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A Journal of Commitment

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*How Tamils view the assassination*



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# NEELAN TIRUCHELVAM

## *The Assassination & the Fall-out*

**EDITORIAL COMMENT**

**Let us first place this on record: No Sri Lankan President, Presidential aspirant or public figure in the island's post independence history had earned at his death such plethora of tributes from high places, such profusion of accolades and such volume of media space (both local and international) as did Neelankandan Thiruchelvam - Neelan as he was popularly known.**

Strange! Let's look back at the many political heavy weights whose deaths occurred during the past few years: Vijaya Kumaranatunga (the idol of Sinhala cinema fans and husband of the present President); the all-powerful first Executive President (*"I have the power to do anything except change a man into a woman or a woman into a man!"*) Junius Richard Jayawardene, a man who straddled the political life of the country for 60 years; President Ranasinghe Premadasa... the ambitious Oxford returned, one-time War Minister Lalith Athulathmudali ... India's favourite and co-architect of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of 1987, Gamini Dissanayake...."*So are they all, all honourable men*", as Mark Antony would have said it , all of them politicians of commanding stature, all of them Sinhalese and members of the ruling race, and all of them victims of political assassination. or near- assassination. **And yet, this man who held no office, wielded no ostensible power, not a man of the people by any means, and what is worse, a Tamil by birth in a country where Tamils as a people have long been reduced to second class citizenship, has now emerged in death, (if not in life), as a seemingly more deserving figure than the rest of them for public lionizing. How does one account for this paradox?**



Even President Clinton and his good First Lady Hillary thought it fit to come down from superpower perch and brush aside all norms of protocol to say how "saddened and shocked" they were to learn the death of a man whom hardly any American citizen would have heard of, or even of the little country that he came from. UN chief Kofi Annan, not to be left behind, showed proof that the world was indeed a global village with hardly any distance separating Manhattan from Rosmead Place in Colombo 7.

Condolences and condemnatory messages came from the Foreign Ministers of Canada and Australia. *THE TIMES, London, THE GUARDIAN, THE INDEPENDENT, THE NEW YORK TIMES, Toronto's GLOBE & MAIL* - (who usually run long obituaries of people whom most readers are not even sure whether such people were alive) - gave more space for this man's death than to report the death of 60,000 civilian killings in Sri Lanka.

Varying shades of concern and grief were expressed by various international bodies claiming to speak for human rights and human freedoms (outside Tamil areas mostly, that is !). The Colombo Press,(practically all Sinhala-owned) went out of the way to give generous space for out pourings from columnists and cousins of the

*Contd. on Page 3*

# What They Say



I am prepared to go to Jaffna, but not by Government transport nor by clearance by the Ministry of Defence. There is no provision in the law of the country that says I must get clearance from my enemy to go to my home in Jaffna".

***-Senior advocate G.G.Ponnam balam who was invited to go to Jaffna to watch the interests of persons arrested or who disappeared in Jaffna (WEEKEND EXPRESS, Aug.28-29).***

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"....She has made the Jaffna peninsula an open prison by capturing it militarily. Peculiar security measures are adopted in Jaffna which is a total disgrace to the Tamil people. Fishermen are asked to go to sea in underwear. Can she do this in any other province? ... although it was started as a war against the Tigers, it has now become a war against the Tamils ...

***- The late military wing leader of the PLOTE, N.Manickadasan, interviewed by the WEEKEND EXPRESS, August 21-22, '99, ten days before he was killed in an explosion at Vavuniya.***

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"...It is a hidden agenda of any Sinhala government to continue to suppress the Tamils through war for another 5-10 years so that they will become the third largest ethnic group. Then they would not be in a demanding position. This is a long-term strategy of successive governments .....

***"Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front" (EPRLF) Secretary General Suresh K. Premachandra in the course of the same interview.***

***(Both interviews were given after the assassination of Neelan Tiruchelvam).***

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"The government is adopting a discriminatory policy in issuing weapons to TELO and a PLOTE group. We are being disarmed, while the PLOTE group is being armed. This policy has led to many of our members being killed".

***- TELO leader Amirthanathan Adaikalanathan. (Sunday Times, August 29.)***

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"This is how I see it. The LTTE is a very powerful organisation. They are not only powerful in Sri Lanka but in the world as well. They are responsible for the killing of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. They have their organisation in London. They openly carry out their business in London. This is something I have witnessed. Then they have their bases in America, Canada, France, South Africa and in so many other places. And these countries are members of the UN. That is why I thought the best mediator would be the UN because all these countries are involved in it".

***- Plan Implementation and Parliamentary Affairs Minister in the Sri Lanka government, Jeyaraj Fernandopulle, in an interview with SUNDAY LEADER, Colombo, August 15, 1999.***



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"It (Jaffna's palmyrah toddy) is a superior drink and tradition demands that you gulp it down from a "gotta" (cone made of leaves) sitting under a palmyrah tree".

***- Sri Lanka Tea Board Chairman Clifford Ratwatte, recalling his "good old days" in Jaffna, at the inauguration of the Palmyrah Board's Palmyrah Arrack Whole Sales Centre at Dehiwala. (WEEKEND EXPRESS, Colombo, August 28-29)***

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"I maintain that the government is involved in tapping e-mail, telephones and faxes of journalists, politicians and businessmen"

***Leader of the Opposition Ranil Wickremasinghe quoted in THE ISLAND, August 29.***

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## INTERNATIONAL

"We would rather lose a thousand soldiers than lose an inch of land".

***-The LIBERATION ARMY DAILY, the Chinese army's newspaper on the tensions between China and Taiwan***

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"It's easy to sing, but it's not easy to do".

***Pope John Paul II, after a crowd serenaded him with a traditional Polish greeting " May You Live Hundred Years".***

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"He was so young, barely four, when he was scarred by abuse. There was terrible conflict between his mother and grandmother. A psychologist told me that being in the middle of a conflict between two women is the worst possible situation".

***US First Lady Hillary Clinton while offering an apologia for her husband's subsequent sex scandals***

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"Anyone who has struggled with excess weight knows that this is a very personal issue, and it's not an easy one to talk about".

***Monica Lewinsky, who had been the brunt of television comics' cruel jokes, many of them focussed on her weight.***

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"We miss the air raid sirens"

***- Ivan Gakovic, a high school student, lamenting the return of normalcy to Belgrade.***

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"In this country nothing comes as a surprise. We've had so many donkeys as Prime Ministers".

***- Indian author, historian and jokestar Khushwant Singh, when asked by INDIA TODAY about the possibility of Sonia Gandhi becoming Prime Minister.***

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(Continued from page1)

dead man, and from grateful people for favours granted and other assorted feature writers.

Descriptions of the dead man ranged from "intellectual giant" to "indefatigable champion of peace". One man, who said he was a cousin, wrote in a government-owned newspaper - *"what Shakespeare has been to literature, what Bacon has been to philosophy, what translators of the authorized version of the Bible have been to religion, Neelan has been to the legal systems and Constitution both in Sri Lanka and around the world"* If someone failed to nominate Neelan's name for next year's posthumous award of the Nobel Peace Prize, it was a glaring oversight no doubt.

One writer in his obituary quoted Schopenhauer, another one quoted Swami Vivekananda. One columnist brought back memories of "the slayings of Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King", while another quoted the Bhagavad Gita and the Mahabharata... and so on and so forth. **What impelled all these obituary writers, some of them I'm sure otherwise sensible people to lose their sense of proportion? Is it a sign of the impending end of the world in the new millenium, or have they all lost their marbles? For good measure, may I also quote someone. Western philosopher Spinoza once said: "What Peter says about Paul tells us more about Peter than Paul:**

Before anyone accuses this writer of showing insensitiveness over the memory of a dead person, let me say this : I had known Neelan during his younger Marga days , and met him once later in Jaffna when he was nominated M.P. for Vaddukoddai, and found him to be very affable and an inordinately modest person. His mother, Punitham, a great lady of tremendous charm and vitality, and a lover of Tamil culture and the Tamil arts, was a family friend of this writer. There is no questioning the many personal virtues ascribed to Neelan as a man, as a scholar, as a jurist and as an academic and constitutional pundit. But all that do not add up to the motivations behind the adulatory postures struck by many of his obituary writers. The reason is not far to seek. Every man who enters public life chooses his own favourable constituency and builds on it, which is a fact of life; **and some obituary writers have their own private agendas.**

One can assert with certainty that had poor Neelan died of natural causes, half those obituaries would not have been written and whatever written would not have had the "fire" that characterised those eulogies. To put it in plain language, many of them exploited the assassination at the hands of a suspected Tiger suicide bomber to use the opportunity to indulge in Tiger-bashing . What a pity, even in death, he had played into the hands of those whose only motive was to discredit the LTTE.

**Copious references were made to Neelan being a "moderate", a "democrat", and so on, but surely he was not killed for being any of this? The one writer who came closest to finding the right word to describe the victim in the eyes of the assassin - AND INDEED IN THE EYES OF THE WIDER TAMIL COMMUNITY, was Lakshman Gunasekera (*Sunday Observer, August 1*). That word was COLLABORATOR.**

Collaborators, as anyone who knows the history of peoples fighting for justice and freedom know, end up by being executed by their own people, status notwithstanding. In war-time phraseology the word "collaborator" (with the enemy) invokes in people a sense of shame and anger. If what is happening in Sri Lanka is not war, what else is it? The Vichy regime in France collaborated with the German occupation force during World War II, and Admiral Darlan, Commander-in-chief of the French Navy, was himself assassinated by a fellow Frenchman because of his Nazi sympathies.

Obituary writers from the West, and those who live smug, cocooned lives in Colombo have no need to empathize with the sufferings of fellow human beings who are facing death every day of their lives a mere 200 hundred miles away. In their way of thinking, hundreds of unnamed "Neelans" being bombed to death from the air or disappearing from the face of the earth is only a matter of war statistics, but one Neelan killed in their own cocoon turns out to be "brutal slaying".

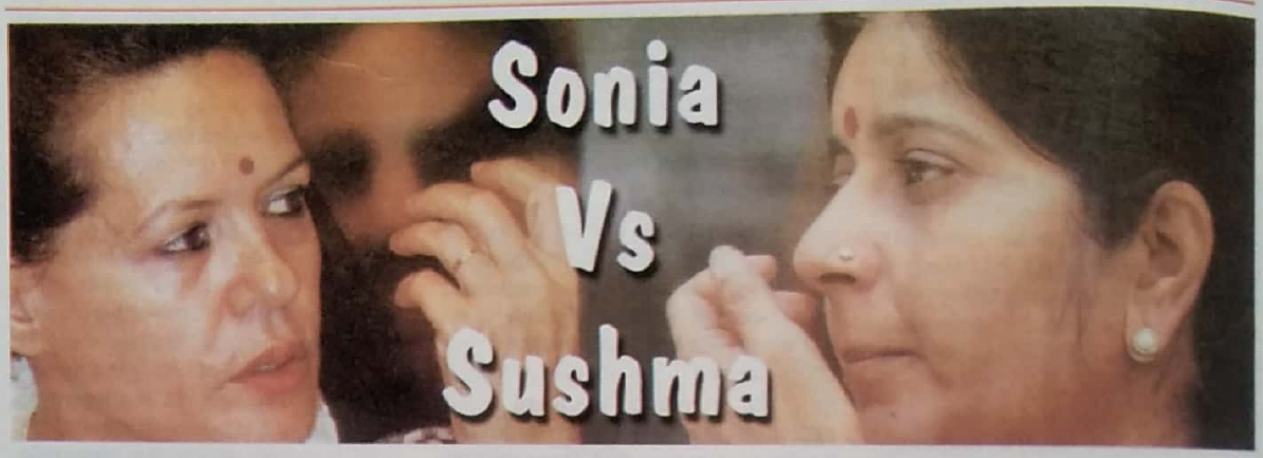
In talking about an act of political assassination, knowing the history of the victim assumes immediate relevance. **The most illuminating aspect of Neelan's political life was the fact that irrespective of changing power equations, he always managed to be close to the seats of power. He was equally close to the late President Jayawardene in 1981 as he was to President Chandrika Bandaranaike in 1999. In 1981, he teamed up with Professor A.J. Wilson to produce a devolution package, and a decade and a half later he got together with Professor G.L.Peiris to produce another package.** Professor Wilson was a well-known academic and always remained one; his expertise in constitution making was available to anyone who sought it, but he had no hand in the fashioning of power structures. On the other hand, Neelan was a politician through and through.

It is interesting to learn from Colombo police versions that Neelan knew that he was an assassin's target, except that his habitual modesty prevented him from thinking that a suicide bomber would be used against him. He had told his security men that his assassin, at worst, would be a gunman, thereby miscalculating even the manner of his death.

Let me recommend an Arab proverb to every one concerned. It runs thus: "GOD SAYS, TAKE WHAT YOU WANT OUT OF LIFE, BUT PAY FOR IT".

**The mistake most people make is to take what they want but when it comes to payment, they squeal. It is time that Neelan's obituary writers stop squealing. Neelan has paid for it, and that is it.**

*S.Sivanayagam*




**BARRY BEARAK**
***(New York Times Sevice)***

**New Delhi - immediately and deliciously billed as "Sonia versus Sushma', some first-rate political sport lies ahead in India between the videshi bahu and the swadeshi beti: The foreign born daughter-in-law who speaks heavily accented Hindi and the homegrown daughter who wears vermilion powder in her hair.**

Gandhi, the Italian heiress to an Indian political dynasty, is leading her Congress (1) Party into a month of staggered elections that begin Sept. 5. If Congress achieves a majority in Parliament, she is the presumed choice of the party for prime minister - that is, if she has won a seat for herself in Parliament.

In India, any candidate may rum anywhere in the nation, so there was great speculation about where Mrs. Gandhi would attempt her maiden quest for elected office. On Wednesday, after a series of political jukes and feints, she showed up about 1,800 kilometers (1,100 miles) from New Delhi, filing her papers in Bellary, a Congress - friendly South Indian district where the party has never lost the seat.

While Mrs. Gandhi succeeded in keeping her plans secret from the press, she failed to outfox those she most needed to fool, her opponents in the Bharatiya Janata Party, or BJP. Sushma Swaraj, a former chief minister of New Delhi who has one of the party's most viperous tongues, was tipped off and arrived in Bellary 10 minutes after Mrs. Gandhi to run for the very same seat.

Just as her adversaries intended, Mrs.Gandhi - the daughter-in-law of former Prime Minister Indira .Gandhi and the widow of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi - was not only left with egg on her face but a little pasta as well. Mrs Swaraj went right to work on the fact of her rival's foreign birth. "I have come here to fight for India's self pride," she told the reporters.

**On Thursday Mrs. Swaraj continued the attack. "As a videshi bahu, a foreign-born daughter-in-law, Mrs Gandhi is entitled to our love, respect and security, but when that foreigner asks to be India's prime minister just because she is one of her family's survivors, this cannot be permitted," she said in a phone interview.**

Mrs. Gandhi quickly hedged her bet. Party members confirmed that she would take advantage of a convenience in Indian law that allows a candidate to run in two districts. Mrs Gandhi will also be competing in a northern state, Uttar Pradesh.

"That race won't be an easy one either," said a political analyst, Mahesh Rangarajan. "She'll be up against Sanjay Singh, an old associate of the Gandhis. He's formidable."

**Sonia Gandhi, 52, raised a Catholic in a small Italian town near Turin, became an Indian citizen in 1983, 15 years after she married Rajiv Gandhi at 18.** As a daughter-in-law in the most famous family in India, she sat at the ring-side of history. The view was horrifying. Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her own security guards in 1984. Rajiv Gandhi, whom she had begged not to enter politics, was blown apart by a suicide bomber in 1991. Sonia Gandhi withdrew from public life.

But in 1997 she agreed to hit the hustings for a floundering Congress Party. She appeared before adoring crowds who considered her a brave widow with a magic name. Dressed in saris, she read short speeches with the Hindi words typed out in Roman script.

While this adventure in barnstorming did not prevent the BJP from coming to power, it did show that Sonia Gandhi was the best - and perhaps only hope of the Congress Party for a comeback.

She became the president of the parry in March 1998. Congress forced and won a vote of no confidence in the BJP government in April, but was then unable to form an alternative one.

Now Mrs. Gandhi finds herself in the midst of a short campaign season with her Italian heritage being weighed against the Gandhi-family legacy.

On Wednesday, for the first time in 14 years, she agreed to give an in-depth interview, which was to be televised Friday night.

During the conversation, Mrs Gandhi insisted that she no longer feels "one bit Italian." To the contrary, she said: "I feel completely Indian. I love India. I love the people here. India is my heart."

Mrs. Gandhi said she knew that people find her Hindi hard to understand: "Well, I do have this accent, and I don't blame people for making fun of it." But Sushma Swaraj is unlikely to accept these bona fides.

"It's not hard to tell what this campaign is going to sound like," said Jairarn Ramesh, a Congress Party official. **"Sushma is going to remind people that the button for India's nuclear weapons is in the hands of the prime minister. She is going to ask, 'Should these hands be Italian?'"**

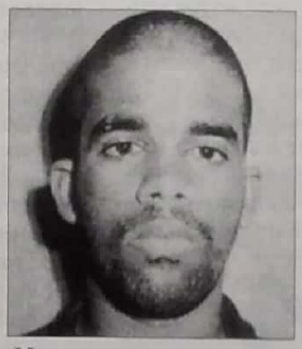
In the coming parliamentary elections, the bloodlines of Mrs. Gandhi are one issue. Another is national defense. The government of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vqjpayee has been enjoying resurgent popularity since the Indian military bested hundreds of Pakistani backed soldiers in the remote mountains of Kashmir. Opinion polls are predicting a decisive victory for Mr Vajpayee and his BJP- led alliance.

"Sushma will know how to play up the defense angles," Mr.Ramesh said "She is a great campaigner, full of life, full of theatrics."

# Rajiv case: Executions stayed



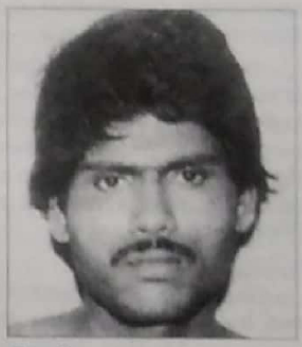
*Nalini*



*Murugan*



*Arivu*



*Santhan*

The Supreme Court in New Delhi stayed the execution of four condemned prisoners in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case till further orders and directed the registry to fix a date for final hearing of the review petition filed by them. The order was given on August 17.

The four who have sought review of the May 11 order confirming capital punishment on them, are 35-year old Nalini, an Indian national, her 29-year old husband Santhan alias Murugan, (both now lodged at Central Prison, Vellore), 27-year old Suthenthiraraja alias Santhan and 27-year old G.Perarivalan alias Arivu, an Indian national, both now lodged at Central Prison, Salem.

Counsel for the four, senior advocate N.Natarajan said that hisarguments would be against confirmation of the death sentence.

தமிழீழ ஆவணக்காப்பகம்
Tamil Eelam Archive

## Subramaniam Swamy and Chandraswami "linked to the assassination".

Janata Party leader Dr.Subramaniam Swamy and political Godman Chandraswami have links with the Rajiv Gandhi assassination, according to Ranganath, an accused in the assassination case later acquitted by the Indian Supreme Court. Ranganath was accused of having provided shelter at his Bangalore residence to Sivarasan, the alleged mastermind behind the assassination.

Giving evidence before the Multi-Disciplinary Monitoring Agency (MDMA) which began sittings at "Mallikai", Chennai, on August 2, J.Ranganath repeated his earlier charge against both these men and said he was prepared to produce evidence to prove his charge. The MDMA was appointed by the Union Government to submit a report on the Jain Commission findings on the conspiracy angle behind the assassination.

