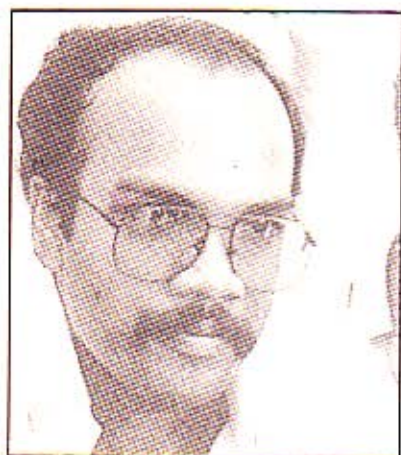


# ***Tamil* TIMES**

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S. Krishnakumar  
(Kittu)

● The Battle of Elephant Pass

● Tamil Refugees in India  
— An Uncertain Future

● London LTTE Leader to be Deported

● Whither Sri Lanka

● The Balkan Nightmare — A Question  
of Self-Determination

● The Ethnic Conflict

● Detained Editor's Release Sought

● Democracy & Tamil  
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● Gandhi Assassination  
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● The California  
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## A NEW INITIATIVE

An opposition MP in the Sri Lankan Parliament, Mr. Mangala Moonesinghe, has proposed that a parliamentary Select Committee be appointed 'to arrive at a political solution to the national question involving the devolution of power to the Northern and Eastern Provinces'. The government has already announced its acceptance of the proposal. Other political parties, including those not represented in parliament, have welcomed the proposal.

Of particular significance is the fact that the MP concerned belongs to the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) which, whether under the leadership of the late Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike or subsequently under Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, bears a major responsibility for initiating and implementing a series of discriminatory and oppressive measures that in the first instance precipitated, and later exacerbated the ethnic conflict in the island.

The primary obstacle to the resolution of the conflict has been the failure on the part of the two main political parties representing the majority Sinhalese community, the United National Party (UNP) and the SLFP, to raise the national question above sectarian party political considerations.

The SLFP has been particularly guilty of criticising, opposing and even obstructing each and every move the government and other concerned parties have made for resolving this problem. Up to now, it has also failed to present its own preferred set of proposals. To that extent the SLFP has been playing a negative and disruptive role.

The broken pacts and failed attempts of the past to effect a negotiated settlement to the national question were more due to the absence of a consensus on the part of the parties representing the majority Sinhalese community and less for reasons of obduracy or intransigence

on the part of the parties representing the Tamil speaking people.

The appointment of a parliamentary Select Committee will offer an opportunity for the first time for all political parties represented in Parliament to discuss and arrive at a political solution to the national question. There is no reason to believe that this exercise should take long provided there is the required political will and honesty of purpose. For a start, there is already in existence the legislative framework of Provincial Councils that emerged from the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987. This framework was wanting in many respects. It has to be conceded that the attempt to perpetuate the unitary state in the form bequeathed by the British has brought disaster to the country and its peoples.

One important fact is that the LTTE, which is the most dominant and decisive of all Tamil groups and which is engaged in the ongoing war, is not represented in Parliament and hence the proposed Select Committee will not have the benefit of their representation. Needless to say that any attempt at resolution of the national question without LTTE's participation is foredoomed to failure. This fundamental inadequacy has to be addressed by facilitating LTTE's participation through its own chosen representatives who may be offered the opportunity to submit their own proposals and take part in the deliberations of the Committee. The LTTE has already publicly called for a resumption of negotiations with the government and therefore it can be presumed that the LTTE will not want to lose the opportunity to place its own demands and proposals before the Select Committee comprising all political parties.

In the context of the ongoing war which has claimed thousands of lives and wrought havoc and destruction in the North-East of the island, the proposal of a parliamentary Select Committee is an initiative worth pursuing.

# The Battle of Elephant Pass

Rita Sebastian from Colombo

No battle in the decade old war between the Tigers and government forces generated so much media coverage as that of Elephant Pass. It was not merely a battle for the strategically located camp, lying on the narrow causeway linking the northern peninsula with the southern mainland, but a prestige battle as well.

The forces could not let it go the way of Kokkavil and Mankulam before it. The camp had to be freed. The Tigers on the other hand wanted to prove their invincibility.

The battle posed tremendous problems for the forces. An estimated 800 men were inside a camp which was literally surrounded by hundreds of Tigers in their well fortified bunkers.

Although the battle for Elephant Pass intensified on July 10, the camp was virtually under rebel siege since June 1990 when fresh hostilities broke out.

Four days into the battle, and the forces made one of its surprise moves. An amphibious landing at the fishing village of Vettalaikerni, 9 kilometres from the camp was to dramatically change the course of the battle.

'Operation Balevegaya' had battalions of soldiers ferried from the eastern province to fight their way, in what was Tiger territory.

The battle was fierce, as it was bloody. For the troops it was a hard slog on an unfamiliar, sandy, mine riddled terrain. And quite naturally the casualties were high on both sides.

In the month long war the military confirmed it had lost over 160 men and estimated over 2000 rebel casualties. Even given the fact that the rebel casualties are on the unbelievably high side, there is no getting away from the fact that hundreds of Tigers were killed in action.

Both sides threw in a substantial amount of men and material. Military sources confirmed that it was the single largest battle in its military history. As the Tigers directed their deadly 'pasilon 2000' mortars at the camp, and at advancing troops, the Sri Lankan airforce pounded Tiger positions.

The battle also had an unexpected element thrown in when the Tigers, for the first time, directed powerful anti-aircraft guns at helicopters, thus successfully preventing the evacuation of the dead and injured. The ashes of the 25 soldiers who fell victim to Tiger gunfire inside the camp, were handed over to their families the week after the siege on the camp was broken.

The forces won the battle at Elephant but, not the war. It still continues despite President Ranasinghe Premadasa's appeal to the Tigers that at least now they should 'give up their campaign of terror. There are no victors in a war. All are losers', he said.

The Tiger leadership put some of its battle hardened fighters to the front. This was no hit and run operation but a battle that was virtually a face to face confrontation. More in the nature of conventional warfare.

The fact that the Tigers were able to keep fighting, they still are, even after almost a month proves their fighting capabilities. More to the point is the fact that they like the forces had a powerful arsenal of weaponry. Not even the crackdown in Tamil Nadu and an year of fighting the Sri Lankan forces has immobilised their fighting machine.

They also seem to have an inexhaustible supply of fighters. Even after so many years of battle they don't seem to be low on men.

Although the military top brass have not divulged what their future plans are at the moment, it is unlikely that the forces will march north to the peninsula. An operation to take on the peninsula would mean thousands of soldiers besides the military hardware that such an exercise would entail.

The government is also not down playing the reality that other areas in the northeast, and the border villages would become vulnerable to Tiger attacks with thousands of troops moved from other areas and deployed at Elephant Pass.

## - A New Effort at Peace

And so once again you come back to the question of a negotiated political settlement. All eyes are now focused on the Parliamentary Select Committee that is to be appointed following a motion by Sri Lanka Freedom Party front-runner Managala Moonesinghe.

Under standing orders the committee will comprise 12 members, but could well be expanded. Will it be able to reach consensus and put forward a substantial devolution package that will meet the aspirations of the Tamils? How will the minority Muslims respond to a solution which may not give them equal representation with the Tamils in the northeastern provinces?

What is heartening is that, for the

time the Sri Lanka Freedom Party is of the view that it must make a positive contribution to resolving the national question. Although it was vehemently opposed to the provincial councils it is understood to have decided to go even further, and agree to some kind of regional autonomy after excising some of the Sinhala dominated areas of the eastern province and annexing them to other provinces.

What it would mean in effect is redrawing boundaries to accommodate the Tamil demand for a permanently merged northeast province.

As was articulated at the recent meeting of SLFP MPs that unanimously adopted the Mangala Moonesinghe motion, it has to be a devolution package acceptable to the Tamils, not the Tigers in particular.

The history making adoption of the SLFP motion without division in parliament on August 9, augurs well for the appointment of a Select Committee that will we hope find that elusive solution that will bring an end to the northeast conflict and return the country to peace and political stability.

It is probably the first time that government and opposition will seriously address the national question. The time for playing politics is over. The people need the political will and statesmanship of its leaders to bring an end to a war where there will be no winners as President Premadasa himself has said.

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# Uncertain Future for Tamil Refugees in India

by M.R. Narayan Swamy of AFP

MADRAS, India, Aug. 3 - Thousands of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees face an uncertain future in India following the gruesome assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

The Government of Tamil Nadu State, where Gandhi was killed, has cracked down determinedly on illegal Tamil refugees after thousands failed to register with authorities.

Some 2,000 Tamils have been arrested throughout the southern coastal State for staying in India without valid documents.

Tamil Nadu officials say more arrests are in the offing, and Sri Lankan Tamils living here say they have never faced such hostility and distrust from Government agencies and the local population.

There has been a very, very noticeable change in the attitude of the (Tamil Nadu) people,' said Chelvanayagam Chandrasaran, a Sri Lankan who runs a refugee relief organisation here. 'Our people are facing a fairly unpleasant situation.'

Indian Tamils, after strongly backing the cause of their Sri Lankan brethren for years, appear to be having second thoughts in the wake of Gandhi's assassination by suspected Sri Lankan Tamil guerrillas.

'People are suspicious about Sri Lankan refugees,' said Cho Ramaswamy, a well-known Tamil journalist and political satirist 'the people of Tamil Nadu want them to go back.'

Added a Madras University student: 'For years we gave them shelter, what have we got in return... Gandhi's assassination.'

'The sooner they (the Sri Lankan Tamils) are all packed off the better,' she said.

Tamil Nadu politicians say the unprecedented and unconcealed revulsion against the Sri Lankans is an extension of the people's anger at the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the biggest Tamil rebel group in Sri Lanka.

The LTTE, believed to maintain an extensive network in Tamil Nadu, has emerged as the key suspect in Gandhi's slaying and its denials are not taken seriously here.

'People suspect that many Sri Lankans may be willingly or unwillingly extending help or assistance to LTTE activities (in Tamil Nadu),' said Jana Krishnamurthy, a Right-wing Hindu politician.

There are more than 200,000 Sri Lankan Tamils in Tamil Nadu. Nearly 115,000 of them live in some 200 refugee camps, while the others live on their own throughout the State.

Many have been here since 1983, when a Tamil Separatist campaign erupted in Sri Lanka's North-East, triggering a violent backlash which forced civilians to flee to India by the boatload.

On June 24, a month after Gandhi was killed by a suicide bomber, the Tamil Nadu Government asked Sri Lankans living outside refugee camps to register themselves with authorities or face deportation. Indians who had rented houses to Sri Lankans were also told to inform police about their tenants.

But when the July 19 deadline for registration expired, only 22,000 people had complied.

Chandrasaran said his volunteers were doing their best to get Sri Lankans to register, but added that there were reasons why many were withholding their identities.

He said many Sri Lankans have 'mingled with the local population. It will be very difficult to spot them' - a statement with which Tamil Nadu police agree.

Police sources said many Sri Lankans had married Indians or acquired Indian passports, settled down, bought property and gone into business.

But the refugees' defiant refusal to register themselves has added to the ire of the locals with whom they share

a common language, culture and heritage.

'People now make all kinds of remarks at us,' said a Sri Lankan man in his 50s who has lived here since 1984. 'The other day a shopkeeper told me not to hide Gandhi's assassin. It is terrible.'

Although most Sri Lankans have lived in peace in Tamil Nadu, the locals have blamed them for the increasing violence in the State - and for spiralling rents in some urban residential areas.

Recently, all that appears to have erupted like a volcano.

Chandrasaran had to deny press reports that some refugees celebrated the assassination of Gandhi, who in July 1987 sent Indian troops to Sri Lanka to fight the LTTE. Thousands died in more than two years of fighting.

'Most of us are ashamed or sick of (the killing),' said Chandrasaran, who is reportedly on the LTTE's hit list. 'But very many just cannot afford to talk.'

A former Tamil Nadu legislator who has supported Sri Lankan Tamil claims for autonomy since the 1970s called for an understanding of their problems.

'After allowing them to come and stay here, we cannot just dump them,' T.R. Janarthanam said. 'Before sending them back we must solve their problems and find them a home.'

The Tamil Nadu Government has not said what it proposes to do with Sri Lankans who have been detained or with those found not to have registered.

An official said the State Government would urge New Delhi to ask Sri Lanka to take its citizens back, but he admitted he had no idea whether the Sri Lankan refugees would agree to return.

## LONDON LTTE LEADER TO BE DEPORTED

The London leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), alias Kittu, has been informed by the British government that he is to be deported from the United Kingdom. In the first instance he was given time until August 7 to leave the UK on his own accord, but it is reliably learnt that the period allowed has been extended.

Mr. Krishnakumar who is a Central Committee member of the LTTE has functioned as the spokesman for the international secretariat of the LTTE from its London office in Tavistock Place since his arrival in the UK in June 1989. He was a well known figure in Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka where

he held the rank of district military commander of the LTTE. In 1989 he came to Britain for medical treatment..

The news about his proposed deportation has raised natural concern among LTTE supporters in the UK. Many feel that in making the decision to deport Krishnakumar, the British government has submitted to pressure following the assassination of India's former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in respect of which the finger of accusation has been directed at the LTTE despite its denial of any involvement.

In August last year Mr. Krishnakumar applied to the Home Secretary seeking political asylum in Britain, but the application was turned down. On 29 July he was served with a letter stating that the Secretary of State for

Continued on page 6

**Continued from page 5**

Home Affairs has decided in principle to deport Krishnakumar from the United Kingdom for the reason that he had abused his position organising fund-raising by coercion and attempting to buy arms and otherwise further the aims of a terrorist organisation. Mr. Krishnakumar has been told that his presence in the UK would not be conducive to the public good for reasons of a political nature, namely the international fight against terrorism.

He also has been informed by the Secretary of State that it was not his intention to detain him, but further consideration would be given if he did not leave by the stipulated date.

The provision of the Immigration Act under which the Home Secretary has acted does not provide Krishnakumar with a right of appeal to the courts against the proposed deportation. The only right he has is to make representations to a panel of advisers appointed by the Home Secretary. This procedure which has been the subject of severe criticism by civil rights organisations does not allow the person facing deportation to know about the evidence upon which the Home Secretary has come to his decision, nor does it permit legal representation when he appears before the panel.

It is reliably learnt that if Krishnakumar is compelled to leave Britain, he will be seeking asylum in some other European country.

## TAMIL RESIDENTS HARASSED

Tamil residents in Colombo and its suburbs have been facing harassment from security forces following the bombing at the JOC headquarters in Colombo on June 21. In addition to the requirement that all Tamils who had recently arrived in Colombo must register with the local police stations, hundreds have been taken into custody in widespread search operations undertaken by security forces and detained allegedly for questioning. Although many have been released, it is reported that still there are over two hundred persons being held at various police stations including Fort, Pettah, Kotahena, Wellawatte, Slave Island, Mattakkuliya and Bambalapitiya.

Since June 90 when fighting broke out between government forces and the LTTE, tens of thousands of Tamil families have fled from the north and east to the south of the island and most of them have found accommodation in Colombo and adjoining areas.

