



## The Military: A Major obstacle to Peace

The third round of talks between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sri Lankan government delegation on 14 January in Jaffna ended without any agreement.

The first round of talks was held in mid-October. During these talks the LTTE insisted that the sufferings of the people must be alleviated before negotiations on the settlement of the national conflict could begin. The people of North-East have endured over ten years of violence, including aerial bombardment and an economic blockade which has left thousands of people dead and the whole population malnourished. The fishing community has been severely affected by the fishing ban. The LTTE demanded that a) the economic blockade must be completely lifted b) the ban on fishing must be removed c) a safe passage must be opened for civilians to travel between the Jaffna peninsula and the mainland d) the displaced people must be resettled, and (e) hostilities must end so that the people could lead a normal life. Currently the government is complaining that there are new demands by the LTTE. LTTE however, deny this allegation and accuse the government of misleading the people of Sri Lanka and the international community.

LTTE say that at the first round of talks, a schedule was tabled by the government to deal with the day-to-day problems of the people in the North-East. They welcomed such an initiative and insisted that the immediate problems of the people

should be resolved first before beginning talks on the national conflict. According to the LTTE the government is only heaping promises but is unable to deliver. LTTE alleges that the government faces a serious problem which it is not disclosing. LTTE say the day-to-day problems of the people of the North-East are linked to military. The military still continues to have control over the social and economic life of the people in the North-East. The dilemma faced by the government is how to separate the military from normal life without losing control of the military situation in the North-East. The government is fully aware that it must have military support in all endeavours to solve the problem. Could this be done? Not immediately, is the answer of political observers from all communities. This is a major problem confronted by the government.

In the second round of negotiations on 3 January and the third round on 14 January same issues were discussed, the government delegation increasingly perturbed over the inability to begin political negotiations. Meanwhile, a number of confidence-building measures, including release of prisoners, have been taken by both sides. A 14-day ceasefire was successfully negotiated and came into force on 7 January. Some observers say the ceasefire was forced on the parties by the visit of Pope John Paul to Sri Lanka on 20 January. The ceasefire will be monitored by five committees, each led by a foreign observer and comprising both government and LTTE nominees.

The LTTE has also demanded the removal of the Pooneryn army Camp and opening of the Sangupiddy

Kerativu route for ferry service to enable the people to travel to and from the peninsula. Currently the people use the hazardous Kilali crossing where around 300 Tamils have been killed by the navy. The Elephant Pass road further east is heavily mined by both sides and observers say the army wishes to keep it closed to the public to rush troops into the Jaffna peninsula if the need arose.

The Jaffna peninsula is surrounded by military camps - Pooneryn camp in the South-East, Elephant Pass in the South, Vetrilaikerni in the East, Palaly in the North and Karainagar naval base and Mandaitivu army camp in the West. The Pooneryn area is strategically important to both sides. The LTTE argue there are around 200 military camps in the North and over 200 camps in the East in the districts of Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Amparai. Some of these camps are strategically placed to disrupt the contiguity of the North and the East and separate the people of the two areas. The string of camps lie like barbed-wire around the peninsula and movement of the people and essential supplies are controlled by the military. According to Anton Balasingham, political adviser to the LTTE, when the Tigers requested the government to open the Pooneryn passage the government insisted that they can only open Elephant Pass.

The LTTE, however, continue to insist on Pooneryn, and argue that the army has been stationed in Elephant Pass for the last 30 years and the camp has been extended to cover a very large area. It is also a strategic location and the army will not agree to move out of Elephant Pass easily. But, the Pooneryn camp

was established only three years ago and it has served as the normal passage for the people and essential supplies, until the military set up the camp. The LTTE alleges that the security forces already have a plan to mount a major offensive on the peninsula from all sides. The change in the government, presidency and peace talks have only resulted in the postponement of the attack on the peninsula. The LTTE also alleges that the present government would not hesitate to show the green light to the military plan if talks fail. The Tigers call for the removal of Pooneryn camp and say that if the army camp remains, people crossing the lagoon will be harassed by soldiers, as in the case of Thandikulam and Eeratperiyakulam army checkpoints.

After talks with military commanders the Presidential Secretary Balapatabendi, had written to Thamichelvan, the head of LTTE's political section stating the government would not close the camp but is ready to open both the Pooneryn-Sangupiddy and the Elephant Pass routes for public use. The communication further adds that the government had decided to shift the forward positions of the army camp at Pooneryn 500 meters West and remove the embargo on all items except those that could be put to military use. The Tigers however, have reiterated their demand that the camp should be completely removed.

Mr. Thamichelvan responding to the letter says "It would seem that this unilateral decision by the government while failing to concede to the various requests that we have been placing before them, amounts to nothing more than a posture meant to lull the outside world into the belief that the government was very keen to take forward the peace process".

He also has accused the government of using its privileged position to brief foreign news agencies on

assessment of claims that are contrary to reality. He went on to say that the assurances regarding the lifting of the economic embargo are only on paper. None of the items relating to which the ban has been lifted reaches Jaffna in any appreciable quantity. The armed forces impose their own restrictions on various items such as fuel, motor spares, vehicles, fertilisers and radio batteries. Whenever these are pointed out, the government responds by giving further assurances that are never implemented, he says.

Thamichelvan says unilateral announcements such as opening of both routes to the public, are meaningless in practice, while failing to attend to the basic day-to-day needs of the people and begin to erode the confidence placed from the beginning in the government, he wonders whether the sunshine stories to the outside world is only part of government strategy to keep the ball in the LTTE court all the time. He further says that attempts to win foreign aid for the ostensible purpose of reconstruction and rehabilitation of the war-ravaged North-East, which could again be used for war purposes, is certainly not the best way to win the hearts and minds of the Tamil people.

Tamil observers also confirm that the government has not implemented several assurances given at the peace negotiations. The negotiators promised that the ban on the 22 remaining essential items will be removed. But after considerable delay the ban on ten items continues. Even before the first round of talks the government removed the ban on a number of items. But cement, plastic containers, tyres and roofing sheets are not allowed beyond the Eeratperiyakulam army camp. People say soldiers at Thandikulam and other checkpoints are not allowing many items on which the ban has been lifted. Tamil leaders have also complained to the Sri Lankan authorities that the army is not allowing a number of items into the Mannar Island from Kalpitty. The much-publicised remo-

val of the economic blockade by the government has become meaningless.

The government removed the restrictions on fishing in January in some areas. The fishing ban continues to be in force in the following areas: (1) from, Valvettiturai in the north to Devils point in the west near Valappadu in the Kilinochchi District which means that the vast majority of fishermen on the Jaffna peninsula and all the islands west of the peninsula and Kilinochchi will not be able to go to sea (2) from Kudarappu, east of the peninsula to Chalai in Kilinochchi, which will enable the Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi fishermen to use only a narrow strip from Chalai to Mullaitivu town (3) from Mullaitivu to Kokkilai, which will adversely affect the Mullaitivu fishermen (4) between Vidattaltiva to Erukkalampiddy, from Pesalai to Talaimannar, and from Talaimannar to Nadukkudah, which will affect Mannar fishermen.

