



## DELIVERING REFUGEES INTO A WAR SITUATION

The governments of Switzerland and Sri Lanka signed an agreement on 12 January for the forcible repatriation of rejected Tamil asylum seekers from the European nation. There are currently over 30,000 Tamil refugees in Switzerland and 16,000 Tamils whose cases remain undecided will be affected by the bilateral agreement.

UNHCR which has been instrumental in the signing of the agreement will 'act as a liaison between the returnees and the two parties and assist in meeting particular problems encumbered by the returnees'. The agreement, which will remain valid for two years, provides for the appointment of a Sri Lankan government competent authority to liaise with UNHCR. The returning refugees may be held in camps until 'conditions permit the returnees to return to their original place of permanent residence.

UNHCR-involved repatriation programme to return Tamil refugees from India resumed on 28 January when 501 refugees were sent by ship from Tamil Nadu to Talaimannar. Reports say around 4,000 refugees will be returned from India in the current phase of the programme. It was necessary, as far as Western governments are concerned, to return refugees from Tamil Nadu in the first instance in order to facilitate repatriation of Tamils from the West. UNHCR became involved in repatriation of Tamils from India despite being unable to determine the voluntariness of the returns and, in its own words, the 'unstable

security situation in Sri Lanka'.

Tamil organisations all over the world have continued to protest against involuntary repatriation. The Tamil Information Centre has, in its representations to the UNHCR, pointed out the involuntary nature of the returns and the deteriorating security situation in Sri Lanka. UNHCR has never addressed the concerns raised by the Tamils and human rights organisations. In its letters to the TIC and other NGOs, UNHCR has always cleverly avoided the fundamental problems of returning refugees to a country at civil war.

In August 1993 USA-based human rights agency Asia Watch called on both governments of Sri Lanka and India to halt the repatriation of Tamils unless there are firm guarantees that refugees were returning voluntarily. Asia Watch also sought assurance that refugees would not be subject to persecution.

The US Committee for Refugees (USCR) says in a report in January 1994 that, 'clearly repatriation to Sri Lanka at this time is risky: the potential remains for inter-ethnic communal violence; and the root causes of the problems in Sri Lanka, - the grievances of the Tamil minority - have yet to be redressed'. USCR further says: 'UNHCR should also keep clearly in mind its own assessment that conditions are not yet suitable for repatriation, and avoid any actions that would appear to encourage return. The agency must also remain sensitive to expressions of

concern by many observes that India is pressuring refugees to repatriate'. UNHCR has not only disregarded international concerns relating to refugees in Tamil Nadu, but has taken a more active role in relation to Tamil asylum seekers in the West and has recommended the return of rejected refugees to Sri Lanka declaring falsely that Colombo and southern areas are safe for returnees.

In November 1993 the British Refugee Council Director Alf Dubs wrote to UN High Commissioner for Refugees Mrs Sadako Ogata expressing concern over the situation in Sri Lanka and asked for a review of UNHCR's position on Sri Lankan asylum seekers in Europe and North America. Mr. Dubs also said: 'Many European governments appear to believe that UNHCR's position as outlined in your office's Information Note of 16 June 1993 endorses the internal flight alternative option and supports both individual and organised programmes of return of Sri Lankan asylum seekers whose applications are rejected'. Mr. Dubs called on UNHCR to review its position and in the light of disturbing developments recommend to governments that Tamil refugees should not be returned until there is a significant and lasting improvement in the situation of bitter and bloody civil war.

