

# Saturday Review

## SRI LANKA

Vol. 6 No. 5 21st February 1987

### FAKE HOUSE

Doesn't the editorial staff of the state-controlled Daily News read its own newspaper?

On 13th February, the Daily News front-paged a story under the headline 'Kittu and Rahim hiding in Colombo?'

On 19th February, the self-same Daily News led with a story filed by a Reuter Correspondent who had interviewed Rahim in Jaffna!

The Daily News didn't have the grace even to blush. In the Lake House days, the News Editor would have been given the standing sack for perpetrating such a howler.

Under the new dispensation he may well find himself heading the Government's Media Centre.

Lake House has now quite openly charged itself into Fake House.

# BLOODY BUT UNBOWED

If anyone thinks he has the Tamils up against the ropes and has only to land the knock-out blow that will send them flying out of the ring, he'd better think again.

Hitler made the same miscalculation about the Russians and the British. Pinchbeck Hitlers will certainly fare no better.

The economic blockade has certainly hit the North hard. But the people have shown that they can take any below-the-belt punches the Government throws.

Not content with hitting the Tamils in the belly, the Government is now pounding them militarily with the hardware liberally supplied it by the Free World and, of course, China.

The front pages of the Colombo newspapers have taken on a distinctly military flavour these days, reflecting the military escalation in the North and East. Particularly, the state-controlled Daily News: its reports about the war—front are bellicosely headlined and speak of 'thrusts' 'ground air operations', 'search and destroy operations' etc.

While the Daily News crows about the Security Forces' 'advances' and the destruction of 'terrorist hideouts', its weekend sister the Sunday Observer (15th February), eschewing war hysteria, talks about 'Tamil separatists' (not 'terrorists') in its soberly written lead story headlined 'Political Negotiations To Be Resumed'.

The very next day (16th February), the Daily News front-paged National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali's speech at Nagoda (not Angoda), under the headline 'We'll Fight Until Terrorists Down Arms, Talk Peace.'

The gist of Lalith's speech is that the Government believes in a political solution to the ethnic conflict but the Security Forces will continue their 'operations' till the 'terrorists' lay down their arms and talk peace.

Lalith's speech seems to give a new twist to the Government's pendulum swing between the political and military options.

It's best summed up as Bombing the Tamils to the Table (BTT).

The Government will soon learn that this strategy is bound to be counter-productive. You can bomb a people to the grave but not to the negotiating table.

Battered but not out for the count, the Tamils defiantly reply: Our heads are bloody but unbowed.

#### HA ! HA ! - 1

In the Jaffna District forces from Kattuvan, Kurumbasiddy, Tellippalai and Ponnalai have advanced towards Mallakam.

(The Daily News of 14th February)

#### HA ! HA ! - 2

Kittu and Rahim, the Tiger Commanders of Jaffna who fell out of grace with their leader, Prabhakaran earlier this year, are reported to be in Colombo, Police sources said yesterday.

(The Daily News of 13th February)

#### HA ! HA ! - 3

The forces had encircled both Jaffna and Mannar and were marching on the two towns at the rate of 100 metres a day.

(The Daily News of 11th February)

#### HA ! HA ! - 4

The Security Forces who had been advancing at the rate of 100 metres a day, conquered Jaffna and were advancing further. At the time of writing they were well beyond Palk Straits and may reach Rameswaram soon.

(SATURDAY REVIEW Advance Forecast!)

Note by Editor: To borrow Ogden Nash's lines to a lady wearing jeans,

"You look divine as you advance But have you seen yourself retreating?"

## ONE MORE MASSACRE

It was on the 14th that the SATURDAY REVIEW said Sri Lanka's killing fields have a long way to go.

Only a couple of days had passed, when we got information that 37 Tamils were massacred in Trincomalee.

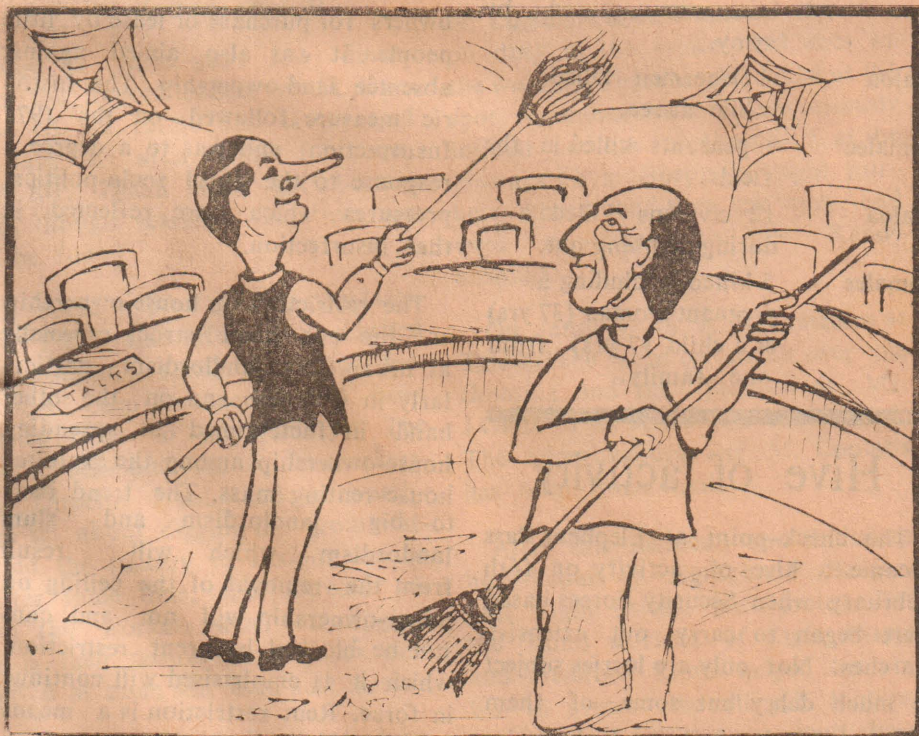
Reprisals and retaliations seem unending. The gruesome tragedy this time struck the Trincomalee district again.

On 17th February, when the Security Forces sallied forth on a "Search and destroy" operation (shades of Vietnam!) backed by air cover, the villages of Pachchainool, Koonitheevu, and Uppuveli were terror-stricken.

