

TAMIL INFORMATION



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NEWS BULLETIN OF
THE TAMIL INFORMATION CENTRE

MAY/JUNE 1995

Nos. 46 & 47

SRI LANKA: CONTINUING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS UNDER THE NEW GOVERNMENT

Tamil Information Centre continued to receive reports of gross human rights violations by the security forces under the Peoples' Alliance government. The new government had taken few steps to halt such violations and the war continues in the North-East resulting in more deaths, destruction and misery to the lives of the ordinary people.

Since peace talks broke down in April the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have stepped up attacks against the Sri Lankan security forces, particularly in the east. Reports indicate that over 400 soldiers were killed in May and June. In a devastating attack on the military base on the island of Mandaitivu, west to the Jaffna peninsula on the Tigers killed over 105 soldiers and captured arms worth Rs. 60 million (\$1.2 million)

For their part the Sri Lankan security forces have stepped up attacks on the Tamil civilian population. In Batticaloa, according to Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) MP K.Thuraijasingam the civilians are being used daily as minesweepers and human shields in Vantharumoolai, Sithandy and Kumburumoolai. The MP says people are also being forced to dig the ground where mines are suspected to be buried. Mrs.Kalikutty Nagamma who was forced to tread a mined area at Iyankerni village near Fravur lost a leg on 5 March. Kanapathipillai Arulmani lost her leg when she, along with many others were forced by the army to walk in front of soldiers from the Murakottanchenai army camp to the railway station. Two other women were also injured.

On 6 May, following a clash between the LTTE and the army near

Pulmoddai in Trincomalee District in which four soldiers were killed, troops entered the village and shot dead five Muslims including two children aged two and ten and a woman aged 70.

According to Mr.Thuraijasingam four Tamils were arrested at Kiran on 2 May by soldiers from the Kiranthurai army camp and the Officer in Charge of the camp has denied the arrest. A farmer named Nallathamby Kirshnapillai was shot dead by the security forces. Police say that his body will be handed over to the parents only if they admit that their son is a terrorist. Two days later, Sinnasamy Mangaladas arrested by the army at Kattankudy had been hung from the roof and tortured in the camp. On the same day all the people in Mangakittu village in Batticaloa were arrested and taken to Muttukkudah and brutally attacked. Jaffna MP A.Rasamanikkam has complained about this incident to Deputy Defence Minister Anurauddha Ratwatte.

Following a grenade explosion near a police station at Pottuvil in Batticaloa on 13 May injuring a police officer, the police ran amok assaulting people and set fire to 60 houses in Inspector Etram village. On 16 May two soldiers on motor cycles shot dead Sivapalan Sivaprabha and Nadarajah Gnanasekaram at Kiran. Batticaloa MP Joseph Pararajasingham says that these two youths had no connection with any militant group and has demanded an inquiry.

During a search operation on 20 May at Poolakkadu and Pondukalchenai in Batticaloa the army burned six field huts and arrested seven people, five of whom are over 50 years of age. Soldiers also shot dead Vinayagamurthy Kandeepan. People in Korakalimadu, Kiran and

Kumburumoolai have complained to Mr. Thuraijasingam that women were raped in their villages by soldiers during search operations. On the same day soldiers attacked civilians at Vantharumoolai market for not informing the military about posters put up in the market.

The LTTE launched simultaneous attacks on police stations at Jayanthipuram, Iruthayapuram and Vijithapuram on the outskirts of Batticaloa town on the night of 22 May, injuring six policemen. The following morning the security forces rampaged through the settlements shooting civilians. Twenty seven people were injured and taken to Batticaloa hospital. Tharmalingam Malathy (age 45) who went to the Vijithapuram police station looking for her arrested son, Sasikumar, was shot dead by police when she turned to leave after inquiries.

Rasalingam Mariyadas, Ravindran Ragunathan, Nadarajah Pararajasingham and Thuraijajah Uthayasekar arrested on 23 May, were taken by police to a field and shot. The first three were killed. Uthayakumar feigned death and escaped with a shattered wrist. From the Batticaloa hospital, he had to be transferred secretly to Colombo when the army demanded him to be handed over. In a letter to President Kumaratunge, Local MP Pararajasingham has demanded an impartial inquiry into the revenge killings.