The letter of Mr. Dubs remains unanswered after two months. Tamil observes have said that UNHCR would wait until after the signing of the agreement between

## Switzerland and Sri Lanka.

Since June 1993, well over 10,000 Tamils have been arbitrarily arrested in Colombo and its suburbs regardless of whether they could demonstrate long-standing residence and employment in Colombo and whether they were in possession of identity documents. Over 2,000 of the Tamils are in detention. A further 2,000 Tamils were arrested in January 1994. Arrests are carried out often in the middle of the night by men in civilian dress and many arrests have not been acknowledged. In a new practice in January a number of Tamils coming out of cinemas have been arrested. Fourteen Tamil youths employed on a Greek ship were detained on 22 January by police when the ship docked in Colombo. A Tamil deported from Denmark was arrested by police in Colombo from his residence in January. A number of Tamils have also been arrested in Negambo and in the Hill Country where Tamil shops have been specifically targeted during search operations.

Amnesty International says that the waves of arrests form a pattern of human rights violations directed at the Tamil community, in which thousands of people appear to have been arrested

solely on the basis of their ethnic origin. Seventeen Sri Lankan human rights organisations say safeguards recommended by the UN Working Group on Involuntary Disappearances and Amnesty International relating to arrest and detention have been disregarded. These organisations also point out that Emergency rule, the Prevention of Terrorism Act, unofficial armed squads, unlicensed vehicles, perceived freedom from accountability before the law etc are some of the factors that need to be addressed.

A number of cases of torture of Tamils have been filed in the Supreme Court and disappearance of Tamils is a major concern. In the last three months, at least 16 Tamils have been abducted by armed death squads in Colombo. The bodies of T. Raviadrarajah and Ravi were found in Negambo with their throats slit in mid- October. Three Tamils were abducted on 17 October. Haran Kumanvel was abducted from Armour Street on 14 November. His dead body was found on the Ratmalana railway line in early December. Uma Prakash who led a government death squad and was responsible for number abduction and killings was himself shot dead in January.

A large number of Tamils have been killed in bombing and shelling in the North-East and military attacks on civilians continue despite representations by the Jaffna Government Agent and international human rights agencies to President D B Wijetunge. In the last three months several hospitals, schools and places of worship have been destroyed by the security forces and people are being made destitute by the economic blockade of the north. The economic blockade has also caused thousands of deaths. In Mannar three Tamil refugees who were living in the UNHCR-managed Pesalai camp were arrested by the police and Amnesty International has expressed concern that their whereabouts are not known.

These appalling violations of human rights are of no concern to UNHCR which has a mandate to protect refugees. Many human rights agencies and the Tamils have no doubt that Tamils returned without proper safeguards will face persecution in a war situation and where the government has been directly responsible for human rights violations. At present refugees will be returning only to a situation which continues to create more refugees.

## NEGOTIATIONS AND TERRORISM

Speaking in Parliament on the debate the extension of the Emergency on 20 January, MEP leader Dinesh Gunawardene characterised the Prime Minister's invitation to the LTTE for negotiations in the context of the President's claim that no ethnic problem existed, as a clear indication of government vacillation on the issue of dealing with the LTTE. He also questioned as to how the Elections Commissioner would ensure a free and fair election in the East and Vavuniya without peace in the areas. not prevailing there.

## EMERGENCY AND ETHNIC PROBLEM

Speaking in the Emergency debate on 20 January Hindu Cultural Affairs minister P.P.Devaraj asserted that if a political solution was not found for the ethnic problem, Emergency rule will have to remain forever.

## TAMIL VILLAGE SURROUNDED

Security forces personnel conducting a search operation at Nilaveli in Trincomalee District on 20 January arrested seven Tamils.

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL WRITES TO PRESIDENT

O. Hedenciren of the Swedish Amnesty International in a letter to President Wijetunge on 5 January has expressed his concern over the fate of Konaamalai Ilancheliyan, Muthukumar Baskaran, Kanapathipillai Vilvarajah, Arulappa Francis and John Augustine Gero who were arrested by the police on the Mutur ferry in Trincomalee District in August and September 1990. The whereabouts of these five Tamils is sought by O. Hedenciren who has also sent a copy of this letter to Prime Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe.

## NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT CONCERN OVER TAMILS IN SRI LANKA

In a reply dated 3 January to the All Parties Supporting Group for Tamils based in Oslo, Stein Seaberg of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry has informed that the the Sri Lankan human rights situation is being monitored by the Norwegian representatives in Colombo. It is said that Norway's concern over the treatment of Tamils in Colombo was conveyed at a meeting between Norway's envoy in Colombo Jon A. Gaarder and Foreign Minister A.C.S.Hameed on 7 December.

It has also been pointed out that the human rights situation in Sri Lanka would again be taken up when Norway's assistance under the country programme comes up for discussion in the second week of January.

## BUDDHIST HIGH PRIESTS EXHORT WAR

New commander of the army Lt. Gen. Gerry de Silva though a non-Buddhist called on the Buddhist High Priests in Kandy to placate Buddhist sentiments riding high in the country. All the three High Priests urged him to go all out to ensure an outright victory in the war and safeguard the rights of the Sinhalese people.

Responding to the almost identical message expressed by the three prelates the commander politely brought to their notice that almost 12,000 soldiers had deserted the army.

## TIC ACCESSION LIST

A selection of documents received by TIC in January 1994

SHR 3289

NGO Forum on Sri Lanka  
Memorandum: Inpunity and  
Human Rights Accountability in  
Sri Lanka

London: NGO Forum on Sri  
Lanka; 10.1.94  
2p.

**DESCRIPTORS: Human Rights  
Violation / Sri Lankan  
Government / JVP / Detention /  
Disappearance / North Eastern  
Province / Sri Lankan Tamils**

SHR 3288

Appeal from Ex-Patriate Tamils  
London: British Parliamentary  
Campaign; January 1994

2p.  
**DESCRIPTORS: Fundamental  
Rights / Appeal / Sri Lankan  
Tamils / United Kingdom**

SHR 3287

British Parliamentary Rally Tamil  
National issue  
London: British Parliamentary  
Campaign; January 1994

17p.  
**DESCRIPTORS: Self-  
determination / Sri Lankan  
Tamils / Constitutional  
Amendments / Agreements /  
Peace initiatives / Ethnic  
Discrimination**

SHR 3286

The current situation of Tamils in  
Sri Lanka  
London: Campaign for the  
Protection of Tamil Refugees  
Under UN Convention; December  
1993

8p.  
**DESCRIPTORS: Appeal /  
Human Rights Violation / Sri  
Lankan Tamils / Sri Lankan  
Government / Situation Report**

OHR 272

Amnesty for unregistered migrants  
and refugees  
London: National Union of  
Refugees; 01-12-93  
5p.

**DESCRIPTORS: Immigration /  
Deportation / Refugees / United  
Kingdom / Asylum / Act /  
Statistics**

SHR 3291

The right to self-determination: the  
Sri Lankan Tamil National  
question: briefing to UNCHR  
Geneve 1994

London: Tamil Information Centre;  
1994

7p.  
**DESCRIPTORS: Self-  
determination / Sri Lankan  
Tamils**

PC 4658

Coomarasawamy, Radhika  
The select committee and the  
failure of politics  
Sri Lanka: The Sunday Times; 05-  
12-93

2p.  
**DESCRIPTORS: Select  
Committee / Peace initiative**

SHR 3285

Futher information:  
unacknowledged detention / Fear of  
"disappearance  
London: Amnesty International; 7  
January 1994

1p.  
**DESCRIPTORS: Disappearance /  
Detention / Sri Lankan / Tamils /  
ICRC**

SHR 3301

Amnesty International  
Sri Lanka: more than a thousand  
arbitrarily arrested and at least six  
held in unacknowledged detention  
London: Amnesty International; 27  
October 1993

2p.  
**DESCRIPTORS: Detention /  
Arrest / Sri Lankan Tamils /  
Colombo / Southern Province**

SHR 3293

Embassy of Switzerland: agreement  
Colombo: Ministry of Foreign  
Affairs; 9 June 1993

3p.

