

# TAMIL REFUGEE REVIEW

VOL.1  
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SEPTEMBER

★ தமிழ் அகதிகள் ஆய்வு ..... 86

## Kill, Kill And Kill Yet Again



*Troops on patrol in Jaffna: no end to the trouble.*

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**TAMIL REFUGEE (ACTION GROUP) HOUSING ASSOCIATION'**

**AIMS ARE:**

1. To assist with the Housing needs and housing welfare of Tamil Refugees and Asylum-seekers in the U.K, regardless of their political or religious beliefs.
2. To promote the Self sufficiency of Tamil Refugees and Asylum seekers and to assist with their settlement into more permanent Housing circumstances

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**VOL -1**

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**EDITORIAL**

**sep/86**

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Sri Lanka's allocation for defence expenditure for the year 1986 is 3,855 million Sri Lankan rupees. This amount constitutes 13.2% of the total expenditure of the country. This defence expenditure represents 62.4% of all the foreign aid received by Sri Lanka for the year 1986. This defence expenditure is 30.9% of the budget deficit for 1986 and this expenditure is over 60% of the country's total earning. While presenting the 1986 budget the Finance Minister of Sri Lanka had stated that unless the Sri Lankan Government finds a solution to the existing problem, Sri Lanka will face disaster.

The only thing the Sri Lankan Government has produced by spending such a large sum of money on defence is a mass of Tamil Refugees.

It is believed that the number of Tamils displaced and rendered refugees at home and abroad is nearing half a million. -

- Editorial Group -

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# Sri Lanka

## Social Affairs

Despite a persistent campaign conducted by the Tamil separatists in many of the aid-donor countries during 1985, de Mel was able to report to parliament that the Paris Aid Group meeting on 20 June was a resounding success. He charged that a campaign of "diabolical distortions, half-truths and untruths was conducted in all aid-giving countries with wonderful orchestration and great skill." He said that he had to visit personally nearly all the donor countries to counter this propaganda. He said the results of the aid meeting showed that the Tamil campaign had completely failed and aid pledges of Rs 13.2 billion were obtained. "Not one cent of this money will be allocated for defence and security as some of our political opponents have tried to make out. Every cent of this will be for economic development and economic development alone," he promised. He said much of the aid was grants while the rest was on very concessional terms.

De Mel was hopeful that the investment of these funds would help boost production and exports enabling loan repayments without any burden to the country. He said that the aid did not seriously affect Sri Lanka's debt-service ratio.

The government continued throughout 1985 devoting substantial resources on the country's hydroelectric-based power-generation programme. Emphasis was laid on rural electrification as well as transmission and distribution projects, in addition to the building of several power houses. There was a slowdown in an ADB-supported rural electrification project due to the failure of the state-owned Ceylon Electricity Board to maintain a fixed programme as a result of frequent requests by members of parliament seeking projects within their electorates.

A feasibility study for a coal-based power-generation project has been completed and the finalisation of a site in the eastern Trincomalee district is under consideration according to the Ministry of Power and Energy. This ministry planned to spend Rs 1.6 billion on capital works in the power sector during 1985.

A serious deterioration in the country's highways network has been apparent over recent years and remedial measures have been given high priority by the government. The problem of bad roads was aggravated by heavy rain and floods during 1985 which the Ministry of Highways said had caused "severe damage to the country's entire road network." Action was being taken to repair and reinstate these roads and satisfactory progress was claimed. A total of Rs 600 million for road maintenance and rehabilitation was allocated in 1985 and the government also obtained some foreign aid to pay for the road-rehabilitation programme.

FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW

## TAMILS: THE RIGHT TO ASYLUM

In August 1986 a group of 152 Tamils hit world headlines by being found adrift in two lifeboats off the Canadian coast. Though their exodus is not on the scale of the Vietnamese boat people, Tamil refugees have had a far-reaching effect on legislation and attitudes concerning refugees generally.

In Sri Lanka the violence has increased over the past year and any peace settlement seems far away. The majority of Tamils who have managed to escape have gone to India. The comparatively few seeking refuge in Europe find the doors shutting firmly against them.

In May 1985, after about 2,000 Tamils had arrived in Britain since the beginning of the year, the government introduced a visa requirement. More than a year later, in June 1986, the government finally granted exceptional leave to remain to those who had arrived before that time.

Because of the visa requirement very few Tamils have been able to reach Britain since May 1985. Of the few who have, an alarmingly high proportion have had to spend long periods in detention while their applications are assessed — in spite of offers of help from BRC and other groups in finding accommodation for them. BRC has expressed serious concern to the Home Office, particularly as some Tamils have now spent more than six months in detention.

Britain is not alone in restricting refugees' rights of entry. Germany and France have accepted over 20,000 Tamils since 1983, but at a meeting in May 1986 of the BRC-based European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), member agencies confirmed a hardening of government attitudes in their respective countries. West Germany particularly has taken harsh measures to prevent Tamils and other Third World refugees from slipping through from East Germany.

"Refugees in orbit" is a phrase now used to describe the small but growing number of refugees who are bounced back and forth between countries which refuse them entry.

BRC is pressing the British government to discuss this problem with other countries and to develop a humane and equitable policy which would avoid this situation.

BRC has been concerned that more and more Tamils are becoming "orbit" cases. Many flee initially to countries such as India, and then — because of family ties in Europe or because of threats by armed Tamil liberation groups in India — they move on to another country. However, the country they first visited is considered their "country of first asylum". Some Tamils have been sent back from Britain to these interim countries, only to be denied entry and returned to Britain.

BRC has drawn attention to these issues through the national media and through its own publications, as well as through regular meetings and correspondence with officials. The trend in Europe is towards even more restrictive attitudes, and voluntary agencies in every country are reporting standards of treatment of asylum-seekers which would have been unthinkable a few years ago.