During military operations in Batticaloa on 26 May, Tamil civilians Selvarani of Pavatkodichenai and Thuraijasingham of Kottiyarveli were shot and injured by troops.

Fisherman Thangarajah Kanagasabai

was shot dead on 27 May while fishing in the lagoon, by soldiers from the Palathady army camp in Kiran. In a letter to Mr. Ratwatte, MP Thurairajasingam has pointed out that Kanagasabai was an innocent civilian who went fishing after showing his identity card at the army camp.

On 29 May a shell fired from the Pulipainthakal army camp injured Pillayar Selvam (age 45) and his five year-old son. Four year-old Nallaratnam Krishanthi was shot dead on 31 May at Kannagipuram while she played in front of her house. Residents suspect the killing was carried out by the police. After an LTTE attack on the Eravur police station on 3 June, police fired indiscriminately injuring three Tamil civilians seriously. Constables stood on streets attacking and injuring many civilians with batons. Local MPs sent an urgent telegram to Mr. Ratwatte to take immediate steps to prevent attacks on civilians.

On 8 June, 62 year-old Velupillai Kandam was shot dead by the army in Vaharai. After an LTTE landmine attack on 13 June at Koduvamadu in Batticaloa, soldiers rushed to nearby Pethankudah and shot dead six Tamil civilians working in the fields, including four women. Two other women were injured. Three shops and two houses in the area were set on fire by the soldiers. MP Thurairajasingam who has complained to senior army officers and President Chandrika says a commission of inquiry must be appointed into the massacre. On the same day over 100 Tamils were arrested in Batticaloa town following a grenade explosion.

Three days later GCE (Advanced Level) students Rsanayagam Satkunam and Samithamby Nadarajah were killed by the police during a search operation in Thuraineelavanai. Farmer Katpura Vinayagamurthy (age 50) was shot dead by troops during a search operation in Poolakkadu. Ten villagers in Pannanthanai, were shot dead by troops on 25 June. Those killed included eight year-old Murugan Kala and 60 year-old K. Thiyagarajah.

In the south of Sri Lanka a large number of Tamils have been arrest-

ed. In the Hill Country, Tamil houses are being searched by security forces and many arrested. On the plantations, a number of estates have been surrounded and searched. Tamils walking in the streets, at bus stands, and work places in buses and students at schools have been arrested and detained. In Puttlam Tamils have been issued special forms to be completed. In Colombo over 2,000 Tamils were rounded up in May and June. Although most have been released, social workers say there is no way of knowing how many are being detained. Tamil members of Parliament have complained that they are unable to make contact with Tamils known to have been arrested. In a letter to Presidential Secretary K. Balapatabendi, Trincomalee MP A. Thangathurai says relatives are not being informed of arrests causing fear and concern among the Tamil community.

The nature of roundups and often denial by security forces of arrests have led to fears that Sri Lanka is entering another phase of disappearances. The fear has been heightened by the discovery of a number of bodies. Eleven bodies were found in June in the Bolgoda lake in Panadura and the Piliyandala lake. More bodies have been discovered in Negombo. Their hands and legs were tied and they had been drowned or shot in the head. Examination has revealed that they had been starved and tortured. At least five bodies have been identified as those of Tamils. The other bodies are decomposed and yet to be identified. Human rights activists say that military death squads have returned, this time targeting Tamils.

On 3 June, the day of the funeral of Polonnaruwa Buddhist monk Dimbulagala Thero, Sinhalese mobs attacked and looted Tamil shops at 8.30pm in Galle town and set fire to over 20 shops. Gangs also entered Tamil houses with swords and knives looting and damaging property. Tamil trader T. Dhamarajah was stabbed. Over 400 Tamils have taken refuge in the Kathiresan and Sivan temples. Another gang entered Nagastenne Estate on the same day at 10.45 pm burning line rooms and attacking Tamil workers. Seven year-old

S. Gnanselvi was stabbed and cut to death. Several others were admitted to hospital with knife wounds and burns. Nagamuthu (age 69) died in hospital. Velayutham Nallasivam a Tamil plantation worker on Geekiyanakande Estate in Matugama was abducted by three persons on 13 June. His body was found in Kalutara sea on 19 June. A Sinhalese gang entered Neboda Estate on 23 June and set fire to the temple chariot.