## JANUARY DIARY

JANUARY 01

**ARREST OF RETURNEE:**

Ponnampalam Rasadurai Segar (26 Yrs.) of Jaffna deported from Denmark was arrested by police at his uncle's home in Colombo.

JANUARY 02

**MORE MUSCLE TO WIN**

**WAR:** New army commander of the army Lt. Gen. Gerry de Silva said the army's strength will be further bolstered and that he would strive to finish off the war with a well co-ordinated plan.

JANUARY 03

**TAMIL ARRESTS CONTINUE:**

In a raid conducted at lodging houses in the Pettah area in central Colombo police arrested 86 Tamils including six females on suspicion of LTTE links.

JANUARY 04

**MASS GRAVES PROBE:** The government rejected calls made by the opposition for the appointment of an independent commission of inquiry to investigate the mass graves unearthed at Suriyakande in the Ratnapura District.

JANUARY 05

**CANDIDATE'S DEATH:**

Kanagaratnam Jeevaratnam a candidate in the local government elections was found dead after being taken away from his home at Kaluwankerni in Batticaloa District, unidentified armed men.

**CLIMB DOWN ON SEDITION:**

Emergency regulations on sedition promulgated on 20 December were amended by the omission of the words " against government and President" following widespread opposition from political parties and the Free Media Movement.

**CIVILIANS KILLED IN**

**AERIAL BOMBING:**

Four civilians were killed and fifteen were wounded when air force planes bombed Thavady , Chavakachcheri in Jaffna District.

JANUARY 06

**HELICOPTER TARGETS**

**CYCLISTS:** V.Arasaratnam (18 yrs.) of Uduvil and S.Sivaranjan (19 yrs.) were fired upon by air force helicopters at 6 p.m. while cycling with a load of firewood in Kaithady in Jaffna District. Both were admitted to hospital with serious injuries.

JANUARY 07

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**

**AND HRTF:** In an Urgent Action Note Amnesty International says that the ICRC has denied a claim by the Human Rights Task Force that three Tamil detainees had been released to them. Amnesty International has voiced its concern for the safety of the three missing Tamils and called for urgent action from the government in this regard. The three Tamils were living in the UNHCR-managed Pesalai camp in Talaimannar.

JANUARY 08

**SCARCITY OF BREAD IN**

**JAFFNA:** Reports indicated that bread was not being made in Jaffna due to the prevailing scarcity of wheat flour in the district.

JANUARY 09

**TAMIL VILLAGE SEARCHED:**

Selvanayaapuram in Trincomalee District was surrounded by army and police personnel in the morning hours and residents were screened at Kalaimagal school . Several were detained after the search.

**OFFICERS BLAMED FOR**

**POONERYN DISASTER:** The commission of inquiry that investigated the Pooneryn disaster in a 160-page report held a Major General, 3 Brigadiers, a Colonel, a Lt. Colonel, a Major and 13 Captains responsible for the army's failure.

JANUARY 10

**MAYOR AND WASTE:** Colombo Mayor R.Rajapakse was suspended

on charges of waste and corruption. Deputy Mayor K.Ganesalingam was appointed the new mayor.

JANUARY 11

**CIVILIANS KILLED IN**

**AERIAL BOMBING:** Mangala Jeganathan, chairman of the MPCPS and his wife were killed and their three children injured when their house at Nedunkerni in Kilinochchi District was hit in a bombing raid by air force planes.

JANUARY 12

**REFUGEE REPATRIATION:**

Switzerland and Sri Lanka signed an agreement providing for the return of rejected asylum seekers in Switzerland.

JANUARY 13

**MASS ARREST OF TAMILS:**

Ninety seven Tamils arrested in Colombo were being held in seven police stations according to Industries State Minister M.S.Sellasamy. He appealed for the release of innocent persons in view of the Tamil Thai Pongal festival falling on 14 January.

JANUARY 14

**INFORMANT KILLED:**

Former soldier in the army Wilmon Dissanayake of Mannampitiya in Polonnaruwa District was shot dead by unidentified men who claimed that he was an informant to his former superiors.

