

Tamil TIMES

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

— Voltaire



Destination Trincomalee: At the Madras harbour, the first batch of Sri Lankan 'camp refugees' boards m.v. Akbar for the journey back home... many hiccups. (Picture: Courtesy of 'Frontline').

- ★ Exemplary Killings and Disappearances in Sri Lanka
- ★ Tiger Leader Prabhakaran Summoned in Rajiv Gandhi Murder Case
- ★ An Appeal For Peace With Justice
- ★ Open Letter by Expatriate Tamils
- ★ Pakistan: Trouble Brewing in Sind
- ★ Battle for Jaffna

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CONTENTS

Nothing to be scared about Federalism. . . .	4
Madras Court Order and Prabhakaran. . . .	5
LTTE leader 'a Proclaimed Offender'. . . .	6
Force cannot suppress spirit of freedom. 7	
Exemplary Killings & Disappearances . . .	9

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CONTENTS

The conflict in Lanka – an open letter. . .	11
News Round-up.	13
An appeal for peace with justice.	14
The Sub-Continental Scene.	19
Amnesty International report – ctd.	21

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BATTLE FOR JAFFNA

The well publicised and much maligned proposed visit of cabinet Minister S. Thondaman to Jaffna to talk to the LTTE leaders is off and that is official. President Premadasa, who was to some extent already weakened by the split in the UNP and the attempted impeachment against him, and latterly threatened by the vehemence and viciousness of the Sinhala chauvinist backlash against the Thondaman peace proposals, would appear to have lost his nerve and hence withdrawn from making any peace move and surrendered to those elements which have been demanding a military offensive.

It is also generally believed that, with the order of the Madras court investigating the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi proclaiming the LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran as an offender and summoning him to appear in court on or before 28 February, the likelihood of any talks between the LTTE and the government of Sri Lanka has disappeared at least for the present. On the contrary, Colombo has promptly acceded to the request of the Indian authorities to have the order of the Madras court published prominently in the Sri Lankan papers along with a photograph of the Tiger leader.

On 14 February, the government announced the imposition of a round-the-clock curfew to last until Tuesday 18, that is a curfew lasting five full days, to cover the entire northern Jaffna peninsula and the surrounding areas. The announcement was preceded by thousands of leaflets being dropped from the air asking the civilian population to leave Jaffna, and threatening that any moving object during the curfew period would be targetted from the air. Following this announcement, many parts of Jaffna have been subjected to an intensified campaign of bombing raids and shelling from naval gunboats. And it looks as if the final battle for Jaffna has begun in full earnest.

As for the LTTE, its deputy leader Mahendrarajah (Mahathaya) has announced that they are making preparations to defeat the government's dream of an easy military victory. 'We have to defeat the invasion of the enemy. Our fighters are preparing to face this military invasion of the Sinhala government. If the Sinhala army comes into the peninsula, it will be a battle bigger than all our battles in the past', he has said.

In this 'mother of all battles', as we have very often repeated, it is the civilian population which is going to suffer the worst. When the Sri Lankan security forces demand that the people should leave the peninsula to

avoid being killed, they do not say how and to where the people numbering over six hundred thousand can go. With a round-the-clock curfew in force, the only tragic and inevitable prospect facing the defenseless and uninvolved civilians is for them to be killed and maimed while remaining inside their homes.

The scenario that is unfolding is tragically similar to the one that was being enacted prior to it being brought to a sudden halt in its track with the Indian intervention in mid 1987. Then, as is now, the extremist forces of Sinhala chauvinism were beating the war drums encouraging the government and the security forces to seek a military solution with absolutely no regard for the fate of the civilian population. Then, as is happening today, the security forces were launching their 'Operation Leap' and 'Operation Liberation' accompanied by indiscriminate bombing from the air and shelling from the sea.

However, today the situation is far more perilous for the Tamil cause for more than one reason. The extremist forces of Sinhala chauvinism, the government and the security forces have reason to be confident that there is no prospect of any Indian intervention or any other form of substantial pressure from any other source. The fund of international solidarity and support that the Tamil cause attracted then on the basis of its democratic and human rights credentials have been wantonly dissipated. All the Tamil groups, big or small, were on the same side then, but now some of the Tamil militant groups are fighting alongside the Sri Lanka security forces primarily motivated by considerations of rivalry and self-preservation. The Tamil cause then represented and reflected the interests and aspirations of the Tamil speaking people as a whole – the Tamils and the Muslims – and therefore had the support of the Tamil speaking Muslims of the northeast, but today the Muslims of the east have been substantially alienated and those in the north have been forcibly driven out in an act of abominable cruelty, and therefore lacks their support.

While it may be useful for expatriate Tamils living in various countries to undertake an exercise in self-examination of the role they have hitherto played by asking the question whether they themselves have in any way been responsible for bringing about this perilous isolation of their countrymen, it is of utmost urgency that all efforts must be made to mobilize support to pressurise the government of Sri Lanka to abandon its urge to seek a military solution to the conflict, to end this war and to bring about a just peace through negotiation.

Nothing to be Scared About Federalism Indian High Commissioner

Mild mannered Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, Nagendra Nath Jha, spoke to 'The Island' (Sunday Edition) News Editor, Rohan Abeywardene prior to his departure to India to resume vacation which was interrupted when he returned to Colombo for India's Republic Day celebrations.

S.I. - What is India's position on the proposed high powered transmitting station of VOA at Chilaw?

I.H. - Our position remains the same as ever. That incorporated in the letters exchanged in July 1987. The follow up letters appended to the document of Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987. No change from that. What gives you the impression we may have changed our position?

S.I. - That is - you all are not happy with the establishment of the station?

I.H. - No. The Broadcasting station does not make us unhappy. What it may, I'm not saying what it will, what it may get used for if at all used connectively is something that can make us unhappy. Just setting up a broadcasting station *per se* doesn't bother us. Any number of broadcasting stations around the world - one more does not bother us.

S.I. - Both the U.S. and Sri Lankan Governments have given assurances that it would not be used for gathering intelligence or any other activity that could be harmful to India?

I.H. - Well we hope these assurances will be kept and the close dialogue, our cooperation or the exchange of views we had with Sri Lanka Government on this will be continued.

S.I. - Now there are reports that Sri Lanka has asked India that we nullify these letters of exchange between former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and former President Jayewardene?

I.H. - These reports have been denied. They have been ascribed to Bradman Weerakoon during his visit to New Delhi. One of the Indian papers carried it and he categorically told me that he made no such remark.

S.I. - Does India still consider the Indo-Lanka agreement to be applicable?

I.H. - Yes indeed. It has not lapsed by any means.

S.I. - In the context that many of the key conditions in the Accord have not been fulfilled by both sides?

I.H. - There are two ways of looking at that document so far as your unfortunate internal situation is concerned. It is truly unfortunate because as I have said earlier both these communities in the Island are extremely nice extremely forward looking, extremely vibrant and have a great deal to contribute towards each other's prosperity and happiness and to the

general welfare of this whole area. So having known both of them going back now over 30 years, one feels very sorry about the whole thing. But that apart if you look at the document under a magnifying glass I'm sure you will agree with me that there does exist within it a formula for a possible solution to the problem given the desire to do so on all sides concerned. The fact that India has brokered it or negotiated it for Sri Lanka, those are extraneous matters. What is important is that the document *per se* by itself is a sound one and it deserves to be given a fair trial, which I don't think it has been so far. Now if you feel that the Sri Lanka Government or the Sri Lanka public opinion, in the light of experience of the past almost five years since it was signed feels it needs to be improved upon or changed or further developed that's up to you... you can do it. You have a parliament, you have public opinion, you have a press, you have everything for that and it can be done. May be the Select Committee is a way of getting around to it but talking about the document itself I really don't see why anybody should react so strongly to it, - because if you forget for a moment how it was brought about or who was responsible for it, as a document by itself it stands out quite clearly. It does provide some kind of a framework for settlement.

S.I. - But hasn't the scenario changed completely? If the Sri Lanka Government is ready to negotiate solely with the LTTE and if India declares the LTTE a terrorist organisation? What would be India's reaction?

I.H. - Well, it is up to the Sri Lanka Government naturally to decide who exactly represent the Tamil people. But we feel it is more a question of Tamil aspirations and the solution to the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka within the parameters of a United Sri Lanka - that is our definite commitment, the Government of India had made earlier will stand by it. There is no change at all. There will be none. I don't see enough emphasis being given right now, or at least the last several months that I have been here - 18 months almost - to an eventual settlement of the Tamil question. I try to make a distinction between the Tamil problem or the Tamil question within Sri Lanka and negotiating with the LTTE - one organisation - whether they represent the Tamil people or not is something

for the Sri Lanka Government to decide. Naturally the LTTE would take the stand it does. Emphasis should now be on giving full thought to solving of the problem, whatever the possible formula that can emerge I think you already have the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, 13th amendment, etc. as the starting point and work from that. If I may be permitted to say so; I think others have said it earlier and I have said it an year ago - I think it is perhaps time that people should get used to the idea of a Federal set up for Sri Lanka. The word Federal should not scare people away because a lot of people in India feel that federalism is not enough for India. They want it to be a looser federalism. So the federalism by itself is not a scary word any longer. Perhaps that might give direction that the Government of Sri Lanka can explore. We already have many features of that in the 13th amendment without calling it that so why not go all the hog and call it by the proper name. I'm mentioning this because then the vast majority of Tamil people would know that the commitment on the part of the Sinhalese people and the Government towards broad partnership and partnership that is in quality and sentiment. It's not a question of equality in the form of sovereign states coming together as partners. I think we all tend to go by legal interpretation of these things, where the sentimental aspect is equally important that two groups of communities should feel that they have equality between them. And whatever may have been in the past this is not the time to go into the past, but perhaps one should not shy away from this any further and one might explore the solution in this direction. Then of course it is entirely upto the Sri Lanka Government to decide and the people of Sri Lanka to decide what exactly they want eventually. It's their country they must decide.

S.I. - But the LTTE now clearly insists on something more than Federalism?

I.H. - That again is for you to decide.

S.I. - Were that to be granted by Sri Lanka, wouldn't it strengthen the separatist tendencies in India?

I.H. - You are again talking about Tigers only. I'm talking about Tamil population - broad majority of it. You

Continued on page 5

The Madras Court Order and Prabhakaran

Rita Sebastian from Colombo

In a dramatic turn of events last fortnight a Madras court ordered Tamil Tiger supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran and Tiger Intelligence Chief, Pottu Amman to surrender, on or before February 28.

The Special Police investigating team say they have sufficient evidence to prove that the two men masterminded the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by a woman suicide bomber, in May 1991.

Since the court order, India has sought and obtained the 'concurrence and assistance' of the Colombo government to have the order implemented. What it means is to have the charge as well as the photographs of the two men carried in the Sri Lankan press and also have them pasted as close as possible to the residence of the two men.

While the question of getting the two men seems the most unlikely prospect, and the question of extradition a purely academic exercise at the moment, what one has to take note of are, the political implications of the court order.

Although legally there is nothing to prevent the Colombo government talking to Prabhakaran and getting the peace dialogue on course again, politically it would pose problems for the government. It will have to take India's concerns into account.

Sri Lanka's political opposition and rival Tamil groups have spoken out vehemently against the government dialoguing with the Tigers. Nava Lanka Sama Samaja Party's Vavudeva Nanayakkara is bitterly critical of the government for not indicting Prabhakaran, following what he describes as the 'cold-blooded murder of Amirthalingam and Yogeswaran in Colombo in 1989.'

'Prabhakaran lives in the shadow of the favour of the top political leaders of this country' charges Nanayakkara. Groups like the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) are quick in their condemnation of Prabhakaran and are for India and Sri Lanka joining forces to crush the Tigers.

The government, by putting the onus for resolving the island's ethnic question on the Parliamentary Select Committee has managed to extricate itself from a difficult situation.

But how long will it take for the Select Committee to come up with a package that would meet the aspira-

tions of the Tamil people? How long before it gets off the ground, seeing the end to a cruel and senseless war?

Meanwhile the decade old conflict has had no lack of mediators. A group of Catholic clergy, nuns and priests, are the newest peace emissaries.

The group met with some members of the Tiger leadership in Jaffna in the last week of January and brought back to Colombo their main demands to resolve the conflict.

And in what is considered a very diplomatic move, the group met with the Buddhist hierarchy in Kandy to let them know that the Tigers were willing to reopen talks with the government.

The mediatory effort comes at a time when the re-action to the Thondaman proposals has not only given rise to Sinhala nationalist movements, with

racial overtones, but generated a response from some hardline Sinhala chauvinists that can only be described as hysterical.

The propaganda against the peace proposals has also been accompanied by a criticism of the Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC), the powerful plantation trade union that Thondaman heads.

It has also led to a charge that the estate Tamils are trying to carve out a separate ethnic enclave in the central province at the expense of the Sinhala villagers.

This is an explosive argument given the history of estate-village tensions, and particularly in the context of recent reports of robberies and unrest in the plantation sector.

Some political analysts claim that the reaction to Thondaman's peace proposals is essentially a middle-class phenomenon and not shared by the ordinary masses.

But what is disturbing is that even a decade of unprecedented violence has not made hardline Sinhala opinion relent in its refusal to share any meaningful power with the Tamils.