Recently two men in uniforms entered a house in Ratmalana and questioned the female occupants regarding

the identity of the persons living there. But when the head of the household went to the police station the next day to handover identity documents he was told that no officers from the station had visited his house the previous day. He expressed concern about the identity of the uniformed men who visited his house and he feared that the current search operations could lead to abuse and harassment of innocent law-abiding citizens.

Tamil residents in Mount Lavinia, Ratmalana and Moratuwa have complained that they have been harassed and intimidated by search teams who were insisting that all Tamils, not just boarders or recent arrivals, should be registered. Members of the Tamil community have expressed fear for their security as they are not usually issued with documentary evidence when they register themselves at police stations. 'We responded to the government's call by registering with the police, but we have nothing to prove it. At any time the police could deny our registration', a resident said.

## LTTE's 'AIR POWER'

Newspaper reports in Sri Lanka have revealed government's fears about the LTTE having acquired aerial military capability.

It would appear that the Sri Lankan Air Force recently stepped up air surveillance in northern Sri Lanka after military intelligence warned that an unidentified aircraft spotted recently over northern air space might have belonged to the LTTE. The Defence Ministry was reported to have 'reacted fast' to the warning by working out a new air defence strategy to counter any possible air attacks by the LTTE or an unidentified ally who could be chartering aircraft. The recent purchase of supersonic interceptors was an important part of the new air defence plan. Local pilots had been trained to handle the supersonic aircraft.

'We can never leave out the possibility of the LTTE acquiring air power. But we are ready for any challenge from foreign or local elements', Air Force Commander Terrence Gunawardene was reported to have said.

The difficulty encountered by the air force to provide adequate air cover for ground troops or even continue to provide much needed supplies to the besieged garrison at Elephant Pass which was under continuous attack by the Tigers from July 10 has reinforced the view that the LTTE has acquired anti-aircraft weaponry. At least one anti-aircraft gun which had never been seen in Sri Lanka before was detected by the Air Force pilots during the Elephant Pass battle. According to defence ministry sources, the weapon

which was spotted only during night flights was described as the most powerful weapon in the hands of the LTTE.

## NO MORE 'HOUSEMAIDS'

Sri Lankan women going to the Middle East will no longer be described as 'housemaids', they will carry the glorified job title of 'house-nurses', according to a proposal put forward by the Minister of Labour and Vocational training, G.M. Premachandra.

It is said that the objective of the name-change move by the Minister is 'to raise the dignity of labour'. Once the proposal comes into effect, recruitment agencies will be required to publish their advertisements of employment opportunities as vacancies for 'house-nurses' and not housemaids.

As the Minister is trying to raise the dignity of labour by this name-change, there are reports that Sri Lankan housemaids who bore illegitimate children in Saudi Arabia have been brought back to Sri Lanka after they were imprisoned by Saudi authorities. The new born infants who were also imprisoned with their mothers have also been brought back. Eight women who had refused to reveal the paternity of the infants had agreed to travel back incognito.

It is no secret that women who go for employment, particularly as housemaids, to the Middle East have been subjected to all sorts of abuse including sexual abuse by the male members of the houses in which they are supposed to work. A change of name in their job title is not going to make any difference to their plight.

## DEADLY TRADE PROSPERS

Once upon a time several species of elephants were distributed all over the world including Britain. Today only two species of this largest living land animal, the Indian and the African, survive but under threat of extinction.

The one principal cause for the danger these animals face is a creamy-white hard substance of their tusks, the ivory. Vanity products to serve the human ego from ivory include bangles, beads, rings, combs, figures and models and even decorative carved ivory stands from the larger tusks. The whole trade in these products is obnoxious.

Apart from the fact the elephant is sacred to the Hindus with its strength and intelligence conceptualised as belonging to the realms of the supernatural, this pachyderm has been for cen-

Continued on page 7

# Detained Editor's Release Sought

Mr. S. Sivanayagam, presently Editor of the fortnightly 'Tamil Nation' has been taken into custody by the Tamil Nadu police and detained. The paper's office was raided by the police as part of a wider crackdown against activities by Sri Lankan Tamils following Rajiv Gandhi's assassination and Mr. Sivanayagam and three others were taken into custody. They are being held on charges of contravening the provisions of the law relating to the Press and Registration and Foreign Exchange Regulations and for remaining in India without a valid visa.

Mr. Sivanayagam, is a former editor of the weekly, 'Saturday Review' published from Jaffna. The paper was banned in early 1983 by the Sri Lankan government for the mere reason that it fearlessly exposed the atrocities committed against Tamils by the security forces and severely criticised the government for its misdeeds. When he feared arrest and detention by the security forces, Mr. Sivanayagam fled to Tamil Nadu in the middle of 1983 and ever since he has lived there.

Mr. Sivanayagam was a regular contributor to the 'Tamil Times' until recently when he became editor of

'Tamil Nation'. His arrest and detention has caused much concern among large sections of the Tamil community.

Mr. P. Rajanayagam, Editor of 'Tamil Times', in a letter to the Indian High Commissioner in the UK, seeking his intervention to secure Mr. Sivanayagam's release has stated:

'The fact that Mr. Sivanayagam has lived in India since 1983 has been well known to the authorities. He was known even in India as a journalist of some repute and he did not lead a clandestine life. He was living with his wife and children quite openly. In fact just before the war broke out between the IPKF and LTTE in October 1987, Mr. Sivanayagam was flown to Jaffna in an Indian Air Force plane to undertake a mission of mediation. This being the case, to hold him on a charge that he was living in Tamil Nadu without a valid visa, to say the least, is quite unreasonable.

'The paper he edited, 'Tamil Nation' was admittedly pro-LTTE in its stance. I am sure you are aware that there have been many papers in India which have published pro-LTTE articles and views. For that reason, one would not incarcerate the Editors of these papers.

Mr. Sivanayagam would appear to have exercised the same freedom of expression enjoyed by others in India in publishing his paper. In fact the authorities must have known that he was editing this paper for a long time now, and it does seem strange that they should have now taken him into custody and detained him on charges of technical breach of the law relating to press and registration of newspapers.

'There appears to be no doubt that Mr. Sivanayagam has become a victim of the tension and atmosphere created following the brutal assassination of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. We ourselves have condemned this crime of barbarity as an act of unvarnished terrorism. The fact that the finger of suspicion is being directed at the LTTE in regard to the assassination does not mean that Mr. Sivanayagam also should be victimised.

'On a personal note, Mr. Sivanayagam is not in a state of good health. His wife and children depend on him. His continued detention would cause irremediable harm to him and his family. In the circumstances, I shall be grateful if your Excellency will communicate with the appropriate authorities to secure the early release of Mr. Sivanayagam from his detention'.

## Continued from page 6

turies a working companion of man as a beast of labour and burden, and as a mobile fortress in wars of old. This partnership has served humanity well.

The greedy ones have no scruples and when it comes to a few bucks, their regard for morality or propriety will go begging. Sacred or not, friend or foe, they have caused wanton destruction to many elephant populations and that of several species of wild life for mere trinkets and rubbish.

Sri Lanka is a signatory to the CITES - Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. Even though poaching for elephant tusks has been controlled to a considerable extent on the African continent, in Sri Lanka the evil trade is prospering beyond belief.

Recently the British Daily Mirror reported that the deadly trade in ivory is the ugly face of tourism on the paradise island of Sri Lanka. Dave Currey, a member of the Environmental Investigation Agency, following an undercover investigation said that despite the country signing the worldwide ban outlawing the ivory trade, it was being openly flouted there.

It was also found that ivory products are even exported to Britain and to make this a local trader alleged that he uses the State Gem Corporation to his advantage. He also appeared to be

familiar with a shipping agent who will assist him. Probably, all these products will get passed off as gems!

The paradox is that Sri Lanka has a government-funded orphanage for baby elephants. Elephants are treated as veritable temple beings by the Buddhists and the Hindus. They are also popular official gifts by the Sri Lankan Head of State to children in other countries.

Yet under the eyes of the state officials and the enforcers of the law, the ivory trade will prosper, the tourism industry being the largest client. The country's civil war too has wrought havoc to the elephant populations in the jungles of the northern and eastern provinces.

If the elephant is an almost divine creature, how come it is under threat in Sri Lanka?

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Some parents express the view that the Jaffna University authorities might be acting under pressure from the LTTE which is attempting to use this method to get these students back to Jaffna. The Association has requested the University Grants Commission to permit the registration of their children by post.

A UGC spokesman is reported to have said that the Commission would urge the Jaffna university authorities to agree to postal registration by these students.

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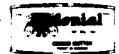
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## NEWS IN BRIEF

● **THREE OFFICERS** and twentyone soldiers of the Sri Lankan army were killed in an attack by the LTTE on Wadamunai Road, Welikanda in eastern Sri Lanka on August 3. The three officers have been identified as Captain Shantha Edirisinghe, Lt. Ajit Chandrasiri and Lt. Weerasiri Silva. The army unit headed by Capt. Edirisinghe was on its way to their Wadamunai camp in a tractor when the Tigers ambushed them half a mile from Welikanda town and all the men in the unit were killed.

● **HOUSEOWNERS** and householders who have rented out houses, apartments, annexes or rooms or kept boarders or temporary lodgers with effect from 1 January 1991 should inform the officer in charge of the nearest police station whenever tenants or boarders are taken in or when they leave, according to a Defence Ministry notification. The notification added, 'the Ministry of Defence is aware that large numbers of persons from different parts of the country have sought refuge in Colombo and its suburbs owing to the prevailing conditions in certain areas of the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Subversives have taken this opportunity to infiltrate into the city along with these refugees and have rented out houses, apartments and rooms or are boarded with relatives and friends.

As the presence of subversives is a source of danger to the general public, it is necessary for the authorities to investigate the presence of strangers in the City of Colombo and its suburbs'.

The notification adds that 'printed forms for this purpose are available at every police station. If such a declaration is not made and the authorities subsequently trace a subversive or a sympathiser to such an apartment, house, annexe or room, the owner of such premises or the chief occupant will be held responsible and will be liable to incur penalties including confiscation of such property'.

● **THE SRI LANKAN** government is said to be reconsidering its previous decision to repatriate about 90,000 plantation workers holding Indian passports. According to Minister S. Thondaman the government was considering a new plan to screen plantation workers holding Indian passports and to give them the option whether to leave Sri Lanka or stay on a merit basis. He said that most of these workers were not willing to leave as it was their parents who had made the applications to leave in terms of the Sirima-Shastri Pact of 1964. There was a 25 year delay in the repatriation, and most of the people were now objecting as they were only small children then and were not a party to the decision to leave Sri Lanka. Many of them claim that their links are entirely with Sri Lanka and did not want to leave for India.

● **THE VICE-PRESIDENT** of the Tamil militant group, PLOTE, Karavai Kandasamy has appealed to the International Red Cross (ICRC) to intervene immediately and secure the release of over 5000 persons who he alleges are being held in detention by the LTTE. The detained persons include Tamils, Muslims, Sinhalese, members of other Tamil parties and their family members, and captured policemen and service personnel. Accusing the LTTE of subjecting the detainees to torture and deprivation of basic amenities, Mr. Kandasamy has asked

the ICRC to ensure that they are treated humanely and provided with necessary amenities.

● **NON-LTTE TAMIL** militant groups are making efforts to get their cadres held in camps in Tamil Nadu released and transfer them back to Sri Lanka. The Indian authorities are keeping the militants under security in separate camps. The PLOTE and EPRLF members in Puzhal, ENDLF in Trichchi, TELO in Puthukoddai and LTTE in Vellore. According to TELO's N. Srikantha, talks have already begun in regard to the release of their members including the TELO leader Selvam who along with others was taken in from his residence in Trichchi several months ago and kept in the Puthukoddai camp. Previous efforts for their release and to bring them back to Sri Lanka were brought to a halt following the dismissal of the Karunanidhi government in Tamil Nadu.

● **LEGAL PROCEEDINGS** have been ordered by the Attorney General to be initiated against a senior gazetted police officer, an Officer in Charge of a police station, on a charge of murdering his 'beauty queen' lover. The charred skeletal remains of a woman has been identified as that of the Avurudhu Kumari (New Year beauty queen) who was romantically linked with the police officer. The CID has recorded a statement from a former reserve police constable who has claimed that he was a witness to the killing. The OIC on the day of the crime had briefed the reserve constable of his plans to kill a girl claiming she was a member of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). On the fateful day, the OIC had invited his lover to attend a party hosted by one of his friends. Accompanying the OIC in his vehicle that fateful night were his lover and the reserve constable. Halfway through the journey the OIC had suggested to his lover that instead of going through the main road, they could make it through a garden. The girl alighted from the vehicle followed by the OIC with his gun in his hands. They walked and minutes later shots rang out, the girl screamed and fell to the ground. The OIC had set ablaze two tyres, poured gasoline over her, and her body was lowered onto the fire.

● **THE SRI LANKAN** government is under strong pressure by the business community in Colombo to devalue the rupee following the devaluation of the Indian rupee. At a recent seminar held in Colombo on 'Devaluation and Liberalisation in India: Its impact on Sri Lanka', many speakers including a former Governor of the Central Bank, Mr. N.U. Jayawardene, strongly urged the devaluation of the Sri Lankan rupee to a minimum Rs.50 or to a maximum Rs.58 per US dollar from the current Rs.40 which they claimed was 'grossly overvalued'.

● **DUE TO THE** battle at Elephant Pass between government forces and the LTTE and because of the imposition of an indefinite curfew by the government, food and other essential supplies to the north, particularly to the Jaffna peninsula have been

severely disrupted. Transport of food and other items hitherto undertaken by sea had come to a standstill. A number of ships destined for the peninsula have been re-directed to Trincomalee harbour. All road traffic beyond Vavuniya town also has come to a grinding halt. Several lorries carrying goods, mainly food items, have been held up at Anuradhapura and Vavuniya.

● **VALAIPADI RAMAMURTHY**, Indian State Minister for Employment and leader of Congress(I) in Tamil Nadu, said in a recent interview with All India Radio that it was time that all Sri Lankans in India were deported since it would be difficult to identify militants from genuine refugees. There were over 200,000 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in India and all of them should be deported and settled in Sri Lanka under UNHCR supervision. Alleging that the LTTE had close connections with 'separatist' movements in Punjab and Assam, he added that there had been threats to his life and that of others. 'If this situation is allowed to continue it will reach a point where Tiger activities cannot be controlled. Therefore the best thing to do is to deport all Lankans'. India had been pushed into taking this action because of LTTE activities and it should be held solely responsible for pushing the people into this plight, Ramamurthy added.

● **OVER 1800** Sri Lankan Tamils who had failed to register with the police despite three extended deadlines have been rounded up and lodged in special camps in various parts of Tamil Nadu. Following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the Tamil Nadu government issued a directive asking all Sri Lankan Tamils living there to register with the police. Out of a possible refugee population of 225,000, only 26,000 had registered by July 19. The police throughout Tamil Nadu began raiding Sri Lankan Tamil homes and other places where they were living and detained those who did not have valid documents or who were carrying on trade without the required permit. The police said that the detained Tamils had not been arrested as such, but their movements have been restricted by placing them in special camps.