Fishing in areas specified is allowed only between 5.00am and 5.00pm. According to fishermen it would be difficult for them to recognise these areas specified by the government and harassment by the navy continues. Already a number of fishermen have been arrested for straying into restricted areas and fishing after 5.00pm. Night fishing which is a tradition among the northern fishermen, is completely banned. Observers say that the announcement on the removal of the fishing ban is ineffective and meaningless.

Immediately after being elected as President, Chandrika complained that the army was obstructing the peace initiative. The army, which has become accustomed to intruding into political affairs of the country, sent a strong signal to the President that it would not submit to the political leadership. The President who had received a massive mandate from the people hurriedly withdrew her statement. The military insisted that military personnel should be included in the negotiations with the Tigers, im-

## News in brief

### EDUCATION IN JAFFNA

Reports from the North indicate that 16,500 students sat for the Tamil Eelam General Certificate Examination in 1994. According to results recently released, nine students scored distinctions in eight subjects.

Tamil Eelam General Certificate Examination is similar to the GCE(O/L) examination conducted by the Sri Lankan Department of Education.

Meanwhile, government MP and Peace Campaigner Vasudeva Nanayakkara took up the case of university admissions from northern districts, with the Minister of Higher Education and the President.

In his written representations the inequality of opportunity for education prevailing as a result of the war in those parts has been highlighted. The lack of electricity precluding any studies after dark has also been stressed as a major factor for consideration in determining the cut-off marks (the minimum marks for University admissions) for the district. The Education authorities have unfairly decided on the same cut-off marks for Jaffna and Colombo districts although the students in Jaffna have suffered without educational facilities for the last four years because of the war.

### CHOLERA AND JAFFNA

Jaffna District has been described as the sole cholera infected area in Sri Lanka by the World Health Organisation in the weekly Epidemiological Record no.45 of 11 November 1994.

plying that any agreement with the LTTE without military participation would not be acceptable. Army officers pointed to the inclusion of LTTE's Deputy political leader *Karikalan* in the Tiger team and said that military officers would be able to detect any military strategy of the LTTE. An army and a naval officer were included for the second and third round of talks. It is becoming increasingly evident that the government is now swayed in its decisions by the military.

The government intends, because of military influence according to observers, to begin talks on the ethnic problem, while the economic and military blockade of Jaffna continues. The government after agreeing earlier that the economic blockade will be completely removed, now says the ban on ten items will continue. The government seems to believe that the blockades, both military and economic, will enable the imposition of agreements on the LTTE.

Justice Minister G. L. Peiris says that agreements with the LTTE will be included in the chapter on devolution in the new constitution which according to government spokesmen will be introduced in Parliament in July. But Mr. Peiris has not clearly revealed how the 1978 Constitution will be repealed. The repeal or amendment of most provisions of the Constitution requires a two-thirds majority in Parliament. But some of the provisions - such as those relating to the unitary character of Sri Lanka (Article 2), national flag (Article 6 says the flag of Sri Lanka shall be the Sinhalese Lion Flag), national anthem (Article 7 provides that the national anthem shall be the Sinhalese "Sri Lanka Matha") and foremost place accorded to Buddhism making it obligatory on the government to protect and foster the Buddhist clergy (Article 9) - require two-thirds majority and in addition approval by referendum.

The People's Alliance (PA) government has a slender majority in Parliament with the support of the minority parties. Even if all the minority MPs support the PA, it would not be sufficient for a two-thirds majority. PA requires the support of the opposition United National Party (UNP). The present Constitution was introduced by the UNP, in 1978. Although the UNP pledged before general elections that the Constitution would be amended to replace the presidential system with a Westminster-style parliamentary cabinet system, party members and MPs are now having second thoughts. A debate is continuing within the UNP whether to support the government in the repeal of the Constitution. Observers believe it is extremely unlikely that the UNP would lend its hand, particularly in view of the fact that the government is introducing measures which would breakdown the political palace constructed by the UNP over a 17-year period, inlaid with abuse of power and corruption.

The government says it could repeal the Constitution because of the mandate given to Chandrika Kumaranatunge at the presidential elections, even without UNP support. During the general elections and presidential election the PA campaign requested a mandate from the people to change the Constitution. Some PA members also believe that a referendum would be sufficient. But, the rules for repeal have been specifically laid down in the present Constitution. Analysts say the issue may have to be decided by the Supreme Court.

It is clear the repeal of the Constitution would not be easy and take long time. The LTTE says, it is for these reasons that it insists on a solution to the immediate problems of the North-East Tamil population. Otherwise, the people will continue to suffer for several years, while politicians and lawyers debate the issue.

## TIC ACCESSION LIST

**A selection of documents received by the Centre in January/February 1995**

SHR 3447

Massacre at the village of "Mylanthanai" on 9 August 1992

Sri Lanka: MIRJE; 1st December 1994

5p.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Killing / Civilian / Sri Lankan Tamils / Genocide / Trial

SHR 3448

Tell the TRUTH AND THE WHOLE TRUTH: The story of the Deception of and State Terrorism on the Tamils of the Island of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: MIRJE; OOOOOO 120P.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Political History / State Terrorism / Chronology / Discrimination / Education

PC 4763

Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka and Sinhalese Perspectives: Barriers to Accommodation

Modern Asian Studies; 1978

24p.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Political History / Ethnic Problem

SHR 3450

Paatukappatta caaticalum, paatukappulla pataiyinatum: Mylantanai

15p. (text in Tamil and not a published document)

**DESCRIPTORS:** Killing / Civilians / Mylantanai / Statistics

SHR 3451

Human Rights Situation in Sri Lanka: Fifty-First Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights

London: NGO Forum on Sri Lanka; January 1995

22p.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Recommendation / Human Rights Violation / Freedom of Expression / Emergency Regulations / Prevention of Terrorism Act / Disappearance / Women / Displaced People / UN Convention

SHR 3452

POLITICAL PARTIES in Sri Lanka since independence: a bibliography by H.A. Peiris

Sri Lanka: Lake House Book shop; 1988

161p.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Political Parties / Sri Lanka

SHR 3453

MY QUESTFOR PEACE: A Collection of Speeches on International Affairs

Singapore: Stamford Press Ltd.; 15th November 1988

216p.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Biography / J.R.Jayewardene / Statement / Foreign Policy / Development / Sri Lanka / Ethnic Problem / Muslims / Buddhism / Agreement

SHR 3454

THE ANGUISH OF83: Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis and the way out: ARTICLES & AN EPILOGUE 1983-1989

Colombo: K.V.G. de Silva; April 1990

135p.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Ethnic Problem / Sri Lankan Tamils / Race Riots / Appeal

SHR 3455

MINORITY POLITICS IN SRI LANKA: A Study of the Burghers by O.Peacock India: Arihant Publishers; 1989

85p.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Ethnic Minorities / Burghers / Sociology / History / Statistics / Education

SHR 3457

THE SRI LANKAN CRISIS by Bhaduri Shankar and Karim Afsir New Delhi: Lancer International; 1990

136p.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Foreign Intervention / India / Ethnic Problem / Statistics / Militarisation / Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement / Politicians / LTTE / IPKF

SHR 3458

The Agony of Sri Lanka: An in-depth account of the racial riots of 1983 by T.D.S.A. Dissanayaka Colombo: Swastika (Private) Ltd.; 1984

124p.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Race Riots / Detention / Agreement / Election / Political History / LTTE / Ethnic Problem / Statistics

SHR 3456

CONTEMPORARY PEN PORTRAITS by John Regis Colombo: Evangel Press Ltd.; October 1989

46p.