Continued from page 4

must be sick and tired of war. Like everybody else Sinhalese population too must be sick and tired of war, whether, it is JVP inspired or the present conflict. So everyone is tired of conflicts, but the point is if that is so then they need to be shown, given some assurance that they have a place in the sun. Now they call it homeland, they call it various things alright - Tamil aspiration, Tamil homeland. Different words can mean the same idea. How does one get about it. One of the ways - there may be better ways - I'm sure there may be better ways, is to see the writing on the wall and recognise it for what it is and try to work out some form of federal set up in which certain powers are guaranteed which mean the Tamil unit will have its own, its own entity or identity fully established. And this does not mean that one talks of one federation or loose confederation or beyond that. I can only talk by the Indian experience which is federation and which was the first set of proposals brought here by Mr. G. Parathasarthi in 1983. If you look at it carefully frankly it applies the Indian situation.

S.I. - Prabhakaran and Thilagar have said there should be nothing less than two nations and only in certain areas that the two nations can cooperate. That clearly goes beyond what was agreed in the July '87 accord?

I.H. - Can it not be argued - I'm just putting out an idea to you - I'm not

suggesting it formally as a High Commissioner, but since we are on the subject cannot it be argued this line of thinking which you say the Tigers have submitted or put up because I have not seen this public statement of theirs but I'm aware of general impressions to the effect, but this particular thing has perhaps come in because there is a vacuum. A vacuum that has arisen because nobody was prepared to state from this side categorically that these are the rights of the Tamil people and they want this and they will get it. In the last 18 months I have not seen this kind of concession. You see when you have a vacuum it gets filled up by something and may be filled up by what you think from your point of view is the most undesirable thing.

(The Sunday Island, 2.2.92).

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Rajiv Gandhi Murder Investigation

LTTE Leader Prabhakaran 'A Proclaimed Offender'

From S. Venkat Narayan

NEW DELHI, January 31: In a significant development, a Madras Judge trying the sensational Rajiv Gandhi assassination case today declared Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran and the LTTE's intelligence chief Pottu Amman as proclaimed offenders for their involvement in the case.

Mr. S.M. Siddick, the judge of the designated court trying the case in Madras, made the proclamation on a plea by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Indian Government's Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The SIT is probing the case.

Accepting the SIT's plea, the judge directed the two accused to appear before his court between 1000 hours and 1700 hours on or before February 28.

The Judge said that the court has reason to believe, on the basis of the

report of the chief investigation officer, that the two accused had committed offences punishable under the Terrorists and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) - TADA - Act.

Mr. Siddick said the proclamation should be published with photographs of Prabhakaran and Pottu Amman in one issue of a Tamil newspaper and an English daily, which enjoy good circulation in India and Sri Lanka. The two men are Sri Lankan nationals and are prominent leaders of the LTTE, which has been waging a guerrilla war in the island's northern and eastern provinces to establish Eelam, a separate Tamil state.

The judge said that the proclamation should be broadcast and telecast on All India Radio and Doordarshan television network.

He also said that the proclamation should be displayed in a conspicuous place in the town in which the two

accused last resided and in the house in which they last stayed.

It may be recalled that Mr. Gandhi was killed at an election rally at Sriperumbudur near Madras in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu on the night of May 21 last year by a Sri Lankan Tamil woman suicide-bomber called Dhanu.

Seeking a proclamation against Prabhakaran and Pottu Amman under Section 8 (3) (A) of the Terrorists and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, the SIT said the two accused were the masterminds behind Mr. Gandhi's gruesome assassination. This was confirmed by the confessional statements made by the accused who are already in custody, informed sources added.

They said the two accused gave the final shape to the crime and that their involvement in the conspiracy before and after the murder is 'crystal clear'.

The two accused may be hiding in the jungles of the Jaffna peninsula in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the SIT said it could not apprehend them. Under these circumstances, a proclamation requiring them to appear before the court is a must, informed sources pointed out.

In its plea, the SIT gave Prabhakaran's aliases as follows: Velupillai Prabhakaran alias Karikalan alias Manivannan alias Thurai alias Kirubakaran alias Thambi Prabhakaran.

Arrest Order to be Published in Sri Lanka

New Delhi, February 5 - Indian authorities today formally delivered to Sri Lankan High Commissioner in India, Mr. Neville Kanakarathne a copy of the order of the designated Court in Madras trying the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case proclaiming LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and Pottu Amman as offenders and ordering their arrest. The original order dated 31 January has been sent to the Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, Mr. Narendra Nath Jha.

In a quick response, the Sri Lankan government promptly gave the Indian authorities permission to publish in the Sri Lankan media the Court order and the proclamation with photographs of the two alleged offenders. It is said that the publication will appear in leading English and Tamil language newspapers.

A spokesman for the External Affairs Ministry said there is a legal framework that will guide the process of extradition. The Indian Extradition Act of 1962 was made applicable to Sri Lanka on 1 September 1978 on a reciprocal basis. In addition, there is also the Multilateral Commonwealth

Convention for fugitive offenders to which both India and Sri Lanka are parties.

Meanwhile officers of the Special Investigating Team (SIT) who arrived in Colombo may meet a few LTTE men taken into custody following the JOC bomb attack to verify whether any one of them is connected with the former Prime Minister's murder or shed light on those who are already in custody in India. CID sources in Colombo stated that if India requested extradition of any one of those in custody in Colombo, it would be favourably considered.

Hunt For Bomb Maker

The Special Investigating Team has stumbled upon new evidence that Ravi alias Ravichandram who is the prime suspect and wanted by the Sri Lanka Police in connection with the JOC bomb blast and the Ranjan Wijeratne assassination, was the person who assembled the belt bomb worn by the suicide killer Dhanu at Sri Perambalur which killed the former Indian Prime Minister.

A massive man-hunt had been on for Ravi in Tamil Nadu for quite some

time, but he was very elusive. Though the SIT wanted to keep the man-hunt for Ravi a secret for obvious reasons, reports from India said that the suspect knew about it.

The SIT at no stage mentioned that they were in search of Ravi. Ravi who according to local Police, assembled the

Continued on page 23

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LTTE Will Give Up Eelam for Federal System and Calls for Talks

The LTTE would be prepared to give up its demand for a separate state of Eelam if the Tamil people were granted a federal system of government which could be achieved within the framework of a single country, Anton Balasingham and Mahendrarajah (Mahathaya) of the LTTE leadership are reported to have told a delegation of the Christian clergy which visited Jaffna on a goodwill mission recently.

In a statement issued to the press following their visit, the members of the delegation said that the LTTE spokesmen had said that the door was still open for a negotiated settlement

but the government was pursuing to seek a solution by military means by launching military operations in the north.

Mr. Balasingham is reported to have told the delegation that the government had failed to put forward substantial proposals to resolve the ethnic conflict and the situation was getting more and more complicated leading to the transformation of the north into a separate state. 'We have already established a police service to maintain law and order and the next step would be to set up a legal system of our own', Mr. Balasingham added.

He described Mr. Thondaman's

peace proposals as constructive and meaningful and offered something concrete to resolve the conflict. In response to a question whether there were any obstacles to achieve their demands within a unitary Sri Lanka, Mr. Balasingham is reported to have said, 'When the marriage is a failure, one party has a right to ask for a divorce. If the marriage is a success, there is no need for a divorce'.

The delegation led by Rev. Fr. Alexander of the Roman Catholic Church comprising four catholic priests, four nuns and Christian brother returned to Colombo on 26 January having toured Jaffna from 21 to 25 January and meeting the LTTE leaders, ICRC officials, members of citizens committees, non-governmental organisations, academics and clergymen including the Bishop of Jaffna.

'Force of Arms Cannot Suppress Spirit of Freedom

In the name of misconceived nationalism, extremist forces have ganged up to prevent a solution whenever serious attempts have been made in the past, The Hindu Council of Sri Lanka said in a statement issued recently.

'History has shown that whenever serious attempts are made to resolve the Sinhala-Tamil question, which has been a running sore in our body politic, extremist forces gang themselves in the name of misconceived nationalism, to prevent a resolution of this question. We are reminded of the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam pact of 1957, the Dudley Senanayake-Chelvanayakam Agreement of 1965, Annexure C of the All Party Conference of 1984 and the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of 1987. Every time these forces succeeded in preventing the implementation of agreements solemnly undertaken by the government in power, the situation further deteriorated, a feeling of disillusionment and alienation grew in the minds of the Tamils and the demand for greater autonomy and self-rule progressively increased and now backed by an armed struggle. While the problem remains unresolved, killings, counter killings and destruction of property are taking place on a large scale.

The flower of our youth on both sides of the divide are dying by the thousands, billions of rupees, which could be productively used for the development of the country, are wasted every year on this fratricidal conflict. This makes us to depend substantially on foreign aid to balance our annual budget. The economy is weak, the political structure is inadequate for multi-ethnic, multi-religious and a multi-linguistic country and the society is riven with mutual suspicion, fear and distrust. How long are we to allow this sad state of affairs to continue?

Let us resolve this problem without

delay and create an era of peace with equality and justice. The Sinhalese and the Tamils have lived in this country for over two thousand years and it is in their mutual interest to live in peace. They have many ties of kinship in religion and culture to enable them to live and let live.

We have in our representations to the Select Committee of Parliament suggested a five point formula to alleviate the situation in the North-East province and to restore peace and normalcy in the country. The cessation of hostilities is the first point in this formula. The fighting must first stop before negotiations.

It has been our consistent demand that the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 29th 1987 should be fully implemented. This was the first time since independence that a compromise settlement was reached, which recognised the basic concerns of the Sinhalese and the Tamils and provided for devolution of power in the context of the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. The necessary legislation establishing the constitutional framework was adopted by parliament and approved by the people at the successive provincial, presidential and parliamentary elections. This constitutional arrangement should be worked in all sincerity for a period of three years. Any outstanding issues that crop up could be settled by negotiations between the centre and the elected representatives of the North-East government after the period of three years is over. The passage of time and the experience gained in working this constitutional

arrangement will enable the parties concerned to view the outstanding issues on their merits free from undue emotional attachments.

Advocates of a military solution feel that the time is opportune in view of various factors to crush the LTTE and to dispense with the political problem. This will be a retrograde step and counter-productive. Militant groups and political parties may come and go, but the cause of the conflict will remain, if it has not been satisfactorily resolved. There are enough examples in history to show that the spirit of freedom and equality cannot be suppressed by force of arms.

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'Exemplary Killings' and 'Disappearances' in Sri Lanka

Three members of the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, Mr. Agha Hilaly, Mr. Jonas Foli and Mr. Toine van Dongen, visited Sri Lanka from 7 to 17 October, 1991. The following is a brief summary of the Group's 64 page report.

Context of Violence

The situation of disappearances in Sri Lanka can only be properly evaluated when seen in the context of the violence that has prevailed in various parts of the country since the 1950s. Violence in Sri Lanka has been of three types: communal or ethnic violence, political violence (including terrorism), and violence by security forces. The first major outbreak of communal violence between the Sinhalese and Tamils occurred in 1958 with hundreds of deaths, particularly among Tamils. Similar and increasingly vehement clashes took place in 1977, 1981 and particularly in 1983.

During 1983 to June 1987, the conflict and violence in Sri Lanka was due to armed attacks by Tamil separatist groups against security forces and military operations by government forces in the north-east. From October 1987 to December 1989, the fighting in the north-east was primarily between the LTTE and the IPKF and its allied Tamil armed groups. From the latter part of 1987, south of Sri Lanka was affected by a campaign of violence by the JVP and counter-insurgency military operations by the security forces. From June 1990, there has been a resumption of intense fighting between government forces and the LTTE in the north-east. In the years after 1987, therefore, Sri Lanka remained caught up in a war on two fronts, ethnic conflict in the north, and political confrontation between the JVP and the armed forces in the south.

Human Rights Violations 1983-87

In the period 1983 - 1987, reports of human rights violations were received, including disappearances, arbitrary arrests, torture and arbitrary executions in the north-east. The Working Group transmitted a total of 861 cases to the government in regard to those years. During 1984, a large proportion of the cases were said to have taken place in the northern Vavuniya district. From 1985 onwards, an increasing number was reported from the eastern province. Violations were generally attributed to government forces, particularly to the Special Task Force (STF), a well trained police commando unit.

Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement

In July Sri Lanka and India signed the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement with a view to taking concerted political and military action and putting an end to the conflict. Following the agreement the India Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) arrived in the island and became responsible for disarming the Tamil militants and for maintaining law and order in the north-east. Following the outbreak of armed conflict between the IPKF and the LTTE, the IPKF and several of the armed Tamil groups allied to the IPKF allegedly became jointly responsible for many human rights violations including detentions without charges or trial, torture and extra-judicial executions. Even though disappearances as such were not a persistent pattern of abuse throughout

The Working Group wishes to emphasize that the cases of disappearances in Sri Lanka rank as the best documented cases among those from 40-odd countries appearing in the Group's annual reports to the Commission on Human Rights.

the IPKF stay, the Working Group recorded 42 cases - the victims were members and sympathisers of the LTTE, which had initially supported the agreement, but later withdrew that support and began to fight the IPKF.

In April 1989, the President undertook negotiations with the LTTE, resulting in a mutual ceasefire, while the LTTE continued fighting the IPKF. It was even alleged that the Sri Lankan government actually supplied arms to the LTTE in order to expedite IPKF withdrawal. In September 1989, the Indian government agreed to pull out its troops and eventually the troops completed the pullout in March 1990.

In the armed conflict between 1987 and 1990, an estimated 10,000 civi-

lians died in the north and north-east, most of the deaths being attributed to civilians being caught in crossfire, to bombings of cities and towns, to collective and reprisal killings attributed to both IPKF and LTTE, as well as to reprisal killings perpetrated by the latter against rival separatist groups.