● **TWO COMMANDOS** of the Special Task Force, including the Commanding Officer of the Arugam Bay commando detachment, Ashok Kumar, were killed and nine more were injured in a landmine explosion triggered by LTTE cadres on 28 July in the Thirukoil area in the Amparai district in eastern Sri Lanka. The blast ripped apart the South African made Buffel armoured personnel carrier. On the previous day, seven soldiers were killed and three more injured critically when three claymore mines were activated by LTTE cadres between Vantharaimoolai and Chenkaladi.

● **THE CAPTAIN** of an Indian-flagged cargo ship landed 46 Asian asylum seekers on the Turkish coast after telling them that they were on the Greek island of Rhodes. 8 Indians, 7 Bangladeshis and 31 Sri Lankans had come ashore near the Mediterranean resort of Marmaris. Three others were missing. The Asians told the local police that the crew of the Indian ship had given them nothing but hunks of bread to eat for 26 days and had stolen all their valuables before dumping them on the Turkish coast.

# The Balkan Nightmare — A Question of Self-Determination

by Richards Karunairajan

A NIGHTMARE situation is fast spiralling in Europe south of the River Danube. The 1918 borders that were re-established in the Balkans after the Second World War have come under threat with Yugoslavia facing an almost certain disintegration.

During the presidency of Josip Broz Tito from 1952 to 1980, the various constituent republics of Yugoslavia — Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosov and Vojvodina — enjoyed a large degree of autonomy. President Tito was able to achieve a considerable extent of harmony among the various communities particularly between the Croats who demanded regional autonomy and the Serbs who were determined to create a pan-Serbian state in which they would be the dominant people.

In recent years, with the Yugoslav economy taking a downward trend, the weaker structures of the country became exposed and old nationalist hatreds began to surface. Furthermore, there are many language groups in Yugoslavia. The main tongues are Serbian, Croatian, Montenegrin and Macedonian and they are all somewhat similar to each other. The other Yugoslavian tongues are Slovenian, Bulgarian, Several non-Slavic languages like Albanian, Hungarian, Italian, Romanian and Turkish. The various religious groups of the country are Catholics largely Croats, Islam and Orthodox Christian.

Unfortunately, the present crisis has been precipitated by nationalists by stirring up racial and religious hatred and by emphasising cultural differences between the various communities. But at the heart of the problem was economic mismanagement.

The history of these Balkan states goes back to around 500-700 AD when the various Slavic tribes such as the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs migrated to what is now Yugoslavia, displacing the Roman and other ethnic settlers of that period. Until the 12th century, a strong Croatian kingdom flourished before it became absorbed within Hungary. Bosnia which existed as an independent state for 74 years until 1254 soon became part of Hungary as well.

In 1168, Serbia became established as a powerful state and extended to what are today Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and the northern half of Greece. The Ottoman Turkish invasion off the 14th century had a

major impact on the Balkans. The Turks held their sway for nearly 500 years. In the years 1463, 1482, 1499 and 1526, the Turks were able to occupy Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro and much of Croatia with the exception of Zagreb, respectively.

In 1809 Napoleon annexed Dalmatia, Slovenia and a part of Croatia. During the latter 19th century Tsarist Russia helped Serbia, Montenegro and Bulgaria to fight against the Turks and support a number of uprisings in the other states.

Early in the 20th century, nationalist feelings were inflamed in Serbia when Austria-Hungary formally annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina and in the Balkan Wars against Turkey in 1912 and Bulgaria in 1913, Serbia gained Macedonia and other areas.

The recent events, following the declaration of independence by Slovenia on the 25th of June, have contributed to a rapid and chaotic political spiralling that is dragging Yugoslavia into a racial quagmire. The rest of Europe particularly the countries of the European Community have become utterly concerned. Virtually all the western European leaders are calling for moral, political and economic weapons to ensure a peaceful solution to the problem.

British Euro Member of Parliament, Tom Spencer, addressing a recent meeting in London said that from the moment Slovenia was bombed by the Yugoslavian federal forces, Yugoslavia has ceased to function as a country and Slovenia will now proceed to independence.

He added: 'The problems lie elsewhere too. The continued fighting between the Serbs and the Croats will lead to partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Albanian majority in Kosovo is on the verge of explosion'.

The Croats are determined to preserve their racial, cultural and territorial integrity and the republic's president, Franjo Tudjman has warned that any attempt to annex Croatia would be fought by every citizen. 'If Croatian independence cannot be ensured then we will call up our entire population to resist the aggression and occupation with their bare hands', he said.

Yugoslavia is certainly breaking up and majorities of people in Slovenia and Croatia want to secede and form independent nation states. What is involved here is a clear principle of the right of nations to self-determination.

This right is paramount — a right that has been grossly violated in many parts of the world.

Sri Lanka is a tragic example of the kind of repression that militates against this right in the treatment of the Tamils, who as a community have paid a massive price to date and the country's government in Colombo continues to be insensitive to this right.

It uses stark military force to confront the just demands of the Tamils who have now for nearly 40 years suffered oppression from the majority Sinhala-Buddhist course. It is not that there are no solutions to the Tamil problem. The Sri Lankan government is not willing to solve the problem because the country is being held to ransom by the powerful Buddhist clergy.

As events unfold in the Balkans, these may very well set a new precedent throughout the world and the UN itself will have to re-examine the question of self-determination of national communities with their own distinct ethnic and cultural heritage. This would be irrespective of the fact they are constituent members of larger states even if they are progressive and tolerant towards minority communities. In this, there is no doubting the fact that national communities like the Tamils of Sri Lanka will now be considered as being the vanguard of the struggle for national self-determination.

The Balkan bells for self-determination have just begun to ring and this is going to be heard far and wide. A country that may very well have to contend with this problem in the very near future could be India itself. However, it is for the Colombo government now to read the message from Zagreb loud and clear and act with a vision and wisdom worthy of the lofty tenets of Buddhism and not that of the political monks who make mockery of this great faith.

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# Whither Sri Lanka

Sujin Segar

When Gautama Buddha, the Kshatriya prince from Nepal, cast away the politics of the state, the splendours of the court, and joys and intimacies of family life and searched for the truth, he was expressing in no uncertain terms that his princely powers and authority would not help to free humankind from its suffering. He became enlightened and today, all humankind is blessed.

While there can be no doubt of the tremendous impact Buddhism has made worldwide and its rich influence on philosophies of all kinds and other faiths, in Sri Lanka however a land enriched with Buddhist traditions from the time of King Devanampiya Tissa, it has become the tragic captive of politicians, Buddhist scholars of questionable credentials and certain types of priests who are seeking their own 'nirvana' in the arena of strident 'Sinhala' politics.

There are, it appears from writings in the Colombo press, no Buddhists in Sri Lanka but only 'Sinhala Buddhists', the only heirs to a great civilisation. In fact this claim was based on the question DIVAYINA journalist Harith Gunawardena recently asked the UNP politician and the president of the Mahabodhi Society, Mr. Gamini Jayasuriya and was reported in the edition of 5 May 1991. Mr. Jayasuriya's answer stressed the 'great customs and sentiments the Sinhala Buddhist people espoused'.

The interview further emphasised the extremism of Sinhala Buddhist fervour which after contributing to the present sad state of affairs in Sri Lanka appears now to be involved in a 'witch-hunt' amidst the Sinhalese people themselves. Reacting to the interviewer's questions, the former minister went along with the view that there are elements among the Sinhalese who are conspiring against the interests and welfare of the 'Sinhala Buddhists'. A 'witch-hunt' is now on, and arraigned for immediate attack are the progressives, mischievously labelled as the 'western-educated, intelligentsia, missionary organisations and Marxist impersonators'.

In this interview, Mr. Jayasuriya lamented that after independence some people who had the opportunity of travelling abroad, came back to propagate worldly comforts among their people and these he said brought about a situation in which their 'mental content were eroded'.

But what is even more terrifying is the kind of racist material that is being freely published. It takes even the

naive and the unlettered to recognise that the faith Buddhism preaches cannot be in agreement with what is happening in Sri Lanka - a land of great beauty, endowed with so much potential not only for economic development but also to create a national society of people from diverse faiths and cultural backgrounds to live together and share their great traditions and rich heritage.

DIVAYINA, in its 21 April and 5 May 1991 issues, featured explosive articles by Sisira Paranathanthri on his reactions to the 'alleged wave of religious conversions'. He was also referred to as having 'led the attack against anti-national and foreign-funded organisations'. Buddhism has too long been used as a camouflage by selfish social scientists, journalists and politicians and if the tenets of Buddhism have real meanings for Sisira Paranathanthri and others of his kind, they are best advised to keep their views to themselves.

The Tamils contributed immensely to the development of their country and through their efforts, hard work and commitment, achieved considerable measure of success. Those who envied them, without being appreciative of their contribution, booted them through legislation at first and then released a series of sheer violence against them, their homes and finally attacked them with military might in their very homelands and cast them adrift as people without rights in their own country and thousands of them as refugees in other countries.

Today, the same kind of hatred is being preached against those who have given their best to the country among the Sinhalese themselves. Where will all these end and when will sense and sensibility in the rich traditions of the Buddhist faith, be achieved in Sri Lanka?

Even Sinhala historians held with great respect have come under fire and branded as agents who have acted against the best interests of the 'Sinhala Buddhists'. Professor Nandasena Ratnapala (DIVAYINA 12 May 1991), referred to the 'maggots that feed on Sri Lanka in the guise of social science'.

He really had to search in the filth and dirt for the 'maggots' of his imagination! These 'maggots', according to him, have appeared on the Sri Lankan scene from the 1960s and could be divided into two groups. The first group he claimed has launched an attack on the main religion - Buddhism, and on the main race, the

Sinhalese. The second, he contended, distorted some of the problems facing the country and earned money through such efforts.

And he pointed out that both groups functioned in ENGLISH. He also went further to say that those who came to the country to learn Buddhism did not even know Pali. If some conclusions could be arrived at from this observation, it is a matter of time before Pali is made the official language of Sri Lanka! After all, too many Sinhala words have Tamil roots!

Professor Ratnapala's most worrying concern is about Buddhism being represented as having achieved its peak in Sinhala chauvinism. This was, he said, because of the misrepresentations of history committed by the country's historians and went on to relate the story about the hundreds of Tamils killed in battle by King Dutugemunu. It seems, the king was overcome by pangs of remorse on his death-bed but was overjoyed when the Buddhist saints assured him that only two of the Tamils he killed were on the correct path to enlightenment and the killing of others was not a sin.

He was also saddened by the silence of the intelligentsia who as he said, 'had a correct understanding of religion'. But he does admit quite unwarily, while offering a sop to his conscience no doubt, that the words 'Tamil' and 'Dravidian' have 'taken on a tinge not because of racism but because they are linked to the concept of foreign invaders'.

Perhaps the professor should admit that this wrong concept has not been dispelled from the minds of the Sinhalese but exploited to the extreme to the detriment of not only the Tamils but to the entire country as well. Even more, Professor Ratnapala has conceded that the Tamils are a distinct nation by themselves. Is it therefore necessary to emphasise that the Tamils have their own right to self-determination and even more, to their own homelands that are traditional to them!

Sri Lanka's problems emanate from the failure to honour these and the fact that religion was used to undermine the goodwill, good naturedness and the tolerance of the Sinhala people. Now, the same sordid manipulation is being resorted to against their own people who see the Sri Lankan situation in its right perspective.

The terrible fighting in which the country is embroiled today is the result of the activities of extremists, all in the name of Buddhism. A recent article in INDIA TODAY titled 'Cyanide Warriors' made the following observation:

*'At quite another level, the cult of the Tigers would never have come into*

**Continued on page 12**

Continued from page 11

being but for the insensitivity and atrocities of an utterly racist Colombo Government. For more than a decade now, Sri Lankan forces have behaved like a mob. Their harassment of the population peaked this year with the Government's imposition of an economic blockade of the peninsula. Petroleum products, batteries, candles, electricity, medicines – even sanitary napkins – are not allowed in the region in the hope of breaking the Tamils' will. 'Supplies get in only through a network of bicycle-borne smugglers from the Sinhala mainland and boatmen from the Indian coast. Last week petrol was selling at Rs.800 per litre in Jaffna. To humiliate the Tamils, the Sri Lankan Air Force has routinely rained barrels full of human excreta from Chinese made 7-12 transport aircraft over Jaffna. No wonder there is no dearth of new recruits to the ranks of

the LTTE perceived to be the only saviour of the Tamils.'

The author of the 'History of Sri Lanka – British Period', Prof. G.P.V. Somaratna published by the University of Colombo, has come under heavy fire. In an article that appeared in DIVAYINA (26 May 1991), he has been chastised as one whose intention was to blacken the names of national heroes and thereby minimise the importance of their contribution. He has been branded as one among those people who are living in a 'dream world nurtured by British imperialist thought' and as 'second-class parasites, who sell such shocking untruths and earn pots of money as a result'.

Another writer, Gunadasa Amarasekera, (DIVAYINA 2 June 1991) said that the ambitions of the Tigers is not merely the creation of a separate state on the island of Sri Lanka but that this campaign is only the 'first

step towards setting up a greater Tamil Kingdom which will be centred on Tamilnadu in South India'.

He went on to say that 'the principal factor that has led to the birth of the Tigers is the racialism which has grown in Tamilnadu over the past few decades' and 'that the Tiger movement in the north is the strongest manifestation of this trend at the moment'. He is of the view that the 'Tiger movement has not been created because of the discriminatory practices of the Sinhalese people, which is what those people who are engaged in studying the ethnic conflict would have us believe'.

If these are the type of observations and views that are finding expressions in the Colombo press and if this is what the Sri Lankans are expected to accept – all in the name of Buddhism – what hopes do we have for a just solution to the terrible problems in Sri Lanka?

## Democracy & Tamil Liberation

S. Sivasegaram

I believe that the concept of democracy cannot be anything but central to a mass liberation struggle and think that the vast majority of the Tamil people share this belief. There are, of course, those who disagree with this belief and exercise their democratic right to express their disagreement. Some sincerely believe that an armed liberation struggle, by its very nature, is anti-democratic and cannot therefore accommodate the exercise of democratic rights, and there are others who would go even further and insist that liberation struggles necessarily cannot respect human rights. The rejection of democracy and human rights in the context of a liberation struggle appears to be due to the failure to recognise the existence of a moral justification for any liberation struggle and the failure to realise that any struggle which negates its source of morality heads for self-destruction.

It is not possible to discuss democracy, human rights and morality on the basis of definitions alone. Man's world is mutable and knows no eternal rules. But nothing has stopped mankind in its search for universal principles to guide its development, and the fact that science cannot claim possession of any absolute truth has not hindered man's search for scientific truths. Definitions of concepts, in the sciences and elsewhere, aim both to explain and to restrict meaning and application. People understand and interpret the meanings of words more on the basis of social practice than on the basis of definitions. Their knowledge of democracy, human rights and morality develops from social practice and does not

depend on the existence of definitions, not because definitions are unimportant but because social practice is more important. Definitions intended to help crystallise human thinking and develop a better understanding of the human environment inevitably place greater emphasis on explanation than restriction of meaning and application.

