

Tamil Information



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AUGUST 1993

No. 25

BRITAIN TIGHTENS ASYLUM PROCEDURE

The British Asylum and Immigration Act became effective from 26 July 1993 despite wide-ranging opposition within and outside Parliament. New Immigration rules on Asylum and Asylum Appeals (Procedure) Rules also came into force in August.

The Asylum Act provides for the fingerprinting of all asylum seekers including children. Those who do not cooperate in fingerprinting can be arrested without a warrant and detained until fingerprints are taken. Fingerprinting, according to the British government is necessary to prevent multiple applications. The fingerprints, according to the Act, will be destroyed within a month of granting permanent stay or after ten years. There is real concern that the records may be misused and that there is likelihood of records passing to the government of the country from where the asylum seeker fled.

The Asylum Rules say that a failure without reasonable explanation to make a prompt and full disclosure of material facts either orally or in writing may lead to refusal. In practice it would be almost impossible for asylum seekers to make full disclosure on arrival, because of the confused state they are in as to what is expected of them. They may not speak English at all or they may be torture victims and fear the authorities. The Rules also set out a number of factors which may damage an applicant's claim. These are, failing to apply forthwith on arrival, making false representations, destruction of

travel documents, involvement in activities in U.K. inconsistent with his previous behaviour and calculated to enhance his claim for refugee status and lodging concurrent applications in different countries.

The 1951 UN Convention on Refugees says that asylum seekers should not be penalised for arriving without proper documentation. Persons persecuted may be forced to obtain false documents to get out of their country and may destroy the documents en route for fear of being sent back.

The provision about inconsistencies with previous beliefs is totally inconsistent with normal human behaviour. The authorities would not be aware of the persons 'previous beliefs and behaviour' and any change in behaviour in the normal course of events may be construed as an attempt calculated to enhance the asylum application. Asylum seekers also may file concurrent applications as insurance against a refusal because of the different procedures adopted by different countries. Further, according to UNHCR it is not proper to list such factors because the credibility of the application involves the consideration of many complex factors. Since all these factors may be important, singling out any of these factors will be incomplete and arbitrary, UNHCR says.

The Rules also refer to categories of application which may be refused without substantive consideration of their cases. One

of the categories is where 'an applicant is part of a "group" whose claims are clearly not related to the criteria for Refugee Status in the Convention'. However, the Act and the Rules do not define a 'group'. Refugee organisations say that such a provision is in breach of the spirit of the Convention which implies that applications should be individually assessed. Asylum applicants arriving from a so-called 'safe third country' can be refused asylum without substantive consideration of their claim and returned to that country.

The Act also provides for curtailing existing leave to remain for those whose asylum applications have been refused and empowers the Secretary of State to serve a deportation order and allows persons to be detained pending deportation. A number of Tamils have been currently detained by the authorities. An appeal can be made on the refusal of asylum but not on the curtailment of the leave to remain.

All asylum applicants whose applications have been rejected have the right of appeal; a normal procedure and an accelerated procedure for the so-called 'groundless' cases. Appeals must be made within ten working days and will be heard by a Special Adjudicator. Once papers are received from the Secretary of State the Adjudicator must fix the date for appeal hearing within five days and determined within 42 days of the Adjudicator receiving the notice of appeal. Appeal may be made to the Immigration

Appeals Tribunal from the Adjudicator's decision and then to the Court of Appeal on a point of law. Lawyers say the procedure drastically restricts the possibility of judicial review.

The Act provides for a 'fast track' procedure for those cases declared by the Secretary of State 'not to raise issues as to the U.K.'s obligations under the Convention' or to be 'frivolous' or 'vexatious'. Asylum seekers already in the country with leave to remain will not be affected by the 'fast track' procedure. The appeal under this procedure must be made within two days and the Adjudicator must fix the hearing within three days and the appeal heard within seven days of the notice of appeal. There is no further appeal, only the possibility of a judicial review.

The provisions of the Carriers Liability Act imposing fines on airlines has also been extended by the Asylum Act. The Act also reduces local authority responsibility to homeless asylum seekers.

The Asylum Act is clearly intended to reduce the number of persons seeking asylum in the

U.K. and exemplifies the strict laws and procedures that are being introduced all over Europe. In the last several years Tamil asylum seekers have been targeted for restrictions and analysts say that European governments have chosen the Tamils to set an example to prospective asylum seekers and cite as examples the repatriation programmes planned by Switzerland and Denmark.