**DESCRIPTORS:** Biography / Politicians / Sri Lanka

SHR 3341

SRI LANKA: COUNTRY PROFILE Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board Documentation Centre; November 1988

21p.

**DESCRIPTORS:** History / Sri Lanka / Political History / Ethnic Problem / IPKF / Liberation Movement / Peace Initiative / Human Rights Violation

# We thought people would be kind to us, would not be cruel or hurt us say Tamil Refugees

Krishnamurthy, a Sri Lankan Tamil says that the Swiss authorities took him into custody, ostensibly for an inquiry, and locked him up in a dark room for thirty six hours. Thereafter he was handcuffed and put on a plane to Sri Lanka.

Under the January 1994 repatriation agreement between Switzerland and Sri Lanka, the Swiss government has taken steps to repatriate refugees who arrived in the country after 1992. Protests by international human rights and refugee organisations that the time is not conducive for returns have fallen on deaf ears. Tamil organisations have held demonstrations against deportations and sent petitions to the Swiss government. In February an Air Lanka plane was delayed at the Zurich airport after demonstrators splashed paint on the plane.

Krishnamurthy of Chunnakam, Jaffna entered Switzerland in early 1994 and applied for asylum. He was sent to the Aufnahmestram refugee camp in Ruti near Zurich. Refugees were allowed to visit other places from this camp but were expected to work in the camp for two weeks in a month. Work involved keeping the camp clean and drying and ironing other people's clothes. According to Krishnamurthy refugees were treated well and the Swiss officials in charge of the camp were friendly. Refugees in the camp were provided three meals a day and paid SF3. Krishnamurthy was transferred to a camp in Staad after ten months. Refugees were allowed to obtain employment outside the camp.

In December 1994 Krishnamurthy

received a letter from Swiss Immigration informing him that those who entered the country after 1992 would not be considered for asylum and advising him to leave Switzerland immediately. His payments were stopped. Through a lawyer he was able to obtain extension to remain up to April 1995. He began working in a factory.

But police arrived at dawn one day in January 1995 and took him to the police station. The police told a relative of Krishnamurthy who was also a refugee, that he was being taken for an inquiry and would be released after two hours. Krishnamurthy was locked in a dark room at the police station. At 3.00 pm he was photographed and fingerprinted. Then he was taken to another place and again locked in a dark room until evening the following day. Around 4.30 pm he was given bread and tea and allowed to come out of the dark room.

When Krishnamurthy asked the Swiss officer who was present as to why he was in custody, she had said that they were only implementing the Swiss government decision to deport asylum-seekers who arrived after 1992. Although Krishnamurthy showed the letter authorising his stay up to April 1995, it was not accepted.

He was handcuffed and taken to the railway station. He had not been allowed to take any of his belongings. He was taken by train to the airport under police guard. At the airport he was given a ticket and SF300. His handcuffs were removed only after he was forced to board the plane. After

the plane arrived at the Katunayake airport in Sri Lanka he was given a travel document by the pilot.

At the airport Krishnamurthy was threatened by customs officers. He changed the SF300 into Sri Lankan currency and gave it to them to escape from the airport. Krishnamurthy's deportation was not known to the others in the refugee camp in Switzerland. They were shocked when they received a telephone call from him from Sri Lanka.

In order to avoid opposition to deportation of groups of refugees, Swiss officers seem to be adopting the method of returning individuals secretly. Krishnamurthy says that he is shocked at the manner in which he was treated. I thought they would be kind to me, would not be cruel or hurt me. I was treated like a criminal, he says.

Another Tamil Muralidaran was asked to leave Switzerland in January. When he refused Swiss police took him to the Zurich airport where he was assaulted by eight police officers. Muralidaran sustained injuries. He was not given medical treatment. No food was provided for two days and thereafter he was deported to Sri Lanka. On arrival in Colombo he showed his injuries to newspaper reporters.

A Swiss government delegation will visit Sri Lanka in February to assess the situation. A Tamil organisation in Switzerland says that the government delegation has been constituted in such a manner as to favour continuing the return of Tamils. This means that the govern-



ment delegation would visit Sri Lanka and on return would simply announce that all is well.

The Norwegian Justice Ministry ordered sixty Tamils in January to return to Sri Lanka. There are currently 6,000 Tamil asylum-seekers in Norway. Reports say 800 are to be returned and 300 may be sent back in 1995. Some asylum-seekers have gone underground fearing deportation. Norwegian officers would also visit Sri Lanka in February with the files of asylum-seekers, allegedly to ascertain the details given by them. Tamils in Norway are appalled that files containing details of human rights violations would be taken to Sri Lanka from where the refugees fled persecution. Observers say the Norwegian government would be exposing the asylum-seekers to danger.

Norwegian Tamil organisations have protested and a number of meetings and processions have been held. Some organisations have met government officers and explained the dangers in returning asylum-seekers prematurely. Norwegian development agencies FORUT and Redd Barna which have projects in the North-East say that despite Sri Lankan government measures in recent months, human rights violations such as arbitrary arrests and detention continue.

Reports say three Tamils were deported from Denmark in January. Around 75 Tamils may be returned. The Danish Refugee Council is of the opinion that any premature return of refugees will adversely affect the peace process. Analysts agree and say that it will take time and perseverance to solve the complex Sri Lankan problem and are worried that countries like Norway and Denmark which throughout showed interest in peace are now taking measures to damage the very process. Canada would also begin deporting Tamils, reports say.

UN refugee agency UNHCR,

meanwhile, made a statement on 3 February 1995. UNHCR in its June 1992 statement divided Sri Lanka into four zones and said that refugees could return to the South and central areas in safety and dignity. Return of asylum-seekers from other areas, UNHCR recommended, "should only be contemplated on a case-by-case basis after a thorough analysis of the risk involved for the fundamental human rights of the individual concerned". UNHCR also said it lacked monitoring capacity and reconfirmed the statement in June 1993. UNHCR continued to assist Indian and Sri Lankan governments in the large-scale return of Tamil refugees from Tamil Nadu to the North-East, as though these refugees were not entitled to any fundamental rights. The repatriation from India will resume in early March. Around 8,000 refugees are expected to be returned in 1995.

In the current statement UNHCR says that despite the peace initiative, no immediate solution to the conflict is in sight and the situation still remains fragile. UNHCR continues to categorise those refugees who have undergone refugee status determination procedure as those "not in need of international protection". Up to now UNHCR has not satisfactorily answered the questions raised by the Tamil Information Centre as to the complexities arising from this simplistic statement.

While agreeing that the situation "still remains fragile", the UNHCR goes on to make a contradictory statement, that risks in respect of arbitrary arrests upon return of those not in need of international protection are now reduced.