A recent argument against the need for the democratisation of the liberation struggle relied on the fact that there is no universally accepted definition of democracy. The absence of universal codes for morality and justice has not prevented societies from seeking to preserve and defend morality and justice, and the absence of undisputed definitions for god, soul and spirit has not made people reject religion. While it is true that concepts such as democracy, freedom and human rights, need to be understood in given social contexts, there are certain underlying principles which enable us to relate practice in one society to that in another. What seems just or democratic to a society based on private ownership of the means of production is not necessarily just or democratic to another based on collective ownership and the demand for greater democracy means different things in different societies. People, nevertheless, sympathise with struggles for greater democracy anywhere, despite differences in their understanding and interpretation of democracy, and very rarely does one hear complaints about an excess of democracy. The vast majority of the people in any society want democracy, freedom and justice and that is why struggles against

tyranny, oppression and injustice enjoy popular support.

A liberation struggle ceases to be a liberation struggle when it violates the democratic and human rights of not only the people it seeks to liberate but also others. History has time and again shown that the freedom of a people won at the expense of the just rights of another is not durable and leads to further injustice, oppression and destruction. It is only the shortsighted who seek to separate a just liberation struggle from the causes of democracy and justice by arguing that the liberation struggle takes precedence over everything else. It does not somehow seem right that a course of action seeking to establish democracy, freedom and justice can be allowed to trample underfoot the very things that it claims to fight for.

Some assume that democracy, justice and human rights will automatically be established after liberation and therefore think that undemocratic methods and unjust means of struggle are acceptable. Their view is not supported by history, and no liberation movement which denied democracy to the people during the struggle for liberation ever granted it to them after coming to power. Means, whether they justify the ends or not, certainly determine the ends, and the kind of democracy that a liberation movement will establish after liberation follows from the way in which it carries out its struggle. There is no reason to believe that a movement which lacks faith in the capability and the wisdom of the people for whom it claims to struggle will accept the judgment of the people in matters relating to the affairs of the state.

Some have unassailable faith in the infallibility of one or another liberation movement and its leadership. They

also seem to believe that the movement and the leadership instinctively know what the views and the needs of the people are and consultation with the people is therefore unnecessary. Their attitude will only discourage movements from seeking to become truly representative of the people.

There are many who restrict the meanings of the word democracy to elected government and therefore fail to see how a liberation struggle can be democratised. Democracy is more than elected government, and the electoral process, although an important aspect of democracy, does not in itself guarantee democracy. True democracy is possible only in an egalitarian society and cannot be achieved by substituting democratic rituals for the democratic spirit. Liberation struggles are associated with a high level of mass political awareness, and armed struggle is merely an extension of politics to the battlefield. To emphasise armed struggle at the expense of politics is to reject popular participation and the democratisation of the struggle.

The case for democratisation of the liberation struggle is based on the lesson of history that it is the people and not weapons that, in the final analysis, determine the outcome of the struggle. A liberation movement which relies entirely on military muscle, whether its own or that of an ally, ignores the importance of the masses, and, becomes increasingly isolated from the masses. Even when it recognizes the need for mass support, its reluctance to use the democratic process to solicit such support compels it to rely on pressure rather than persuasion so that it becomes fearful of not only the democratic process but also the masses.

The liberation struggle of the Tamil people was waged against national oppression and the denial of their just and democratic rights. It is paradoxical that a struggle aimed at restoring the rights of a nationality to self determination has degenerated into one that denies that right to other national and ethnic groups and that the struggle which also sought to defend democratic and human rights finds itself violating these very rights. I do not believe that the failure of democratic politics in the Tamil liberation struggle can be associated with the rise of any particular movement or with the development of the armed struggle. The roots of this malaise run deeper, and there is a need for some soul searching and a serious review of the social attitudes and norms in Tamil society.

The liberation struggle of the Tamil people is at a critical juncture and, as often, the conflict of interests of the rival movements appears to have taken precedence over the interests of the people. Some movements have

chosen to collaborate with the oppressor to settle scores with their rivals. The LTTE claims that this is a vindication of its position that its rivals are traitors and that it is the sole representative of the people. The LTTE has been singled out for criticism by some who accuse it of being a fascist organisation. If the excesses committed by the LTTE are the criteria for this assessment, the main rivals of the LTTE do not have a particularly commendable record on matters relating to democracy and human rights. The rivals of the LTTE have the duty to justify and explain to the Tamil people their collaboration with the dictatorial UNP regime; equally the LTTE owes an explanation for its conduct in the period preceding June 1990.

All the leading liberation movements need to defend to the people a whole series of actions carried out in the name of the liberation struggle. The people have the right not only to know but also to determine the course of the liberation struggle. But they have been allowed access to neither. The attitude of the liberation movements towards the Muslims and Sinhalese in the North and the East has been far from acceptable and reflects neither the true feelings of the Tamil people nor their long-term interests. The exercise of democracy in such matters of importance to the liberation struggle could have prevented many serious errors and won the sympathy of not only the Muslims but also a considerable section of the Sinhalese in the North and East and outside.

Many recognize that the liberation struggle has been weakened by the lack of unity and cooperation between the movements, which have allowed outside interests to use one against the other. If the Tamil liberation struggle cannot learn from the mistakes of other liberation struggles it will learn ever more bitter lessons before it accepts the importance of uniting all the forces which need to be united against the oppressor. The only peaceful way to resolve the differences between the rival movements is to let the people be the judges of what is right and what is not. Free and open discussion of the issues by the broad masses will make all but a handful recognise their mistakes and rectify them, and those who refuse to accept the public will be isolated and politically destroyed.

Past attempts at cooperation between rival movements never involved the masses and were not carried out in the spirit of equality and good faith. Personal and group interests have cost the lives of too many dedicated fighters for freedom. Much of this was possible because the people were kept in the dark about the course of the struggle

and the purpose of the negotiations between rival movements and between the movements and outside interests. The liberation movements need to educate themselves in the process of democracy and mass struggle and recognise that self-criticism is as important as criticism for the development of a liberation struggle.

Democratisation of the struggle is a necessary instrument in uniting all the forces which can be united against the enemy and ensuring that the broad masses will be the ultimate winners. Most liberation movements accept the democratic principle, at least in theory, and it does not take much effort to extend it to practice. Failure to do so will only help prolong and deepen the divisions and help no one but the oppressor.

## Military Accused of Smuggling

The Military police from Colombo recently took into custody seven military police personnel including a Captain and two Lieutenants in Anuradhapura who are alleged to have helped a businessman to smuggle banned items such as petrol, diesel, batteries etc. to the north of the island. The Anuradhapura businessman who is also the president of the Anuradhapura Private Bus Owners Association was also taken into custody. Cheques issued by this businessman have been found in the possession of a Brigadier W.M.P. Bandara of the Anuradhapura Military police unit. Mr. Bandara's case is now being investigated by the Bribery Commissioner's Department. Seven soldiers and one civilian who were produced before the Colombo Magistrate were remanded on charges of accepting bribes to permit transport of banned goods.

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# Sri Lanka: The Ethnic Conflict

Dr. P. Saravanamuttu\*

The outbreak of fighting in June 1990 in the north-east of Sri Lanka, between the government security forces and the principal Tamil guerrilla group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE or Tigers), highlights the intractability of the island's nation – and – state – building trauma. There have been threats of secession and revolution, as well as external intervention by the predominant regional power, India. The separatist war waged since 1983 by the minority Tamils against the majority Sinhalese-dominated government has been preceded and accompanied by internal upheavals within both communities and two armed insurgencies by the Sinhalese nationalist *Janatha Vimukti Peramuna* (JVP) to capture power (1971, 1987-9). In addition, there has been an Indo-Sri Lankan Accord and the installation of an Indian Peace-keeping force (IPKF) to contain extremism and to define the middle ground between the unacceptable and the unattainable. However, no national consensus within Sri Lanka has been achieved. The article will investigate the background to Sri Lankan insecurity and the prospects for national reconciliation.

## Ethnic tension: The Parliamentary Phase

Tensions between the Sinhalese and Tamils regarding their respective positions in an independent Sri Lanka can be traced to 1931, when the island was granted universal adult suffrage. The enduring Tamil fear since has been that their positions of relative advantage in the bureaucracy (gained through educational attainments and colonial policy), would be irretrievably jeopardized by majority Sinhalese rule. The Sinhalese, in turn, have been eager to redress this imbalance to reflect their majority status and claim of cultural and religious exclusiveness to Sri Lanka, in contrast with Tamil links to south India.

In the prelude to Sri Lankan independence in 1948, Tamil anxieties were expressed in their demands for parliamentary constituencies to be drawn up on a communal basis. Even though this was not granted, population distribution ensured that the 'first past the post' Westminster-style electoral system would lead to political polarization along ethnic lines, with the majority Sinhalese parties predominating in the south and their minority Tamil counterparts in the north. Tamil fears of marginalization at the centre were sustained by the

certainly of Sinhalese preponderance in government.

Tamil leaders, nevertheless, committed themselves to the parliamentary process after independence. This strategy exchanged support and participation in government for measures safeguarding minority interests, and attested to the strength of the inter-communal elite consensus on parliamentary democracy and the constitutional ethos of the island's independence movement. But political accommodation, although subscribed to in principle, was not fully reflected in practice by government policy. Despite setbacks, however, this consensus survived until it was finally eroded in the 1970s.

The acceptance of political accommodation and parliamentary democracy as the framework for managing societal tensions was undermined by intra-elite competition with exploited ethnic populism for partisan advantage. Explicit identification with ethnic populism has come to be regarded as crucial to electoral success, thus legitimizing the older and divisive bases of identity as the ultimate sources of political power, and exposing the inability of the elite consensus to fuse them into a durable national identity. Herein lies the significance of the 1956 election, which was won in the south by the centre-left coalition of Sinhalese populist forces headed by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, founder of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), and in the Tamil north by the Federal Party (FP) favouring the constitutional arrangement between the two communities implicit in its title.

Once in government, in 1956 Bandaranaike fulfilled his election pledge to make Sinhala the official language striking at the heart of Tamil fears regarding education and employment. More damaging, his inability to control the Sinhalese Buddhist coalition that had propelled him to power forced him to further positions inimical to ethnic harmony. Consequently, his efforts in 1957 to ameliorate the impact of this language policy on the Tamils, with special provisions for the use of their language and the devolution of power to regional councils in a pact with FP leader Chelvanayagam, were obstructed by the innate chauvinism of the Sinhalese constituency and the political opportunism of the United National Party (UNP) opposition. Violent Sinhalese-Tamil riots ensued in

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1956 and 1958, the first of their kind in independent Sri Lanka, and were only exceeded in their intensity by the carnage of 1983.

Throughout the next decade the ensuing deterioration in ethnic relations was tempered by the enduring vitality of the parliamentary consensus. The Tamil leadership continued the practice of parliamentary accommodation, even though the first government of Bandaranaike's widow, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike (1960-64), vigorously implemented the official language policy and reneged on promises to reintroduce the devolution proposals envisaged in the Bandaranaike – Chelvanayagam Pact. With assurances of this score contained in a pact with the UNP, the FP joined the UNP-dominated national government in 1965. While legislation for the use of Tamil was passed, that relating to the devolution of power was not and the FP withdrew from the government in mid-1969.

Therefore, seen from the perspective of nation and state-building, the 1956 election was a milestone in Sri Lankan politics. In the south, the triumph of ethnic identity amounted to the capture of the state by the majority community for the purpose of political consolidation and control of economic power through nationalization; in the north, it represented the beginnings of a serious challenge to the unitary status of that state.

## Secession and insurgency: the pattern of political violence

The patterns of political activity initiated in the 1970s signalled the collapse of the parliamentary consensus and institutionalized the recourse to violence in the resolution of political conflict.

Disenchantment with elite leadership among both Sinhalese and Tamil youth coalesced into the conviction that their grievances could only be met through armed insurgency against the political centre. In the south, the basis for grievance has been the call for greater access to socio-economic and political benefits. Originally exemplified by the ultraleftist 1971 JVP insurgency of mainly educated rural youth, it re-emerged in the extreme nationalist JVP reincarnation of 1987 following the external intervention by India. In the north, youth dissent has been founded on frustration with the failure of political accommodation to prevent discrimination most notably the United Front (UF) government's alterations in university admission criteria. By the mid 1970s, the accruing bitterness had spawned a plethora of guerrilla groups, the most famous of which is still the LTTE.

Established political parties, in turn, have deepened this alienation by seeking to extend and consolidate their monopoly of state power at the expense of the parliamentary framework, thus reinforcing the trend towards violent opposition. Both the left-wing UF government of Mrs. Bandaranaike (1970-77) and its right-wing successor, the UNP regime of J.R. Jayawardene (1977-89), were guilty of this. Both were swept into power with unprecedented legislative majorities which they used for partisan advantage, and both changed the constitution – the first (1972) making Sri Lanka a republic in which the primacy of the majority language and religion, Sinhala and Buddhism, was assured, and the second (1978), replacing the political system with a Gaullist-style executive presidency. Most ominously, the UNP introduced the dubious precedent in December 1982 of a referendum to postpone elections for 11 years, thereby compounding the unrepresentative character of the legislature and sealing it off from radical opinion.

The common stand in the establishment's response to what in the JVP case was a threat to the character of the state and in the case of Tamil militancy a threat to its territorial composition, was its attempt to delegitimise both challenges by defining them as essentially terrorist in nature. In the south, however, given an armed insurgency from within its own ethnic constituency, the government's sense of danger was more acute and consequently its response more political. Sinhalese-dominated governments, regardless of ideological orientation, defended the political establishment with brutal determination while simultaneously moving to placate the radical elements within their ethnic group. This 'carrot-and-stick' approach was adopted towards the JVP by Mrs. Bandaranaike in 1971 and by Jayawardene's UNP successor President R. Premadasa in 1989. Alternatively, when confronted with Tamil secession the response was uncompromising and militaristic; the search for political solutions was necessitated only by military stalemate and impending bankruptcy in the Jayawardene era.

The response of the Tamil leadership was conditioned by the need to preserve political credibility in the new era of militancy. Interpreting the chauvinistic bias of its proceedings as the effective abandonment of minority rights by the UF government, the FP walked out of the Constituent Assembly in 1971 and closed ranks with other Tamil parties to form the Tamil United Front (TUF) a year later. In 1976 they adopted the Vaddukoddai resolution calling for a separate state of Tamil

Eelam to be established, through armed struggle if necessary, thus transforming themselves into the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF).

However, when the TULF won a popular mandate for the separatist election, it returned to the National Assembly as the single largest party in opposition, and its leader, A. Amirthalingam, accepted the official title of Leader of the Opposition. Nevertheless, the limited hope generated by this and the Jayawardene regime's promise of an all-party conference to address Tamil grievances soon evaporated; that forum was not convened and a district development council scheme was rejected as inadequate by the TULF. In addition, the excesses of an indisciplined army empowered with a draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act, combined with inflammatory rhetoric from within the cabinet, ensured that the vicious cycle of ambush, atrocity and invective destroyed any prospect of ethnic reconciliation.

This was irrevocably confirmed in July 1983. The mismanaged funeral arrangements of Sri Lankan soldiers killed in an LTTE ambush served as the catalyst for the most savage outburst of anti-Tamil violence and all-out war. Thousands were massacred or made homeless; many of the survivors fled to refugee camps, the north, to India or abroad. Extensive damage was done to property, with the worst atrocities being committed in the capital, Colombo. Most damning were the reported acquiescence and participation of sections of the security forces in the terror, and allegations that elements within the ruling party were behind its instigation.