In Britain, 4,265 Sri Lankan asylum seekers were granted Exceptional Leave to Remain (ELR) in 1992 while only 40 persons were given Refugee Status. In the same year 435 applications were rejected. In the first quarter of 1993, 2,285 persons were granted ELR and 40 applications were refused and no one was granted Refugee Status. In the second quarter of 1993, only 80 persons were granted ELR and 60 applications were refused. Five persons were granted Refugee Status. The number granted ELR has dramatically fallen despite the pending applications remaining at 2,875 at the end of June and refusals have increased. Reports suggest that since the Asylum Act only a few have been granted ELR and a large number of applications

have been rejected. There are rumours of a Home Office decision to refuse ELR to Tamil applicants.

There appears to be some credence to these reports from the letters written by the Secretary of State to Tamil applicants. The Secretary of State says that the human rights situation has improved in Sri Lanka and in some cases has gone to the extent of saying that the Sri Lankan security forces and the Indian Peace Keeping Force were justified in imprisoning youths on allegations that they supported or were members of the LTTE.

However, according to Human Rights NGOs there has been no improvement in the Human Rights situation. The admittance of Amnesty International and other Human Rights bodies into Sri Lanka is no indication of improvement and this assumption of western nations is a matter for grave concern. The Tamil community believes that asylum seekers should not be returned until a lasting solution is found for the conflict in Sri Lanka.

A STEP in RIGHT DIRECTION

A five year agreement of cooperation between the University of Jaffna and the University of Tromso, Norway was signed on 30 August 1993 in Tromso. Prof. A. Thurairajah, Vice Chancellor of the University of Jaffna and Prof. Ole Mjos, Rector of the University of Tromso signed on behalf of the respective universities for closer cooperation between the two universities on scientific, cultural and educational activities.

Research on Fisheries, Rural Development and Environmental Studies are high on the agenda for the coming years.

It was also agreed that the University of Tromso and the University of Jaffna will take steps to organise an international conference in Tromso at academic level. The aim of the conference would be two fold:

- Focusing on ethnical problems and conflict in modern Sri Lanka - can academics contribute in a constructive way to a solution?
- The development of the North-Eastern Sri Lanka - areas for Skandinavian research and educational assistance.

SCULPTOR IN CUSTODY

Kanagasabai Selvarajah (51 Yrs.) a famed sculptor who had constructed temple chariots for Katukelle Pillayar and Matala Muthumariamman temples was arrested at Mayura temple, Colombo and is held in detention at the CID office. He had been commissioned from 10/10/92 by the trustees of the Mayura temple to construct three temple chariots.

TOKEN FAST

The Indo-Sri Lanka Friendship Society organised a one day fast in Madras on 12 August to protest the forced repatriation of the Tamil refugees to Sri Lanka. The repatriation operations which were suspended for over ten months resumed on 12 August.

Concerns were also raised on the role of UNHCR and its claim that refugees were returning voluntarily. The Indo-Sri Lanka Friendship Society says that it would be an act of sheer inhumanity to deport thousands of innocent Tamils when there is war in Sri Lanka

The fast was also aimed to highlight the precarious conditions of the refugee camps and to demand to lift the ban on NGOs to visit the camps to help the refugees.

Solidarity messages were sent to the organisers by a number of organisations and political parties in India.

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS APPLICATION

Wife of Velu Selliah of Nanu Oya in Nuwara Eliya District has filed application in the Court of Appeal for the release of her husband held for twenty one months at Bogambara prison without trial. The trading establishment of which Selliah was the owner had been sealed by the respondents and compensation for consequential loss amounting to Rs. 200,000 (\$4,100) is also being claimed. Court issued notice on the respondents cited in the application.

TIC ACCESSION LIST

A selection of documents received by TIC in August 1993

SGN 353

Europe Tamil's sixteenth literary conference souvenir: collection of articles submitted in the conference and other articles
Netherlands: A AA IE; August 1993
74p.

DESCRIPTORS: Essays / Tamil Literature / Drama / Women

SGN 352

Kanapatipillai, I. Va
Eelattu Cettipalayam I. Va.
Kanapatipillaip pulavatin
Nurtiraddu
Canada: Jeeva Publishers; 1990
126p.