The Soldiers entered the houses, chased the occupants out, molested women and killed 37 persons including women and children.

Apart from guns, knives and swords were freely used, resulting in 17 persons receiving cut injuries and 20 persons bullet wounds.

An unspecified number of persons were taken into custody by the Security Forces during the operation. Houses too were damaged. Many people fled to the jungles to escape this rampage.



Release All Political Prisoners In Sri Lankan Jails



## Saturday Review SRI LANKA

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## Shelling again

After a lull of 24 hours shelling erupted from the Palaly Army Camp. Kurumbasiddy and Kupilan areas bore the brunt of this shell fire from 5.30 in the evening on 16th February. Many houses were damaged and people evacuated their homes. Shelling also commenced again from Kankesanturai and Navatkuli camps on the 16th.

## Landmine casualties

On the night of 13th February a tractor carrying Police Commandos and Home Guards from the Eravur camp to Batticaloa hit a land mine, killing all according to militant sources.

5 solidiers were killed at Kondavil in Trincomalee district on 14th, February whilst on a routine visit to a nearby mini-camp. Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam have claimed responsibility.

# GUARANTEE TAMIL'S LIFE AND PROPERTY —Mothers Front

Text of a letter sent to President Jayewardene :

We the Mothers Front write this letter to you in great anguish, to take necessary steps to guarantee the life and property of the Tamil people of this country and to provide them with Justice and Peace.

We vehemently condemn the atrocities by the armed forces, in the Eastern part of the country. The Armed forces, along with the Special Task Force and the Home Guards arbitrarily arrest civilians and shoot them, even women and children, in the course of their combing out operations. Poor peasants and fishermen are deprived of their livelihood. Here we set out some of the incidents which occurred in the month of December 1986 and in the month of January 1987 to highlight the pathetic conditions of the people of this region.

	Date	Village	District	
1.	4-12-'86	Kuchaveli	Trincomalee	5 fishermen shot while at sea.
2.	4-12-'86	Sambalthivu	Trincomalee	3 civilians including a woman killed in a combing out operation.
3.	5-12-'86	Kathankudi	Batticaloa	16 people including 12 SLTB employees shot dead by the Home guards while travelling in SLTB bus.
4.	9-12-'86	Kumburupitiya	Trincomalee	3 men killed by armed forces.
		Kiliveddy	Trincomalee	3 women molested by armed forces.
5.	11-12-'86	Nilaveli	Trincomalee	1 fisherman killed & 5 others injured when boat was captured by army.
6.	14-12-'86	Amirthakali	Batticaloa	4 fishermen killed while at sea.
7.	17-1-'87	Pankulam	Trincomalee	6 peasants killed in the fields.
8.	19-1-'87	Mandur	Batticaloa	12 civilians killed during combing out.
9.	23-1-'87	Thambalak- amam	Trincomalee	5 killed including a pregnant woman (37 yrs) & a child (7 yrs) from one family.

Thousands of people from this region have been driven out of their homes and have been living in refuge camps without sufficient food, clothes and shelter for more than a year.

Is it not the sacred duty of your Excellency's Government to protect all its citizens irrespective of race, religion and language?

In addition to this, the ban on fuel to the North has not only caused greater difficulties in the free

movement of food supplies within the peninsula but also dealt a blow to the cultivation of food crops. Transport within the peninsula is almost paralysed so that mothers with sick children are even forced to travel on the hood of minibuses to go to the hospital.

Adding to these agonies is the frequent shelling from the army camps in Jaffna, Pt. Pedro, Valvettithurai which have not only caused deaths of innocent lives (7th, 8th, 20th 21st, 22nd January, death toll 10,

injured 25) but also led to nervous breakdowns among children.

Therefore, we appeal to your Excellency to give us our basic right—the Right to Live. We urge you to take immediate steps on the following matters: 1. Order the Armed Forces of the Eastern Region to refrain from arbitrary arresting and killing of civilians and children and molesting women. 2. Lift the ban on fuel supply to the North. 3. Take action to stop the arbitrary shelling from the army camps in the Jaffna peninsula.

## REGRESSIVE STEPS AGAIN

Among the numerous regressive steps taken by the present UNP Government, two of the worst have just been announced by the President himself. These are the removal altogether of the ceiling on house-

ownership the sharp raising of the ceiling on land ownership from 50 acres per family to hundred acres per family. This doubling is to be further doubled to 200 acres in the case of married couples. Both husband and wife are to be entitled to a hundred acres each.

The two measures strike directly and hard at two of the most progressive measures of the SLFP-LSSP-CP Government of 1970-75.

The Land Reform of 1972 aimed at the wider distribution of land ownership by releasing the excess land in the hands of big private land-

Here is the text of a statement by The Lanka Sama Samaja Party on Government's latest steps on land ownership. The statement was signed by Mr. Colvin R. de Silva.

owners for purchase or lease by little people. It was also aimed against absentee land ownership. The historic measure followed on the 1971 Insurrection and was to a degree a response to the rural socio-political pressures which were reflected in that insurrection.

The restriction on house-ownership on the one hand struck especially at urban slum-landlordism, particularly in Colombo and on the other hand in fact, aimed at spreading house-ownership among the exploited house-renting mass. The trend back to big landlordism and slum landlordism which will result from the removal of the ceiling on house-ownership will not and cannot be blocked by rent restriction, which it is emphasised will continue in force. Rent restriction is a means of protecting tenants but is not a means of spreading house-ownership.

(Continued on page 7)

## Hive of activity

The check-point at Elephant Pass became a hive of activity on 16th February when Security Forces based there began to carry out extensive searches. Not only are lorries subject to much delay but some of them had their goods confiscated—batteries for torches and radios, medicines like Panadol and Dispirin.



# ST. COOMB'S: STORY OF A BLOODSHED

Of course the year 1987 began casually for the plantation workers with the usual New Year Greetings, promises pouring from the Ministers etc.

But how shocking it was to learn that even before the people awoke from these sweet coated promises, greetings etc. bullets were sent to rip through the chests of the workers, at St. Coombs Estate, Talawakelle on the 5th day itself of the new born year!

Of course, the greetings, promises and about having achieved the Himalayan records etc. remain promises to this day.