The government belatedly responded by effectively blaming the victims. In a move openly designed to placate Sinhalese chauvinism it passed the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution which effectively outlawed advocacy of secession and, to counter adverse international publicity, blamed ultra-leftist groups for the slaughter as part of a determined conspiracy to destroy democracy in Sri Lanka. The JVP, whom Jayawardene had legitimized and whose leader R. Wijeweera had unsuccessfully contested him for the presidency in 1982, was proscribed along with other radical left-wing parties. The cumulative impact of these measures was to conclude the parliamentary phase to nation-building with the exclusion of the Tamil and anti-establishment Sinhalese parties. This also enabled the government to cultivate an image of itself as the embattled champion of the democratic political establishment against the forces of extremism and terror.

## Ethnic war: the external dimension

As full-scale ethnic war ensued, the external dimensions of the conflict were highlighted. Given its domestic Tamil Nadu constituency and the influx of refugees from Sri Lanka, India offered to mediate. However, when the determination of the Sri Lankan government to compromise even its policy of non-alignment in pursuit of a military solution became apparent, Indira Gandhi adopted a subtle two-pronged strategy. While presenting itself as an impartial mediator, India also offered sanctuary to the Tamil guerrillas in order to sustain the military stalemate indefinitely and to impress upon Jayawardene the imperative of a political solution. This also forcefully reminded Sri Lanka of India's overarching strategic priority – denial of the subcontinent to interference by external powers.

Jayawardene's plans to use the West to counter Indian leverage on behalf of the Tamils fell apart because of the West's reluctance to compromise relations with New Delhi over a conflict which it deemed to be of marginal significance. Nevertheless, numerous countries facilitated indirect assistance to the Sri Lankan government in the purchase of weaponry and counter-terrorist expertise. The latter was channelled through an Israeli interests section located in the US embassy in Colombo and through private sources, notably the Channel Islands registered organization Keeni Meeni Services. Equally galling to India was military assistance and training provided by Pakistan.

The elaborate Indo-Sri Lankan charade of pseudo-deterrence and counter-manoeuver only temporarily obscured the hard strategic realities of the conflict. Neither the Sri Lankan government nor the Tamil guerrillas could achieve a military solution on their own and, given the geopolitical and ethnic dimensions to the conflict, whatever objectives they pursued impinged upon Indian security concerns. Furthermore, in terms of a political solution this also meant that the most New Delhi would contemplate on behalf of the Sri Lankan Tamils was the approximation of Eelam through provincial autonomy rather than its attainment through secession. Accordingly, Indian mediation attempts focused on convincing the belligerents to agree to a package that would encapsulate the minimum interests of all concerned – recognition of legitimate Tamil grievances while maintaining the unitary status of Sri Lanka.

Although hostilities persisted, by late 1986 there were signs that the Jayawardene government would

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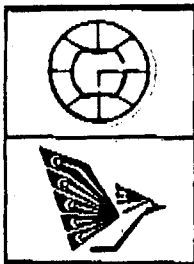
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**Continued from page 15**

accept provincial autonomy in principle, but not the Tamil claim that the north and eastern provinces (with significant Sinhalese and Muslim minorities), constituted their traditional homeland. Unable to break the impasse, the Sri Lankan government ordered the Army into a fresh offensive in May 1987. By the end of the year it was ready to commence the battle for Jaffna, the northern stronghold of the LTTE. Mindful of the enormous civilian casualties this would incur as well as the domestic political repercussions, underlined by then Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran's donation of US\$ 3.2 million in humanitarian assistance to the Tigers, the Rajiv Gandhi government dramatically embarked upon direct involvement; first by sea and, when that was thwarted by the Sri Lankan Navy, a much publicized air-drop on 4 June. This was largely designed to demonstrate Indian power-projection in the region and to remind the Sri Lankan government of New Delhi's determination to obstruct a military solution. By 29 July, Colombo had absorbed this basic lesson in regional geopolitics and, apprehensive too of the severe economic toll of the war, agreed to the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord.

**The Indo-Sri Lanka Accord**

The crux of the Accord was the substitution of provincial autonomy for Tamil secession. With the exception of extremists on both sides, there was general, if tacit, acceptance of it as a viable formula for ethnic reconciliation. The Sri Lankan government agreed to make Tamil an official language, with English as the link language between Sinhala and Tamil. It also agreed to enact legislation for provincial councils and to confine the army to barracks once the cease-fire had taken effect and the militants had surrendered their arms. Territorial obstacles were surmounted by the merger of the northern and eastern provinces into one administrative unit, subject to approval in a referendum. The timing of the referendum was left to the Sri Lankan President and has now been scheduled for 1991. India undertook to guarantee the Accord and to co-operate in curbing guerrilla activity if the militants rejected it. New Delhi also dispatched a peace-keeping force to the north-east of the island at the request of the Sri Lankan President to assist in the implementation of the Accord. In fulfilment of this undertaking, an 8,000 strong IPKF was deployed immediately and then enlarged beyond 50,000 men once the agreement unravelled.

At the inter-state level, another controversial aspect of the Accord was the exchange of letters (in an Annex to the

agreement) between the two leaders, in which New Delhi obtained a virtual veto over Sri Lanka's foreign policy. Sri Lanka agreed to review its arrangements for foreign military assistance and broadcasting facilities in accordance with Indian security concerns, and conceded that similar considerations would apply to the use of the strategic eastern port of Trincomalee. The oil tank farm there, another source of Indian anxiety, was to be developed as a joint venture between the two states.

**Return to militancy and upheaval**

Despite its substantive merits regarding provincial autonomy, the Accord was fatally flawed in its assumption that India could negotiate on behalf of Tamils without a clear and explicit mandate from them. Therefore, while the LTTE submitted to Indian *force majeure* with a partial surrender of weapons at the outset, by October 1987 it had reverted to guerrilla warfare against the IPKF following an Indian offensive. A fatal combination of arrogance and ignorance about the nature of the task confronting them led the IPKF to dissipate its stock of goodwill among the population, thus allowing the LTTE to present itself as the protector of the Sri Lankan Tamils. Consistently misconstruing the political equation in north-east Sri Lanka, India tried to circumvent the LTTE by intervening directly in the political process. The IPKF was employed to ensure that the November 1988 provincial elections, boycotted by the LTTE, resulted in victory for India's preferred eastern-province-based Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF). Without a strong foothold in the overwhelmingly Tamil north and reliant upon Indian protection and Colombo's goodwill, the EPRLF council had only limited legitimacy. It proved to be a thoroughly inadequate counterforce to the LTTE and, not surprisingly decamped with the IPKF.

However, by the time of its withdrawal at the end of March 1990, the IPKF had furthered some of India's objectives. Although it, too, was responsible for some atrocities, it averted a bloodbath in the north in 1987 and held separatism in abeyance in the short-term. While it sparked the second JVP insurgency, the IPKF also indirectly assisted in its destruction by relieving the Sri Lankan Army of the onerous burden of a guerrilla war on two fronts, thereby buttressing a Sri Lankan government from whom India had obtained highly favourable concessions.

In the south, the Accord and exchange of letters provoked instant and violent opposition against what was seen as an unwarranted Indian intru-

sion in Sri Lankan affairs. Some even spoke of the threat of 'Indian annexation.' The promise of provincial autonomy acquired notoriety too as the inevitable precursor to eventual partition and the diminution of power at Sri Lanka's political centre. Both Premadasa and National Security Minister, L. Athulathmudali openly voiced reservations while the SLFP opposition denounced decentralization and vociferously proclaimed its ability to obtain less demeaning guidelines for Indo-Sri Lankan relations. More seriously, the JVP, reincarnated as the champions of Sinhalese nationalism, portrayed the Accord as a betrayal of the Sinhalese nation by the political establishment and exploited popular sentiment to relaunch its armed insurgency in deadly earnest.

Throughout the 1987-89 period in which presidential and parliamentary elections (December 1988 and February 1989) were held, the JVP steadily escalated its rebellion. Its strategy of political assassinations and economically crippling strikes was matched by an unrelenting counter-terror operation conducted by the state through para-military and regular forces. As intended by the JVP, the election campaigns were marred by violence and intimidation and the results disputed accordingly. In spite of, or because of this, the UNP held on to power and by the end of 1989 had crushed the JVP rebellion.

Before turning on the JVP, Premadasa had effected a temporary realignment of political forces in the ethnic conflict. Given the shared need of the President and the LTTE to be rid of the IPKF, collaboration between the two took place. Premadasa, desperate to demonstrate his nationalist credentials and to fulfil his election pledge to solve Sri Lanka's problems without external intervention, entered into negotiations with the LTTE. The latter complied, eager to capitalize on a considerable bargain – the departure of the IPKF without incurring a cost to itself. Having initiated these contacts in May, Premadasa then engineered the worst Indo-Sri Lankan crisis. In a 2 June 1989 speech he unilaterally demanded the complete withdrawal of the IPKF by the second anniversary of its introduction – 29 July – and, when India flatly refused, he threatened to evict it. Though this was bluff designed for domestic political consumption, it succeeded in heightening tension. The LTTE responded favourably with the announcement of a largely symbolic cessation of hostilities against government forces. The JVP (which wished for the removal of both the IPKF and the Sri Lankan President) increased its terrorist activity plunging the state into near anarchy. As tempers sub-

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## THE CALIFORNIA TAMIL CONFERENCE

# 'Tamils: A Nation Without a State'

by Prof. Kopan Mahadeva

Over a hundred international professors, scholars, professionals and Eelam supporters from various parts of the United States, Canada, Australia, India, Japan, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, UK and Tamil Eelam met in California State University, Sacramento on 20 and 21 July at the INTERNATIONAL TAMIL EELAM RESEARCH CONFERENCE - 1991 on the subject of 'Tamil Eelam - A Nation Without A State.'

Research papers written by academics from California, California State, New Brunswick, Griffith, Harvard, Jaffna, Nebraska Wesleyan, Uppsala and Virginia Universities, The Birmingham Polytechnic, Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries, and Osaka Institute of Bio-sciences as well as by legal, engineering & business leaders and representatives of International Tamil Federations and Sangams from all over the world were openly and dispassionately discussed along with their hypotheses and findings, and also the future of Tamil Eelam, in relation to the current political impasse in Sri Lanka. The success of the conference was mainly due to the efforts of Chairman and Organiser, Professor John Balachandra and his indefatigable associates including Mrs. Sarojini Balachandra.

### Sri Lanka Government's Protest Fiasco

The conference got off to a flying start despite and possibly because of the formal protest at the Conference Centre, organised by the Sri Lankan High Commission, eventually parading 29 Sinhala slogan-shouters and placard-carriers including some toddlers, although some 5000 protestors were rumoured to assemble, from various parts of the USA, with warnings and threats of violence.

Amidst vehement protests by the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in Washington to the California State University's Governors, branding the organisers as supporters of terrorism, the authorities stood firm for the freedom of speech. The FBI who conducted very thorough investigations cleared the Conference as a genuine academic exercise, and the offices of President Bush and Vice President Dan Quayle then gave support, and requested copies of the Conference Papers and bound Proceedings, for serious study.

### Eelam and Sinhala Rata

The prevalent confusion relating to

the names EELAM & TAMIL EELAM, particularly among non-Tamils, was elucidated at the Conference so that the world at large, and the Sinhalese themselves could better understand what the Sri Lankan Tamil people are indeed fighting for, in the context of what they already possess.

EELAM is really the Island of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) as has been called in Tamil literature for several centuries. It is the old and sentimental Tamil name for Sri Lanka, gradually and naturally reinforced back into use, in the political reawakening and ethnic revivalism of the recent years, to replace the rather dull and impassive Tamil word ILANKAI as used in the present and immediately past Sri Lankan constitutions. Thus EELAM (Island of Sri Lanka) already exists. Both the Sinhalese-speaking people as well as the Tamil-speaking people (including Muslims) now as for several centuries before, are living in the Island of EELAM.

The combined North-Eastern Province of EELAM consisting of the current eight districts of Amparai, Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochi, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya forms the territory which has been called TAMIL EELAM and which has been inhabited by EELAM Tamils predominantly for over two millennia. So, TAMIL EELAM too already exists as the eight districts where EELAM Tamils live as a majority nation. The territory of these eight districts with its people and the natural and man-made resources is thus what is fondly and rightfully called TAMIL EELAM by its Tamil-speaking majority in their own language, and now in English by others also.

What the Tamil youth-in-arms are fighting for, backed almost fully by all the Tamils, after the failure of parliamentary democracy and diplomacy of the past 43 years in 'independent' EELAM is TAMIL EELAM's political and economic liberation from Sinhalese domination, Discrimination, deprivation and oppression.

As a compromise to the Sinhalese, the Tamils have voluntarily excluded from their demarcation of TAMIL EELAM, EELAM's central districts of Nuwara Eliya, Badulla and adjoining areas populated by over 1,000,000 Up-country Tamils of recent (post-British) Indian origin as well as the coastal Puttalam District for which the Tamils

have historical and ethnic claims. It is expected that the Up-country Tamils and the Tamils now living in the rest of EELAM will be invited into TAMIL EELAM once it is politically liberated. EELAM Tamils wouldn't mind the rest of EELAM, excluding TAMIL EELAM being called SINHALA RATA to satisfy the legitimate and reciprocal, natural sentiments of the Sinhalese people.

It was stressed at the Conference that two virtually independent federal-type states of TAMIL EELAM and SINHALA RATA will be the best arrangement under the current circumstances with a ceremonial, sentimental, nominal, connecting link at the centre.

### Discrimination, and Broken Pacts

Papers including from non-Eelam nationals denounced the manner in which over a million Up-country Tamils were unjustly decitizenised and disenfranchised overnight by Prime Minister D.S. Senanayake's UNP Government by Ceylon Citizenship Act No.18 of 1948 and Ceylon (Parliamentary Elections) Amended Act No.48 of 1949 thus reducing Tamil representation in Parliament by over 40%, in violation of Section 29 of Lord Soulbury's Independence Constitution prohibiting the 'enactment of any law that would make persons of any community or religion liable to disabilities or restrictions to which persons of other communities or religions weren't liable or confer advantages or privileges on persons of any community or religion which were not conferred on persons of other communities or religions.' Section 29 was violated yet again several times.

Thus, Tamils-disabling and discriminatory Official Language (Sinhala Only) Act of 1956 by Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike's SLFP Government, and his unilateral abrogation almost before the ink was dry, of his subsequent conciliatory Pact of 1957 with Mr. Chelvanayagam and its abandonment soon by his Government; Tamils' unsuccessful non-violent protest movements of 1956, 1958, 1961 and 1970 to 1976; the Republican Constitution of 1972 rejected by the Tamils; the failure of successive Sinhalese-dominated EELAM Governments to restore equal rights and opportunities to Tamils; the Governments-backed waves of anti-Tamil riots of 1958 to 1983, and the dictatorial legislations and state terrorism of President J.R. Jayawardene's era were isolated as causes for the continuing armed struggles, 100,000 deaths and 2,000,000 refugees in EELAM.

### US Journalist Weeps

Deanna Hodgkin, a Staff Writer and Foreign Correspondent for the INSIGHT Magazine, who had earlier vi-

sited the battlefields of Middle East, Afghanistan, Amritsar and Kashmir as part of her assignments, and seen horrific torture, beatings, bombings and shooting declared that nothing was so terrible as she witnessed in Sri Lanka in 1990. She illustrated her talk with a pre-circulated paper and a slide show in the middle of which she broke down, wept, and abruptly terminated her presentation, moving the audience also to tears. This happened in the morning session of 21st July.