DESCRIPTORS: Biography / Tamil Literature / Poems / Hindu Temple

PB

Thagam (a monthly periodical)
London: Thagam, September 1993
Vol.1; No.1; 24p.

DESCRIPTORS: Essays / Human Rights violation / Sri Lankan Government / Liberation Fighters

PB

SAAMA: for peace, democracy and justice in Sri Lanka (periodical)

London: SAAMA editorial collective; June 1993

No.5

DESCRIPTORS: Human Rights violation / Sri Lanka / Ethnic problem / War

SHR 3219

Aa Aa Ie: Pukalita Cirukataikal
Cirappital (text in Tamil)
Nederland: Tijdschrift Voor
Tamils in Nederland; June 1993
66p

DESCRIPTORS: Short stories / Refugees / Sri Lankan Tamils

PB

Pravada: a monthly periodical
Colombo: Pravada Publications
Vol 2; No.6; July/August 1993
35p.

DESCRIPTORS: Freedom of Expression / Ethnic Problem / Human Rights violation / Sri Lanka / Politics / Economics

SGN 351

Selvarasakopa, Ko, Ta
Vala Vaikkum Ninaivukal: Ilamaip
Patuvac Cintanaikal
Canada: Jeeva Publishers; 1990
202p.

(Text in Tamil)

DESCRIPTORS: Autobiography

SHR 3216

Journey without a destination: Is there a solution for Sri Lankan Refugees?
London: The Refugee Council
66p.

DESCRIPTORS: Ethnic problem / Sri Lankan Tamils / Refugees / Question and Answers

SHR 3212

Four Nobel Prize winners present a peace plan for Sri Lanka
Canada: The World Council for
Global Co-Operation, 16 July
1993.

8p.

DESCRIPTORS: Ethnic problem / Sri Lanka / Peace initiative

OHR 250

The speech of Mr. Isax Chishi
SWU at London Conference on
Indigenous peoples.

Thailand: National Socialist
Council of Nagaland; July 1993
DESCRIPTORS: Indigenous people / Thailand

AUGUST DIARY

AUGUST 01
MINISTER AND ETHNIC PROBLEM: Speaking at the Muslim Education Conference Minister A.H.M.Azwar said that if the Parliamentary Select Committee failed to find a solution to the ethnic problem it would be a disaster for the whole country.

AUGUST 02
EXPLOSION AT HINDU FESTIVAL : Explosions at the Bambalapitiya Hindu Temple in Colombo claimed the lives of six persons. Thirty eight others were injured. Police blamed rivalry among bidders for stalls for this incident.

AUGUST 03
ARREST OF TAMILS: Peliyagoda police raided lodging houses in Kotahena, Pettah and Grandpass in Colombo and arrested several Tamil youths. Six of the youths identified were Mohansingham and T.Arunagirinathan from Kayts, S.Devanandan from Jaffna, S.Uthayakumar from Kokkuvil, T. Sivakumar from Nainativu and K.Rajendran from Thirunelveli.

SHELLING CONTINUES: Continuous shelling from army positions at Karainagar towards Sithankermi and Vaddukoddai in Jaffna District led to a displacement of residents to adjoining areas.

AUGUST 04
GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL ABDUCTED: Armed gunmen abducted Assistant Government Agent S.Amalanathan from his residence at Batticaloa according to Police reports.

AUGUST 05
ASIA WATCH AGAINST REPATRIATION: International NGO Asia Watch urged India not to proceed with the repatriation of Tamil refugees. It said " refugees have faced direct and indirect coercion to return home, including arbitrary arrest, withdrawal of

stipends and food rations and pressure to sign forms indicating desire to return without knowing the contents of what they were signing".

AUGUST 06
AERIAL BOMBING IN NORTH: Brigadier Angamma confirmed that aerial bombing of LTTE targets in the North was in progress. Leaflets requesting the public to keep away from LTTE positions had also been dropped according to him.

AUGUST 07
DISAPPEARANCE BECOMES A KILLING: The decomposed body of J.A.J.Jeyathas (40 Yrs) who disappeared from Uvarmalai in Trincomalee District was recovered from the Sambaltivu area by security forces.