JVP Campaign of Violence

Amidst extreme Sinhalese nationalist sentiments, reportedly brought on by the presence of foreign troops, the Peoples Liberation Front (JVP) which had remained underground from 1983, re-emerged to launch a violent revolt against the State. The JVP, and its military wing, the Patriotic People's Front (DJV), launched a campaign of murder in early 1988, intended to annihilate those described as 'traitors to the motherland' and 'enemies of the nation'. Particularly targeted for punishment by death by JVP cadres were the members and activists of the ruling United National Party (UNP) and of leftist parties, and government employees. In 1988 alone, the government held JVP accountable for over 700 politically motivated killings.

Exemplary Violence by Both Sides

Both the JVP and the security forces resorted to the use of extreme violence in this contest for state power. Both sides adopted a tactic of 'exemplary killing' a means of instilling terror in the civilian population. Mutilated bodies at roadsides or in market places were a regular sight in many parts of the south in the years 1988 and 1989. Hundreds of bodies were seen burning on tyres or washed up on the shore.

Death Squads

In mid-1988 the Government launched a strong counter-offensive by arresting and killing JVP rebels. An important new feature in combating the JVP uprising was the proliferation of death squads whose main task was to kill suspected rebels and sympathisers. These squads operated in plain clothes and moved about freely in unmarked vehicles, passing roadblocks unhindered, and engaged in fearsome

Continued on page 10



Dead bodies of young men burnt alive by the army at Ambokka

Continued from page 9

forms of exemplary killings. After resumption of fighting in the north-east, similar death squads (paramilitary and vigilante units) have begun to operate engaging in the same sort of fearsome exemplary killings. Such groups are widely believed to consist of members of the security forces, but this is denied by the government. The conflict in the south took a particularly violent turn after July 1989 when the JVP appeared to make a final thrust towards capturing state power with widespread enforced work stoppages, intimidation and assassination. For the first time, the JVP started attacking and killing the family members of police and army personnel.

To thwart the JVP military offensive, the State launched a generalised counter-insurgency campaign. The armed forces and police appear to have been given a wide latitude of action to eliminate the rebel movement and restore law and order in any way they saw fit. Anyone suspected of being a subversive was often arrested and shot summarily. Reports indicate that in the autumn of 1988, the security forces used their new powers liberally as political violence intensified. By the end of November 1989, the armed forces put down the JVP revolt when they succeeded in capturing and executing the nucleus of the JVP leadership. Conservative estimates put the number of deaths during this period of violence at over 40,000. For the same period, the Working Group has to date recorded over 2,700 cases of disappearance.

Resumption of Fighting in North-East

Following the withdrawal of the IPKF gradually from December 1989 and completely by March 1990, the LTTE took effective control of the north-east as the talks between the LTTE and the government continued. Fighting between the LTTE and its rival Tamil groups followed in which hundreds of persons were killed and thousands of Tamils fled to India and other countries.

On 10 June 1990, the LTTE, breaking a 14 month ceasefire, occupied Batticaloa police station followed by attacks on other police stations and army camps in the north-east, and full scale fighting resumed between government forces and the LTTE with the government redeploying troops from the south to the north-east.

Muslims Affected

The Muslim community in the northeastern province has been severely affected, some sections being besieged by the LTTE. Muslim Home Guards act as a civil defence unit; they are armed and trained by the Sri

Lanka army and often act jointly with them against LTTE cadres, a form of cooperation which has provoked retaliatory action by Tamil insurgents. Many Muslims have fallen victims of surprise attacks. Over 300 members of the community have been abducted to date. Two horrifying events took place in 1990 when the LTTE, in separate incidents, indiscriminately fired upon and killed approximately 100 Muslims in two mosques while the victims were at prayer.

Killing by LTTE

The LTTE has also consistently carried out arbitrary execution-style killings of hundreds of civilians, including large numbers of Sinhalese and 'dissident' Tamils. The insurgents are also responsible for many cases of abduction and torture of prisoners, including policemen and other government officials. Since June 1990, over 700 policemen have been killed in Batticaloa alone.

Mass Killings and Disappearances

In June 1990, the Sri Lankan army came back to the northeast, publicly vowing that the same strategy was going to be adopted against the LTTE as had been used to put an end to JVP terror in the south. The then Minister of Defence (since assassinated) announced all-out war.

A fierce counter-insurgency campaign ensued, reported to have led to mass killings and arrests, large-scale round-ups of non-combatant civilians and an almost total breakdown of civil administration. It is estimated that between June and September 1990, more than one million people were displaced by the fighting in the north-east. As of January 1991, over 210,000 had fled to southern India and more than 5,400 killed. *Since the resumption of hostilities, the Working Group had recorded over 2,000 cases of disappearance from that area.* Those who live in 'refugee' camps form a particularly vulnerable group, and there have been many reports of threats and attacks by government forces placed there to protect them. Many cases of disappearance have been recorded by the Working Group regarding inhabitants of such camps.

The Phenomenon of Disappearances

(a) Since 1980, **4,932 cases** of disappearances have been reported by NGO sources to the Working Group and transmitted to the government of Sri Lanka.

(b) For the southern and central provinces, **3,255 cases** were transmitted between 1988 and 1990; **313 cases** were reported to have occurred since 11 June 1990, and to date for the year 1991, about **40 cases** have been reported to the Working Group.

(c) For the years 1980 to 1987 in respect of the northern province, the Working Group transmitted **821 cases** attributed primarily to the Sri Lankan army; for the period 1987 to 1989, **43 cases** were reportedly attributed to the IPKF; and more than **700 cases** were reported to have occurred since 11 June 1990.

(d) In addition to the cases already processed and transmitted to the government, a large number of cases reported in 1990 and 1991 could not be processed before the Group's visit. These include approximately **7,000 cases** alleged to have occurred in the southern and central provinces between 1988 and 1990, over **2,000 cases** alleged to have occurred in the northeast since 11 June 1990, and approximately **30 cases** alleged to have occurred in the southern province.

(e) In addition, during its visit the Working Group was directly handed more than **one thousand well documented individual reports** from families of missing persons.

(f) During the visit, the government handed over reports of widespread killings in the south by the JVP of police and government officials as well as reprisal killings of entire families of police and civil officials. It also provided reports of widespread killings and disappearances, which included Muslims, Sinhalese and opposition Tamil groups, in the northeast attributed to the LTTE.

(g) The Group was informed that the LTTE was responsible for approximately **91 abductions**, apart from the **death of 100 policemen** off duty. It received reliable information that the LTTE detention centres currently exist in the northeast, where it is believed a number of missing police and military are being held in detention incommunicado. It also received reports of **290 individual cases** of abduction from the Muslim communities attributed to the LTTE.

(h) The Group also received reports covering all regions of mass disappearances, as well as other reports and studies analysing the phenomenon of disappearances in Sri Lanka, or highlighting certain elements believed to create conditions in which disappearances can take place.

(i) In the northeast, while the majority of disappearances have been attributed to the army and the police, Muslim civil defence groups, known as 'Home Guards' were also said to be responsible for several disturbances. Home Guards came into existence to protect the Muslim communities after mass killings of Muslim civilians by the LTTE in August 1990.

(j) In many cases, search and round-up or 'cordon' operations conducted by

the army or by combined military and police forces, sometimes accompanied by armed men in civilian clothing, resulted in large numbers of persons being detained at one time. The Group received reports of numerous cases of mass detentions in which persons who were not released and who subsequently disappeared included women of all ages, children and the elderly.

(k) Many disappearances were reported to have occurred in the context of reprisals. In some cases, large numbers of young men in a town, region or 'refugee' camps were alleged to have been detained in cordon and search operations after an armed encounter between security forces and terrorist groups.

(i) From the detailed reports received by the Group, it was able to determine that, while the numbers of disappearances in the south had diminished with the elimination of the JVP leadership, disappearances continued to occur in steady numbers, and in the northeast there has been a large increase in the number of cases reported to the Working Group.

(m) The Group has so far received over 1,000 cases alleged to have occurred in 1991, 40 from the south, and the rest from the northeast.

Conclusions

(a) The context in which the phenomenon of disappearances has materialized in Sri Lanka largely arises from two major sources of conflict: first and foremost, the confrontation of Tamil separatist militants and government forces in the northeast of the country; secondly, the confrontation between the JVP and government forces in the south.

(b) Disappearances and other violations of human rights most frequently occur in situations of generalized violence and excessive and undirected use of force. In the Sri Lankan context, observers agree that, in view of the situation that eventually developed, the use of state force *per se*, both against the LTTE and the JVP, did not contradict international norms. However, in the course of that use of force, human rights violations have

been committed, particularly as regards non-combatant civilians. The fact remains that the Group has recorded up to 12,000 cases of disappearances between 1983 and the present. It should be pointed out that this figure does not include abductions by non-governmental forces such as the LTTE and JVP.

(c) The Working Group wishes to emphasize that the cases of disappearances alleged to have occurred in Sri Lanka rank as the best documented cases among those from 40-odd countries appearing in the Group's annual reports to the Commission on Human Rights.

On the basis of the material available, the Working Group has concluded that, both in the northeast and south, the army, and predominantly the police in the south, have been involved in disappearances. Death squads, which given the circumstances could only have operated with the acquiescence of government forces, have been involved as well. Also implicated were civil defence units, armed and trained by the army

The Conflict in Sri Lanka

An Open Letter

Several leading Tamil academics and professionals from the U.S.A. have signed an open letter dated 20 January 1992, addressed to the government of Sri Lanka and Tamil political parties and groups in regard to the ongoing armed conflict. The following is the text of their open letter:

We call on the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to initiate a peaceful resolution of the ethnic conflict.

We strongly condemn the resurgence of Sinhala chauvinistic opposition to a negotiated settlement.

We call for a broadening of the framework of negotiations to include Tamil civil organisations, who also represent the interests of the Tamil people.

The immense suffering of Tamils during the decade-long ethnic conflict, includes indiscriminate killings, imprisonment and torture of tens of thousands of Tamils by Sri Lankan armed forces, and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Tamils. Living conditions in the North and East have deteriorated drastically, with the severe shortages of basic foodstuffs, medicine, electricity and means of transportation. The greater misery experienced by women and children during the war is evidenced by the increasing number of women refugees, and the increase in infant and maternal mortality. Tamils

have lost an entire generation of youth, either as victims of violence or as participants.

The armed response of the LTTE, however, has included massacres of innocent Sinhala villagers, and the torture and killing of prisoners. Recently, tens of thousands of Muslims were forcibly evicted from their homes and expelled from the North, while several hundred were killed in the East. The LTTE has also been responsible for the imprisonment and death of student leaders, women's rights activists and human rights activists. Other Tamil political organisations, such as the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) and the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), have also contributed to the pursuit of vengeful politics, to the detriment of democracy in the North and East.

Further, caste discrimination continues to be a major obstacle to socio-economic advancement for a significant segment of the Tamil community. Tamil women who have organised themselves autonomously for women's rights or against the

war have been suppressed. The exclusionary basis of Tamil nationalism has been hostile to Muslims and has led to a breakdown in Tamil-Muslim solidarity, exacerbating the problem of achieving peace in the North and East. Finally, the sympathy of the international community for the suffering of Tamils has been eroded by the militarism of the Tamil nationalist movement.

We feel the nature of the LTTE response to Sinhala chauvinism raises important questions about Tamil nationalism that have not been sufficiently addressed. How has the development of Tamil nationalism alienated Muslims of the North and East? Why has the claim to a traditional Tamil homeland led to the expulsion of Sinhalese and Muslims, who have been living in the North and East for generations? Do the demands of the Tamil nationalist movement reflect the aspirations of the Tamil people of the East, or do they only express the will of its Jaffna leadership? And why have the interests of women and 'depressed' castes not been represented by the Tamil nationalist movement?

Recommendations.

We call on the Government and the LTTE to cease hostilities and to release all political prisoners.

We urge both parties to facilitate the transportation of food, medical supplies and fuel to the North and East.

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NEWS ROUND-UP

● **CABINET MINISTER** and President of the Ceylon Workers Congress, Mr. S. Thondaman would not visit Jaffna to meet the LTTE leaders as announced earlier unless the Parliamentary Select Committee appointed to discuss the ethnic conflict asks him to do so, Mr. M.S. Sellasamy, General Secretary of the CWC said on 31 January. 'Our party is only interested in bringing peace to our country and to end this costly war. We presented a solution as any individual has the right to do so', added Mr. Sellasamy.

● **TWELVE PERSONS** were killed and 21 more were injured when a private bus hit a landmine believed to be planted by the LTTE. The mine exploded under a private bus at Borapola on the Arantalawa Road in eastern Sri Lanka on 26 January. It was reported that the driver, conductor and an airman travelling in the bus were among the dead.

● **ABOUT 600 TO 700** detainees held in Pelawatte camp have gone on a hunger strike demanding from the authorities that they should either be released from custody forthwith or else be charged in a court of law for whatever offenses they are held.

● **FORMER BRITISH** High Commissioner for the UK in Sri Lanka, Mr. David Gladstone, who was declared *persona non grata* and expelled on the orders of President Premadasa, has been appointed British Ambassador to the former Soviet Republic, Ukraine.

● **THE CEYLON BANK** Employees Union has expressed its total opposition to the proposed conversion of the Bank of Ceylon and the Peoples Bank to companies under the Company's Act. The Union has alleged that the conversion would eventually lead to the sale of banks to local and foreign capitalists, and the proposed step was against the national interest.

