPF affair, the sale of shares by the Employees Provident Fund to a company linked with a top government official which deprived investors of some Dollars US 4 million...the UMBC scam involving the purchase of a major share in the United Malayan Banking Corp (the country's third-largest) by family companies of the Finance Minister, Daim Zainuddin, and its later sale to the government investment company, Pernas, at an undisclosed price.

No prosecution has been launched by the Malaysian government in relation to any of these instances of alleged malpractice or mismanagement.

Compounding Mahathir's worries is the fact that the country is in an economic mess. The cautious *Far Eastern Economic Review* commented on November 13; "Malaysia's economy is in real trouble and not much improvement lies on the horizon."

Last year saw negative growth of 1 percent in GDP instead of the 5.2 percent positive growth predicted by the Finance Minister. There has been a 14 percent deterioration in terms of trade and a decline of 8.1 percent in GNP this year.

The government is now obliged to borrow money to pay the salaries of its public servants. The external debt at the end of 1985 was more than Dollars US20 billion, while the Malaysian dollar has depreciated 60 percent against the yen, the source of most of the government's borrowing.

The slump in commodity prices, especially tin, palm oil, petroleum and rubber, shows no sign of a recovery.

— (Courtesy: *THE BULLETIN*
December 16, 1986)

Rape, Abduction Etc.

Tampalakamam in Trincomalee witnessed abduction and rape of many young women and suicide of some, according to the eye witness account of a young woman who has reached Jaffna with others as refugees. Security Forces in a search operation last week had ordered the inmates of houses out, shot and killed them. The eyewitness in question, whose father was among those killed, after spending 15 days in the jungle without adequate food, with her brother and six others finally reached Mullaitivu and subsequently came to Jaffna with the help of the militants.

GA RESIGNS?

The Government Agent, Kilinochchi Mr. Jega Senthilnathan has reportedly resigned his post. Informed sources state that the Security Forces wanted him removed. Mr. Senthilnathan who was contacted by the SATURDAY REVIEW, was not available for comment.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

VIDEOS CAN LIE

Two private buses and one ELF Route Van were shot at on the Paranthan-Mullaitivu road on 11th February. One of the buses that left Colombo for Jaffna never reached its destination. On the morning of 11th February, the Security Forces who were lying in ambush opened fire at the VIP bus, killing the driver

Arunthavarajah from Thambasiddy. Two women passengers - one Muslim - also were killed and six injured.

Another bus owned by Safety Travels and the ELF Van had to drive through the spray of bullets immediately afterwards.

According to an eye-witness who travelled in the VIP bus, the Security Forces who surrounded the bus immediately ordered everyone to get out, with raised hands; they were then ordered to lie on the roadside.

The Security Forces forced the passengers to state that the Tigers were responsible for the shooting and video taped it.

An officer who had come to the spot in an armoured personnel carrier later sent the injured to hospital.

The Government Media have, as usual, declared that militants killed the passengers. The Rupavahini—the State TV—provided tele-cover.

ADAMPAN HOSPITAL BOMBED

Was it a Sri Lankan pilot or a foreign mercenary who demolished the Adampan Government Hospital during an air sortie on 11th February?

The bomber pilot's pin-point accuracy suggests it was a foreign hireling.

The dead-on-target bombs killed several patients and destroyed the

second biggest hospital in the Mannar District.

The patients who managed to scramble out of the bombed building were fired at by helicopter gunships.

Security forces engaged in a search operation in Mannar the same day went on a rampage. The soldiers'

cutting spree left 50 persons dead. The bodies bore slash marks.

Twenty thousand people fled their homes during the Security Forces, five-day operation in Kilinochchi, Uruthirapuram and Paranthan.

The Government clamped down a 36-hour curfew on Kilinochchi, Mannar and Mullaitivu on Wednesday evening (11th February).

The curfew was extended for a further twelve hours in Kilinochchi.

Protest Boycott

Jaffna University's medical students boycotted lectures on Thursday (12th February) to protest the bombing of the Adampan Hospital.

A Major...

(Continued from page 1)

acting together and that the Sri Lanka Internal Security Minister Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, has encouraged a split in the LTTE.

Whatever the truth in these allegations, it appears that New Delhi has not been fully taken into confidence by the LTTE, and that it has accepted a somewhat reduced role for itself as mediator. Such a view is further strengthened by the dramatic, if inadequately noticed, decision by the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister to ask the powerful director-general of police (CID), Mr. K. Mohandas, to go on 60 days' leave from last Friday. Mr. Mohandas was widely held to be responsible for the ham-handed police action against the Tamil militants last month and known to have preferences for some of them. His departure must be seen as linked to what may be emerging in New Delhi as a new response, based more on abstention than an active intervention, to the recent developments.

Mr. J. N. Dixit, High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in India, handed over a letter from the Indian Prime Minister Mr Rajiv Gandhi to President Jayewardene on 12th February. It is learnt that the Indian Prime Minister has stipulated three main conditions to be met by the Sri Lanka Government if India's good offices were to be continued in resolving the ethnic issue.

These conditions, it is reported, are clear and definitive steps are being expected from the Sri Lanka Government. The conditions further stipulate that the proposals accepted by President Jayewardene on 19th

Mini Camps in Paranthan

The Security Forces who were on a 'search and destroy' operation in the Kilinochchi district, have occupied the Chemical Factory, Post Office and the People's Bank in Paranthan and put up camps there.

Several shops and houses in the vicinity of these camps were demolished.

India Lays Down Conditions To Continue Mediation

December at his meeting with the Indian delegation led by Mr. Chidamparam should be the basis for settlement, that the embargo on fuel to the North should be lifted immediately and lastly the present atrocities perpetrated by the Security Forces

in the North and East should cease forthwith.

It is also reported that the President apprised the cabinet of the details of this communication from the Indian Prime Minister, and a reply has been forwarded.

JAFFNA THE NEXT TARGET?

The Jaffna Peninsula will be the next target for a three-pronged attack by the Security Forces, according to informed sources.

If and when the Security Forces succeed in over-running Kilinochchi and Mannar, then they will concentrate on re-establishing their hegemony in Jaffna, these sources say.

Wresting control of the Jaffna peninsula from the Tiger militants has now become a prestige issue for both the Government and the Security Forces.

Death Of A Child

Vijitha, a three year old child, hit by a shrapnel when Point Pedro was shelled on 1st February, succumbed to her injuries yesterday.

The Battle of Jaffna will be decisive, one way or the other.

Bombing The Tigers To The Table

National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali has said in an interview that the Government will continue to take military measures till the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) agrees to negotiations to solve Sri Lanka's ethnic problem.

Fisherman Shot Dead

A Gurunagar fisherman who was fishing in the Jaffna lagoon was shot dead by a Jaffna Fort sentry round about 5.30 a.m. yesterday.