AUGUST 08
POLICEMEN AMBUSHED: A police foot patrol was ambushed by the LTTE at Nilaveli in Trincomalee District. Five policemen were killed in this incident.

AUGUST 09
RETURNEES RENDERED HOMELESS: Refugees returning from India found their dwellings in Trincomalee had been demolished for construction of houses for Town Council employees. Some of the houses are occupied by Sinhalese families.

AUGUST 10
KILALI CLAIMS LIVES: Seventeen civilians were killed when traveling in a boat across the prohibited Jaffna lagoon. Survivors reported the capsizing of the boat consequent to naval fire in the area. Maheswaramoorthy (38 Yrs) with his wife and three children, T.Ganeshalingam (55Yrs), S.Sabanadesan, Mrs. S.Thangammah (59 Yrs), Mrs.R.Kamaladevi (52 Yrs), Mrs.B.Rajeswary (56Yrs) with her daughter Dayananthi (23Yrs), B.Mehawarnan (47Yrs), Mrs.

S.Ratneswary (60 Yrs), I.M.Nehru (30Yrs.) with his wife and child and Miss A.Ilaverni were the casualties.

AUGUST 11
ATTORNEY GENERAL AND PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEE: At the Geneva meeting of the UN Sub Commission on the prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Attorney General Tilak Marapone asserted that a parliamentary select committee was working towards finding a permanent solution to the ethnic conflict.

AUGUST 12
MEDIATION REJECTED: President Wijetunge conveyed to the World Council of Global Co operation that the North East problem is a domestic issue which was not ethnic but terrorist in nature. UN intervention to settle this problem was therefore not needed according to the President.

AUGUST 13
REFUGEE RETURNS: One thousand and eighty refugees were brought by ship to Trincomalee. Unaware of the local conditions the refugees inquired about their security and safety from officials who received them at the sea port.

AUGUST 14
TROOP WITHDRAWAL: Soldiers together with Cadres of Tamil group TELO operating with them retreated from the forward lines to the Thallady and Vankalai camps in Mannar island.

AUGUST 15
HELICOPTER PURCHASE OFF: President Wijetunge ordered the cancellation of the order for three Mi8 Russian attack aircraft, following allegations that senior officials in the government were receiving commissions on the purchase.

AUGUST 16
UNHCR INSPECTION: Deputy

AUGUST DIARY

chief of UNHCR mission in India Rajiv Kapur said in Tamil Nadu that UNHCR has sought permission from the Indian government to inspect the refugee camps in Tamil Nadu where Sri Lankan Tamils are housed.

AUGUST 17

FURTHER REFUGEE

RETURNS: Another batch consisting of eleven hundred and thirty one refugees from Tamil Nadu arrived by ship at Trincomalee.

AUGUST 18

RELEASE OF POWs: Secretary of the Organisation of Parents of Missing Army and Police Personnel E.Yakupitiya blamed the government over the failure to secure the release of POWs in the hands of the LTTE.

AUGUST 19

LOCAL ELECTIONS:

Government announced the holding of elections to seventy two local councils in the three districts in the East and Vavuniya in the North .

AUGUST 20

INDUSTRIAL UNREST: St. Clair and Glenmore plantation workers at Talawakelle in Nuwara Eliya District were on strike protesting against new tea plucking practices insisted upon by the management.

AUGUST 21

BOMB INJURES CHILDREN: S.Suresh (9 yrs.) and S.Kannan (10 yrs.) were seriously injured when a bomb they had found in a dried up well in Vavuniya exploded as they played with it.

AUGUST 22

MILITARY TRIBUNAL:

Newspapers quoted from the findings of a court of inquiry led by Major- General Gerry de Silva to the effect that Northern Commander Major- General Rohan Daluwatte and Brigadier Parry Liyanage were negligent at

the time the LTTE overran the Janakapura army camp in July.

AUGUST 23

ARMY RECRUITMENT:

Interviews were held at twenty one centres to recruit 10,000 soldiers for ten more infantry battalions.

AUGUST 24

REFERENDUM ON MERGER:

Presidential secretariat announced a postponement of the of 19 August referendum on North East merger in terms of the Indo- Sri Lanka Accord of 1987. New dates announced are 18 February 94 for the East and 28 April 94 for the North.