Ranganath had told reporters soon after he was freed by the Supreme Court how when he told D.R.Karthikeyan who headed the Special Investigation team of the CBI about the involvement of the two Swamis, he was asked to keep quiet.

**Indian Election Dates:** September 5, September 11, September 18, September 25, October 3

# GIVING DEATH PENALTY IS NO DETERRENT, *says Amnesty*

Questioning the wisdom of the trial court in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case in passing death sentences on all 26 accused Amnesty International states:" Amnesty International believes that the trial court's sentencing of all 26 accused to death represented a knee-jerk reaction based on a misguided perception that the death penalty is an appropriate or effective means of deterrence or retribution".

"Both the trial court judge and one of the Supreme Court judges referred explicitly to the need to provide strong sentencing as a means of deterrence. However, numerous studies conducted in different countries and using different methodologies than other punishments".

Giving the background of the trial and the judgment of the Supreme Court on 11 May 1999, Amnesty International says in its report:-

In January 1998, a trial court specially established within the jail complex at Poonamallee in Tamil Nadu sentenced 26 people to death in connection with the 1991 assassination of Mr Rajiv Gandhi. The accused were detained, charged and tried under provisions of the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act 1987 (TADA). They were also tried under other charges including conspiracy to murder, offences under the Arms Act, the Explosive Substances Act and the Foreigners Act. The trial lasted four years. The conviction of the accused by the trial court relied heavily on confessional statements made by many of the accused and recorded by police following their arrest.

**The accused were convicted and sentenced to death in a space of two hours on 28 January 1998 in a judgment that shocked may observers. Lawyers for the defence called it a "judicial massacre".** Appeals against the convictions and sentences were submitted to the Supreme Court in February 1998.

On 11 May 1999 a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court gave its judgment on the appeals, the three judges giving separate judgments. Two of the judges upheld the sentences of death against four: Nalini, Murugan, Santhan and Perarivalan. One of the judges however — Justice Thomas — while agreeing on the sentences against Murugan, Santhan and Perarivalan, dissented in his opinion on the sentence of death against Nalini arguing that she had a child whose father (Murugan) had also been sentenced to death and that therefore sentencing her to death would orphan the child. As his was the only dissenting judgment on this issue, the death sentence against Nalini was upheld.



*"Basic standards for fair trial had not been met during the trial process"*

At the same time, the judges commuted the sentences of three other people to life imprisonment and further ordered the release of 19 people judging that they had already served their sentences for the crimes for which they were convicted because of the time spent in custody awaiting and during trial.

**In their judgment on the appeal, the Supreme Court judges pointed out several flaws in the convictions by the trial court. In particular, in ordering acquittal or release, the judges questioned the evidence on which several of the accused were convicted of conspiracy to murder, as well as other offences, inferring that the trial court had found several of the accused guilty by association and raising concerns that basic standards for fair trial including presumption of innocence and the need for proof of guilty beyond reasonable doubt had not been met during the trial process.**

In the case of two of the original accused for example, the Supreme Court exposed the way in which the prosecution had implicated them and the trial court sentenced them with no other evidence than their marital relation. Both Shanti(f), and Selvaluxmi(f), wives of other accused, were deemed by the Supreme Court judges to have been innocent of any conspiracy, although guilty of "harboring" their husbands. Justice Thomas in his judgment commented of Shanti: "She is the wife of (Jeyakumar). Except the fact that she accompanied her husband from Sri Lanka in September 1990 and continued to live with him in India we are unable to find any involvement for her in the conspiracy to murder Rajiv Gandhi. Learned Special Judge has considered her case, tagging it with her husband's case... We have not come across any material, apart from her living with her husband.... To suggest that she had any role in the conspiracy. It is very unfortunate that for the

role played by her husband she has been sentenced to death". Both the women's convictions for "harboring" (under section 212 of the Indian Penal Code) were upheld but they were released having been judged to have spent sufficient time in custody.

Perhaps most significantly, in their judgment on the appeal, the Supreme Court judges ruled that the 26 people should not have been detained, charged or convicted under TADA and acquitted them off all charges under the Act. **The judges agreed with the argument put by the defence in the appeal to the Supreme Court that the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was not a "terrorist act" as defined in section 3(1) of the Act'.** They reasoned that the plan to assassinate Rajiv Gandhi was provoked by a personal sense of betrayal by the leadership of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) as a result of his policy on Sri Lanka when he had been Prime Minister rather than an attempt to "overawe" the Government of India.

Those who remain under sentence of death had their convictions upheld under section 120-B (criminal conspiracy) read with section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code.

Despite concluding that the accused should not have been charged or convicted under TADA, the Supreme Court dismissed arguments that this cast in doubt their conviction on other charges. Pre-empting arguments that evidence obtained under provisions of TADA should be disregarded – most notably confessional statements to police which would not have been admitted as evidence in an ordinary trial (see below) – the Supreme Court judges argued that section 12 of TADA provides for individuals to be tried for other offences under provisions of TADA if the crimes are being tried concurrently.

**Incoming to this conclusion, Amnesty International is concerned that the Supreme Court failed to consider the incompatibility of certain sections of TADA with international standards for fair trial set out in Article 14 of the ICCPR .**

# DEMONSTRATION IN JAFFNA DEFYING ARMY PRESENCE

Over two hundred journalists, writers, students, priests and others took part in a demonstration in Jaffna town on August 31 to protest against the grenade attack on the Uthayan paper on August 21, blamed on a paramilitary organisation operating with the Sri Lanka Army in Jaffna.

The demonstration was held at the main bus stand in the heart of Jaffna town from 12 noon to 1 p.m.

**A contingent of Sri Lanka Army (SLA) troops was present at the venue, causing anxiety amongst the protesters, as the SLA had earlier pressured Jaffna shopkeepers not to join the protest, said witnesses.**

A spokesman for the North Sri Lanka Journalists' Association, which organised the protest, told TamilNet that a large number of people from the local media and business establishments had, however, come to the venue of the demonstration in Jaffna town.

The demonstrators held placards and shouted slogans. Black flags were carried also.

Representatives from the union of Jaffna university non-academic staff, the university's students' association, the Vanni region students' organisation, the Hindu Peravai, the Tamil Teachers Association, members of the Missing Persons' Guardian Association, the Peace and Good Will movement of the Jaffna Catholic church, and Catholic Kalai Ilakkiya Pervai were among those who took part in the demonstration.




Staff from the Sri Lanka State radio's FM station, which broadcasts from the SLA base at Palaly also, joined the protest.

The North Sri Lanka journalists' Association sent a memorandum to the Sri Lankan president at the conclusion of the protest.

The memorandum stated, among other issues, " we the journalists in the north wish to submit before you the sordid incident of throwing hand grenades at Uthayan (the only Tamil daily in the north) newspaper office to create fear psychosis and gag the press from exposing incidents of extortion, corruption, moral turpitude and other incidents of social and cultural debasement."

"We appeal to your Excellency to set the arms of law in motion to carry out an impartial inquiry into this contemptible attack and take action to prevent incidents of this nature in future," the memorandum

**Earlier Sri Lanka Army soldiers told shopkeepers in Jaffna town they should not close their businesses from 12 noon today to 1 p.m. in support of the demonstration.**

**The Jaffna Traders' Association had called on all business establishments in the northern town to remain half closed and for all its members to take part in the protest this noon.**

The Association had placed an advertisement in the Uthayan on the matter and had also informed all its members to show their solidarity with the North Sri Lanka Journalists Association and the Uthayan paper.

The grenade attack on the Uthayan was carried out by cadres from the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP), according to the late Manikathasan, leader of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE). **Both paramilitary groups operate alongside the SLA in Jaffna.**

***TAMILNET***

# Policemen's lot to keep guard at VIP gates, *says DIG*

**BY KESARA ABEYWARDENA**

Police force in Sri Lanka has deteriorated to such a low ebb that policemen who are recruited with good educational qualifications and after a training are asked to keep guard at VIP gates during day and night, senior DIG Indra de Silva said last week.

He was speaking at a seminar titled "The role of police in the protection of Human Rights" organised by the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute. He said that human rights are violated by police officers due to the lack of knowledge and also due to the tremendous pressure under which they have to work in the present situation of the country. "If policemen adhere to the common law of the country and the Police Act there is no chance of them violating human rights. But as emergency law prevails in the country today at certain times when officers under pressure and bressuned have to take quick decisions mistakes do happen" he said.

He also said that political and other forces with evil intentions are continually trying to influence and buy police officers which also leads to unlawful actions. "Today the police officer who was looked upon as a law enforcement officer, peacemaker and protector of the community is replaced by a police officer with a gun in hand at checkpoints. The role of the police officer in community development work is completely forgotten" he said.

Although human rights is enshrined in the constitution there is a gap between the practical side of police work and accepted rights of the people, he pointed out. There is also a difference between qualities that are attributed to humans and the conduct of humans, he added.

Dr. Laksiri Fernando of the Colombo University who also addressed the seminar said that human rights is a relatively new concept not only in Sri Lanka but internationally. "The word human rights became a frequently used word very recently. Although there are international conventions and treaties on human rights the knowledge of common people in this regard is inadequate" he said.

Referring to the police Dr. Fernando noted that common perception about human rights with regard to the police force is not a positive one and there are reasons to that. "People have tried to define human rights in many ways through time and today it is identified with the qualities of humanness.Protecting the dignity of individuals is an important component of human rights today" he added.

He said that rights could be divided as civil rights that is freedom from humiliation and torture, cultural rights to speak one's own language etc. Political rights, Educational and Economic rights. "The need to protect human rights is to achieve social development in a country for the well-being and freedom of its civilians. The UNO has identified today that development could not be achieved only through economic advancement. There are social and life quality indexes to measure development today" he added.

# RAJAPAKSE PROTESTS TO COURT OVER STATE COUNSEL'S ATTITUDE

Fourteen places where scores of arrested Tamil civilians were allegedly killed and buried by the Sri Lanka Army in and around Chemmani near Jaffna town in 1996 and 1997 were identified by ex-soldiers convicted in the rape and murder of the Jaffna school girl Krishanthy Kumarasamy.

**The key witness in the investigations on the alleged mass graves, ex-corporal Somaratna Rajapaksha, made an application to Jaffna district judge M.Ilancheliyan when the special temporary courts set up at Chemmani resumed sittings this morning that the state counsel Yasantha Kothagoda was unduly cross examinig him as though he (Rajapaksha) was suspect.**

**The ex-corporal pointed out that Kothagoda was doing this despite he (Rajapaksha) being the state witness.**

**He said that under these circumstances he was not in a position to further identify places where the bodies of Jaffna civilians are buried in the Chemmani area. Rajapksha asked the court to allow him to seek legal advice and assistance.**

Judge Ilancheliyan, having listened to his application, told the state counsel not to unduly cross examine Rajapaksha.

He allowed the ex-corporal to secure legal assistance and advice for the case.

Rajapaksha appealed to court that it was not right to keep him separated from the other witnesses in the case as he was unable to consult and discuss with them about the location and details of the alleged grave sites in Chemmani.

The judge allowed his application and instructed the Police to keep him with the other witnesses.

The ex-corporal was then taken away from the special temporary court.

The other witnesses in the case, ex-SLA soldiers Mudiyansalage Jayasingha, D.M Jayatilaka, S.A Perera and Gunasekera Priyadharshana, were meanwhile brought to Chemmani to show investigators places where bodies of civilians killed by the army in 96-97 were buried.

**- TAMILNET**

# BLACK TIGERS AND THE "BLUE" NEELAN

*Hot Spring*
*PO Box 14258*
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***Dear Sir***

**Death, it may be trite to say, is the most awful, irreversible and the ultimate tragedy to befall a human being , especially when the person is healthy and young.** All the loving and fighting joking 19 and snarling, singing and crying and otherwise responding and interacting and the field-force of emotional ties flowing out, touching, pulling and pushing others end for ever never to return leaving the love and affection of all others towards him or her wither away unrequited henceforth.

For those of us who are "chance" survivors the daily grind of our exigence does not allow time to ponder the contingency and tenuity of our lives for what they are worth. For the young, death is mostly an abstraction and remote unless it is personified in someone very close and dear. Even here the 'passing away' of a person is mourned but the brute fact of death takes time to 'sink in'.

This manner of musing is the familiar Tamilian **'wisdom of the crematorium'**, so derided because of its fleeting, superficial and occasional nature. But, then, most of our lives were unremarkable, mundane and temporal with hardly a physically risky venture or a 'death-defying' gesture until the Sinhala mob in the South and its uniformed counterpart armed to the teeth invaded our homeland. **For many generations the Tamils led timid, fearful and sequacious lives behaving as if they were puppets to be manipulated by others, with little control over their destiny. The Tigers changed all that, for better or for worse.**

There is everything about suicide commandos or a warrior that spellbinds ordinary mortals like us. They seize the initiative, grab their fate by its throat and embrace death fearlessly. And when they do this on behalf of lily-livered and timorous Tamils like us, our enormous debt to them looms massive like a mountain. What makes a suicide

## BY S.K. RATHINAM U.S.A

commando so disdainful of life dig we pitifully cling to, so defiant of death that we even shudder to contemplate? All I can say is that we are in awe, in thrall. and are totally unworthy of their supreme sacrifice.



**Neelan Thiruchelvam**

I am writing this in the waning days of the month of July traditionally dedicated to the commemoration of the Black Tigers. It is NOT about violence — it is indeed fighting against cowardly violence. It is about valor of the highest order and it is about sacrifice of the noblest and the highest kind. If the Tiger warriors are some of best in the world amongst guerilla fighters, the Black Tigers are the elite of the elite among them. When a young person, in the prime of his or her life takes the vow to be a Black Tiger, knowingly and willingly, goes through the rigors of training, every moment aware that the mission will end his or her life and goes out on that fateful day to perish for the cause and ends more often than not, with the fragile body that was the temple of the indomitable spirit in smithereens - that is something for people like us to be awestruck about. Out of the six billion people on this earth how many would even contemplate such a sacrificial endeavor?

**That the Tamils of Ceylon, some of the most selfish people on earth with a non-existent social conscience, should produce such remarkable a group of people as the Black Tigers is a phenomenon totally unforeseen even twenty years ago.** They and their deeds will, I am certain, continue to inspire many a future generation. In a more creative age yet to come, I hope, the legend of the Black Tigers will give rise to works of art, literature, music and drama of the highest evocative quality. We, as an ethnic group, now have the experience and the exploits; we need the artists and artistes, writers and poets to recount them for ourselves and our posterity. We should take all measures to preserve and protect 0 the memorabilia relating to the Tigers fully aware that the Sinhala mob whether in uniform or mufti will instinctively turn its wrath on our heritage as it did with our irreplaceable treasures in the Jaffna Library and the revered monuments to our warriors.

Having said all this I must confess here to a deep ambivalence about the whole thing. I mean, I wish there were no occasion to have to immolate 147 of our golden youth in this uncalled for brutal ethnicidal aggression of the Southerners. We wish that the Sinhalese had the political wisdom to concede the Tamil nation its rights. **The Tamil person, that includes me, is an extreme pacifist at heart - pacifist to such a degree that his pacifism lost its positive aspects and degenerated into timidity. The Sinhala man, watching them like a predator for weaklings took this as a signal to pounce on them which he did repeatedly. And the Tamils ran and ran and kept running as the Sinhalese both the mob and the politicians preyed on them well near their hearts' content. But this blood sport of the Sinhala gave rise to consequences that they did not care to contemplate in the giddy**

**days of the early Bandaranaike dynasty. As if out of mutated genes playing its role through natural selection, there was born the Tigers and they changed the Sinhala man's expectations of an easy kill from then on.** With an impeccable credo, relentlessness in the pursuit of it with unshakable faith and determination they have restored some self respect to the Tamils. Along the way to maturation, they have learnt and are continuing to learn from their mistakes too. It is worth restating their central credo as I understand it: **As long as a single Sinhala soldier (or anyone else considered inimical) is on the soil of Tamil Eelam, uninvited, every action taken by Tigers anywhere in the territory of the soldier or in Tamil Eelam in order to facilitate the removal of the soldier, directly or indirectly, is to be construed as in defense of Tamil Eelam.** They have striven single-mindedly in pursuit of this belief.

## TWO SUICIDES

Half way through writing this I learnt about the death of Neelan Thiruchelvarn through the actions of a suicide bomber. It is, indeed, more correct to say there were two coincidental suicides. Mr. Thiruchelvarn is said to have confessed, perhaps with some guilt, that he expected to be killed by a somewhat different method - with bullets, and inexplicably, it appears, he worked towards it, regardless. It was short sighted and tragic and my opening remarks about death is eminently applicable here, too. **He could have channeled his considerable talents in the service of the long suffering Tamils whose representative in the Parliament, he was. Instead, he worked in the service and in collusion with the government the armed services of which, murdered and disposed of the bodies of hundreds of Tamil civilians, continues to make people 'disappear', bombs and shells people in and out of their homes rapes and loots makes thousands homeless and brings death by starvation and disease.** He never criticized Chakravarthi Kumaratunga nor her government for any of the atrocities even when pointed out by international agencies or N.G.O.'s. He even refused to join his own party, TULF, on the rare occasions when it voted against the government. **He was playing 'nice guy' to those very people who were murdering the people he was expected to protect.**

There is an outpouring of grief in the Southern newspapers in the island about Neelan Thiruchelvarn which is unusual considering he is a Tamil. **It was as if he was one of them which indeed, in a manner of speaking, he was.** He worked tirelessly for the aggrandizement of Kumaratunga and her government, of course, at the

*He was playing 'nice guy' to those very people who were murdering the people he was expected to protect.*

expense of the interest of the Tamils. In this deadly ethnic-war game team-spirit is undoubtedly of paramount importance among the chosen players especially representing those fighting for their survival. Mr. Thiruchelvarn chose to join the team and as a TAMIL Member of Parliament. He had a position if not in the offensive line up at least in the defense. Not only did he fail to tackle the opponents in his own territory, he sneakily nudged in a few goals against his own side, expectedly, to the applause of the opposing side. Naturally, he was loved by the other side. The captain or the manager of the team would not or could not remove him, so probably an enraged fan of the team took him out, for the 'game' ultimately, may not be lost.