*Emergency accommodation was provided by community groups when Tamil refugees arrived in 1985; now, few are allowed into Britain*



U.P.H.R. Can. har. Foto

# TAMIL REFUGEES & THE EELAM STRUGGLE

'Tamils abandoned at high seas', 'Tamils left in lifecrafts off the coast of Canada', etc., as headlines, the Fleet Street informed us all of a group of Tamil Refugees who were found by fishermen near Newfoundland, while a chorus of headlines such as 'send them back', 'close doors to phony refugees', Canada's a sucker for illegals' by its Canadian counterparts and anit-Tamil demonstration welcomed them in. The story was built as an intrigue and of deception by the Tamils based on morality as old as the Western civilization. The main source of concern we were briefed to believe was not the plight of those refugees or Tamil refugees in general outside Sri Lanka or for that matter the conditions that initiate such exodus from Sri Lankan but, the port of departure of those Tamils. Investigative Journalists of the West, as the time and urgency required of them, turned Immigration Control Experts in Defence of the West of its democracy and asked us to ponder, what consequence to follow if the Tamils set sails from all directions towards their desired destination - the democracies of the West. These Tamils are economic exiles said a many; mind you, not in the same light as those who leave say, Britain to the USA to avoid paying taxes, but, for better standard of living, and worse still black and of alien culture. The story lost its impetus as the Tamils revealed the truth and accepted that they had escaped from the Kaiser country and its concentration camps (much informed since the Nazis were in power).

Unprecedented violent repression let loose by the authoritarian Sri Lankan State and its armed forces against the Tamils in the Island, leave only two alternatives to the majority who have the means to escape the carnage. One is to cross

A country which boasts deceptly generous constitutional provision granting the right of Asylum to 'all Political Refugees', does not consider those who flee 'free world' (Sri Lanka is one?) terrorism. But, there is no record of a single Pole or East German or Soviet ever rejected. All this amount to nothing but, anti-Sovietism, anti-Communism and racism disguised and paraded under the slogans of freedom and prosperity.

Tamils once in West Germany, like any other from the Third World are at first dumped in the train stations and on streets, then in tent camps and boxcar barracks. From there they are taken to special camps for Political Refugees where they are virtually prisoners. They are prohibited from leaving city and working. German citizens are banned from entering these heavily guarded stalags, without special permission. These camps are often fire-bombed by neo-nazis and skin-heads and refugees are attached on the streets.

This being the reality, it is no wonder 'if one prefers even Enoch-Powells' Britain to the successor state to the Nazi Third Reich.

Tamils of Ceylon never left their soils in droves prior to the Black July, 1983. Statistics would vouch, only a few thousand left the shores mostly for higher education or as hired-hands to the Middle East and perhaps, a few hundred highly qualified professionals to the West as Immigrant labourers.

However, since 1983 Black July, more than 3000,000 have fled and in that half of them to India. Only about 60,000 went to Europe and Canada. Further, massacre of Tamils in their fifties and hundreds are news that appear sensationally in the pasages

the Palk-Strait in small boats surviving precariously from the gunfire and missiles from the British or Israeli supplied patrol-boats of the Sri Lankan Navy, into the welcoming arms of our brethren in South India, not knowing the abject poverty and squalor that await. Two is to take a flight to the West, using the very few channels open.

Those who have the means and are aware of the conditions facing the refugees in India would no doubt will seek their way to the West, sell whatever they possess to pay to the 'crony agencies' who make killing profits, nevertheless, manage to arrange them the passage. However, the tiny minority who achieve their 'passage to freedom' discover the sad relatives soon enough and face contemptuous treatment meted by their, once supposed, humanitarian saviours.

For a Tamil escape into the West, the chances are negligible. As in the case with the UK, they stand less than on equal chance compared to a Libian who is branded as a potential terrorist and a victim of terror on equal footing. Then, we know in the hard world of power politics these notions of moral superiority are like noise of fallen autumn leaves, subjective to the audience that is naive enough to be fool. To pass through the iron grids of Immigration Controls, erected around the West, Third World refugees deploy the usual tactics of false travel documents or make use of the only loop hole left open at the East-West boarder in Berlin. The Western Politicians who make ethical speeches near the 'berlin wall' demanding that 'it should become more penetrable', scream elsewhere against 'foreign infiltration'.

of media everywhere. Shouldn't we consider these as contribution factors towards this Tamil exodus?.

When the West prefers itself squarely behind the regim in Sri Lanka, supporting its attacks on the Tamils with men, machinery and millions in cash, shouldn't they have expected a small fall out of dark skined Tamils to blot their landscape? One would think they would have calculated this consequence as part of the process, a small price to pay to sustain neo-colonialism in Sri Lanka.

If not, it is high time the old Colonial Masters realise, that they could not have everything free of charge for their eternal self-indulgence. The modern world has shrunk to an imaginable size and their former slaves and naive subjects are at last becoming aware of its mechanism and of their own potential. If they want to stay as Masters of Economic Dominions, benefiting from cheap labour to raw materials and sale of arms to their client states and factions, they have to deploy a bigger heart than before and must pay a minimum price, even, if that is to tolerate a few thousand dark skined persons roming the white streets.

Meanwhile, the Tamils' struggle for their right to self-determination against imperialism, capitalism and neo-colonialism continues. It has to continue since it is the only means to assert our self-pride and dignity.

(to be continued..)



# Neither here nor there

**There are nearly 2,500 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in Britain facing a frustrating present and an uncertain future. A report.**

**O**F the nearly 50,000 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in Europe, about 2,500 are in London. The rest are mostly in France and West Germany. The influx into the United Kingdom was between May 10 and 29 last year and the reception was far from friendly.