JANUARY 15

**ABDUCTION IN VAVUNIYA:**

Ms. M.Julith of Kundukulam in Vavuniya District was abducted in the night from her home by unidentified men.

JANUARY 16

**POLICEMEN KILLED:**

Bodies of two reserve policemen with gunshot wounds were discovered in the army sentry point at Cheddikulam in Vavuniya District.

## JANUARY DIARY

### REFUGEE CAMP VISITED:

North-East Governor Lionel Fernando visiting the Vipulananda refugee camp at Karaitivu in Amparai District to observe the living conditions at the camp.

JANUARY 17

### ABDUCTION AND KILLING:

Sellathurai Pushparajah (22 yrs.) was abducted by unidentified persons at Kiliveddy, Muthur in Trincomalee District. His body was later found at Menkamam.

JANUARY 18

### VILLAGERS PARADED

**BEFORE INFORMANT:** Tamil villagers in Meeravodai, Sungankulam and Kulkkottan in Batticaloa District were taken by security forces personnel to a public place where they were paraded before a hooded informant.

JANUARY 19

### EXPLOSION KILLS

**POLICEMEN:** Two policemen on foot patrol at Karuwakkerni in Batticaloa District were killed when they stepped on an explosive device.

### TAMILS ARRESTED IN EAST:

Twenty two Tamils including four women were arrested by security forces personnel who surrounded Mannampitiya in Polonnaruwa District.

JANUARY 20

### PRISONER OF WAR

**RELEASED:** Lance Corporal I.R. Gunasekera taken prisoner at Pooneryn was released by the LTTE on humanitarian grounds for advanced medical treatment. The ICRC arranged for the released soldier to be flown to Colombo.

JANUARY 21

### MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE OF

**COCONUT OIL:** Speaking in Parliament on the Bill to restrict the use of pesticides Suresh Premachandran MP queried as to why even a bottle of coconut oil was being banned for the residents of

Jaffna. He pointed out that there was no military use from this vegetable oil. Referring to the elections in the East he asserted that the army and the Special Task Force were the only contestants.

JANUARY 22

### PRESIDENT'S CONCERN:

Batticaloa's UNP leader A.Rizwie Sinna Lebbe in a statement disclosed that President Wijetunge had authorised an additional allocation of Rs. 90 million for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction in the district following the representations made by the UNP in the previous week.

JANUARY 23

### POLICEMEN IN ELECTION

**CAMPAIGN:** At a conference for candidates summoned by the Government Agent, Batticaloa, SLMC MP M.L.A.M.Hisbullah charged that a Senior Superintendent of Police was actively engaged in selecting candidates and campaigning and demanded an immediate stop to this type of activity.

JANUARY 24

**LANDMINE EXPLOSION:** Two soldiers were injured in a landmine explosion at Ambilanthurai in Batticaloa District.

JANUARY 25

### URGENT ALLOCATION FOR

**VAVUNIYA:** At a conference at the Vavuniya District Secretariat Commissioner General of Essential Services Christy Silva announced the immediate allocation of Rs.90 million to the district from his department.

JANUARY 26

### RELIGIOUS DELEGATION

**VISIT DESTROYED CHURCH:** The religious delegation to Jaffna led by the Bishop of Colombo Rev. Nicholas Marcus Fernando in the company of ICRC officials visited the St. James Church at Gurunagar and observed the damage caused

during the bombing in November.

### ANOTHER MASS ARREST OF

**TAMILS:** Thirty eight Tamils were arrested in the Mutuwal area in Colombo during a night swoop conducted on the directions of Assistant Superintendent of Police Gnanaratne.

JANUARY 27

### RELIGIOUS DELEGATION

**MEETS LTTE:** The religious delegation led by the Bishop of Colombo Rev. Nicholas Marcus Fernando met with A.Balasingam, Ilankumaran and V.Balakumar of the LTTE from 5pm to 7pm and explored avenues for peace.