UNHCR has suggested to Western governments to enter into bilateral agreements with the Sri Lankan government for large-scale returns. In case of such agreement UNHCR will become involved in "passive monitoring" which means UNHCR will not take any responsibility. UNHCR's February 1995

statement replaces the 1992 and 1993 statements implying that refugees can now be returned to any part of the island. No clear agreements have been reached between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE. The talks are deadlocked and fears have been expressed that negotiations may breakdown. Arrests of Tamils in Colombo and the Hill Country are continuing.

As in previous periods, without taking these factors and the statements of Amnesty International and other NGOs into consideration, UNHCR has once again rushed to satisfy Western governments and once again at the expense of Tamil asylum-seekers.

## TAMIL ARRESTS IN COLOMBO

Colombo Additional Magistrate set Rs25,000.00 bail for four women among the 22 Tamils arrested by Pettah Police while in lodging houses in Colombo on 4 January 1995. Eight women and fourteen men were arrested and police alleged that they all had links with the explosion at Grandpass on 24 October.

Meanwhile, on the same day, Mrs Kandan Poomany (25 yrs) with her baby and relatives on their way to meet the lawyer of her husband arrested in Colombo was granted bail by the Colombo Magistrate.

## INFANT DEATHS

A report of the Health Department indicates that 410 infants died within a month of birth in Jaffna District during 1994. This figure is a 12% increase on the 366 recorded deaths in 1993.

Malnutrition among pregnant women and lack of adequate medical care are prime causes for the devastating figures of infant death revealed in the report

## Federation of Public Organisations Condemns Government Inertia

A mass rally was held in Jaffna on Saturday 18th February, condemning the Sri Lanka Government's inertia and lack of will in attending to the problems of the Tamil people. The rally, estimated at around 50,000 participants was held under the auspices of the Federation of Public Organisations. Trade Unions, Traders Organisations, School of principals, Teachers, Students and Government Employees took part in the rally held in front of the Jaffna Secretariat. The protesters submitted the following memorandum to the Government Agent to be forwarded to President Chandrika Kumaratunge:-

We, of the Federation of Public Organisations functioning at 291, Stanley Road, Jaffna are involved in the task of identifying the problems that affect our people, and in ascertaining how they can be helped to live in an atmosphere of durable peace. We held a massive rally on this day to focus attention on these issues and are herewith submitting the following for your humanitarian consideration and suitable action.

You are no doubt aware, of how successive Sri Lankan Governments have in the past brought tragedies and disasters on the Tamil people through their communal attitudes and actions. Having undergone various social and economic stresses particularly through the effects of the war, the Sri Lankan constituency placed confidence in you and entrusted you with the responsibility of finding a peaceful, permanent settlement of the conflict.

Unfortunately, we detect in recent times, a hesitation on your part in resolving the many problems that affect the Tamil people. How can you take the peace process forward when our people are continuing to grow under the day to day economic problems that beset their lives, the social stresses that follow their displacement from their homes and hearths? At the

same time we also realise your continuing faith in non peaceful means of achieving a settlement. Any hesitation on your part is bound to bring more impediment at this juncture. Your statements and expression of attitudes at the beginning of your term of office gave us tremendous hope. We received them with enthusiasm. But the continuing military pressures are diminishing our hopes. There is even a fear that the Tamil people would be cheated again.

After all -

1. Yours is a government that came with the mandate from the Sinhala people to resolve the ethnic conflict;
2. As President, you wield enormous power;
3. The International community is extending its co-operation and willingness to find a solution to the conflict.
4. The Tamil Leader has extended his hand of friendship in order to find a workable settlement to the on-going conflict in his desire to see that the Tamil people benefit by a permanent peace.

When such favourable conditions exist, enabling you to take constructive step towards a quick settlement, it disappoints us to see that you do not exhibit enough political will. At this point of time when the LTTE has come forward to examine the required steps to find a peaceful settlement, we are forwarding to you what we consider are reasonable demands that enjoy unanimity among our people:-

1. We stress the fact that whatever political settlement that you have in mind, should fulfil the total aspirations of our people and recognise our right of self determination as a people.
2. In removing the economic blockade in full, you have to ensure that our people are provided their basic needs in full, and at prices that are reasonable.
3. In order to ensure a safe and free

ovement of our people, the army camp at Pooneryn should be dismantled and the Sangupiddy-Kerativu passage be opened so that our people could travel without fear.

4. The army should vacate areas they have forcibly occupied, and army check posts be removed, so that our people who were forced to vacate their houses and property and living elsewhere as displaced people could go back to their original habitats.

5. Conforming to the cessation of hostilities agreement, all restrictions on fishing should be removed, enabling our people to carry on their traditional livelihood.

6. Work on reconstruction and rehabilitation in the North-East be launched without delay.

7. Extend the cessation of hostilities and work towards a permanent cease-fire.

8. Win the trust and confidence of the Tamil people through the above measures, so that a permanent and peaceful political settlement become possible. It becomes your responsibility to continue the peace talks with the LTTE and end this long drawn conflict.

We are of the firm belief that the measures we have outlined would certainly bring about a reconciliation between our peoples and ensure a durable peace.

Knowing your own concern in bringing about a peace of mind among people, we submit this memorandum to you on behalf of the Tamil people, in the hope that you would take concrete steps towards accepting our demands.

Thank you.

Federation of Public Organisations,

Signed  
291, Stanley Road,  
Jaffna  
18-02-1995

## JANUARY DIARY

JANUARY 01

**SOLDIERS KILLED:** An army patrol in Mandaitivu in Jaffna District was ambushed by the LTTE resulting in the death of two soldiers.

JANUARY 02

**NEW PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR:** Retired Judge K. Viknarajah was appointed Governor of the Western Provincial Council.

JANUARY 03

**PEACE MOMENTUM SUSTAINED:** Second round of talks between the LTTE and government delegation got underway in Jaffna. Brigadier Siri Pieris from the army and Capt. Prasanna Rajaratne from the navy were included in the government team.

JANUARY 04

**SOLDIERS ON RAPE CHARGE IDENTIFIED:** Two soldiers in an identification parade were identified by rape victims from Thampanaveli in Amparai District. The offence had been committed on 1 January.

JANUARY 05

**TAMIL VILLAGE SEARCHED:** Special Task Force cordoned off Karaitivu in Amparai District from 6 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. to conduct a detailed search.

**TIGERS KILLED:** Three Tigers were killed in a troop ambush at Kokkuthoduwai in Mullaitivu District. Eight soldiers were also injured.

JANUARY 06

**HOSTILITIES CEASE:** In her speech at the opening of Parliament President Chandrika Kumaratunge announced that agreement had been reached with the LTTE for the cessation of hostilities and that it would be effective from 8

January.

JANUARY 07

**DETAINEES ON HUNGER STRIKE:** Ninety four Tamil detainees held at Batticaloa prison under the Prevention of Terrorism Act began a hunger strike demanding trial or release.

JANUARY 08

**DAWN OF PEACE:** The agreement signed by President Chandrika Kumaratunge and LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran for the cessation of hostilities took effect.

JANUARY 09

**COMPLAINTS TO LTTE:** Kalmunai Telecommunication Department was accused by the people for not taking steps to rectify breakdown of telecommunication links to post-offices, banks and hospitals in the areas of Karaithivu, Kalmunai, Ninthavur, Akkarapatru and Sammanthurai. A member of the public threatened to make complaints to the LTTE if post-office manager doesn't take immediate action to get the services reinstated.

