

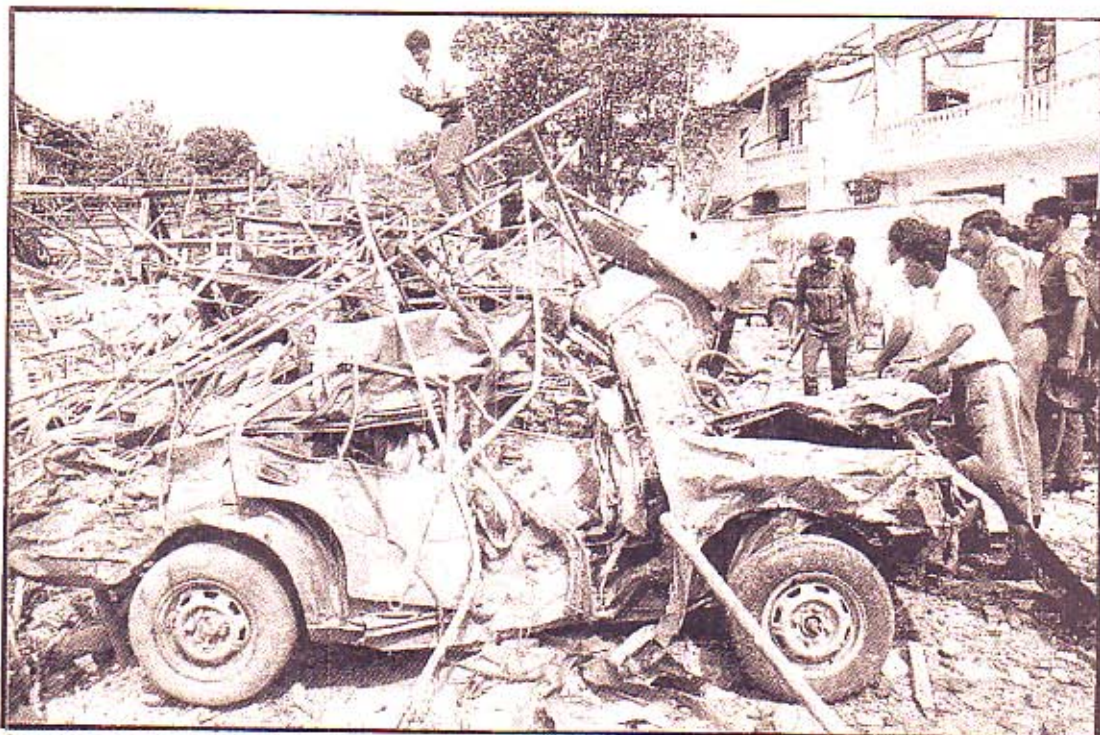
Tamil TIMES

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"I do not agree with a word of what you say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it."

— Voltaire

- ★ **Bomb attack blasts Colombo Military HQ**
- ★ **RAJIV ASSASSINATION**
— The Inside Story
— LTTE Reactions
- ★ **British Aid To Sri Lanka frozen**
- ★ **Massacre in the East**
- ★ **Assassination blocks Peace initiative**
- ★ **Jayalalitha rewrites T.N. Poll History**
- ★ **Indian Protest over VOA Deal**
- ★ **Eleven months of war**



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THE KOKKADDICHOLAI MASSACRE

A landmine is activated. The resulting explosion kills two soldiers. Those who were responsible for the explosion and the deaths take to their heels and escape. The local army commander leads a group of his men in a revenge-seeking retaliatory exercise. Over one hundred people, all civilians including women and children, are hacked or gunned down to death. Many survive with serious injuries. Some women are raped. Over five hundred homes and other premises are set ablaze and destroyed. Many dead bodies are burnt and buried in an attempt to conceal the scale of the massacre. A frightened and terrorised population, in their thousands abandon their homes leaving behind all their belongings, and flee to other areas or into nearby jungles in search of physical security. Briefly that is exactly what happened at Mahiladitivu Munaikkadu and Mudalikuda in Kokkaddicholai in the Batticaloa district in eastern Sri Lanka on June 12.

The Kokkaddicholai incident is not the first of its kind. Nor is it likely to be the last when one takes into consideration the record of the Sri Lankan security forces. Although not on the same or similar scale, such incidents of retaliatory brutality have been committed against innocent civilians whenever and wherever the security forces have become targets of ambush attacks at the hands of LTTE cadres. More often than not it is the civilian population of the east which has suffered the worst since the latest war broke out in June last year. Peoples' lives have been literally decimated. They had to face and contend with the ferocity and horrors of the war between government forces and the LTTE, the attacks on Muslims and counter-attacks on Tamils producing an unprecedented climate of fear, hostility and division between these communities, and the unmitigated level of atrocities and excesses committed by the security forces resulting in the death or 'disappearance' of over three thousand persons since June last year. Tens of thousands have fled the area. Many are 'living' in the adjoining jungles. The Kokkaddicholai massacre has put paid to the hopes and expectations of these people returning to lead an unmolested normal life.

The response and reaction of the Colombo media to the massacre was typical of the ignoble role it has always played in the coverage of news and information on inter-ethnic relations and the ongoing conflict. It sought to conceal, underplay and distort the truth and scale of the massacre and the circumstances surrounding it. It was only after some Tamil Members of Parliament of the eastern province, notably Mr. Joseph Pararajasingham of the TULF raised the matter with the President that the scale of the massacre became slowly revealed to the public, that too through the columns of the Tamil daily, 'Veerakesari'.

Although a state of emergency exists, the newspapers in Sri Lanka, whether owned and controlled by the government or not, are not presently subject to any official censorship. However, all the mainstream newspapers and the journalists working for them are possessed by a highly developed culture of self-censorship which is exercised as a matter of routine in a manifestly selective and partial manner. Official claims, though palpably false, are always prominently reported. The investigative journalist who exposes the falsity and distortions in official claims has no place in this culture of self-censorship. For example, no journalist in any of the newspapers had the courage to question the assertions by 'army sources' that those who fell victims in Kokkaddicholai 'died in the crossfire'.

Being questioned and watched by donor countries on its appalling record on human rights, the massacre was one incident which the President and his government could have done without. Despite initial reluctance, the government has reacted uncharacteristically. The President has appointed a Commission of inquiry comprising two retired Supreme Court judges and a former member of the Ceylon Civil Service to inquire into and report on the incident. The credibility of the Commission and the claimed bona fides of the President and his government will depend entirely on the impartiality and thoroughness with which the inquiry is conducted and the action that is taken to punish the guilty men who have been responsible for committing this crime against innocent people.

Bomb attack blasts Colombo Military HQ

Thomas Abraham in Colombo

Shortly before 10am on June 21, a blue Isuzu van driven by a suicide bomber crashed into the side gate of the operational headquarters of the Sri Lankan Ministry of Defence in Colombo, the Joint Operations Command, and exploded with a force that was felt through most of the city. The elegant two-storeyed mansion, the nerve-centre of the military operations in the North and the East, turned into a rubble and smoke-filled inferno. Glass from windows flew across the road. Trees came crashing down, and cars on the road burst into flames. An army barracks across the road crumbled, burying soldiers in rubble. As the shock subsided, columns of smoke rose.

The final death roll was 21 with 150 people hospitalised including 24 seriously wounded soldiers. Eleven of the dead were soldiers and the rest passers-by.

Military casualties were thus relatively light, and no senior officer died. The seniormost officer on the premises, Brig. Tilak Paranagama, Director of Operations at military headquarters, was injured when the ceiling collapsed on him. But other senior officers, including the Principal Staff Officer of the operational headquarters, were unhurt. Minister of State for Information, A.J. Ranasinghe had passed the building minutes before the blast and reported seeing a man on the parapet waving his arms as if signalling somebody. The Commander of the Sri Lankan forces in Jaffna, Brig. Wijaya Wimalaratne, was on his way to the building for a meeting, and was minutes away when the bomb exploded. Had the explosion taken place at another time, it would have killed a number of senior officers, perhaps decapitating the army's command structure. High-level meetings were often held in the building.

The operational headquarters is on Flower Road in one of Colombo's most exclusive residential areas, and the blast brought home to Sri Lanka's elite the horrors of the war in the North and the East. Two of Sri Lanka's most prestigious schools, Ladies College for Girls and the Royal College for Boys, are nearby and children from both schools were injured by shrapnel and falling ceilings. The Industries Minister and Cabinet spokesman, Ranil Wickremasinghe, who lives just behind the building, had the roof of his house

blown off. Also down the same road were one of the offices of the President, a Soviet consular office and the American Centre library.

More important than the damage the blast caused is the symbolic impact it has had. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (and there is little doubt in the public mind that the LTTE was responsible) had demonstrated its ability to strike almost at will in Colombo against heavily guarded targets. Four months ago, Minister of State for Defence, Ranjan Wijeratne, the best-guarded man in the country after the President, was killed in a car bomb explosion.

The non-LTTE Tamil parties in Colombo believe the explosives could have been brought into Colombo and stored during the honeymoon between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE during 1989-1990, when the LTTE is also reported to have smuggled large quantities of the arms and ammunition into the country.

The scene of the Wijeratne murder and the operational headquarters are within a few kilometres of each other, and one theory the investigators are working on is that the LTTE has a safe house in the vicinity where both bombs were assembled. Initial reports indicate that the bomb had about 70 kg of plastic explosives, which would make it almost twice as powerful as the explosion that killed Wijeratne, and more powerful than any of the earlier explosions in Colombo in the pre-accord period. The investigators have also found that the vehicle used was stolen from a 'pappadam' manufacturer in Negombo, north of Colombo, but have not got anywhere in tracing the suicide bomber. The explosion, however, once again showed the devastating effect the LTTE can achieve by using one of its main resources - people willing to kill themselves.

What is the political impact of the blast on the prospects for a resolution of the ethnic conflict? And what sort of

message is the LTTE trying to convey through the attack?

The bomb, like almost everything else the LTTE does, is a part of its broader political and military strategy, and is, as far as one can see, intended to demonstrate to the Ranasinghe Premadasa administration that the LTTE can strike any target it wants to in Colombo, at any time it likes. Underlying this is the message that if the war continues the consequences will be felt increasingly in Colombo. In other words, the LTTE seems to be saying, 'Talk to us, give us what we want, otherwise the war is going to be fought in Colombo and the Sinhalese areas as much as in the North and the East'.

In Colombo, the immediate public reaction to the blast seemed to be that the Government should 'give them (the LTTE) whatever they want and solve this problem'. This is very different from the aggressive, chauvinistic reaction to the pre-accord Pettah blast in which a large number of civilians were killed. After that blast in early 1987, the J.R. Jayewardene Government declared its intention to take over Jaffna militarily, and the public mood was belligerent. But the mood seems to have changed dramatically in the past years, and the dominant sentiment is for peace. Political parties have also stopped using such incidents to inflame passions, which has resulted in a far more sober reaction to terrorist violence. While an incident like this three years ago would have made Sinhalese thugs belonging to the ruling party or the Opposition go on an anti-Tamil pogrom, this time there was no perceptible increase in tension.

Even the military seems to have taken the attack in its stride, and there is no evidence of the army thirsting to take revenge on the LTTE. The lack of emotion, either grief or anger, among the soldiers and officers helping to clear the debris was striking.

So, in contrast to the pre-accord period, the bomb attack in Colombo is unlikely to be used to try and impose a military solution. In his first major speech after the blast, Premadasa hit out against those who were trying to frighten his Government into taking decisions, but also made it clear that the door to negotiations was open, and that the only way to solve the problems of the North and the East was through negotiations.

'Mastermind' Commits Suicide

Nadaraja Varatharaja alias Varathan alias Appachchi alias Sridharan, aged 32, hailing from Puloly in Point Pedro, described as an 'explosives expert', the most wanted man with a million rupee reward on his head and alleged by the police to be the mastermind who plan-

ned the suicide bomb attack on the JOC headquarters on June 21 and the assassination on 2 March of Defence Minister Ranjan Wijeratne died on 3 July after swallowing a cyanide pill as

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detectives attempted to apprehend him from a hideout in Christland Farm at Kotagala, 16 miles off Talawakelle.

On information received from Varathan's close associates already in police custody a special team of detectives from Colombo rushed to Kotagala and approached a twin house on the Christland Farm. The door of the house was locked from outside and bolted from inside. Ramakrishnan, a teacher from Talawakalle who was a friend of Varathan and who had found the house for him to stay, was with the detectives at that time. Ramakrishnan called out 'Varathan' who asked his teacher friend to enter from the back-door. As Ramakrishnan entered the house, the detectives followed him. Seeing the policemen, Varathan took the cyanide capsule and bit it before the police could arrest him. Police grappled with Varathan to take the capsule from his mouth but they succeeded in retrieving only half of it. Varathan immediately vomited blood and died soon afterwards.

According to police sources the breakthrough on the whereabouts of Varathan came on the morning of July

3 with the arrest in Ratmalana of a fourth woman associate of Varathan who had given information about his movements. Following wide publicity about being wanted by the police in connection with the bomb attack, Varathan had left Colombo with Rs. 6.5 million in his possession on 27 June in a lorry transporting bottled mineral water to Nuwara Eliya. The owner of this lorry is a business woman from Jaffna and is now in police custody.

From information gathered from those already in custody, police are reported to have identified the suicide bomber who drove the Isuzu van packed with 70 kilos of high explosives to the entrance of the JOC headquarters as Chandran, a 20-year-old youth from Valvettiturai, Jaffna. Varathan who masterminded the bombing had assured Chandran that he would have time to leave the vehicle after triggering the bomb and that someone would be waiting close by to whisk him away on a motorcycle. But Chandran died in the explosion and the motorcyclist had escaped.

Arrests in Colombo

Police in Colombo took in for questioning 261 Tamil youths in two sepa-

rate cordon and search operations on 28 June. All of the arrested youths were from Fourth Cross Street and Sea Street in Pettah in Colombo. After questioning, a majority of the youths are reported to have been 'released'. On the same day the police raided two more 'LTTE safe houses' at Ratmalana and Wellawatte. According to police sources, the JOC bomb had been assembled at the Ratmalana house which had been taken on a year's lease. The 60 kilo bomb used in the assassination of Ranjan Wijeratne was assembled at a house in Wellawatte. Both houses have now been sealed and placed under police guard, Worldwide Link Communications, a private telephone and telex agency, situated at Wellawatte has been sealed off following a raid on 26 June and its owner has been taken into custody. Approximately 28 persons with alleged LTTE connections and four women are said to be in custody.

In the meantime the leader of the Up-Country Peoples Front, P. Chandrasekaran and its General Secretary, Cader have also been taken into custody on suspicion of alleged connections with Varathan.

MASSACRE IN THE EAST

Over one hundred and fifty Tamil civilians, including women and children, were killed and hundreds of houses set on fire by a rampaging mob of Sri Lankan security forces at Kokkaddicholai in Batticaloa in the east of the island on June 12 and the bodies of some of the victims were burnt and secretly buried. While most of the Colombo newspapers, as usual, underplayed the scale of the massacre and repeated the government's claim of the death toll being 'only 67', TULF MP for Batticaloa, Mr. Joseph Pararajasingham estimated the number killed to be over 150 and those injured to be over 200.

Following the death of two soldiers in a landmine explosion allegedly triggered off by the LTTE, a detachment of soldiers reportedly led by Lt. Kudaligama went on a rampage in the villages of Mahiladitivu, Munnaikkadu, Mudalaikuda and Kokkaddicholai hacking every civilian they could lay hands on, including school children, and burning over 500 houses. An investigating team of Opposition MPs said that at least six women teachers were raped and a relief team from the International Committee of the Red Cross was denied access to the area for 48 hours while soldiers disposed of the dead. At least sixteen bodies were dumped and burnt in the crater formed by the landmine-blast. Over forty people were

reported to have been killed and burnt in a rice mill.

Thousands of Tamils living in and around Kokkaddicholai and adjoining villages had abandoned their homes leaving all their belongings and fled to other areas and into the jungles fearing further violence. Tamil MPs and prominent citizens of the area rejected the claim by 'army sources' that the victims were killed 'in the crossfire'.

Following persistent complaints from Tamil MPs from the eastern province, President Premadasa despatched his Prime Minister D.B. Wijetunga, Industries Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe, President's Special Advisor Bradman Weerakoon and acting Defence Secretary Walter Fernando for an on-the-spot inspection. One of the victims of army violence, a lady teacher described in evidence before the team headed by the Prime Minister how she was badly beaten and displayed the scars on her back, thighs and arms while another witness described how a young girl was sexually assaulted and another reported seeing 38 bodies set on fire. Four villagers in their evidence gave details of incidents including the burial of 56 corpses inside a pit on the orders of the army.