JANUARY 28

**REFUGEE RETURNS:** Five hundred and nine refugees returning from Tamil Nadu in India arrived by ship at Talaimannar in Mannar District.

JANUARY 29

### RESUMPTION OF RELIEF

**WORK:** A report said that UNHCR was likely to resume relief work in LTTE controlled areas following discussions between UNHCR Colombo officers and the LTTE in Jaffna.

JANUARY 30

### PEACE INITIATIVE OF

**RELIGIOUS DELEGATION:** The three-member peace delegation to Jaffna led by Bishop Rev. Nicholas Marcus Fernando in a statement issued in Colombo called for a cease-fire and negotiations to as a means to bringing the war to an end.

JANUARY 31

### ANOTHER BATCH OF

**RETURNEES:** Five hundred and seven families returned to Talaimannar from Tamil Nadu in India where they had sought refuge since June 1990.



## Mass Graves, Mafioso and Militarism

The fact that militarisation in Sri Lanka has reached unacceptable limits is clearly demonstrated by the big slice it takes off government expenditure. From US\$ 12 million in 1978 and \$ 189 million in 1986 it stands at \$ 510 million in 1993 and is expected to rise. More funds are diverted for military expenditure by way of supplementary estimates and drastic cuts in public spending. It is no secret that large sums indicated as rehabilitation expenditure are siphoned off for the pursuit of war. The appointment of Brigadier Ananda Weerasekera, a serving army officer as the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation serves this purpose well.

The preoccupation of the government with militarisation and flames fanned by the media, Sinhalese Buddhist chauvinists and the Buddhist clergy have inevitably led to the rise of militarism in the country. The media blames every one other than itself for the ineffective conduct of the war. Former minister and leader of the Sinhala Defence League, Gamini Jayasuriya faults every politician who mentions the cost of the war and condemns these individuals as who are ignorant of the cost to the nation resulting from corruption and waste. The Buddhist high priests in Kandy bless the service chiefs whose only function is the pursuit of war.

With this unchanging background for over a decade as the breeding ground, militarism has taken a firm root. Excesses by the security forces have been condoned and those involved in the abuses have been rewarded. President Jayewardene began this process by promoting officers who demonstrated opposite the residences of judges who gave unpalatable decisions. President Premadasa turned a blind eye to violations on a massive scale by the security forces ostensibly conducted against the JVP. President D.B. Wijetunge rewarded former Deputy Inspector General of Police P.Udugampola with an appointment

as vice chairman of the Ports Authority for not disclosing the links of politicians in the role of death squads. All three presidents have actively ordered the service commanders to pursue the war against the Tamils in North-East under the guise of fighting the LTTE and rewarded them on their retirement with important positions as secretaries to ministries and as ambassadors abroad. The aerial bombing, strafing and shell fire have in fact targeted civilian Tamils instead of the combatants. All three presidents have knowingly been encouraging the security forces to commit more crimes against the Tamils who are the target of army offensives in the North-East.

Resulting from the support received from successive presidents the Sri Lankan forces are in the same position as the German army just prior to World War I. This new force in the body politic is a threat to the existing weak democratic fabric and seeks to dictate government policy. Immediately after the *Yal Devi* military operation, army commander General Cecil Waidyaratne issued a death threat to journalist Iqbal Aththas who was reporting on the conduct of this campaign. On 6 November a wreath was sent to the journalist's residence from the Sinha regiment of the army. Following the Pooneryn disaster General Waidyaratne also pressed for the imposition of censorship which however was turned down. In December Gunadasa Amerasekera and Prof. Nalin de Silva of the Jathika Chinthanaya (National Consciousness), who have constantly criticised the conduct of the war, received a letter from army officers urging them to refrain from attacking the military. The letter has had its desired effect.