YOUTH BURNT :

The body of a youth burnt on rubber tyres was discovered at Vystwyke road at Mattakkuliya in Colombo. A poster nearby in Sinhalese referred to the body as that of Raveendran, a LTTE member involved in the killing of former President Premadasa.

AUGUST 25

SELECT COMMITTEE

DELAYS: NSSP has said that the Parliamentary Select Committee appointed to examine the constitution was delaying deliberations and called on opposition parties to resign from the Committee.

AUGUST 26

NAVAL ENCOUNTER: JOC reported the destruction of LTTE boats and killing of fifteen men at kilali in the Jaffna lagoon. Two naval craft were severely damaged and five sailors lost their lives. Five sailors were injured and four were reported missing.

AUGUST 27

INDEFINITE CURFEW:

Curfew was imposed at 6 a.m. in Jaffna and Mullaitivu districts and air craft were engaged in bombing LTTE targets. Troops advancing in Madagal area in Jaffna District lost a lieutenant and eight soldiers

were wounded. An army spokesman reported that the LTTE lost at least eight of their cadres.

NO LOCAL COUNCIL

ELECTIONS: President Wijetunge postponed the holding of elections to local councils in the East and Vavuniya previously announced on 19 August.

AUGUST 28

HINDU DEVOTEES BOMBED

FROM AIR: Devotees attending a festival at the Dhurkkai Amman Temple at Tellippalai in Jaffna District were targeted by two attack aircraft. Seven devotees were killed and over fifteen were injured.

TEN PERCENT CUT IN

PUBLIC SPENDING: President Wijetunge imposed a ten percent cut in public spending to make up for extra expenditure incurred on defence and rehabilitation.

AUGUST 29

NAVAL SHOW PIECE SUNK:

Israeli built naval gun boat-DVORA with twelve sailors aboard was sunk when rammed by an LTTE boat laden with explosives. Two LTTE members were also killed in this incident off the Point Pedro coast in the northern waters.

AERIAL BOMBING:

Air Force planes dropped bombs at Thavady and Kondavil in Jaffna District killing four civilians including three women and a child. Seven others were injured and several buildings were also damaged.

AUGUST 30

FUEL PRICE INCREASED: The price of a litre of diesel fuel was increased by ten cents to Rs.11.90.

AUGUST 31

DEFORESTRATION: According to the Forest Department, 17,025 hectares of forest has been destroyed in Batticaloa District and reforestation is difficult due to the ongoing war.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIATION EFFORTS THWARTED by INTRANSIGENCE of SRI LANKA

The peace plan proposed by four Nobel prize laureates on behalf of The World Council For Global Cooperation which recommended that the Government and LTTE invite the UN Secretary General to send a special envoy to mediate a negotiated settlement was rejected by the Sri Lankan Government in August.

Within Sri Lanka, a number of persons in power have expressed the need to end the conflict and dwelt of the adverse impact of the war, while at the same time rejecting external mediation offers and peace initiatives. President Wijetunge speaking at Sri Rahula College in Kandy in the first week of August lamented that US\$ 0.51 billion is being spent every year on the ongoing war in the North East while only US\$ 0.30 billion is available for education. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe echoed similar sentiments at a function at Anamadua in Puttalam District. In July Foreign Minister Harold Herat referred to the search over a decade for a solution to the same problem. The U.S ambassador referred to the need for an early solution to this problem at functions in July and August. Minister for Muslim affairs Azwar explained that it would be disastrous for the nation if the Parliamentary Select Committee failed to solve the ethnic issue. Japan's envoy expressed concern to President Wijetunge in May at the war situation in North East and conveyed Japanese government's belief that negotiations would be held early with a view to resolving the conflict.

The financial cost of the war is of concern to the President and Prime Minister. The cost in

human lives and misery although stupendous have been conveniently left unremarked by leaders in control of the state. There is no gainsaying the fact that the death of thousands of people cannot be overlooked by the international community.

The concern shown by nations and especially those that provide the much needed aid for Sri Lanka is understandable. Britain's John Major in a communication on 9 August has said " The British government's position is quite clear. We along with our European partners, believe the only way to achieve a lasting peace in Sri Lanka is through a negotiated, political settlement reached by all parties to the conflict. We have long urged this course of action as the only way forward to a lasting solution which recognises the rights of all the peoples of Sri Lanka. You will be aware that we have regularly said that our good offices are available to help talks start. Unfortunately negotiations are no closer ". Representatives of - U.S., France, Belgium and Norway submitted a draft resolution for discussion in August at the UN Sub Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities calling on both the Sri Lankan Government and LTTE to effect a cease-fire and seek the help of the UN Secretary General to reach a settlement.