But how unfortunate it is to learn that the young workers had to succumb to the bloody gun shot injuries they received in the hands of the very state that made the sweet promises.

Ramasamy of Somerset S.P., Paramasivan of Bearwell S.P., Selvarajah Tillicoultry S.P., had to lay-down their precious life. Another 17 workers received serious gun shot injuries and were admitted to the Hospitals.

## THE BACK GROUND:

We learn that on the 27th of December 1986 one of the estate workers Jesiah mysteriously disappeared from the estate. It has been reported that he was last seen talking to two supervisors of the estate, namely Gunapala and Asoka late in the evening on the very day he disappeared.

On the complaint made by the workers the Lindula Police took the said supervisors into custody, probably for interrogation. They were later released and this led the workers to strike from the 29th December 1986 onwards.

On the demand made by the workers, the Director of the Tea Research Institute (T. R. J.) Mr. Sivapalan made arrangements to search for the body of Mr. Jesiah as it was suspected by the workers that he was killed and buried somewhere near a new building site which was within the estate boundary.

As heavy Machines were used and as workers from the surrounding estates were much concerned about the sudden, mysterious disappearance of a union leader, the search attracted workers from the neighbouring estates too.

The search continued for days and on the ill-fated day, some of the residents of the estate who were non manual workers demonstrated their disapproval of the search by throwing stones at the workers who were involved in it.

This sparked off the conflagration and the workers who were already tensed by the mysterious disappearance of their leader began to respond to the stones throwing and this resulted in some un-known persons setting fire to two of the estate quarters.

Following those incidents, the Police walked into the estate and opened fire at the workers killing three and seriously wounding seventeen.

It is true any state will give top priority for preserving law and order

We reproduce this article from the "Mavali" (1st. February), News and Views from the National Union of Workers. The Mavali, founded by the late C. V. Velupillai, a renowned poet, writer and trade unionist, made its first appearance in 1977.

C. V. Velupillai, while dedicating the major portion of Mavali to exposing the sufferings of the estate

workers, did not fail to give an important place to the advancement of the country's interests or to world peace or to the cause of advancement of the Third World or to defend the legitimate rights of the people. His demise brought a temporary halt to the publishing of Mavali. Now, Mavali is again in bloom. We wish Mavali a prosperous future.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva's statement on behalf of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party.

WHERE IS MR. JESIAH, leader of the Lanka Jathika Estate Workers Union? What fate has overtaken him? Will he ever be found again, dead or alive? If he is still alive, why should he go into hiding? If he is dead, one thing is obvious: he could not have died a natural death. He must have been killed. If so, who killed him and why?

These are all questions that are agitating the workers and other people in the Talawakelle area in particular and the estate workers in general. They will not rest till the mystery is solved.

There are many paths to the unravelling of this mystery. The

police was only to disperse, the crowd. But one gets shocked when one learns the truth that the opted motives for dispersing the crowd has been the simple act of opening fire.

It should be noted here with all seriousness, that prior to the shooting the normal procedure of dispersing a crowd has not been adopted in this instance. Neither the use of teargas nor the use of baton-charge have been considered by the Police.

The workers, whom the mass-Media of the country described as uncontro-

were located within a few yards from the Police Station.

In fact soon after the recent disturbance in the Talawakelle Region an accord was reached between the Trade Unions and the Police to the effect that the Police should contact the Trade Union of the region concerned before taking any violent action so that unnecessary confrontations could be easily avoided.

This had been the practice even in the days of British, because the prime object had been constructive and not destructive action.

Despite all these past practices and the existing accord, the shooting had been carried out.

The attempt at present to justify the killings will never hold much water.

It was alleged that the workers were carrying arms. One wonders what kind of arms were these, that they are taking about.

We have witnessed so many acts of mob violences in the past else, where in the country and so much of them in the crudest of forms. No shooting, not even a baton-charge was carried-out against them. But here, the action taken was different may be because, citizen shipless Tamil estate workers are involved. (Citizenship is yet to be given).

In any case, we wish to state only the following.

Let's build this country for that one needs just and fair approach.

## WHERE'S JESIAH?

question is who can be trusted to do the unravelling? The answer should be: the police! the CID!!

But, unfortunately, the police and specifically the Lindula police, have got entangled in the situation in a tragic and dramatic way. The police themselves have to be investigated regarding certain incidents which link up directly or indirectly with the Jesiah mystery!

The question arises: can the police investigate the police to the public's satisfaction? Does not the situation demand an Independent Commission of Inquiry? The LEWU thinks such a Commission is the correct way for the Government to face the situation. Government cannot afford to leave the Jesiah my-

stery unsolved or the responsibility for the connected incidents unassigned authoritatively. Government must probe the affairs to the bottom. Only an independent Commission of Inquiry can conduct such a probe.

The Commission will have some useful lines of investigation to start with. For instance, back in February, 1986, there was an incident at the Tea Research Institute estate, St. Coombs, in the course of which it is said, the Lindula Police shot at three children and relations of this very Mr. Jesiah. There is said to be an inquiry in this connection. Cannot the Commission of Inquiry start there?

The disappearance of Mr. Jesiah also took place at St. Coombs. He

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Drug abuse is one of the most acute problems facing mankind all over the world to-day. The abuse of drugs in one form or another is as old as mankind. It appears that some people are unable to face life without the use of drugs like sedatives and stimulants, tranquillizers or similar drugs. Drug abuse has turned out to be a challenge to administrators all over the world. This has thus become an insurmountable problem as a result of socio-economic factors, lack of government control and ineffective law-enforcement. All concerned have now realised that the drug menace has to be dealt in a hard-headed manner.

Drug dependence results in physical and mental degradation, sexual perversion and crime. This in turn affects the bare fabric of society which are the young men and women of a country. This habit is mostly prevalent between the ages of 15-30. Young people are in the habit of experimenting with things which are normally considered bad or new in life. The common examples are smoking, consuming alcohol or using drugs. This habit can become permanent in most cases. This habit is not prevalent in every one but mostly in people who have some adverse psychological background and those with personality disorders. These are mainly observed in youngsters who lack parental affection or those from insecure environment.

Drug trafficking is another way by which these youngsters become victims of drug-dependence. In our country too this has now become an acute problem. One of the reasons is that most of the youngsters have been leaving the country in search of jobs or as refugees during the last few years.