It is well to impress upon the reader this metaphorical scenario because it throws into relief the possible motives and urges not of just the Tigers but of the hundreds of thousands of Tamils who continue to suffer because of Thiruchelvam's 'errors' of omissions and commissions. ( Too facilely, every suicide attack is attributed to the Tigers. Premadasa and Athulath muthali were not killed by Tigers just because some hapless Tamils' heads were produced by the police. As we now know it was the result of deadly internal warfare.) Just as a person is rewarded for performing well, he is also dismissed for a bad job and can be sent to jail for attempting to bankrupt the firm by selling the trade secrets to the competitor. Any employee could have implicated him. **The Tamils are literally fighting for their lives. In the very long history of the Tamil nation one cannot recall such a sustained period of tribulations and betrayals. Any Tamil leader who ignores the sufferings or contributes to them has thus betrayed the Tamils and should, duly, step down or be prepared to be removed. This is not the law of the jungle but of the real world of business or politics or any organized activity.**

## GETTING RUN OVER

Thiruchelvarn is talked of as a gentle, peaceable non-abrasive man of I do not doubt this at all nor do I doubt the thesis that he lost his life NOT because of those attributes. In social intercourse, these are universally loved qualities in an individual. Jimmy Carter, ex-President of the U.S. is such a man. Americans called him a "wimp" and replaced him for not doing his job more aggressively. There is nothing wrong about Mr. Thiruchelvarn having desired to play a political role, though, apparently, he was not savvy enough for it. **Even nice people get run over if they do not watch where they are going.** The draft constitution he crafted with Peries and which was repeatedly watered down to the disadvantage of the Tamils is, to be presented to the Parliment in its very emasculated form. It is a kind of a surrender instrument to implement a Pax Romana by Chakravarthi Kumaratunga and Thiruchelvarn is inextricably associated with it. **Every time a Tamil like arch villain Kadirgamar, or Thiruchelvam, is used as a willing tool in promoting an antiTamil policy, the media in the South broadcast to the world accompanied by a supporting statement, like, "Mr. Kadirgarmar (or Thiruchelvam), who is himself a Tamil, says:- This riles the Tamils to no end.** These men bear a great responsibility for their utterances, whether in speech or writing. With all his learnedness he failed to perceive the anger and resentment caused by his actions and the concern that he failed to articulate on behalf of the people that he was meant to represent. So, as Brutus spoke of Caesar at the latter's funeral we could say, mutatis mutandis,

*"—If there is any friend in this assembly, any friend of Ceasar's, to*

*him I say, that Brutus' love to Ceasar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Ceasar, this is my answer: Not that I loved Ceasar less, I loved Rome more. Had you rather Ceasar were living, and die all slaves, than that Ceasar were dead, to live all free men? As Caesar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy, for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death, for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended . . . ."*

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# NEELAN'S REAL ASSASSINS

BY PROFESSOR KOPAN MAHADEVA

Dr Neelan Thiruchelvarn is no more. According to reports, he fell victim to a suicide bomber in Colombo on Thursday 29th July. His security guard, seated in front in the same car, did not save him. The world has lost a leading constitutional & human rights lawyer and academic. The Sri Lankan government has lost an ally. President Chandrika, Foreign Minister Lakshman and others have lost a personal friened. TULF has lost a vice president. Sri Lanka's parliamentarians have lost an able and mild mannered, persuasive debater. A practitioner of peace and non-violence is lost to our world for good. **But what have the suffering and down-trodden Tamils living outside Colombo lost?** And who were Dr Thiruchelvarn's real assassins? These two questions are difficult to answer. The answer to the first question is unclear and murky, judging from newspaper reports and social chit-chat. I will try to answer the second one briefly, with the hope that we could thereby see the safest path which lies ahead of us.

I never knew Neelan personally. Statistically he belonged to half a generation after me. He was born in Colombo and lived there all his life. I was born in Jaffna and have lived for 20 years each in Jaffna, Colombo, and the U. K. The other five years were spent in the West Indies and in travelling around. Neelan studied at Royal College, and I at Jaffna Central. At University, I was at the Colombo Campus reading engineering, and Neelan studied law at Peradeniya. Our postgraduate and academic links were with the U. K. and USA respectively. But I knew Neelan's parents; more his mother than his distinguished lawyer-politician father. Punitham, his mother and I were fellow committee members when we organised the (in)famous 1974 International Association for Tamil Research Conference in Jaffna. She was a Vice President and 1, the de-facto General Secretary who negotiated visas for delegates with P.M Sirimavo. Thus I knew Neelan's family and do grieve his sad and sudden departure, deeply and sincerely.

And, who are Neelan's real assassins? A motivated suicide bomber? The LTTE, as widely suspected? If so, for what reasons? With what real useful purpose? We don't really know. We may never know. The manner of Neelan's execution does not leave much room for authentic, indisputable information. **But I would place the bulk of the responsibility for Neelan's death, and of those 60,000 equally important lives so far lost in the ethnic war in Sri Lanka, squarely in the laps of the successive governments of independent Sri Lanka from 1948 till now.** The responsibility presently lies unshirkably with the PA Government of Chandrika, Sirimavo, Laxman, Lakshman and crowd, as well as (I would say) personally with Ranil Wickremasinghe who is misleading the Opposition's UNP. The above ladies and gentlemen were elected by the impoverished people of Sri Lanka to govern the country justly and fairly and to maintain law and order in an even-handed manner, to pass appropriate legislation by reforming the constitution so that all the racial and religious groups live with equal rights under a non-presidential political structure, to solve the ethnic problem peacefully by negotiations with the LTTE, to lead the country towards economic prosperity, and so on. But what are they really doing? They are squandering billions on an unjust futile war, dragging their feet on Justice and progress, living, enjoying and flapping around, arrogant with power and prestige, in the comparative safety and luxury of Colombo. If they had worked harder, and more honestly and efficiently, with the interests of all the people equally in mind, Neelan would not have met his untimely end.

**Thus I conclude that the real assassins of Dr Neelan Thiruchelvarn are: 1) The PA government's inability to solve the country's ethnic problem as they promised when they came to power; 2) The oppressive and brutal war carried on by the government against the Tamils of the Northeast; and 3) The UNP leader's unstatesmanlike intransigence and non co-operation.**

## PRICE PAID FOR A POLITICAL FAILURE

*(Excerpts from an article written by **Jude L.Fernando , SUNDAY TIMES**, August 8, 1999)*

"Dr.Tiruchelvam's assassination is not an isolated event. It is an integral part of a chain of events that respond to the country's decade long failure to find a settlement for its ethnic crisis. We must realize that though a political killing is dramatic and compels attention, it is not an act that stands suspended in time.

"It has antecedents and sets in motion a string of events and actions. There is much to be gained by treating the assassination as a price paid for a political failure , than simply an act of terror committed to commemmorate Black July .....

"If a sustainable military victory is not feasible and there are no possibilities of any group other than the LTTE representing the interests of the Tamils and administering the north and east, the most pragmatic step should be to negotiate with the LTTE. In order to do that the government need to have the correct mindset .....

# AUGUST 1999 HAPPENINGS

***August 1:*** Security in Colombo stepped up further following the assassination of TULF politician Neelan Tiruchelvam on July 29.

Red Cross begins "mercy mission" to evacuate the sick from LTTE-held areas following the death of four persons due to lack of urgent medical treatment.

***August 4:*** **Twelve Police Special Task Force commandos killed near Vepankulam when a claymore mine placed tied to the handle of a bicycle exploded. It happened when some 40 commandos were travelling in a truck. Twenty other commandos were injured. Vepankulam is within army-controlled area, about two kilometres north of Vavuniya.**

***August 6:*** **An army lieutenant and five soldiers were injured when the truck in which they were travelling hit a claymore mine on the Vepankulam-Kurumankadu road.** Angry army men barge into a TELO camp and open fire, at TELO cadres suspecting them to have placed the mine. Seven TELO men reported wounded.

***August 9:*** **Major B.Karunanayake was killed within the army camp at Vakarai in the Batticaloa district when a male suicide bomber blew himself up.** Another officer, Major J.H.Karunadasa was wounded. The killed officer had served in the district for a continuous period of ten years. Nine years earlier, in 1990, Major Karunanayake was held responsible by the Tigers for the arrest and massacre of 159 Tamil youths in the Eastern University at Valachchenai nearby.

***August 10:*** **Mrs.Selvarani Parameswaran (42) was arrested by army personnel at Kaithady, and on the following day, Mrs.Kulasegaram (37) was arrested at Chavakach cheri.** Their families were not informed of the reason for their arrests nor where they were being held

***August 11:*** **Ten policemen were killed and 21 more wounded when a claymore mine ripped through the vehicle in which they were travelling.** The attack took place near the Batticaloa police station. The policemen were going on leave and were proceeding towards Welikande.

***August 12:*** **Two SLAF personnel, M.D.Jayasiri (29) and M.P.N. Fernando (36) were killed in a mortar attack by the LTTE in the Moondumurippu forward defence line bunker,** according to fellow airman S.A.Bandusena who gave evidence at the inquest later.

***August 13:*** Another airman, **Flt.Lt.Mahinda Rajapakse was killed in an explosion, also at Moondu murippu.** Airman Aravinda Nanayakkara giving evidence before acting Vavuniya magistrate S.Ramanathan, said the Flight Lieutenant was killed while returning to camp after giving orders to plant mines ahead of the defence lines. *(Tamil Net).*

Five people from the Pesalai refugee camp in Mannar were arrested on suspicion in the course of a cordon and search operation *(Tamil Net).*

***August 15:*** Over 50,000 devotees, both Sinhalese and Tamils, took part in the Madhu Feast which was-held today, according to church sources

***August 16:*** **A Dvora Fast Attack Craft (FAC) was sunk and two other boats of the Sri Lanka Navy were heavily damaged in a Black Sea Tiger attack** launched on a group of Sri Lankan patrol boats in the seas off Pulmoddai, 52 kilometres north of Trincomalee, according to the Voice of Tigers radio this evening.

***August 18:*** **Six commandos of the Special Task Force (STF) were killed, and five others wounded in a LTTE attack near the Bar Junction in Central camp,** according to sources in Amparai, reports *(Tamil Net).*

Fighting has been reported between the Sri Lankan army and the Liberation Tigers in the mangroves of Nelliyan, Chempianpattu south and Maammunai in the Vadamarachchi East division of the Jaffna peninsula. *(Tamil Net).*

A demonstration in Colombo organised to protest against the government's failure to honour its election pledges turns violent. Police fire tear gas to disperse demonstators.

**Nine Sri Lankan soldiers were killed in a claymore mine attack in Navvi, west of Omanthai in the Vavuniya district.** The soldiers were travelling in a tractor.

***August 19:*** A part of a human skull and a grenade were unearthed in Ariyalai West, a suburb of Jaffna by two woodcutters who were attempting to dislodge a tree stump. *(Tamil Net).*

***August 22:*** A group of Sri Lankan army soldiers on patrol damage a LTTE war dead memorial at Eachchamkulam according to villagers.

***August 23:*** **Two hundred and ten (210) Tamil youths are arrested in a night round-up in Wellawatte, Bambalapitiya, Kotahena and Pettah involving a search operation for Tiger "infiltrators".**

***August 24:*** A 14-year old school girl, Selvarajah Thushanthini of Gurunagar, Jaffna, has been reported missing the 21st, according to a statement made by her parents to the Human Rights Commission in Jaffna.

The "People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam" (PLOTE) accuses the "Eelam People's Democratic Party" (EPDP) of being responsible for the grenade attack on the office of the Jaffna daily, **THE UTHAYAN** on August 21.

Amnesty International, the London based human rights group says it was concerned for the lives of several Tamil politicians who are alleged to have received threats from the Liberation Tigers.

***August 27:*** Mannar Government Agent's driver Anthonythas, 34 arrested at the Kachcheri by Mannar Police.

***August 31:*** Four policemen including a police inspector were killed and a sub-inspector wounded when the jeep in which they were travelling was hit by a claymore mine near Cheddikulam in the Vavuniya district.

# TULF REAPS THE WHIRLWIND

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PRESS RELEASE
10 August 1999

The death of Dr Neelan Thiruchelvam on 29 July 1999 is a particularly unfortunate turn of events. Each one of us in The Action Group Of Tamils (TAGOT) interacted with him on numerous occasions over several years and had known him as a friend and colleague. We regret the passing away of an individual of considerable intellectual stature and unusually personable demeanour.

However, Dr Thiruchelvam was assassinated, that is, it is a politically motivated killing. He is the most recent casualty among the many Tamil politicians who have paid with their lives for the politics of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF). If his killing as alleged was carried out by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), then historical lessons arising from the circumstances leading to Dr Thiruchelvam's assassination, and from the tragedy itself, have to be acknowledged.

Dr Thiruchelvam in his personal capacity was a scholar of exceptional repute. He was concerned with defending human rights in the international arena. But, he was also a member of a political party, the TULF; he was a politician.

As Vice President of the TULF, Dr Thiruchelvam exercised a decisive influence in crafting and purveying the party's widely condemned politics of collaboration with the Sinhalese State. Even the proverbial child knows that this assassination had nothing to do with his work in human rights and had everything to do with TULF's treacherous politics, which he promoted as its loyal member.

Yet, we find that most commentators writing on this tragedy nimbly sidestepped the all-important political aspect of Dr Thiruchelvam's life. They focussed instead on his personal qualities, which were undoubtedly exemplary, to substantiate political assertions; that by killing him "a voice of reason and sanity" has been "silenced", that Sri Lanka has lost a "democratic-reformist thinker".

## DR S SATHANANTHAN
### SECRETARY

**From portraying him as a democrat who was killed, the commentators slid almost imperceptibly into the assertion that he was killed because he was a democrat.** The caption, for example, of the United News of India (UNI) report of 29 July filed from Colombo screamed: "Leaders condemn killing of intellectual" ***(The Hindu, 30/Jul/99).***

By this sleight of hand the Colombo intelligentsia and the media have sought to structure the discussion around the following spurious question: Why does the LTTE target a moderate like Dr Thiruchelvam who was trying to bring constitutional reforms and devolution proposals for the Tamils? Their obvious intention is to engineer the condemnation of LTTE for killing a Tamil man of peace, a democrat.

But as life would have it, the intelligentsia and the media were thrown off balance by an unforeseen event. The Tamil people did not participate in Dr Thiruchelvam's funeral in Colombo. An Indian journalist who noted the Tamil response reported that the Tamil community is "unmoved and unprotesting" ***(Indian Express, 3/Aug/99).***

**The verdict of the Tamil people is loud and clear. Their unequivocal response, of not attending the funeral, is a definitive statement. It is a statement against, and a firm rejection of, the TULF's reviled politics of running with the (Tamil) hare and hunting with the (Sinhalese) hound.** Moreover, the united expression clearly showed that the Tamil people as a whole are not impressed by Dr Thiruchelvam's credentials as a democrat and human rights advocate in the international arena. They judged him by his track record in Sri Lanka with respect to the violations of human rights of Tamils.

TAGOT expected those who crave for "democracy" and swear by "the will of the people" to abide by the virtually unanimous declaration by Tamils of their revulsion over the politics of TULF. Perhaps we are idealists.

If the commentators' assertion that Dr Thiruchelvam was killed primarily, if not solely, for his work as a democrat and defender of human rights of Tamils is to hold water, then the Tamil people's popular verdict against him had to be neutralised. So a few days later the Colombo intelligentsia began damage limitation ploys and, before the end of the first week, they employed a logical twist; they invented a fear of the LTTE. In the weekly columns of national papers the intelligentsia patronisingly alleged that Tamils did not attend Dr Thiruchelvam's funeral because of a "debilitating fear" (The Island, 4/Aug/99) of the LTTE and political violence. A political commentator in the Colombo-based English media gratuitously insulted Tamils; he arrogantly declared that "there were no longer peace loving Tamils but only frightened Tamils" ***(The Island, 8/Aug/99).***

The members of the intelligentsia seem to have conveniently forgotten that Tamils showed no "fear" when they voted for Mrs Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga in the 1994 elections as well as when they enthusiastically hugged and kissed the helicopter that brought to Jaffna the "peace emissaries" of the her Peoples Alliance (PA) Government.

The establishment in the South

also sought to denigrate the judgement of the Tamil people. At a briefing to the diplomatic community on 2 August, Foreign Minister Mr Lakshman Kadirgamar told Tamils in Sri Lanka and abroad to "pause to consider" and to "open their eyes". And the Indian journalist dismissed Tamil opinion out of hand as the response of a community that "has mortgaged its soul to the LTTE" ***(Indian Express, 3/Aug/99).***

As a Tamil parliamentarian, Dr Thiruchelvam was accountable in the first instance and always to the Tamil people. The views of others, including those of the international community, however valid are nevertheless secondary; and they are credible only insofar as they duly respect and take into account the verdict of the Tamil people.

The concrete reality is that the Sinhalese State is at war with the Tamil people. The fundamental issue in dispute is the right to national self-determination of the Tamil people, the right to State power, and not the farcical "defence" of "minority rights". The TULF's political wheeling and dealing with the Sinhalese State is cheered in the south of the country as "the capacity and commitment to re-conceptualise Tamil politics in democratic emancipatory terms". From the standpoint of Tamils, they are TULF's opportunistic manoeuvres to undermine the rapidly growing competing centre of political power, namely, the LTTE-led Tamil national movement for the right of national self-determination.

From 1994, the year in which the TULF appointed Dr Thiruchelvam as Member of Parliament (MP), the TULF parliamentarians have callously voted in favour of the Government's defence budget year after year. **By ensuring adequate financial resources for the Sinhalese war machine, the TULF members joined the chauvinist Sinhalese MPs of the PA Government in effectively signing the death warrant of a whole generation of Tamils.** Barring the occasional statement made by Mr Joseph Pararajasingam, no other TULF member, parliamentarian or otherwise, defended within Parliament or outside the human rights of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. But some among the southern intelligentsia would like the world to believe that TULF politicians are "working for peace".

**In the eyes of the "unmoved and unprotesting" Tamils, Dr Thiruchelvam is unfortunately a comprehensively discredited Tamil politician. He tried among other things to exonerate President Kumaratunga, by issuing a "character certificate" of dubious origin, when she clearly was wrong in making anti-Tamil remarks in a private gathering. He was instrumental in obtaining the Nandhi flag, which the TULF shamelessly supplied to be hoisted at the infamous "victory" ceremony of the army after the "conquest" of Jaffna on 5 December 1995.**

**It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the unprecedented outpouring of grief among Sinhalese intellectuals and politicians and in the Sinhalese-controlled media confirms the usefulness, to the Sinhalese State, of Dr Thiruchelvam's invaluable contribution to legitimise TULF's collaborationist politics.**

We categorically state that what is not, we repeat, not at issue are Dr Thiruchelvam's endearing personal attributes and impressive professional accomplishments. What is necessary at this tragic juncture is a clinical review of the bankrupt politics of the TULF. And we pose a different question, which is in the hearts of most Tamils: Why has the TULF repeatedly attempted to sabotage the Tamil movement for national self-determination through a counter-revolutionary strategy seductively packaged as "democratising project", "ethnic as well as social pluralism" and "ethnic inclusivism"?

*THE ACTION GROUP OF TAMILS (TAGOT)*

## "HE ECHOED THE SENTIMENTS OF THE SRI LANKAN REGIME".

In a letter to the Editor of FRONTLINE dated September 24, Mr.P. Ramasamy, Department of Political Science, National University of Malaysia, writes:

"Radhika Coomaraswamy's article on Neelan Tiruchelvam (August 27) was more refreshing than the anti-LTTE reports. While she condemns violence, she refrains from making sweeping generalisations about the perpetrator(s) of this murder. However, her support for moderation seems to offer little for the Tamils in Sri Lanka to advance their self-respect and dignity.

"Neelan, I agree, was a brilliant lawyer, but he was an individual who basically echoed the sentiments of the Sri Lankan regime. Moderate Tamil leaders have a vision, but I am not sure that the Tamil people would like to be part of this vision".


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# Neelan - The other side of the story

G.G.PONNAMBALAM (JR)

It is over one month since Dr. Neelakandan Tiruchelvam's demise at the hands of an assassin.

I wish to place on record the feelings of a preponderant section of the Tamils on the matter of Tiruchelvam's death.

Eulogies have come in from abroad and locally. From foreigners and from the Sinhalese. Indeed, at this time, it is the done thing to say all the good things about a dead person. But there has been hardly a good word for him from the Tamils, whether from abroad or locally.

Why this glaring dichotomy?

The Tamils have been condemned by the international and local media for being unmoved and callous indeed, showing supreme indifference at Tiruchelvam's death. "Silence is the most perfect expression of scorn" said George Bernard Shaw. It should not be so, we are told, because he was a "Tamil politician", a "Tamil parliamentarian", a "Tamil moderate", a "fighter of minority rights", a "human rights activist", a "committed crusader for peace", an "international figure" and a hoard of other things that he is supposed to have stood for. Still, there were no Tamil banners, no Tamil leaflets as is customary, no mass Tamil participation at his funeral barring the well-known Tamil supporters of Sinhala Governments and the Establishment, no Tamil speakers at the cremation barring the Secretary General of his Party, and no eulogies from Tamils. Indeed, one would have thought he was not a Tamil, after all. All this, a strong indictment indeed.