Later it was announced that the President had ordered an 'impartial probe' into the circumstances of the

massacre headed by retired judge of the Court of Appeal and Defence Ministry's Legal Advisor, D.G. Jayalath. The Jayalath team having visited the areas affected by the violence and taken evidence from a variety of sources submitted its report to the President. Based on the findings of this team, President Premadasa has appointed a three member independent Commission under the Commissions of Inquiry Act to inquire and report. The members of the Commission are former Supreme Court judges O.S.M. Seneviratne and Siva Chelliah and a former member of the Ceylon Civil Service, Dr. A.A.M. Sahabdeen.

The terms of reference ask the Commission, inter alia, to inquire into and obtain information on the circumstances relating to the death of civilians and destruction of property as well as the landmine explosion which killed two soldiers. The Commission also has been asked to report whether there was any connection between the two incidents, whether civilian death occurred in consequence of army action against those suspected of being connected with the landmine explosion or as retaliatory action against those not so connected. It also has been asked to report on the amount of compensation payable to those who suffered loss in this incident and as to what steps should be taken to prevent the recurrence of such incidents. The Commission has been directed to submit its report within three weeks.

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Indian Protest Over VOA Deal

COLOMBO - India has protested to Sri Lanka over the latter's decision to allow the Voice of America (VOA) to set up a high-powered transmitting station on the island, sources say.

The Indian High Commissioner, Nagendra Nath Jha, has reportedly lodged a diplomatic complaint when he called on foreign secretary Bernard Tilakaratna earlier last week.

Asked about the government's decision, presidential advisor on international affairs, Bradman Weerakoon, said that the VOA had been using Sri Lanka as a relay station for four decades under an agreement signed in 1953. 'There's nothing new. They (VOA) want to shift the station now to Chilaw' (in the west coast), he said.

When asked about India's aspersions that the relay station could be used for intelligence gathering, Weerakoon said that a review would have been done to ensure that the facility would not be abused.

India not satisfied

However, diplomatic circles in Colombo are of the opinion that India was apparently not satisfied with the assurances given by Sri Lanka. Under the new agreement, the U.S. Government is likely to soon recommence construction of the transmitting station at Iranwila near Chilaw. Although the ground-breaking ceremony for the construction was conducted in March 1985, the project was temporarily halted due to protest from the residents in the area. Subsequently it was 'shelved' because of India's objections.

India-Lanka Agreement

The clause 2 (IV) of the annexure to the India-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 29, 1987 stated that 'Sri Lanka's agreement with foreign broadcasting organisations will be reviewed to ensure that any facilities set up by them in Sri Lanka are used solely as public broadcasting facilities and not for any military or intelligence purposes'.

After an understanding was reached recently on the construction of the

relay station, U.S. Ambassador in Colombo, Donald Westmore, had discussions with a delegation of predominantly Christian population of the area headed by Rt. Rev. Frank Fernando. Earlier, on April 22 Rev. Fernando wrote to President Ranasinghe Premadasa expressing grave concern over the setting up of the VOA station and said that the project could affect social and cultural values and the environment.

After an assurance was given by the American ambassador that there were no grounds for such concerns and that the project would enhance facilities in the area, Rev. Fernando and the people in the area indicated that they were not against the VOA project.

'Under the circumstances, the government is likely to go ahead with the project and allow the U.S. Government to set up the relay station, unless India's protests discourage them from doing so', a South Asian diplomat said.

Official sources, however, indicated that the 1987 agreement did not prevent Sri Lanka from granting broadcasting facilities to any country.

UNI adds from New Delhi: Sri Lanka has assured India that its VOA project would not be inimical to India's interests, an External Affairs Ministry spokesman told reporters here.

'A Serious Security Threat'

The Federation of Muslim Youth of Sri Lanka (FAMYS) in a letter to the President has expressed deep concern over the proposed establishment of a VOA station here, stating it could be a serious security threat.

FAMYS has warned that the VOA station may lead to India attempting to destabilise the government as it has done ever since Sri Lanka tried to forge closer relations with the West.

The FAMYS letter states that the West has consistently harboured LTTE cadres and provided them with arms to fight the Sri Lanka government and platforms in the West to attack the Sri Lanka government. As a result, FAMYS has pointed out, there was no guarantee that the VOA station would not be used for these same purposes.

'What is the guarantee that the VOA will not beam out the proceedings of the International Tamil Eelam Research Conference scheduled to be held from July 19 to 21 in California...?' the letter asks.

Certainly, the time is most opportune, in the light of the Rajiv Gandhi killing, for Sri Lanka to cultivate the closest relationship possible with both the Indian and Tamil Nadu govern-

ments. It is certainly not the time to force New Delhi to plan out its modus operandi of repeating recent history.

Any wrong emphasis on prestige may cost Sri Lanka heavily, the Muslim youth have warned. So long as Western policy dictators remain willing to sacrifice Sri Lanka for India, there is no need for Sri Lanka to sacrifice India for the West.

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In the meantime, the Commanding Officer of the Kokkaddicholai army camp has been suspended and a military tribunal has been set up to inquire into the June 12 incidents. Following the landmine explosion, the Commanding Officer had gone to the scene of the blast along with 16 soldiers. The military tribunal will begin its inquiry after the Commission appointed by the President submits its report.

ASSASSINATION BLOCKS PEACE INITIATIVE

Details available to *Frontline* show that a carefully worked out Peace Initiative outlining the steps to be taken for negotiations between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE was in the hands of President R. Premadasa by May 13 – and that, as of May 16, he was giving it his 'careful consideration'. A day-to-day timetable within a 100-day timeframe was in hand; in this short period, the modalities of the talks would be settled, a devolution package shaped, 'normalcy' restored and an agreement signed between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE.

The essential perception behind the Peace Initiative, which was very favourably received by the Sri Lankan President, was that 'there are only two parties to the issue – the Government and the LTTE'; that 'negotiations should be confined strictly to these two parties only'; that 'the outcome of discussions should always be documented'; that 'there should be an exchange of documents between the Government and the LTTE'; and that 'a target of elections to the North-East Provincial Council in one year should be aimed at'.

The Peace Initiative provides for the settling of preliminaries and modalities during the first 30 days; for a first round of talks during the next 30 days; for a second round of talks during the subsequent 30 days; and for a final round of talks during the last 10 days – culminating in the signing of an Agreement between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE.

The actual timeframe worked out scheduled the 100-day talking period between May 15, 1991 and August 25, 1991. This was to be followed up within 180 days (between September 1, 1991 and February 28, 1992) by a Provisional Administration for the North-East Province and an amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution. The next stage would be a 60-day period (March 1, 1992 to April 30, 1992) for nominations and elections. The fourth stage would be the installation of a Provincial Council by May 15, 1992.

The details obtained exclusively by *Frontline* reveal that the idea on the structural framework, devolution package and related measures – which were under President Premadasa's 'careful consideration' five days before Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in Sriperumbudur – would take the contours of this attempted political settlement considerably beyond the framework provided by the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 29, 1987,

which is now virtually a dead letter. However, no specific reference is made in the Peace Initiative to a federal solution to the ethnic conflict.

Stage I (the settling of Preliminaries and Modalities) would begin with President Premadasa issuing a fresh call to the LTTE to eschew violence as a means of settling political or ethnic issues. On receiving a positive response from the LTTE, the Sri Lankan Government would, in turn, pledge to eschew violence. This would be followed by a *cessation of fighting*.

Then the Government would nominate a *negotiator* acceptable to both sides. It would follow this up by transmitting its documented proposals to the LTTE through the negotiator. This document would outline the Government's position on the devolution package. Specifically, this would relate to an expanded provincial list, financial arrangements, a provincial police force, vesting land in provincial councils and the absorption of LTTE cadres into the police and armed forces. The document would also commit the Sri Lankan Government to a *permanent merger* of the North-East and to the *repeal of the Sixth Amendment* to the Constitution.

After transmitting this important document to the LTTE, the negotiator would finalise with both sides the following items of business: the venue for the talks, the agenda, the date of the first meeting and the schedule of meetings.

By Day 20 in Stage I, the negotiator would obtain the LTTE's response to the Sri Lankan Government's proposal. Next, a 'green signal' would be given by the Government to the negotiator for formal negotiations – assuming that the response was favourable from the LTTE. On Day 26 of Stage I, there would be a simultaneous declaration of *ceasefire* by the Government and the LTTE. Formal negotiations would commence on Day 30 between the negotiator and an LTTE delegation.

The *first round of formal talks* would last 30 days. The negotiator would begin this round by discussing the question of *Devolution* with the LTTE: finalise the Report of Discussions within 10 days; complete his discussion with the Sri Lankan President over the next ten days; transmit a copy of the document to the LTTE; and finalise the document with the armed militant organisation.

The *second round of formal talks* would last another 30 days. This would

entail discussion matters connected to *Provincial Councils* (namely, provincial administration, restoration of normalcy and elections), after which the negotiator would finalise his Report of Discussions. The negotiator would then complete his discussion with the Sri Lankan President, transmit a copy of the document to the LTTE and finalise the document with the armed militant organisation.

The *final round of talks* would last 10 days. On Day 91 of the process, the Government would be ready with a Draft Agreement. On Day 95, a common Agreement would be in hand. Day 98 would feature a meeting between the Sri Lankan President and the LTTE. On Day 100, an Agreement would be signed.

Rajiv Gandhi's assassination supervened on the active consideration, at the top level of the Sri Lankan Government, of this Peace Initiative – aimed at negotiating a political settlement with the LTTE as the sole representative of the Sri Lankan Tamils. There was no specific mention in the plan for any Indian role.

(*Frontline*, 22 June–5 July).

Karunanidhi Resigns

MADRAS, June 22.

The DMK president, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, today resigned the Harbour Assembly seat which he won in the just concluded elections.

Mr. Karunanidhi was the lone survivor of the 171 candidates the DMK had fielded. He won the seat with a slender margin of 890 votes as against the huge margin of 31,991 votes he secured in the 1989 elections from the same constituency.

In a statement, Mr. Karunanidhi said that over 40 years, the DMK as a political and social movement had served the people of Tamil Nadu in resisting Hindi imposition and protecting the Tamil language. Whether in power or not, the party had struggled for the rights of the State, safeguarding the integrity of the nation and ensuring the protection of varied sections of society. The people had given their verdict influenced by the sympathy wave without taking into consideration the genuineness of the DMK.

The sympathy wave had turned into a tornado. He was unable to accept his lone victory when his party had suffered a crushing defeat, he said.

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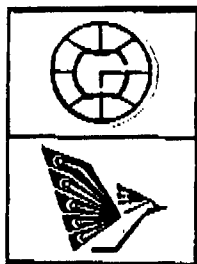
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RAJIV GANDHI ASSASSINATION

THE INSIDE STORY

By ANIRUDHYA MITRA in Madras

One month after the brutal assassination of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, the crack special investigation team (SIT) has managed to edge considerably closer to unravelling the complex plot behind the shocking crime that stunned the nation.

The exhaustive investigation process and interrogation of key suspects picked up so far have established that the plot to kill Rajiv Gandhi was first hatched in October 1990 deep in the jungles of Jaffna. The motive is now understood to have been related to the political tremors then emanating from New Delhi. The then prime minister V.P. Singh was battling for survival following a threat by the BJP to withdraw support to his minority National Front government. Across the Palk Straits, in the forest hide-outs of Jaffna in north-eastern Sri Lanka, the LTTE leadership met for a crucial assessment of the situation. The meeting decided that the chances of Congress(I) president Rajiv Gandhi returning to power were now almost certain. For the extremist organisation struggling for Tamil Eelam, this meant a possible re-induction of the IPKF in Sri Lanka and a certain crackdown on the elaborate LTTE network established in Tamil Nadu.

Even before the National Front government finally collapsed, the LTTE had made up its mind to prevent Rajiv Gandhi from regaining power even if it required the ultimate deterrent – his assassination. By early November 1990, the V.P. Singh government was voted out and Rajiv Gandhi was virtually back in power, shooting from behind Chandra Shekhar's shoulder. The possibility of a mid-term poll loomed ever larger. The LTTE was getting desperate.

Realising that Rajiv as prime minister would be a near-impossible target, it was decided that they should strike while his security status was still that of an opposition leader and election campaigning would render him even more vulnerable. In end-November, the elusive LTTE supremo Pirabhakaran, having decided on the physical elimination of Rajiv Gandhi, summoned four trusted lieutenants – Baby Subramaniam, Murugan, Muthuraja and Shivarasan – to finalise the contours of an assassination plot. Subramaniam and Muthuraja were summoned from Madras where they were staying at the time.

In the first week of December, Pirabhakaran made his decision known to the four members of the team he had summoned. The actual details of the operation were left to them but each was assigned a specific task.

● Baby Subramaniam, a prominent ideologue of the LTTE, was operating from Madras running a printing press publishing LTTE literature. His task was to prepare a back-up team that would arrange shelter for the assassins before and after the killing.

● Muthuraja was asked to prepare a base in Madras to ensure proper communication facilities, couriers for messages and the smooth distribution of money for the assassins.

● Murugan, a key instructor and an explosive expert of the LTTE, was asked to take over the assignments from Subramaniam and Muthuraja after their departure for Jaffna.

● Shivarasan, the much wanted man today, who has been labelled 'one-eyed-Jack' was given the most important task – the actual assassination.

The assassination plot received further impetus with the dismissal of the DMK government led by M. Karunanidhi in Tamil Nadu. Karunanidhi's government was dismissed on grounds of having encouraged the LTTE movement in the state – not entirely base-

less as Karunanidhi on his campaign trail, before the assassination, portrayed the fellow Tamils' cause in Sri Lanka as just and noble.

Imposition of Central rule in Tamil Nadu was a major setback for the LTTE. The decision to dissolve the DMK government – though essentially political and under tremendous pressure from the Congress(I) and the AIADMK – was taken following a series of reports filed by the Intelligence Bureau (IB) revealing the growing informal relationship between the followers of the DMK and the LTTE.

But even though the IB had established Karunanidhi's sympathy towards the LTTE and its links with the DMK, it was utterly in the dark regarding the extremist group's plan to liquidate Rajiv Gandhi. The external intelligence organisation, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), was equally clueless about the existence of the plot.

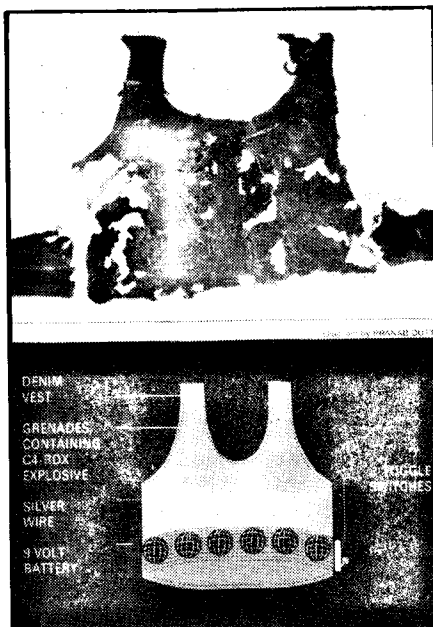
Meanwhile, by the beginning of 1991, the four lieutenants of Pirabhakaran had already set the plan in motion. Baby Subramaniam and Muthuraja were back in Madras. Both were engaged in the crucial first stage of the plot – identifying and recruiting local people who would eventually harbour the assassination squad.

A key recruiting centre was a photo agency which had developed into an LTTE hub in Madras. Shubha News and Photo Agency was run by Shubha Sundaram who is considered to be a godfather for most of the budding photographers in Madras. Shubha's agency was visited by many Dravida Kazhagam (DK) members also. The DK, which is an extremist sibling of the DMK, has been openly sympathetic towards the LTTE.

Muthuraja and Baby Subramaniam picked their first target – Bhagynathan – a young DK activist from Shubha's place. Bhagynathan had expressed ambitions of bringing out a political journal but lacked the financial resources. Bhagynathan's family was heavily steeped in debt and had meagre means of support. He himself managed to earn a living by supplying stationery items to a firm where his sister, Nalini, was employed as a secretary. His mother, a nurse, was working in Kalyani Nursing Home.