A good number of these youngsters are left abandoned halfway in other countries like Pakistan and India by those who promised to take them to their destinations. These people take up to drug-trafficking as an easy way of earning quick money either to return home or reach their destinations. During this process some of them get used to taking drugs and become dependent. When they return home they introduce this menace here too and drug abuse has now become a serious problem in the Northern part of the country and also in Jaffna.

#### GOD'S OWN MEDICINE

Drugs which cause addiction or dependency can be broadly divided into different groups. They are narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, cannabis groups and inhalants. Presently the narcotic group and cannabis group pose the most serious problem. In the narcotic group opium takes the foremost place.

# DRUG ABUSE

Opium is the exudate of the unripe seed capsule "poppy"—namely *papaver somniferum*. Morphine which is used in medicine as a powerful analgesic is extracted from opium. Synthetic products are Pethidine and Methaqualone (Methadone). Pethidine is used as a pain-killer in Western medicine, while Methadone is used in some centres in the treatment of heroin-addiction. Codeine which is another derivative of opium is used as a pain-killer and in cough mixtures. Heroin is a semi-synthetic product of opium and presently poses a serious threat to human life. Opiates are good pain-killers and referred to as God's Own Medicine—G.O.M. The most popular product of opium is morphia which is injected.

The addicts inject morphia subcutaneously and this is called "skin-popping". Some elderly people too become addicted to opium. Opium is given orally by ayurvedic physicians as a panacea for various illnesses. These elderly people become addicted to it subsequently.

#### ACK - ACK GUN, MOUTH ORGAN

Heroin, as mentioned earlier, is the most dangerous drug which has become a challenge to human life,

by

They present with various symptoms. These are nervousness, fear, depression and inability to be on their own.

Physically they suffer from unbearable abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, excessive sweating, sneezing, rhinorrhoea, (running from the nose), excessive tearing of the eyes, yawning and muscle cramps. They may also suffer from constipation and the pupils are constricted. They have an increased heart-beat and high blood-pressure. Some people feel that they have lost their skin-sensitivity (Depersonalization) and injure themselves with blades and needles. Finally they have muscle pains, weakness of muscles and appear very sick. These drug-addicts can also suffer from the ill-effects of the unsterile methods of administration of drugs. They are thrombosed veins, malaria, hepatitis, Septicaemia tetanus and the recent deadly disease AIDS (Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome).

#### CANNABIS GROUP

These are drugs derived from the plant "*Cannabis Sativum*." Almost every part of the plant is used.

Dr. V. Yoganathan

Lions Club of Jaffna

doctors and administrators. In the West, this is taken by intravenous injections and the resulting thrombosed veins are called "mam lines". In the East this is either smoked through a cigarette, popularly termed "firing an anti-aircraft gun", inhaling through a stew is termed "chasing the dragon"; a smoke through a match-box cover is termed "playing the mouth organ". This is sold as a white powder. In addition a kilogram is said to cost Rs. 100,000/- while in European countries the cost is estimated at Rs. 600,000/-.

A drug-addict will have 20 times more chance to die than a normal person. A heroin-addict will not live for more than 5 years, if left untreated. The only way to save these persons is by hospitalization and treatment. Only very few people are treated successfully because these addicts do not stay in hospital for more than a few days the most, because they cannot be without the drug for more than a few hours. Gradually the amount needed becomes more and more and the period of action becomes less and less.

The drugs obtained from this plant are called by various names. They are ganja, marijuana, cannabis grass, pot weed, tea boo or "Mary Jane" and hashish which is the resin of the plant. The parts used are the leaves, stems and flowers. It was believed that Cannabis had no more harmful effects than cigarette-smoking. Now reports show that chronic users suffer from brain damage and personality changes and is also linked to the usage of other drugs of abuse.

#### WHAT CAN BE DONE?

What can be done to stop drug abuse? This cannot be left to a single department but it is the duty of every citizen and only a concerted effort from all corners can prevent this menace.

Some countries adopt a harsh approach. These people are treated as criminals not as patients and they are executed, for example Iran and Taiwan. Western Europe and America adopt a liberal approach where the addict is treated as a patient and treated but this has not produced

good results. The Asean countries and Japan approach this problem in a hard-headed but practical manner. Here drug-taking is regarded as a personal choice but an offence and drug addicts are considered misguided persons who need help. The drug-traffickers are seen as ugly peddlers of death and sentenced to death. The addicts are treated and supervised. This "non-sense" attitude has brought good results.

The problem is dealt with in a multi-pronged approach and needs the co-ordinated effort of several departments to carry out the following scheme - (1) Education; (2) Legislation; (3) Enforcement; (4) Treatment and rehabilitation (5) After-care.

#### EDUCATION

It is very necessary that all sections of the citizens including school-children should know about the dangers of drug-abuse. This can be done by regular talks and exhibitions in schools, clubs, community centres and other public places. Pamphlets, booklets and posters can be printed and distributed to public and social service organisations like the Lions, Rotary Clubs who can play a major role. Further the public media like the radio, television and newspapers can also be fully utilised. It is necessary that regular campaigns are launched to remind people of this evil.

#### LEGISLATION :

This should distinguish drug-addicts from drug-traffickers. Treat drug-addicts. Possession of drugs is to be given mandatory long jail sentence, while trafficking of drugs should receive mandatory sentence of death. This procedure is adopted in Singapore, the result being that drug-traffickers avoid Singapore.

#### ENFORCEMENT :

No law is effective without strict enforcement. This requires good teams of customs, narcotics and police officers who should be dedicated and honest. They should be backed with good scientific support and dogs should be trained to sniff out hidden drugs.

#### TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION :

Special centres with specially trained medical staff are available in developed countries. This scheme recognises that heroin addicts cannot be treated at an out-door centre because the environment should be drug-free. The scheme consists of 6 stages. Stage 1 - Detoxification : This takes one week of mandatory Detoxification. Those who are medically unfit or over 55 years are

(Continued on page 5)



Even one-time genuine nationalists have been driven to the conviction that the U.N.P. government has forfeited its right to govern the Tamil people. Democracy has fled the country!