**RESIGNS FROM GOVERNMENT TEAM:** Lionel Fernando, member of the peace negotiation team was forced to resign following allegations of discrimination in the appointments of teachers when he was Governor of the North-East province.

JANUARY 10

**FELICITATION MEETING:** LTTE held a memorial meeting at Eluthumadduval Junction in the Jaffna District for cadres and civilians killed in the Kilali crossing. It was announced that sixteen LTTE cadres so far have lost their lives in the crossing.

JANUARY 11

**CAMARADERIE AMONG ANTAGONISTS:** Field comman-

ders of the Sri Lanka army and LTTE in Batticaloa District met at Vakara Church to forge liaison in terms of the cessation of hostilities agreement.

JANUARY 12

**PEACE PUSH CONTINUES:** Field commanders of the Sri Lanka army and the LTTE met at Poo-varasankulam at 11 a.m. in Vavuniya.

JANUARY 13

**MONITORING PROGRESS:** Chairman of the Trincomalee District cessation of hostilities committee Mr. Ardenholm from Norway visited Trincomalee. The Committees for Mannar and Vavuniya districts also met in the respective districts.

**NEW NORTH-EAST GOVERNOR:** Gamini Fonseka, former Deputy Speaker under the UNP government took his oaths as Governor of the North-East Provincial Council.

JANUARY 14

**LTTE OPENS COURT:** LTTE established a new Tamil Eelam District court in Chemmanaltivu in the Mannar District. Previously, soon after the pronouncement of cease-fire, LTTE established a police station in Mannar mainland.

JANUARY 15

**TAMIL IGNORED:** Tamils living in Bogawantalawe in the plantations made a complaint against the local sub-office for not having postal information, including money order forms and telegram forms in Tamil. There are over 50,000 Tamils in the area and not a single Tamil is employed by the post-office.

JANUARY 16

**LTTE TIGHTENS SECURITY:** Movement of people in and out of Jaffna Peninsula increased following



## JANUARY DIARY

cessation of hostilities between Security forces and the LTTE. Reports suggest LTTE has stepped up its security in the peninsula. People have been asked to provide information of any new faces in the area behaving suspiciously to their local area leader.

JANUARY 17

**DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL:** Sixteen Tamil detainees held at the Akkaraipatru Intelligence Unit's Detention Centre in Amparai District without trial or charges for over a year began a hunger strike demanding redress.

**PLOTE ACCUSED OF KILLINGS:** SLMC MP IM Iliyas, announced in the parliament that two Muslim fishermen were killed by gunmen at Puttalam. Reports say PLOTE was responsible for the killing.

JANUARY 18

**CIVILIAN KILLING:** R.Balachandran, a leading trader in Mannar was shot dead by gunmen at 10 p.m. in his garden. PLOTE was accused for the killing.

JANUARY 19

**BUDDHIST CLERGY IN PROTEST MARCH:** Buddhist monks numbering less than a hundred went on a march on Colombo streets in a protest against the visiting Pope.

JANUARY 20

**POPE'S REQUEST:** At a meeting with religious leaders the visiting Pope said that the religious resources of the entire nation must converge to bring an end to the continuing ethnic conflict. Buddhist high priests, the Mahanayake Theros boycotted the meeting in protest over reference to Buddhism in Pope John Paul's book "Crossing the threshold of hope".

JANUARY 21

**POPE'S OPEN AIR MASS:** Over 300,000 people attended the mass held in the Galle Face Green in Colombo. Around 2,500 Catholics came from the North.

**ECONOMIC BLOCKADE CONTINUES:** The Defence Ministry announced that eight items from the list of items banned for transport to the North would remain in force.

JANUARY 23

**FLOOD RELIEF:** I M Hanifa, Relief Officer Kathankudy division informed that 7,513 families affected by the recent floods were assisted fully with relief. Kathankudy was one of the worst affected areas of Batticaloa. Government servants earning more than Rs. 1,500.00 are not entitled for the relief.

JANUARY 24

**HACKED TO DEATH:** An unidentified body of a man was found hacked to death in Mullaivatuvan in Batticaloa District. Observers say that the killing was carried out by the LTTE alleging that he was a spy for Special Task Force.

JANUARY 25

**PRESIDENT ACCUSED OF MISLEADING THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY:** In an interview given to the French *Le Monde* daily President Chandrika Kumaranatunge reiterated her Government's commitment to a negotiated settlement of the ethnic question but, contented that taking up new demands at every stage would not be conducive for the talks. LTTE protested against the President's remark and accused her of misleading the International Community.

JANUARY 26

**WAR DECRIED:** A mammoth peace march was held at Ratnapura

town. Starting from the Sri Sudharmodaya Buddhist Temple the demonstration demanded an end to the war and the ushering of peace in the country.

JANUARY 27

**SURRENDER DENIED:** LTTE announced that two PLOTE members from Vavuniya had surrendered to them with their arms. PLOTE however has denied and say that their members were abducted by the LTTE.

JANUARY 28

**MARKET GUTTED:** Twelve shops at the public market in Karungkoditivu in Amparai District were completely burnt down in a mysterious fire.

JANUARY 29

**APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE:** Parents made an appeal for the release of Morakatuwanchenai Ramakrishna Mission school premises currently occupied by the military. Since out break of war in 1990, school activities for over 1,000 pupils and 20 teachers were held under trees and nearby damaged buildings. Children's education is often disrupted by rain and bad weather.

JANUARY 30

**VAVUNIYA VISITED BY US OFFICIALS:** Two officials from the US embassy in Colombo visited the army camp at Thandikulam, transit checkpoint to the North and Poovarasankulam area in Vavuniya to ascertain prevailing conditions.

JANUARY 31

**FISHING LEADS TO ARREST:** Sebastiampillai Jeyaraj (19 yrs.) and Soosaitasan Anthony Crusz (19 yrs) were arrested by the navy while fishing off Gurunagar in Jaffna District.

## FEBRUARY DIARY

**FEBRUARY 01**

**FALSE PROPAGANDA:** LTTE has accused the government for using the recently set up Tamil Broadcasting Service by the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation to propagate false and sometimes twisted information about the peace negotiations.

**FEBRUARY 02**

**TULF SPLIT:** A TULF spokesman from Trincomalee has condemned the power struggle between TULF veterans R Sampanthan and A Thangathurai from the same district. The row began following Thangathurai's refusal to resign his parliamentary seat on 31st January. The split has caused considerable concern to the party and its leader Mr Sivasithamparam.

**FEBRUARY 03**

**MUSLIM LEADER ACCUSED:** LTTE radio announcement over the "voice of the Tigers" accused Mr. Ashraff, Leader of Sri Lankan Muslim Congress and Cabinet Minister for discriminating Tamils in housing in the areas of Batticaloa and Amparai under the Ministry's construction and housing settlement programme.

**FEBRUARY 04**

**SEARCH OPERATIONS:** LTTE has accused the military of carrying out search operations in the Muthur area. LTTE also drew attention to an attack on a Tamil in Kattaiparichan in Trincomalee District by the soldiers.