The crunch came when his mother was asked to vacate the quarter provided by the nursing home authorities. The family was desperate, lack of money meant they could not afford to rent a place to live in Madras. The first recruit for the assassination plot had fallen into the LTTE's lap. Baby Subramaniam casually mentioned to Bhagynathan that he was looking for a customer for his printing press as he

Continued on Page 10



The denim jacket put together from pieces at the blast-site

Continued from Page 9

was thinking of switching to another business. Bhagynathan offered to take over the press provided the price was paid in instalments. Seeing Bhagynathan falling into the trap, Baby readily agreed. He sold the press to Bhagynathan at a ridiculously low price of Rs 5,000 payable in small instalments.

Baby now had also gained access to Bhagynathan's entire family which had shifted to the area where the press was located. He advised Nalini to help Bhagynathan in his new venture after her normal office hours. The press premises, in any event, offered the perfect cover for a suitable hide-out. The second stage of the operation – recruiting the entire family – had begun. Baby's strategy of convincing Nalini to help Bhagynathan run the press was starting to pay off. Nalini was exposed to the LTTE literature which was then being churned out and conveyed one key message: Rajiv Gandhi was solely responsible for the 'crimes' perpetrated by the IPKF in Sri Lanka.

Nalini was easy to recruit. She was soon working on a book titled *Satanic Forces* and sub-titled *Heinous Crimes of the Indian Peace Keeping Force*. The book carried no comment from the LTTE except one innocuous message from Pirabhakaran: 'Work is worship'. The book itself was merely a compilation of sundry news reports, photographs, cartoons and editorials published in the Indian media about the negative aspects of the IPKF in Sri Lanka and the mishandling of the situation by Rajiv Gandhi's government.

Meanwhile, the second member of the recruiting team, Muthuraja, had been equally busy in Shubha Sundaram's agency. Shubha had already received a message from Pirabhakaran to cooperate with Muthuraja in a secret operation of the LTTE for which recruitment of some unknown faces was necessary. Two young photographers, Ravi Shankaran and Hari-

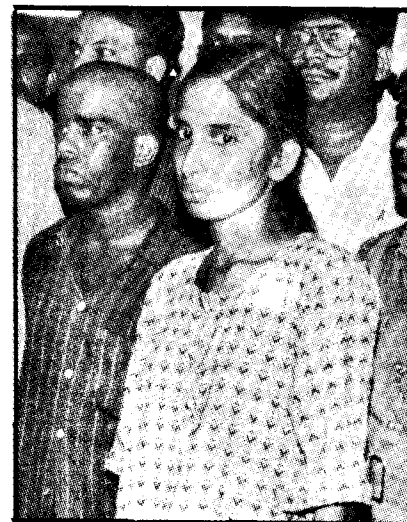
babu, fitted the requirements. Even though Shubha had fired Haribabu for being inattentive, he was deeply indebted to the LTTE for the financial support they had given him for photographic assignments. Haribabu had joined a new agency, Vigneshwar Video, but was well aware that the money being paid to him was much more than the normal assignment fee.

This was when Muthuraja informed Haribabu that someone who needed to be trained in photography was arriving from Jaffna and would stay with Haribabu as a paying guest. The new entrant in Haribabu's life, Balan, did much more than allow Haribabu to earn some extra money. He gradually brainwashed the young photographer into believing that Rajiv Gandhi was solely responsible for the brutality inflicted on the Sri Lankan Tamils and that his return to power would mean yet another bout of atrocities.

Back in Jaffna, Murugan was preparing to make his entry onto the stage that had been set by his two accomplices in Madras. The plot was proceeding satisfactorily and according to schedule. After a series of meetings with Shivarasan in Jaffna, Murugan decided to send two young LTTE boys from Shivarasan's village, Jaykumaran and Robert Pias, to Madras. They arrived in early February. Initially they stayed at Jaykumaran's brother-in-law Arivu Perulibalan's house at Savri Nagar Extension in Porur, a suburb of Madras. Arivu, a diploma holder in computer science, had been living in Madras since early 1990. Although a dedicated member of the LTTE, he had played no active role in its subterranean activities till he was approached by Murugan. Arivu's electronic expertise was to be of deadly significance.

Murugan entered the scene in mid-February when he arrived in Madras. His first move was to shift Pias and Jaykumaran to new accommodation with the help of Arivu who had been told about the 'special mission' without disclosing the target. Murugan's primary task was to give logistical support apart from providing sufficient financial support to all three. By shifting Pias and Jaykumaran to a new residence, he had also provided another hide-out for the team. Pias and Arivu were told to organise a fake licence for a two-wheeler.

In end-February, Muthuraja introduced Murugan to Bhagynathan's family. By then, Nalini had developed a deep sense of hatred for Rajiv Gandhi at a time when his return to power was becoming imminent. Murugan thus had no problem in finalising the third hide-out. With three safe shelters, an electronic expert in Arivu who had been asked to improvise a bomb out of grenades that could be detonated by a



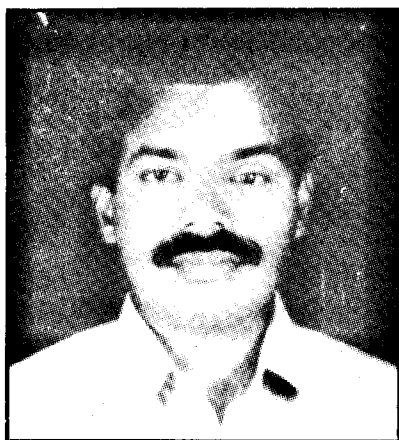
Murugan and Nalini

suicide bomber, three converts in Nalini, Padma and Bhagynathan, and a recruiter in Shubha Sundaram, the plot was in place. Murugan sent a message to Shivarasan in Jaffna asking him to come to Madras. Shivarasan arrived in the first week of March. He first stayed at Pias' house in Porur where he was given a detailed briefing on the shelters and the people who had been recruited by Muthuraja and Baby Subramaniam.

Shivarasan's arrival in Madras completed the elaborate web spun by Pirabhakaran in the jungles of Jaffna for the execution of Rajiv Gandhi. From now on, the key role in the plot would be played by Shivarasan. Everything was working to plan. Shivarasan, himself an expert on explosives, examined Arivu's design for a human bomb and pronounced it suitable. He asked Baby Subramaniam and Muthuraja to leave for Sri Lanka as it would not be safe for them to live in India any longer. By the end of March, Muthuraja and Baby Subramaniam left for Jaffna.

Shivarasan moved to the Bhagynathan household where he discussed the plan with Murugan, Nalini and Bhagynathan. He told them that he had somebody in mind who would act as the human-bomb. He also asked Bhagynathan to look for a photographer who could be trusted. However, the target was still kept secret. Ravi Shankaran and Haribabu, old-time friends, were then brought into the picture. Sensing that they were being involved in a specific operation of the LTTE, both realised that they had reached a point of no-return.

The next step was to prove the most fateful – Shivarasan returned to Jaffna to bring back his human-bomb. In Jaffna, he met Pirabhakaran and briefed him on the progress that had taken place in Madras. Pirabhakaran asked Shivarasan to make sure that they undertake dry-runs before the



Missing link – Sivarasan

actual operation and ordered that the whole exercise be photographed for his viewing.

Shivarasam then selected his human bombs - Dhanu alias Gayatri and Shubha alias Shalini, two women members of the LTTE's shadow squad. Incidentally, both the girls happened to be his cousins. He was back in Madras within a week with the two girls in tow. The next step was to procure the explosives (C4 variety of RDX), the same yellow-coloured plastic explosives he had used to kill the EPRLF leader J. Padmanabha. With the LTTE's vast network in Tamil Nadu, obtaining the explosive was the least of the problems. Shivarasam was now all set to carry out his leader's orders - the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

In Madras, Dhanu and Shubha had been taken to Nalini's house where Murugan was awaiting them. Shivarasam kept the others - Pias, Jaykumaran and Arivu - away from the planning sessions which were to follow. But in a separate meeting, Shivarasam explained to Arivu the specifics of the bomb he required. Without disclosing the operation in detail, he asked for a bomb that could be easily hidden beneath the clothes and fitted around the waist of a female person.

Arivu got down to work and came up with an ingenious design for a belt-bomb. Six grenades could be fitted in a series on the belt. Each grenade would be made up of 80 gm of the C4 RDX (2,800 splinters of 2.00 mm each) enclosed within a casing of TNT. The grenades were connected in parallel with silver wires and the circuit was completed with two toggle switches, one for arming and the other for triggering the bomb. The device was charged with a 9 mm battery.

After approving the bomb, Shivarasam instructed Murugan to find a tailor to stitch the vest. Murugan found a local tailor and had the vest made of blue denim, a fabric heavy

enough to support the one-kilo bomb. Once the vest was ready, Arivu carefully fixed the bomb onto the vest. The weapon that would reduce Rajiv Gandhi and at least 16 others to a mangled heap was now ready to be put to use.

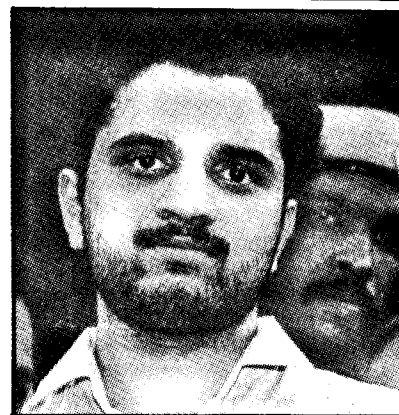
With this, Shivarasam was ready to stage the dry-runs ordered by Pirabhakaran. The first dry-run took place on April 21 at the favourite spot for political rallies - Marina Beach in Madras. Marina Beach was the venue for Rajiv Gandhi's first campaign meeting in Tamil Nadu which was also addressed by the AIADMK leader Jayalalitha. The meeting was photographed by Ravi Shankaran while Shubha Sundaram's agency took a video recording. However, the potential assassins did not attempt to get too close to the two leaders. Incidentally, Haribabu, who was present at the trial run along with Ravi Shankaran, had his first inkling that the target was going to be a politician.

The next dry-run was executed on May 12 at a meeting featuring V.P. Singh and Karunanidhi at Thiruvallur in Arkonam, 40 km away from Madras. This time, the exercise was more fruitful as Dhanu was able to touch the feet of V.P. Singh in much the same manner as she would do with Rajiv Gandhi on the fateful night of May 21. This session was also shot on video by the Shubha Photo Agency. The video film is now in possession of the investigating team.

Following two successful rehearsals, Shivarasam now looked for the right opportunity for the actual assassination. Time was running out. The May 21 meeting at Sriperumbudur was announced two days in advance and it provided the best - and the last opportunity. On the morning of May 20, Shivarasam reached Nalini's house with a newspaper clipping which detailed Rajiv's public meetings on May 21 ending at Sriperumbudur that night. The venue was decided.

Ravi Shankaran called Haribabu and asked him to purchase the garland and then meet Shivarasam and others at Nalini's house on the afternoon of May 21. Haribabu then asked Ravi Shankaran to get him a camera along with a film roll. Ravi Shankaran, instead of giving Haribabu one of his own cameras, borrowed one from a friend Deepak, and gave it to Haribabu along with a Konika colour roll.

The night of May 20 was spent in a relaxed mood. The conspirators watched a film. None of the girls, particularly Dhanu, showed any sign of nervousness. Shubha tried out the denim vest on Dhanu. She also tried on the spectacles she would wear for disguise for the first time. The next day at 4.30 p.m., Nalini, Shubha, Dhanu and Shivarasam left for Parry's Corner for their rendezvous with Haribabu.



Arivu Perulibalan

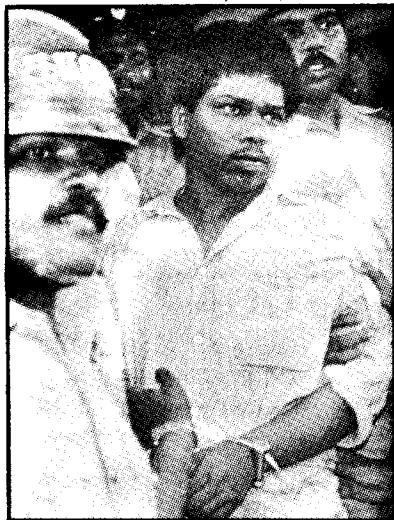
At Parry's Corner, near the main bus stand of Madras city, Haribabu was waiting with the sandalwood garland which he had bought an hour earlier from the state emporium Poompuhar. The five conspirators boarded a bus for Sriperumbudur where they reached around 8 o'clock in the evening.

All five, with Dhanu holding the garland, positioned themselves around the VIP enclosure. At one point, they were questioned by a woman sub-inspector on duty, Ansuya Kumari. Haribabu said he was a press cameraman and was there to take the photograph of the girl (Dhanu) garlanding Rajiv Gandhi. The sub-inspector told them that Rajiv was coming much later and hence there was no need for them to be around so early and the photographer should go to the press enclosure. They moved away. Shubha and Nalini sat in the crowd. Shivarasam took his position near the dais. He carried a pistol as he was the lone member of the back-up team. Dhanu and Haribabu stood close to the red carpet on which Rajiv would walk on his way to the dais.

Rajiv arrived at around 10 p.m. and was immediately surrounded by people trying to garland him. The sub-inspector, Ansuya, once again tried to prevent Dhanu from getting close to Rajiv. She had almost caught hold of the assassin but for Rajiv Gandhi, who, according to Ansuya, said: 'Let everybody get a chance'. Ansuya moved away - thus saving her own life. Dhanu bent down as if she wanted to touch Rajiv's feet. Rajiv in turn bent to lift her up. Dhanu's right finger activated the bomb.

Soon after the blast, Nalini and Shubha walked towards the bus stand where they were to meet Shivarasam who told them that Rajiv Gandhi, Dhanu and Haribabu were dead and they better make a getaway. They took an auto-rickshaw till Poonamali from where they took another to reach Shivarasam's Porur house. Shivarasam rang up Shubha Sundaram and told him that though Haribabu had died in the blast, his camera was intact and

Continued on Page 12



Robert Pias

Continued from Page 11

Sundaram should try and recover it.

But because of the disturbance in the city, they were confined to the house all through the day. On the night of May 21, Sundaram swung into action. He rang up the house of a photographer, T. Ramamurthy, and was told that Ramamurthy had called from the Poonamali police station to say that he was slightly injured in the blast and would take some time to reach home. Sundaram then rang up the Poonamali police station and asked Ramamurthy if he had brought the camera from Haribabu. Ramamurthy told him that was 'not his job'. Meanwhile, Sundaram had informed Ravi Shankaran about the necessity of recovering Haribabu's camera and the crucial film roll.

By then, the SIT had launched its massive investigation. Officials had visited the Madras General Hospital to get an eyewitness account from the victims. Ansuya gave them a description of some 'suspicious characters' she had seen roaming around with a photographer. By then, the photographs taken by Haribabu had been developed. Ansuya's account had made them suspicious about certain characters featured in the pictures including that of the woman holding a sandalwood garland along with Shivarasan. Next day, Ansuya confirmed that they were the same people she had spotted.

The next morning, the SIT visited the scene of crime where they found parts of Dhanu's dress, strips of the vest and the belt-bomb she wore with pieces of flesh attached, two toggle switches, wires used in the bomb and a half-burnt 9-volt battery. The experts carried out DNA printing of the pieces of flesh found at the spot. The flesh piece attached to the belt matched with the portion of the woman's body found. That established convincingly the theory of the assassin being a human-bomb.

Next, the bomb experts of the National Security Guards reconstructed the denim vest and part of the belt. Meanwhile, on May 25, the arrest of an LTTE member, Shankar, at Vedaraniyam port, provided another breakthrough. Shankar, when intercepted, told the local police that he had been sent to India by Pirabhakaran in order to kill Varadaraja Perumal who has been given refuge by the Indian Government in Bhopal.

The matter was immediately brought to the notice of the SIT in Madras. Shankar, when shown the pictures taken by Haribabu, identified the kurta-pyjama clad man in the photographs as Raghuvaram, an explosive expert and a trusted lieutenant of Pirabhakaran who was involved in the killing of EPRLF leader Padmanabha.

Of the several LTTE activists and sympathisers rounded up for interrogation, one Jagdishan from Vedaraniyam also identified the kurta-pyjama clad man as Raghu adding that he had travelled during the Padmanabha killing in his speedboat between Vedaraniyam and Point Pedro off Jaffna.