Efforts by distinguished men and friendly nations of Sri Lanka take into cognizance the need to arrive at an early solution to the ongoing war. The salient feature in these moves is that there is no compulsion suggested anywhere. All have made only a suggestion that the Government utilise the

services of the UN to find a way out. In Somalia, Cambodia and Yugoslavia there was no request from the Governments for UN intervention. In the case of Sri Lanka the international community has sought to avoid the pitfalls that may arise in intervention.

The Sri Lankan Government has however rejected outright the help offered. The quick response of the President almost amounting to a retort in respect of the proposal made by the World Council for Global Co-operation appears no different from a snake's gut reaction. A decade long deliberations variously dubbed as-Round Table Conference, All Party Conference and Parliamentary Select Committee have all been thrown overboard as irrelevant. The statements of President Wijetunge seem to imply that the ten years of search had been debating only a terrorist problem. The strangest feature then is that even the terrorists (as the LTTE is termed by the Government) were closeted in parleys lasting over six months with the government. The Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord that dealt at length on devolution of power and units of devolution also becomes in the eyes of the present rulers an instrument seeking to solve a terrorist problem. In rejecting suggestions for International mediation the Government has only succeeded in making its position weaker in the international community. The attempt to rewrite a decade's history is not easily achieved.

Within the country Sinhalese extremists have spoken in support of the rejection which is understandable. So too is the

dissent on the rejection voiced by the Tamil political parties. The Government is keen to avoid any mediation and it announced the holding of local elections in the North East to pre-empt the draft resolution presented by the representatives of US, France, Belgium and Norway. Once the draft was not taken up the government postponed local elections. But the efforts to seek a military solution is being sustained. Raising ten new battalions with 10,000 soldiers is clear proof of the government's intentions. The 10% cut in public spending is another pointer that this amount too is to be diverted to the war effort. Having thwarted all efforts at mediation the government seems to be heading for an all out war to solve the ethnic problem.

DETAINEE RELEASED

High Court judge, Colombo Tharmadeva Jeyawickrema released an accused Kandasamy Sudhaharan (aged 21) from Vellaveli, Batticaloa District. He was arrested by security forces on 01.11.91 while he was on his way home. A case was filed against his detention in Supreme Court on 11.11.91., which recommended his release considering the report of Human Rights Monitoring Committee that the accused was unfit psychologically and physically to face inquiry. He is a psychiatric patient and medical certificate was produced before court. He was detained well over twenty months. When his case was taken before the high court, Colombo prosecution, with reference to Supreme Court recommendation, called off all charges against him and the court released him. He was charged with

CHILD ABUSE IN SRI LANKA

A recent survey by two eminent social workers highlighted the plight of the Sri Lankan children. One in every five children in Sri Lanka of the age group of 10 -- 14 years, does not attend school because of child labour practices. Of the 1.9 million children in the age group 10 - 14, about 250,000 are in the non-formal labour market. Around 100,000 children between the ages of 10 and 14 are in refugee camps and about 20,000 in the same age group are engaged in male prostitution and some 10,000 are estimated to be street children according to the study. Hundreds of house-holds in and around Colombo are continuing to employ child servants despite a plea to end this abuse of children. More children are also abandoned by their parents now. An abandoned child is found every other day, on the streets of Colombo, at an average of nearly 16 a month, Police statistics reveal.

PSC LACKS QUORUM

Parliament Select Committee for finding a political solution to the ethnic crisis headed by SLFP MP Mangala Munasinghe postponed its meeting for lack of a quorum. Only nine members were present whereas the minimum should be fourteen. Tamil and Muslim MPs are boycotting the proceedings of PSC as the two major Sinhalese parties failed to submit their proposals to the PSC.

having joined the LTTE and receiving training in the use of arms between 01.01.90 and 31.12.90.

SHELL ATTACK

A shell projectiled from Palaly army camp took the lifes of two devotees who gathered for a festival at Selva Sannathy Temple, Thondamanaru, in Jaffna District. Some others were also injured in this incident.