● **ANOTHER GROUP** of 659 Tamil refugees from Tamil Nadu returned to Trincomalee in eastern Sri Lanka in the vessel Akbar on 29 January. The group consisted of 187 families including 455 public servants. On arrival the refugees were sent to the transit refugee camp at Uppuveli to remain there until they are able to be sent to their former residential areas. It is reported that all those refugees who arrived previously from India had been returned already to their home areas.

● **THIRTEEN SOLDIERS** were killed and eight more were wounded in an ambush attack by the LTTE on 29 January between Welikande and Sinhapura in the Polonnaruwa district, following which the security forces launched a massive search-and-destroy mission.

● **A THIRD YEAR** student of the Sri Jayawardenepura University detained illegally by the police and the army for over two years was granted a compensation of Rs.5,000 by the Supreme Court on 29 January. The petition filed by K. Anurapala which named several officials including the Army Commander, Hamilton Wanasinghe, Secretary for the Ministry of Defence, Cyril Ranatunga, the Attorney General and Inspector General of Police, Ernest Perera, had alleged that he was taken into custody on 7 September 1989 without a detention order and released on 21 October 1991. He was, during this period kept in six different places including four army camps, and subjected to torture.

● **SEVEN SOLDIERS** were killed and four more were seriously injured when cadres belonging to the LTTE attacked the army camp at Vankalai in the Mannar district on 2 February. Air Force and Navy reinforcements had to be summoned to repulse the continuing onslaught by the LTTE. Army sources claim that over 25 Tigers were killed was not confirmed. Meanwhile, in Sithandi in the Batticaloa district, army sources claimed that they captured a Tiger base following an equally fierce battle with the LTTE. Inside the LTTE base, the army seized a large haul of guns, ammunition, diesel barrels, bombs, polythene paper, food supplies, medical equipment including bottles of saline.

● **TWO PERSONS** have been detained in the Puttalam area for alleged involvement in an operation to supply fuel to the LTTE in Mannar. Following their arrest, investigating officers are trying to ascertain whether any personnel from the security services were involved in the supply of fuel to the LTTE.

● **SEVERAL INSTANCES** have come to light about ex-army personnel being involved in rape, robbery and other criminal offences. According to the Army High Command, there is reliable evidence that army personnel who have deserted after extensive training, and those who scout off while on duty are involved in a variety of crimes. In the Matala police area about ten such culprits have been arrested.

● **THE CEYLON MERCANTILE** Union (CMU) has, in a resolution, condemned the misuse of police powers to interfere with legitimate trade union activity including holding processions, pickets and taking strike action. It also condemned the refusal by the Defence Ministry of the right to public procession under the pretext of 'maintaining public order', and the practice of arresting and detaining overnight union activists at police stations without any justification.

● **FOLLOWING** the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement in July

1987, 4,193 Tamil detainees held in detention centres and army camps were released; of the 705 Tamil persons arrested and detained since 6 June 1990, 173 had been released, 76 had been produced in courts while the balance of 519 had not been produced so far, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Vincent Perera told Parliament on 5 February in reply to questions.

● **EIGHT SOLDIERS** of the Vijayabha Regiment were killed and 17 others injured in a fierce gun battle with a large Tiger contingent in the jungles of Kulipanchical in Batticaloa district on 7 February where the security forces were engaged in a major operation against the LTTE.

● **SOURCES** close to the Attorney General's department have disclosed that at least 26 persons, alleged to be connected with the LTTE, are to face prosecution shortly on charges in connection with the bomb attack on the military Joint Operations Command Head Quarters in Colombo in June last year in which 20 persons were killed and over 30 were injured when a suicide bomber drove a vehicle packed with explosives through the front gate of the building. It is reported that the suspects are to be charged under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and the charges would include conspiracy to overthrow the government, harbouring 'terrorists', failure to give information about 'terrorists', and possession of firearms.

● **MASKED MEN** in camouflage T-shirts brandishing weapons stormed into an exhibition portraying human rights violations, tied up and assaulted the volunteer workers and organisers and took off with the exhibits, mostly photographs of 'disappeared' persons, burned and mutilated bodies etc., at Uyanwatte, Matara in southern Sri Lanka on 27 January.

The exhibition and seminars to last for three days had been organised by the newly formed Citizens' Front to focus attention on the violation of human rights in the country. The Front is led by two MPs, Mahinda Rajapakse and Mangala Samaraweera.

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An Appeal for Peace With Justice

Over two hundred persons of influence from all communities in Sri Lanka have signed an appeal calling for an end to the ongoing war with the aim of securing peace with justice to all. Following is the text of the appeal sponsored by the Committee of the World Solidarity Forum on Sri Lanka for Justice and Peace:

We call on the peoples and Government of Sri Lanka to consider seriously and urgently the catastrophic situation our country is in and to take decisive constructive action now for peace, on the basis of justice for all.

We feel that the most urgent problem facing us is the ethnic conflict. While recognising that there are many inter-connected problems affecting different communities and sections of the people in different parts of the country, we realise that the most urgent priority is to put a stop to the ethnic conflict.

This conflict has caused and is causing unutterably tragic death and destruction on both sides. This has been in the context of a deteriorating economic situation and the breakdown of normal legal and democratic processes.

Without a stop to the war there can be no demilitarisation of society and cutting down of military expenditure, repeal of repressive legislation, lifting of the State of Emergency and return to normal law, and restoration of democratic processes. Thus there can be no real progress towards development of the resources of this country which is so urgently needed by the people, especially the poor, who are undergoing so much hardship.

Cost of War

We would emphasise that even if a victory is won by either side on the battlefield, the problem of a just settlement would still remain. And how practicable is winning the war and at what cost? Even government military experts are not agreed on this. A state of total war with frightful consequences will be necessary if the objective is to achieve a military victory in the North. Even in the East, after so much death and destruction, the war is far from over. In the South, too, there is continuing unrest.

We wish to emphasise that a special effort must be made by the majority community to understand the desperate plight of the people living in the areas of conflict, especially in the North. Normal civilised life is severely disrupted. In the North, the transport system is completely paralyzed. There has been no electricity for over a year, telephones have not been operating for over five years, food and medicines are extremely scarce and prices have risen several-fold. Most of all, there is the fear under which people live. There is no real government there, the people are alienated and neglected.

Mutual Understanding and Common Action

There is a great need for mutual understanding which can lead to mutual help and mutual building of confidence in each other. All communities need to understand the serious threats, common to all, that they face today with the daily deteriorating economic situation and erosion of democratic rights. It is of the utmost importance that fighting should be stopped so that they could get together for action on these common issues. Ordinary suffering people of all communities involved in the conflict should have the chance to express their deep desire for peace, understanding and co-existence. The positive achievements of ordinary people through the traumatic experience of war could then give rise to meaningful expressions of justice and peace.

Different communities and sectors should be able to preserve their own proper identities and reserve their right to work for long-term social and political goals and yet be prepared to make real and sincere sacrifices and concessions

in the present, in order to put a stop to the seemingly endless slaughter and destruction and enable progress towards peace.

We also believe that the different communities and sectors should, at the same time, given the necessary determination, be able to come together with the Government, if the Government takes the necessary constructive initiative, to set up the necessary monitoring bodies and processes, composed of recognised and respected individuals and accredited representatives of organisations within the country as well as from the international community, to ensure the effective implementation of whatever arrangements are made to move towards peace.

Devolution and Autonomy

The principles of devolution and autonomy have come to be widely accepted as a result of the struggles for justice of both majorities and minorities. There has to be continuous pressure from people and development of public opinion to devise suitable forms of devolution and effective means of implementation. There has to be the political will to make the devolution of power and autonomy a reality to enable the development of the people, especially the poor and underprivileged, in the areas concerned.

The major communities in this country, Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim have, over a considerable period of time, especially through the conflicts of recent years, become conscious of their separate identities and nationalities. We believe that the time has come for all communities to frankly face the reality of each other's identity and nationality.

Arrangements for devolution and autonomy should enable independent development, while at the same time enable co-existence and inter-dependence for mutual security, help and wider common aims.

The right of all those who have been displaced from their homes to return to their homes should be ensured and people of all communities should have the right to live in any part of the country. When all recognise each other's rights there should be no difficulty in ensuring this.

The Sri Lankan Constitution needs revision to make devolution and autonomy central features of it. Two other important aspects may be mentioned here:

1. The character of Sri Lankan society – democratic and pluralistic – should be recognised and core values, both religious and secular, should be enshrined in the Constitution. There should also be a Bill of Rights that is justiciable.

It should be mentioned here that secular values should not be understood as being in any way against or exclusive of true dharma or religion. In the context of pluralism in modern political life, they stand against inequality and discrimination.

2. There should be suitable constitutional restraints on the powers of the Executive Presidency which is now practically above the law and threatens a proper division and balance of powers between the Executive, the Judiciary and the Legislature. The question of the reversion to a parliamentary system can be seriously considered.

Effective constitutional arrangements have to be made to ensure the rights and security of Muslim and Sinhala minorities in the North-East and of the Plantation Tamils in the Central Provinces.

Language, Land, Education and Employment

The four key areas of discrimination and dispute have been language, land, education and employment and they still remain so. There are no instant solutions. Attempts to resolve problems must be accompanied by serious study and research by both Sinhala and Tamil scholars so as to give an

authoritative lead to public dialogue.

For instance, the whole question of colonization and the Tamil homeland rouses intense feelings on both sides. A joint inquiry by scholars and competent persons on both sides could make a real contribution to peace. The same would apply to the subjects of education and employment.

Economic Aspects

The economic aspects, in particular the impact of the development models adopted in Sri Lanka, need to be given serious consideration in working towards Justice and Peace in the country. The failure of economic policies and development models adopted since Independence has been a major cause of the uprisings in both the South and the North. Deepening economic crisis led to ever-increasing discrimination and, more especially, racial discrimination.

Despite rapid social and economic development there is a deepening crisis in Western Society, in the economy as well as in spiritual values. The Third World should beware of blindly imitating Western economic models.

In Sri Lanka, after nearly 15 years of open market policies, government sources acknowledge that an average of nearly 50% of children under 5 are under-nourished (in certain areas it is as high as 70%) and responsible researchers say that an average of 25% of babies born are below the minimum weight of 2.5 kilograms. What this means in terms of limitations of the basic right to life in this country has to be clearly understood and the necessary conclusions drawn.

The fact is that, as mentioned earlier, all communities and sections in this country face common threats to their existence and rights. The rights of all working people are especially threatened. Rights of workers that have been won through a long history of struggle have been seriously eroded. The condition of the peasantry who have long suffered from neglect has worsened further.

The condition of women and children must be specially mentioned. In all the tragic happenings we have passed through, women and children have been among the worst, if not actually the worst, affected. The mental agony and anguish and psychological trauma caused by the violent dismemberment and break-up of families are indescribable. Yet they have shown a remarkable spirit and resilience in the face of adversity and have set up several organisations for mutual help and solidarity. Help for them should receive high priority in any schemes of rehabilitation. Further, it must be emphasised that the struggle for women's rights is a very important and integral part of the whole struggle for fundamental, human and democratic rights.

Immediate steps should be taken to bring down the cost of living and so relieve pressure on the poorer sections of society, who suffer most from the galloping inflation.

The open economy with its fast-increasing trend of privatisation (dubbed peoplisation in Sri Lanka to mask the reality) increases the power of foreign capital and encourages an elite life style. The national debt increases and the gap between the rich and the poor increases. All this intensifies injustice and inequality and requires a strong centralized state to keep down discontent and safeguard foreign capital. This militates against devolution of power to sub-national units.

So there must be evaluation of economic policies and search for alternatives. Research aimed at working out appropriate policies and technology for Sri Lankan society should be promoted. Awareness of deep reforms needed in the rural economy should be created in the country. Broad involvement of political, religious and intellectual groups to identify and achieve these reforms urgently is needed.

Religion and Culture

By far the most devastating effect of economic policies and development models has been on the spirit of the people. No

doubt, they have brought certain benefits to some. But there has been a continuous process of alienation and dehumanisation. The violence brutalizes people, the worship of money and goods enslaves people and the 'rat race' breaks up community and divides and alienates people, people are plucked out of their roots and cast adrift. Consumerism subsumes all virtue and value.

So there must be a return to the roots of our indigenous life, a renewal from within to work out our own form of development, free of foreign domination. There needs to be a continuing open dialogue on this between various view-points that are strongly held. What Sri Lanka needs is a development model that is firmly rooted in the soil of our indigenous cultures, with participation of the masses of the peoples in Sri Lanka, and also open to genuine, secular, scientific influences from the wider world beyond. We need to build a national, scientific, mass culture.

Especially necessary will be an understanding by all of the multi-religious, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic character of our society.

There is reluctance on the part of some of the majority community to accept such an understanding. This cannot be put down to racism pure and simple but is due to complex historical factors. There has to be patient building of mutual confidence between majority and minority communities through common actions for justice and peace, action in tackling each other's problems. It is not simply a matter of oppressor and oppressed. There is oppression on both sides. Isolation has to be broken down and the majority has to understand the problems of the minority and the minorities have to understand the problems of the majority. However, while recognising that both the majority community and the minorities are subject to various forms of oppression and that there are privileged sections in all communities, it must be understood that the minorities are oppressed by the added fact of being minorities.

Appeal

There has been stark tragedy on a massive scale in our midst. But, hopefully, it has not been all in vain. There have been lessons learnt, insights gained and character formed through the struggles and sacrifices of the deep movement of the people for justice and peace. There are still residual deep traditions in the social and political life of our peoples. There is the world-wide struggle for justice and peace and the solidarity of the progressive international community. These are all valuable resources for the tasks ahead of us.