**FEBRUARY 05**

**ENDING WAR GOVERNMENT'S PRIORITY:** Speaking at a public function in Kandy, Deputy Minister for Defence Col. Anuruddha Ratwatte claimed that the North-East war cost Rs.29,000 million in 1994 alone whereas the whole Mahaweli scheme cost only

Rs.5,900 million.

**FEBRUARY 06**

**TAMILS ARRESTED IN COLOMBO:** Mrs.Y.Nagulasiri, husband Nagulasiri and A.Vinayagamurthy were arrested at Bloemendhal Road in Colombo while they were returning after her interview for selection of teacher-trainees at the Department of Education.

**ASSAULT ON EDITOR:** Lasantha Wickrematunge of the weekly newspaper *Sunday Leader* and his wife were assaulted near their residence at Nugegoda by masked men.

**FEBRUARY 07**

**STRENGTHENING OF ARMY CAMPS :** Speaking in parliament TULF MP Joseph Pararajasingam, questioned the necessity for strengthening of security force camps in the East when a cessation of hostilities is in force.

**FEBRUARY 08**

**RECONNAISSANCE BY TIGERS:** Military intelligence sources have informed the government that the presence of Tigers in the East has increased tremendously and they were seen monitoring military camps.

**FEBRUARY 09**

**FORCIBLE REMOVAL OF CIVILIANS:** Operational Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence disclosed that four persons from the Central Camp area in Amparai District were abducted and the matter had been conveyed to the LTTE.

**FEBRUARY 10**

**UNP MP ASSURES SUPPORT:** Former UNP minister Chandra Bandara speaking on the budget debate said that he will support a reasonable settlement to the Tamil problem.

**NGO INTERVENTIONS:** At the 51st session of the Commission on

Human Rights NGOs made interventions on several issues, including Emergency regulations, zonal commissions on disappearances, political detainees, anti-torture Bill and the question of accountability of members of the police and the armed forces.

**FEBRUARY 11**

**THREATS TO THE PRESIDENT:** Opening a library in her Athanagalla constituency President Chandrika Kumaranatunge referred to the threats she had to face from security force officers who had been involved in bribery and corruption over 17 years and said that they were greater than LTTE threats.

**FEBRUARY 12**

**ARRESTED FOR FUNDRAISING:** A spokesman for the Operational Headquarters of the Defence Ministry confirmed the arrests of two persons on 9 February at Kalkudah in Batticaloa District while in possession of Rs.3,650 being funds collected from villagers.

**FEBRUARY 13**

**TIGER RECRUITMENT:** LTTE stepped up its recruitment drive in the East. Observers say large number of students have joined the LTTE following the ceasefire agreement. A truck load of new recruits were taken to Jaffna for training and batches of trained cadre were brought to the East.

**FEBRUARY 14**

**MUSLIM VILLAGE IGNORED:** Muslims in Aswathami village near Kurunegalle have appealed to the government to provide them facilities for transport and communication. Last government promised them many things but nothing happened. They wish to see action taken by the new government to improve their living conditions.

## FEBRUARY DIARY

FEBRUARY 15

**PUBLIC RALLY:** With LTTE involvement, the people of Mullaitivu organised a public rally calling the government of Sri Lanka to fulfil the agreement reached in the talks with the LTTE and urging the government to recognise the right of self-determination of the Tamil people.

FEBRUARY 16

**PEACE DIVIDEND:** UN Resident Representative in Colombo Robert England assured that UN Development Funds around Rs 400 million would be made available for North-East rehabilitation if peace is achieved.

FEBRUARY 17

**PEACE MARCH:** A Peace march headed by People's Alliance MPs Vasudeva Nanayakkara, Y P de Silva and B L Premaratne reached Jaffna via Kilali at 5.00 pm. Responding to questions raised by news reporters at Kilali, Mr. Nanayakkara said that he was not coming as a government representative, but only to listen to the Tamil people and to see for himself the situation in Jaffna so that he could create awareness among the Sinhalese people for better understanding.

FEBRUARY 18

**NORTH-SOUTH IN PEACE HARMONY:** Peace marchers from South led by the MPs Mr Nanayakkara, Y P de Silva and B L Premaratne mingled with local peace marchers in Jaffna harmonising peace calls in the whole country. A memorandum to the President specifying seven peace building measures were received by the Southern peace marchers for transmission to Colombo.

FEBRUARY 19

**WAR RAVAGES REVEA-**

**LED:** Several Buddhist priests returning to Vavuniya from the peace march to Jaffna spoke of the colossal war damage to life and property in the North and reiterated that the Movement for Peace with Democracy should be sustained.

FEBRUARY 20

**MILITARY OPERATIONS:** Army stepped up search operations in Karaitivu in Amparai District. All vehicles passing the Special Task Force camp were stopped, searched and passengers questioned.

FEBRUARY 21

**FORCED LABOUR:** Special Task Force (STF) forcibly took people living near their camp at Kanchipuram in Batticaloa District to clear land surrounding their camp, sweep and clean the camp. STF stationed in Thirukovil demanded shops in the area to give them five bags of cement per shop to build bunkers.

FEBRUARY 22

**JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS:** Dr. W. William, Regional Health Services Director announced that blood tests on thirteen people from Manmunai, Poraitivuppatru, Pattipalai, Eravurpatru and Koralaipattu health divisions have revealed that they had contracted Japanese Encephalitis.

FEBRUARY 23

**DILEMA OF FLOOD VICTIMS:** Opposed to claims by Kathankudi area office in providing relief funds to all flood victims, people who went to encash their cheques at the bank were informed that they have no money to pay. Over Rs 90,000,000 worth of cheques paid as relief fund were turned down.

FEBRUARY 24

**LABOUR BANK:** LTTE has

urged all unemployed men and women in the North-East to register their names with the recently established Labour Bank.

FEBRUARY 25

**OPENING OF LAND ROUTES TO THE NORTH:** Presidential Secretariat announced the decision of the Government to open the Poonagari and Elephant Pass land routes to Jaffna Peninsula by withdrawing the army's forward defence lines at these two camps by 500 meters.

FEBRUARY 26

**NAVY ATROCITIES:** LTTE accused the Navy following complaints by local fishermen for entering into Vadamaradchi sea coasts and causing damage to boats and nets of the local fishermen. LTTE has brought this matter to the attention of the Jaffna Government Agent.

FEBRUARY 27

**WAR PREPARATIONS:** A representative of a foreign NGO revealed that people in Batticaloa had expressed fear and concern over military activities in the East while ceasefire was in operation. People have accused the military of setting up a massive military camp occupying nearly 200 acres in the coastal area of Mankerni. Preparations were also underway to strengthen the Kallady camp, one of the biggest military camps in the Batticaloa District.

FEBRUARY 28

**ELECTRICITY DENIED:** Virudcham Village Development Society in the Trincomalee District has lodged a complaint to Education Ministry that Tamil areas were denied supply of electricity but, the surrounding Sinhala areas were supplied.

# *The Last Letter*

Ms. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunge,  
Her Excellency the President of D.S.R. of Sri Lanka,  
Presidential Secretariat,  
Colombo - 1

Your Excellency,

## **A step towards solving the ethnic Conflict**

We kindly request you to bear with us for our continued writing to you since you became Prime Minister after the general election held in August and thereafter when you became the first elected woman executive president of our small island republic with an unprecedented mandate from all communities to bring back peace and harmony among the people and develop the country with your transparent open economic system.