**Tiruchelvam had an unnatural death. But he is only one such Tamil. There have been thousands of Tamils in the recent past having had similar fate at the hands of successive Sinhala Governments hell-bent on the genocide of Tamils. They were also precious lives. Precious Tamil lives, no different from that of Tiruchelvam. But nobody would stop to think about them. Why? Is it because they were not friends of the Sinhalese? Is it because they were of no use to the Establishment?**

In the beleaguered and tiny Tamil Nation, Tiruchelvam was very good material. I will say this in full measure. Acknowledging this fact, he was asked to contest the Colombo District on an independent Tamil list in 1994. He refused and assumed the roll of a king-maker by searching for Tamils to get onto the Peoples Alliance(PA) list. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

As a Tamil, Tiruchelvam was an enemy unto himself.

As a "Tamil politician", Tiruchelvam did not know what his constituency was. Was it the Tamils or was it really the Sinhalese? He preferred anybody other than the Tamils. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

## TULF & Thimpu

As a Tamil, he could not have been blinded to the Tamil aspirations at this moment because the party to which he belonged, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) was a signatory to the Thimpu Principles of August 1985 which laid down the four principles extolling Tamil aspirations. In the process of fashioning some convoluted "Peace Package", that saw three drafts in as many years in some engine room behind, Tiruchelvam saw to it that the sacred aspirations of the Tamils were smashed up or completely ignored. And this, so soon after Thimpu. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

**That Tiruchelvam was an architect of the notorious "Peace Package" everybody knew for sometime. But Tiruchelvam was very secretive about this and would never admit it. Why? If the "Peace Package" was any good to the Tamils, surely he should have been proud of it? The Tamils have not forgotten this.**

His father, the late M. Tiruchelvam argued in the Amirthalingam Trial-at-Bar that the Tamils had not lost their sovereignty when the Portugese captured Jaffna and that sovereignty remained with the Tamils when the British left the shores and, therefore, what was left for the Tamils to do was to restore that sovereignty with the setting up of the separate state of Tamil Eelam. Tiruchelvam has seen to it that this case that was built up was smashed for all times by the "Peace Package" that he "co-authored". That, too, after he put out a book containing his father's submission under the aegis of the Tiruchelvam Pothu Pani Manram. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

**Tiruchelvam was more an Establishments Man. An Establishment Man of successive brutal Sinhala Governments.** He was a great friend of The Official Languages Commission and would be a principal speaker at all its functions and indeed had a very close associate of his as one of the Commissioners. But this Tamil Commissioner would eternally complain about the impotence of the Commission. Tiruchelvam did not help in the full and proper implementation of the Tamil Language inspite of his well-known proximity to the Sinhala Establishment. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

**Tiruchelvam revelled in being an engine-room boy. He loved that role which was detested by the ordinary Tamil. It was this character that prevented him from facing the hustings and his Tamil peers. Still, it got him into Parliament twice, but only as a nominated member on each occasion.** The only time he faced the Tamils was when the "friendly" Indian Peace-Keeping Force(IPKF) was in situ in Tamil Eelam in 1989. But even his "international connections" could not help him in 1989 when he faced his own kind.

Tamil Eelam Archive

sitive to Tamil sentiments? An answer to this could be had from the various eulogies and encomiums that have been paid to him. Very, very significantly, not one of them had anything to say about Tiruchelvam's contribution to the Tamils! And even more significantly even the President of his Party, M. Sivasithamparam, has singularly assumed a position of stony silence! Equally significantly, the Tiruchelvam Pothu Pani Manram has chosen to distance itself from Tiruchelvam at this moment.

In December 1995 when an alien Sinhala army "captured" Jaffna by setting foot in a deserted Tamil land mass, the insensitive Sinhala Government wanted a song and dance to appease the baser Sinhala sentiments. Poor Tiruchelvam was equally insensitive in suggesting that the Nandhi flag should be hoisted at the "victory ceremony" of the Sinhalese in order to satisfy the Tamils! This was done. Was this necessary? The Tamil Nation, which was reeling at that time, has not forgotten this.

## Baling out Chandrika

In 1997 October when President Kumaratunga, at a weekly meeting of financial officials on Fridays, blurted she would get onto the streets and attack Tamils if the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam(LTTE) attacked Buddhist places of worship and this leaked out and there was a hue and cry from the Tamil quarter, Tiruchelvam feigned another's signature in an irrelevant and disgraceful letter to the President which sought, dishonestly, to bale the President out of a very difficult position. To say that Tiruchelvam is a paragon of virtue, even after this notorious act, is nothing but midsummer madness. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

Tiruchelvam is described as a "crusader for peace" and "a tireless worker towards resolution of conflicts". **After Tiruchelvam's death, it has surfaced that he was abandoning Parliament and the "Peace Package" for pastures new and that he was going to take up a teaching assignment in America on 1st September 1999.** Some interested parties want the people to accept the "Peace Package" as this would be the least that they could do in the memory of Tiruchelvam. But if D.B.S. Jeyaraj's eulogy at page 10 of "The Hindu" of 7-8-99 is anything to go by, **Tiruchelvam obviously did not tell Jayaraj, even as late as 35 minutes before his death, that he was leaving the shores in a matter of days.** On the contrary, Tiruchelvam had even minutes before his death "wanted a little more time in Parliament to accomplish his goal of achieving a political "settlement". It will not be easy unravelling this strange situation more so if we take into consideration what the President has said about presenting the "Peace Package" to Parliament by the end of August 1999. This, too, has raised Tamil eyebrows and all sorts of questions are being asked in Tamil circles. **Was Tiruchelvam decamping after ensuring his pension? Where is his commitment to the Peace Cause, leave alone the Tamils?** The Tamils have not forgotten this.

Tiruchelvam is described as an "international figure". Of particular interest to Tamils was the fact that he was Chairman of the Minority Rights Group International. This organization did a study of Sri Lanka after the present Government came into power and brought out a report in February 1996 with special reference to the Tamils. It was an indictment against his friend - the Sinhalese Government. The Report had many recommendations. Some Tamil organizations had written to Tiruchelvam during his stewardship requesting him to use his good offices with the Government to which he was so close (as has been now made out by representatives of this Government) and alleviate the distress of the Tamils. He just would not move in the matter. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

## South Africa bloomer

**In July 1998 when President Kumaratunga went to distant South Africa and came out with the bloomer that the Tamils are not the original people of this island and there was a mass protest from Tamils, here and abroad, there was not a whimper from the international personality that Tiruchelvam was.** He could have used his good offices as an international figure that he was held out to be, to neutralize this statement, more so, when he had the opportunity to do so as he was in South Africa soon after the President's characteristically ill-conceived outburst. He did nothing. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

To make matters worse, Foreign Minister Lucky Kadirigama who, incidentally, was suddenly catapulted into the political arena from nowhere, due largely to a typical Tiruchelvam machination, completely let down his friend by calling a press conference on 2-8-99 and announcing, with pompous finality, that Tiruchelvam was a virtual consultant to the Foreign Ministry. **This has opened the eyes of the Tamils who now charge that Tiruchelvam, with his "international connections" as was evidenced by the outpourings that came from abroad and specifically from America, had a hand in the designation of the LTTE and that Tiruchelvam was indeed a CIA agent. A greater dis-service Kadirigama could not have done to Tiruchelvam.**

## 3-year package

In spite of the fact that the President had done nothing about Tiruchelvam's "Peace Package" for three years, that he should have thought that she was still the best bet for the Tamils when the whole Tamil Nation was arraigned against the President for years showed not only Tiruchelvam's political acumen but also the distance he occupied from the Tamil Nation.

Friends of Tiruchelvam have said that the Tamils have kept their distance from Tiruchelvam because of fear of the LTTE and as the "Indian Express" has said "mortgaged its soul to the LTTE". I do not think the LTTE would ever think of videoing those who attended the Tiruchelvam funeral in order to take it out of those Tamils. Such modus operandi are only carried out by a despotic Sinhala Government to intimidate and harass Tamils who attend Tamil political meetings in the vastly predominant Sinhala Colombo.

As a "Tamil Parliamentarian", Tiruchelvam went into Parliament, first, in 1982 when he was nominated to the Vaddukottai seat - the constituency which staged the Pannakam Convention way back in 1976 where the momentous resolution for the separate state of Tamil Eelam was passed. During that stint in Parliament, Tiruchelvam did not make one speech about the Tamils or Tamil Eelam, even so soon after the Pannakam Convention. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

## Game of Hide & Seek

**From the word go in August 1994, the TULF would nominally speak on the debate for the extension of the Emergency and slither away during voting time. Tiruchelvam would not even speak at such debates, lest it hurts the Establishment. This game of hide and seek went on for about a year or more till the TULF suddenly changed course due to one Tamil ridiculing them out of hand. The Tamils never expected a Tamil with Tiruchelvam's intellectual stature to lend himself to play hide and seek during tragic times. The Tamils have not forgotten this.**

From the time this particular Sinhala Government took office, Tiruchelvam's party, the TULF, on the basis of dubious logic, would oppose the votes of the Ministry of Defense but would vote with the Government for the Budget. This, the TULF thought, was honesty. But the Tamils viewed this as intellectual dishonesty of a very base order because this Sinhala Government's reign has been the bloodiest in the history of this island, as far as the Tamils are concerned. Tiruchelvam, inspite of his intellectual attainments, did not try to extricate himself from this obscene and ridiculous situation, even if he could not change the course of his party. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

**In the five years since 1994 that Tiruchelvam has been a parliamentarian, he has spoken on matters ranging from sex to satan. But he could not have spoken even five times about the pathetic and tragic plight of the Tamils under this barbaric Sinhala Government? Thousands of Tamil civilians have been killed, tens of Tamil villages shelled, hundreds of Tamil homes and acres of Tamil agricultural lands have been destroyed, many places of worship and schools in Tamil Eelam bombed, food and medicine denied to Tamil refugees, torture and rape used as weapons of war against the Tamils, Tamils used as human mine detectors and as forced labour by an alien Sinhala army, disppearances of Tamils in their hundreds and mass Tamil graves coming to light only now, merciless murders of caged and, therefore, helpless Tamil political prisoners. Indeed, the genocide of the Tamils! There wasn't a whimper from Tiruchelvam. The Tamils have not forgotten this.**

The use of Tamil as an administrative language in the District of Colombo could only be done if the President makes a proclamation in terms of the Sixteenth Amendment and the proclamation is gazetted. Only if this is done would all the records be kept in Tamil also and Tamil be used as a language of court. Repeated requests were made to the President. In spite of Tiruchelvam's position with the President, he did nothing to have this done. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

Tamileelam Archive

## Lip service to Peace

Tiruchelvam has been described as a "Tamil moderate". Was he really? It is legion, certainly amongst the Tamils, that it was his party, the TULF that goaded the Tamil youth to take to arms with the inflamatory speeches they made from all their platforms so much so that the youth slit their wrists, drew blood and dramatically placed "pottu" of blood on the foreheads of TULF leaders during the 1977 hustings. The Tamil youth took to arms in a big way, as a result. All the Tamils who carry guns today and who are snuggly ensconced in the lap of the despicable Sinhala Government which is making use of them like chattel, will not deny this. If Tiruchelvam was a true moderate and if he was in the TULF then, why did he not disassociate himself with the TULF line? If he was not in the TULF then, why did he join it thereafter? As if this is not enough, the TULF manifesto for the 1977 General Elections said that the Constitution of Tamil Eelam would be "brought into operation either by peaceful means or by direct action or struggle". What does this sentence denote, if it does not refer to an armed struggle? The TULF has not unequivocably jettisoned this stand of theirs. Tiruchelvam is therefore part and parcel of this philosophy. To pay lip service or otherwise to "peace", whilst running with the hare and hunting with the hound, is hypocritical if not downright despicable. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

## Not one word of protest

Tiruchelvam is held out to be a "fighter for minority rights". How could it have been? For, long before Tiruchelvam came onto the political firmament, the Tamils categorically changed their position on this matter and held themselves to be a "Nation" and refused to think, again, as a "minority". So, if he was a fighter for minority rights, he could certainly not have had the Tamils in mind. Tamils could not be expected to forget this.

**Tiruchelvam is held out to be a "human rights activist". It is the position of the Tamils that never before have they been at the receiving end of so much human rights violations and so much brutal and barbaric violence as has been experienced by them since August 1994. During the bloodiest period of this god-forsaken country's history, was there one word of protest, loud and clear, from Tiruchelvam in the name of the Tamils? The Tamils have not forgotten this.**

Tiruchelvam took his oaths under the Sixth Amendment which the International Commission of Jurists (another of those international agencies which sent an eulogy on Tiruchelvam's demise) condemned as undemocratic and in violation of Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Tamils have not forgotten this.

Did Tiruchelvam ever have Tamil interests at heart or was he even sen-

**Rather than psycho-analyze the Tamils, let us come to grips with reality. Tiruchelvam's funeral took place in Colombo; not in Tamil Eelam. The Sinhalese bandwagon says that "400,000 Tamils have colonized Colombo because they could not stand LTTE harassment". If that argument is correct, why were those Tamils not present at Tiruchelvam's funeral?** Indeed, where were the so-called Colombo Tamils who are said not even to know of the LTTE? Or did Tiruchelvam's funeral show the Sinhalese and the international community about the silent revolution that is under way? And was the realization of this mass support for the silent revolution that led the Sinhala and international sector to work overtime to obtain eulogies about the "brutal", "despicable", "senseless", "dastardly", "cowardly", "callous", "heartless", "monstrous" act that killed Tiruchelvam?

Make no mistake. Any death that is not natural or accidental must, indeed, be described in those superlative terms. But who started it all? Who made this the culture of this island? Who made this a way of life in this country? Let the Tiruchelvam murder lead to some soul-searching, at least, not only in the Sinhala quarter but also in the TULF corner.

*What I have written is not a justification for the murder of Tiruchelvam.*

**What I have written is not a justification for the murder of Tiruchelvam. Rather, it is to place before the world the other side of the story, if it could be such, for the staggering unconcern and stunning indifference on the part of the Tamils everywhere regarding this incident. There is really no point in blaming the Tamils en masse for their "indifference" because they have their reasons, and valid ones too. I am only seeking to place those reasons publicly.**

What I have written might be described as not being appropriate at this time. But the other side of the story had to be writ and writ soon. The international sector have had their say about Tiruchelvam. The Sinhalese have had theirs. The Tamils must now have their say and bring out their perspective. It is my position that a Tamil must first say, whatever that is not popular, sitting fairly and squarely in Colombo. That is why I have written the Tamil point of view about Tiruchelvam.

**Why blame the Tamils for being unmoved over the Tiruchelvam incident? That is their right; their prerogative. Indeed, that is democracy. Is this hue and cry about the Tamil silence because Tiruchelvam is a friend of the Sinhalese? If Sri Lanka is a democracy, then it must be bound by the Peoples Will. The Tamil People have shown their will.**

**To continue pretending not to understand the mind of the Tamils betray the arid and infertile terrain of a degenerate mind.**

Many moons ago, the "Darling of Jaffna" was flashed a question by his best friend as to what he thought was the greatest thing in life. The politician of yore shot back unhesitatingly, "the love of one's own People". Did Tiruchelvam enjoy the love of his people? Ask Nirupama Subramaniam.

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# A FOURTH ROUND OF TALKS WITH THE LTTE

ADRIAN WIJEMANNE

**1.** A groundswell of public opinion seems to be gathering momentum asking for unconditional talks with the LTTE, preferably with an international mediator, to end the war. For the last 4 years the government has opposed the idea adamantly. Instead, it has chosen the military route to eliminate the LTTE or to debilitate it so seriously that the constitutional "concessions" to the Tamil people could be applied on an island-wide scale. The rising tide of public opinion seeks, therefore, to reverse a cherished policy of the government. The resulting tension and antagonism has invested a fresh round of unconditional talks with the LTTE with the aura of a panacea for the "ethnic problem". It has altogether submerged the memory of the three earlier rounds of unconditional talks with the LTTE which failed to secure peace. Even worse it has diverted attention away from a serious study of the reasons for the failure of those three earlier talks. It is very timely, therefore, to make good that lack.

**2.** The first encounter between the Sinhala side and the LTTE was at the Thimphu Talks in 1985 sponsored by the Indian government. There the Sinhala side was a quasi- government delegation and the LTTE was one of several Tamil groups, some militant, others constitutional. The Sinhala delegation apparently hoped for a negotiation within the existing constitutional framework and were completely thrown by the entirely different plane on which the Tamil parties unitedly took their stand, namely, the plane of their national rights. The Sinhala delegation refused to engage with the Tamil parties on that plane and rejected altogether their claims to national rights. The reason adduced for that rejection was that the recognition of Tamil national rights would lead, inevitably, to the break-up of the existing single all-island state into two. The Sinhala position was that the existing geographical configuration of the state as comprising the entire island as an whole was not negotiable and that this had to take precedence over any Tamil claim to their national rights. Consequently the talks proved abortive and the two sides returned to war.

**3.** There are important lessons to be learned from this encounter. The first is that there can be no meaningful discussion when the two parties are on two entirely different planes - the one on the plane of rights and the other on the plane of practical arrangements based on the rejection of the claim to rights. The claim of the Tamil parties was bolstered by an overwhelming vote in its favour by the Tamil people at the 1977 general election and, therefore, had a democratic basis. It was implicit in the Sinhala position that a democratic mandate by the Tamil people could not be allowed to break up the territorial configuration of the state. It is an impasse that still exists and will bedevil any future talks.

**4.** The second lesson is equally important. Underlying the Sinhala position was the absolute and unquestioned assumption that the existing territorial configuration of the state could be preserved intact by military force. Superior and overwhelming military force could, and would, dispose of the threat to it implicit in the recognition of Tamil national rights. The war was only two years old then and the military campaign thus far was presented as a military triumph even though we now know it was more like a draw. The lesson is that the assumption that in the last resort the Sinhala position can be upheld by military force undermines the possibility of a realistic discussion and forecloses the attainment of an agreed result.

**5.** The second round of unconditional talks took place in Colombo for 14 months in 1989-90 during 18 months of fierce fighting between the IPKF and the LTTE. This time the talks were exclusively between the government of President Premadasa and the LTTE. For the greater part of the 14 months of the talks they were dominated by a convergence of interests between the government and the LTTE in securing the unconditional withdrawal of the IPKF from the island. As soon as that was achieved in March 1990, there emerged once again the Sinhala dependence on military force to suppress a separatist tendency. Once again the two parties returned to war.

**6.** Once again the lesson was the same, namely, the subordination of the burning issue of Tamil rights to the need to preserve the territorial integrity of the state by the force of arms is a certain recipe for failure in the talks.

**7.** However, after the IPKF's military failure against the LTTE the old faith in military success was shaken. The LTTE mounted a successful siege of the Jaffna Fort which fell after the withdrawal of government forces. However, in mid '91 the LTTE's siege of the Elephant Pass Camp was repulsed. In November '93 the army suffered its first debacle in a frontal engagement at Pooneryn. The

war dragged on inconclusively with large areas of the merged north-east province being evenly contested by the two sides.

**8.** The third round of unconditional talks took place in Jaffna in '94/95 under the present government. This time it was a low level government delegation sent to Jaffna and the talks were exclusively with the LTTE. A cease-fire was negotiated but the talks did not get beyond preliminary issues relating to the economic blockade. Even minor relaxations agreed to were subverted by military foot-dragging until it became clear that the government was susceptible to military pressure. Before the substantive issue of the national rights of the Tamil nation and their accommodation could be considered the lack of any will to compromise on the part of the government became clear. Once again the two sides returned to war.

**9.** The lesson on this occasion was that skirting round the substantial issue by dealing with peripheral matters in the vain hope that the central question of Tamil national rights would somehow disappear is absolutely futile. The continuing dependence on the conviction of military success in the last resort is fatal to the possibility of a realistic conclusion.