We belong to different religious and racial communities and include working people, professionals and those holding responsible positions in public life, intellectuals and clergy. We appeal to the peoples and Government of Sri Lanka. Let us all together face up to the realities of our situation and take positive common action for justice and peace.

Declare Terms and Guarantees

So as to enable an end to the ethnic conflict and move towards peace we call upon the Government, the Opposition, the LTTE and other involved groups to declare publicly now their respective stands on the issues at stake.

What terms will the Government offer? What terms does the Opposition, particularly the major Opposition party, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, offer? What terms does the LTTE and other involved groups demand?

We also call for clear statements of what guarantees will be offered and accepted in terms of mediation and monitoring bodies, processes of judicial appeal etc. regarding effective implementation of promises and arrangements made regarding demilitarization, restoration of democratic processes, including multi-party system and elections, devolution of power and autonomy.

Continued on page 17

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Continued from page 15

We have urged both the Government and the Opposition to declare their stand because attempts to reach a just settlement on previous occasions, particularly in 1957 and 1965 by each of the main political parties in turn were upset by the opposition party, at the time, seeking to make political capital out of the situation. Thus we call upon both the Government and the Opposition to come to an agreement now on a settlement, without either side seeking political capital.

Our Appeal

We also call upon the people to support this appeal and unite to work for and support a just settlement.

Finally, we repeat, our Appeal to all those responsible and to all those concerned is:

- ★ Stop the War
- ★ Declare terms and negotiate for Peace
- ★ Declare terms of mediating and monitoring procedures
- ★ Ensure rights of Minorities as well as Majority and recognise reasonable apprehensions of both
- ★ Continue dialogue on disputed issues
- ★ Repeal repressive legislation, lift State of Emergency, return to normal law and restore democratic processes
- ★ Bring down cost of living
- ★ Search for alternative economic policies to bring justice to the under-privileged of all communities
- ★ Ensure rights of all working people
- ★ Ensure rights of women and children

We are publishing this appeal with some representative signatures. We are resolved to continue gaining support for this appeal and campaigning and working for Justice and Peace. Signing this appeal does not necessarily mean acceptance of all the positions adopted in it. It signifies understanding of the urgency of stopping the war and commitment to common dialogue and action for Justice and Peace in Sri Lanka.

Ven. Navagamuve Dhammaloka Thero, Chief Sangha Nayaka of Ihala Dolospaththuwa, Hiripitiya; Ven. Moragalle Wimaladhamma Tissa Thero, Chief Sangha Nayaka of Eastern and Tamankaduwa Provinces, Trincomalee; Ven. Mawatagama Wimalagnana Thero, Viharadhipathi, Angangala Raja Maha Viharaya, Kurunegala; Ven. Tripitakacharya Delduwe Dhammaratana Thero, Chief Adhikarana Sangha Nayaka of Eastern and Tamankaduwa Provinces, China Bay, Trincomalee; Ven. Minneriya Sumanakiththi Thero, Viharadhipathi, Jayasumanaramaya, Trincomalee; Ven. K. Jinananda Thero, Viharadhipathi, Velunna Raja Maha Viharaya, Sri Agrabodhi Pirivena, Kantalai; Ven. Ampitiye Dhammakiththi Thero, Sahana Seva Centre, Matale; Ven. Gopallawa Rathnajothis Thero, Viharadhipathi, Galayaya Viharaya, Ibbagamuwa; Ven. Morogollagama Rathnasara Thero, Parivenadhipathi, Dharmachandra Maha Pirivena, Hiripitiya; Ven. P. Anoma Thero, Sinhala Madhya Maha Vidyalaya, Trincomalee; Ven. Mihindupura Mahindavansa Thero, Head, Buddhist Centre, Trincomalee; Ven. Dehiowita Piyatissa Thero, Viharadhipathi, Sri Bodhirajaramaya, China Bay, Trincomalee; Ven. Kamburawala Rathnapala Thero, Viharadhipathi, Sinipura Viharaya, Kantalai; Ven. Madampagama Assaji Thero, Bhikkhu Organisation for Protection of National Resources, Grandpass, Colombo; Ven. Batapola Nanda Thero, Subadraramaya, Batapola; Ven. Pallewela Devarakkhitha Thero, Subadraramaya, Nugegoda; Ven. Baddegama Samitha Thero, Pradeshiya Sabha Member, Baddegama; Ven. Kiranthidiye Pannasekera Thero, Mahameuna Environment Development Project, Molkawa; Ven. Dodampahala Sirisuguna Thero, Ruhuna Environment Foundation, Mini Kirula Rajamaha Viharaya, Dikwella; Ven. Hurikaduwe Nagitha Thero, Chief Organiser of Hapitagama Korale Siyamavansika Sangha Sabha,

Pallewela; Ven. Thalawathugoda Sirirathana Thero, Bauddhamaya, Thalawathugoda; Ven. Indigasthuduwa Sudaththa Thero, President, Child Development Project, Vanawasala, Kelaniya; Ven. A. Wimalagnana Thero, Viharadhipathi, Raja Maha Viharaya, Agbopura, Kantalai; Ven. Molkawe Sudamma Thero, Secretary, Galle District Environment Committee, Ampegama; Ven. Kosgoda Siriwimala Thero, Sirinivesaramaya, Piyagama; Ven. Welithara Amarajiva Thero, Nayaka Temple, Balapitiya; Ven. Dandeniyage Gnanananda Thero, Ratmalana; Ven. Yatalamaththe Vanarathna Thero, Alubomulla; Ven. Hevesse Upatissa Thero, Migama; Ven. Ganthune Somatilaka Thero, Kelaniya; Ven. Ratvita Wimalajothi Thero, Ibbagamuwa; Ven. Rt. Revd. Jabez Gnanapragasam, Bishop of Colombo; Rt. Revd. Andrew Kumara, Bishop of Kurunegala; Revd. Kingsley Muttiah, President, Methodist Church of Sri Lanka; Revd. S.K. Perera, Former President, Methodist Church of Sri Lanka; Revd. Paul Caspersz, S.J. Satyodaya, Kandy; Revd. Tissa Balasuriya, O.M.I., Centre for Society and Religion, Colombo; Revd. Aloysius Peiris, S.J., Kelaniya; Revd. Oswald Firth, O.M.I., Director, SEDÉ, Colombo; Revd. T. Pius Pathmarajah, St. Mary's Cathedral, Trincomalee; Revd. E.A.J. Soysa, Eastern Human and Economic Development, Muthur; Revd. Yohan Devananda, Devasaranaramaya, Ibbagamuwa; Revd. Kenneth Fernando, Ecumenical Institute for Study and Dialogue, Colombo; Revd. Sydney Knight, Kithu Sevana, Colombo; Revd. Lionel Peiris, Director, Social Action, Lanka Sabha, Colombo; Revd. Joseph Sarvananthan, St. Paul's Church, Kynsey Road, Colombo; Revd. Jeffrey Abeysekera, NCC Chaplain, Peradeniya University; Revd. S. Victorine Rodrigo, Women's Desk, SEDEC, Colombo; S. Ravichandrakurukkal, Chief Priest and Trustee, Sri Badrakali Ambal Temple, Trincomalee; Swami Ajaratmananda, Ramakrishna Mission, Wellawatte; M.K. Sellarajah, Attorney-at-Law, President, Konesar Temple, Trincomalee; S.M. Salahudeen Lebbe, Mohideen Jumma Mosque, Trincomalee; K.P. Silva, General Secretary, Communist Party of Sri Lanka; Athauda Seneviratne, M.P. Lanka Sama Samaja Party; G.G. Ponnambalam, All Ceylon Tamil Congress; Linus Jayatileke, Commercial and Industrial Workers Union; Y.P. Silva, General Secretary, Sri Lanka Mahajana Party; Mavai S. Senathirajah, M.P., TULF, Jaffna; Joseph Pararajasingham, M.P., TULF, Batticaloa District; K.R. Kuganeswaran, M.P., EPRLF, Wannai District; Emmanuel Silva, M.P., EPRLF, Mannar District; Prince Casinadar, M.P., EPRLF, Batticaloa District; D. Siddharthan, Democratic People's Liberation Front; Karavai Kandasamy, Democratic People's Liberation Front; George Seneviratne, Former Minister, North East Provincial Council; Alhaj Abdul Rasool, Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, Provincial Councillor NWP; Tennyson Edirisuriya, Attorney-at-Law, Provincial Councillor, Southern Province; Ranjit Navaratne, Leader of Opposition, Provincial Council, Galgamuwa; Dhammika Bandara Lenawa, Leader of Opposition, Provincial Council, Kekirawa; D.M. Chandratilleke, Provincial Councillor, NWP; P.N. Gunawardena, Provincial Councillor, NWP; Nimal Siri Ekanayake, Provincial Councillor, NWP; C. Wickremnayake, Provincial Councillor, NWP; N.B. Kaluhendiwele, Provincial Councillor, NWP; Gilbert Jayawardena, Provincial Councillor, NWP; Tissa Herath, Provincial Councillor, NWP; D.S. Jayawardena, Provincial Councillor, NWP; Salinda Dissanayake, Provincial Councillor, NWP; I.M. Gunatileke, Provincial Councillor, NWP; K. Somapala Kanakarathne, Provincial Councillor, NCP, Kebitigollawa; Nalin Wijeyaratne, Provincial Councillor, NCP, Madawachchiya; A.M. Ranjit Adhikaram, Provincial Councillor, Uva, Bibile; Kirthisinghe Ratnayake, Provincial Councillor, Uva, Moneragala; M.B. Leelarathne, Provincial Councillor, Uva, Passara; M.S.M. Samsudeen, Attorney-at-Law, Town Councillor, Hambantota; Lakshman Ananda Lanerolle, President, Pradeshiya Sabha, Baddegama; M.P. Vincent, Leader of Opposition, Pradeshiya Sabha,

Continued on page 18

Continued from page 17

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Civilians Asked to Leave Jaffna

The civilian population of Jaffna, numbering over six hundred thousand are being encouraged to leave the peninsula and take refuge in nearby islands, before the security forces move in for a final thrust against the LTTE.

'We will destroy the LTTE's war machine but before that we want to make sure that the innocent civilians are safe,' JOC Chief, Hamilton Wanasinghe said.

The LTTE's rival Tamil group, the EPDP has also moved in to play a supporting role in organising the settlement of civilians in Army-controlled islands on the outer perimeter of the Jaffna peninsula, military sources said.

'More than five hundred civilians have already moved to safe areas, despite blockades by the LTTE,' a military official in Colombo said.

THE SUB-CONTINENTAL SCENE

Pakistan: The Brewing Troubles in Sind

— Aabha Dixit

Ethnic hatred in Sind appears to have reached boiling point. The press, that is already under tremendous pressure from the government, has taken the lead in declaring that the provincial Jam Sadiq Ali government's retributive style of functioning has taken the troubled province well past the danger mark and if allowed to continue in the same vein, another East Pakistan like situation in Sind could become a reality.

The Pakistan People's Party (PPP), whose home turf has borne the brunt of the establishment attacks, has responded in like vein. Benazir Bhutto made a recent public statement 'that the situation in Sind is similar to the one prevailing in Bangladesh in 1971. I shall play my role.' It has drawn both bouquets and brickbats for the PPP leader. Followers shower her with praise for taking a courageous stand on such a sensitive subject, but political opponents have been quick to the draw in comparing her statement with that of her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who before the infamous crackdown of March 1971, was accused of having planned Pakistan's dismemberment.

If in the political arena, Sind continues to remain the battlefield where the two opponents slug it out relentlessly, at the popular level, Bhutto's statement has generated a debate over the future of Sind, as part of Pakistan. Across the board polarization, primarily on ethnic lines, is one noticeable feature of the debate and has called into question whether in their fanatical search for a national identity, the rulers wilfully followed destructive policies that today are tearing its social fabric asunder.

A spate of articles have been written in all major newspapers on whether the search for an identity as Pakistani has proved false and misplaced and whether this elusive search has put the entire country on the road to disintegration. Jam Sadiq is increasingly being compared to the former Governor of East Pakistan, Monem Khan, who had the dishonourable reputation of hastening Pakistan's dismemberment through sycophancy to the military dictators that never gave the west Pakistani elite the true picture of emergent Bangladeshi nationalism. Ever since Monem Khan has come to be associated as Pakistan's equivalent of a Quisling.

But oblivious to popular perceptions at the grassroots level, the establishment's witchhunt to obliterate the PPP in the Sind has convulsed its society as never before. Every attempted body blow by Jam against the Bhutto ladies has in fact become a shot in the arm for the nationalists. A year under Jam's functioning has brought a new found respectability for smaller Sindhi nationalist groups like the Awami Tehrik of Rasul Bux Palejo. Its 28 day long march last month, that began in Sukkur and ended in Karachi, was intended to give vent to the anger of interior Sind against Islamabad's shenanigans and their policy of attempting to settle Biharis (non-Bengali migrants from Bangladesh) in the province.

The long march that concentrated on the towns of the interior areas was a stunning success and virtually every Sindhi nationalist leader was trying to join the bandwagon. Political opponents like Liaquat Jatoi and Benazir addressed the long marchers on the same platform. The Palejo effort becomes sharply noticeable because of the lukewarm response given by the rural Sindhis to the PPP ordered strike that preceded Palejo's mobilization drive.

As the political initiative slips from the 'centrist' PPP towards the nationalists, the seemingly unchanging character of their political opponents — the Punjabi elite — has become its biggest support base. At the political level, the tussle is between Jam Sadiq Ali and Benazir Bhutto, but the same power struggle, when looked at from the socio-economic level, presents an uncomfortable manifestation of the deep psychological divide that exists between the Sindhi and Punjabi thinking on what ails Sindhi society. So well entrenched is this perceptual gap that it would require a miracle for both sides to ever agree on the root causes of Sindhi's dilemma.