STF EXTENDED

Elite Special Task Force earlier stationed in Ampara District has extended it's operations to the Batticaloa District too. They have put up camps in Porativu, Chettipalaum, Thettativu, Thalankuda, Manmunai, Arayampati, Ampalanthurai, Mahiladithivu and Kiran Kulam in Batticaloa District under the commandship of Sarath Perera, Assistant Superintendent of Police (STF). Two camps at Oluvil and 8th mile post in Amparai District were completely removed and numbers were reduced in some other camps in Ampara District.

LG ELECTIONS PUT OFF

Tamil and Muslim MPs and party leaders welcomed the decision taken by President D.B. Wijetunge to postpone the local government election in East and Vavuniya. They requested the President not only to stick to the postponement of the election but also to find a solution for the national ethnic crisis, respecting the rights of all the people concerned.

The election was postponed to September 1994 and the MPs expressed their hope that the government should forward a solution to the ethnic problem by then.

Situation Report

HABEAS CORPUS APPLICATION

An application was made in the Colombo Appeal Court by Mrs. Sivakumarasamy Jeyaletchumy for her son Gajendran held in custody since 1 March without charge or trial to be brought before court. Her husband had disappeared on 10/10/89 and son Gajendran had then fled to India as a refugee according to this application. He had been held in custody for nine months in India and released without charges being framed. On arrival at Katunayake airport in Colombo he had been arrested and held until now.

KANNAKIPURAM VILLAGE IN AMPARAI DISTRICT

In June 1990, 1361 members from 330 families residing in Kannakipuram village fled their homes due to the commencement of hostilities. They have been refugees for thirty nine months in temporary shelters at Panankadu village. The German envoy in Colombo Mr. Klaus pledged German assistance for resettlement after visiting Kannakipuram. The refugees were informed of the move to resettle them by 31 July. However, rehabilitation staff were instructed at the last minute to put off resettlement arrangements until further notice.

PRISONERS OF WAR SUSPEND FAST

Thirty three prisoners of war held by the LTTE suspended on 12 August their fast unto death after learning that chances of government intervention for their release was not forthcoming.

MUSLIMS BELEAGUERED

Development schemes without regional security is meaningless and Muslims should not be duped by such trivial benefits said SLMC leader Ashraff at a meeting held at Pothuvil in Amparai District. The traditional lands of the Muslims have been stealthily alienated and attempts are being made even on lands belonging to mosques he added. The only district with a Muslim majority had been systematically changed and they have become a minority. The only way out of the domination by the majority community is for the Muslims to secure a Muslim provincial council within a merged North East province, concluded Ashraff.

POLITICIANS TO FIGHT THE WAR

A meeting to review the political and security situation was held at the parliamentary complex attended by the Prime Minister, leaders of SLFP, MEP, USA, SLMC and EPRLF. JOC's General Hamilton Wanasinghe and the three service chiefs were present at this meeting where General Wanasinghe explained the destruction of the Janakapura army camp by the LTTE. When questioned as to what could be done to boost the morale of the troops the General replied that it could be achieved by the opposition remaining united. The General also recommended the holding of local elections in the East as a means of wiping out the LTTE. He expected the East to be ready for elections after September.

REGISTRATION OF RESIDENTS

The Defence Ministry has issued instructions to the Deraniyagala police in Ratnapura District to register all Tamil residents in the town and plantations. The registration form has separate parts for including blood relatives and others. Residents have been warned not to allow any one not included in the forms to stay without prior notice to the police.

BISHOP'S APPEAL

Church of South India's Jaffna Bishop Rev. Dr. S. Jebanesan in a communication to President Wijetunge has appealed for the suspension of aerial bombing. Innocent civilians had been killed due to aerial bombing in the last week of July according to the Bishop who cited the death of five persons including four students in Thirunelvely and Kopay on 27 July. The bombing on 30 July at Sithankerny, one mile from his office claimed the life of T. Muhunthan, a student. In all, ten persons were seriously injured in these bombings, the Bishop added.

US ENVOY REITERATES

Ms. T. Schaffer, speaking at a meeting of the UN Association of Sri Lanka in Colombo on 26 August said relatively few people in Colombo seem to have any sense of urgency in solving the North East problem and this is a disturbing attitude. She said the indifference might be due to frequent betrayals and broken promises on this issue.

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