Also, helicopter strafing of Tamil civilians, indiscreet bombing of towns with heavy, napalm, and excreta bombs, intimidation, kidnapping, robbery, arson, mass torture and murder of suspects and villagers, mass cremation of victims' bodies using rubber tyres and gasoline, burning and bombing of Jaffna's Public Library and Model Market, houses, churches, temples and schools, cutting off of electricity, telephone, food, fuel and medical supplies were all cited in papers and discussions as genocidal evidence documented by international agencies and NGOs such as AI, ICJ, ICRC, UNHCR and MSF.

### Racial Colonisation and Discrimination

Prof. R.C. Oberst, and Dr. E.A. Selvanathan's paper quoted the findings of researchers like Kearney, IJC's Leary, Manoharan, Peebles, Shastry, Silk and Sims and Wilson as evidence of EELAM Governments' deliberate and surreptitious colonisation over 40 years of Tamil homelands with Sinhalese, to force-change population structures and boundaries of TAMIL EELAM's districts to oppress Tamils. Similar data were cited to prove discrimination against Tamils in education and employment, which really made the youth take up arms.

### Youth Uprising

Reasons were identified which resulted in the uprising of the usually docile and passive Tamil youth in 1972 intensified mainly after TULF's final 1976 Vaddukkoddai Resolution, as: Youths' vision of a bleak future in education and employment, vis-a-vis the Sinhala Only Act, the repeated failure of Sinhalese-led parliamentary democracy and diplomacy and consequently youth distrust in the efficacy with the Sinhalese political psyche, of their own elders' methods of non-violence, peaceful protests, Satyagraha, and pacts in an atmosphere of unity and co-operation with the majority nation.

The divide-and-rule tactics used by the EELAM governments in fostering quisling groups among Tamil militant movements were deprecated and also the fragile resolve and political wisdom of such groups and their leaders, in the

context of a lasting solution.

Although the constraints of guerrilla-type resistance were well appreciated, the internecine warfare and fraternal and civilian killings were pointed out, especially by non-EELAM delegates, as the main reasons for the apparent lack of support from foreign governments for the Tamil cause confounded presently by the suspicions raised by Rajiv Gandhi's assassination inquiry. Co-ordinated actions from Tamil intellectuals and professionals with EELAM's external supporters, with effective efforts towards international public relations and lobbying were pointed out as the best path for the future, to very soon realise EELAM Tamils' legitimate goals.

One speaker's concluding words nicely summed up the consensus of the delegates' advice to President Premadasa, 'The government's legitimacy in the Tamil areas will have to be earned and cannot be won at the point of a gun ... or face endless war or partition.'

### India's Continued Role and International Support

Mainly during informal discussions, it was gathered that many delegates considered the Indo-LTTE war of 1987-90 as an unfortunate episode which took place mainly due to India's failure to act impartially and decisively as peace-keeper in the initial stages, since the army commanders were not given clear-cut instructions and guidelines by the political leaders, but the same delegates also felt that India has an important continued role and obligation in addition to self-interest to participate in building peace in war-torn EELAM, and particularly to assist the Tamils in securing an honourable and lasting solution to their most important problems.

It was also stressed in some papers and session discussions, that EELAM Tamils and their representatives should approach heads of government in world's leading countries personally, for financial and diplomatic support for TAMIL EELAM's political liberation, for economic reconstruction and development and, as soon as practicable, for associate membership in the Commonwealth and the U.N.

The view was expressed that United Kingdom has acted rightly in freezing aid to EELAM temporarily and, in view of the doubtful nature of the legitimacy of the EELAM government and its appalling human-rights record, other countries and international aid agencies too should freeze all aid, and certainly not sell any arms to EELAM until its ethnic problems are solved with TAMIL EELAM.

The examples of other ethnic regions and groups in the world which are facing similar problems with their own

governments and oppressive majority nations were referred to by several speakers who felt EELAM Tamils should forge links with Kurds, Lithuanians, Croats, Tibetans, Quebecois and similar groups for mutual support.

### Reconstruction

It was pointed out at the Conference, that large portions of the economic infrastructure such as roads, bridges, shops, office buildings, houses, factory units, boats, fishing implements, transport gear, farms, agricultural machinery, schools, churches, temples, libraries, markets and hospitals have been demolished or damaged. E.g., in Jaffna alone up to September 1987, 24737 houses and 8085 commercial properties had been completely, and 27876 houses and 2908 commercial properties partly damaged, along with 398 churches and temples. It was estimated that 150 million sq.ft. of buildings will have to be repaired and an equal extent rebuilt in TAMIL EELAM.

The funds required for the entire rebuilding task to pre-1980 levels, for all the infrastructure including roads, etc., was said to be possibly around US\$ 1500 million. Appropriate technologies and strategies for the reconstruction were discussed, and it was reckoned that TAMIL EELAM has sufficient manpower for reconstruction.

A Five Year Plan was recommended for reconstruction as well as development of TAMIL EELAM to the levels of the rest of EELAM, for which another US\$ 1500 was said to be required, even with the same manpower, including 2000 engineers and 18,000 other professionals.

The resources and potentials of TAMIL EELAM were comprehensively presented in one big paper in the areas of paddy/rice cultivation, animal husbandry and dairy farming, horticulture and subsidiary food crops, water resources, deep-sea fishing, aquaculture, coconut and palmyra plantations, fruits and orchards, cotton, hemp, cashew, sugar cane and soya beans, handicraft and cottage industries, medium and large-scale industries, information technology, energy resources, tourism, and public health priorities.

### International Aid and Bank of Tamil Eelam

After comprehensive analyses of the natural, mineral and manpower resources, potentials, cultural heritage, historical factors and contemporary aspirations and levels of enthusiasm of the people of TAMIL EELAM, particularly in comparison with the sizes, populations, natural resources, international affiliations and per-capita GNPs of 39 member states of the UN,

Continued on page 21

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**Continued from page 19**

75% of which are also members of the Commonwealth and smaller than TAMIL EELAM both in size and in population, and eight countries smaller either in size or in population it was concluded in a popular presentation that TAMIL EELAM is indeed viable as an independent economic nation provided around US\$ 3 billion could be found from international aid, for immediate reconstruction and development on a Five Year Plan, so long as TAMIL EELAM also has the freedom to make relevant policy decisions, and negotiate direct international aid and service contracts.

It was recommended that in any event, EELAM Tamils must start befriending and lobbying world governments and heads of state from now itself so that their support would mature as and when needed.

Many delegates also agreed with the recommendation in a paper that a BANK OF TAMIL EELAM should be established forthwith, on the private initiative and funds of wealthy EELAM Tamil individuals and organisations, with its head office in London or New York and branches in UK, USA, India, Australia, Germany, France, Switzerland, Canada, and any-

where else there is scope to serve the individual and national interests of EELAM Tamils. It was suggested that the customers should be provided with internationally competitive, comparable service, so that they would seek to join no bank other than the proposed BANK OF TAMIL EELAM, any time in their life.

**Self-Determination and Secession**

Political models for TAMIL EELAM were examined and also Tamils's right to self-determination and secession, by political researchers and legal experts and scholars. Canadian and Indian models of federalism were deemed unsuited to the EELAM Tamils who might accept, it was felt, a loose and nominal link at the centre. EELAM's lawyers were urged to start drafting a new constitution for EELAM Linking SINHALA RATA and TAMIL EELAM on the basis of virtual independence.

Quiet elation pervaded the auditorium when several papers and speakers on self-determination concluded, with case citations, U.N. declarations, international ethnic comparisons and legal arguments that TAMIL EELAM indeed has an irrefutable right to self-determination as well as to secession.

Thus, it was suggested that time is running out for President Premadasa and the EELAM (i.e. Sri Lankan) Government for consultation and fair compromise to forge a new EELAM.

**Disclosures in Two Other Note-Worthy Papers**

The existence of an EELAM Tamil Buddhism for 2000 years, and the recognition, in the World Encyclopaedia of Cultures, of EELAM (Sri Lankan) Tamils as a separate nation, with their own individuality, different from all other Tamils, were also disclosed.

**Principal Participants at the Conference**

The main authors and speakers at the Conference were: Professors J. Balachandra, G. Hart, K. Mahadeva, R. Oberst, B. Pfaffenberger, P. Schalk and J. Wilson; Drs. K. Arulanantham, Sachi Sri Kanthi, E.A. Selvanathan and N. Sriskandarajah; Mss. D. Alexander, D. Hodgins, K. Parker; Messrs N. Chinivasagam, T. Gunanayagam, A. Pararajasingham, W. Paul, J.M. Rajaratnam, Justice S. Ponnambalam, V. Rudrakumaran, K. Satchithanathan, K. Sivarajah and D.N.S.K. Thankarajah.

**Continued from page 17**

sided and diplomacy was rediscovered, a timetable for the IPKF withdrawal was reached and the possibility of a treaty to formalize the new relationship between Sri Lanka and India was broached.

By April 1990 a number of factors could be cited in support of a cautiously optimistic interpretation of the Sri Lankan situation. Government-LTTE contacts continued. In preparation for its anticipated entrance into the political mainstream, the LTTE formed a political party in December 1989, the title of which - the Popular Front of Liberation Tigers - no mention of Eelam. The LTTE had also moved into the areas evacuated by the IPKF and routed the last-ditch military efforts of the EPRLF in the north-east, exercising *de facto* quasi-governmental powers. In the south, the military backbone of the JVP had been crushed, and with it the justification for the ferocious counter-terror state apparatus. On the economic front, the international donors maintained a generous flow of vital aid, but curbed government extravagance by imposing austere conditions. On the surface at least, reconciliation and rehabilitation seemed finally possible.

(To be continued).

**Bharata Natya Arangetram**

The Bharata Natya Arangetram of Sivakam-sunthary daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Kumaravel of Garden Village, Hatfield, Herts, U.K. takes place at the Forum, Hatfield on 14.9.91 at 7pm. She had shown great enthusiasm for this dance form at the tender age of 6 and after being taught by a few exponents underwent intensive training in Madras under Nirtha Periyar Sri J. Venkatachalapathy. Besides her famous Guru at Nattuvangam, she will be accompanied by Sri Kesavan at Miruthangam, Dr. Luxmi Jayan at Violin and Sri Aravindkshan as vocal accompanist. She was Head Girl at the Hatfield Bishops Girls School and was at St. James Palace last October to receive the Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award in the presence of HRH Prince Philip.

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**Arunathathy releases her Veena Cassettes**

The London Veena Group had its annual Cultural Evening at Graveney School Hall, London SW17 on 3.8.91. The highlight of the evening was the release of the Veena Cassettes of Mrs. Arunthathy Srikantharajah, the pioneer exponent of this ancient instrument in London. The recipients of the cassettes were Mr. A.T.S. Ratnasingham, the chief co-ordinator of the Shree Ghanapathy Temple; Mr. S. Sampathkumar, President of the London Murugan Temple; Mr. S. Maharasingham, a social worker and Mr. G. Rabinovitch who had been one of the promoters of the London Veena Group since its inception in 1983.



Mr. S. Meganathan, the organiser of the concert said that it was most appropriate that the dignitaries of two Hindu temples should be associated with the promotion of music and culture in U.K.

The items of entertainment for the evening included a scintillating performance of Bharatha Natyam by Anusha Varathalingam, pupil of Pathmini Gunaseelan of Narthana Kalalaya and a hilarious Drama titled 'Kaal Kattu', produced and directed by Pulavar Sivanathan.

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## A POINT OF VIEW

# Rajiv Gandhi's Murder & the Tamil Problem

by T. Balasingham

The following is presented in view of the prevailing suspicions and antagonism against Sri Lankan Tamils in India due to the killing of Rajiv Gandhi, thereby precipitating much damage to the Sri Lankan Tamil cause, in India and abroad, although only the LTTE is implicated. Since it is the militants who have been at the forefront of the struggle for Tamil rights and free existence, the distinction is of little relevance. The killing though unproven, and the suspicions disputed, great damage has already been caused on the basis of the circumstantial evidence so far uncovered. It is possible that the instigators of the deed may never be accessible for identification and proof, but meanwhile the damage to Sri Lankan Tamil interests must be faced. There is also the consideration that is due to the girl for the supreme sacrifice of a life, seemingly long meditated and willed, for a cause, however misguided she may be. In the world, hardly anything is certain, but impacts flowing from events have a great bearing on views and opinions.

The killing of Rajiv Gandhi, a well known Indian leader and the scion of the highly respected Nehru family has deeply offended Indians and also earned world opprobrium. It is presently directed against Sri Lankan Tamils, and hence the cause for much concern to them. Assassination of leading personalities is a common feature from time immemorial, and the pages of history are littered with such events. It is a trait of primeval human nature, in the craze for power, to kill and supplant even by the most devious means. It can also be the reprisal of the weak to avenge or right a wrong against unassailable power. Intelligence services of many countries have also resorted to such for ends that cannot be achieved by politics, diplomacy or other means.

Facts to which important consideration must be given in the evaluation of the event, are possible reasons and the persons.

The killing of Indira Gandhi, a highly venerated leader of India, and respected for her commitment to Indian wellbeing was deeply mourned the world over, including Sri Lankan Tamils who owe her a deep debt of gratitude. It was her stern warning to the Sri Lankan Government in 1983, which prevented the genocide of the Tamils in the North who were then unprepared to oppose. The killing of Mahatma Gandhi, the apostle of non violence and goodwill to all humanity

is a similar event. On the other hand, the killing of despots, and tyrants, have been wished for and condoned. Human groups who have undergone great sufferings, indignities, and deaths cannot but have much illwill on those who are directly or inadvertently responsible. These are human traits which must be considered in the evaluation of such events.

Despite the condemnation of the deed, it must still be viewed in the light of compulsions and motivations that may have brought it about. Suicidal attacks and immolations due to sudden emotions are but aberrations of the thinking process, and are common enough. Killers hired with rewards and gold are at the beck and call of power aspirants of all sorts, even for desperate enterprises. But the long contemplated and willed supreme sacrifice with self triggered death, for a cause that he or she would not live to reap, must need consideration, apart from the deed itself. To right or avenge a wrong has its own justification for those who make the supreme sacrifice. Many are those who will raise their hands in self righteous horror at violence, but incapable of the smallest sacrifice except for selfish ends. Weighed in the balance, the supreme sacrifice challenges the hollow protestations of those who hide their craving for power by great protestations.

It also must be considered that those who are responsible directly or indirectly for the infliction of suffering and death of innocent people must anticipate reprisal or retribution in some form or other, whatever be the needs of state or political imperatives. A parent who bewails the killing of loved ones, a spouse who mourns the death of a lifelong partner and supporter, a girl whose life is blasted for ever by rape, or a youth tortured and maimed must all cry for vengeance or punishment on whomsoever they believe responsible for their plight.