Insular Islamabad has always viewed the ethnic problems in Sind as a result of the province's political process being distorted and the virtual highjacking of democracy by vested groups. A classical and time enduring defense mechanism perfected by the Punjabi elite to defend their ubiquity within Pakistan has permeated every strata of Pakistan's political structure that is dominated by the Punjabi. The

nationalist struggle of the Sindhis is not credited with having any political philosophy and it has drawn its fringe support from an anti-Centre posturing rather than exhibiting with any credibility, distinguishing features that stake Sind's unique claim as a separate nationality. Put plainly, to the Punjabi, Sindhi nationalism is merely a facade for perpetuating terrorism.

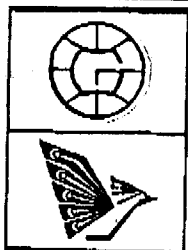
Sense of Frustration

Similarly, Sindhi claims of representing a civilization and having a distinct history is looked upon as an exercise in wishful thinking. Sind, according to this *idée fixe*, was always ruled by outsiders and Sindhi heroes were none other than 'corrupt, inefficient, negligent, debauched and given to a luxurious style of life.' It was the Pakistan movement that energized the dormant Sindhis to wrest a measure of rights from their own oppressors — the feudal lord and the pir. The sense of negativism displayed by these twin forces of status quo, who even today dominate the political and socio-economic landscape, are instrumental in injecting the sense of deprivation and frustration among the Sindhi masses, which the feudal and pir have channelized into the nationalist mould to ward off any attack upon their leadership.

The ruling Punjabi elite rejects claims by Sindhi intellectuals that the original people of Sind are ethnically different from the rest of Pakistan. The Punjabi world view sees Sind through the historical prism as a multiracial society, where many ethnic groups have intermingled and hence no single group could lay exclusive claims of being sons of the soil in the entire province. Consequently, the Sindhi language, that was a key precursor to the nationalist struggle, is looked upon as another regional language like Punjabi or Pushto, which may be comparatively more developed. Thus the language riots of 1972, that set fire to the ethnic cauldron, arose because of the attempt to give more importance to Sindhi, than what is done for other regional languages in the rest of the provinces of Pakistan.

If language and feelings of exclusivity are rejected by the Punjabi world view, the rural-urban divide that is often projected by Sindhi intellectuals as an example of ethnic discrimination, becomes only an issue of urban and rural sociology. But the icing on the cake of Punjabi domination betrays the ruling elite's desire to portray itself as a master race in Pakistan. To them, Punjab has progressed because of its history and the character of the people, who work harder and better. The irrigation miracle of upper Sind in the British days is touted as an example of

Continued on page 23



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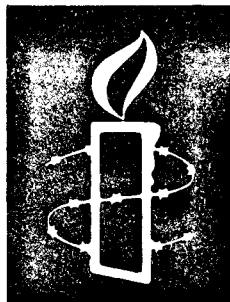
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Amnesty International

Human Rights Violations in North-East Sri Lanka

(Continued from last issue)

One of the people interviewed by Amnesty International in June 1991 described how late one evening in April 1990 three armed members of the LTTE jumped over the wall around his house and ordered him to come with them for interrogation. They blindfolded him and took him in a van to what seemed to be a transit camp. He was held there for nine days with an estimated 40-45 others. During this period, he was never interrogated. On the ninth day, he was transferred to Tunukkai, Mullaitivu district where one of the largest places of detention of the LTTE at that time was established. Tunukkai LTTE detention camp was situated in the former premises of the Paddy Marketing Board Stores. The majority of the prisoners were held in a large covered area which was divided into individual spaces for prisoners by white lines painted on the ground. Each prisoner was allocated a numbered space of 3' x 2'. Prisoners were forced to stay in their allocated space. Their feet were shackled together with a rigid nine-inch bar. He estimated that about 800 people were held in this hall at that time. He also alleged that those considered to be 'hardcore' prisoners were held separately in eight foot deep pits surrounded by barbed wire. There were five such pits in the camp, each of which, he thought, contained approximately 20-25 prisoners.

Amnesty International has also received several reports of torture of prisoners held in LTTE custody. The same prisoner mentioned above described in his testimony to Amnesty International how at a detention camp set up in the Kachchai area, near Chavakachcheri, Jaffna District, where they had been transferred from Tunukkai, he and four other prisoners were put into a small room, told to stand with their face towards the wall and were hit on the back with a sledge hammer. He said he received seven blows and claims he still has problems breathing as a result.

In mid-July 1990, at Kachchai LTTE detention camp, he also witnessed how 16 soldiers of the Sri Lanka army who had been taken prisoner during the LTTE attack on Kokkavil Army Camp in Mullaitivu District were tortured in an open space inside the camp. He said he saw how nails were pushed under their fingernails, how they were forced to eat mud and sand and were stripped naked and made to roll in the hot sand. He described how they were hung upside down and beaten and how, one by one, they were put into a small room in which red chillies were being burnt. He said he could hear them cry out in pain.

Several ex-prisoners of the LTTE have provided Amnesty International with names of people in LTTE custody, including names of members of rival groups, journalists, employees of institutions such as banks, civil servants and police officers. Relatives of people in LTTE custody have also written to the organization. Several of them claim that they have not been able to establish the fate or whereabouts of their relatives who were taken into custody by the LTTE. Among those 'disappeared' are dozens of police officers who surrendered to the LTTE in June 1990 as well as Muslim and Sinhalese civilians.

Amnesty International interviewed a relative of two Sinhalese brothers from Kallady in Batticaloa District: 35-year-old W.H. Sony Silva and 28-year-old W.H. Sarath. They were taken away by the LTTE while travelling on a bus to Colombo on 7 July 1990. The bus was stopped in the vicinity of Chenkalady, north of Batticaloa, by an LTTE convoy of three pick-up trucks. The relative believes that they were taken because they were married to Tamil women and because one of them had earlier refused to

give the LTTE use of his boat. Their relatives have made appeals through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) but to date their whereabouts remain unknown.

In mid-November 1990, 28 Muslim traders from Jaffna were taken by local LTTE cadres. Three of them were released, one was reportedly killed in custody. Twenty four of them continue to be held as of early June 1991.

Hundreds of Sinhalese and Muslim villagers have also been killed by the LTTE since the outbreak of the fighting in the northeast. Villages in areas bordering the present Northeastern Province, particularly in Pollonaruwa District, but also in Anuradhapura and Moneragala District, have been attacked, often at dusk or night time. Seventeen villagers were killed on 14 April 1991 at Ethimale, a largely Sinhalese village in the Moneragala District, near the border with Amparai District by a group of approximately twenty LTTE cadres. Among the victims were at least six children. It is difficult to ascertain with complete certainty the identity of the attackers. Survivors are often confused and make apparently contradictory statements. Sometimes the LTTE has claimed responsibility. On other occasions, LTTE spokespersons abroad have issued statements denying they were involved in the killings. The latter, for instance, happened in early August 1990, when 103 Muslim worshippers were killed inside two mosques at Kattankudy in the east.

Among the victims of extrajudicial executions by the LTTE are also a number of people who have disobeyed LTTE orders, including LTTE members, and people found guilty of misappropriating funds or abusing the name of the LTTE. One such victim is 39-year-old Vasantha Sulosana from Navatkiri, Neerveli, Jaffna District. She was publicly executed on 15 August 1991 at Muthiraisanthai, together with one Shanmuganathan (alias Guru Master), who had reportedly been found guilty of fraud. Vasantha Sulosana was tied to a lamppost and executed by a woman LTTE cadre. Her body was later dropped in front of her home.

In October 1990, the LTTE issued an ultimatum to Muslims in Mannar, Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi and Jaffna districts to leave the area or be killed. An estimated 40,000 fled south to Puttalam and Colombo. Similar threats have been reported in mid-July 1991 in some Muslim villages in the east.

Amnesty International's investigations into the above allegations are continuing. Although relatively little information is available about the procedures established by the LTTE with regard to the treatment of prisoners, it is apparent that basic principles proclaimed in international humanitarian and human rights law are not always adhered to. As a matter of priority, therefore, Amnesty International believes the LTTE should ensure that prisoners are not held incommunicado or in secret. Prisoners should be seen promptly and regularly after arrest or capture by representatives of an independent body such as the ICRC which can monitor their well-being and seek to protect them. Prisoners should be held in humane conditions and LTTE cadres should be instructed that under no circumstances the torture and killing of defenceless people, including prisoners and civilians, is permitted.

8 GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

During its talks with government officials in March and June 1991, Amnesty International was informed of certain steps the government has taken to attempt to stem the tide of human

Continued on page 22

Continued from page 21

rights abuses that take place in the country. As stated in the Introduction, Amnesty International met with representatives of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into the Illegal Removal of Persons⁹ and the Human Rights Task Force, both bodies recently set up by the government in an attempt to investigate and prevent human rights violations, 'disappearances' and torture in particular.

8.1 Initiatives relating to 'disappearances':

The Presidential Commission of Inquiry into the Illegal Removal of Persons is mandated for one year to investigate all cases of 'disappearances' that occurred after 11 January 1991, the date of its establishment. Amnesty International has welcomed its creation, believing that a full, impartial investigation can play an important part in preventing future abuses, provided that its working methods and terms of reference will enable it to function effectively.

When meeting with its members in June 1991, the delegation inquired about the Commission's working methods. It was told that during the period January - June 1991, the Commission had received 363 complaints and that, after initial investigation, 35 were found to be within its terms of reference. Out of the 35 investigated cases, eleven of the 'disappeared' persons were found to be in custody, on remand or released and in 24 cases, inquiries were continuing. Amnesty International also noticed when raising the work of the Presidential Commission with human rights activists from the northeast, that the large majority of them were either not aware of its existence or did not know where and how one could get in touch with them.

Amnesty International learned that as part of the initial investigations by the Presidential Commission, relatives were expected to travel to Colombo to appear in person before the commission before a final decision is made about the acceptance of their case. Amnesty International is concerned by the apparently slow nature of the procedures applied by the Presidential Commission. Taking into account the present situation in the country, it is concerned that travelling to Colombo may be difficult, particularly for people living in those areas where most 'disappearances' take place for the moment, i.e. the east. Amnesty International is also concerned at the high number of cases submitted that have apparently been deemed to fall outside the mandate of the Presidential Commission.

It also learned from the commissioners that one interim report has so far been submitted to the President and that a final report on their activities will be written in the period January - March 1992. Amnesty International understands from government officials that it may be possible for the term of office of the Commission and for its terms of reference to be extended.

Amnesty International was informed of the government's plans to introduce legislation before Parliament to allow relatives of 'disappeared' to obtain death certificates if their relatives have been missing for a certain period. This would allow relatives to qualify for relief, pensions, etc.

In relation to 'disappearances' reported recently from the northeast of Sri Lanka, the government informed Amnesty International of its request to the Indian Government to be provided with a list of all refugees from Sri Lanka presently living in refugee camps in Tamil Nadu, south India. The government said it hoped to find some of those reported as 'disappeared' among these refugees. Amnesty International wants to stress that all cases of 'disappearances' it has submitted to the government fulfil certain criteria, including that there is adequate proof that the person was arrested by the security forces. It therefore surmises that, if some of those considered as 'disappeared' were indeed in India, that they may have left the country directly after having been released from custody and without informing their relatives or Amnesty International.

8.2 Initiatives relating to arrest and torture:

The establishment of the Human Rights Task Force under the chairmanship of a former judge of the Supreme Court, J.F.A. Soza, was announced at the time of the Amnesty International visit to Sri Lanka. The Amnesty International delegation met with Justice Soza and discussed with him in detail the terms of

reference of the newly-established body. At that time, the Task Force had not as yet become operational although advertisements for several investigating officers and administrative staff had appeared in the press.¹⁰

The Task Force, which is a permanent body, has six parts to its mandate, which is generally described as 'to monitor the observance of fundamental rights of detainees'. These six tasks comprise:

1. To maintain a comprehensive and accurate register of detainees with full details of their detention and ensure observance of and respect for their fundamental rights, and ensure humane treatment for them.
2. To investigate and establish the identity of each and every detainee by a proper identification process.
3. To monitor the welfare of the detainees.
4. To ensure the safe handing over of detainees to properly identified next of kin at release from detention.
5. To carry out regular inspections of places of detention, make roll calls and other necessary spot checks and to take immediate steps to remedy any irregularities.
6. To record any complaints or representations and/or grievances that may be made and take immediate remedial action.

Amnesty International was assured that a register of all people detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and Emergency Regulations would be kept centrally, regularly updated and made accessible to members of the public. Amnesty International was also assured that the authority of the Task Force would extend to all places of detention, including army camps and possible unofficial 'safe houses'.

Amnesty International welcomes the establishment of the Human Rights Task Force. The keeping of a public, central register, the setting up of a system of regular visits to places of detention by an independent body and the monitoring of releases have all been recommendations for the prevention of torture, 'disappearance' and extrajudicial execution made by Amnesty International in the past.

According to information provided by the government, there were 7,619 people in detention in the south as of early June 1991. The following were figures provided for Tamil people in detention:

Batticaloa prison:	28
Batticaloa STF custody:	147
Trincomalee prison:	10
Pollonaruwa:	9
Vavuniya:	10
Poonanai:	11
Magazine prison, Colombo:	279
Anuradhapura prison:	2
Negombo prison:	3
	499

These figures do not include people held at local army camps, the total number of which is unknown to Amnesty International.