During the racial riots of 1983 President J.R. Jayewardene, at an interview with a foreign correspondent, remarked: "We will stop all supplies to the North if necessary"! At that time the general public did not know the real tenor of his remark. It is now clear that he had actually intended an economic blockade of the Tamils of the North if they insisted on their democratic rights. He is today literally translating his cruel policy into action.

His government's ban on the supply of fuel and drugs to Jaffna has disorganised life here. Patients died for want of transport and drugs. A woman, very much advanced in pregnancy, travelled by a mini-bus that was packed inside to the point of suffocating and overflowing with passengers at the entrance and on the hood! After eight miles journey she collapsed and died in that bus itself! What cruelty! On account of belated operations, some patients had to forfeit their lives and in certain other cases no operations could be performed for want of requisite drugs and hospital facilities.

Painful is the misery of cultivators, vehicle owners and small-scale manufacturers who depend entirely on petrol, diesel and kerosene. Their families are on the verge of starvation. Thousands of employees, who are bread-winners, are without work and their children are crying for milk! Cultivation is almost at a standstill; irrigation of crops is impossible without petrol and kerosene, depending on which, cultivators at Jaffna had done away with their traditional well-sweep, etc.

## Drug Abuse

(Continued from page 4)

exempted from this form of treatment. Stage II - Recuperation and Orientation: This stage covers another week. Orientation is conducted to prepare the inmate to be more receptive to the treatment and rehabilitation programme. Stage III - Indoctrination: This stage too covers another week. This is conducted by a team of counsellors of various disciplines, viz. psychologists, teachers prison social officers and medical staff. Special care is taken to impress on the inmates the harmful effects of drug-addiction to the individual, family and the country. Stage IV - Physical Training: This stage goes from the 4th week to the end of the month. The idea is to restore the physical well-being and

# UNP Has Lost Its Right To Govern Tamils

More painful is that when Tamils are steeped in economic distress, the army at Kilinochchi and Paranthan set fire to heaps of paddy just harvested! The armed forces had, heartlessly indeed, reduced all their produce to smoke and flames!

There were demonstrations against the fuel ban in all Tamil areas. But the government had not been moved a bit, unimaginative as it was. The traders and several welfare bodies had to petition the Indian High Commissioner, Mr. J.N. Dixit to move

Nations to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms"

Instead of lifting the ban, the government's attitude has become one of "We will teach them a lesson"! The police and army at the Elephant Pass barrier, who had usually checked the vehicles with care and a sense of duty, immediately received orders from the authorities to carry out minute checking involving an examination of the contents of the vehicles, luggage by luggage. This led to unloading and

by

S. Ponniah

in the matter. The Indian Government strongly protested against the continuance of the fuel ban and urged the Sri Lankan Government to lift it forthwith. A cabinet Minister was reported to have taken umbrage remarking that "the fuel ban is an internal affair and that India has no business to interfere!"

Denial of food, fuel and drugs amounts to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. When barbarous acts outrage the conscience of the world, a member country of the world assembly has the right to protest against such barbarous acts. Not only on grounds of traditional or natural affinity or commitment, but on grounds of humanity India has a duty to protest against such acts. Moreover, every member state has pledged to work "in co-operation with the United

reloading of the goods: as a result lorries, trucks, vans, etc. had to stop about a mile from the barrier even for eight to ten days before being allowed to pass. Numerous lorry drivers, conductors and workers on the lorries underwent hardships for days together at the Pass without food, bath, sleep and a place to rest.

Passengers in buses, mini buses and vans were delayed for more than four to six hours and sometime for the whole of the day. Train travellers could not catch their trains and thereby debarred from attending to their important engagements. Some applicants for jobs shed tears that they could not present themselves at interviews and thereby lost their employment opportunities. The experiences of the old, sick and female passengers including mothers with their infants in their arms were well-nigh unbearable! A very old woman in a bus suddenly yelled out: "Oh! help me! I am having a bad stomach. I want to go out!" So saying she seized the hands of a young lady and disappeared in the bushes near by! She took half an hour to return to the bus shivering and perspiring. The buses were halted in the burning sun for several hours and passengers started coughing, sneezing, yawning and vomiting!

The children kept on crying all the time and this meant terrible inconvenience to their mothers. Their hardships could not be described in ordinary words. Some mushroom boutiques were started and they were primarily motivated by consideration of quick profits and less by any sense of help!

Requests and demonstrations failed to move the Ministers whose hearts were flint even against such sufferings! They lacked human feeling for their fellow-men.

Even fair-minded Sinhalese are perturbed that the U.N.P. government is trying to build a Sinhalese society ridden with racial hatred against Tamils.

The killings of Tamil civilians at Paduvankarai, Kokkadicholai and in most parts of the North and East and particularly the most gruesome murder of the children of Valvetty, Valvettiturai and Uduppiddy by confining them in a building and bombing them alive, the massacre of the 35 passengers on the boat Kumudini at Nainativu by butchering them to pieces and merciless killing of the 32 fishermen of Gurunagar, Jaffna are incidents that reek of racial hatred.

The government attacked Mannar, Kilinochchi and Paranthan after imposing the fuel ban in the hope that the Tamils and their freedom fighters would have become weak and unable to resist the attack. This cannot be anything short of human treachery!

Mr. Athulathmudali had reportedly said that to gain control of Jaffna, they had to eject one lakh and thirty thousand Tamil families from Jaffna. His statement that they would continue military actions until the LTTE was forced to come to the Conference Table to discuss the ethnic issue is like Idi Amin getting his innocent victims lashed until they confessed their guilt.

The only conclusion is: the racist government of Sri Lanka has forfeited its right to govern the Tamil people.

## BUDDING MARVEL

Late yesterday I sighted a bud,  
Motionless and lifeless it stood.  
My heart today leaps at the sight  
Of a lovely rose instead with delight.  
Fresh and beautiful this glorious birth,  
Makes me marvel from the earth.  
Glistening in the sun in utter nakedness.  
This red rose gives me complete happiness.  
But when the bud opened its petals  
The sound was not heard even in whispers.