Noting the increase in their number, the Home Office, then under Leon Brittan, announced on May 20, during a parliamentary recess, that all Sri Lankans entering the U.K. should have valid visas issued by the British High Commission in Colombo. It was the first time that such a requirement was being imposed on Commonwealth citizens entering the U.K.

The rule came into effect nine days later. That effectively put a stop to the "flood" of refugees Brittan had referred to. Jeremy Corbyn, MP for Islington North, who along with some other MPs had taken up the case of the Tamil refugees, had met Brittan the same day but was not told of the new requirement. "Indeed, he refused to answer any specific questions," Corbyn recalls.

Those who managed to get into Britain before it closed its doors arrived clutching their belongings hurriedly packed in handbags. Though no statistics are available, reports indicate that most of them were young men in the 16-30 age group. The lives of the youth are the most at stake in Sri Lanka. The army hunts them out and ruthlessly kills them on the pretext that they belong to, or sympathise with, the "Tigers".

## MOSTLY MODERATES

Among the refugees in Europe, some do align themselves with one of the many political groups. But most of them are moderates who share the dream of Eelam with their fellow Tamils. As one of them said: "You can-

not give me a gun and ask me to shoot. I must have the courage." They are, however, increasingly beginning to hope that India will liberate the Tamils, as it did East Pakistan (now independent Bangladesh) in 1971.

The refugees conform to the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the 1967 protocol to which the U.K. is a signatory: "A passenger who does not otherwise qualify for admission should not be refused leave if the only country to which he can be removed is one to which he is unwilling to go owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion."

The British Government might have hoped that by terming them "economic" instead of "political" refugees, it would be under no obligation to keep them. Indeed, they would have been removed to Sri Lanka where, as one refugee put it, "They can come and arrest me from my bed. There is no place safe for us in Sri Lanka." In fact Leon Brittan, Home Secretary, speaking in the House of Commons on May 31, 1985, even claimed that the British High Commissioner in Colombo had been given a "formal personal assurance" by President Jayewardene that no Tamils who returned to Sri Lanka would be harassed or persecuted.

## SRI LANKA THREAT

This, despite a report in the *Tamil Times* of November 1984, which quoted Lalith Athulathmudali, Sri Lanka's National Security Minister, as saying that Tamils returning to Sri Lanka from countries where their request for refugee status had been refused, would be arrested "if necessary" on arrival in Colombo.

Stoyl, a counsellor with the refugee unit of the United Kingdom Immigrants Advisory Service (UKIAS), described the British Government's attitude thus: "This was obviously a group that the Home Office did not want to stay (in Britain)." He disagrees with the Government's argument that they were economic, not political, refugees. From his experience, they appeared to be "middle class" and "professionals" with no

particular economic problem. They must be from fairly affluent families to have been able to raise the cost of an air ticket at such short notice.

Says Corbyn: "Drawing a difference between political and economic refugees is wrong." The fact, as he saw it, was that the Tamils were fleeing political persecution, "irrespective of their economic status".

Corbyn believes that the British Government tried to play a "racist card" in the whole issue. "It is basically a sort of racism by the British Government that refugees, if they are white and if they are fleeing from what is determined as communist aggression, are no problem. But if it is people from Sri Lanka, it is not willing to accept them."

## DETENTION CAMP

To deal with the influx last year, a special Tamil unit was set up at Heathrow. As the refugees arrived, most of them were taken to a detention camp at Harmondsworth in Middlesex, where they were questioned by immigration authorities. They were later granted temporary leave to stay for six months by the Home Office which retained their passports. On the expiry of the initial period of six months, the refugees have managed to have it extended for another six months. Corbyn is confident that the period will be further extended as the situation in Sri Lanka shows no sign of improving.

In June last year, Taylor, a high court judge, accused the Home Office of using "artificial" and "inhuman" criteria in dealing with the applications for political asylum from Sri Lankan Tamils. Quashing a ministerial decision refusing

**At the peak of the influx, immigration authorities took about 60 young male refugees, handcuffed to one another like common criminals, to the remand centre in Ashford.**

asylum to a 34-year-old Tamil he said it was a startling proposition that the applicant could not qualify for asylum because he and his family had not been singled out for persecution. There was evidence that he and his father had been beaten up and threatened with death. His house in Colombo had been looted in the riots of July 1983. "It can be of little comfort to a Tamil family to know they are being persecuted as Tamils rather than as individuals," the judge said.

But in another case, two Tamil couples unsuccessfully claimed that the Home Office acted unlawfully when it decided they had no right to be in the U.K. as refugees because they had spent two days in transit in West Germany. Their argument was ruled hopeless by the judge who said: "People who go to Germany and remain there for periods of time and then come here from that country are not from Sri Lanka at all."

At the peak of the influx, immigration authorities took about 60 young male refugees, handcuffed to one another like common criminals, to Her Majesty's Remand Centre in Ashford, Middlesex, where they stayed for 25 days before being released.

At that time, the Tamil groups and individuals in London were busy sponsoring people in detention to get them into the country. Some of them were resettled temporarily in Hindu temples in East Ham, Wimbledon and Archway. The others were taken in by relatives and friends, many of whom had never seen the person they were sponsoring. Attention therefore focussed on the young men still in prison. Corbyn was contacted as he was handling many cases of Tamils seeking refuge in the U.K. He visited the Harmondsworth and Ashford detention centres and spoke to a number of refugees. He still remembers how frightened they were.

On May 24, 1985, after the House of Commons had risen, Corbyn's office heard a rumour, later confirmed by an announcement, that the Home Office would insist that all representations by MPs regarding refugees should be made within 24 hours. Corbyn's office was then handling well over 250 cases and the staff worked overtime to deliver the prepared cases at the Home Office within the stipulated time.