**10.** Since April '95, 4 years and 4 months of unrelenting warfare has taken place. The city of Jaffna was captured by government forces without resistance in December '95 and a military government has been in place there since then. This was followed by serious reverses for government forces in July '96 at Mullaitivu and in September '98 at Kilinochchi where the LTTE held (and still holds) the ground vacated by government forces. A costly attempt, lasting 19 months, to open a land supply route from the south to the Jaffna peninsula was abandoned in December '98. There have been no major military actions by either side for 11 months now since September '98.

**11.** There has been no serious study or analysis of the causes of the lack of success of the government's military forces. It is this writer's position that such a study will reveal systemic factors which not only explain the reasons for the lack of military success of the government's forces but which lay bare the factors which militate against military success at any time in the future. After 10 years of intermittent warfare between the two sides the LTTE is considerably stronger now than at the beginning of the conflict. It has acquired a significant naval capability, becoming the first secessionist guerilla force in the world to do so. This has compelled the government into an expansion of its own naval strength at a cost which is wholly beyond its capacity to sustain in the long term future.

*The LTTE seeks to translate into reality the right of the Tamil nation to sovereign independence and self-government in the area of its domicile - the north-east province. Future constitutional arrangements in that area are a matter for the Tamil nation to devise in a manner of its own choosing.*

**12.** The fourth round of unconditional talks with the LTTE, when it does take place, will be held in a context fundamentally different from the earlier three. The certainty of military success no longer exists. On the contrary, it is quite clear that the LTTE as a military force is now a permanent and significant and growing presence in the island. The talks this time will be between two armed parties neither of whom is able to eliminate the other. Even after the talks the two parties will continue in possession of their arms. The only means of securing, and keeping, peace between them is by a peace treaty the terms of which are agreed to by both sides and not dictated by either side to the other. In fact, therefore, the "talks" will be a negotiation for a peace treaty.

**13.** The widely prevalent idea, nurtured by every government since the outbreak of war, that there can be a constitutional resolution of the "ethnic problem" is a complete misapprehension of the realities of the situation. The LTTE seeks to translate into reality the right of the Tamil nation to sovereign independence and self-government in the area of its domicile - the north-east province. Future constitutional arrangements in that area are a matter for the Tamil nation to devise in a manner of its own choosing. The "problem" is not "ethnic" - it is national and it is not a "problem". A nation's exercise of its rights is not a "problem", it is a normal activity, common worldwide. It is made into a "problem" when that activity is opposed, as it is in Sri Lanka, on the ground that it will result in two states on the island instead of one. It is because that opposition has so little basis in reason that it has to be backed by military force. After 16 years of reliance on military force it is now plain to see that that is a broken reed.

**14.** The talks on this fourth occasion will succeed only if the lessons of the three earlier failures are seriously understood and accepted by the Sinhala side. The casus belli relates to a nation's rights and the foundation for peace is the recognition of those rights. Unquestionably this precludes a return to the ante bellum single all-island state. The talks on this occasion will be in the nature of a negotiation between an existing state and an emerging state for a peace treaty that will secure peace for each of them and will regulate future relationships between them in the interest of their peoples for a future free of violence, bloodshed and war. This is the only, and the indispensable, way to peace and there is no other. ■

# "GOODNESS GRACIOUS ME!"

The latest 'hot potato' which is concerning the citizens of this sceptered isle seems to be whether or not non-prescribed drugs should be legalised, thus exerting more control over the problem and hopefully, reducing the level of drug-related crime which appears to be spiralling out of control.

**Addiction is a terrible thing as I and many other readers will vouch for as we nail-bitingly awaited our next 'fix' of that highly addictive product, 'Hot Spring', or as users refer to it, 'chasing the tiger'.** The editor tells me that some of the problems he is faced with in getting the magazine out on time, is the lack of suitably qualified volunteers and if I understand correctly, those with desk-top publishing and printing trade skills are the people required. Please play your part in 'the struggle' and get in touch with the Editor.

**We are invited by the editor to give our views on the article written by 'Raja Cholan' and I would like to take up that invitation as well 'as commenting on one or two other thought- provoking articles that made this late issue well worth waiting for:**

***Adrian Wijemanne*** - brings logical, mathematical and financial arguments to bear in suggesting that the 'peace through war' policy will never succeed. However there is, as another writer puts it, the matter of 'huMAN natURE' to consider. This is an important factor that underpins the argument for increased military expenditure which is not based on any mathematical formula or military strategy but on the greater opportunities for corrupt individuals to misappropriate government funds for their own personal advancement?

***Ana Pararajasingam*** - suggests that racism was a motivating factor i n the UK/USA led NATO intervention in Kosovo. Personally, I believe that it was much more to do with what politics, politicians and governments are all about - 'chess-board' diplomacy ! This is the strategy, as chess players well know, where you try to focus your opponents attention to the move in hand whilst having a totally different end game plan in mind!

## வெள்ளைப் புலி

## "WHITE TIGER"

தமிழீழ ஆவணக்காப்பகம்
Tamileelam Archive

***Raja Cholan*** - alludes to this when raising the matter of the India I card', played in the world 'poker' game. **It seems to me that when the Government of India feels threatened by Tamil Nadu, there is almost a pavlovian response to develop stronger ties with the Government of Sri Lanka. When Delhi does not feel threatened by Tamil Nadu, India becomes pro-Tamil and distances itself from Colombo.** The strongest factor which unites the Governments of India and Sri Lanka is a Palk Straits axis between Tamil Nadu and a separate Tamil state which would include the Jaffna peninsula and this raises a question for all Eelam aspiring Sri Lankan Tamils. If you were in the Sri Lankan Government's shoes, would you ever give up the Palaly/KKS military complex or, come to that, the Trincomalee military complex, both of which are in the Tamil homelands and proposed separate Eelam state? As for the I parpannans' (the Brahmins), I will comment on that later.

***Vasantha Rajah*** - is completely right in making the point that the Tamil leadership need to spend much more time in cultivating relationships with the media in order that the Sri Lanka/Tamil issue attracts the sort of attention that the Serbia/Kosovar issue has done. This however, may not be as easy as it seems - at least if my own experiences are anything to go by. For the past two years, much of my time has been spent writing to politicians and the media in an attempt to put Tamil issues on their agendas but there has been very little interest or sympathetic response. The sort of responses I have Ana Parara singham - suggests received from politicians include, **"Mr.Hague... appreciates you bringing your concerns over the Tamils in Sri Lanka to his attention and has carefully noted your comments..."**

**"We (the Foreign & Common wealth Office) do not agree that the situations in Kosovo and Sri Lanka are almost identical..." And from the media, ". . we ('The Guardian') are monitoring the situation (but) I am afraid that our editorial space in the international pages is very limited" "Thank you for contacting the BBC World Service... and have passed your letter to the appropriate department".** Meanwhile, I get more and more depressed by the lack of concern and I'm not even a Tamil ! Heaven knows how you all feel!

**I am certain that I am now seen as a supporter of the LTTE rather than a supporter of the Tamil people, by those in power. Who knows, maybe I have a file lying next to yours in one or a number of British government departments? I certainly have one in Colombo!**

Could there be a conspiracy to

keep the Tamil 'struggle' off the British government's agenda, our TV screens, and the pages of the more serious newspapers? I think not but we must take note of how the LTTE is viewed by Western governments and the Western media. If the West is biased against the LTTE, does the LTTE have a case to answer? Are the LTTE a bunch of 'control freaks' ? Was there as much a 'climate' of fear' in Jaffna under LTTE control as there now is under SLA control? Were the people able to openly criticise the LTTE without fear of recrimination? Did the people of Jaffna willingly give their financial support to the LTTE or were they 'forcibly encouraged'? Are ex-patriate Tamils under the same pressure ? Indeed, why aren't the children of expatriate Tamils fund raising for the LTTE like the little Bengali girl, on the inside front cover of the last issue of 'Hot Spring', is doing for the families of Indian soldiers killed in action? **While I myself have always had reservations about some of the LTTE's strategies, one thing is for sure - the LTTE is the 'force majeure' in trying to protect the basic human rights of Tamils in Sri Lanka as well as in the fight for a separate state.**

Now to return to Raja Cholan and his concern about the power wielded by Hindu Malayalees and Madras Brahmins. They may well not be "friends of Eelam Tamils" but why single out these two groups from the many that exert influence on the Tamil proletariat? Throughout our lives, we all fall into one of two symbiotic groups such as; strong or weak, rich or poor, powerful or powerless, leaders or led, controllers or controlled. These groups are intrinsically linked in so far that you can't have one without the other. They are not however static - people move from being on one side of the coin' to being on the other. In our early years in particular, we lack power and are controlled - by mothers, families, religion and politics but as we get older and, hopefully, acquire worldly wisdom, we begin to question. So begins the development of individuality - for some. Those who are unable to break free from their shackles, for whatever reason, are the most vulnerable to exploitation by those who have agendas to pursue. If it wasn't the brahmin it might be the catholic priest; if not the Hindu Malayalee maybe the Muslim Bengali; if not the SLA maybe the LTTE; and if not Tony Blair maybe the 'Cholan King'!.

As humans, we struggle to understand the true nature of things' and complex moral and philosophical questions such as, "Is it sometimes right to do 'wrong' ?" or "Does the end always justify the means?" One thing we humans are good at is the ability to rationalise almost everything. For example, the LTTE are opposed to the caste system and dowries and would, I suspect, be much more openly critical of all religious practice if that did not entail losing the ground-rock of both Hindu and Christian support. So, like most other human groups, they compromise and even tolerate the Matrimonial pages of our esteemed magazine! In conclusion, I come full circle back to Ana Pararajasingam's concerns about white supremacy and racism - the Matrimonial pages could be considered as having similar aims to one Adolph Hitler in his bid to prevent racial mixing in pursuit of a master race! Remember - Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Revolution changes everything - excepts men's hearts.

# MATRIMONIAL

*British born; 'educated' in Jaffna and University of Life, degreeless; "Vellakaran" caste, very pale skin; respectful of interested in, but not subjugated by - all religions; retired, own house [no 2nd house on Mars], little money, no car; vegetarian [at least as far as tobacco and coconut products are concerned!]; committed but not fanatical; takes life seriously but has strong hedonistic tendencies; no previous owners; seeks young, wealthy, beautiful partner to keep me in the manner that I have always dreamt about. Please send horror scope or even telescope.*


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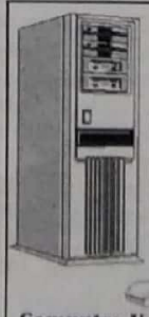
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## He arranged his own funeral

A bachelor arranged his own funeral before committing suicide. This incident occurred at Gampaha last week.

Just before committing suicide by shooting himself with a repeater rifle, a 49-year old unnamed bachelor had visited an undertaker and bought a coffin saying that a friend of his had expired.

Later he went to the grocery shop and ordered fifty bottles of fizzy drinks to be sent to his house later. He had also hired furniture for those attending his funeral.

Just before he shot himself he wrote a letter to his brother with the title deed of his paddy field and requested his brother to sell the land and settle the dues he owed the bank.

Later that evening he shot himself. According to the Gampaha police, the reasons for committing suicide are still unknown, since he comes from a wealthy family.

***(Sunday Times, Colombo, August 1, 1999).***

## The highest suicide rate in the world

Sri Lanka's suicide rate is the highest in the world. At present, an average of 20 Sri Lankans kill themselves every day. For each person who commits suicide, four others fail in their attempt.

In that context, it is more damaging to our society than the ethnic war or any other factor. But identifying potential candidates for suicide can be difficult.

Here are some strategies than can be adopted: Take the threat of suicide seriously. Most suicide victims have told someone that they want to end their life, but the threat had not been taken seriously .....

Be cautious in the sale of chemicals and potentially dangerous medication. They are, after all, the commonest mode of suicide in this country. These should not be sold to persons less than 18 years of age and a significant proportion of attempted suicides occur before the age of 18 .....

***(Sunday Times, July 25, 1999).***

## "What went wrong with our country

"As one sees this crowd of young people before us, one feels a sense of apprehension and concern for their future. There must be many people here who during the last few years must have asked themselves the question, **"what went wrong with our beloved country ?" - the country that was almost a haven of peace and still is a land of idyllic beauty", said H.L.De Silva, President's Counsel and former permanent representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations in New York, at the prize- giving of St.Thomas' College, Kollupitiya, held on July 16, where he was chief guest.**




"In many ways", he said, "we are greatly disillusioned, even disappointed, and feel a sense of defeat and frustration at the tide of events that has overtaken us over the last few decades. It is especially painful in a sense because not long ago it seemed as though new vistas of hope for development and economic progress has opened that would have lifted us from the morass of stagnation.

"In a sense, the situation is most baffling, for Sri Lanka is a country which has one of the highest rates of literacy in the world, a country where there has been compulsory primary education for decades, free education from the lowest grades to the University. It is a country which has enjoyed universal franchise for over fifty years and is perhaps one of the earliest in Asia to have enjoyed the advantages of democratic government.

"Despite these enviable achievements, the people of Sri Lanka have tragically failed and demonstrated their incapacity and inability to live in peace and harmony in much the same way as others in the world who are perhaps less fortunate and less privileged

## Drunk, he captured cobra with bare hands.

A habitual drunkard put his hands into an old anthill and pulled out a live cobra.

K.Sima, aged 60, addicted to liquor, generally the local drink, "kasippu" had come home drunk in the evening. on his arrival home, his wife and children had told him that a huge cobra into the anthill near their house. He made a flaming torch out of some dried coconut leaves and made its smoke move into the anthill. Then with a mammoty he cut the top portion of the anthill and made the entrance hole a little wider and fanned in more smoke.

He was trying to put his hand into the anthill. His wife who was watching all his actions pleaded not to do anything at that time of the night. But Sima was adamant to pull out the cobra with his bare hands.

In a loud tone he started chanting esoteric words and all of a sudden he pulled out the cobra, and with the other hand he firmly gripped the cobra from its neck, while his wife ran away with fear. The cobra coiled its lower body round his hand. The man shook it off several times, and when the cobra stretched itself, he dashed it with all his might against the coconut tree nearby and killed it.

All his actions had not taken more than two or three minutes, his neighbours said. But the following morning the man had little knowledge of the life and death struggle he experienced with the cobra.

This incident occurred in

Degalathiriya, a remote village in Kegalle police division.

***(Daily News, Colombo, August 3, 1999)***

## President Chandrika vs. President Kumaratunga

"Responding to President Kumaratunga's call for public assistance to detect corruption at all levels of state authority, UNP's M.P.

Dr.Rajitha Senaratne has brought to the President's attention that she "has omitted the office of the Executive President" in the categories of public offices against whom complaints would be accepted.

"Dr.Senaratne in his letter of complaint to the President on the Channel 9 deal, further states: "It is however ironic that I have to lodge my first complaint to Your Excellency against Your Excellency itself. In doing so, I am well aware that I am engaging in an exercise in futility.

"After all not even the most naive can expect a person against whom allegations are levelled to conduct an impartial investigation against oneself.

"Mr.Senaratne points out that "nowhere in the world would you have a system of justice where the accused conducts his or her own investigation .....

***(Weekend Express, Colombo, August 7-8, 1999.)***

## Elephants go wild in central Lanka

A herd of wild elephants stormed into a crowded town in central Sri Lanka and went on a rampage killing one man and wounding several others, a Press report in Colombo said recently.

About half a dozen elephants barged into the town of Matale and began attacking vehicles and residents, the Sinhalese language LANKADEEPA newspaper said. It said a man who was injured after being attacked by one of the elephants died in hospital while several others were hurt and some of them were reported serious.

# Lanka eyes teak trees for cash

**BY DILSHIKA JAYAMAHA**

**COLOMBO:** Cash-starved Sri Lanka wants to cut down valuable teak trees in its national parks, raising a cry of outrage from environmentalists.

A committee appointed by the President Chandrika Kumaratunge early this year suggested the government could earn $35 million by cutting and selling the teak. That is enough to pay one-fourth of the country's annual education budget.

The committee recommended that laws be changed to allow the felling of 70 per cent of the teak trees in national parks, said forest conservator W. Wickramasinghe. The plan to log the teak — a hard, highly prized wood used in some of the world's finest furniture — reflects the government's economic desperation.

Sri Lanka is experiencing a 10-year low in economic growth and has a defense budget that has swollen to $635 million to fight a protracted civil war against Tamil separatists.

The legislature would have to approve the change in the law to allow the logging of the trees. In the meantime, the government has been trying other means to balance the budget, including selling shares in the national airlines and telecommunication networks.

The latest estimates by the Central Bank point to a further slide in the economy, with gross domestic product growth in the first quarter at 2.7 per cent, compared to 5.7 per cent in the same period last year. ``We've been expecting a weak year, but the numbers are much worse than anticipated," said Rajiv Casie Chitty, director of research at CT Smith stockbrokers.

Environmentalists say that if the government needs money, hacking at the thick trunks of the elegant, costly trees is not the way to go about it. The conservationists were tipped off about the plan when the government proposed amending the legislation that forbids logging in national parks.

The government argues the trees are not part of a naturally occurring forest, but were planted three decades ago by the forest department with the intention of harvesting them. ``We expect natural regeneration of local species of trees to take place after the felling. If this does not take place, we will replant in these areas," Wickramasinghe said.

Environmentalists say the issue is not that simple. ``No proper study has been done about the ecosystem and replanting with local species," said Hemantha Withanage of the Environmental Foundation of Sri Lanka. He warned that the felling of teak could be a prelude to commercial logging.

Logging is highly regulated in Sri Lanka. Its forests cover 1.76 million hectares or 27 per cent of the land area. The law requires an environmental assessment before the government can fell trees, and individuals must get permission to cut a tree.

An official in the wildlife department said the department's view is that teak is not crucial in maintaining the ecosystem, and is not as good as other trees for retaining ground moisture. ``Teak trees are not much use for either the animals or as forest cover," the official said.

But Jagath Gunawardene, a member of the Society for Environmental Education, said teak provides food for the parks' wild elephants and prevents soil erosion. ***(AP)***

# 'A Foreign Policy for Tamil Eelam'

***Editor,***

***Hot Spring***

*Dear Sir,*

I read with interest Mr. Raja Cholan's point of view titled 'A Foreign Policy for Tamil Eelam' in the June-July issue of Hot Spring.

I was struck by the inconsistency of the positions adopted by the Mr. Cholan, and by the simplistic approach he takes to several complex issues of international politics.

However, what stood out most from his article were the vitriolic, derogatory – and unjustified - comments he makes about India and her present government.

Opening his piece, Mr. Cholan condemns the Western powers for "interfering in the affairs of almost every country in the world". He says the world is subject to "the collective will of six or eight white rulers" whose "naked military power" sanctions their ability to exploit the third world.

But a little later Mr. Cholan justifies and supports Western intervention as it is supposedly based on human rights, grievances of minority races (incidentally a derogatory term coined by the imperialists Mr. Cholan initially railed about), political rights, etc.

Finally, at the end of his piece, Mr. Cholan suggests the Tamils should "align ourselves with the new ethnic and social justice policies set out by the United States".

So what precisely is Mr. Cholan suggesting? That we ingratiate ourselves with the US and other major western powers by begging their support because the Tamils are being badly treated in Sri Lanka?

Does he seriously think the major powers – of any political persuasion – make their decisions on anything other than the well being and aspirations of their own states?

In particular, does Mr. Cholan believe the Western powers (whose "elaborate surveillance systems and high speed information technology" he exalts in his articles) are simply unaware of the realities of the conflict in Sri Lanka?

Then, in a refrain often sung by a particular generation of Tamils, Mr. Cholan lauds the government of Indira Gandhi for "supporting liberation movements worldwide" and its "love for the Tamil and Bengali people."

Perhaps he does not understand that external support for any movement is based on the advantages that accrue to the supporting government as a result, and not on the nobility of the cause. (I suggest Mr. Cholan studies events in Bangladesh shortly after it became an independent country as an example).

## LETTERS

With regards to geopolitics, Mr. Cholan's ignorance is matched only by his arrogance.