We on our part would not be worrying or harassing you with our lengthy letters if only our elected representatives to the legislature and the executive bodies could function as expected in a democratic country and meet the needs of our people.

Unfortunately for our motherland which is torn apart by an unwanted ethnic war caused by the opportunist politicians and as there are various forces who seek to make hay while this war is on we who earnestly urged for a peaceful solution to the ethnic crisis on the basis of live and let live to create a society of equality and justice for individual and communities to maintain and develop their independent culture, customs, language and religions. We were happy, when the people of this country rallied round you in support of your call for peace against the call for war by the power hungry self seekers.

We also are aware that it is not easy to bring back peace to a country which had suffered immensely in life and property through a long drawn out war instigated by an ambitious and short sighted politicians who paraded through the length and breadth of the country as "Jayewardene's" of patriotism and nationalism.

The masses are willing to wait patiently till you succeed in your mission for peace with those engaged in a war at present as some of those forces who were once engaged in the armed struggle on behalf of the Tamil people along with the LTTE either in unity or separately realised that they were betrayed and let down by the Sinhala leadership of the previous government when they gave up the arms and came forward along with others to find a solution through the democratic process as they realised that a war cannot bring a solution to an ethnic conflict within a country like ours in the modern world without causing devastation of life and property in a mass scale. In one way some of them committed suicide by eating the sugar coated poisonous seeds given by the former president J.R. Jayewardene ably assisted by the Indian diplomats in the name of Indo-Lankan agreement. It is too late for them to regret and no charge sheet could be served on any one for murder as it was a suicide.

But we do not regret for our decision as we took up arms and waged a struggle not for power or to cause destruction but to protect our people from the merciless and inhuman war waged

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Karavai Kandasamy was an active trade unionist in the Hill Country. Regarded as a progressive and an ideologist he worked among the Plantation labour for many years. Following the July 1983 anti-Tamil violence, he left the plantations and joined the Association of Displaced Employees. He was elected Assistant Secretary of the Association. He was earlier involved in LTTE activities. Later joined PLOTE and became a Member of Parliament. He was shot dead at his Colombo residence on 31 December 1994. Karavai Kandasamy assassination is the latest in the long line of activists killed in their course of their service to the Tamil community. We publish below his letter to President Chandrika Kumaranatunge written only two weeks before his death.

---

them by the previous UNP Government since 1977 and which escalated into a genocide after 1983 and to assure them a life of dignity and equality with the rest of the population in this country and that is the goal and aim of revolutionary leaders and which differentiate us from the reactionary war mongers and under world gangsters.

In the meantime while your government continues its peace effort with the LTTE we kindly request you to attend to the following matters which are affecting or involves the day to day life of the Tamil speaking minorities in this country whether the Tamils of North-East, South or up-country and Muslims.

1. Non-implementation of Tamil as an official language by all the ministries and the statutory bodies under them including courts of justice.

When ever we made representations to late President Mr. R. Premadasa, he of course without fail pulled up the officers concerned and they in the utmost apologised to the complaining party and the matter ended there. There was no effort made by the government as such to implement the official language policy as intended by the legislature in regard to the Tamil language which if implemented properly will ease the tension and the misunderstanding and be of help to the Tamil speaking people to conduct their business with the government departments without any difficulties. Even the official language commission was not able to do much with the bureaucracy which pretended to be sleeping in this regard though its past Chairman Mr. Desmond Fernando (PC) took much interest and effort to give life to the legislation.

2. Failure on the part of the former government to recruit sufficient number of Tamil translators, Stenographers and Typists which is said to be the reason for the non implementation of the official language policy by certain administrative authorities.

3. In the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation the Sinhala language and even the English language have broadcasting facilities in two different services called national and commercial section. In Tamil, the two were made into one by J. R. Jayewardene's government in 1984 in its drive against the Tamils and still that order continues and thereby the Tamil language receives the third place after Sinhala - the language of the majority, English - the language of the elite in the Sri Lankan society and then Tamil.

4. Illegal occupation of the lands and property of the Tamils who were affected by the ongoing war by outsiders.

5. Appointment of a non-Tamil as the principal of the college of education at Patana in the Nuwara Eliya district where over 75% of the students are of the Tamil medium and from the plantation areas. This appointment is against the accepted principle of the education department. This was done by the last government to please the voters from the majority community.

6. Failure to recruit sufficient number of Tamils to the police force to reflect the ethnic ratio in the country and to man the police stations in the predominant Tamil areas.

7. Failure to appoint sufficient number of Tamils Grama-Sevaka Niladharies to plantation areas where majority population are Tamils.

8. Assisting and ensuring proper earnings for the resettled refugees of the ethnic war and those refugees who are sent back from India and other countries.

9. Proper schooling facilities to the children of the resettled families of refugees in the North-East with adequate teachers and furniture.

10. Releasing the innocent in detention under PTA and refrain from arresting the innocent.

11. Appointing an administrative authority either as a Governor as required by the Provincial Council system or an interim body that could understand the needs and minds of the Tamil people to look after the affairs of the North-East until your government's negotiation with the LTTE brings out an acceptable solution for the people of the North-East also to enjoy the gentle breeze of democracy as enjoyed by the people of the South Sri Lanka at present.

12. To eliminate all discrimination towards the Tamil students particularly of the students from North in the admission to the University which had prevailed up to this year.

13. North-East was not developed during the last 46 year history of Sri Lanka since independence. This was confirmed by Hon'ble Minister of Health, Social Service and Highways Mr. A.H.M. Fowzi when he visited Batticaloa recently after that area was badly affected by the recent flood caused by the heavy rain in that area. We



therefore urge for immediate action for proper maintenance of roads, drains and other utility services in the North-East.

14. Until your peace effort succeeds we kindly request your Excellency to give effort to the 13th amendment with life and blood so that the minorities will gain more confidence in your administration.

These are issues on which the previous UNP Government was not willing to act as they feared in their dream of a reaction from the Sinhala majority voters.

Further these issues need no legislative action or Parliamentary approval, but only the administrative action and willpower on the part of the administration which we believe, are available in ample proportion with you, Your Excellency under the prevailing all powerful executive Presidency.

Your Excellency,

Please trust us that we will not stand on your way or cause any form of obstruction to your effort to bring back normality to the country in general and to the people of North-East in particular through negotiation even if it endangers our own existence as we are of the firm belief that even if we have to die our political goal of establishing a society without any form of exploitation and oppression of the human society will be taken forward by those who remain behind us like what the great Chinese Leader Mao said of the old man who wanted to remove the mountain before him.

Our dream is sweet and beautiful and the firm determination in us will help us to cover come all the obstacles and make it a reality very soon.

Trust this appeal will receive your Excellency's kind attention for necessary action and if you wish we are willing to discuss these in detail at a discussion where the other Tamil parties in Parliament also could participate if you have no objection.