—WASANTHA THAMBIRATNAM



# OUR RULERS' BLIND, IMPOTENT FURY

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

I am sorry I missed your fifth birthday party, but was glad to see my brief appreciation of your lusty and mischievous presence in our midst, in the anniversary issue of January 24th. Recovering from recent eye surgery I dictated to my grand-niece appropriately named Nayana. There were five mistakes in the printed version, two prepetrated by her in the manuscript and three by your compositor, of which "growen" for "craven" and "direct" for "direst" were the most damaging to my intent. No matter, as I would like to add more unhappy returns of thought to those quick greetings—SR has always relished fusing humour and realism.

It strikes me that the Tamil word for eyes is Nayanam, and so what are we fighting and spilling blood about in this wanton and senseless fashion. Truly there are none so blind as those who will not see. Where its leaders lack vision, a nation perishes. Cataracts of bigotry and pride have clouded our rulers' eyes and reduced them to a blind and impotent fury. The dramatic and surgical power of justice, humility, and a compassionate realism is required to restore sight to a people blundering in a wilderness of obtuse arrogance and abject chauvinism.

A decade of lost opportunities has come and gone with nothing to show for all the strident promises of peaceful settlement and an Everest of proposals which could have papered the Straits between Sri Lanka and its great neighbour. One senses that the momentum of negotiation has petered out. Mediation is at a standstill, and the forces of violence and the protagonists of a military solution have gained the upper hand. The prospects of a settlement are in jeopardy once more, and positions are hardening on both sides of the unfortunate divide. All this spells enormous suffering and unendurable hazards for all the people of this land and not only those exposed to the ever-present perils of war in the arena of conflict. It also paralyses present and future development by this or any other government.

Is it beyond the collected wisdom and accumulated experience of all communities in a common motherland to forge the tools of understanding, harmony and mutual self-reliance? It is not as if the formulae for ending the agony are unknown and beyond the reach of determined and reasonable men. The hour is already late, the practice of politics seems enmeshed in a deepening cycle of regression and death, whether tragic brutal or poignant, arouses merely a cynical twist of the mouth. SATURDAY REVIEW has held up to scorn those demented minds that rule our temporary roost and the clarion of defiance and passion has instilled fresh hope and resolution in a generation sickened by moral cowardice and appalled by the

apparently unlimited scope of political unreason. Long may you publish and be damned by little men.

H. A. I. GOONETILLEKE

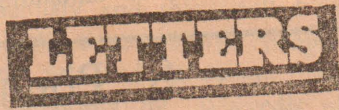
Colombo

## Tragic Situation

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

The present situation in the country is most frightful, tense and tragic. Unless it is arrested before it deteriorates further, our very independence with our cherished spiritual, cultural and human values would be at stake. For the current state of affairs our politicians of all shades, creeds and ideologies are responsible. The remedy now lies with the people. The politicians piously declare that the sovereignty resides with the



people. But in practice only a few comprising the elected elite govern the country with supreme authority, enjoying sovereign power.

The social contract between the rulers and the ruled is broad-based embracing all the people of a country. But in practice it has been interpreted to mean majority rule. This principle of majority rule is vitiated in a democracy like ours with a plural society. The Sinhalese outnumber all the minorities put together. Within the Sinhalese, Buddhists out-distance those professing different faiths.

In a democratic set-up like this the majority community guided by wise statemanship should make every effort to allay the fears of minorities on the ground of discrimination and unequal treatment. Instead of following this noble course each successive government since independence resorted by legislative and executive acts to discriminate against the minorities particularly the Tamils at many levels in the matter of employment, university education, etc. This resulted in lot of hardships, frustration and heart-burning to the Tamils.

The government, in the interests of the entire country should do some hard thinking to accommodate the Tamils' aspirations for some kind of regional autonomy for the Tamil speaking people of the North and East. It is appreciated that this is no easy task for the Government in the face of hostile forces ranged against it.

One excuse trotted out against any kind of linkage between the North and East is that the Muslims are opposed to it. This excuse does

not hold water on close examination. The recent reported skirmishes between the Muslims and Tamils have been stage-managed and manipulated by designing and self-seeking elements. Left to themselves the Muslims will continue to live in amity with the Tamils as they did for centuries. Is it not a fact that at the beginning of the federal movement there were some Muslim federal members of Parliament?

The country has already lost many precious human lives on both sides. Let us put a stop to this senseless and bloody carnage. The Government should tell the people the truth of the matter and enlist the support of all concerned, the Sinhalese, the Buddhist clergy—a powerful force, the media and other agencies. This way lies our salvation.

Dr. K. Subramaniam

Colombo 6

## Darkest Hour

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

How many innocent Tamil civilians are being killed, in cold blood, day after day?, why is the government dragging its feet to restore the fundamental rights of the Tamil-speaking-

people in respect of a settlement to the ethnic problem? Why don't the Buddhist monks who have been playing the most significant role on behalf of the government as also the Sinhalese-speaking people, as far as the ethnic strife is concerned, suggest that the ethnic conflict be resolved as quickly as possible if the people do want to have peace of mind? All in all the government is to blame for the intransigent attitude, and chauvinism owing to which the Tamil question has been lying unsolved since independence.

Eventually, whatever the government says, whatever solution may be arrived at, whatever the so called political-parties conferences convened by the government, whatever the Buddhist monks suggest the government find a solution by hook or by crook and however much the government makes attempts to suppress the Tamil people, what the Tamils do need today in the darkest hour of their lives is the separate state without which they cannot live independently and only which will ensure their unity, integrity, sovereignty and of course their safety.

V. ROOBASKARAN

Jaffna.

## Jaffna Hospital: Shortage of Fuel, Oxygen and Surgeons

The Director of the Jaffna General Hospital (Teaching) informed the Hospital Committee at its meeting on 19th January the difficulties they had to face, due to the Fuel restriction. He said that although it was announced a week back over the State Media, that fuel could be obtained from Kilinochchi Army Camp for the ambulance, it still has not materialised. He said that his telephone calls to the Brigadier has not been answered by any army officers other than the telephone Operator. We do not have petrol or diesel for the ambulance or lorry. As a result we are unable to transport patients to and from the hospital and secondly, we are unable to transport officers at night if there is an Emergency call.