Additional to such interferences is the ominous threat posed by the security forces to politicians who spoke out against those responsible for the mass graves unearthed at Sooriyakande in Ratnapura District

on 3 January. These 40 foot graves with almost 300 bodies including those of school children have in fact made militarism come out unmasked. Many of the army and police officers implicated in the disappearances now hold senior positions in the forces and some of those who commanded them are in the diplomatic service as ambassadors, a perfect setting for the cover up operations. This coterie wishes to ensure that the skeletons continue to be in the closet and the threats to the opposition elements is a natural outflow. MPs Richard Pathirana and Nandimitra Ekanayake received direct threats. A veiled threat in Mafioso style was directed at the local politician Dharmadasa Wanniarachchi who was involved in digging up the mass graves. On 5 January a skull was propped against his front door in a clear message seeking his silence. Local cemeteries were dug up by armed gangs which carted off 7 skeletons with one of them ending up again on the door step of Dharmadasa Wanniarachchi on 9 January. State-run Lake House newspapers which blacked out the mass graves at Sooriyakande gave prominence to the run on the cemeteries implying that mass graves were the result of skeletons missing from cemeteries. Lawyer S.A.Premaratne watching the interests of some parents was also shot at while returning to Colombo after the magisterial inquiry.

The naked face of militarism in Sri Lanka is made unambiguous by the report of the committee appointed to inquire into the *Pooneryn* disaster. The new commander of the army is unable to act on any of the findings of the committee and is holding back his recommendations fearing open rebellion among his forces if any action is contemplated against officers responsible for the military failure at Pooneryn. It is clear that politicians in power have no way other than to toe the military's line on any national problem. Failure to heed the voice of militarism may not end with mere skeletons on doorsteps and President Wijetunge could well be the biggest casualty.

## CIVIL ADMINISTRATION UNDERMINED

The monthly report for December 1993 submitted by the Jaffna Government Agent vividly portrays the civil administration buckling under the economic blockade, aerial bombing and artillery shelling by government security forces.

The total number of persons displaced in the district stands at 266,613 from 80,522 families. Large sections of the residents from Gurunagar, Kokkuvil and Chavachcheri have been displaced as a direct result of aerial bombing carried out during December. The GA points out that if aerial bombing is suspended all these persons will be able to leave the 198 welfare centres. The serious incidents of aerial bombing and artillery shelling and the resulting death and injuries listed in the report read as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Type of Attack</u>	<u>No. of Death</u>	<u>No. of Injured</u>
02.12.1993	Gurunagar, Jaffna	Shelling from Mandaitivu	-	2 children
05.12.1993	St.James church, Gurunagar, Jaffna;	Air attack	10	17
	Pasaiyoor, Jaffna;	Air attack	06	14
	Erlalai, Vali-South.	Air attack	-	04
07.12.1993	Punnalaikkadduwan, Vali-East.	Shell attack	-	01
08-12-1993	Jaffna- ICRC Hospital Security Zone	Shell attack	-	01
	Kondavil	Shell attack	-	02
	Valvettiturai	Shell attack	-	02
09.12.1993	Karanavai, Vadamaradchi- South-West.	Shell attack	01	04
	Jaffna-ICRC Hospital Security Zone	Shell attack	-	01
15.12.1993	Mallakam, Vali-North	Shell attack	-	01
23.12.1993	Jaffna Lagoon	Firing from navy boats	01	-
25.12.1993	Jaffna-ICRC Hospital Security Zone	Shell attack	01	-
30.12.1993	Chavakachcheri Town	Air attack	10	57
		TOTAL	<u>41</u>	<u>140</u>

Low food stock level, minimal fuel and medical supplies have also been detailed in this report submitted to President D B Wijetunge. Road repairs had never been carried out in the district for three years which has crippled transport thus aggravating the already precarious food situation. Standard of living in the district deteriorates beach day and the population is suffering both physically and psychologically according to the report. Referring to his repeated requests for the suspension of aerial bombing and artillery shelling which cause nothing but destruction, the GA points out that he is trying to provide at least the basic necessities under trying conditions. The population will be disillusioned and civil administration would be put under severe strain if these attacks continue, concludes the report.