This and pressure from other groups, like the UKIAS, helped to prevent the Government from sending any of the detained refugees back to Sri Lanka. There was also the fact that other European countries which had accepted Tamil refugees were not sending them back on humanitarian grounds. Poul Hartling, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, had in April 1984, appealed to governments to give particular attention to requests for asylum from Tamils and not to send them back to Sri Lanka if their safety was in doubt.

It was a period of mental agony for the detained refugees though they are now able to joke about it. But the question that remains unanswered is: Why were they singled out from among so many refugees and kept in detention?

Says Corbyn: "I am convinced there was a direction from the Home Office to do that. Normally they would not detain that number of people. They did it as a very rapid process of clamping down on people arriving here." According to him it was purely "administrative" that the men were detained in Ashford as there are not many places to keep such people in detention. That does not, however, explain why the men were handcuffed.

He thinks it significant that the 24-hour rule for MPs, the visa require-

**Aside from the day-to-day problems, the refugees are under immense strain. Their stay in the U.K. is uncertain. And they fear for their families in Sri Lanka.**

ments, the detention of refugees and Britain's continued political support for the Jayewardene Government all came within a month of Margaret Thatcher's visit to Sri Lanka in April 1985. Until then the British Government was willing to accept that the situation in Sri Lanka was dangerous for the Tamils to remain there.

## UNEMPLOYMENT

Most of the refugees had left Sri Lanka at short notice, without any source of finance in the U.K. Jobs are hard to come by because of the present rate of unemployment in the U.K. They are, therefore, forced to claim benefit from the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). Housing, however, is a matter for the local authorities and some councils like Haringey have been efficient and helpful in rehousing the refugees.

The Tamil Refugee Action Group (TRAG), set up on May 31, 1985, helps the refugees on matters such as immigration, health, education, housing and welfare. TRAG is run by a group of young volunteers, mostly refugees, and is financed by the government-funded Manpower Services Commission. It has on its board representatives of various Tamil groups. TRAG volunteers insist that they work as a team forgetting petty political differences. Others who work with TRAG disagree.

Groups to help the refugees have been formed by other people also. Some charge for their services. A few set up with council grants are known to help Ghanaian refugees as well. There is little coordination between the

groups in voicing their common problems.

The UKIAS, which is also funded by the Government, deals with all matters pertaining to immigration and asylum. For day-to-day problems of living, the refugees turn to one of the many groups formed to help them or to the British Refugee Council (BRC). The main problems they face relate to housing and welfare. TRAG has set up a housing association to re-house the refugees. The houses offered, however, are often in an appalling state of disrepair.

Most claimants of social benefits find it difficult to deal with the DHSS. The refugees are no exception. An added disadvantage is that they do not know how the system works and how to get the maximum benefit. This is where the refugee help groups have to step in.

Refugees who want to continue their disrupted education or gain new qualifications are told they have to pay overseas student fees — something they cannot afford. So they have to settle for part-time courses. Advice on this matter is offered by the refugee help groups, who in turn get it from the World University Service. Some like TRAG have appointed an educational adviser who has established direct con-

tacts with some colleges and polytechnics. Selvadurai, a TRAG volunteer, said some colleges were particularly helpful in accommodating refugee students. He named the South East London Technical College (SELTEC), the North East London Polytechnic and Brixton College.

#### FRUSTRATION

Selvadurai was a lecturer in economics and statistics at the Polytechnic Institute in Jaffna. He is undertaking a survey of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in the U.K. Apart from doing a certificate course in computer studies he works part-time at a service station. He is frustrated that he is not able to find a job matching his qualification — a pass in the ICMA (accountancy) examination in Sri Lanka. He finds the attitude of European employees racist. "You have to be doubly qualified when competing for a job with a white person," he says.

Aside from the day-to-day problems, the refugees are under immense psychological strain too. Their stay in the U.K. is uncertain. They still have no legal status. And they fear for their families in Sri Lanka.

Asked if they would go back to their homeland, the unanimous answer of

the refugees I met was that they would, the moment it was safe. Said Rani: "I feel more at home among my people, temples and traditions. If there is no political problem (in Sri Lanka), it is a beautiful place to live in."

But Corbyn says that though the initial response of most of them was that they did not intend to stay, as time passes, they would build friendship and ties which would become difficult to break. He cites the case of the Chilean refugees who fled Pinochet's regime in 1973. Even if they could return to Chile now, many of them would not. So, Corbyn believes that the longer the conflict in Sri Lanka, the more likely the refugees will remain in the U.K.

According to him the British Government believes that in the long run it is important for it to support the Jayewardene Government because of the latter's good relationship with the U.S. But, he stresses, such political and military support to Jayewardene is also one reason why the U.K. has Tamil refugees. For him it is very important that India continues its non-aligned stance to maintain some stability in the area. □

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
(FRONTLINE) in London

## NEWS IN BRIEF

01.09.86 : Jaffna; Vasavillan High School, used by the army as an out-post, was blown up by Tamil fighters after chasing them away.

03.09.86: Mannar; 2 Army camps came into heavy attack by Tamil fighters.

04.09.86 : Batticola; an army transport plane was severely damaged by rocket fire by Tamil fighters. Sri Lanka reported that its forces had sunk a boat with a foreign journalist. But, in India it was said that all passengers swam to safety after an accident, later to be picked up by Indian fishermen.

07.09.86 : Jaffna; Army came under heavy fire when tried to break out of their fort camp. Two soldiers were killed. However, 2 Tamil civilians were also killed and the hospital, 20 shops and a temple near by endured severe damage.