The Hospital Committee resolved to request the Hon'ble Minister of Teaching Hospitals to make immediate arrangements with Security Authorities for the supply of petrol or Diesel for the use of the Hospital Vehicles. It was also decided to point out that the information given through the State Media for the supply of Petrol or Diesel for the Hospital ambulance etc. are not borne out by actual

facts. The Hospital Committee represents this with grave concern over the rapidly deteriorating situation by the fuel shortage in the G.H. (T) Jaffna.

The Director also informed the Hospital Committee that he has made arrangements for the transport of Cylinders by Ship from Jaffna to Colombo. But he is unable to transport Cylinders from Hospital to K.K.S. Harbour by lorry due to fuel shortage. He further said that he has written for Authority to purchase petrol in the Black Market at exorbitant prices for urgent use of ambulance in a medical Emergency.

The Director further informed the Hospital Committee that there are only two Surgeons as Dr. V. Krishnarajah too has left for U.K. for Medical treatment. The Hospital Committee notes with alarm that in a Hospital where there were six general Surgeons, there are now only two. In addition to the above six Surgeons there were the Orthopaedic Surgeon, Neuro Surgeon, Thoracic Surgeon and all these posts are now vacant.

The Hospital Committee requests the Hon. Minister of Teaching Hospitals, to send FOREIGN VOLUNTEER SURGEONS (FRENCH) who have come to serve in Sri Lanka.



Holy Family Convent, Jaffna, celebrates its 125 years of existence this year. Originally started for the education of youth it expanded into other spheres. At the bidding of Bishop Semeria in 1862 the Holy Family Nuns undertook the work of education for girls in Jaffna. These were the first nuns who trod the soil of Sri Lanka.

Following the six European Nuns who pioneered the work in school, 18 Ceylonese girls embraced the religious life to follow their footsteps. By 1918 the number of indigenous nuns was 77. A Novitiate was opened at Ilavallai, Mathagal, in 1894, Mannar in 1895, Sillalai in 1886, Point Pedro in 1897, Kayts in 1898, Naranthanai in 1909, Karampon in 1916. This expansion of the Sisters denoted a steady advance in the appreciation evinced in the religious life. The Schools manned by them were more and more becoming fortresses of sound English and vernacular education tempered with Christian discipline.

From Jaffna, the Holy Family Congregation expanded to Anuradhapura, Kurunegala and Colombo.

Holy Family Convent, Jaffna was the first establishment in the North of Sri Lanka to send pupils for the Trinity College Examinations. It started with 15 or 20 young European girls, 100 Tamil girls and a few of other religions. The first Principal was Mother Helen (1862—1891). Till 1969 all Principals were Europeans. In 1970, the first native Principal Sister Martina took over.

# Jaffna Convent Celebrates 125th Birthday

In 1922, the number on roll was 300. The curriculum extended from Kindergarten to London Matriculation. Two students from Holy Family Convent were the only ones who passed the Matriculation in the North. Home science, Needlework, Physical Education, Cooking were added as subjects followed by drill, singing and dancing. Painting and Drawing still held pride of place for the last 50 years. Moral and Religious Training followed. This is kept up to date.

In 1938, the strength of the School increased to 450. Today it has reached 1680 and the clamour for admission is ever increasing, but due to lack of space many have to be turned down.

Holy Family Convent was the first girls school in the Island to form the St. John Ambulance Cadet Division.

Till 1976 Holy Family Convent, Jaffna, was a non fee-levying Private School. Due to financial difficulties it opted to become a Government School. Today it is a Grade 1 School with a Staff of 49. After the

take over in 1976 the present Principal Sister Anthony Joseph revived the School Development Society and the Prize Day as a means of assessing the achievements of the School from time to time.

Although handicapped by various detrimental forces like standardization, the exam results of G.C.E O/L and A/L are good, and A/L Students have entered the Faculty of Medicine, Dental, Bio-Science, Law, Commerce, Arts, Agriculture and Fine Arts, and many of the girls have succeeded in getting appointments in

Banks, Kachcheri and Commercial Establishments.

In the field of Sports the Families still hold pride of place. All Island Champions in 1973, All-Island Runners Up in 1979. Their activities are restricted now owing to the disturbances in the Country.

The Girl Guide Movement and the School Band have won laurels of praise from many. Quiz, debates and Seminars help the students to enrich their knowledge and the House and Prefect System help keep discipline for which the Convent in outstanding the A/L Union, Tamil Day, English Day Activities give the pupils a rounded School career.

With such a heritage of pride they hope and pray to God to guide them through the present turbulent times.

## Murder and Mayhem

Unidentified persons in an army vehicle armed with knives and gun entered two houses at Vallaveli village in Batticaloa on 14th February ordered the inmates out, hacked them and then shot died. The incident took place near Vallaveli Police Station. Among the 12 killed were 3 men, 3 women and 3 children.

In another incident on the same day in the Eastern Province a bus proceeding from Trincomalee to Batticaloa was stopped on the Polonnaruwa Road by Home Guards and searched. Three Tamil passengers were taken off the bus, shot and killed. Two of the deceased were reported to be Government Servants. Some of the Home Guards involved in the incident were arrested by the Police.

## Regressive....

(Continued from page 2)

The new measures come in the context of a stepped-up privatisation drive which undermines the credibility of preferred assurances that the nationalised company estates now run for the State by Sri Lanka State Plantations Corporation and the Janatha Estates Development Board will not be handed back to the private sector. This Government is in no position to resist the heightened pressure on it both of the imperialist "aid" agencies like the World Bank and the IMF as also of the newly affluent Sri Lanka bourgeoisie for room to invest in land. Landed property is the finest insurance in Sri Lanka against the deleterious impact of ranging inflation and steady devaluation of the floating rupee. It has moreover its traditional statue - attraction. In addition to it all, there is also the growing threat that the newly irrigated Mahaweli land, which was all along intended for distribution to smallholders from among the landless of our country, will increasingly be diverted to high landowners from at home and abroad. The process will be facilitated by the sharp raising of the land ceiling.

—COLVIN R. DE. SILVA

## Where's Jesiah?

(Continued from page 3)

is said to have gone for dinner with the Superintendent of St. Coombs on 25.12.86 and is reported to have left after dinner for home. But Mr. Jesiah never got home; and, though searched for, was not to be found.