Although identities and methods are still being probed, no conclusive evidence proved, suspicions and charges strongly denied, it would be relevant to briefly dwell on the relations between Rajiv and the Sri Lankan Tamil Community, any of whose members could still be suspected. For over three decades, the Sri Lankan Tamils had been at the receiving end of harassment, discrimination, and violence at the hands of the Sinhala majority, and in July 1983 a communal holocaust of terror, violence and looting, and murder was launched by Sinhala goondas

and mobs, on the helpless Sri Lankan Tamil Community in the South. There is little doubt that leading politicians in power had helped to plan and direct the violence and it was apparent that state security and military agencies had also a hand. On the pretext of crushing Tamil militants the Sinhala army engulfed the Tamil region with violence, murder, rape, loot and devastation. The embattled Community was under siege, and longed and prayed for Indian assistance to halt the horror.

It was then that the entry of the Indian army (IPKF) sent by Rajiv purportedly to succour the besieged Tamils was welcomed with songs and garlands. To their great horror and chagrin, the Indian army soon turned on the Tamils with savage fury imposing destruction, killing, looting, rape and devastation over the whole Tamil region on the pretext of taming the LTTE militants who had restarted the violence against Sri Lankan and Indian directives. Militants and civilians were not spared, and thousands of innocent civilians – old and young, were killed, often in cold blood as reprisals for militant resistance. The Indian army did not and could not discriminate between the LTTE militants and the civilians since all Tamils resented the brutalities of the army. A revealing instance was the questioning of an Army officer at Amritsar, on leave from Sri Lanka who had with him a quantity of broken gold jewellery, as reported in the Indian papers. It was merely the tip of the iceberg. The incident that triggered the start of hostilities is generally attributed to the callous disregard for Tamil susceptibilities and militants' security, by New Delhi. On arrival of the Indian army, peace was declared in the North and East. But 17 LTTE leading militants were captured on the high seas by the Sri Lankan Navy the Sri Lankan Government demanded the captives to be sent to Colombo. There was little doubt that these militants would have been subjected to torture, humiliation and death despite the peace accord which was the purpose for which Rajiv sent the IPKF. Although the Indian commander and even the Indian ambassador in Sri Lanka protested, New Delhi agreed to the transfer of the captives to Colombo. It has been asserted that it was the intention of the high ups, to precipitate the LTTE into reprisal violence so that it could be crushed on that excuse, and so eliminate Tamil capabilities to satisfy some secret terms of the Accord.

The Tamils in general and the militants in particular had long suspected the goodwill of Rajiv. His attitude at the Thimpu Conference to Sri Lankan Tamil aspirations, and the surrender

Continued on page 23

# **QUIZ CROSSWORDS – No. 7. Set by: Richards**

**Closing date for completed grid and coupon to be received is 30 September 1991.**

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

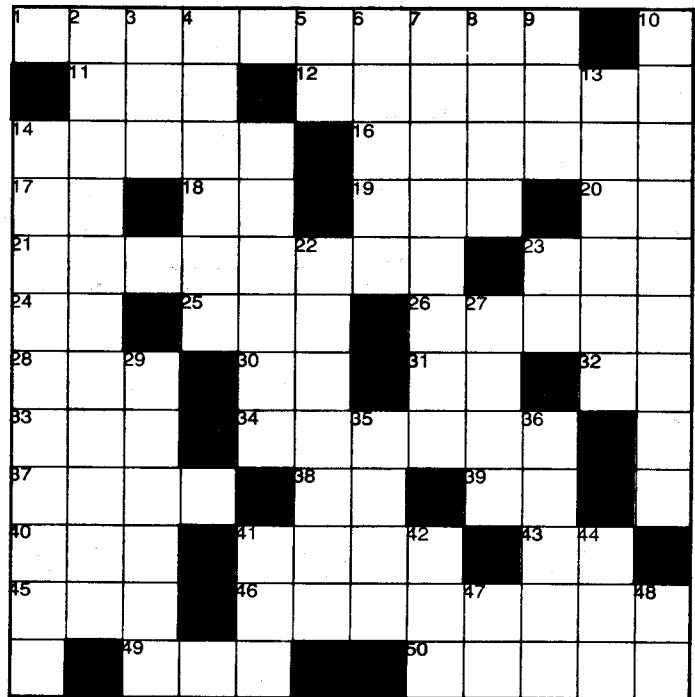
## **Across.**

1. Western Indian Ocean republic of 115 islands, a splendid example of appropriate Third World development (10)
11. East African capital city, briefly (3)
12. Stem of a rattan palm or a Malaysian state (7)
14. Directed (5)
16. Rich French cake (6)
17. Indicates low frequency (2)
18. Conjunction used to join alternatives (2)
19. Printer's measure (3)
20. Elizabeth Regina (2)
21. Specialist table for cue and a ball (8)
23. Southwest Asian river rises in Lebanon, flows through Syria and Turkey and falls into the Mediterranean (3)
24. International car registration for Ecuador could be even a London central zone (2)
25. Sri Lankan cartoonists and satire writers often referred to the late Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike as the electric fishy one (3)
26. The Buddhist monk that passes into Nirvana at death (5)
28. Knock (3)
30. Briefly 'sound' or South Dakota in USA (2)
31. 'A longer way to go' Sound of Music (2)
32. Rhode Island in USA (2)
33. Transistor transistor logic, briefly (3)
34. Guyanese rum a Creole delight in the West Indies (6)
37. One hundred dinars in Iran (4)
38. Anuradhapura's world renowned sacred tree (2)
39. Non liquet, it is not clear, briefly (2)
40. Longest division of geological time, possibly two or more eras (3)

41. Elaborate song arrangement for accompanying a solo voice (4)
43. Not out (2)
45. North of North East (3)
46. Situated southwest to Sri Lanka are 1087 coral islands of this republic (8)
49. Vital body fluid (3)
50. Kambar was one, Oddakkoothar was another and Puhalethi was a third one and there were many great ones.

## **Down:**

2. Enlightenment when spiritually uplifting (11)
3. Jaffna's king variety is super breakfast food (3)
4. A language born of extended contact between French and African languages (6)
5. One sixth of an inch used as a key printer's measure (2)
6. Too much can make some really loutish (5)
7. Suburb of Cardiff seat of the oldest bishopric of Wales (8)
8. Consumes (4)
9. Scottish Certificate of Education (3)
10. Settled by the Dutch in 1638, abandoned, taken by the French in 1715 and the British in 1810, a West Indian Ocean Commonwealth state (9)
13. Head of State and ultimate authority during Rome's glorious period (6)
14. Led a revolution and within a decade transformed his country from abject poverty to a great degree of development (6,4)
15. Lack of moisture in its extreme form (6)
22. World famed island is a living natural history museum (7)



23. Anno Hegirae, the Muslim era (2)
27. In the tropics it is a monsoonal feature (4)
29. Aircraft in numbers popularly (6)
35. Baffle and frustrate to defeat (4)
36. Alert or responsive (5)
41. Unit of electric current (3)

42. Briefly, automatic data processing (3)
44. Trap (3)
47. Priestess of Hera turned into a beautiful heifer in Greek mythology (2)
48. Special police force of Nazi Germany (2)

## **Quiz Crosswords – 5: Solutions.**

**Across:** 1. Vishnu. 6. Kalki. 10. Acre. 11. Alf. 12. Re. 13. MB. 15. Pique. 17. Upas. 18. Rev. 20. Heard. 23. Rhea. 24. Aired. 24. An. 26. Sam. 28. Al. Hasa. 30. IRA. 31. Kos. 33. Anu. 34. Pain. 35. Urim. 37. True. 39. Ca. 40. Ramachandra. 43. MCH. 44. Demi. 46. Ayah and 47. Matsaya.

**Down:** 1. Varaha. 2. Ice. 3. SR. 4. Hem. 5. UN. 6. Krishna. 7. Laurasia. 8. Klee. 9. If. 14. Buddha. 15. Parasurama. 16. Narasimha. 19. Vamana. 21. El. 22. Rel. 27. Arica. 29. Anthem. 31. Kurma. 32. Oracy. 34. Ped. 36. Ma. 38. Unit. 41. CD. 42. Ria and 45. Pa.

**Winner: Pratheev Manikavasagar, P.O. Box 34939, Lusaka, Zambia.**

## **Continued from page 22**

of the 17 militants helped to confirm suspicions that the Peace Accord signed between the Sri Lankan Government and Rajiv was primarily for the purpose of curbing Tamil resurgence in Sri Lanka, lest it inspire similar aspirations in Tamil Nadu. The unchecked atrocities lasting almost three years resulted in thousands of civilians being killed, untold devastation, and even worse, rape of girls and women, a crime unforgivable in the eyes of the Tamils. Despite protests and even international condemnation, hardly any action was taken to halt the atrocities, and the high command was blamed, not without reason. The atrocities inflicted on the Tamil Community has been described in some detail in a book titled 'Broken Palmyrah' by four Dons of the University of Jaffna (published by the Sri Lanka Studies Institute). Although armies on foreign soil are prone to atrocities and human rights violations, the long continued unchecked horror resulted in deep ani-

mosity of Tamils against those responsible at the top. Whatever might be the political objectives and state policies, there was no doubt of the atrocities, and the Tamils even joined the Sinhala Government to request the departure of the IPKF. What was supposed to be an Accord, even to be imposed by violence, was found to be a disaster for all including India. The thanks Rajiv got for the ill fated and misconceived intervention, was the deep illwill of the Sri Lankan Tamils and also the distrust of the Sinhalese. This was highlighted in a blow aimed at Rajiv's head with the butt of a rifle by a Naval rating at a Sinhala guard of honour. If Rajiv had not ducked his head in time, his tragic death would have occurred earlier. The naval rating, though imprisoned for the deed, has been released and is virtually a hero.

It has been a case of sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind. There is little doubt that the Sri Lankan adventure, whatever be the power motiva-

tions, was a tragic mistake, harmful to all and particularly to the Sri Lankan Tamils who expected succour from a kindred race. To India too it was a tragic mistake, for the reputation of its formidable army was blemished, its conduct in the field questionable, apart from over four thousand casualties, including many soldiers maimed for life, and a cost of probably 1000 crores of rupees which could have funded many a project for India's poor. The cost of equipment and loss of lives is staggering.

In the end, the army departed 'unhonoured and unsung'. In view of the sacrificial resistance of the LTTE against the genocidal attacks of the Sri Lankan Government, it would be a distortion of truth to claim that the Tamils have little sympathy for the LTTE, though such is the excuse for attacking the Tamils en masse. Whatever the intentions of Rajiv's accord, to the Tamils, it was a perceptible disaster in effect. Betrayal or hurt by a

**Continued on page 26**

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### MATRIMONIAL

**Jaffna Hindu seeks partner for brother, 35,** employment in London. Please send particulars, horoscope. M 509 c/o Tamil Times.

**Jaffna Hindu seeks groom for sister, 37,** music graduate teacher in Colombo, qualified programmes, T.V. Send particulars, horoscope. M 510 Tamil Times.

**Batticaloa Hindu brother seeks partner for his brother, 34,** accountant, CIMA finalist in London. Send details horoscope. M 511 c/o Tamil Times.

**Christian Tamil parents seek groom for their daughter, pretty, fair, 5'5", well educated,** race religion no bar. M 512 c/o Tamil Times.

**Jaffna Hindu brother seeks partner for fair economics graduate sister, 32,** Mars in eighth house. Send details horoscope. M 513 c/o Tamil Times.

**Christian/Catholic Jaffna Tamil parents seek professional groom for daughter, 21,** homely, convent educated, attractive, British citizen. M 514 c/o Tamil Times.

**Jaffna Hindu brother (Australian citizen, 31,** Computer Systems Officer) seeks marriage for sister, 35, trained teacher in Jaffna. Widower, divorcee, inter-marriage also considered. Send full details, horoscope. M 515 c/o Tamil Times.

**Friend invites correspondence from educated Sri Lankan females for Sri Lankan Tamil Catholic professional, 32,** highly educated, well established, financially secure, US permanent resident. M 516 c/o Tamil Times.

**Jaffna Hindu brother seeks partners for sisters, 42 and 36,** ideal housewives. Divorcees considered. Please reply M 517 c/o Tamil Times.

### ENGAGEMENT

**Dr. M.J. Jayarajah and Miss J.B. Marks.**

The engagement is announced between **Mohan** only son of Mr. & Mrs. D.C. Jayarajah of Sutton, Surrey, U.K. and **Jennifer** eldest daughter of Mr. P. Marks of Penzance and Mrs. R. Wheeler of Emsworth, Hampshire, U.K.

### WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couples on their recent wedding.

**Dr. Erajasekeran** son of Mr. & Mrs. S. Annamuttu, P.O. Box 6957, Boroko, Papua, New Guinea and **Jeyagowre** daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Sittampalam, 15 Airlie Bank Road, Morwell, Victoria 3840, Australia on 14.7.91 at West Strathfield Bowling Club, Homebush, NSW 2140, Australia.

**Dr. Tilly**, son of Mr. & Mrs. T. Sivaramalingam of 23 Arthur Street, Winchester MA01890, USA and **Brinda** daughter of Mr. & Mrs. S. Sathiamoorthy of 75 Oaklands Road, Hanwell, London W7 2DT on 10.8.91 at Greenford Town Hall, Greenford, Middx., U.K.

## OBITUARIES



**Sabapathy-Kanakeswary, Relict of Sam A. Sabapathy, Proctor and First Mayor of Jaffna,** beloved mother of Padmini (U.K.), mother-in-law of Dr. C.K. Thurairatnam (U.K.) and much loved grand mother of Sumathie, Malathi and Sudharshan (all of U.K.), Udishtira and Vishnumohan (Australia), passed away peacefully on 2nd July 1991 and was cremated at Villundi, Jaffna on 3rd July - 3 B Folkestone Road, Walthamstow, London E17 9SD.



**Kanagarajah - Herbert Rasiah, beloved husband of Pearl Selvaranee (nee Sanders);** father of Dhyanthi, Vasanthi (Melbourne, Australia); grandfather of Rebecca; beloved son of the late Mr. & Mrs. S.K. Rasiah (Tellipallai, Sri Lanka); brother of Selvaranee, Amirtharane, Thevaranee (London, U.K.) and the late Selvarajah passed away peacefully at his home in Melbourne, Australia on 25th July 1991. Sadly missed by all his loved ones and friends. - 31 Donald Street, Blackburn South, Victoria 3130, Australia. Tel: 03 894 3366.



**Mrs. Visaladchy Selvavinayagamoorthy (80)** of Alaveddy, relict of the late N. Selvavinayagamoorthy (Eye Physician), beloved mother of Devanathan, Sivalingam and Mrs. Chitra Kuganesan (all of Sri Lanka); Mrs. Gnanasakthy Navaratnarajah and Subramaniam (both of Canada); and Viknarajah (Cambridge, U.K.) passed away peacefully on 1.8.91 and was cremated in Kokuvil, Sri Lanka on 2nd August - 47 Malvern Road, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge, CB1 4LH, U.K. Tel: 0223 248785.

## IN MEMORIAM



**Mayilvaganam Velummayilum J.P. U.M.** Attorney-at-law and former Chairman, Urban Council, Point Pedro, Sri Lanka, whose second anniversary of his passing away is on 31.8.91. Sadly missed by his loving wife, children Thayanandarajah (U.K.), Nithyanandarajah (New Zealand), Mayilvaganarajah (U.K.), Chitra, Anandarajah, Krishnarajah and Jayanthi (all of Sri Lanka), in-laws, friends and a host of grateful constituents - 59 Edgwarebury Gardens, Edgware, Middlesex. HA8 8LL.