08.09.86 : Mannar; army attacked the village of Pannankoddadi burning several houses and injuring many civilians.

09.09.86 : Elephant-Pass; 2 army personnel surrendered to Tamil fighters, who were later produced in the local TV for an interview.

10.09.86 : Today Tamil detainees completed their 7th day of hunger strike within Booza camp demanding release or to charge them.

Army surrounded villages near Trincomalee and arrested several youth.

11.09.86 : Batticola ; 6 Police commandos were killed in clashes between them and Tamil fighters. Karrai Nagar, Jaffna several hours of fighting was reported between the navy and Tamil fighters.

12.09.86 : Amnesty International accused Sri Lanka for the disappearance of more than 300 Tamils. Anuradapura; landmine exploded at Thaddiapuram killing 5 army men.

15.09.86 : Batticola; Athulath Muddali paid a surprise visit to the town and met 2 members of its citizen committee. It was said that he promised to provide full information of those arrested in the future and to return bodies of those killed.

16.09.86 : Batticola ; Air force resorted to bombing to dislodge Tamil fighters who had been attacking the army camp at Padduvankarai. Several civilians were said to have received severe injuries. Thrukkovil; 4 army personnel were killed in a land mine attack.

17.09.86 : More than 15,000 Tamils have joined the scores of refugees in the Eastern province, following the incidents around the Padduvankarai army camp.

18.09.86 : Batticola; 47 Tamil civilians were shot dead in front of Nageshwara cinema theater.

19.09.86 : Tamil fighters attacked Elephant-Pass, Mankullam army camps. One week of 'hartal' was organised in protest against the massacres in Batticola.

20.09.86 : Unknown number of police commandos were killed in a land mine explosion near Thampalaharan. A curfew was declared by the government in Batticola.

23.09.86 : A Tamil civilian Mr. Parajrsekaran filed a court case against the newly appointed Sri Lankan ambassador, in Canada. He has alleged that Brg. Veerathunga was responsible for many massacres of Tamils, when he was in service and asked the court to dismiss him from his responsibility as ambassador.

Sri Lanka however, stated that this case violated all the international norms and asked for the deportation of Mr. Pararajasekaran to Sri Lanka.

24.09.86 : Trincomalee ; 6 Army men were killed and 4 injured when Tamil fighters attacked an army convoy.

Several Tamil civilians were kidnapped by 'Home Guards' near Trincomalee. Huge demonstration was held in protest against the massacres in Batticola.

## OUTCASTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

### Status of Ethnic Minorities in the West

The past few years have witnessed a dramatic exacerbation of inter-racial and inter-ethnic relations in western countries that in many cases erupted into violent, angry clashes. The street fighting in the coloured ghettos of London, Washington, Birmingham, New York, Liverpool and Chicago have drawn public attention to the tragic condition of the ethnic minorities. Whereas in the West not very long ago they spoke of an accidental outbreak of an 'epidemic of nationalism', today even bourgeois leaders concede that the roots of the unrest lie in racial discrimination that flourishes in all areas of life.

#### Slave Status:

In developed countries there are no signboards with the words 'For White Only'. But society's division into two sections isolated from each other and not enjoying equal rights - coloured and white - is glaringly in evidence. Most of the coloured are on the lowest rung of the social ladder, and they are ones who, as a rule, perform the most unattractive and low-paid work. In the USA half again as many Afro-Americans as whites, 80% of the Chicanos (Mexican origin), and over 70% of the Puerto Ricans are employed on unskilled mostly manual work. The corresponding indicator among immigrants, mainly from Central African countries, is 81.6% in France and between 84 and 94 % in Britain among immigrants from Caribbean and Asian countries. They are employed chiefly in poorly equipped sectors of the mining, textile, and food industries, construction, public utilities, transport, agriculture, and sanitation services. Most of the 'clean' professions are closed to them. Mainly whites are employed in the nuclear, electronics, and petro-chemical industries, banking, and other prestigious sectors of the economy.

Discrimination against so-called guest workers is particularly harsh. Recruited in their homelands, they are for all practical purposes denied freedom of choosing jobs. This category of working people

is subjected to eminently brutal exploitation as a result of the steady intensification of labour and the introduction of uncontrolled overtime. In Italy for example, according to statistics of the Italian Confederation of Trade Unions, they work from 55 to 70 hours a week. The absence of labour protection is the cause of countless cases of injury and occupational diseases. In Switzerland the number of accidents among guest workers is, depending on the industry, from three to ten times higher than among Swiss. In France immigrant workers, who account of only 8% of the employed population, suffer 22% of the production injuries. Denied social rights, they get no compensation for such injuries.

There is also wage discrimination against persons of ethnic minorities. In the USA the wages received by Afro-American and other ethnic citizens is almost half of the remuneration paid to whites. In Canada Eskimos get half and Indian miners get one-third of what paid to whites. Ship-building companies in Britain pay one-fifth of the wages of whites despite the fact that their work-day is four hour longer.

Non-white workers are usually at the top of the dismissal lists. In the USA, even according to official statistics the unemployment rate among ethnic minorities has reached almost 50%. The conditions of the indigenous inhabitants of North America, Australia and New Zealand is appallingly tragic. The jobless rate is 80% among the inhabitants of Indian reservations of the USA 80-90 % among Eskimos of Alaska and 75% among able-bodied Canadian Indians. In Australia unemployment among aborigine industrial workers is six times above the average, reaching 100% in some communities.



Foreign workers live under constant threat of dismissal. Over the past 10-15 years the government of western countries, in alliance with the monopolies, have been pursuing a policy of regularly renewing the body of immigrants in order to obtain the largest possible returns from alien proletarians. Superexploitation leads to the rapid physical exhaustion, and the need arises for replenishing manpower. New immigrants come to take the place of dismissed and deported immigrants, often on poorer terms. For example, 477,000 foreign workers were discharged and deported in the FRG in 1966-67. They were replaced with newly arrived immigrants. This sort of 'rotation' persists to this day.