"Forget India" he tells us like an imperious Colonial governor before going on to insult the present government in Delhi.

For someone who feels justified in putting forward a 'Foreign Policy for Tamil Eelam' Mr. Cholan demonstrates a remarkable ignorance about the South Asian region.

It should not need pointing out to readers that India remains the regional superpower – and under the present government has taken several steps to enhance her capabilities and standing in the region.

It is quite clear that no significant change in the region will occur without Delhi's consent.

Mr. Cholan says that since 1987 successive Indian governments have collaborated with the Sri Lankan government to crush the Tamil Eelam liberation movement. Yet he doesn't pause to ask why.

Unfortunately, an apprehension - fuelled by Sri Lankan lobbying – that a separate Tamil Eelam may be hostile to Indian interests encouraged Delhi to attempt over the past few years - to remove a potential threat.

If Mr. Cholan had bothered to pay any attention to recent developments in India he would have noticed major changes are underway. Tamil Nadu political parties with strong public support are espousing support for an independent Tamil State of Eelam.

The relationship between Delhi and Colombo has noticeably cooled. Though the two countries are not hostile to each other, there is a new suspicion of each other's intents.

The Sri Lankan government's main military and strategic ally today is the United States – where are the "new ethnic and social justice policies" Mr. Cholan waxed lyrical about now?

The Sri Lanka Army's best division, the 53 (currently the main SLA force in the Vanni), has been wholly trained and organised by the US.

These facts are not lost on India, and a realisation that the Sri Lankans and not the Tamils could be the regional conduit for US interest in the South Asia, has led Delhi to reevaluate the whole game.

As an aside, not content with insulting the BJP government of Atal Vajpayee, Mr. Cholan goes onto give the Congress Party's Sonia Gandhi a curious endorsement. "A fresh wind," he calls her, in a stated hope that she will follow Indira Gandhi's path vis-à-vis the Tamils.

Perhaps Mr. Cholan thinks the major powers base their strategic decisions on the personal opinions of their leaders and not on the machinery of state?

Indeed, it is irrelevant to the Eelam Tamils who governs India, as long as the Indian State itself is satisfied that the Tamils are – and will not become – a threat.

The Tamils are a significant geopolitical force in South Asia and will factor significantly in the plans of any major power with an interest in the region. Some powers may feel the Tamils should be neutralised, others may feel we are potential allies.

But no power, of any political persuasion, will base their decisions purely on the suffering of the Tamils (if this was the case, the Tamil question would have been resolved a long time ago).

Also, it should not be forgotten that while Western interests in South Asia may grow and decline, Indian interests will always remain.

And while the Western powers should be lobbied to take a favourable position on the Tamil question, India too should be made comfortable that the Tamils are not a potential enemy on the southern border.

As a final point, Mr. Cholan's comments lead me to believe he is at best simply naive or at worst an agent provocateur intent on souring the goodwill presently developing at all levels of Indian officialdom towards the Eelam Tamils.

***- Raja Cheran***

# A Reply to "Raja Cholan"

*Mr.T.Ratnasabapathy of Melbury Gardens, Wimbledon, London SW20 0DL writes:* Dear Raja Cholan, With reference to your point of view ***"A Foreign Policy for Tamil Eelam" (HOT SPRING, June/July 1999,*** 1 would like to make one or two comments.

Your denunciation that the R.S.S. is something of an Eighth Day Adventist is totally wrong. You are trying to say that R.S.S. is tring to practise one sect of Hinduism as opposed to another sect. This is an absurd and stupid argument which is against all the ideals and practices that the R.S.S. stands for and against all tenets of Hinduism . Hinduism is universal in concept and not divisive.

To say that Ravana was a Tamil is absolute nonsense. Ravana is a figure in mythology which is supposed to have been written 3000 years ago. There is absolutely no reference to Ravana as a Tamil in Valmiki Ramayana. More than 3000 years ago hardly any civilized society existed in Sri Lanka and to say that Ravana was a mighty king of Sri Lanka and that Rama travelled all the way from Ayodhya at that time is height of absurdity.

These stories were created by the Dravidian movement a few decades ago to bolster up their political future. They ridiculed and distorted the Hindu religion and today after three decades of their rule in Tamil Nadu, Tamil is almost on the verge of extinction. Thank you.

# TEMPLE PLAY IRKS ARMY MEN

**The trustee board members of a Tamil temple and the owner of a village sound service were grilled by the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) in Batticaloaon August over a play critical of the Sri Lankan government that was staged on Sunday night at the shrine's annual festival.**

Residents of Murukkanthivu, a hamlet across the lagoon about 3 kilometres south west of Valaichenai, said that the activities of the SLA were mocked and the Sri Lankan President was portrayed as a male in some scenes of the play staged by the village youth on the final day of the annual festival of the local Murugan temple.

Soldiers at the Kinnaiyadi SLA camp who know Tamil had listened to the play from their positions by the lagoon during the night. The Kinnaiyadi camp is situated by the shore, less than a kilometre across the lagoon from Murukkanthivu.

**They had immediately reported the play to their commanding officer who had summoned members of the Murukkanthivu temple's trustee board and the widow who had rented out the sound system for the play first thing on Monday morning.**

These persons were interrogated by the commanding officer of the Kinnaiyadi camp about the drama.

Details of the playwright, the actors etc., were obtained from them by the SLA officer. Murukkanthivu is on the edge of the hinterland west of the lagoon, which is dominated by the Liberation Tigers.

**The officer had hence questioned them about the possible involvement of the Tigers in production of the play. The sound system was confiscated by the SLA.**

**The army took away the national identity cards of the temple trustee board members and the widow on condition that they (I.Ds) would be returned to them only after all the persons connected with the Murukkanthivu drama are brought by them to the Kinnaiyadi camp.**

**Tamils cannot move about in the army-controlled parts of the north and east of Sri Lanka without their national identity cards.**

**No one involved in the drama has so far reported to the SLA at Kinnaiyadi.**

**"We won't be able to work or tend to our fields but will have to precariously idle at home in this situation" lamented a member of the Murukkanthivu temple trustee board member.**

People in the army controlled areas immediately south of Valaichenai who have fields and cattle in the hinterland have to cross the lagoon from the army's point at Kinnaiyady. The army checks them before they take the canoe (thoni) to Murukkanthivu and from there to trek to their respective destinations in the western hinterland.

***- TAMILNET***


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# CALL FOR AN ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST SRI LANKA

## INTERNATIONAL ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST SRI LANKA IMPERATIVE TO ARREST ITS GENOCIDE OF ETHNIC TAMILS, says Christopher S.Sebaratnam in an open letter to British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Dear Sir,

I am amazed to learn from the report in a Sri Lankan newspaper that Sri Lanka took delivery of a British hovercraft and that Standard Individual Export Licenses (SIELs) has been issued by your government for permanent export of certain categories of arms and equipment consequent to the lifting of restrictions imposed on arms sale to Sri Lanka.

In this connexion reference is kindly requested to the dialogic exchange of correspondence I had in the years 1991 –1992 with Ms. Clare Cookson and later Ms Elaine, secretaries of the foreign and commonwealth office acting on behalf of your predecessor Mr.John Major in the context of our submission of 25.07.1991 that international arms embargo against the Sri Lankan government imperative to arrest its genocidal onslaught on the Sri lankan Tamil race.

**As a result of the above said dialogue your predecessor had finally expressed acquiescence or near acquiescence of my position that:**

*The UN did have a mandate to intervene in the internal affairs as well of its members in terms of article 56 of the UN Charter, vis-à-vis, all members pledge themselves to take joint and separate action - - - - - - for the achievement of the purpose set forth in article 55 which stated*

" the UN shall promote - - - - - - - - universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedom " and that universal respect could not but encompass also the internal affairs of a state , for instance, the U.N. enforcement of economic sanctions against South Africa for it's legislative policy of apartheid which was one of domestic jurisdiction ;

The supply of arms to Sri Lanka government by many nations of the U.N. of which Ms.Clare Cookson mentioned, constituted on their parts a breach of the U.N. General Assembly resolution No. 1514 which prohibited armed action or repressive measures of all kinds directed against dependent peoples in their exercise of the right to complete independence ;

CHRISTOPHER SEBARATNAM


தமிழீழ ஆவணக்காப்பகம்
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*Tony Blair*

Britain's concern to 'recognise that Sri Lanka government had a very serious threat from LTTE ' which was expressed by her was unwarranted , rather it should be its obligation much above that of any other nation to positively intervene and arrest the horrendous plight of the minority Tamils of Sri Lanka which is a consequence of the omission of the British crown, in the instance of the grant of Independence in 1948, to restore the statusque of the Independent Tamil state that was disestablished and brought under a unitary government for administrative convenience in 1833 on the recommendation of the Colebrooke Commission.

You – the British had a special obligation to protest had been asserted by seven leading British citizens headed by Sir John Foster, QC who wrote to the Times Of London 22 years year ago on September 20, 1977 thus:

***" Sir, A tragedy is taking place in Sri Lanka. - - - -***

***At a time when the west awake to the evils of racialism, the racial persecution of the Tamils and denial of their human rights should not pass without protest. The British have a special obligation to protest as these cultivated people were put at the mercy of their neighbours less than thirty years ago by British government. They need our attention and support."***

***Yours faithfully,***
***John Foster***
***David Astor***
***Robert Birley***
***Louis Blom Cooper***
***James Fawcett***
***Dingle Foot***
***Michael Scott ;***

The armed struggle of the Tamil National Liberation Tigers ( LTTE – belligerents ) to restore the Tamil state of Eelam ( North – East Sri Lanka ) was consistent with the International law , viz, the UN General assembly resolution 2105 (XX) of 20 December 1965 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ;

the Tamil sate Eelam that was disestablished under the British rule comprised the Northern and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka prior to the British rule was evident from , inter alia, the report made in 1799 to the Colonial office by

Sir Hugh Cleghorn which read thus :

***"Two different nations from very ancient period have divided the island. First the Sinhalese in its Southern and Western parts from the river Walawe to that of Chilaw and secondly the Malabars in the Northern and Eastern districts."***

( Note: Malabars referred to Tamils ) ; and the Tamils had been compelled to resort to armed action from 1983 because they had been at the receiving end of gross and consistent violations of human rights and rank discrimination since the independence in 1948 and because peaceful negotiations for over 35 years had been of no avail.

**Ms.Clare Cookson had said in her last para of her reply dated 21 Jan 1992 that your predecessor's government would be 'monitoring the Sri Lanka government's efforts to carry out their undertaking to implement the recommendations made by Amnesty International in its September 1991 report on Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka and would be keeping your policies towards Sri Lanka under review.'**

**Seven years have passed since, and what is the outcome of your government's pledge in which a rational approach was underwritten? Here it is:**

**The Sri Lanka goverment's violation of human rights has multiplied tenfold in number and ferocity since:**

Thousands of Tamil civilians have been driven out of about 25 villages in the Northern and Eastern provinces by the government armed forces by aerial bombardment, artillery shelling, destruction or forceful occupation of houses, churches, temples, public institutions and terrorisation, and some of these villages have been already colonized with Sinhala people and plans are underway to colonize the other villages with sinhala people to alter the demographic pattern of those places and interdict the North - Eastern territorial contiguity of the Tamil homeland. *(Source: Sunday leader April 11, 1999)*

Through the horrors of bombing, shelling and terrorization close to a million Tamils have been forced to live in conditions of scarcity and misery as internally displaced people in the vanni districts of Noth - East Sri Lanka. Another million are living in the Jaffna district under conditions of military rule without liberty or security, by what is in effect an army occupation. *(Jehan Perera - Independent Times 8 Nov-Dec 1998)*

Over half a million have been forced to live in foreign countries seperated from their loved ones and places in Sri Lanka. *( Jehan Perera - Independent Times 8 Nov-Dec 1998 )*

**I wonder whether you deem U.K.'s economic survival is dependent on the genocide and ethnic cleansing of the three million minority Tamils of Sri Lanka !**

Since 1983 over 60,000 Tamils have been killed. 22742 have disappeared under army detention. Torture and ill-treatment including rape continue to be widespread.

*(Professor Dr John P. Neelson, Eberhard Karls University of Tubingen Germany)*

Highest number of disappearances reported since 1992.

*( Amnesty International 11 April 19997)*

Close upon 1000 Tamils tortured, killed and buried in about 18 mass graves by the army in Jaffna and Batticaloa *(US state department Country report on Sri Lanka for 1998, Sunday Times, 25 April 1999. Sunday Leader, 20 June 1999 )*

Blanket censorship on independent military news clamped down in June 1998. In the words of Mr.Paul Watson of the Asean Bureau of the " Toronto Star " " There is no end to what Sri Lanka's military will do to stop the outside world from knowing what's really going on here. It is a lesson in what happens to a fragile democracy when war breaks out - the generals feel there power and civil rights are the first to die. Lying to journalists is just par for the course."

34 school children massacred by aerial bombardment flying low over the school Medicine Sans Frontiers *(Quote by Tamil Monitor, 10 March 1996 )*

Roman catholic Church Navaly bombed killing 120 people – ICRC *(Quote by Tamil Monitor , 10 March 1996 )*

" Missing - Lanka world's No.2 while Iraq tops the list " – UN Commission on Human rights *(Quote by the Sunday Times, 28 March 1999)*

Sri Lanka government employs embargo on food and medicine as weapon of war against the Tamils. Sri Lankan president has prohibited most NGOs access to the Northern territories of Sri Lanka. *(Talk at the Royal Institute of International Affairs London – Mr.Rudrakumaran – Quote by Hot Spring, November 1998)*

**In sum, the Sri Lanka government is the 1st degree principal in the perpetration of the genocide and ethnic cleansing despite its incapacity to manufacture the military equipment that it employs in its barbaric pursuit. Contrary to the charismatic pledge made by your government in 1992 and the international Law, your government, let alone a few vulgar nations, has since unwittingly sustained in part the gross violations of human rights by way of military training and licensing the sale of military equipment to the Sri Lanka government. Strangely, this unholy approach had been initiated in the wake of the expulsion of the U.K.High Commissioner Mr. David Glastone for his expression of the British Government's concern over the Sri Lanka government's violation of Human rights ! I wonder whether you deem U.K.'s economic survival is dependent on the genocide and ethnic cleansing of the three million minority Tamils of Sri Lanka !**

It is very much appreciated that playing a high profile role in NATO's military strike on Yugoslavia you have fixed the ethnic cleansing of the ethnic Albanians of Kosovo. Hon. Prime Minister , the genocide and ethnic cleansing of the Tamils of North-East Sri Lanka over the past fifteen years under cover of tight censorship are

more than what obtained in Kosovo, and surprisingly you do not seem to be concerned in the gross violations of human rights by the Sri Lanka government.

From time immemorial Great Britain is reputed for its high sense and order of justice , equity and fairplay. This pre-eminence is reflected in what the seven leading British citizens had written to the Times of London 22 years ago vide para 4 page 2. Hon. Prime Minister, it is obligatory on the part of your government to perpetuate the pre-eminence your forefathers have built up for Great Britain.

***In all the said circumtances, it behoves your government to :***

1 Revoke immediately the Standard Individual Export Licenses (SIELs) for the export of arms and equipment to Sri Lanka and any program of military training to Sri Lanka.

2. Prevail upon the government of Sri Lanka to :

(i) withdraw its security forces from the occupied Tamil homeland ( North-east Sri Lanka)

(ii) lift the embargo on essential food, medicine and fuel against the Tamil Homeland and

(iii) seek a political solution under the auspices of a neutral third party preferably the UN towards the restoration of the State of Tamil Eelam (North-East Sri Lanka)

3. Should the Sri Lanka government be not amenable to 2 above, move the UN Security Council to have International Arms Embargo, which is only partial interruption of economic relations sans any destruction of human life or property, enforced against Sri Lanka under the provisions of article 41 of the UN charter to arrest the genocide and ethnic cleansing of the Tamil people.

An early reply will be very much appreciated.

Your sincerely,

**Christopher S. Sebaratnam**

***Past President***

***(Catholic Association of Sydney Tamils.)***

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*Appreciation*

# A.C.S. Hameed - An Exceptional Politician

The sudden passing away of A.C.Shahul Hameed on the night of 3rd September has deprived Sri Lanka of an exceptional politician who could have been a catalyst for good and a useful bridge builder between communities. In a country riven by distrust between conflicting forces, the late Mr.Hameed was one who had the flair for earning the trust of everyone - a faculty that was to prove invaluable to him during his long stint as a Foreign Minister, and more particularly during times when he was a negotiator for peace.


தமிழீழ ஆவணக்காப்பகம்
Tamileelam Archive
*Mr. Hameed presiding over the talks with the LTTE*

Mr.Hameed had an unbroken innings in parliament for nearly 40 years and has held high offices, but it was not the trappings of office that earned him respect and goodwill; it was the man himself For one who was diminutive in physical stature, his standing among diplomatic circles was always high, even after he quit office. He was, as the French expression would have it an *eminence grise* - a person who exercises influence without office.

Three Presidents have come and gone during the 16-year Eelam War, with a fourth one completing her five years in office, with no end to the war in sight. The only occasion when talks between the government and the LTTE were characterised not only by a commonality of interest but also by honesty of purpose was when the late President Premadasa held office. It was no coincidence that the man who led the talks on behalf of the government then was Mr.Hameed. The difference between Jayawardene the present incumbent and President Premadasa in their attitudes towards the LTTE leader was that while the former two feared and hated Prabhakaran, Premadasa had a healthy respect for his enemy. If the talks eventually failed after one year, it was not because the Tigers broke the talks as has been misinterpreted, but because the dialogue had run out of steam, and there was nothing more to look forward to.

**In the course of an informal chat with him on one of his recent visits to London, Mr.Hameed was frank enough to admit that it was unwise on the part of the Premadasa government to have initiated talks with the EPRLF even while continuing the dialogue with the LTTE. That, he said, was in the eyes of the Tigers a betrayal of the trust they had placed in the President. When I pressed him as to why he could not intercede and prevent such a course of action, Mr.Hameed replied rather quizzically: Don't forget Ranjan (meaning Wijeratne) had also the ears of the President.**

While ignorance of the other person's language could be a hindrance to easy communication, fluency in that language could be a major asset. Hameed in fact spoke properly enunciated Tamil and this no doubt would also have helped him in breaking the ice with the younger members of the LTTE. Talking of language, I related to Mr.Hameed what a Tamil friend who did Classics at the University told me about him. In those happy days he and Mr. Hameed had a mutual arrangement - he taught him Latin while Mr.Hameed was to coach him in his Sinhalese. My friend recalled that all the Sinhala that he learnt from him was Sinhala love poetry and nothing else! After the lapse of nearly fifty years, my friend still remembered some snatches of those poems ... *"My pretty love, even a hundred Kalidasas cannot describe the gleam in your beautiful doe eyes"*.. or some nonsense like that. When I related this to him, he was pleasantly surprised-He quickly took the Havana cigar out of his mouth, laughed through his tobacco-stained teeth and said: Let's have lunch together one of these days and talk about those things. Alas, that lunch appointment never materialised, and he left us all before that.

A man who loved the good life, and at the age of 72, he had not only led a well-lived life, but a life that was given to peace and camaraderie. Hot Spring's sincere condolences go to his wife and children.

*- S.S.*

# Tamil-Canadians reluctant to re-live journey

**ANDREA BAILLIE**
***[Sun Aug 29, 1999]***

**Raj Rasalingam, head of the Pearson Shoyama Institute, an Ottawa think-tank on social and public policy, says the newcomers from China may face a similar fate.**

Media images of Chinese refugees in handcuffs and prison-style coveralls are evoking painful memories for Tamils, whose own arrival in Canada a decade ago also sparked a debate about federal refugee policies. It was 13 years ago this month that 155 refugees appeared off the choppy waters of Newfoundland's south coast. Jammed into overloaded lifeboats, the bedraggled group were members of Sri Lanka's Tamil minority fleeing persecution by the majority Sinhalese.