Justice Soza assured the Amnesty International delegation that the Task Force would regularly visit places of detention in the east.

Instructions were also issued to police in October 1990 concerning the proper registration of prisoners held for subversive activity, and requiring that senior officers be personally involved in the interrogation of these suspects to ensure their personal safety.

⁹ For Amnesty International's more general comments and recommendations with regard to the working of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into the Illegal Removal of Persons, see *Sri Lanka: Commission of Inquiry Announced to Investigate New Cases of 'Disappearance'* (AI Index ASA 37/04/91) of February 1991 and *Sri Lanka: Update on Commission of Inquiry to Investigate New Cases of 'Disappearance'* (AI Index: ASA 37/12/91) of April 1991.

¹⁰ Amnesty International has since learned that the Task Force has procured its own premises and has started visiting places of detention and compiling a central register.

(To be continued).

Closing date for completed grid and coupon to be received is 31 March 1992.

Answers and the name of the winner – first all correct entry pulled out of a bag – will be announced in the April 1992 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.

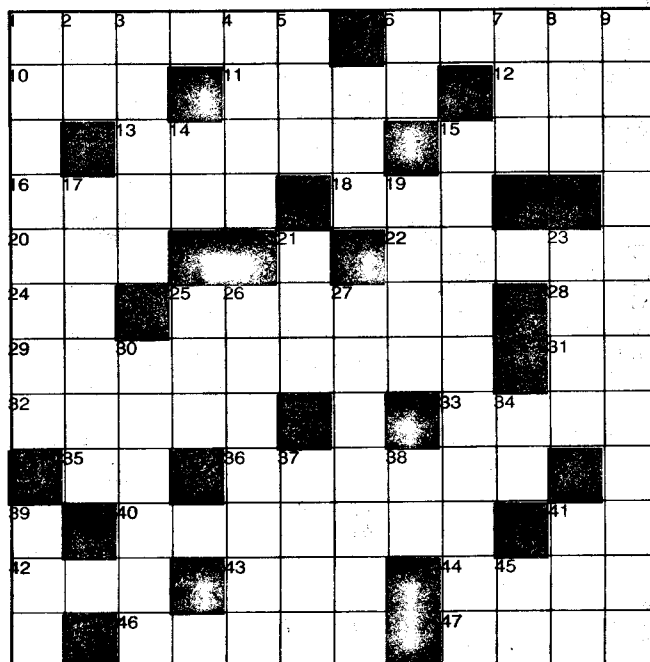
1. Tamil poet who rendered Ramayana in Tamil (6)
6. Greek teller of moral animal fables (5)
10. Miss Gardner who shot to fame in the film Bhowani Junction, affectionately (3)
11. Key factor (4)
12. Specially made in a particular style (3)
13. The family of two German brothers who wrote many popular fairy stories (5)
15. Intellectually acute (4)
16. A number of enumerated things (5)
18. Colourless, odourless and tasteless resin used in paints, abb. (3)
20. A dwelling for a fox (3)
22. Powell, a Tory firebrand of yester years (5)
24. Prefixed to 'on' it's anonymous (2)
25. French protestant leader who stood for rigorous observation of Christian values (6)
28. Short hectare (2)
29. Heroin in the verse drama which has the same name authored by 1 Down (9)
31. Laotian monetary unit (2)
32. An excuse often given in a court of law (5)
33. Usually refers to researched information (4)
35. Ibidem – in the first place, abb. (2)
36. The earliest evolved from reptiles 200 million years ago (6)
40. Connections between transmitters and aerials (4-3)
41. Short foot (2)
42. Sri Lanka's popular export product (3)
43. Albanian monetary unit (3)
44. East European mountain range
46. Egyptian president to his family and friends (5)

47. A girl's name or a Philippine hurricane (4)

Down:

1. India's 5th century dramatist and poet and author of 29 Across (8)
2. Briefly, Authorised Version of the Bible (2)
3. – David, Star of David (5)
4. Author of Lucky Jim, That Uncertain Feeling, Take a Girl Like You and other novels (4)
5. The sign of the zodiac Aries (3)
6. 'A' when used emphatically before a vowel sound (2)
7. Requests a self-addressed stamped envelope for reply (3)
8. Inspirational sound at Spanish festivals (3)
9. A collection of classical Indian fables in which animals are portrayed in human situations (12)
14. Revolution per minute (2)
15. Tamil writer of great repute and the author of 'Meaningful Hinduism' (10)
17. The township in Andhra Pradesh associated with the famous court jester Raman (6)
19. A disguise or even a pretext (4)
21. Short altitude (3)
23. Friendly conversation (4)
25. Young one of a lion or even that of a fox (3)
26. '—, minerals and vegetables', Gilbert and Sullivan's 'Pirates of Penzance' (7)
27. Author of Ramayana (7)
30. Direction of Mecca indicated in mosques by a niche in the wall (6)
34. Higher form of the GCE (2)
37. Middle-eastern port city (4)
38. Chemical symbol for manganese (2)
39. Pen for the pigs (3)
41. Evergreen coniferous tree (3)
45. In this way or that (2)

QUIZ CROSSWORDS – No. 13. Compiled by: Richards



Quiz Crosswords – 11: Solutions.

Across: 1. Christmas. 9. AD. 11. Araneid. 12. Able. 14. Thomas. 15. Grebe. 16. At. 17. Puma. 18. Mentor. 22. Maria. 23. Agee. 24. OT. 26. Rot. 27. Anaconda. 31. Thaipongal. 33. Nile. 36. Sneak. 37. Troth. 41. Trine. 43. Three Wise Men.

Down: 1. Catamarans. 2. HRH. 3. Rao. 4. Inmate. 5. SEATO. 6. Tis. 7. MD. 8. Sarma. 9. Alb. 10. Deepavali. 13. Bearing. 15. Gum. 19. Ego. 20. Nettle. 21. Ronin. 25. Tap. 27. AA. 28. Courts. 29. On. 30. Daphne. 32. Heave. 34. Inch. 38. Ore. 39. Tim. 40. NW. 42. En.

Winner: S. Vijayan, 42 Van Dyke Street, Toxteth, Liverpool L8 0R7, U.K.

Continued from page 6

car-bomb which killed General Wijeratne, is said to have crossed over to Tamil Nadu to accomplish the task of assembling the belt-bomb. It was after this task that he had come down to Colombo and assembled another car-bomb in Ratmalana that blasted the GOC building at Sir Ernest de Silva Mawatha. In all three incidents about 75 people died.

A special team of the City Crime Detective Bureau was flown to Madras a fortnight ago to identify a youth called Ravi, whom the SIT nabbed suspecting him to be the man whom they were looking for. However, the local team to whom the man was shown dismissed the SIT's suspicion.

Reports from Madras also said that Ravi was the only prime suspect now wanted in connection with the Rajiv Gandhi assassination and if the task of apprehending him is accomplished, legal proceedings would commence. All other suspects in the Rajiv assassination either committed suicide or are in custody.

Continued from page 19

Punjabi enterprise of turning a desert into green fields. The overwhelming domination of the armed forces draws sustenance from the British theory of martial races. They have made it into the armed forces of Pakistan on their merit and because of their ability to meet the maximum standards of excellence.

The Punjabi view of the emerging crisis in Sind is strikingly similar to its perception of the Bangladeshi's abilities. As Sindhi bashing continues unabated, it too, will take the remainder of the country through another upheaval that will shred Pakistani society irreparably.

The newspaper *The News* summed up the consequences of the ruling elite's failure to learn from the experiences of the past. It wrote, 'when we look around us today, there are strong echoes of the 1960s, in terms of branding political opponents as unpatriotic, and in terms of the tunnel vision that is evident in the handling of Sind... There are also some disturbing similarities. First an inability to acknowledge a problem in all its dimensions – until it is too late, and even then to adjust reality to an eclectic reading of events. This approach links 1971 to 1991. So does the tunnel vision that made Bengali separatism a self-fulfilling prophesy, and is today probably driving Sind to the point of no return.'

(Aabha Dixit is a research officer at the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis and was recently in Pakistan.)

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Jaffna Hindu parents, seek partner for daughter, 23, British citizen, graduate in good employment in London. Send horoscope, details. M 550 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu sister seeks suitable partner (preferably educated, 34 - 40) for elder brother (divorced with one son), 43, banker, Canadian Permanent Resident. Please send details. M 557 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents seek partner for daughter, 22, fair, Canadian Citizen and following Business studies in Canada. Details and horoscope to M 558 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu brother seeks partners for homely brides, 42 & 39, living in Sri Lanka. Divorcees without encumbrances considered. Details and horoscope in first letter. M 559 c/o Tamil Times.

Well established Jaffna Hindu Canadian citizens seek polished, educated bride for only son, 26 years, well employed Canadian Government officer. Send details, horoscope. M 560 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Hindu parents seek bride, British citizen or permanent resident for son, 30, part qualified accountant (finalist) working in London. Mars afflicted. Send horoscope, details. M 561 c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna parents seek partner for daughter, 31 years, British citizen, working in London and owns house; practising Jehovahs witness. Prospective partner Jehovahs witness or sympathetic and understanding. Age, race no bar. M 562 c/o Tamil Times.

Christian Tamil parents seek groom for daughter, 23, pretty, 5'4", educated in Jaffna, working in London, for early marriage. Write with recent photographs. M 563 c/o Tamil Times.

WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couple on their recent wedding.

Ramesh son of the late Mr. Rajendram and Mrs. R. Rajendram of 34 Road 8/14, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia and Ratnajothy daughter of the late Mr. V. Seevaratnam and Mrs. Seevaratnam of Urumpirai South, Sri Lanka on 26.1.92 at Sri Ghanapathy Temple, London SW19.

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OBITUARIES



Mr. Sangarapillai Nadarajah of 27 Castle Lane, Colombo 4, retired Assistant General Manager and Consultant, Bank of Ceylon, Sri Lanka, passed away while on holiday in London after a brief illness on 16-12-91. Funeral took place according to Hindu rites on 28-12-91 in Bromley, Kent. His wife Laliitha, children Dr. Bhamini Kumar, (U.K.), Dr. Aravindhan (U.K.), grandson Niroshan along with Dr. (Mrs.) Saradha and P. Rajasimman of Bromley, Kent, wish to express their thanks and gratitude to all friends and relations for the immense support, sympathy and assistance in several ways during their time of shock and grief. They regret their inability to thank them individually. - 21 Wellsmoor Gardens, Bickley, Bromley, Kent.



Miss Kanagammah Saravanamuttu (Satkumam), 79, formerly Teacher, Jaffna Hindu College; Principal, Pandatheruppu Girls College and Vadamaradchi Hindu Girls College and Inspectress of Schools, Jaffna; daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. Annammah Saravanamuttu of Arialai, Jaffna; sister of the late Mrs. Arulammah Somasundaram, Dr. Thanabala-singham, late Dr. Paramanathan and Mrs. Sivapakiam (Jegasothy) Navaratnarajah; beloved auntie of Mrs. Pathma Selvaratnam passed away peacefully in Colombo on 21.1.92 and was cremated at Kanatte on 23rd January. We pray for the everlasting rest of her soul - Mrs. Devika Perinpanayagam, 15 Rotant Road, Northwood, Middx. Tel: 09238 22974.

As we go to press, we are grieved to learn of the passing away of the **Rt. Rev. Dr. S. Kulendran**, First Bishop in Jaffna of the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India, on Friday, 14.2.92. He was 92 years old. The funeral took place on Monday, 17th February in Vaddukoddai, Jaffna.



Mrs. S. Perisundaram, wife of the late Senator Perisundaram, Former Minister of Labour, Industries and Commerce, Sri Lanka; Founder and First President of the Ceylon Workers Congress; mother of Dr. P.S. Alageswaran, Mrs. M. Subramaniam, M.P. Sundaram, Mrs. S. Toniappa and Jaya Perisundaram passed away in Madras on 16th February 1992. The funeral took place in Madras on 20.2.92. - 187 City Way, Rochester, Kent ME1 2BG.

Mr. S. Thambydurai - An Appreciation

The demise of Sinnappu Thambydurai (former District Judge) on 2nd December 1991 has spelt the exit of the last of the old guards who adorned the public arena of Jaffna. He passed away at the ripe age of 85 after having led a benign life, which benefited every segment of the Tamil community and in particular, the people of Jaffna.

Mr. Thambydurai was a product of St. John's College, Jaffna. Law was his chosen profession, after a spell at the private Bar, he joined the Judiciary. He had been in the Judicial service for over 20 years and had served in Anuradhapura, Chilaw, Point Pedro, Batticaloa, Kandy and Colombo. By his amiable manners and endearing temperament, he earned the respect of the members of the Bar and the adoration of the public in every station he served. Even as a Judicial officer, he actively participated in and promoted the cultural and religious life of the community.

Mr. Thambydurai has been an ardent Tamil Nationalist who could not, by reason of his office, articulate his committed views. However, when he retired from the Judicial service and entered private law practice, he passionately gave expression to his nationalist fervour. He had since been actively involved in the several campaigns organised by the Federal Party and later the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF). In the absence of Mr. Chelvanayagam, Mr. Thambydurai served as a father figure, often resolving the inner conflicts within the TULF. He has been the Vice President of the TULF from 1977 until it was outlawed in 1983.