Signed:

Karavai A.C.K. Kandasamy

Vice President

Democratic People's Liberation Front

14 December 1994

## Foreign Observers Await Greenlight

The foreign heads of the cease-fire monitoring committees met LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran at Ariyalai in Jaffna on 5 February. During the 30-minute meeting the Tiger leader thanked the four observers from Canada, Netherlands and Norway for the role of Western nations in peace initiatives in Sri Lanka. He called on the Western nations to continue working towards peace in the island nation.

Mr. Prabhakaran referred to the large number of Tamil refugees in Western nations and the humani-

tarian assistance rendered to the Tamil people by international NGOs. He urged Western diplomats and government representatives to visit Tamil areas more often and assured that the LTTE would provide protection to foreign visitors and that the LTTE would welcome tourists. The LTTE leader also said that the monitoring committees would be able to function independently as soon as the present difficulties are overcome. The Sri Lankan government and the Colombo newspapers have blamed the LTTE for the delay in the cease-fire monitoring committees beginning to function. The truce came into effect on 7 January and

soon thereafter the foreign observers arrived on the island. But the monitoring committees have not been permitted to begin functioning.

In a letter to Presidential Secretary K. Balapatabendi, LTTE's political leader Tamilchelvan has denied that the Tigers are responsible for the delay. Mr. Tamilchelvan says in his letter:

We would like to stress that the LTTE is not responsible for the delay in the cessation of hostilities monitoring committees beginning to function. We believe that the sooner the committees begin to

function it is better for the full implementation of the ceasefire. We perceive that the delay is due to the attitude and approach of the government.

In the talks on 14 January we asked for government clarification relating to the ceasefire agreement. In our letter dated 15.1.95 we informed about our position relating to the movement of LTTE members in the East and requested that the agreement following discussions between of both parties should form an annexure to the ceasefire agreement. This will enable the monitoring committees to function effectively. You came forward to examine the issues relating to the movement of LTTE fighters, coastal area movements and fishing. We have received negative response to these issues from you which has resulted in the fourth round of talks being postponed.

You are aware that despite provocations by the security forces, the LTTE is observing the ceasefire. Your list of ceasefire violations are based on false information. We are sending a list of violations by security forces in the East. Col. Ratwate has been contacted regarding a violation you refer to.

This incident took place at Kalkudah in Batticaloa on 23 January 1995. The Sea Tiger boat with seven Tigers came ashore at Kalkudah because of engine difficulties. This is not a ceasefire violation but an accident. The boat had machine guns but not motars as alleged by you. Although the fighters have been released, the boat, weapons and communication equipment are still held. Despite repeated requests there have not been returned. Confiscation of weapons during the ceasefire is not permitted. If these weapons are not returned immediately, the friendly relations will be affected and we have to regard it as a

ceasefire violation.

We were not involved in any incident at Nittambuwa referred by you. The person referred to is not a LTTE member. We are shocked and surprised at your reference that the security of the President is threatened by the LTTE. This allegation has no basis. Your statement that the LTTE is engaged in recruitment and building camps in the east is false. You agreed that we were free to carry on our service to our people. It is true that a police station was established in furtherance of our administration in Murunkan which is under LTTE control. This is not a ceasefire violation.

Because of delays by the government foreign members of the ceasefire committees were unable to meet the LTTE leadership. You agreed that both parties could meet the monitors. But after overcoming considerable obstacles we were able to meet the foreign observers in Jaffna. We requested them to begin work without delay.

It is childishness to believe that the North-East problem could be solved by talking to someone else. The Tamils will not receive salvation under the unitary constitution. It is possible only under a federal constitution. Only after 42 years the majority community has begun to think about such a solution. However, they are not willing to share power. For this reason the demonstrations began over the language rights issue escalated into a major ethnic conflict. Youths lost confidence in non-violent protests and took up arms. The LTTE is continuing the armed struggle. This is the reason we say that the problem could be solved by talking to the LTTE.



## RESETTLEMENT AT STANDSTILL IN BATTICALOA

Attempts to resettle displaced persons in their own homes have run against a wall in Batticaloa district due to the occupation of these residences by the Police and Security forces personnel.

Three hundred and fifty such cases have been identified and unless the residences are released for occupation, resettlement will remain unaccomplished. The efforts of the Ministry of Rehabilitation have come to nought as the security situation takes precedence over resettlement.

## FACELIFT FOR REFUGEE CAMPS

The dilapidated sheds which served as shelter for Muslim refugees in Puttalam for four years are to be improved. Rehabilitation Minister M H M Ashraff allocated in early December Rs.1.2 million (\$ 24,000) for restoration work at Puttalam.

## PEACE DIVIDEND

Policemen PSP Bandara, HD Wimalasekarasiri, SE Athukorale and WD Dharmasiri held since 13 June 1990 were released from captivity by the LTTE.

## VOICE OF AMERICA AGREEMENT REVISED

A revised agreement relating to the VOA relay station at Iranawila in Puttalam District was signed between the US and Sri Lankan governments.

## PRESS RELEASE

**STATEMENT OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE  
NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL OF SRI LANKA  
133 Kynsey Road, Colombo 8, Sri Lanka. Tel. 691885 Fax. 695136**

**T**he mandate to establish the National Peace Council and an accompanying Secretariat as the base supporting structure to launch and sustain a people's movement for peace was given to the Peace Task Force by a National Peace Conference held on October 25, 1994. Such an intervention, it was held, would be crucial at a time during which serious negotiations directed towards a peace settlement had already commenced between the Government and LTTE.

The National Peace Council notes with appreciation the commitment of the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in working towards a negotiated peace. The achievement of cessation of hostilities and other important agreements, such as those pertaining to the rehabilitation programme, are the first fruits of this commitment. We call upon Her Excellency Mrs Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunge and Mr. Velupillai Prabhakaran to fearlessly honour the people's aspiration by ensuring that the peace process is not derailed by formidable forces attempting to subvert it.

While commending the important achievements, the National Peace Council notes with concern certain obstacles that have surfaced in the negotiations. Recognising that the peace process will be a difficult and tortuous one, with many setbacks possible along the way, we urge both parties to exercise restraint in making public pronouncements that polarise rather than mediate which can create an atmosphere of demoralisation and confusion among the people.

The National Peace Council also urges the parties to take all measures that can build goodwill and alleviate the sufferings of the people. In particular, we ask that the difficulties of passage for people to and from the north

be alleviated and the lifting of the economic embargo on non-military items as promised by the Government be properly implemented with immediate effect. Despite the lifting of the embargo on many items the ban on petrol and diesel continues to be in effect. This virtually negates the benefits of lifting the embargo since these two items are crucial to reactivating the economy and alleviating the sufferings of the people. The implementation of the Government's decision to supply electricity will directly serve to ameliorate the sufferings of the people.

All communities, Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim have endured tremendous suffering. In the pursuit of their democratic rights, the social, economic and human costs to the Tamil community in particular have been exceedingly high. We hope that in evolving a political solution the people's aspiration for living together in unity and harmony as one family is honoured. The National Peace Council therefore appeals to the Government and to the LTTE not to give up on this one best chance for peace.

It would be an unpardonable crime against the people if their mandate for peace is manipulated to justify a renewal of hostilities, the cost of which will be morally unacceptable. The National Peace Council for its part, shall strive to the best of its ability lasting peace within a democratic social order.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

Cyril Ferdinands

Signed

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