**"It was a bad situation," says Karunakaran Jeyatharan, who made the desperate journey with his wife and infant son in search of a better life. "We were three or four days at sea . . . I don't think about it. If someone wants to know about it, I don't tell them."**

Like the Chinese refugees, many of the Tamil men, women and children had paid huge sums of money for a cramped and uncomfortable passage to Canada. They arrived only to find themselves at the centre of an emotional debate about their status in this country.

Some Canadians opened their hearts to the Tamils, but they also bore the brunt of nationwide criticism from those who said Canada's refugee policies were too permissive.

The first "boat people" to arrive in Canada, the Tamils set off dire predictions that refugees would start to target the country, as word spread that merely by reaching its shores they would gain the right to stay.

That didn't happen. But, nevertheless, the debate over what should be done with the Tamils forced them to endure an uncomfortable stigma.

**"When the media portrays refugees in handcuffs they're feeding the fear that those people are not desirable for this country," he said.**

For the Tamils, the struggle to belong survives.

So much so, that few trust the media enough even to share memories of their 1986 journey.

**"They feel the whole saga (of the Chinese refugees) is played out as negative," said Nehru Gunaratnam, a Tamil community spokesman.**

**"There is an element of anger in these stories, displaying these people as** aliens. (The Tamil refugees) have established their lives. They don't want to go back."

Many of the refugees have made their homes in Toronto and Montreal, receiving guidance from the growing Tamil communities in those cities.

Despite the tumult of their arrival, less than a year later, the 155 refugees had found jobs paying an annual wage higher than the Canadian average, an Immigration official said.

*Continued next page*

## FLASH BACK

## August 1986

This month 13 years ago it happened. one hundred and fifty five- Tamil refugees in Germany crammed into two lifeboats were rescued by three Canadian fishing boats off Newfoundaland in Canada. The group, including a few women and children had sailed at dawn on July 28 from Brake near Bremen in Germany aboard a German-owned and Honduras- registered coaster named "Aurigae". The captain of the freighter Herr Wolfgang Bindel was accused of casting them adrift near the Canadian coast after charging the Tamils DM 700,000 (£230,000).

It was a precarious voyage, and according to nautical experts, had they been caught in the Gulf Stream, they might been cast adrift some 250 miles south of where they were found. The incident was widely reported in the Press on both sides of the Atlantic. "All the people were scared", said **Kandasamy Lingaratnam,** a 31-year old deserter from Sri Lanka's Navy, about the lifeboat experience, as reported in the NEW YORK TIMES of August 13, 1986. "We thought we were dying", **Nalliah Wijayanathan** 46, an accountant said.

The following report, datelined Bonn, appeared in THE TIMES, London, of August 22, 1986:

The 154 refugees who fled to Canada on a West German freighter did so because they feared that the Bonn government would send them back to Sri Lanka, the Help and Information Organisation of Tamils in West Germany said yesterday .....

**"Mr.Tharmalingam Nadesa lingam,** the Help and Information Organisation chairman , a former Sri Lankan journalist who has been in exile in West Germany since 1977, said of the boat people "They panicked".

There had been such an outcry in the West German newspapers and on television about the number of asylum seekers from the Third World whom the East Germans were enabling to reach West Berlin in recent months, that they feared the West German government would clamp down on asylum seekers and refugees in general.

"They feared that they would be sent back to Sri Lanka and that could have meant death for them .....

## CANADA Scene

# Canada may increase immigration quota

The Canadian government is proposing to increase the annual immigration quota to 500,000 from the current level of 225,000, with a government minister admitting that immigrants made an it enormous contribution" to the nation's economic growth.

According to a report in the **TORONTO STAR,** the plan to increase the immigration quota is the result of shortage of labour in many parts of the country, including Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan provinces.

In the past two years, the immigration department reportedly let in 50,000 immigrants less than the 225,000 ceiling. Elinor Kaplan, the new citizenship minister, is seen to have greater sensitivity towards immigrants than her predecessor Lucienne Robillard.

"We know that immigrants who come to Canada make an enormous contribution to our economic growth", Ms Kaplan was quoted as saying, "We've had tremendous success in our immigrant success for themselves but for all of Canada", she said.

There is also a cause for alarm. The number of skilled workers leaving Canada for the US has increased dramaticall; from 17,000 in 1986 to 98,000 in 1997. Between 1995 and 1997, 69 percent of computer graduates in the country went to the United States and 52 percent of all engineering graduates went south of the border because of higher pay and other benefits.

## Tamil-Canadians . . .

Tamil community leaders say the success was due, in part, to the strong education system in Sri Lanka.

But even armed with new jobs, some say the feeling of being an outsider can be difficult to overcome.

More than a decade after thousands of Tamils flooded to Canada, newspaper reports on youth violence often refer specifically to "Tamil gangs." **Achievements, meanwhile, by the likes of Michael Ondaatje and Shyam Selvadurai, two high-profile Canadian writers with Tamil ancestry, are often reported without any reference to ethnic origin.**

**"At what point are you a Tamil youth and at what point are you a Canadian youth?" asks Rasalingam. "When it's a success story, it's viewed as a Canadian success story that's good. When it's a negative story, it's a Tamil story."**

Harsh media scrutiny can be particularly hard to digest on top of the enormous challenges which are inherent in adapting to a new culture.

**Families can be split apart and subsequently de-stabilized. In a war-like situation, the father often stays behind and sends his wife and children to safety, says Rasalingam.**

**Re-unification can take years and depression can be a common result.**

**Jeyatharan, who has established himself as a the proprietor of a Montreal convenience store, simply wants to forget.**

**"This is a second life. We saw the fisherman (who rescued us). We thought. This is our new life."**

# Twin tragedy of a Scarborough Tamil

**BY IAN ROBERTSON,**
**Toronto Sun**

Grieving relatives of a Scarborough man who jumped in front of a subway train with his young son are bracing for their joint funeral tomorrow.

Three-year-old Sajanthan Balasingham, who loved being with his dad Jeyabalan, will be buried at the Duffin Meadows cemetery in Pickering.

Jeyabalan, 41, who came to Canada from Sri Lanka 11 years ago, will be cremated at the Highland Crematorium and his ashes will be spread over water, brother-in-law Prajash Balasundaram said.

Balasundaram, 30, said his sister Uma, the mother of Sajanthan and Jeyabalan's three-week-old daughter Abbira, is still in shock.

"She is still crying and too upset to talk," he said, as the sounds of wailing echoed from the family's small apartment in a Lawrence Ave. E. highrise.

"Everyone is taking this very hard," Det. Mark Mendelson said.

Mendelson dismissed reports the picture framer told his wife before he left home that he intended to commit suicide.

"We've met with most of the family and the extended family, and no one said a word about that."

Tamileelam Archive

Uma Balasundaram told police her husband said he was going to visit a friend's house.

Witnesses in the TTC subway station at Victoria Park and Danforth Rd. told police they saw Balasundaram grab his son and leap in front of the train about 6 p.m. on Sunday.

Balasundaram suffered from chronic depression for years but stopped taking anti-depressant medicine some time ago, police said.

Mental health experts say depression-related suicides are increasing among the almost 200,000 Tamils who settled in Canada over the past 15 years — 75% in the Toronto area.

"People have a nostalgic link to the mother country," said Sitha Sittampalam, president of the Tamil Eelam Society.

He said war, loss of homes, family deaths, difficulty adjusting to a less-restrictive Canadian society and financial troubles are at the root of many depressions.

# *In Colombo - a day to remember*

***(The characters appearing in this fictional account are drawn from imagination. Any similarity or resemblance to living humans may be considered coincidental and unfortunate)***



## By Tony Kanth

It was a hot and humid day when I landed in Colombo and to make it worse, Rajan began lecturing to me as if I was a public meeting.

"In Sri Lanka", he said, "people have no concepts about democracy And the sad thing is they don't even want to know, or willing to be educated either. When I was at the Jaffna University I talked to lots of students ... we talked about everything, the funny thing is they thought my student-centred approach was a mad thing ... any way, so in our discussions I asked them why they want to fight a stupid war and nobody knew the answer. At the end of my talk I asked them for any doubts and think of what they came up with ? Some questions in Maths which I didn't know either. I got pissed off and told them to go and find a book and come back with the answer... such bookworms, idiots !". Rajan banged his glass on the table and looked at me.

I gave him half a jet-lag eye and one ear and said I understand, although I did not know what he was getting at.

**"Man," he said, "wake up ! We have a good opportunity to get rid of these Veluson boys. We should try to instill the right Christian virtues and bring back the gentle way of living again".**

Before I could open my mouth to say something suitable, the phone rang. He put down the receiver and said, "Oh, it is Hoovan and he wants us to come over to his place. Shall we leave, he asked. "Sure", I said, feeling more unsure about myself.

In that steamy Colombo weather his air conditioned Mitsubishi with stained glass windows felt like cool Lake Zurich.

In the first corner out of Rajan's Cinnamon Gardens hide-out there was an army check point.

**On the way to his house that morning the soldiers stopped me and checked my papers and asked something in Sinhala. Since I did not speak that lingo they thought I was a Tamil and asked: "Ado palapango, you Themalu ?". I smiled and said that I'm British and my name and clothing must have confused them so they let me go.**

In that same checkpoint Rajan stopped the car and got out. The soldier in front gave him a very friendly smile and called for his senior.

Rajan introduced me to the officer and we shook hands. "There is no problem in this place and you are welcome anytime here", the officer said, but gave a puzzled look. Maybe he remembered my face.

"Where is that Parker you have", Rajan asked and took the pen from my shirt and gave it to the officer.

He gave us a big smile and said "Oh thank you Sir, say if you have any problems from my boys here just tell them you are a friend of Captain Fernando" and then left.

We got into the car and Rajan said: "See, there is no discrimination against Tamils in Colombo, they all know who we are and they treat us as brothers, but if you have been to Jaffna a couple of years ago Veluson's boys would have treated you like shit"

"I thought they were after you in big time", I said.

"Yea, they are pissed off about my work, they just don't like clever intellectuals like us", he said.

They even sent death squads ... what do you call them ... ahrr.. black tigers ... to finish me off but I was one step ahead, you must have felt my precautionary measures".

"Is this why I was asked to call three telephone numbers and waited five days in London to know how to see you", I asked.

He smiled very proudly and said "if these sarong boys have that sort of brains imagine a Cambridge PhD's brain capabilities" and giggled.

Half an hour later we arrived at Hoovan's place. The guy looked a bit pale and even more bold.

"Hey boy, you look healthy", he said and invited us inside.

I looked inside for his talkative children and he said the kids were gone to Liberty Plaza with their mother and aunt.

"So you decided to quit California then", I said.

I was sick of teaching the bloody Hispanics something they won't understand for another thousand years and decided to give my services to my countrymen", he said.

"So how are you adapting to your paradise", I asked.

"Paradise! my arse, everything is bloody expensive, cars, traffic jams, shopping malls, everything is everywhere man", he sounded irritated.

"So now can start writing your thoughts like Rajan", I asked. I had always liked Rajan's way of looking at politics and most of my understanding of this war came from the classics he and DBS wrote in the Damil Liemes.

"How many years did you spend in California", I asked.

"Twenty long years man and at the end I was sick of it , my wife and kids think I'm mad to come back to this hell-hole, but this is my dream you know; get your degrees, get the green card, save enough dollars, expand your horizons, age gracefully, and come back and lead your countrymen into the next millenium. But then you come here and see the damn place and it's worse than Harlem."

"So when was the last time you visited here ?", I asked.

"Oh, we haven't set foot in this place for the past 20 years". I was puzzled.

"Then how come you have such strong views about everything that has been happening here for the past 20 years ? ", I asked.

At this point Rajan and Hoovan looked at me with pity and then Hoovan said: "you don't have to be in one place physically to write about what is happening there. In these modern times you have things like telephones, television, and the internet and that is how Rajan writes his stuff too, isn't it mister human rights ?"you go to Sea Street or Island Lodge and find some new arrival to Colombo from Jaffna and offer them help to get a police certificate and then ask what happened in their village the week or month before and use that information and cook up a story and post it on the net and you have a story" and both of them laughed heartily.

**I looked Rajan and he was a bit embarassed and said "no, no, of course we have extensive contacts in Jaffna and we know exactly what goes on there, and as you know I'am .... or rather, I was on the teaching staff of the Jaffna University.**

"So when did you leave Jaffna", I asked

"Early 1989 1 think, when we were writing the book I was tipped off by people inside that we were going to be killed so I decided to leave and begged Daya , Rajani and Sree but they stayed. Since then I am underground in Colombo. But I did visit Jaffna last week and I did tell you how the Army is taking care of the problem".

So how come the Tigers allowed Daya to live and work in Jaffna after all he co-authored your reports", I asked.

"Oh he is a weather cock no, the funny thing is that he first refused to go back to Jaffna because the army had taken control there and I think he was gonna to Cambodia or Burma for his research. As for this so-called professorship of psychiatry in Jaffna , how can you be professor of psychiatry when he is the only one pschiatrist in that damned place", replied Rajan

**"What do you think of Larry, Rajan,". interrupted Hoovan**

**"He is a very nice fellow, you can see that he is from high caste Kandyan stock, very handsome no ! Vadamarachchi folks love his gentle rule, if you have people like him to rule the Jaffna Tamils you can kick out Veluson and his fanclub within a year, out of this world that is ", he said proudly.**

"Because you allow these saronged boys to dictate to you you end up in this mess. You guys have to come back, from California or wherever you are, and take the responsibilities. You guys are the leaders, not these bloody Velusons". That is what what Larry told me ", concluded Rajan.

"That man is full of wisdom, Kandyan stock, you said, no ?" said Hoovan, and looked at me and said, "what do YOU think of it all?".

Both of them being my kinsmen, I did not want to say rude things. I said it would take some to understand exactly what was going on, on, in a sort of non-commital way.

They both laughed and said, "my boy, it will take more than your lifetime to understand that. But always remember who you are. Our great, great grand father brought the white man and his horse to our village, and from then on brought civilisation and education and democracy to Tamils. We translated the Bible, we taught them manners, English and Maths, we treated their illnesses, and we are the ones who have the moral authority to I lead our people, not some boys in sarongs.".

I said I was really proud of our family history.

The Hoovan turned to Rajan and said, "you should take him to Chandi's cocktail party, when is the next one".

"Oh, I should ask Radhi C", said Rajan

"What do you mean? you guys are invited to President's cocktails

I'm very impressed", I said. They both smiled proudly.

"She even asked me to take a job in her cabinet but I refused, and she gave the job to Kadi because that blue fellow wanted it given to him ", said Rajan.

"Why the hell you refused man ". I was surprised to hear that.

**"You see, because you eat Tamil meat, you don't have to wear the bones as a necklace, do you ? and also once you collaborate openly the Western funding bodies wont take you seriously", Rajan chuckled.**

Hoovan said: "But dont you see Rajan, if Chandi loses the next election, as long as you are an ex-Foreign Minister you can still get a shit job as a special rapporteur about sheep shagging or on Violence against Men or something. you have lost that bloody chance you fellow, because of your pride".

"No, no, man, my mind is bent on nobler things. I want our golden times back. I want to be the darling, the icon of the Jaffna Tamils. Why do you think I've spent the best part of my life doing a useless PhD?".

"Hold on, hold on, I've lost you there", I said.

After a short pause and a mouthful of something which looked suspiciously like water, Rajan carried on. "You see", he said. "If you are a doctor you become a member of Social Class! in the UK, but if in Jaffna you become an aristocrat as well as upper class. And you are a saviour of people. I'm sure this is what all the educated people whether they live in Surrey or

Scarborough want to so. If you are an educated person how can you ever support these buggers in sarongs and carrying guns who can't even speak a word of English. Do you know what Father Chelva's son once told me in Madras ? "These saronged boys may fight and win, but to govern the fellows have to come to me and you.

**"So how come all these educated Tamils in London support Veluson and his boys", I asked.**

"Oh they are those bloody opportunists who want to make themselves prominent by supporting the Tigers so their pictures will be printed in the Tamil papers as Tamil leaders. They are fellows without a history you know. They just come out of their little huts in some Vadamarachchi palmyrah bush and get a degree in medicine and engineering and land in London pretend to be nationalists and support Veluson and his boys.", fumed Hoovan.

As taking our mind off from our discussion, the phone started to ring. Hoovan got up and answered. Within seconds his voice went high pitched and he started to scream over the phone.

"I'm coming, I'm coming", he kept shouting in the phone, banged the instrument on the hook, and turned to us.

**"They've arrested my sister at the Liberty Plaza. Just because she cannot speak Sinhala and looks Tamil, they think she is one of Veluson's woman suicide bombers. Uneducated bumpkins these army rascals. I dont know why we came back to this blessed country. I'm gonna call the American Embassy and began dialling.**

Rajan looked abashed but thought I needed some explanation.

"You do have some bad apples in the forces like anywhere else. It could be some soldiers who want some money I guess. Excuse me, I'm gonna get Capt Fernando and reached out for his mobile phone.

**A few minutes later we all got up and drove to Kolpity police station. Hoovan's California money then began to speak.**

❖ ❖ ❖

# WHILE CHANDRIKA WAGES WAR TAMIL CHILDREN SIT EXAMS!

**NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN**

*COLOMBO, AUG 23:* **Imagine having to move ``house'' 18 times in the last few years because of a war, sleeping under trees or crowded into shelters, a situation in which food and money are scarce and the threat of mortars, artillery and bombs ripping apart your already fragile existence very real.**

And then imagine, in the middle of this chaos and trauma, bright faced boys and girls dressed in, maybe old, but always clean uniforms, setting out every morning to school unerringly.

It may sound surreal, but in north-eastern Sri Lanka, where a war has been raging for years and years, school is the only certainty, the pole star around which an entire community of Tamils seeks to order its fractured existence.

This month, over 2,000 children -- many of them refugees from other parts of the north-east -- living in the Vanni mainland, Sri Lanka's main war theatre, have tucked thoughts of war into a corner of their minds to concentrate on the all important A level (A/L) exams. Last month, even while the LTTE and the army stood deadlocked over a passage for food convoys, the only concession made by both sides was for a safe passage for civilians seeking medical help to leave LTTE territory and for the A/L examination papers to be delivered to the schools there.

**``It's absolutely amazing. In no other part of the world does this happen, that there is a national exam going on in an area so completely affected by conflict,'' said Bo Schak, senior protection officer of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).** A few months ago, a military offensive in Oddusudan near Mullaithivu forced people to flee the area. About 12,000 people took refuge in schools as a result of which it seemed that hundreds of children might not be able to take the O level (O/L)exams that were about to begin then. When the refugees realised this, they moved out to other buildings so that the examination would not be disrupted. Education continues in the north-east despite the fact that there is a huge backlog in filling vacancies for teachers -- few are willing to be posted to the area and in Killinochchi for instance, where there are 40,000 students, there is one teacher to every 60 children. Aid agencies have helped repair many school buildings damaged in the war, but according to aid workers, there are schools that carry on without buildings, under trees. Due to the constant movement of families displaced by the fighting, areas equipped to cater to a few hundred students now have to cope with few thousands. Children have to share text books because these are in short supply as are notebooks and even pencils. There is, of course, no electricity in these areas and all studying has to be done by daylight.