The scientific and technological revolution and the structural readjustments in the economics of the western countries have hit the employment rate of ethnic minorities particularly hard. Automation, new method of management, and modernisation in the service industry have cut back the demand for unskilled labour, the bulk of which consists of non-whites. The opportunities for learning skills are extremely slim on account of the discrimination in access to occupational training.

(to be continued..)

By: S.RAVI

## DATA BOX

**Major industries:** Food, beverages and tobacco, Rs 8.62 billion; textiles, apparel and leather goods, Rs 7.57 billion.

**Major agriculture:** Tea, 208 million kg; rubber, 142 million kg; coconuts, 1.98 million; rice, 2.4 million tonnes; sugar, 18,301 tonnes; fisheries, 170,067 tonnes.

**Oil and natural gas:** Nil.

**Mining:** n.a.

**Major imports:** Consumer goods, US\$440.23 million; intermediate goods, US\$946.2 million; investment goods, US\$484.86 million; unclassified, US\$22.7 million.

**Major exports:** Agricultural products, US\$898 million; textiles and garments, petroleum products etc, US\$501.59 million; gems and other minerals, US\$33.14 million; unclassified, US\$54.98 million.

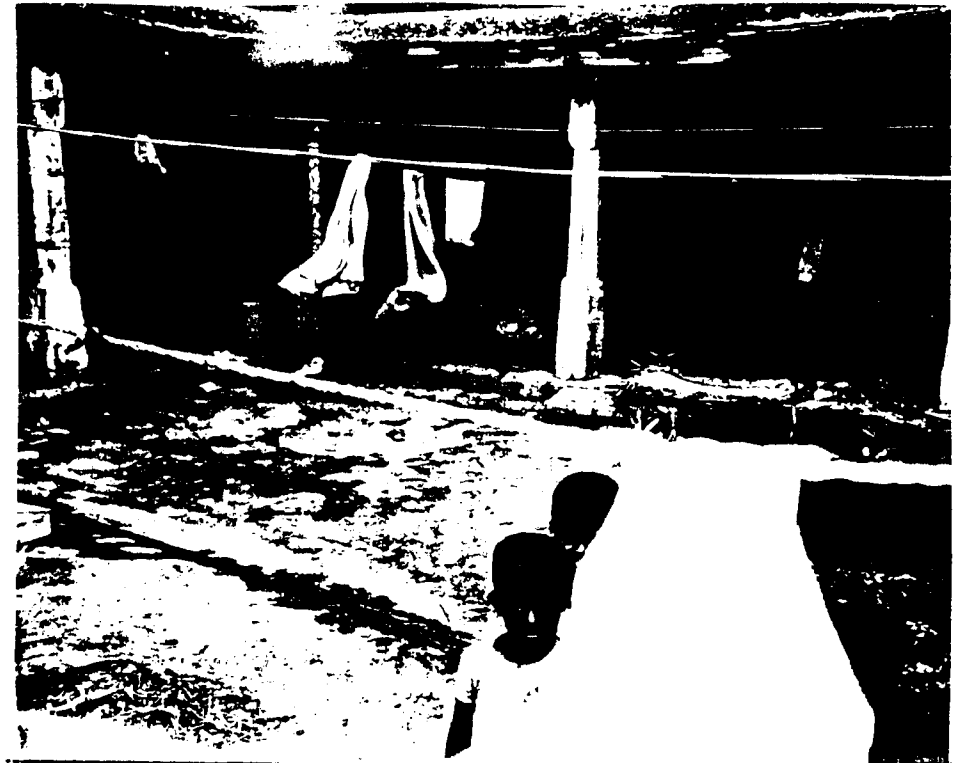
**Tourism and transport:** Arrivals, 317,734; tourism revenue, US\$106.37 million; national airline, Air Lanka; rail network; coach services between towns; hire cars available.

**Finance:** n.a.

**Currency:** Sri Lanka rupee, 100 cents. Rs 25.10:US\$1 (26.50).

(All figures are estimates for 1984 unless otherwise stated. Most figures for previous year n.a. Currency conversion as at 1 October 1985.)

## TAMIL REFUGEES IN INDIA.



### REFUGEE

### MOTHER KILLED

A mother of 8 children, Isaac Eileen Rukmani (52) was killed by a direct hit from a shell fired from the Jaffna Fort whilst taking refuge in the toilet of her house at 2nd Cross Street, Jaffna on the evening of 7th September. Her remains were picked up in pieces and interred at the cemetery. She had come as a refugee from Trincomalee a few months ago. Her children were fortunately not with her at the time of the incident.

Saturday Review 20th September 1986

**இலங்கையின் தற்போதைய பொருளாதார நிலையும், தமிழ் அரசுகளின் பெருக்கமும்.**

கடந்த பூனை மாதத்தில் மட்டும்,		
திருகோணமலை யில்-----	101	தமிழர்களும்
மட்டக்கிழப்பில்-----	54	"
மன்னார்யில்-----	52	"
வவுணியாவில்-----	32	"
யாழ்ப்பாணத்தில்-----	20	"
மூல்லைத்தீவில்-----	13	"
அம்பாறையில்-----	08	"
கிளிநொச்சியில்-----	07	"

சிறீலங்காவின் ஆயுதப்படைகளால் கொல்லப்பட்டிருக்கின்றனர்.