Notwithstanding his age and sober thinking, he always identified with the aspirations of the younger generation. During the turbulent days of the early 70s, Mr. Thambydurai had the courage of his convictions to defend Sivakumaran, the founder of Tamil Militant movement, who was arrested for a bomb attack on Junior Minister Somaweera Chandrasiri in Urumpirai, in 1970. Undaunted and stoical, Mr. Thambydurai carried on with his vigorous political activities even after an attack by the army men at his house in Thirunelvely in May 1981 killing a young man. This house was graciously lent by him to accommodate the TULF head office, after the TULF main office in Jaffna was razed to rubble by the rampaging security forces.

He served adversity with fortitude. His son Muthukumaraswamy, being a student activist was arrested and detained many times in the 70s for a total period of over 5 years. The father endured the pain with legitimate pride. Eventually when Muthukumaraswamy, who later qualified as an Attorney-at-Law, filed a Defamation suit against the government, Mr. Thambydurai was a key witness in that case.

Educational institutions in Jaffna were fortunate in enlisting his services in one way or another. The presence of a large number of students and members of the staff of the Jaffna University at his funeral was a symbolic acknowledgement of his invaluable services as a member of the University Council. Muthuthamby Vidyasali founded by his ancestors was fostered by him. His daughter is presently the Principal of this school.

Mr. Thambydurai's wife predeceased him in July 1975. He is survived by his two sons and six daughters, all of whom are eminently settled in life. Two of them are Lawyers, one of them a Doctor presently in charge of the Thirunelvely Nursing Home in Jaffna, one of them a Principal and another an Engineer.

Mr. Thambydurai lived a perfect life in the service of the people and died in dignity. May His Soul Rest in Peace.

S. Navaratnam,

Attorney-at-Law,

A Nephew's Tribute



My uncle Mahendran Wanigarajah Alagaratnam, great grandson of the first Udayar of the village of Usan in Thenmaradchy, north Sri Lanka made a lasting impact on me.

A great lover of the pastoral and one who loved the rural environment and had a home farm of his own rearing cows and goats, he was an unpretentious person who was always humble and never hesitated to even sacrifice his own health for the good of others. He was one who always enjoyed the life around him and would even smile his way through problems and challenges. I have never seen him ill-tempered or even annoyed.

He was a sheer joy to the younger members of his family particularly his grand children who adored him. Often he would spend hours recounting to them the days of his youth - those magic years will flow with beauty and charm from his memories that were ever fresh. It was sheer nostalgia.

Apart from the livestock he was also greatly interested in fruit farming living up to the farming traditions of his ancestors. He had his primary schooling at St. Peters College, Colombo and secondary education at Jaffna Central and St. John's Colleges. His other interests were sports and music and he enjoyed the rhythmic beats of the mridhan-gam which he played very well.

He was a natural story teller and humour was his forte. He described life's events with spontaneous ease, charm and wit and was very popular among his Bank of Ceylon colleagues. He was in the Bank's service for nearly four decades.

He had all the opportunity to leave his native home and be away from the terrible conflicts that have become endemic to life in his province. Even for medical treatment which he needed he would not forsake his home and the folks around him. He never sought material things and was more than satisfied with little comforts in life.

My uncle, affectionately 'mama' to me, was a true man of the soil. He found joy in simple things in life and very few would be blessed with the kind of charisma he possessed. I am privileged to pay homage to such a remarkable man whose memory will always be an inspiration to me and will be cherished.

Nandakumar Ratnaveil.

(Mahendran Wanigarajah Alagaratnam who was born on 5 April 1929 was called to rest on 5 December 1991 and a memorial service largely attended by his relatives and friends was held at St. Nicholas Church, Tooting, London SW17 on 11 January 1992. The above is a résumé from a tribute paid by his nephew at this service.)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

March 1 Prathosam.

Mar. 2 Maha Sivaraththiri.

Mar. 4 Amavasai.

Mar. 7 6.00pm Union College Old Students Association presents an evening of Dance, Drama, Dinner & Disco featuring Naaddukuthu 'Eelam Kanda Paandiyan' at Heath Clark High School Hall, Cooper Road, Croydon, Surrey. Tel: 081 669 8161/993 3772.

Mar. 7 6.30pm Natha Vidyalyaya & Narthana Kalalaya present a Musical and Dance evening at Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane, Wembley, Middx. Tel: 081 968 7816/509 1263.

Mar. 8 Chathurthi.

Mar. 14 6.15pm West London Tamil School presents Natya Gana Brindham - Bharatha Natya and Pann Isai at Acton Town Hall, London W3. Tel: 081 743 8289/574 4463.

Mar. 18 Panguni Uththiram. Full moon.

Mar. 28 7.00pm Tamil Union of Herts. presents 'Kaladda Kalyanam' At Salisbury School Hall, Nightingale Road, Edmonton, London N9. Tel: 0923 226000.

Mar. 31 Prathosam.

At the Bhavan Centre, 4A Castletown Road, London W14 9HQ. Tel: 071 381 3036/4068.

Feb. 29 7.00pm Karnatic Vocal by Mrs. Sivasakthi Sivanesan.

Mar. 2 7.15pm Maha Sivarathri Puja & Prasad. All welcome.

Mar. 7 6.30pm Vani Fine Arts Society presents Bharatha Natyam by Ragunath Manet from Pondicherry, India.

Mar. 8 6.30pm Kathak by Sushmita Ghosh.

Mar. 13 7.45pm & Mar. 15 6.30pm Folk Dances of India by Hosi Mullah & Mahendra Boricha & Group from India.

Mar. 14 5.30pm Mahabharata Lecture by Sri Mathoor Krishnamurti.

Mar. 20 7.45pm & Mar. 22 6.30pm Bharata Nritya by Dr. Padma Subramaniam and her troupe.

Mar. 21 5.30pm Veena by Kannan and Troupe from India.

Mar. 28 5.30pm Mahabharata Lecture by Sri Mathoor Krishnamurti.

Venoshini, Veshanthini Win Challenge Trophy



The Challenge Trophy for the best South Indian dancer at the Festival of Brent 1992 was won by 10-year-old Miss Venothini Indra Kumar and 9-year-old Miss Veshanthini Ravindran. They entered the competition in the Under 11 Years Solo Class and both of them were presented with gold medals.

Venothini, had won the gold medal and Challenge Trophy in the same event in the 1991 Festival of Brent as well.

Both Venothini and Veshanthini are students of Mrs. Vijayambigai Indra Kumar, the famous dancer. Another dance student of Vijayambigai Miss Shona Kundu won the silver medal in the Open Age Solo Class at the Festival of Brent 1992.

Faberge Expert from Jaffna



Travel through the great traditions of the art whether Indian or European came naturally to Perampalam Baskara a son of Sri Lanka. His parents were keen that he should choose a profession that will give him a comfortable life. But he was a born creative artist who always enjoyed oil painting.

After receiving his Master's degree in industrial design in Stoke-on-Trent, the Mecca of porcelain production and an apprenticeship with a local well-known family firm, Baskara began an incredible journey into the world of art, studying various traditions and at the same time sharing his expertise with others.

Israel was his first art-port of call and today a pattern he designed for a company there bears the name Baskara. From there he moved to France where a brief involvement in

Continued on page 26

Continued from page 25

women's dress wear designing did not meet with his taste. But across the border in Germany where he joined the famous firm of Rosenthal, Baskara's talents began to flower into something very special and unique.

He also enjoyed the *carte blanche* given to him to originate whatever designs he desired. It was the kind of freedom artists need, to give their best, unaffected by market demands. Such an opportunity enables the introduction of new features and the creation of future demands.

Another firm of German designers, Hutschenreuther offered him a new dimension to develop his art and it was here he really returned to his roots by developing **Festival in Paradise** which consisted of eight groupings of icons from India. This collection included a Buddha, gold-festooned elephants, and Shiva.

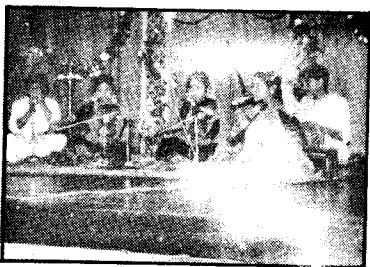
In 1983 he achieved his childhood dream of working in the United States and joined the market-oriented firm of Lennox as a designer. It took him two years to adapt himself to the needs of the market and meet with their requirements quite adequately. He, however, lost no time in studying the American lifestyle and very soon designed a number of successful Lennox patterns and among them were **Buchanan** which found its way into the **China Glass and Tableware Annual Survey of Bridal Pattern Preferences** as one particularly recommended for bridal patterns.

Some of his other successful patterns are **Hartwell House**, **Riverdale**, **Palmyrah**, **Belalre**, **Coral Springs**, **Constance**, **Emily** and **Pierce**.

This spring, the 42-year-old artist from Jaffna will feature a new Faberge tableware collection, a special line of fine china that originates from this famous jewellery house. This elegant collection was premiered in the autumn at New York's **Tabletop and Accessories Show**. Among them Baskara's **Athena**, a Greek-inspired pattern featuring an architectural motif was recognised by experts as a design of the future with great potential for success.

A contract with Faberge represents the opportunity of a lifetime for Baskara. It was to him a dream that has really come true.

Trio Violin Concert



The **Natha Vidyalaya** presented a Trio violin concert by its director **Sangeetha Vidwan Smt Kalaivani Indrakumar** and her sishyas **Janani** and **Jayavani Atchuthan** before a large and appreciative audience in **Lord Baden Powell Hall**, **London SW7** on **5th October 1991**. The stage was specially decorated for the occasion with flowers. The repertoire included a number of popular and ever appreciated pieces which were rendered with great ease.

The accompanists were **Sri K. Sithamparanathan** on **Morsing** and **Sri Angelo Kumarathan** on **Gadam**.

Tamil Radio Broadcast

A new Tamil radio broadcast on a very powerful frequency **FM 100.8** was inaugurated in **Croydon**, south **London** on **Thursday** the **13th** of **February**.

It is part of an **Asian network** transmitting daily from **6.00am** to **12.00 midnight** in various Indian languages, including **Hindi**, **Gujarati**, **Bengali**, **Punjabi** and **Tamil**.

The Tamil broadcast is being beamed out twice a week on **Mondays** and **Thursdays**, from **10.00pm** to **11.00pm**. It will include **news**, popular **Tamil songs**, **dramas** and **interviews**.



Mr. Wimal Sockanathan

Veteran broadcaster, **Mr. Wimal Sockanathan** produces and presents the Tamil programme in this ambitious project known as '**Eastern FM Radio**'.

Navalar Day in London



Dr. Ambikapathy

Arumuga Navalar Day was celebrated at the **London Murugan Temple Annexe Hall** in **East Ham**, **London** by a large gathering on **30.11.91**. Proceedings commenced with a **pooja** conducted by **Kurukkal Naganatha Sivam** and hymns sung by **Niroshan Arulambalam**. **Mr. V.R. Ramanathan** welcoming those present referred to the yeoman services rendered by **Navalar**. **Mr. Rajamanoharan** spoke about his teachings, adherence to which would enable us to lead a good life. **Dr. Ambikapathy** elaborated the reforms **Navalar** had advocated. Some details of the various contributions of **Navalar** were illustrated through a dialogue between **Mrs. Nirmala Vijayakumar** and **Mrs. Kalarohini Thiagarajah**. This item was written and organised by **Kavingnar Gnanamaniam** who had also composed the song for the recital by **Mrs. Nivethitha Indrakumar**. Both items were greatly appreciated by the audience. Students of **Mrs. Arunthathy Srikantharaja** of the **London Veena Group** gave a **veena** performance. **Mrs. T. Muthucumaraswamy** who had organised this function for the seventh year in succession proposed the vote of thanks.

Thai Pongal in British Columbia

For the first time in **British Columbia**, **Thai Pongal** was celebrated at the **Sri Maha Luxmi Temple** situated at **11th Avenue** and **Fraser Street** in **Vancouver**. **Mrs. Thevarani** made the arrangements for the **pongol** and devotional songs were sung by **Mrs. Shyamala Sivakumar** and **Mrs. Pathma Rajamahendran**. The **pooja** was performed in **Tamil** by **Premaji Iyer**.

Monthly **poojas** are conducted in **Tamil** at the temple at present.

Excellent Performances in G.C.S.E. Tamil Examination

21 students were presented by the **London Tamil Academy** for the **G.C.S.E.** examination in **Tamil** held by the **University of Cambridge** in **November 1991**. These candidates were from the **Tamil Academy of Language & Arts**, **Thiruvalluvar Tamil School** and **West London Tamil School (Wembley)**. 8 candidates received **A** grade passes, 9 got **B** grade and 4 passed with a **C**. The **South London Tamil School** in **Croydon** had 1 in grade **A** and 3 in grade **B**. The **West London Tamil School** had 3 in grade **A** and 2 each in grades **B** and **C**. Overall there were 96 percent passes.

Miss Aarani Nitkunan of the **West London Tamil School (Wembley)** who had obtained 10 **A** grade passes in other subjects secured an additional **A** grade in **Tamil**.

Assistance to Refugees

Our organisation **The East London Refugee Advice Service (E.L.R.A.S.)** was inaugurated on **25.11.91** after contacting over 150 organisations and finding that they did not have the finance, time or personnel to solve the several problems ranging from **Immigration**, **Education**, **Housing**, **Employment**, **Unemployment**, **Benefit**, **Taxation** and **legal matters** faced by refugees.

We have formed a **refugee project** in association with **Skillsline Ltd.**, and can offer free confidential advice in the language understood by the refugees. We can negotiate with landlords if they cause difficulties and put pressure on them by a referral to the rent office. If for some reason we can't help you, we have a referral service by which we can refer you to other professional people who would be better qualified to help you.

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