But that does not deter students. Schooling has always had a high priority for the Tamils of Sri Lanka, more so now than ever before. Parents drill it into their children that school is their only window of opportunity, their passport to the world outside, away from war and misery. ``It also gives them an alternative to joining the LTTE. There is nothing worse than a situation where young people become part of the fighting force because they have nothing else to do,'' said Schak. **Education department statistics show that children in the north-east fare no worse than those in other parts of the island, and sometimes much better.** The national pass percentage in the O/L examination for 1996 was a low 26 per cent, with the districts of Vavuniya (32 per cent) and Mannar (30 per cent) in second and third position respectively after the capital, which registered the highest pass rate of 36 per cent. Last year, Vavuniya climbed to the top. However, the sad fact is that fewer children take these examinations now than used to in these areas. According to the UNDP Human Development Report on Sri Lanka for 1998, education in the island's embattled north-east has weathered all odds, but the war has taken its toll.

***(INDIAN EXPRESS)***

# TEEDOR HOSTS AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Tamil Eelam Economic Development Organisation - UK (TEEDOR) hosted an international conference at Middlesex University, London, on 22 August 1999. The theme of the Conference was **TOWARDS THE NEEDS OF TAMIL EELAM NOW AND BEYOND**. It was a fullday conference at which several participants from other countries read papers and participated at the discussions.

Subjects taken up for discussion were:- Transportation in Eelam - 2000 and beyond; "Bridge and Shipping Canal"; Modern Application of Modern Construction Methods to Development in Tamil Eelam; Development of Service Sectors and some General Issues; "A River for Jaffna"; Alternative Power Generation ; Solar Power used in Domestic and Health Improvement; Alternative Sources of Energy; Health of the Tamil Nation - surviving an economic embargo; Impact of War on Tamil People, Resettlement and Development; The Thondamanaru Water Sceheme; and "Distinguishing the work of TRO and TEEDOR".

TEEDOR is the institution responsible for the building up the Infrastructure and self-supporting economy of Tamil Eelam by utilising the natural resources there with the help of knowledge, skills and experiences of Eelam Tamils all over the world.

In Tamil Eelam, TEEDOR has undertaken various projects such as animal husbandry, milk processing, health and nutrition, food preservation, fresh water fish farming, restoration of tanks, and irrigation channels, leather processing, solar cookers and twain burner cookers. As part of rehabilitation of uprooted people, it has been instrumental in providing loans to facilitate farming, fishing and handicraft. An example of long term projects undertaken by TEEDOR is the reforestation programme to plant hundreds of thousands of trees to prevent an ecological disaster.






தமிழீழ மக்கள் அமைப்பின்
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Because of the restraints imposed by the ongoing war in Tamil Eelam, more participation from the expatriate Tamils are needed at this moment for the survival of the Tamil nation. The participation of Tamils possessing expertise in various fields has to be brought together for this purpose.

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# A Tamil is Singapore's President

Portraits of an ethnic Tamil man and his Bengali wife went up across across government offices in Singapore as Mr.S.R.Nathan took charge as the island nation's sixth elected President.

**Mr.Sellappan Rama Nathan, - a one-time office boy, union leader, retired bureaucrat, intelligence chief, chairman of the local newspaper monopoly and ambassador to Malaysia and the United States - was plucked from relative obscurity to be projected as mainly-Chinese Singapore's titular leader.** At 75, he is the oldest entrant to the office. His predecessor - former Deputy Prime Minister Ong Teng Cheong - did not stand for a second term.

## Lee Kuan Yew on why Nathan was chosen

The Government would have gone all out to campaign for Mr.S.R.Nathan if he had been challenged by a populist Chinese candidate, as a defeat would be a blow to multi-racialism and a sad day for Singapore.

The convention of rotating the presidency among the races was important to remind Singaporeans that their country was multi- racial, said Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew.

In mid-August, Mr.Nathan who underwent a coronary artery bypass in 1991, was elected unopposed to the job after a commission scrutinising potential candidates threw out the competing applications of two other men, both ethnic Chinese.

Mr.Nathan is expected to preside over a critical leadership transition, now tipped for 2002, when the prime ministership could be handed to Mr.Lee Hsien Loong, the son of founding patriarch Lee Kuan Yew. The younger Lee is now one of two deputy prime ministers to Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong.



*Mr. Nathan with his wife Urmila*

Reports of Mr.Nathan's humble beginnings - poverty apparently drove his father to commit suicide and he himself fled his home as a boy - has sent a softer image to his personality in recent weeks.

**In a lengthy interview to the *STRAITS TIMES* daily , the Singapore born Nathan revealed several little known aspects of his life, including that his mother gave birth to him after a pilgrimage visit to Rameswaram and that he wore an ear ring till he was 17 to ward off evil spirits after losing three brothers early.**

During World War II, Mr.Nathan was hired as a translator and interpreter by the Japanese police. That was also when he met his future wife Urmila, a woman of Bengali descent whom he courted for for 16 years before her family relented to the marriage.

***(India Abroad News Service).***


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# KOKUVIL ALUMNI MEET DISTINGUISHED OLD STUDENT

**Kokuvil Hindu College Old Students' Association in U.K. arranged a get-together on Sunday 15 August 1999, to meet one of the distinguished old students of the school Dr.Muttaiya Sundaralingam.**



Dr. Sundaralingam is an Eminent Scholar (a title given to a handful of scientists) in Ohio State, USA and also the Professor of Chemistry & Biochemistry at Ohio State University. **He is a world-renowned biochemist who took up his post in Ohio State University in 1989.** Dr.Sundara lingam came to Ohio State University from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where he was holding the coveted "Chair of Steenbok" Professor of Biomolecular Structures and Chair of the Doctoral Programme in Biophysics for more than 15 years.

He is internationally known for his work in determining the structure of large biological molecules(macro-molecules) such as protein and nucleic acids (DNA and RNA) and in determining their underlying structural principles. His research has implications in many areas including improved design of proteins, hormones, anti-viral agents and anti-cancer drugs.

Dr.Sundaralingam's one of the five biophysicists whose published work is most frequently used by other scientists the world over. He has published more than 350 articles in Scientific Journals and has lectured throughout the world.

Dr.Sundaralingam was born in Malaysia, but his family , including his brothers and sisters, settled in Kokuvil in the late 1940s. Dr.Sundara lingam joined Kokuvil Hindu College in 1949 and in 1952 completed his Advanced level examination in one year, instead of two, and entered University of Ceylon, in Colombo. He earned his doctorate at the University of Pittsburgh, USA in 1961, nearly 40 years ago.

Several old students who were present at the convivial get-together joined in remembering the old times at the school and recalled with affection and pride the services of many teachers especially ex-Principals of the School, Mr. Handy Perinbanayagam and Mr. Kanthaswamy.

Mr.S.Kanagasundram, President of the K.H.C. Old Students Association chaired the proceedings.

# Jaffna University completes 25 years



The University of Jaffna completes 25 years of teaching this August. Founded as the Jaffna Campus of the University of Sri Lanka in August 1974 with the Faculties of Science and Humanities I it became a separate University in January 1979

The Ramanathan Academy of Fine Arts providing courses in Carnatic Music and Bharatha Natyam at Maruthanamadam, Chunnakam, wasattached to the University in 1975 and the Medical Faculty began functioning at Adiapatham Road, Tinnevely in August 1978.

The total intake of students for the current year stands at 864 and lectures begin in October.


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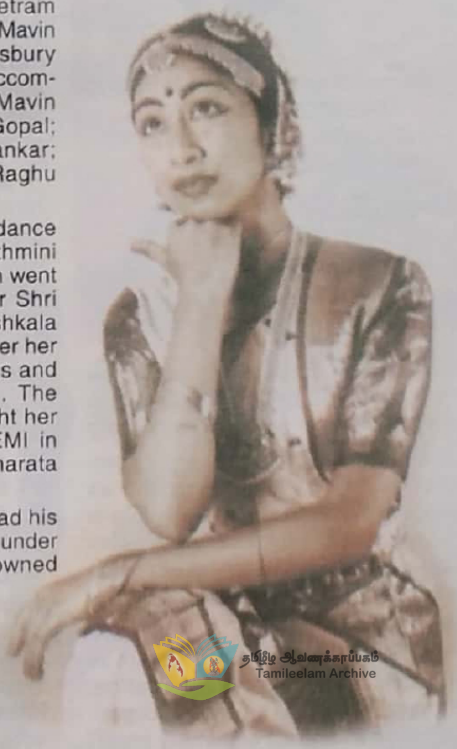
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# Bharata Natyam: The Guru & Sishya

The Bharata Natya arangetram of Saraswathy, disciple of Mavin Khoo, took place at the Bloomsbury Theatre, London, recently. The accompanists were Nattuvangam: Mavin Khoo; Vocal: Smt.Pushkala Gopal; Mridangam: Shri Bhavani Shankar; Violin: Shri Bangalore Balu Raghu Raman.

Saraswathy had her initial dance training under Smt. Pathmini Gunaseelan in London. She then went on to further her training under Shri Unni Krishnan and Smt. Pushkala Gopal. She then went on to further her academic studies at Guys' Kings and St. Thomas' Medical College . The desire to dance however brought her back to training to the ACADEMI in London. The teacher for Bharata Natyam was Mavin Khoo.

The guru Mavin Khoo who had his initial training in Malaysia, came under the direct tutelage of the renowned



*Saraswathy*

தமிழ் ஆவணக்காப்பகம்
Tamileelam Archive



*Mavin Khoo*

teacher Padma Shri Adayar K.Lakshman. Mavin Khoo can today lay claim to be an international star in the world of dance. He has enthralled audiences in Chennai, Mumbai, New Delhi and in the theatres of London, Tokyo and America, and was twice invited to inaugurate the prestigious December Festival of Music and Dance in India.

Saraswathy is the daughter of Mr and Mrs.Sabanathan of Clayhall, Ilford, UK.

## Married

### SWITZERLAND

### Satheeskumar - Kalaichchelvi

Satheeskumar, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ponnudurai of Keniyady, Tellipalai, Jaffna to Kalaichchelvi, daughter of Mr.Mrs. gunalingam of Lycklemastraat-7, 8501-LR-Joure, Nederland, at the Sri Manonmany Ampal Temple, Olten, Bleichestrasse-6, Trimbach, Switzerland on 4th September 1999.

* * *

## Married

### AUSTRALIA

### Pranavan - Vaithegi



Pranavakumar, son of Mr. and Mrs.S.Punniamoorthy of 6514, 154th Ave NE, Redmond, WA 98052, USA, to Vaithegi, daughter of Mr. and Mrs.A.Thanikasalam of 26, Ron Scott Circuit, Greenacre, NSW, Australia, on 6th September at the Town Hall, Alexandra Street, Hunters Hill, NSW 2110, Australia.

* * *

### CANADA

### Mignonne - Harold



Mignonne Nirmala, daughter of Anton and Stella Saverimuttu, of 6, Clementine Square, Scarborough, Ontario M1G 2V7, Canada, to Antony Harold, son of Edward and Violet Edward of 711, Kennedy Road, Apt, 308, Scarborough, Ontario M1K 2G3, Canada, on August 20, at St.Thomas More Parish , 1 Dormington Drive, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada.

# MATRIMONIAL



*Respondents are invited to write to*
*THE MEETING POINT,*
*PO Box 24360, London SW17 7FF,*
*United Kingdom.*
*Tel: 0181 767 1230,*
*Fax: 0181 672 6433*

*Please ensure that you quote the appropriate Ref.No. given at the end of the proposal in which you are interested.*

***Father seeks a Tamil speeking Jaffna Hindu professional,*** working in US or prepared to move there, for his daughter,28, vegetarian 5' 9" tall, Canadian citizen with degree in Electronics, currently working in the US as software engineer. *Ref: MPG220 Hot Spring*

***Jaffna Hindu Daughter,29,*** graduate, currently teaching in Madurai, South India, with brothers, sisters settled in other European countries, seeks suitable partner. Willing to move. Please write forwarding horoscope. *Ref: MPG219 Hot Spring*

***Jaffna Hindu daughter, 29,*** graduate, high school teacher in Canada, 5'6" tall, vegetarian, seeks professionally qualified person who would settle in Canada. Please forward horoscope and details. *Ref: MPG221 Hot Spring*

***Daughter, 25,*** Jaffna Hindu, graduate, in good position in Sydney, Australia, seeks a professional partner, either settled in Australia or willing to move there. Please forward details. Horoscope is not a criterion if both parties like each other. *Ref: MPG223 Hot Spring*

***Hindu daughter, 29,*** British born, graduate, in good employment in London, seeks suitable Hindu partner with long UK background and education. Please forward details in confidence. *Ref: MPG225 Hot Spring*

***Niece, 24,*** Hindu, originally from Jaffna, now settled in the United Kingdom and in secure employment in London seeks suitable groom. Horoscope is not essential if both like each other. Please forward details in confidence. *Ref: MPG226 Hot Spring*

***Son. 30,*** Hindu, British born, Masters degree holder, working as Academic Research Assistant in a London teaching hospital seeks suitable partner. Please send horoscope and other details. *Ref: MPB110 Hot Spring*

***Son, 27,*** Doctor, British born, of Hindu parents originally from Jaffna, currently working in a London hospital. Horoscopes are not of primary importance if persons,families etc suit well. Please forward details. *Ref: MPB111 Hot Spring.*

***Daughter, 27,*** Roman Catholic, of Jaffna origin, presently working as an accountant in London, parents now settled in Australia, seeks a professionally qualified Roman Catholic or Christian partner aged between 28 to 35. Horoscope or numerology immaterial. *Ref: MPG227 Hot Spring*

***Niece, 30,*** Christian, educated in Colombo schools throughout, father practicing as a doctor in Colombo, presently visiting London, seeks suitable Christian professional of suitable age in the UK. Horoscope is immaterial. *Ref: MPG228 Hot Spring*

***Electronics Engineer, 42,*** Jaffna Hindu, now Bitish, in a good management position, divorced, two children who live mainly with their mother, seeks suitable Hindu lady, from UK or elsewhere, about 35 years old single, divorced or widowed. Horoscope immaterial. *Ref: MPB112 Hot Spring*

***Brother, 33,*** Civil Engineer, PhD qualified in a senior position in UK, 6' tall, seeks professional/ graduate with UK background not less than 5ft 3in tall. Please forward brief particulars in confidence. *Ref: MPB113 Hot Spring*

***Daughter, 22,*** Attractive, with traditional cultural background, dance, dance, music, presently working in Colombo, willing to move, parents both doctors practicing in the UK, seek professional partner. Please forward horoscope and details in confidence. *Ref: MPG 229 Hot Spring*

***Sister, 29,*** Computer Systems Engineering graduate, working as a programmer in the UK, seeks suitable partner. Please forward details in confidence. *Ref: MPG 230 Hot Spring*

## The Meeting Point

Tel: 0181 767 1230 Fax: 0181 672 6433

*The Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora has in recent years spread to many different countries in the World - to the UK and other European Countries, to America, to Canada and Australia. As a result contacts between those who were previously friends and neighbours back in Sri Lanka have become almost non-existent. The hardships and pressures in trying to establish ourselves in the new country of residence have made matters even more difficult.*

*Many young men and women of marriageable age are therefore faced with difficulties in finding suitable partners in their own community.*

*The Meeting Point was inaugurated in London on 17th May 98, at a meeting attended by a large number of Tamil parents. The Meeting Point will operate as a voluntary organisation manned by a few respectable retired persons who are keen to serve the community by helping parents find suitable marriage partners for their sons/daughters. These volunteers understand the nature of this exercise and will ensure utmost care and discretion in divulging information of individuals.*

*The Meeting Point also organises events such as parties and forums where young people will have opportunities to meet and get to know each other in a leisurely atmosphere. Suggestions, help and contributions are most welcome.*

*Parents/guardians/friends, desiring to seek a partner for a girl/boy, are welcome to make an application to The Meeting Point. Applicants are also welcome to visit the office of The Meeting Point by prior appointment.*

கலைக்காய் கலை படைப்போம்

**CEDERBRAE C. I**

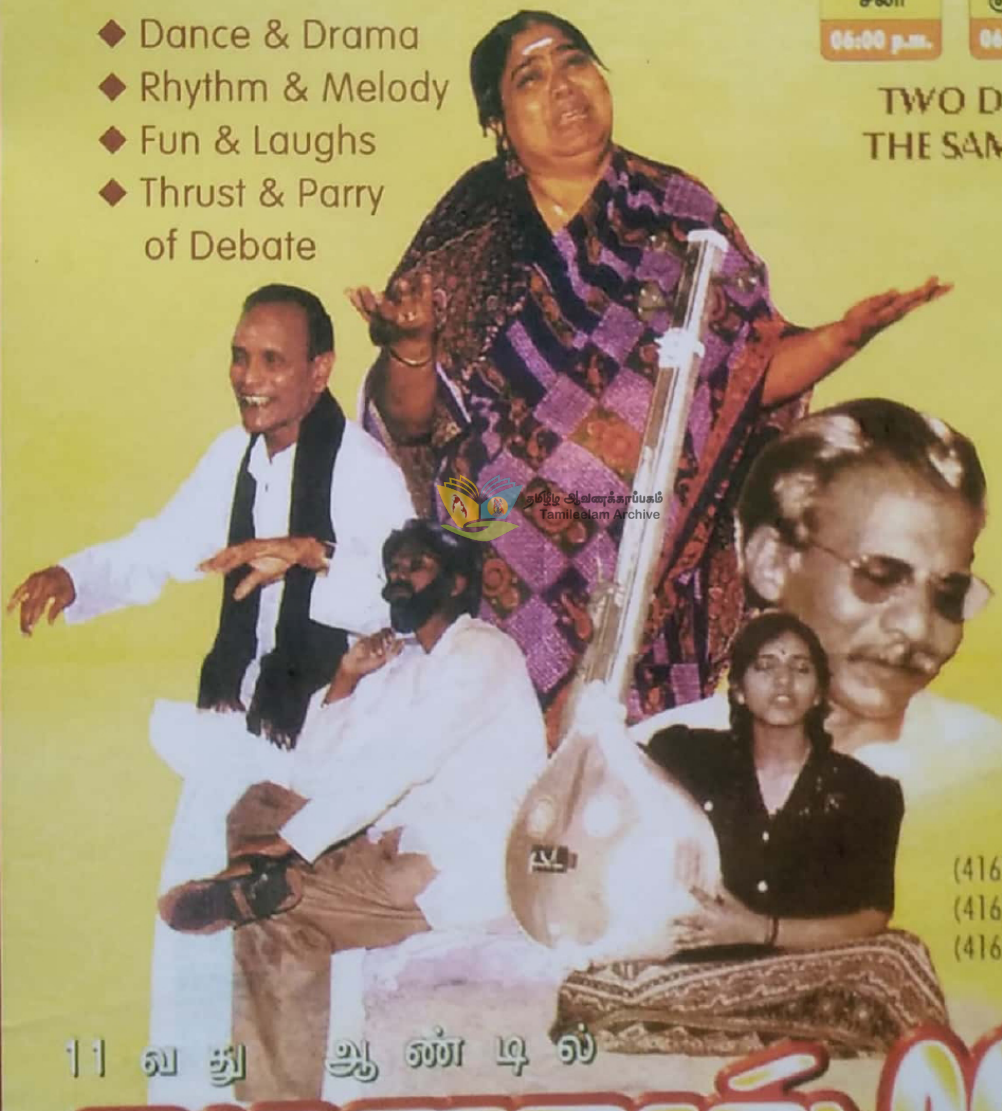
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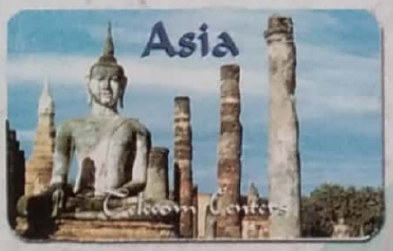
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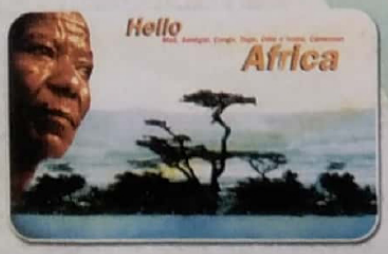
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