A notebook recovered from Shankaran's possession carried a Madras telephone number with two names: Nalini and Murugan. The telephone authorities confirmed the identity of the holders of the number.

Meanwhile, a study of Padmanabha's killing revealed that the two unexploded grenades found from the spot contained C4 RDX explosives. The SIT also received a tip-off about two photographers, Shubha Sundaram and Ravi Shankaran, who were desperately looking for Haribabu's camera. Haribabu's mother, Laxmi, told the SIT that Ravi Shankaran had visited their house on May 22 morning to inquire about the camera but never told them about his death. Another friend of Haribabu, Kannan, also told the SIT the same story. This led the SIT to tap the phones of the two photographers. Both were put under surveillance.

The SIT officials visited Sriperumbudur again with the pictures shot by Haribabu of the crowd which was circulated among the local population. Through a painstaking process of elimination, only four or five characters were left unidentified and two of them turned out to be Shubha and Nalini.

A study of the photo album seized from Ravi Shankaran also showed Nalini along with a few others. During questioning, Ravi Shankaran told the SIT that he knew one of the characters in the photograph from his album. It turned out to be Nalini's brother, Bhagynathan.

Bhagynathan was picked up from his printing press but Nalini and Murugan managed to flee. Bhagynathan told the SIT how he came under the influence of Baby Subramaniam and about the operatives he had harboured. He identified the mysterious kurta-pyjama clad man as Shivarasan.

Working round the clock, the SIT had managed to establish the identities of the kurta-pyjama clad man, the actual assassin, her accomplices Shubha, Murugan and Nalini. Further interrogation of Bhagynathan, Shubha Sundaram and Ravi Shankaran revealed more details of the plot.

While this was going on, Murugan and Nalini were in Tirupati where he planned to shave his head to celebrate the success of the operation. They also planned to get married. But by now, Nalini's photograph had been splashed all over the state so they gave up the

idea. Presuming the coastal areas would be heavily patrolled, both of them decided to return to Madras.

They were unaware that scores of police teams were waiting for them at all the railway and bus stations in Madras. The arrest of Murugan and Nalini was the biggest breakthrough in the investigation. Their interrogation not only revealed the entire plot but also pointed a conclusive finger at Pirabhakaran as the mastermind. Murugan admitted that he had direct orders from Pirabhakaran. With their confession, the arrests of Arivu and Robert Pias quickly followed.

But despite the successes notched up so far, SIT chief D.R. Karthikeyan still feels that 'there is a long way to go'. as he told INDIA TODAY: 'We are yet to catch the main culprit (now popularly known as one-eyed-Jack because of his one glass eye) which might help us stretch the arm of law deep inside the forest of Jaffna. I am not jumping to any conclusion about the motive or conspiracy behind the crime. But we have solved how the assassination was executed. I must say that my colleagues have been doing a remarkable job'. Judging by the chilling and detailed reconstruction of the plot to kill Rajiv Gandhi, that is clearly no idle boast.

(Courtesy of 'India Today', 15.7/91).

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'LTTE Had no Inimicable Feelings Towards Rajiv' says Kittu

MADRAS

The LTTE leader, Mr. Sathasivam Krishnakumar alias Kittu, has confirmed that a meeting did take place between the former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, and the LTTE representative, Mr. Kasi Anandan in New Delhi on March 5. The meeting led to a 'good relationship' between Rajiv Gandhi and the LTTE and therefore, the LTTE had no reason to kill him, Mr. Kittu added.

Mr. Kittu said from his residence in London that the Sri Lankan Government was anxious about the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement being revived if Rajiv Gandhi were to return to power.

Plastic explosives

Answering a question on only the LTTE having the technology and precision to use the plastic explosives that killed the former Prime Minister, Mr. Kittu said India had supplied 'large quantities' of plastic explosives to all the Tamil militant groups when they were receiving training in arms in India. 'In the battlefield, these groups did not get an opportunity to use them', he added.

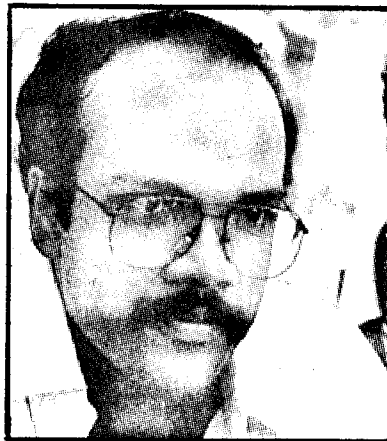
There were also many 'Eelam Tamil women' who were affected when the Indian Peace-Keeping Force was in Sri Lanka. One of the affected women could have come to the conclusion on her own to take direct action, he said.

Asked about the Congress(I) spokesman, Mr. Pranab Kumar Mukherjee's denial of 'the whole report' about the unpublicised meeting between Rajiv Gandhi and Mr. Kasi Anandan in New Delhi on March 5, Mr. Kittu said Mr. Kasi Anandan did meet Rajiv Gandhi on behalf of the LTTE. 'I gave him permission (to meet Rajiv Gandhi). I am a Central Committee member of the LTTE. He asked me whether he should meet Rajiv Gandhi or not. He sought permission from me not only to meet Rajiv Gandhi but even to make arrangements to meet him. Rajiv Gandhi knew that Mr. Kasi Anandan is our political leader. Only after he knew it, he agreed to meet (Kasi Anandan). The meeting lasted 45 minutes. . . The LTTE leader, Mr. V. Prabhakaran's permission was also given for Mr. Kasi Anandan to meet Rajiv Gandhi', Mr. Kittu said.

In the meeting between the former Prime Minister and the LTTE representative, Rajiv Gandhi said that he would do what was possible on his part

to mitigate the hardship of the Sri Lankan Tamils, Mr. Kittu said. 'Rajiv Gandhi said he had wanted to solve the Tamils' problem through the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement but certain unexpected incidents took place' the LTTE leader said from London.

Besides, Mr. Arjuna Sithampalam of London also met Rajiv Gandhi within two weeks of Mr. Kasi Anandan meeting Rajiv Gandhi, Mr. Kittu said. But



Mr. Kittu

Mr. Sithampalam, 'an international banker', did not meet the former Prime Minister on behalf of the LTTE. He met Rajiv Gandhi on behalf of the Tamils.

Good relationship

'Even in that meeting, Rajiv Gandhi referred to the Tamil problem. He said he wanted to help the Sri Lankan Tamils and that the Tamil struggle was a just one. He said the Tamil struggle should not end in failure. At the same time, Rajiv Gandhi said his

desire was that Sri Lanka should be stable. When you consider all this, anybody will understand that there was a good relationship between Rajiv Gandhi and the LTTE', Mr. Kittu said.

'As far as the LTTE is concerned, there is no justification for the LTTE to have inimical feelings towards Rajiv Gandhi. . . The LTTE has never interfered in the local politics of India. So there was no room for the Congress(I) or Rajiv Gandhi to entertain any inimical feelings towards the LTTE and vice versa. After the withdrawal of the IPKF, the relationship between Rajiv Gandhi and the LTTE was built up step by step. Therefore, there cannot be any connection between the LTTE and this murder', Mr. Kittu said.

On the assessment that only the LTTE cadres, including its women fighters, had the highest motivation to carry out such an assassination, Mr. Kittu said that the LTTE cadres did have the highest motivation but the LTTE could not be blamed for all the incidents. 'There were several struggles under way in India to obtain their rights. It cannot be said that men taking part in these struggles are afraid of losing their lives. As far as this operation is concerned, our argument is that anybody can do it. Besides, when you look deeply at it, the Sri Lankan Government was worried that the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement would be revived if Rajiv Gandhi were to return to power', he said.

When it was pointed out to him that the LTTE also would have been very apprehensive about the revival of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, that it had derailed the Agreement in the past and so it had a strong reason to kill Rajiv Gandhi fearing his return to power, Mr. Kittu replied, 'The Agreement is a political problem. It is a big issue. We wanted to discuss it elaborately and solve it. It cannot be solved in one stroke. Just because Rajiv Gandhi died, nobody can expect the Agreement also to die. Such an argument is fallacious'.

Balasingham and Yogi Deny LTTE Complicity

JAFFNA

Senior LTTE leaders in Jaffna have emphatically denied any involvement in Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, and have described statements from Indian Ministers implicating the LTTE as irresponsible and emotional.

Mr. Yogaratnam Yogi, general secretary, LTTE's political wing, said, 'We have been blamed by people from Ministers downwards, but without a shred of evidence. These are irres-

ponsible statements based on an emotional outburst'.

Mr. Anton Balasingam, LTTE's political adviser, pointed out that the Tigers had issued a statement from London stating that they were not in any way involved. 'The Congress party is accusing the LTTE. We are disappointed to note this. After all, Mahatma Gandhi and Mrs. (Indira) Gandhi were also assassinated, in-

Continued on Page 14

Continued from Page 13

dicating that there are many forces within India hostile to the establishment. We can't understand why we are being blamed'.

Mr. Yogi said he felt the LTTE was being blamed because there would be a domestic backlash if anyone else was involved.

Asked about the technology used in the explosion, which seemed to point to the LTTE, Mr. Balasingam said that it was wrong to say the technology used was sophisticated. 'It was just a matter of joining two wires together. As for the explosives used, there is no shortage of explosives in India'.

Questioned about the political motive the LTTE might have had in preventing Rajiv Gandhi from coming back to power and insisting that the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement be the basis for any political settlement, Mr. Balasingam said the assassination would not change anything if a Congress government came back to power. 'The Congress Party manifesto mentioned the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, and any Congress government would have followed the same policy'.

Mr. Balasingam also said that foreign policy in India was made by bureaucrats rather than politicians, and so assassinating Rajiv Gandhi would not really achieve anything.

The LTTE adviser also pointed out that an LTTE representative had met Rajiv Gandhi recently, and by all accounts the meeting had gone off well.

Asked whether the widespread suspicion of the LTTE's involvement in the assassination would affect their relations with Indian political parties, Mr. Yogi said, 'Without concrete evidence, it cannot affect us'.

About the possibility of Tamil refugees being asked to leave Tamil Nadu, Mr. Balasingam said, 'I don't think these people will be thrown out. For decades Tamil Nadu has been a refuge for them'.

Distrust for Rajiv Gandhi: The LTTE's denial, however, should be viewed in the context of its general political and military strategy. The Tigers have never admitted to any of the assassinations they have been linked with, and are unlikely to admit responsibility for Rajiv Gandhi's death even if they were involved. The assassination should also be seen in the context of the deep distrust that senior LTTE leaders, including its leader, Mr. V. Prabhakaran, had for Rajiv Gandhi.

To the LTTE, Rajiv Gandhi was the man who betrayed the Tamil cause by signing an accord that met India's security interests, but not Tamil demands for genuine autonomy. Rajiv Gandhi is also blamed for the chain of events that led to the outbreak of

hostilities between the LTTE and the IPKF. Mr. Prabhakaran is also known for the ruthless and single-minded dedication with which he has removed potential stumbling blocks which would hinder Tamil aspirations from being achieved.

In private conversations senior LTTE leaders have made no effort to hide their suspicion of India, and their desire to prevent any further active Indian intervention in Sri Lanka. Whatever the feelers that might have been sent out by the LTTE representatives in India, the suspicion of India and particularly Rajiv Gandhi is deeply ingrained within the core leadership of the LTTE.

The LTTE's suspicion of Rajiv Gandhi does not in any way link them to his assassination, but it does provide

the context within which any denials of involvement or any demands for Indian mediation or involvement should be viewed.

Cool reaction in Jaffna: In Jaffna itself, the reaction to Rajiv Gandhi's death has been cool, largely because he is perceived as the man responsible for putting the IPKF on a collision course with the Tamils. 'When Indira Gandhi was assassinated, there was a spontaneous outburst of grief', said one Jaffna resident. 'People wept and put up banners and flags of mourning. This time, there has been absolutely no reaction. People blame him for what the IPKF did'.

'We are all so absorbed in the everyday struggle to get enough food that outside events hardly sink in', said a University professor.

'LTTE denial not credible' say other groups

COLOMBO

The denial by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of involvement in the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi should be seen against the background of the group's record of 'irrational violence' observers here say.

If, despite the denial, the Tigers have emerged as the main suspects in the assassination, it is due not only to circumstantial evidence but also the erosion of their credibility, they said.

'With the LTTE you cannot look for rational thinking or action', said the leader of a rival Tamil group, commenting on press reports that the militants had no reason to assassinate the Indian leader after the reported cordial meeting with him by one of their leaders.

The People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT) leader Mr. D. Sithadthan said such reports were given credence largely because of ignorance of the LTTE's modus operandi. 'The LTTE chief, Mr. Prabhakaran would have taken the decision to eliminate Rajiv long ago, perhaps when the IPKF was still fighting the LTTE in the North And East', he said.

Once such a decision was made, a small group with necessary expertise is assigned the job, and they carry it out, regardless of the time and location, he said. After the assignment is given, the killer group acts on its own, except for logistical support given by cadres and supporters of the group in the area of their operation.

Mr. Sithadthan said this method of operation made it possible for the

LTTE to easily deny involvement in the killing because the killers having virtually snapped all links with the group for some time, were difficult to be traced back.

Other observers pointed out that the LTTE had similarly denied involvement in the killing of Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) leader Amirthalingam here two years ago.

But when the three militants, who carried out the assassination were themselves shot dead by Amirthalingam's security personnel and their identity as LTTE men was conclusively established, the group said the three were deserters, having left the organisation some time ago. At the same time, posters carrying the pictures of the three had been put up in the North and East, praising them for their 'heroic deed'.

'Disowning the person'

One observer referred to London-based LTTE leader Anton Raja's statement suggesting that the Rajiv Gandhi assassination might be the act of an individual affected by the IPKF operations and said the LTTE seemed to be already preparing to disown the killer in the event of her identity being established as an LTTE member.

Mr. N. Srikantha, political adviser to the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) said it was 'inconceivable' that Rajiv would have promised help to the LTTE when a leader of the group called on him in March as claimed by DMK leader and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Mr. M. Karunanidhi.

'It smacks of a sinister attempt on the part of Mr. Karunanidhi to divert

and deflect the serious allegation made against the LTTE that it was responsible for the assassination', he said.

He said when he and other TELO leaders met Rajiv Gandhi on January 30 at his residence in New Delhi, they had found him 'sharing our view in regard to the intransigence of the LTTE'. The Congress(I) leader Mr. Natwar Singh and Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyer were also present at the meeting.

Committed to the accord

He agreed with us that the LTTE's action are harmful to the interests of the Tamil community and expressed deep anguish about the plight of Tamil civilians', Mr. Srikantha said, adding Rajiv was 'firmly committed to the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord'.

'It is inconceivable that the same Rajiv Gandhi would have changed his views by March. The least we expect from Mr. Karunanidhi, if he wants to help the Sri Lankan Tamils, is not to defend the LTTE', he said.

Another observer pointed out that it was part of the LTTE's strategy to talk and fight at the same time. The group was talking to the TULF leadership when the unsuspecting Amirthalingam was gunned down. Similarly, President Mr. R. Premadasa was holding secret talks with the rebels when they launched the war against his Government in June last year, he pointed out.

Mr. Sithadthan and others are convinced that the woman suicide bomber, who killed Rajiv Gandhi was a Sri Lankan Tamil, judging from her pictures published in the press here. But they do not totally rule out the possibility of some extremist group in Tamil Nadu carrying out the assassination through LTTE cadres. 'The LTTE input is definite there, in terms of technology and personnel', one of them said.

They said it was common knowledge both in Sri Lanka and India that the LTTE had imparted arms and explosives training to 'volunteers' in Tamil Nadu who, in turn, have provided sanctuary and protection to the group in the State.

In the volatile atmosphere created by the parliamentary elections, some of them could have decided to carry out the attack with LTTE's help.

Some observers blame the Government of India and Tamil Nadu for turning a 'blind eye' to the activities of Sri Lankan militants in the State for so long that they have come to believe they can extend their campaign of violence across the Palk Strait with impunity.

They said hundreds of thousands of Tamils from the island who had fled to Tamil Nadu since 1983 to escape the

ethnic conflict in the island had permanently settled down there and even acquired Indian citizenship by 'buying' Indian passports. These people had become tools in the hands of the rebels who extract their cooperation for their activities, either voluntarily or through threats against their family members still living in the north-east.

Rival Tamil groups say that the LTTE has deeply infiltrated the Tamil Nadu polity that they have considerable freedom for their activities. The leaders of the EPRLF are convinced that their leader K. Padmanabha and

13 others could not have been massacred in Madras in June last year without collusion by local people.