**Mr. Gunaratnam, Divisional Superintendent of Post Offices,** on the first anniversary of his passing away on 28th August 1990.

Sadly missed by his loving wife Rani, Children Thiru, Vasuki, Devaki (Australia), Sutharsan (U.K.), Saratha Devi; son-in-law Radhakrishnan (Australia); grand daughter Mayurica, sister and in-laws - 59 Edgwarebury Gardens, Edgware, Middx. HA 8 8LL.



In loving memory of **Mrs. Sinnathangam Suppliah** (Retired Head Mistress, Arunasilam Vidyasalai, Alaveddy Sri Lanka) on the third anniversary of her passing away on 20.8.88.

Sadly missed and lovingly remembered by her children Sivathasan and Sivarupavathy; daughter-in-law Sivadevi; son-in-law Sivasubramaniam and grand-children Kuhan, Nirupa, Meera, and Parathan - 303 Hempstead Road, Gillingham, Kent M37 3QU.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 1 3.30pm Novena at Asian Chapel, 548 Gt. Peter Street, London SW1P 2HA. Tel: 071 222 2895.

Sept. 1 6.30pm Violin Samarpanam of Arvind Jayan at London Sri Murugan Temple, 78 Church Road, London E12 6AF.

Sept. 1 2.00 to 7.00pm West London Tamil School, Wembley organises Barbecue & Sports Meet at Wembley High School Grounds, East Lane, Wembley, Middx.

Sept. 7 7.00pm Ms. Pathmini Gunaseelan of Narthana Kalalaya presents Bharatha Natya Arangetram of Sujatha, Ameera & Gunalogi daughters of Mr. & Mrs. Gunasegaram of Edmonton at Logan Hall, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1 Tel: 081 509 1263.

Sept. 7 4.00pm New York Tamil Sangam holds International Tamil Dance Contest in New Brunswick High School Auditorium, New Jersey, USA for Balasaraswati Award. Tel: (718) 377 6491.

Sept. 8 Ammavasai.

Sept. 11 8.00pm Nritta by Stella Uppal Subbiah at The Place Theatre, 17 Duke's Road, London WC1. Tel: 071 387 0031.

Sept. 15 12.30pm Skanda Varodaya College Old Students (U.K.) Association's Annual Lunch, A.G.M. & Variety Entertainment at Lola Jones Hall, Greaves Place, off Garratt Lane, London SW17 ONE. Tel: 081 681 2052 / 692 0823.

Sept. 15 6.30pm LOFUG with Shakespeare's School of Oriental Dancing presents with live music, Bharatha Natyam and Kuchipudi by Nirthaperiyar Sri J. Venkatachalapathy at Winston Churchill Hall, Pinnway, off Bury Street, Ruislip, Middx. Tel: 0923 225851/223987, 081 951 0594.

Sept. 16 Aavani Moolam.

Sept. 21 7.30pm Chundikuli - St. Johns Past Pupils Association AGM & Dinner Dance at Woodhouse Sixth Form College, Woodhouse Road, London N12. Tel: 081 200 6743, 021 471 3629 & 0702 524661.

Sept. 21 7.30pm Sutton Subrang presents with live music Bharatha Natyam by Indhumati Srikumar, Nattuvangam Nirthaperiyar Sri J. Venkatachalapathy & Kathak by Sushmita Ghosh at Secombe Centre, Cheam Road, Sutton, Surrey. Tel: 081 642 0870/770 4642.

Sept. 21 7.30pm to 2.00am Past Bridge-tees in U.K., Annual Dinner & Dance, Forum Hotel, Cromwell Road, SW7. Tel: Calista 081 848 9793 & Srimalee 081 853 3207.

Sept. 22 6.30pm Smt. Selvalaxmi Ramakrishnan of The Laxmi Arts Centre presents 'Natyajali' which includes the Dance Drama 'Krishna Parijatham' at the Beck Theatre, Hayes, Middx.

Sept. 23 Full Moon, Purattathi Sani (First week).

Sept. 26 & 27 8.00pm Pushkala Gopal & Unnikrishnan present a blend of Bharatha Natyam Kathakali & Folk Dance in 'The Taming of the Shrew' at The Place Theatre. Tel: 071 387 0031.

Sept. 28 7.00pm West London Tamil School presents with live orchestra a spectrum of Bharata Natyam by Mira Balachandran - Gokul at Acton Town Hall, London W3. Tel: 081 743 8289/841 5186.

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

Sept. 12 7.30pm Ganesh Chaturthi Bhajans, Puja & Prasad. All welcome.

Sept. 14 7.00pm & Sept. 15 6.30pm Hindustani Vocal by Gangubai & Krishnaa Hangal.

Sept. 21 7.00pm Karnatic Vocal by T.K. Govinda Rao.

Sept. 22 6.30pm Kathak by Sabodh Rathod & Lurie Eisler.

Sept. 27 7.45pm & Sept. 29 6.30pm Clarinet by A.K.C. Natarajan.

## An Arangetram with a Difference



Thirteen year old Sumangala Sooriakumaran a Student of Vazuvooor style of Bharata Natyam pleased the hundreds of invitees with her brilliant performance at the Commonwealth Institute Theatre on 22nd June. At the end of the performance I met a wellknown dancer trained in Adayar Kalakshetra style and discussed little Sumi's performance. The dancer was very frank in her reply. 'I as a student of the Kalakshetra style always had reservations about the Vazuvooor style and had always felt that the performers under that style were slow and not very appealing. But Sumi changed my entire impression.'

Sumi did change the ideas and misconceptions many had in their minds. Sumi was trained by Shrimathi Girija Varothayasingham at her Nadana Brahman Dancing School for the past five years. Shrimathi Girija already has four students to her credit who have completed their Arangetrams.

Sumi's performance started punctually at 7pm (a fact almost ignored in most Tamil functions). The participating artistes Vocalist Shrimathi Ambika Thamotheram, Violinist Shrimathi Rudrani Balakrishnan, Mirudangam player Shree Balashri Rasiah and the Flautist Dr. T. Nimalaraj were all brought to the centre of the stage into the spotlight and introduced to the audience. Sumi opened her performance with Pushpanjali followed by Alarippu, Jathiswaram, and Varnam (Swami Nee Manamirangi). Very often one finds that costume changes by a performer just before Varnam take anything up to thirty minutes. This delay was avoided in Sumi's performance when she performed non stop right from the start through the Varnam until the main intermis-

sion without interruptions. This was a very pleasant change from the norm.

The second half of the programme consisted of three Pathams one of which was on Lord Shiva (Kaila Nathan) and the next on Goddess Shakthi (Adhi Parasakthi). There was a musical interlude during which the audience were able to see and hear Shrimathi Ambika Thamotheram in her melodious voice singing a song on Goddess Shakthi.

Sumi changed into a young Maiden's costume to perform or more or less act a part based on the wellknown Tamil poet Bharathiyar's very popular song 'Sinnanchiru Kiliye Kannamma'. The young maiden attends to her child's needs, bathes the child, dresses her, feeds her, plays with her and finally puts her to sleep. When Sumi withdrew at the end of this item the audience gave her a thunderous applause. Sumi returned to the stage immediately and asked them by her Abhinaya 'not to disturb the sleeping child' to the amusement of the audience whose applause was much greater than the previous time. An interesting idea indeed.

The last two items Javali 'Keliyai Ponathadi' and the Thillana were very fast and appealing. Sumi performed these brilliantly just like the rest of the items in her Arangetram. We were able to note that Sumi who is only thirteen was able to perform and depict by her Abhinayas and Bhavas the emotions of a young maiden, a young girl in love with Lord Krishna - subject of ridicule among her friends etc. The training given to her by Shrimathi Girija Varothayasingham and the assistance given to her by Sumi's mother - Shrimathi Umaiyal Sooriakumaran (formerly Miss Ratnasingam) a Bharata Natyam dancer of her own right was clearly evident in Sumi's performance.

I am sure that many members of the audience would agree that Sumi by her performance has proved that she has a very promising future in Bharata Natyam.

- Wimal Sockanathan.

## Sculptured Elegance in Rhythm



Experience and talent and a total dedication to the finest elements of the Bharata Natyam and Kuchipudi were richly evident in a concert of dancing performed by Anandavalli at the Baden Powell House, London under the auspices of the Academy of Fine Arts on 29 June 1991.

Anandavalli made her debut with her arangetram at the age of nine and was immediately and most deservedly hailed as a child prodigy. She progressed from there under the instructions of Mylapore Gowrie Ammal and Vazhurvoor Ramaya Pillai and later was also tutored by Adayar Lakshmanan, Vazhurvoor R. Samarraj and Udupi Laxminarayan.

Based in Sydney, Australia and heading the fully fledged dance school 'Lingalayam', Anandavalli maintains an international performance schedule. Her school and her students have won community and critical acclaim for their highly professional standard of performance and production.

Anandavalli at her Baden Powell House concert, began her performance with Vinayakkar Anjali in the traditional Hamsadhvani raga to the beat of adi, and from there went onto the more elaborate Varnam in the Natakurinji raga.

Following the intermission her repertoire included Krishna Sabdam and Shivashtakam (Mohanam) in the Kuchipudi traditions, and then resumed with Padam (Durga), and Thillana (Dhanashree) in the Bharatha Natyam traditions.

Anandavalli also treated the audience to a demonstration of the various aspects of the dance and their meanings before she performed the most demanding Varnam Piece, **Swami Nan Unthan Adimal**. The varnam embodied the glorious virtues of Shiva the Lord of the Dance describing him as the Supreme being - the saviour, the redeemer and the compassionate one. This dance highlighted the sculptural poses of the many attributes of Lord Shiva.

A Brisbane newspaper once commented that Anandavalli has to dance for only a few minutes for an audience to realise she is something special. After her London performance, she left the audience without any doubt that she indeed is very special. Her artistry, portrayal and the ease with which she communicated the message of the dance was an enriching and soothing experience.

## Sangeeta's Salangaipooja



The Assembly Hall of Walthamstow echoed with the drum beats, cymbals and the co-ordinating jingling of the ankle bells on 15th

June 1991. The occasion was the Bharatha Natya Arangetram of the diminutive but confident 11-years-old **Sangeeta** daughter of Sri. & Smt. Sivagnanasundaram of 105 Essex Road, London E10. A colourful brochure designed by Krishnarajah along with the traditional customs welcomed one and all to the auditorium.

A very proud guru Smt. Ragini Rajagopal was waiting to present her third graduate to the critics and art lovers. Sangeeta stepped on the stage for her debut with Pushapanjali and Alarippu and proceeded to thrill the captivated audience with her varied repertoire. The choreographic skills of Ragini were evident with Sangeeta's rendering of the multifaceted Varanam Sakiye in Ragam Sankaraparanam and the Andali Thiruppavai. The composition of the rhythmic Jathis were evident with Sangeeta's speedy footwork in the Varanam and Thillana. Sangeeta performed the Thandava of Lord Natarajah to a kaleidoscopic light and spectacular smoke effect. Ragini's skills as a trained Nattuvanar were evident. She was ably supported by mellifluous vocalist Smt. Mathini Sriskantharajah, the talented multipercussionist Sri. Muthu Sivarajah on the Mirudangam, the eminent violinist Dr. Lakshmi Jayan, the melodious flute of Smt. Kamala Pathmanathan, the talented Sri. Arumugam Balendran on the veena and another multipercussionist Sri. Kandiah Sithamparanathan on the morsing.

There is no doubt that the efforts and the hours of intense and dedicated work put in by Sangeeta's parents contributed a great deal to the success of the debut. There is also no doubt that their continued encouragement will help Sangeeta develop her talents further. Smt. Ragini Rajagopal with her consummate skills as a teacher will undoubtedly continue to promote this divine art form with endless zeal and dedication to many more youngsters, thereby bridging the West culturally with the East.

Manju.

## High Street Enterprise

Sri Lankan entrepreneur George Devarajah met a long felt need of the residents of New Addington, Surrey, by converting his shop to provide post office facilities as well. The opening of this enterprise was marked by a three-hour street party with children's entertainers and a speech by the local Member of Parliament, former Minister of Transport, Mr. John Moore.

Some residents, however, are demanding a full scale Crown Post Office but Roger Stiles, Post Office local network manager said it was untrue there was enough business to support a bigger office with four sub-post offices in New Addington.

Mr. Devarajah, the proprietor of Pond Travel in Thornton Heath, Surrey, was of the view that his services will adequately meet local demands and help in particular the elderly folks.

Mr. Devarajah is one among the younger Sri Lankan Tamils who have taken to High Street enterprises and small ventures such as sub-post offices, grocery shops, auto service stations, mini-cabs, record bars, fast-food counters and restaurants. In many of these they have begun to provide services of highly commendable standards.

This is not only true of London but also

several other urban centres in the UK as well as in Canada, Australia and Western Europe. It appears that the incredible obsession Sri Lankan Tamils had all these years for careers only in the medical, engineering, public service and legal professions and later in the field of accountancy is now disappearing.

Sri Lankan grocery shops unlike the highly impersonal Supermarkets, have a welcome cultural dimension to them. Just like the coffee shops of old of which the English poet and lexicographer, Samuel Johnson spoke much as a meeting place for conversation and the exchange of pleasantries among folks of the neighbourhood, Sri Lankan establishments have also become an extension of the families in the various localities, just like how it was in North and East Sri Lanka, developing the sense of the parish.

## India Wins Nataraja Case

The House of Lords unanimously refused the petition of the Canadian company, Bumper Development Corporation for leave to appeal against the ruling of the High court, thus bringing to a successful conclusion India's battle over the Nataraja statue which had lasted 9 years.

The Nataraja, a 12th-century bronze statue of Shiva was stolen from a temple in Tamilnadu in 1976 and was bought by Bumper Development Corporation in good faith in London. Before it could be exported to Canada, it was impounded by Scotland Yard in 1982.

The trial began in November 1986 and lasted 40 days and the landmark judgment which was given in 1988 ruled that the statue bought by Bumper was stolen from Pathur (Tamilnadu) and that the Temple and the state of Tamilnadu possessed the right to sue for its recovery. Bumper then appealed to the Court of Appeal, arguing that the courts of Britain ought not allow a Hindu God to sue in this country. Bumper further claimed that the Sovereign was the highest power in the U.K. and this was in any case a Christian Kingdom. The Court of Appeal on 13.2.90 affirmed the earlier decision and refused Bumper's application. Bumper then petitioned the House of Lords for leave to appeal to the House of Lords and this has also been refused.

The bronze idol is expected to be returned to Tamilnadu in the near future.

## Continued from page 23

supposed friend is far more hurtful than the violence of the enemy. It is a fact of life that 'violence begets violence' and chickens come home to roost. The above is in no way meant to condone or excuse the deed, but is meant to be an appeal to India in particular that animosity and illwill against the Sri Lankan Tamils and their struggle against Sinhala injustice, is unjust. Many homes in Sri Lankan Tamil regions are adorned with pictures of Indira Gandhi, Nehru and Gandhi, and to them, India is the motherland from whence their ancestors came.

Violence and mistakes are but reactions to events, which must be evaluated above frail human emotions and superficial perceptions.



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