## ABYSMAL MEDICAL FACILITIES IN MULLAITIVU

According to the latest figures available 29,190 persons have been registered as displaced in Mullaitivu District from among the 132,174 residents. This means one in every four persons has been displaced.

The district hospital at Mullaitivu town had been abandoned since 1990 due to the security situation and functions temporarily at the Puthukkudiyiruppu village hospital while the central dispensaries at Kokkilai and Mankulam remain closed for years. The temporary hospital has one District Medical Officer, two Assistant Medical Practitioners and six nurses. This hospital with 40 beds caters to an average of 275 patients a day and is pathetically inadequate to the task.

Upto November a total of 395 patients had been transferred elsewhere for further treatment. It has no dentist or even a maternity ward in spite of around 60 childbirths a month. There is one defective refrigerator for the whole hospital which has no electricity supply.

As a result of the neglect of medical services the death rate in the district has risen to 14.5% from the 3.17% of 1987. There is no ambulance for emergency transfer of patients to Vavuniya, 75 km. away. Eighty four patients died in the year before ICRC assistance could be sought for an ambulance. Lack of drugs to arrest haemorrhage has led to

innumerable deaths especially in the context of aerial bombing and artillery shelling. Casualty rates of 23 deaths at the Vatrappalai Hindu Temple festival on 18 May 1992 arising out of artillery shell fire and 27 deaths at the cultural festival at Mathalan village on 28 September 1993 arising out of aerial bombing could have been significantly reduced if drugs were available to arrest bleeding, reports say.

It is clear beyond doubt that the denial of medical facilities is taking a huge toll on human lives. The district needs urgent improvements in medical facilities and uninterrupted supply of medicine.

## LAWLESSNESS AMONG SECURITY FORCES

A series of incidents involving the Sri Lankan security forces have demonstrated the unmistakable trend that they are proving to be a law unto themselves. This pattern pervades the officer corps too and has resulted in a state where discipline has become hard to maintain.

Soldiers U.Piyasena, K.A.Sunil Shantha, H.M.Jayalath and A.G.Seneviratne were remanded by the city Magistrate on 28 January for robbery of a gold chain and wrist watch at Galle Face Green beside the army headquarters.

M.L.Kumarasiri arrested in January over a highway robbery at Anuradhapura with four accomplices turned out to be an army deserter. A T-56 rifle, M14 grenades and ammunition recovered from him proved to be army issues made to the army camp in Vavuniya from where he had deserted two years ago.

Major P.Udugampola suspended from the army over his involvement in the smuggling of

gold biscuits on 31.07.91 was given the benefit of the doubt by a judge who exonerated him in January. Lt. M.Wickremaratchie who too was charged and pleaded guilty was fined Rs. 100,000.

Lt. Col. Jayantha Kotelawela under training at Fort Benning in the United States was expelled from the Infantry Advanced Officers Course for misconduct over a shoplifting charge. It is significant that this is a parallel of a senior police officer being charged with a similar offence at the Selfridges shop in the United Kingdom some years ago. Lt. Col. Kotelawela had claimed that he is innocent but the US authorities were not convinced and he had left the United States in the second week of January.

Brigadier Daya Wijesekera now retired is linked to a massive racket involving the transportation of banned goods to the Jaffna

peninsula and was the subject of an army court of inquiry whose findings have been finalised now.

In the local government elections to be held in the Eastern province three MPs have alleged that security forces personnel had forced some civilians to sign the nomination papers. SLMC MP M.L.A.M. Hisbullah has complained of a senior police officer being actively engaged in selecting candidates and in campaigning.

On becoming the new commander Lt. Gen. Gerry Silva announced that he was considering a general pardon for army deserters.

This litany of indiscipline among the security forces is ample testimony that they cannot be relied upon to maintain law and order in the country.

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