A party spokesman Mr. Abbo Yusuf said he had no doubt that the LTTE was responsible for the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and it was part of a larger plan by certain foreign forces to destabilise India and the entire region. 'The irresistible inference from this...unimaginable violence in the electoral politics of Tamil Nadu is the irrefutable involvement of the LTTE mercenaries', concurred Mr. C. Karunakaran, TELO, MP.

Jayalalitha Rewrites Tamil Nadu Poll History

C. Raghavan in Madras

A resolute Ms. Jayalalitha has done it; the AIADMK general secretary has carried out the mandate given to her by the reunited MGR legacy to stamp out the party of her mentor's arch rival - Mr. M. Karunanidhi's DMK and bring back the 'golden rule of MGR'.

When she takes the reins of government, Ms. Jayalalitha will be creating history of sorts by not only becoming the first elected woman Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, but also having the largest number of members behind her in the State Assembly.

Struggling against great odds and braving the severest of attacks and a smear campaign indulged in by the leaders of the DMK including its president and former Chief Minister, Mr. Karunanidhi, both at the political and the personal levels, she has led her party in the company of its electoral ally, the Congress, to a stunning victory, avenging the humiliation suffered at the hands of the DMK in 1989.

Her image among the AIADMK rank and file as the true heir to the MGR legacy, the magic spell of MGR's two-leaves symbol and the undiminished MGR vote bank have brought Ms. Jayalalitha the biggest ever electoral victory in Tamil Nadu or, perhaps, in the country, and made the DMK bite the dust at the hustings.

The blows she dealt to the DMK in the just concluded election - of the 171 candidates it fielded for the State Assembly the lone survivor was Mr. Karunanidhi and it lost all the Lok Sabha seats it contested - is so severe that the party, as its leader had threatened even before the elections, may give up the political path and take the path of 'Periyar' (who engaged himself in propagating social reform).

Although the DMK's gradual decline was much in evidence long before the poll no one could have visualised the kind of utter defeat it has suffered, perhaps for the first time in its existence. And, the reasons are not far to seek.

All the populist and social security measures the DMK launched during the two years it was in office could not offset the impact of the people's suspicion about the party's role in the havoc played by the Sri Lankan Tamil militant groups in Tamil Nadu since the ethnic crisis erupted in the island-nation eight years ago.

The DMK which was removed from government and held under suffocating check by the inexplicable MGR phenomenon for full thirteen years bounced back to power in 1989, thanks to the split in the AIADMK immediately after the death of MGR and the Congress(I) breaking with both the factions. However, it was not left in peace for long and the reunited AIADMK under Ms. Jayalalitha revived its old alliance with the Congress(I) and soon launched a well-orchestrated campaign for the removal of the DMK Government charging it with allowing the LTTE a free run in Tamil Nadu and to use the State as base of operations in its armed struggle with the Sri Lankan Government.

The happenings at that time also appeared to lend support to the charge: the belated attempts made by the

Continued on Page 23

Tamil Nadu Elections - 1991

	Votes	Per cent	No. of seats won
Electorate	3,95,99,800		
Polled	2,52,88,881	63.86	
Valid	2,44,66,093		
Rejected	8,22,788	3.25	
AIADMK	1,08,54,301	42.92	163
Cong(I)	37,75,140	14.93	61
DMK	54,65,963	21.61	1
PMK	14,54,243	5.75	1
APTTMK	3,41,104	1.35	2
CPI(M)	8,03,083	3.18	1
CPI	2,80,032	1.11	1
JD	4,15,947	1.64	1
Others	10,76,280	4.26	1

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Masterminding a Tornado

K. Raghunathan

She is no soothsayer or astrologer, but it is her prediction which has come true. When she declared a month ago that the AIADMK-Congress(I) alliance will achieve a cent per cent success at the hustings, the immediate reaction of the pressmen, assembled at the party headquarters to collect the candidates list, was that she was being overambitious. Apart from the fact that it is a Himalayan achievement for her party and its ally and a devastating blow to the opposition DMK, the poll outcome, a record of sorts, would have come to Ms. Jayalalitha Jayaram as a great vindication for all the humiliation that she had been subjected to particularly in the last five years.

She has demonstrated that with a will of steel to work hard and fight the way up, women could attain the impossible in the highly volatile and sensitive political arena dominated by male chauvinists. In fact, concern for women and their emancipation is uppermost in her mind. For, the 43 years of her life are full of challenges and sufferings. Though by choice or by design she had to bear the brunt of things unpleasant, ultimately she had emerged victorious in all the battles she was forced to fight alone and all alone throughout.

And her fights had always been in self-defence. She had been ruthless in cutting her opponents to size. On an occasion when a strong coterie in her own party sought to put pressure and sideline her when MGR fell ill, she flared up and warned the people not to play a dangerous game. 'They have provoked the Bhadrakali, watch, she is going to assume Viswaroopam', she said then. The effect of Viswaroopam has perhaps been realised in the landslide victory of her party and the route of the DMK.

In just two years of her entry into the glamorous film field at the age of 16, she became the most sought after heroine. Elated over her success, her mother, Sandhya, noted in an interview that Jayalalitha's horoscope was good and that she was bound to enjoy a prosperous career. The young girl who was beside her interjected and said she was not depending on her horoscope to perform miracles and she would work hard for them; she appeared as the female lead in over 125 films in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Hindi, English and Malayalam. But the most relevant to her future was her co-starring with MGR in 28 films. As an accomplished Bharata Natyam artiste, she had given hundreds of performances.

A rare combination of intelligence,

beauty, talent and determination. Ms. Jayalalitha was cut out for something big. She quietly withdrew from an exciting and lucrative film career and directed her ambition to serve the people in a more constructive manner by entering politics. 'My desire is simply to leave the world a better place when I leave it than it was before' she had said.

Her dominating traits and sensitive nature brought her more enemies than friends. And when she was inducted into the AIADMK in 1982, some of the senior leaders did not take to her kindly. Her appointment as a member of the high power panel to oversee the functioning of noon meal centres and as Propaganda Secretary and entry into Rajya Sabha, all in just two years, and her ability to draw large crowds aggravated the heartburn of her rivals within the party. They gave vent to their feelings and tried to humble her when MGR fell ill in 1984. They would not even allow her to see her ailing mentor.

And subsequent developments following the death of MGR led to the party's split. She was harassed despite her making it clear that she was not after power or wealth. But realising the potential in her and the qualities which could make her a leader of the masses, a section of the senior leaders of the party pressed her to take over the leadership. They convinced her to say 'yes' and the position of general secretaryship of the party was handed over to her 'literally on a platter'.

The new position brought her greater responsibility and, in its wake, tremendous challenges and strain. She led the party effectively keeping at bay the rival camp and the pressure group within the party. Her major success came when she got the party premises on the Lloyds Road for her group, bearing police beatings and winning a legal battle.

She likened her vigorous pursuit to push her group to the forefront to a tidal wave, 'It begins miles and miles away as a small ripple. You can't see it. You only see it when it has become a big wave'. She would not have visualised that the ripple she created would ultimately become a tornado and wipe out her political rivals.

When she successfully blocked the efforts of Mrs. Janaki Ramachandran, leading the rival group from staying in power, elections became imminent. She went on a campaign trail in 1989. Though she could secure only 27 seats, her party became the largest opposition party in the State Assembly. This



T.N. Chief Minister Jayalalitha

was despite the failure to reach an accord with the Congress(I) – the difference was over the issue of leadership and seat sharing – and having to contest on a new election symbol. The scenario of split votes favoured the DMK.

Sensing that she, and her party would be hounded by the DMK, she quickly changed her strategy. Showing greater maturity and patience, she reunited the two factions of the AIADMK. At one stage she sought to renounce politics and retire. Her sending in her resignation served as a shock therapy just as it used to be in the days of her political mentor MGR, and that brought greater cohesion among the party cadre and leaders. When she was assaulted in the legislature, she swore that she would not return to the House as long as the DMK president, Mr. Karunanidhi, was in power.

The DMK started losing its popularity in the wake of the AIADMK and the Congress(I) highlighting day in and day out its sins of omission and commission. When the DMK Government was sent packing, it was once again time for elections. Her ability to strike quickly a deal with the Congress(I) on her terms, lead the campaign, remaining always miles ahead of the rival front – and deliver the kind of message which would make the right impact among the people, had a salutary effect. Keeping the pressure groups in check, she personally selected the candidates and worked out the campaign style. She carefully chose the candidates from among the nearly 4,200 aspirants personally interviewing them individually for nearly a month, sitting from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. She went into every detail meticulously, preparing posters, publicity materials, media advertisements, and production of audio and video cassettes. The end result of the hard work has demonstrated her ability to garner votes. And people are now looking forward to assessing her mettle in governing the State.

MAY : NORTH-EAST SITUATION REPORT

ELEVEN MONTHS OF WAR

The war in Sri Lanka began in June 1990. For the last 11 months the war continues non-stop killing innocent defenceless civilians and their properties destroying much more than the militants and their hideouts. Often, schools, churches, hospitals, power houses, libraries, banks, refugee camps and houses of citizens have become the targets of bombing, helicopter shooting and gunboat shelling. Mannar, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu areas have been virtually flattened. Thousands of innocent civilians have been killed and many more thousands injured, leaving behind widows, orphans, elderly, sick and infirm. These will be the heritage of the Tamil communities in the North and East as the result of this senseless war.

Ban on food, medicines and essential items to the people in the North have made people to starve virtually, since June 1990. For the last 11 months only one month food was sent to the North. Most of the hospitals in the North are ineffective due to heavy bombing. ICRC is not able to take the needed medicines to the North. Vehicles of ICRC, UNHCR and MSF have become the target of aerial bombing by the Government forces. On May 4th, 3 MSF staff and the driver were injured by aerial bombing and helicopter shooting. These NGOs have stopped their services to the affected areas and others like church organisations have been also forced to limit their services due to becoming targets of bombing and shooting.

Even essential goods like kerosene, diesel, box of matches, candles, soap etc. are banned. Since power houses have been bombed there is no electricity in the North since June '90. And when candles and box of matches are banned, people in the North have been forced to live in utter darkness since June '90. The Bishop of Mannar was manhandled by a soldier on the way when he took some paschel candles with the permission of JOC.

Communication and Transport

Since there is no electricity, people in the North are starved of listening to radio, TV etc. Batteries cannot be taken to the North inspite of the fact there is no electricity, so that people could use their radios and torches.

Since diesel and petrol are not permitted to be taken to the North there is no transport facilities. People have to cover any amount of distances by push bike, bullock cart or by walking. In case of emergency and illness often people succumbed to death without transport facilities. People who are

injured by bombing, shooting and shelling often die of excess bleeding, lack of transport and lack of medical aids.

Since there is lack of food, small traders and venders come to Vavuniya by bike, a distance of 90 miles to take some dry ration for the starving people. Lack of kerosene and diesel has its impact on people's survival and economy. Any vehicles seen on the road will be bombed. So bicycle is the only means of transport.

Indefinite curfew

Indefinite curfew is imposed very often in Jaffna, Mannar, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu and Vavuniya. Already people are starving due to Government's economic ban. And whatever food items have to be brought by bike which takes a week for the bicycle traders. And when indefinite curfew imposed, off and on, this worsens the situation of the starving people.

Most of the people in the North are farmers who do intensive cultivation for their survival. They live on the product of the small plot of land they own. At a time, when there are no import of food and essential goods to the North, they could still survive by cultivating their own plot of land. But manure, diesel and kerosene are not available for them even to cultivate their land just for survival. This only proves that the ban by the Government on these items is a clear sign of pushing people to starvation and death purposely. It is a planned genocide of a minority race.

EEC is going to help Sri Lanka in agricultural development an announcement came over the radio on 16.5.91. Is the EEC not aware of the situation in Sri Lanka? Is it not helping the Government to continue its genocide with all the aid? Can development take place in a country while there is a war going on?

The Sick the Infants and Pregnant mothers

Deafness is on the increase and mental illness due to depression and frustration of the situation of continuous war for the last 11 months. Many hospitals do not function due to aerial bombing and lack of essential drugs. Even ICRC which manages Jaffna hospital is unable to take the essential drugs from Colombo. Due to lack of electricity, even the drugs that were in store when the war started got spoilt. Children are dying in hundreds with diarrhoea. More than 25 pregnant mothers died without proper

treatment. The infants and under five years old are starving without milk powder.

The WHO and other Health International Organisations met at Alma Atar in 1978 and made a commitment to health for all by 2000. But WHO in Colombo does not seem to show any concern for the health of the people caught in the war since June 1990.

Cash flow in the North

There is a very limited cash flow in the North and banks are operating with very limited cash flow. Salaries to Government servants are paid in voucher which cannot be cashed outside Jaffna. Thus all the Government servants, widows and pensioners are unable to cash their voucher payment for nearly a year. For the last 3 months, Government servants, widows and pensioners have not received even the voucher payment. This means they are starving, unable to purchase anything. Add to this, the price of living has shot up drastically. Since there is no diesel, no petrol, whatever items brought to Jaffna are brought at very costly prices. Hence prices have shot up beyond the means of the people example a price of soap which is Rs. 5/- in other parts of Sri Lanka is Rs. 40/- in Jaffna. This again adds to the problem of the starving people in the North which eventually leads to ill health and sickness. And lack of medicines aggravate the situation and pave the way for chronic illness. The vicious circle continues this way for the people in the North since June 1990.

Reports from Batticaloa

People coming down from Batticaloa report that near Chenkaladi Bridge bodies of young boys were found with their eyes gouged out. The bodies are beyond the state of identification. Thousands of youths and young men are missing since June 1990. On the 2nd February 1991 Sri Lanka Government donated 42 pairs of eyes to Japan to mark the 42nd anniversary of Sri Lanka's independence. Japan is to invest in Sri Lanka.

Destruction of Environment

Continuous bombing, shelling and shooting not only destroys environment and nature, but also fills the earth with poisonous chemicals and gas which will create a sickly society for the years to come. This will be the heritage of North and East of this continuous war. A society laden with sick, lame, neurotic, widows, orphans and elderly with no one to care for. A rotten society.

System of the LTTE

Besides, all what has been mentioned, the pass system of the LTTE though they think is a must because

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QUIZ CROSSWORDS – No. 6. Set by: Richards

Closing date for completed grid and coupon to be received is 31 August 1991.

Answers and the name of the winner – first all correct entry pulled out of a bag – will be announced in the September 1991 issue.

The winner will receive a prize of £20.00 sterling.

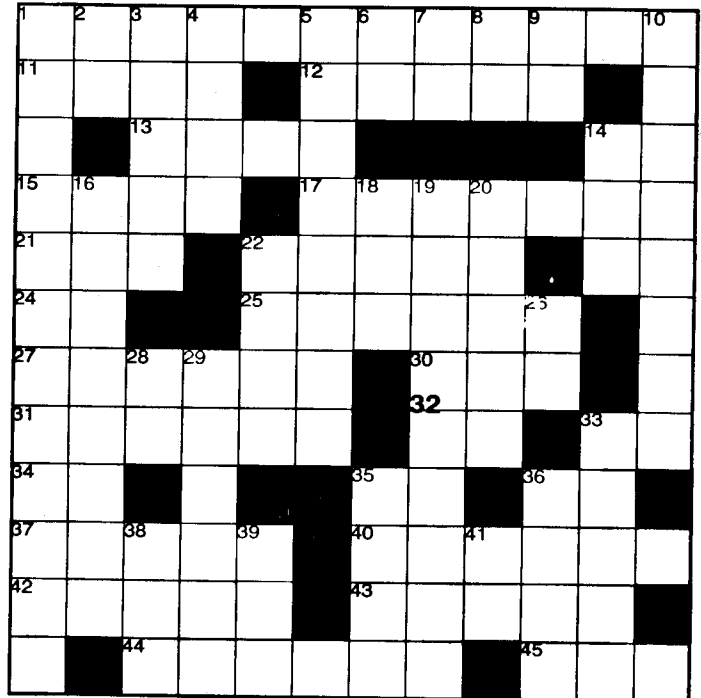
All entries should be sent to: Tamil Times, P.O. Box 121, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3TD, UK.

Across.