**காணாமல் போனவர்கள்.**

காணாமல் போனவர்கள்.		
திருகோணமலை யில்-----	43	தமிழர்கள்.
மட்டக்கிழப்பில்-----	14	"
மன்னார்யில்-----	12	"
வவுணியாவில்-----	04	"
கிளிநொச்சியில்-----	06	"
மூல்லைத்தீவில்-----	05	"
அம்பாறையில்-----	04	"
யாழ்ப்பாணத்தில்-----	03	"

இப்படியிருக்கையில் 31.07.86 இல் கொழும்பில் நடைபெற்ற பாசுகாப்பு கவுன்சிலின் அறிக்கையின்படி கட்டமொன்றில், வடக்கில் உள்ள இராணுவ தளங்கள் எக்காரணங்கொண்டும் மூடப்படமாட்டாது, எனத்தீர்மானிக்கப்பட்டதோடு இவ்வூரில் இருந்த புதிதாக வந்த 50 'மொசாட்' படையினரும் வடபகுதி முகாம்களுக்கு அனுப்பப்பட்டுள்ளனர். 27.06.86 இல் கப்பல்கள் மூலம் பலாலி இராணுவ முகாமுக்கு, நவீன, பயிற்சிபெற்ற கொமான்டோ பிரிவைச்சேர்ந்த 400 இராணுவத்தினர் வந்தசேர்ந்திருக்கின்றனர். அத்தடங்களை நவீன கெலிகொப்பர்கள் பல இறக்குமதி செய்யப்பட்டுள்ளனர். 18.07.86 இல் புதிதாகப் பிரிக்கப்பட்டவர்களில் 500 புதிய கடற்படையினர் காரைநகர் முகாமுக்கு வந்தசேர்ந்தனர். 20.07.86 இல் மண்டைதீவு, பலாலி ஆகிய இராணுவ முகாம்களுக்கு 300 ஆயுதப்படை கொமான்டோ பொலீசார் கப்பல்கள் மூலம் வந்தசேர்ந்தனர். மன்னார் பகுதிக்கும் விசேட ஊர்கா

வற்படையினர் வந்த சேர்ந்தனர். இவை தவிர திருமலை மாவட்டத்தில் கல்லாறு, கண்ணியா, செவ்வநாயகபுரம், சந்தி, ஆகிய இடங்களிலும், திருமலை-பொல்லநறுவா மாவட்ட எல்லை யில் உள்ள 'ரூகல் வேவ', பல்லியா கொடல, திருவவேவ ஆகிய இடங்களிலும், வட பகுதியில் வசாவிளாட்க, மண்டைதீவு ஆகிய பகுதிகளிலும் புதிய இராணுவ முகாம்கள் திறக்கப்பட்டன.

வடக்கிலும், கிழக்கிலும் தற்போது நடைபெற்றுக்கொண்டிருக்கும் போராட்டத்தினால் நாட்டின் பொருளாதாரம் மிகவும் பின்தாங்கித்தள்ளப்பட்டிருக்கிறது, என இலங்கையின் நிதியமைச்சரே ஒப்புக்கொண்டுள்ளார். அவர் தனது வரவு செலவுத்திட்ட உரையில், 'நாட்டின் வருமானத்தைக்காட்டிலும் செலவு மிகவும் கூடுதலாகவுள்ளது. நாட்டின் வருமானத்தில் 60%க்கு மேல் இராணுவ தளபாடங்களுக்குச் செலவு செய்யவேண்டியுள்ளது. நாட்டின் பற்றுக்குறைக்கு முக்கிய காரணம் இராணுவச்செலவின்மாதும். நாட்டின் மொத்தச்செலவில் 10%க்கு மேல் இராணுவச்செலவு உள்ளது' என்று. இத்தருணத்தில் இலங்கையின் தற்போதைய பொருளாதார நிலையைக் கருக்கமாக எடுத்தே நோக்கலாம்.

இலங்கையின் முக்கிய ஏற்றுமதிப்பொருட்கள் தேயிலை, இறப்பர், தொகுப்பொருட்களாகும். உலகச்சந்தையில் இவற்றின் விலை வெகுவாகக் குறைந்தவிட்டதால் 1985 க்குப்பின் இவற்றிலிருந்து கிடைத்த வெளிநாட்டு வருமானம் வெகுவாகக் குறைந்தவிட்டது. கொழும்பில் வெளிநாட்டுக் கம்பனிகளுக்கான தேயிலை ஏலவிற்பனையில் 1986 ஏப்பிரல்-மாதவாரத்தில் ரூபா 30.08 சதம் ஆகக் குறைந்தது, மே மாதத்தில் ரூபா 29.40 சதமாக வீழ்ச்சியுற்றது. இவ்விலையிறக்கமும் நாட்டின் பொருளாதாரத்தை வெகுவாகப்பாதித்தது, என கொழும்பில் வெளியாகும் 'சுண்டே ஒப்போவர்' பத்திரிகை செய்தி வெளியிட்டுள்ளது.

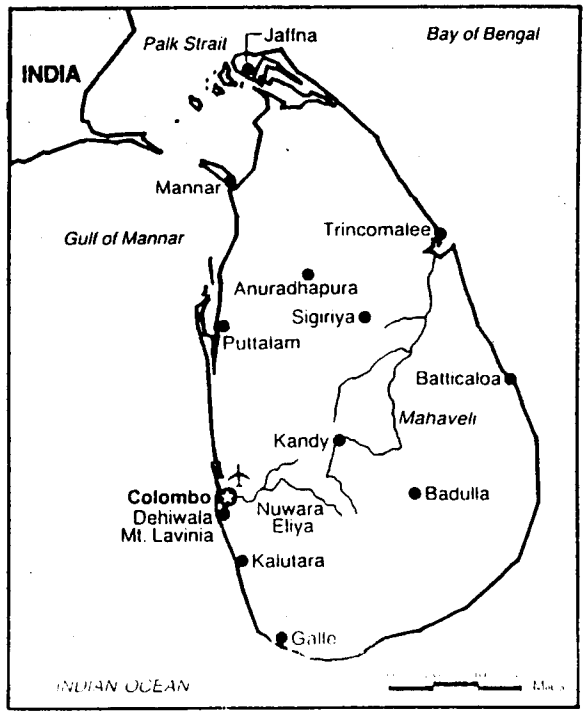
1984 இல் தேயிலையின் விலை 49% ஆகவிறந்தது. 1985 இல் இவ்விலை 26% ஆகி, 1986 இல் இவ்விலை 23% ஆகியுள்ளது. நாட்டின் தொழில் உற்பத்தி 5% தாங்க உயர்ந்துள்ளது. 1984 இல்