It would appear that on 5th January, 1987, some information reached Mr. Jesiah's family that Mr. Jesiah had been murdered and been buried close to the factory. The frantic relations, the estate workers, the Director T.R.I. and the watchers set about digging the ground around the factory in anxious search. After some time, the Director left but the workers went on digging. It is their position that stones were pelted at them and even acid thrown.

On January 6th, the estate workers of Waltrim, Tillicoultry, Langdale and Somerset estates joined in digging in search of the body. There

is said to have been stoning again and a big clash took place.

On this occasion, police constable of Lindula Police Station who was on duty at the estate had shot at the workers. Three workers died at the spot. Seventeen workers were seriously injured and one of them died at the Nuwara Eliya Hospital. Eight workers whose condition was very bad were transferred to the Kandy hospital.

On January 7th all the estates at Talawakelle went on strike over the shooting and the question of Mr. Jesiah. That strike has been settled. The Superintendent of St. Coombs has been transferred.

After this incident, two Sinhalese hut-kadai at Agrakanda Bazaar, near Elgin Estate, were looted. But the Tamil workers of Elgin Estate and Hemford Estate helped the police to arrest the alleged looters, who were Tamils. As a result there were clashes between the Tamil workers of these estates. Nine workers on Agrakanda Estate and some

others from Hemford Estate have been arrested.

Can the matter be left at that? Obviously not!

The most thorough investigation is necessary and it must be seen to be an independent one. Only an Independent Commission of Inquiry can meet the situation adequately.

Let us learn from the past. Let us remind ourselves of the Moo-loya incident of January, 1940, when Sergeant Suraweera shot the estate worker Govindan dead. A magisterial inquiry held that the shooting was justified. But a powerful agitation led by the LSSP and the then Lanka Estate Workers' Union (LEWU) which was the precursor of a huge strike—have that swept the plantations, compelled the Government to appoint a Commission of Inquiry. That Commission, after a thorough inquiry, found, that the killing of Govindan was unjustified!

The LEWU demands an independent Commission of Inquiry to investigate the whole St. Coombs situation.



# Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

## Driving The Blues Away

It is no secret in Jaffna that Security Forces based at Palaly and Fort Camps have their own tele-casting network.

Daily in the evenings, a couple of Tamil films and a Hindi film are shown in sequence, on this self-styled 'Tamil People's TV.'

## "See You In Jaffna"

"We shall finish all our business elsewhere and come to meet the Tigers and you in Jaffna as soon as possible. Keep you Indian planes ready to make a quick getaway". So advised the soldiers at Elephant Pass checkpoint to the travellers on their way to Jaffna on 15th February.

## Search And Arrest

On 16th February, Security Forces in full strength suddenly swooped on the area around Pachchainool, a village in Trincomalee District and took into custody people both young and old to the nearby camp.

## U. S. Armed Forces Chief Visits Lanka

Admiral Ronald Jackson Hays, Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Command, visited Colombo during the week of 8th February as part of an official tour of South Asia. Accompanied by Mrs. Hays, the Admiral also visited India, Nepal and Australia. In Colombo, Admiral Hays called on senior officials of the Sri Lankan Government.

## GNLF Recognised By Indian Govt.

The New Delhi meeting with India's Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Buta Singh in late January is being viewed as a triumph for Mr. Subash Gheisingh and his associates in the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF), which is demanding a separate state for the Nepalese community in India.

Not only has the GNLF yielded on any of the issues they have raised, but by virtue of the kind of hospitality accorded to its leader by the Union Government they can now legitimately claim that the Centre has accepted their organisation as the principal representatives of the community.

It has been Mr. Gheisingh's contention, like all agitation leaders in other countries (including Sri Lanka) that violence has been imposed on them by the Communist Party (Marxist) Government in West Bengal state and its police.

The Centre has only asked Mr. Gheisingh to be peaceful but not to withdraw the agitation. Now the GNLF has a case in its favour.

On the one hand, the Centre responded to the West Bengal Government's appeal for more Security Forces to deal with the agitation and, on the other, treated the agitational leader as an official guest. (Courtesy "The Times of India").

# JAFFNA MOURNS ITS DEAD

Ponnamman alias Kugan, one of the senior - most members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was among the ten LTTE militants who were killed in the blast that occurred accidentally on 14th February.

The heavy blast which involved several kilos of TNT (Tri Nitro Toluene - a highly explosive chemical) had a devastating effect on the neighbourhood where 20 others were also killed.

The LTTE militants who lost their lives were: Vasu alias Suthakar (Valvettiturai), Curdles alias Thileepan (Kandavalai), Siddharthan alias Vaseekaran (Vavuniya), Paran alias Arjunan (Valvettiturai), Naguleswaran (Vavuniya), Kumanan alias Kandiah Mohanalingam (Batticaloa), Akbar alias Arulambalam Yogannathan (Madduvil) and Thevan alias Thambipillai Vasanthakumar (Meesalai).

Mourning and weeping yet again engulfed the Peninsula when the news of the blast spread.

On 16th February there was a spontaneous Hartal enforced by the people themselves. Not a single shop was opened and loud-hailers announced tributes to the dead militants with intermittent sombre music.

The main roads and in some instances the by-lanes were decked with "Thornams" and black flags.

Memorial meetings were held in various places at which Mr. Kittu and Mr. Rahim spoke.



VASU

We give below a potted Biographical note on the three top militants:

Kugan was an active member of the LTTE from 1977 and a member of its Central Committee. An old



KUGAN

boy of Jaffna Hindu College, he excelled in Cricket. He was skilled in the technical field and was the brain behind the military hardware locally made for the movement.

Vasu of Valvettiturai became a militant in the LTTE in 1983. He left the University of Peradeniya without completing his degree in Agricultural Science, as he was deeply moved by the ethnic violence unleashed in 1983. Vasu was in charge of the military Technology division of the LTTE.



CURDLES

Curdles (Thileepan) who was in charge of Chavakachcheri and other Thenmaradchy areas joined the LTTE in 1983. He was an old boy of Jaffna Hindu College and also played Cricket for his College during his Collegiate days.

## MEETING ON EMBARGO

A meeting of the Mass Movement for Human Rights, Jaffna to decide upon further steps to be taken in regard to the Government embargo on fuel, was held at the College of Higher Studies, Jaffna under the Chairmanship of Mr. E. Seevaratnam, Attorney-at-law.