1. Sri Lanka's ancient city of sacred and secular splendour (12)
11. No one (4)
12. Famed Greek story-teller (5)
13. Russian Head of State prior to the Bolshevik Revolution (4)
14. Egyptian mythological sun-god (2)
15. Prepare material for publication (4)
17. Prince, the king's son (3)
21. Delaware, briefly (3)
22. It's pace is just too slow but suits the creature alright (5)
23. Small amount (2)
24. Quite contrary if prefixed to legal (2)
25. Reaching the end of it could mean the end of one's patience (6)
27. Moves suddenly forward (6)
30. Anger (3)
31. Assumes power wrongfully (6) 32. New Testament (2)
33. Station Master, briefly (2)
34. Either a French nod or a Roman six (2)
35. Teetollar (2)
36. Isle of Wight perhaps (2)
37. A region in Asia Minor colonized by the Greeks from about 8c BC (5)
40. Buddhist faith teaches against this terrible human failing (6)
42. Concerning (5)
43. Homer's epic poem of 24 books (5)
44. Dreaded disease carrier of Africa (6)
45. Quod erat demonstrandum and not as some quack said – quite easily done (3)

Down:

1. The Great Land Tortoise of Seychelles is a creature of this time (12)
2. There are those who cannot take this for an answer (2)
3. Up to a specified time (5)
4. A valued break after a hard day's work (4)
5. Gautama Buddha dispelled this from his mind and thinking when he achieved Nirvana (8)
6. His Excellency (2)
7. Briefly the kind of stuff that is a hallmark of a Sri Lankan militant movement (2)
8. An Italian valley that inspired the Don Camillo books (2)
9. That which goes there must return says a proverb (2)
10. Happiness, its sheer happiness (8)
14. Devotees' chorus often heard in North Indian Hindu festivals (3)
16. Buddhism preaches against such a state of mind (8)
18. Johnson said eaten by the humans in England and horses in Scotland (3)
19. Today its a jungle shrine, yesterday a centre of great agricultural activity but more known as the place where Buddhism took roots in Sri Lanka (9)
20. In constant readiness (5)
22. A Christian chorus says one at a time is sufficient (4)
26. Short reference (2)
28. Greek letter (2)
29. Vital food items in many cultures (6)
33. If not a Scandinavian native then a large yellow-fleshed turnip (5)



35. The nearer or more obvious one of two if he has to be pointed (4)
36. Generally regarded as today's problem state (4)

38. Trap of a kind (3)
39. Consumed (3)
41. Remember the von Trapp Family – the final note (2)

Quiz Crosswords – 4: Solutions.

Across: 1. Trincomalee. 9. Reno. 10. Lah. 11. Mt. 13. Inca. 14. Liquor. 17. Doh. 18. Trimurti. 20. Sri. 21. SR. 22. 1A. 23. NTH. 26. Up. 27. Aaron. 29. Triumph. 32. Ning. 33. Inspect. 34. EN. 35. Ser. 36. Foal. 38. Liput. 39. Telugu. 41. At. 42. Red. 44. Harem. 45. Myliddy, and 46. BSS.

Down: 1. Trident. 2. Reno. Inch. 4. NDA. 5. OL. 6. Mali. 7. Ahimsa. 8. Emotion. 12. Triangulum. 15. Quran. 16. Ur. 18. Trumpeted. 19. Ripper. 24. Trinity. 25. Hin. 28. Rigours. 30. Ussuri. 31. HC. 34. Elam. 36. Flab. 37. Ages. 40. EH, and 43. DD.

No Winner.

BRITISH AID FROZEN

Britain has frozen a £13 million aid package to Sri Lanka in the face of continuing human rights abuses and the expulsion of British High Commissioner David Gladstone, last month.

A Foreign Office spokesman in London said a new High Commissioner would shortly be appointed to ensure an effective voice on human rights and that all subsequent aid commitments would be linked to Sri Lanka's human rights record. Mr. Gladstone has been a persistent critic of human rights in Sri Lanka especially in the south, where NGOs estimate over 60,000 people have disappeared since 1987 in the brutal struggle between security forces and the Sinhalese Marxist insurgent People's Liberation Front (JVP).

A European Community (EC) statement released earlier this month described Mr. Gladstone's expulsion as 'unacceptable' and said there was continuing concern over human rights in Sri Lanka. In October, EC donor governments attending the annual World

Bank meeting on Sri Lanka in Paris, highlighted a resolution linking future aid to Sri Lanka's human rights record and Britain immediately suspended £3 million of programme aid.

But observers say Sri Lanka is prepared to tough it out with the international community and has told aid donors that it will not be pressured on domestic political issues. Opening Sri Lanka's third Free Trade Zone at Koggala on 14 June, President Premadasa said: 'We will not sell our souls to satisfy our hunger'.

Mr. Premadasa's government claims measures such as a Presidential Commission on Missing Persons introduced last January will stamp out extrajudicial killings and disappearances which continue at the rate of 100 a week. Critics say the Commission has no retroactive powers and is merely a palliative to allay international concern. Of 425 complaints made to the Commission since January, only 35 fall within its limited terms of reference.

Sri Lanka's dilemma is that while it struggles to maximise foreign investment through schemes such as the Koggala project, creating 80,000 jobs in the process, its economy is still heavily dependent on foreign aid.

Direct foreign investment was only 4% of aid transfers last year and as the current Central Bank report shows only 279 million SDR in foreign aid transformed a 177 million SDR current account deficit.

Others say Sri Lanka can live without the meagre \$60 million of European aid while large donors like the Japanese remain impervious to the human rights lobby and Chinese military assistance continues.

Ironically the crisis comes when Sri Lanka's economy may be on the road to recovery. This year's World Bank meeting is postponed till next February while Sri Lanka bolsters its balance of payments position through an IMF \$300 million Extended Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF). In return Sri Lanka must reduce import tariffs and privatise all state corporations by the end of the year – an increasingly unlikely undertaking.

Rao Govt. Brings New Hopes

A gentle scholar and a non-controversial politician capable of rising to the levels of a statesman took office as India's Prime Minister following one of the country's most traumatic and bloodiest elections. It was a mid-term poll caused by the fall of a minority government elected earlier in an indecisive poll.

The results of the recent poll was only a slight improvement but with the kind of threat India faced from a rising tide of dangerous Hindu fanaticism it could not have been better – and India has for the moment staved off a blood bath. India and the subcontinental states, Sri Lanka already bleeding with racial violence, Bangladesh, desperately poor and the Pakistanis still unable to carve up a democratic state for themselves, cannot afford a new and a deadlier dimension to violence.

Now it falls on the shoulders of Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, a former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and who served with great distinction in the cabinets of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi as Union Minister of Home and later Defence and External Affairs, to guide India through very difficult times and bring back that spirit of development that marked the early years of independence under Prime Minister Nehru.

A great credit to Mr. Narasimha Rao, the first national leader from the South, is that, while there were many aspirants to the leadership of the party whose efforts were rather strident and indeed manipulative, he alone of them all, showed no anxiety or even appear to pull any strings.

A small group even tried to forestall a natural succession within the party's political structure by trying to drag in Mrs. Sonia Gandhi who had been apolitical all these years and had no intention to become involved now or in the future. She showed no interest whatsoever even to hold a position *pro tempore* until such time a new generation Nehru-Gandhian was eligible.

It is true young Priyanka Gandhi is a person to watch with great interest but it is better in her own interests and that of India that she earns her political wings in her own right and not as a successor from a dynasty that during its final years has done more harm than good to the party. The harm it did was seen so shamefully expressed by some Congress(I) leaders who felt that only a Nehru-Gandhi could serve the Congress Party and head the Indian nation even if that person who bore that name was apolitical.

The attempt by those leaders who tried to persuade Mrs. Sonia Gandhi to accept the leadership was certainly

South Asian Commentary

Sufin Segar

manipulative and many members of the Congress rank and file were also quite disgusted by their efforts. It was shoddy and they paid no heed to the fact that there was a general election on and the spectre of the fundamentalist BJP was looming large threatening to destroy India at every fine and intricate seam of its socio-cultural and religious unity and the rich concept of secularism.

Now that the power brokers have been silenced, India must put its house in order and can there be a better leader at the moment than the veteran Narasimha Rao? His record as a Congressman is unblemished and as the Indian HINDU stated editorially, he is 'non-controversial, a big plus point where groupism and infighting rule the roost'.

The HINDU further stated that his choice as the leader represents the best possible consensus in a situation where the soaring ambitions of various regional leaders are now unbridled by a vision of a crown within their reach.

During the last few years political bankruptcy has been creeping into dangerous proportions bringing into focus highly worrying and disturbing elements of religious and caste violence. India's secular star was slipping from the heavens but today India under Narasimha Rao has been given a new lease and what is essential is a soothing solution to these problems. It is vital that no Indian leader, national or sectarian, be allowed to hold the people of India to ransom anymore.

Gandhian moral philosophy and Nehru's political idealism are rich with visions and India has achieved much from their inspiration as perhaps no other nation in the developing world. It is for Narasimha Rao and his government to recapture those positive elements and inject new vigour, new visions and fresh enthusiasm and purpose to chart the future course for the subcontinent.

It appears the Narasimha Rao Government has begun well.

THE RAMA-RAVANA SYNDROME

The dubious credit of trying to dig up ancient warring myths, legends and sentiments, some of which may never have even existed, belongs to two leaders on either side of the Palk Straits at a time the people of India and Sri Lanka are hard hit with poverty, violence and a continued assault on their dignity as human beings.

Unable to be succoured by their respective motherlands, large numbers of Indians and Sri Lankans are veritable 20th century slaves in Arabian homes and even on the European continent. Thousands have become refugees of some kind or other and their tears continue to flow in tragic torrents.

As if these are not enough, a Sri Lankan entrepreneur is offering young maidens from his country as brides to aging Italians to serve them sexually in their bedrooms and slavishly in their kitchens. This Italy-based Sri Lankan from that distance has even guaranteed their virginity and refers to an aunt, a nun in Colombo, who is helping him in this venture.

While such is the plight of the Indians and Sri Lankans, President Ranasinghe Premadasa unveils a statue of the mythical King Ravana in the hallowed precincts of the Kataragama

Temple, the seat of Lord Muruga venerated from prehistoric times, while India's BJP leader Advani, is drumming up support to tear down the Islamic mosque in Ayodhya so that a holy place for King Rama could be built there.

These incredibly pitiable efforts can only come from the politicians and both leaders have much to answer for the violence over which they preside now. In appealing emotionally to the baser elements of the people even to the extent of directly or indirectly inciting them into violence to achieve their own political clout, President Premadasa and Mr. Advani cannot in any way be said to be seeking lofty ideals as they should, let alone peace and harmony among the millions on the Indian subcontinent, but are indeed still continuing to seek the gutters and sewers to manipulate human passions.

Religion is not for the politicians and politics is not for the priests and if one disagrees with it, he or she can see what the political priests and the politicians who dabble in religion have done to Sri Lanka and continue to hold an entire population of Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims as hostages of a new kind in a time-frozen, economically, culturally and morally ravished and violent state. The entire country stands perilously on the brink of total disaster as a result.

NEWS ROUND-UP

● **SRI LANKAN TAMILS** living in Tamil Nadu have been directed by the state authorities to register with the police and failure to do so would result in severe penalties including deportation. The warning has been publicised by newspaper advertisements. An estimated 200,000 Sri Lankan Tamils have gone over to Tamil Nadu since the outbreak of ethnic violence in the island. A substantial number of Tamils live in refugee camps, but a large number are either living with friends, relatives or on their own. The directive gave the people a week to register. Landlords and employers must register Sri Lankan Tamil tenants and workers. Failure to do so or supply wrong information would be dealt with severely, the warning said.

● **LTTE's PARIS-BASED** spokesman Lawrence Thilagar is reported to have said that the LTTE was willing for 'unconditional talks' with the government of Sri Lanka and that they could be held in an European capital. Referring to the reported statement by Thilagar, Presidential Special Advisor Bradman Weerakoon restated the government's previous conditions for talks, namely that the LTTE should make a declaration of its intention to give up arms, it should agree to other Tamil parties and groups participating in the talks and that LTTE leader Prabhakaran himself should participate in the talks. However he added, 'Now we won't insist on Prabhakaran's presence. He can come in at a later stage'. LTTE had already rejected these conditions. Thilagar is already on record as saying, 'We will never accept the condition that Prabhakaran should come for talks. We will have to think of his security. The LTTE is responsible for its leader's safety'.

● **FORMER CABINET** Minister, Gamini Dissanayake and three others have been indicted before the High Court in Colombo in connection with the abduction and subsequent release of Prof. Ralf Buultjens. Mr. Dissanayake, Mohamed Azar Abdeen, Mudalige Don Sunil and W.A. Don Kumara have been charged with having conspired along with named seven others to abduct the Professor on 26 June 1988 and wrongfully confine him. The second and third accused have been indicted with having, along with named two others, abducting the Professor. Mr. Dissanayake is facing an additional charge of aiding and abetting the commission of the offence. Among the 23 witnesses listed to give evidence for the prosecution are several co-conspirators who have made confessions and expressed their willingness to give evidence for the prosecution.

● **GOVERNMENT FORCES** launched a fresh offensive described as phase two of 'Operation Wanniwickrema' in the Vavuniya sector in northern Sri Lanka beginning 14 June with imposition of a round the clock curfew. Backed up by helicopter gunships and fighter bombers, three infantry battalions pushed seventeen miles west of Vavuniya to the Paraiyankulam junction with Madhu road after heavy fighting at Puvarasankulam and Pandirichan. Defence Ministry sources claimed that over 200 LTTE cadres and 36 soldiers were killed in the operation but local sources maintained that many civilians were killed and houses destroyed in a blitzkrieg of sustained aerial bombardment. The Tigers claimed that they shot down a Bell 212 helicopter belonging to the airforce. As fierce fighting continued amidst reports of heavy casualties on both sides, five soldiers were killed and one seriously wounded at Wahalkada in the Anuradhapura district on 17 June when a landmine planted by the LTTE exploded ripping apart the vehicle in which they were travelling.

● **SENIOR SUPERINTENDENT** of Police, K. Dharmadasa, once charged with the killing of Wijedasa Liyanarachchi, a human rights lawyer, reportedly shot himself to death on 4 June. He and two other senior police officers were charged last year with the murder of the lawyer, but on pleading guilty to amended charges of conspiracy and wrongful confinement all three were sentenced to imprisonment but the sentences were suspended and fines were imposed. Mr. Dharmadasa's prison term of two years was suspended for ten years and he was also ordered to pay compensation in a sum of Rs. 55,000. Following the court case, Mr. Dharmadasa was reinstated and was posted at the police headquarters in Colombo.

● **SIX SOLDIERS** patrolling the Kallar - Mavillaru area in the Trincomalee district were killed in an LTTE ambush in Trincomalee on 10 June. The arms, ammunition, communication equipment etc. belonging to the dead soldiers were also taken away by the attackers. Two days previously on 9 June four soldiers were shot dead in another LTTE ambush in the Batticaloa district. In another incident on 12 June three soldiers were killed and four more injured in a landmine ambush in Mannar. Nineteen soldiers were killed and four more were wounded when the LTTE ambushed an army truck on 25 June along the Haambeewa Road in Welioya in the Trincomalee district. As the vehicle approached a landmine was triggered to explode and those soldiers who tried to escape were gunned down by LTTE men waiting in ambush.

● **THREE HUNDRED AND TWO** university students are reported to be missing since the violent upheavals in the universities during 1989 to 1990, according to the University Grants Commission. At least 95 varsity students are still said to be in various detention and 'rehabilitation' camps at Boossa, Pallekelle, Pelawatta and Telaawela while some are imprisoned in the Magazine prison at Welikada in Colombo.

● **LTTE LEADER** and its Supreme Military Commander Velupillai Prabhakaran made one of his rare public appearances on June 10 at a cultural festival recently held in northern Jaffna. The Tiger leader had made his last appearance before the public on 4 August 1987 following the arrival of the IPKF at Sudhumali in Jaffna when he addressed a largely attended public meeting. It was reported that the Tiger leader presented seven gold medals and other prizes to those who had made valuable contribution to cultural and literary activities.

● **1639 SECURITY SERVICE** personnel have been killed and 585 are reported missing in action since war broke out between the LTTE and government forces on 11 June last year, Air Marshall Walter Fernando told journalists on 13 June. The breakdown of those killed was: Army - 969; Navy - 18; Air Force - 7; STF - 9; Police - 339; and Home Guards - 27.