நாட்டின் வியாபாரப்பற்றுக்குறை 9.9 பில்லியன் ரூபா வாக இருந்தது. 1985 இல் இது 14 பில்லியன் ரூபா வாக அதிகரித்தது.

இந்தவருடம் பாசில்தாள், சீம விடயி ருந்த 120 முதல் 230 வரையிலான மெற்றிக் தொன் அரிசியை இறக்குமதிசெய்திருந்தது. ஆனால் இவ்வருடம் மேலும் 100,000 தொன் அரிசி தேவைப்படுகிறது. இது தொடர் பாக இலங்கையில் உணவு அமைச்சகம் அரசுக்கு எச்சரிக்கை யும் செய்துள்ளது.

இக்கண்ணோட்டத்தில் பார்க்கும்போது, மொத்தத்தில், இலங்கை தனது பொருளாதார வீழ்ச்சியையோ, தமிழ் மக்களுடைய பிரச்சினையையோ, தீர்க்கவேண்டுமெனும் எண்ணம் கிழிசித்தும் கிடையாது என்பது மிகத்தெளிவாகத் தெரிகிறது. ஆனால் ஒன்றமட்டும் வெளிச்சமாகப்பெறுகிறது. அதாவது தமிழ்பேசும் மக்கள் மேலும் அதிகமாகவதற்கும், உயிர், உடமைகளை இழக்கவும் அதிகம் வாய்ப்புள்ளது.

நகர்ப்புள்ளி. - கா த -



THE BRIEF HISTORY OF SRI LANKA.

The Portuguese arrived in Ceylon at the beginning of the 16th century. They settled on the west coast and converted many of the inhabitants to Christianity. One hundred years later they were replaced by the Dutch, who occupied most of the coastal region; only the kingdom of Kandy in the centre of the country retained its independence. The Dutch were evicted by the British, to whom Kandy surrendered in 1815. The country became independent on 4 February 1948 and on 22 May 1972, the Republic of Sri Lanka was created. Before the new republican constitution was promulgated, a youth insurrection in April 1971 rocked prime minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike's United Front government, leading to her imposing several harsh socialist measures. By the 1977 general election, a country tired of endemic scarcities and rising prices swept her out of office. The United National Party administration of Prime Minister Junius Jayewardene which took over replaced the 1972 constitution and Jayewardene assumed unprecedented power as executive president, becoming both head of state and head of government. He was elected to a second six-year term as president in October 1982 and won a mandate at a national referendum to extend the life of parliament until 1989. An unprecedentedly violent communal clash in July 1983 resulted in a wave of murder and arson against Tamils living outside predominantly Tamil areas and continuing civil strife.

# அஞ்சலி



அமரர் கணபதிப்பிள்ளை - ஆறாமகம் அவர்கள் தமிழ் மக்களுக்காகப் பல வருடங்கள் சேவை செய்தவந்த ஒருவர். நிறைந்த கல்விமாலாகிய அமரர் ஆறாமகம் அவர்களின் பொதுப்பணிகள் அளவிடற்பரியன. அவருடைய இழப்பு தமிழ்குறம் நல்லலகிற்கு ஈடுசெய்ய முடியாததொன்ற. அன்றாடக்குத் தமிழ் அகதிகள் நடவடிக்கைகக் குறு தனது ஆழ்ந்த அஞ்சலியைச் செலுத்துகிறது.

## தூ ல்நிலையம் பற்றிய அறிவித்தல்.

எங்கள் மீதாபனத்தில் தூ ல்நிலையம் ஒன்ற அமைக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. இத்தூ ல்நிலையத்திற்குத் தேவையான புத்தகங்கள் தமிழ் அகப்பர்களிடம் இருந்து நன்கொடியாக எதிர்பார்க்கப்படுகிறது. மேலும், இங்கே சிறுவர் புத்தகங்கள், தமிழ் நாவல்கள், அரசியல் சம்பந்தமான வெளியீடுகள் என்பன உள்ளன. புத்தகங்கள் பொதுமக்கள் பாவனைக்கு இரவலாகவும் கொடுத்தவப்படும். முற்றிலும் இலவச சேவை.

நன்றி. - தூ லகர் -

இங்கிலாந்தில் அகதிகளின் சட்ட நிலைப்பாடு சம்பந்தமான மொழிபெயர்ப்புப் பிரதி வெளியீடுகள் இரண்டு எம்மால் வெளியிடப்பட்டுள்ளன. இலவசப்பிரதிகள் தேவைப்படுவோர் பின்வரும் முகவரியுடன் தொடர்பு கொள்ளவும்.

TAMIL REFUGEE (ACTION GROUP)  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD.  
62 WEST GREEN ROAD  
SEVEN SISTERS  
LONDON N15 5NR  
TEL: 802 9369

# TAMIL REFUGEE REVIEW

★ தமிழ் அகதிகள் ஆய்வு



தேசியாவில் தமிழ் அகதிகள்.

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