● **THE POLICE** raided the Colombo offices of the Eelam National Democratic Front (ENDLF) and took into questioning three Tamil youths along with an Panjero jeep belonging to a Provincial Council Member. The raid on the ENDLF office was ordered after investigators probing a spate of burglaries in the Wellawatte area unearthed evidence which linked some ENDLF cadres to the burglaries. The jeep had been used as the get away vehicle. In early May, a senior ENDLF activist was apprehended from the same office following a robbery of one million rupees from a wealthy household in Bamabalapitiya.

● **FOUR POLICEMEN** and Home Guard attached to the Bulathsinhala police station in south Sri Lanka have been taken into custody following the death of a JVP suspect in their custody on June 13. The suspect, E.G. Siripala

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from Molkawa, Badureliya had been arrested by the police several days prior to his death while being taken to the hospital by the police during the early hours on 13 June. Twentyone policemen from the Dickwella division were identified at an identification parade following allegations of extortion, harassment and other illegal activities. A Sub-Inspector identified as Gamini Jayasiri and three police constables of Thebuwana police station in the Kalutara district were recently remanded in custody in connection with the killing of two police

constables attached to the Amparai Mobile Police Post whose bodies were found floating in a river in Kalutara during the height of the JVP campaign.

● **SIXTEEN PERSONS** travelling in a private bus loaded with 36 passengers, mostly Muslims, were killed and 11 were injured on 27 June when a claymore landmine was allegedly activated by LTTE cadres blowing the bus apart at Hulannuge in the Amparai district. The bus was on its way from Pottuvil to Colombo. The dead included a Danish national who was a tourist. Thirteen persons escaped unhurt.

Book Review

New Stories from Sri Lanka

A MATTER OF LANGUAGE, is one of the three stories in Kopan Mahadeva's latest book of short stories. In this, prisoner Kandasamy was mercilessly mauled by his Sinhala-speaking Forces interrogators as have been hundred and hundreds of innocent Tamils over the last many years. Around him on the floor lay broken PVC pipes and cigarette butts, lesser weapons of the 'nasties' for pain infliction and deadly torture.

But then there were also frightened Sinhala officers whose heart bled at such heartlessness of their serving colleagues and their concern, compassion and kindness made them take risks to rush to the aid of the Tamils. Staff Sgt. Anura Jayawardana was sickened by the sight of Kandasamy crouched on the floor like a cooked prawn. It was unbearable to him.

He knelt down beside Kandasamy with a bowl of warm water and towel to comfort and lessen his pain and misery. His eyes flooded as he tested his forehead for temperature and stroked his hair gently as his mother would have done.

Much as he would have liked, how can he comfort him? In 1956 itself Bandaranaike with his infamous Sinhala Only legislation caused a chasm – a terrible and violent divide between the Tamils and the Sinhalese! Now Sinhala was the only official language enforced rigidly even within the Forces.

Anura knew a bit of Tamil but did not wish to create an inadvertent offence, through possible misuse of words. So this Sinhala officer spoke in English, a language which still holds a feeble link between the two communities.

Anura's kindness was soothing but Kandasamy, hardly seventeen, had a cause in his hand and he was fighting for it with great dignity and pride. He had no time for sympathy however well meant it was. There were higher goals to be achieved . . . and in Sri Lanka there are Kandasamys and Anuras who want peace, justice and harmony among the various communities of the island state. But the oppressors are far too many and that's the tragedy.

It may be recalled on the 5th of June 1947 it was a Velupillai Kandasamy of Moolai Road, Vaddukoddai who became a martyr fighting for trade union rights for Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim government service employees. Young Kandasamy who was the breadwinner of a family of four sisters and a brother fell to the Forces bullets of a government that rough rode the rights of the public servants of that time.

Unfortunately a memorial built for him in Colombo was destroyed during the 1958 racial riots and in its place was installed a statue of Lord Buddha but Sinhala trade union leaders who benefited from Kandasamy's martyrdom and even held ministerial positions later, never had the guts to bring the spirit of Kandasamy back to that pedestal.

In this book, Kopan Mahadeva once again communicates the deep seated problems in his motherland, *Philip Master*, and *The Displaced Undergraduate* are the other stories.

These stories are heart beats and tensed nerves of thousands of Tamils – in Sri Lanka and in many parts of the world. They have been scattered because a majority race that holds the principles of Buddhism to the high heavens is blinded when it comes to justice and fairplay. Mahadeva in his unique and simple style brings the message quite pointedly but will Colombo ever take note?

The NEW STORIES FROM SRI LANKA is priced at **£2.75** and copies are obtainable at: **Century House, 99-101 Sutton Road, Erdington, Birmingham B233 5XA** (Telephone 021 382 0109).

Kaathu (a collection of poems)

Young Siddharthan, hardly fifteen has produced a book full of Tamil poems and titled his literary work *Wind*.

A small but large-hearted volume of Tamil verses each one of them appears to be an immediate reaction to experiences – ordinary experiences most people tend to ignore as trivial purely because they are unable to recognise deep meanings in them. Just like the Duke in Shakespeare's *Tempest*, Siddharthan sees messages and meanings in just about everything – and these are deep and challenging and certainly that of the teacher and the philosopher.

Seasons of the year he has personified beautifully and the mark of the story teller is etched in it. Wealth of the type he recognises, gets a brush off with the contempt it deserves and in the night sky he visualises the discord and the concord in the breath-taking spectacle of heavenly movements. Concept of travel brings out the world of the traveller and seeker and they are indeed two different people.

The youthful mind and the idealist comes out great in his reaction to the stratification of the human beings and the pain and anguish it continues to cause. But of the wind, Siddharthan the poet says, he just cannot understand its temperament.

At first his verses and the message appeared brief to me but when I pondered over them it became evident that the mere size of the book was only the tip of the iceberg. There is depth in it and the meanings are vast – some even too vast to comprehend easily. Here is a youthful farmer who has begun to sow and reap and it's a matter of time before his harvests become even more plentiful.

I was most privileged to read and meditate on his book.

Kaattu is priced at **15 Sri Lankan rupees** and is available from the author at: **62 Campus Lane, Thirunelvely, Jaffna**.

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DMK Government, often under directions from the Centre, to curb the activities of the militants were seen as half-hearted. With the National Front, in which the DMK is a partner, in power at the Centre, the AIADMK-Congress(I) campaign had little impact in Delhi. However, when the V.P. Singh Government fell, Delhi's patronage was lost. The successor - Government, led by Mr. Chandra Shekhar, with its dependence on the Congress(I), came down heavily on the DMK Government and, after issuing a few warnings, sent it packing.

When the elections came a shrewd politician that he is, Mr. Karunanidhi realised the odds against him in the battle of the ballot and, therefore, worked overtime on his campaign trail visiting the nooks and corners of the State and making full use of his oratory. Anxious as he was, the DMK president spent almost five days in his own constituency, Harbour in Madras, calling at every household and visiting all the slums.

Even as the DMK president was worrying about his party returning to power came the bombshell - Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in Sriperumbudur. The needle of suspicion pointing to the LTTE, the people of Tamil Nadu could not help recalling the alleged nexus between the Sri Lankan Tamil militants and the DMK. The charge, however, was stoutly refuted by Mr. Karunanidhi and others during the resumed electioneering after the mourning for Rajiv Gandhi. All the same, the people were angry and gave vent to their indignation in a silent manner through the ballot box. By their verdict they had also rejected the caste-based politics sought to be revived not only by the newly formed Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), but also by the DMK in a subtle way. The anti-DMK votes have enabled the AIADMK-Congress(I) combine to virtually sweep the board and wipe out not only the DMK, but all its allies including the CPI(M), the CPI and the Janata Dal.

The AIADMK-Congress(I) alliance together contested all the 234 Assembly and the 39 Lok Sabha seats. The polling countermanded in two Assembly constituencies, the alliance bagged 224 Assembly seats and all the Lok Sabha seats with large margins in most of the constituencies.

In the new Assembly the ruling AIADMK party will have a strength of 158 members of its own while its ally, the Congress(I), which will sit in the opposition, will have 60 members. There are six more members belonging to the alliance, five of them returned on the AIADMK's two-leaves symbol and one on the Congress(I) hand sym-

bol. Of the remaining eight members who will form the real opposition but with no official status as such, seven belong to six parties - two to the newly formed Anna Puratchithalaivar Tamizhaga Munnetra Kazhagam led by Mr. S. Thirunavukkarasu who was expelled from the AIADMK, and one each to the DMK, the CPI(M), the CPI, the Janata Dal and the PMK. These eight seats which the opposition parties hold have gone four each from the AIADMK and the Congress(I).

The sweep is such that six main parties including the DMK and the PMK, have combinedly polled less than one-fourth of the total votes secured by the winning AIADMK-Congress(I) front.

The AIADMK-Congress(I) front has secured 57.85 per cent of the total votes polled and bagged 232 seats. On the other hand, the DMK and its allies, which have together polled 28.89 per cent could win only six seats. And, the DMK has lost the deposit in three places. The PMK, leading the third front collected 5.75 per cent of the votes contesting in 200 places and getting through in only one.

In the 1989 Lok Sabha election when the two major allies were similar, the Congress(I)-AIADMK combine netted 56.98 per cent of the total valid votes polled to win 38 of the 39 seats while the DMK-led front got 33.78 per cent to secure one seat which went to the CPI.

In the Assembly elections of 1984 when the two alliances were similar, the AIADMK-Congress(I) front polled 53.55 per cent to win 195 seats (AIADMK 133 and Congress(I) 62). The front led by the DMK secured 37.34 per cent and the 32 seats it won were shared by the DMK (24), CPI (2), CPI(M) (5) and AFB (1).

In 1989 when the two factions of the AIADMK and the Congress(I) fought the Assembly elections independently against the DMK-led front AIADMK (JL) secured 21.90 per cent of votes and 29 seats; AIADMK (JR) 9.13 per cent and one seat; the Congress(I) 20.19 per cent and 26 seats. In the DMK front, the DMK got 33.34 per cent of votes to win 151 seats (including eight others who contested on the DMK symbol); the CPI(M) 3.53 per cent and 21 seats.

When the Assembly was dissolved on January 30, 1991, the composition of the House was: DMK - 142; Congress - 26; AIADMK - 25; CPI(M) - 15; AIADMK(JR) - 1; Janata Dal - 6; IUML(L) - 4; CPI - 3; AIADMK-II - 3; UCPI - 1; FB - 1; IFTP - 1; Ind - 2; Nominated - 1; Vacant - 3 and Speaker - 1.

With a woman as Chief Minister the Tamil Nadu Assembly this time will have the largest number of women

members - 25 belonging to the AIADMK and five to the Congress(I).

With the real opposition in the Assembly reduced to near nothing and almost the entire House backing her, Ms. Jayalalitha as Chief Minister can have all the time and energy of her team to spend on constructive activities. This is the sum of the reaction of political observers on the outcome of the Assembly elections.

They point out that the situation was different when the fledgling AIADMK wrested power from the DMK in 1977. Although the then Chief Minister, the charismatic MGR, had 130 members in the House much of his time was taken in tackling the opposition DMK which kept the Government on tenterhooks all the time.

And, when the DMK recaptured power in 1989, a greater part of the first few months was mostly spent on exposing the MGR Government and settling scores with the combined AIADMK-Congress(I) opposition which soon turned hostile.

(The Hindu).

Continued from Page 18

people must not leave the peninsula creates enormous problems for people who want to travel up and down for different purposes. Every body who leaves Jaffna is not getting out of the country. There are NGOs and Church organisations, working amidst great difficult circumstances to commute between Colombo and Jaffna to bring some food to the starving nation. At one time the NGOs had to wait at Omathai for 10 days before crossing the LTTE check point. This creates enormous problems for the charitable organisations, and increases the starvation of the people whom they are trying to serve.

British Broadcasting Corporation World Service

Though the war continues and it is getting worse as days go by, BBC World Service does not seem to give enough coverage to the problem. Daily the Tamil Osai reports the message of Chris Morris. But BBC World Service is very indifferent. The war in Gulf is over. But there is enough and more coverage to the problem of Gulf war and the Kurdish refugees. But comparatively what is going on in Sri Lanka is far worse and yet BBC World Service is ignoring the issue. I wonder why?

The UN organisations which are working for peace also do not seem to be interested in the problems of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Are these organisations genuinely working for peace? Or are they only interested in implementing the policies of the donor countries? The latter is true of what is happening in Sri Lanka.

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MATRIMONIAL

Jaffna Hindu uncle seeks for niece, 43, Saibaba devotee, excellent cooking, sewing skills, well knowledgeable, pleasing personality, ideal housewife qualities, suitable partner. Send details M 496 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Tamil parents seek fair, educated, Christian (non R.C.) bride for son, Canadian citizen, 31, working for leading Canadian Bank. Reply with photograph. M 497 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu seeks partner under 30 for nephew, engineer with Ph.D. (Metallurgy) in Australia, preferably with overseas residence status ASAP. Details with horoscope to M 498 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents seek educated partner for son, 33, accountant in London. Send details, horoscope. M 499 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents seek professionally qualified groom for part qualified accountant daughter, 23, British citizen. Send details, horoscope. M 500 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Tamil brother seeks partner for sister, 30, Roman Catholic resident in London. Full details to M 501 c/o Tamil Times.

Brother seeks Jaffna Hindu Tamil groom, age 30-40. Send horoscope details. M 502 c/o Tamil Times.

Brother seeks suitable partner for Jaffna Tamil lady, 50, innocent divorcee, U.K. permanent resident with means, good health, and no encumbrances. M 503 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents seek partner for graduate daughter, 30, working in London. Send details, horoscope. M 504 c/o Tamil Times.

Brother seeks Tamil, Catholic groom for sister, Australian permanent resident, 31, fair, working in bank. Reply with full details. M 505 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents seek attractive professionally qualified partner under 26 for son 30, working in Australia as Computer Systems Officer. Reply with horoscope M 506 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents seek qualified partner for their professionally qualified daughter, 24, British citizen. Send details, horoscope. Confidentiality assured. M 507 c/o Tamil Times.

Tamil brother from educated family seeks partner in late thirties or early forties for his attractive, good looking, outgoing, well mannered, qualified (accountancy) sister working in U.K. Divorcees considered. M 508 c/o Tamil Times.

WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couples on their recent wedding.

Thayan son of Mr. & Mrs. V. Sivagnanasundram of 2 Chrisalex Place, St. Clair 2759, NSW, Australia and **Premini** daughter of Mr. & Mrs. V. Thirunavukarasu of Arasan Printers, 30 Hyde Park Corner, Colombo 2 on 24.6.91 at Hotel Palmgrove, Madras, South India.

Mohan son of Mr. & Mrs. V. Sivagnanasundram of 2 Chrisalex Place, St. Clair 2759, NSW, Australia and **Janaki** daughter of Mr. & Mrs. M. Perairavan of 20 Wade Avenue, Apt. 714, Toronto, Ontario M6H 4H3, Canada on 3.7.91 at La Pineta, 17 Vinyl Court, Woodbridge, Ontario, Canada.

OBITUARIES



Mr. Thuralappa James Jayaratnam, retired Divisional Agricultural Officer, Colombo; beloved husband of Regina; loving father of Jayamani Emmanuel (Colombo), Dr. Albert Jayaratnam (Chilaw), Jayasothi Benedict (U.K.), Dr. Rabin Jayaratnam (U.K.) and Dr. Anandha Jayaratnam (U.K.); father-in-law of Naesan Emmanuel (Colombo), Ranji Jayaratnam (Colombo), Anton Benedict (U.K.), Swinitha Jayaratnam (U.K.) and Kamala Jayaratnam (U.K.) passed away peacefully on the 20th June 1991. Cremation took place on the 22nd June at Kanatte Cemetery, Colombo, Sri Lanka. - 16 Parkland Avenue, Slough, Berks. SL3 7LQ. Tel: 0753 541151.

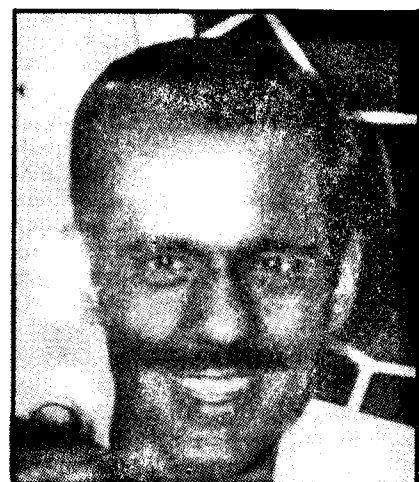


Mrs. Annam Suppiah, wife of the late Tham-bipillai Suppiah (Survey Department, Colombo) of Alavaddi, Sri Lanka; sister of Vinayagaratnam (Canada), Mrs. Nadarajah (Chankani, Sri Lanka); beloved mother of S.V. Moorthy (Coventry); Kamala (London), Kanagambikai and Balampikai (Colombo), Cuganesan (Australia), Ampikaipakan (Kanderodai, Sri Lanka), and Inpanathan (U.K.); mother-in-law of Saratha, Gnanasoorian, Navaratnam, late Vamadevan, Ramani, Sunthary and Luxumi; grand mother of Shankar, Jeyaraj, Jeya, Siva, Gowri, Sube, Mythili, Ramesh, Suresh, Akila, Kokulan, Nilani and Shalini; great grand mother of Sanjeev expired on 1.7.91. Funeral took place in Coventry - 8 Cawthorne Close, Primrose Park Estate, Coventry CV1 5FG. Tel: 0203 256810.



Thillainadesan (62), President of Uduvil Murugan Temple Trust; eldest son of the late Ratnam (P.W.D. overseer) and Mrs. Ratnam; beloved husband of Pushpavathy (Retired teacher); brother of Sugirthamalar, Sambasivam (Manager, Peoples Bank), Dr. Paramathasan (Swindon), Mahadevan (Director of Highways, Trincomalee), Vimalendran (Croydon), and Indranee; brother-in-law of Mailvaganam (Retired Irrigation Engineer), Jeyapathy (Saudi Arabia), Mangai, Saro, Mahes, Ratna, Punitham, Puvanam and the late Tiruchelvam; Uncle of Kumar (Harrow), Dr. Gowri Aum Bhagavan, Premkumar (Canada), Thabo, Dhamayanthi, Ruby, Dhanushan, Myura, Myuran, Vijitha, Ratheesh, Dhayani, Shiyamini, Dharshana, Srikumar (Southall), Shanthakumar (Heston), Lalitha (Canada), Bhaama (Canada), Bubby and Radha passed away peacefully on 28.6.91. Funeral took place at Uduvil on 29th. Tel: 0793 871435 (Swindon), and 081 681 2052 (Croydon).

A poojah in his memory will take place at the Highgate Murugan Temple, 200A Archway Road, London N6 on 28.7.91 at 11.00a.m.



Sivagananathan (48), son of the late Mr. & Mrs. T. Balasubramaniam; Stepson of Mrs. Rajaletchumy Balasubramaniam (Australia); beloved husband of Kamala; brother of Mrs. Gowri Pathmanathan (Jaffna), Dr. Sivaloganathan (St. Albans, U.K.), Thirunavukkarasu (Australia), Mrs. Bhagawathy Mohanadas (Colombo), Mrs. Mangayarkkarasi Jetheendran (Australia), Radhakrishnan (Jaffna), Mrs. Jayanthi Kumaranayagam (Australia) and Sriharan (Australia) passed away on 22.6.91 and was cremated at Kanatte, Colombo on 23rd - 9 Upton Close, Park Street, St. Albans, Herts. AL2 2NR. Tel: 0727 873537.

Poopalapillai Navaratnasingham (F.M. Singham), Retired draughtsman, Department of Buildings, Colombo and Royal Air Force, Negombo: husband of Annaletchumy (Valvetiturai); father of Navieendiran (U.K.), Rupamalar (Trichy) & Raventhiran (Zambia); brother of Cumaranyagam (Attorney-at-law, Trincomalee) and Mrs. L.W. Thambimuthu (Batticaloa); father-in-law of the late Vanitha, Gamini (Trichy), Jeyasundaram (Singapore) and Manjula (Zambia); grandfather of Habilan, Oorvachi, Janani, Girija, Hanieetha and Narmatha; uncle of Dr. T.K. Shakespeare (Consultant Surgeon, Colombo), T.S. Rockwood (Tax Consultant, Colombo) and S. Soundaranayagam passed away peacefully on 18.2.91 at Valvettithurai - 190 Sellingcourt Road, Tooting Broadway, London SW17 9SB. Tel: 081-682 0783.



Dayalakumar (born 17.3.45), eldest son of the late Mr. Sivajoti and Mrs. Logeswari Sivajoti; beloved husband of Mahendra Ravi Rani; father of Ranitha; brother of Danny Kumar (Australia), Malini, Srikantha, Thathuva Skandan, Diviya Skandan, Pushpa, Karuna Skandan and Ambika; brother-in-law of Shashileka (Australia), Ratnasabapathy, Sri-mathidevi, Latha, Raguvaran, Yvonne, Mahendraraj, Mrs. Parasakthy Jegannathan, Devaraj, and Srihar; son-in-law of the late Mr. C. Ratnasabapathy and Mrs. Maheswari Ratnasabapathy passed away on 15.7.91 and was cremated on the 18th. - 360 Thorold Road, Ilford, Essex IG1 4HF, U.K. Tel: 081 518 0826.

IN MEMORIAM



In loving memory of **Mrs. Mankay Sivasambu**, born 30th October 1932, on the first anniversary of her passing away on 2nd August 1990.

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by her loving husband, children, brothers and sisters.

- 15 Wolsey Way, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 1XQ, United Kingdom.

Kunrakkudi Adikalaar Visits U.K. & U.S.A.



Adikalaar with Swami Siva Nandhi

Kunrakkudi Adikalaar, the head of the Thiruvannamalai Aadheenam in South India was in London from 16th to 24th May on his way to the U.S.A. He visited the London Meikandaar Aadheenam and had discussions with Swami Sivanandhi.

A former member of the Tamilnadu Legislative Council, a well known speaker and a prolific writer; Adikalaar has been referred to as 'the sage of the 20th century' for his overriding concern for the man in the street and characterising the great Thirukkural as not only our cultural heritage but also as our 'Hindu Saiva Agamic Heritage'.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

July 27 10.00pm Tamil Association of Brent conducts Soft Ball Cricket Tournament for boys and girls under 16 at Alperton Playing Field, Alperton Avenue, Alperton, Middx. All welcome. Tel: 081 866 3363.

July 27 1.00pm Jaffna Old Centralites - Jaffna Old Johnians Cricket match at British Gas Grounds, Twyford Avenue, off Uxbridge Road, East Acton, Middx.

July 27 6.00pm A.G.M. & Dinner of Henri-cans, U.K. (O.B.A., St Henry's College, Ilavalli, Sri Lanka) at Merton Hall, South Wimbledon, Kingston Road, London SW19. For tickets and information Tel: 081 441 1713.

July 28 Asian Chaplaincy organises Asian Pilgrimage to Aylesford, Mass 12.30pm. For details Tel: 071 222 2895.

Aug. 3 6.30pm The London Veena Group presents Annual Cultural Evening of Song, Dance, Music & Drama at Graveney School Hall, Welham Road, London SW17. Tel: 081 471 2348/509 1263/521 0345.

Aug. 4 3.30pm Novena at Asian Chaplaincy, 48 Gt. Peter Street, London SW1P 2HA. Tel: 071 222 2895.

Aug. 17 7.00pm Tamil Association of Brent conducts Sports Day at Vale Farm Sports Centre, Walford Road, Sudbury, Middx. For details Tel: 081 866 3363.

Aug. 31 1.00pm Jaffna Old Hinduites - Jaffna Old Centralites Cricket match at British Gas Grounds, Twyford Avenue off Uxbridge Road, East Acton, Middx.

At the Bhavan Centre, 4A Castletown Road, London W14 9HQ. Tel: 071 381 3086/4068.

Aug. 14 7.45pm Indian Independence Day Celebrations. Chief Guest: The High Commissioner of India.

Aug. 24 6.30pm Sri Matha Sruthi Laye Kshethram presents a Carnatic and Veena Concert by Lakshmi Rangarajan & Dr. Suma Sudhindra. For tickets Tel: 081-776 7724.

Mathini's Melodies



Saturday, the 18th May was a special day for the South London Tamil School in Croydon. As part of the cultural programme that evening, the students of the school had presented their varied and glittering array of music, dance and percussion items followed by the Chief Guest Councillor Mary Walker's address. Post-intermission all was set for a Karnatic vocal concert by **Mrs. Mathini Srikandarajah**. As the concert started with 'Tiger' Varadachariar's varnam 'Anname' in Arabhi, the packed audience of parents, teachers and eager students (with shining evening face and satchel to school, to vary a Shakespearean expression), all sat up in rapt attention to the flow of the melodious music. After a couple of items by Papanasam Sivan, Mathini went on to present rarely heard compositions of other modern composers who included Gopalakrishna Bharathi, Swami Surajananda, Dr. Balamurali Krishna, Mohan Rao and Subramanya Bharathi. The Kalyana raga alapana preceding 'Chithambaram Ena Manam Kaninithida' constituted a masterly rendering and the Swaraprasthara of the item was noteworthy. The Virutham 'Orumaiyudan Ninathu Thirumalar Ninaikkindra' gave a chaste portrayal of the ragas.

Appropriately Mathini confined the concert to Tamil songs and the concert was indeed a cultural beacon to the young boys and girls of the school. Thiruvalluvar Kothandapani's virtuoso play on the violin, Somasundaram Desigar's mastery on the Mridangam, Nathamani Muthu Sivarajah's soft touch on the Ganjira, Sithamparanathan's flourishes on the Moresing and Angello Kumarathan's enthusiastic Gadham play all added to the musical value of the evening.

P.P. Kanthan

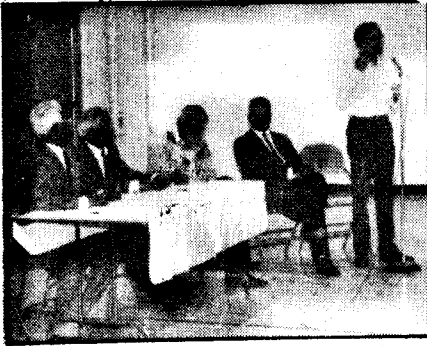
Second Anniversary Celebrations



The London Anglo-Tamil Association, Edmonton, celebrated their second anniversary with a well-attended function at Salisbury School Hall, London N18. The audience was highly appreciative of children born and educated in the U.K. performing Bharatha Natyam, singing and giving speeches in Tamil, playing the Miruthangam and acting in a Tamil drama. The chief guest, Mr. Rajalingam, Lecturer, North London Polytechnic, complimented the association on the excellent progress during the 2 years of its service.

Aruvathilum Valvu Unda

The Senior Tamils conducted a debate in Tamil on 'Is there a purposeful life after 60' (Aruvathilum Valvu Unda), at the Oriole CRC, Don Mills, Ontario, Canada 14.4.91 (New Year's Day).



The picture shows S. Tharmalingam (team member) taking part in the debate. The others in the picture left to right are A.R. Alexander (Moderator), Fred Balasingham (President), P. Canagasabapathy (Team Leader) and T. Yogirajah (Team Member). Those not in the picture are Dr. T. Vasanthakumar (Team Leader), Maria Edward, S. Paramanathan (Team members) and Siva S. Nathan (Secretary).

Dance Debut of Anbu & Angela



A feast of music and dance. That's what it was on 30.6.91 at the Great Hall, Bromley Civic Centre, Kent where the Bharatha Natyam Arangetram of **Anbu and Angela**, daughters of Mr. & Mrs. P. Somasundaram of 48 Claverdale Road, London SW2 took place.

A distinguished and appreciative audience which packed the hall, was treated to a near perfect rendition of this ancient hindu classical dance recital by the talented teenage sisters. Their performance was all the more creditable as they were born and raised in the U.K. and in addition do excel not only in their academic career, but also in sports, martial arts and as girl guides. Their parents should be complimented for the encouragement and untiring support given to them.

The success of the Arangetram was due to the elegant Nattuvangam provided by their tutor, **Mrs. Vinothini Shanmuganathan**, herself a renowned exponent of the art; the melodious singing of the **vocalist Gana Boshanam Srimathi Ambika Thamotheram** who had herself composed some of the lyrics and music; expert percussions on the

Miruthangam by **Sri Muthu ivarajah**, the harmonious playing on the violin by **Thiruvapur Kothandapani**; the sweet tunes produced by **Dr. T. Nimalraj** who blew the flute with consummate ease; and last but not least **Sri Kandiah Sithambaranathan** who strung the morsing well.

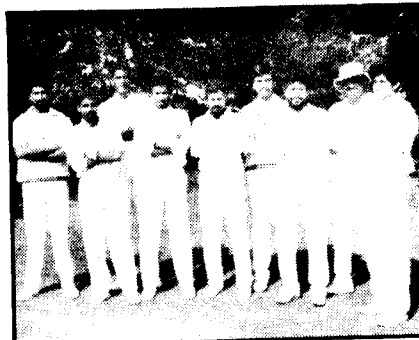
The perfection of timing and rhythm with the feet combined with the grace and suppleness of the eye, neck, arm and finger movements are the essence of Bharatha Natyam. Highlighting the eye movements, facial expressions and hand symbols are important and the lighting hampered these time and again. The sound technician seemed to have adjusted his system to the auditorium but failed to balance it with the accompanying artistes as well as the resonance from the stage hollow underneath.

The pick of the day were the Patham 'Katrinite Varum Keetham', where Anbu's costume and dance sequence combined with Ambika's melody and the Peacock dance where again the costume and the synchronisation of the two dancers worked out satisfactorily.

Let us hope and wish that Anbu and Angela will continue to nurture this ancient art for the present and the future.

Ras.

History Repeats Itself



L to R - **Singham, Thamilalagan, Muraleetharan, Dharmaraj, Prabaker, Srirangan, Thomas, Maheethan & Wiljenathan.**

The Jaffna Old Centralite cricket team kept their flag flying by winning the Festival of Cricket Trophy for the second year in succession at the Maori Club Grounds, Worcester Park, Surrey on bank holiday Monday, 27th May 1991 before a mammoth crowd. The Old Centralites under the leadership of T.G. Singham, who played a captain's innings in the finals against the Old Royalists won the shield in grand style. Thomas won the cup for the man of the tournament. Anurudran who sportingly stood down as captain in favour of Singham did an excellent job as manager and coach of the team.

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Krishnamritam



Composed by **Sri R. Visweswaran**, and choreographed by his wife, the renowned Bharatanatyam dancer and teacher **Sm. Chitra Visweswaran**, this solo dance-cycle was brilliantly performed at The Commonwealth Institute on June 1 1991, by **Sm. Chitra**.

The libretto of Krishnamritam, 'The Nectar of Krishna', consists of a number of compositions of the 17th century devotee from Karnataka, Purandaradasa, brilliantly woven into a three-act cycle by **Sri R. Visweswaran**. The Acts show the three stages of response by the devotee to the Lord: Vatsalya, love of Him as a baby and child; Madhurarati, love for Krishna as the Divine Lover, and Bhakti, love towards Him in his supreme Godhead as revealed, for instance, in Bhagavadgita.

Like the devotee's own via sacra through these stages of devotion, the rapt audience the other day was led by Chitra's radiant exposition of her art from one stage of absorption in the Divine to another. This was achieved happily, with the briefest of musical interludes, so that one's concentration and mood were not broken.

So successfully was the work welded together, that it would be hard to single out any one part for special mention. But the manner in which Chitra portrayed love for the Baby, and the Child's tenderness and wayward curiosity showed that, importantly, she had not forgotten her own childhood and could with total conviction convey to us all the wealth of emotion that surrounds love for, and by, a child. Via the agonized love for the young God in the second Act, Chitra could move readily to the awe-inspiring majesty of the third Act. The God saves the modesty of Draupadi, and counsels Arjuna before the battle at Kurukshetra, and we were left in no doubt of His supreme power and dignity.

The compositions were beautifully sung by **Sri R. Visweswaran**, and so clearly rendered that one realized indeed how helpful the Kannada texts were, and how faithfully Chitra adhered to their content. Flute accompaniment was by **Sri Unni Krishnan**, and I particularly liked his playing of Pahari and Nadanamakriya, that served as introductions to Acts II and III.

One of **Sm. Chitra's** senior students, **Sm. Srikala Suresh**, gave the Nattuvangam, and brilliant and sympathetic percussion on Mrdangam was played by **Sri Mayuram J. Shankar**.

This wonderful evening was organized by the British Association of Young Musicians, and we are deeply in their debt for so rewarding an experience that will in the memory live long.

John R. Marr.



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Abbey Life's range of family protection plans'

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