The economic blockade and the ban on fishing imposed once again are leading to great suffering among the Tamil people of the North-East. In June a ship containing food for Jaffna refugees was diverted by the navy to Kankasanturai. A total ban on petrol and diesel has been reimposed and supply of kerosene cut by half. Shelling from of the Jaffna peninsula from military camps and aerial bombing continues.

On 17 May Sivalingam (age 50) was killed by a shell in Atchuveli and seven others were injured. A shell from the Palaly army camp hit a passenger bus at Valalai on 20 May seriously injuring 15 people. On 30 May seven civilians were killed by shells in Thondamanaru. The Selvachannathy temple in Thondamanaru was badly damaged.

The Sri Lankan air force bombed Vadamradchy on 9 June injuring a woman. Eighteen houses were damaged in Atchuveli when troops advanced east from Palaly in mid June. Over 15,000 families fled south and have taken refuge in temples and schools. Two Tamil civilians who returned to their homes in army - controlled Thellippalai were shot dead.

The Tamil Information Centre along with other international human rights organisations has been calling on the Sri Lankan government to take immediate action to remedy past human rights abuses and to address the latest developments. The response from the government has, however, been minimal.

Extra-judicial Killings and Disappearances in Batticaloa District since 19 April 95

Tamil Information Centre received reports on the following extra-judicial killings and disappearances in the Batticaloa District. Such incidents have multiplied all around the country and the victims had almost all been Tamils.

02-05-95-

1. Seenithamby Kirupamoorthy (Age 26) of Kumaraveliyur, Eravur. There was a cordon & search operation in Eravur on 2.5.95 at 7.30 am. The boy was shot dead in his house. Parents say he had fever and when asked to come out he tried to locate his identity card after putting on a shirt when a police constable shot him dead. It is reported that the constable is a Muslim.

2. Mailvaganam Amirthalingam (Age 18) Vishnu Kovil Veethy, Kirankulam. Some boys were rounded up at Kirankulam by the STF. Mailvaganam Amirthalingam, a student was coming there on his bicycle and was asked to join the others being held. All the boys were ordered to sit beside the road. They were then asked to close their eyes and Mailvaganam Amirthalingam was shot dead at point blank range.

3. Kanapathipillai Ravichandran (Age 25) Puthukudiyiruppu. There was a johnny mine blast and as a result one Muslim police constable was killed and another injured. Policemen went on a rampage assaulting people of Arumugathankudiyiruppu, a village bordering Eravur, a Muslim village. Kanapathipillai Ravichandran came out of his house with his wife and mother and was shot dead in front of his wife and mother. Both witnesses to this killing were severely beaten up by the policemen.

16.05.95:

Sivapalan Sivaprabha
Nadarajah Gnanasekeram -both from Morakottanchenai.

They had gone among the shrubs to answer a call of nature as is the practice in the village. While emerg-

ing from the shrubs both were shot dead by soldiers passing by on a motor cycle.

23-05-95:

1. Ravichandran Ragunathan (Age 20)
2. Rasalingam Mariadas (Age 38)
3. Nadarajah Pararajasingham (Age 24)

All three were taken into custody for questioning by police at 6.00 am from Iruthayapuram following an attack on the Jayanthipuram and Wijeyapuram Police posts the previous night. All three were taken and shot along with another youth named Thurairajah Uthaiyasekar who escaped with shot injuries and was admitted to the Batticaloa hospital.

He refused to divulge the true story to the police because of fear and reprisal.

23-05-95

Mrs. Malathy Tharmalingam (Age 42) Iruthayapuram.

She was shot dead by the police while she was pleading to obtain the release of her son who was taken into custody earlier.

28-05-95:

Thangarasa Kanagasabai (Age 32) Fisherman - Kinnayady

He was fishing in the lagoon where the army apprehended him and took him to his house. After a search of the house he was taken along by the army. Later his wife learnt that his body was lying in the Valaichenai hospital.

03-06-95:

Ponnambalam Thilaiyapody (Age 25) Mahiladitivu

He was shot dead on a false complaint made by a person with whom he had a private dispute. The STF sent word to him to come to the camp. Out of fear he did not go there. The next day they came in search of him and while he was working in his paddy field shot him at point blank range.

13-06-95

Following a claymore mine attack on the security forces on the Budulla-Batticaloa Road the following civilians were killed:-

1. Veerasingham Komaleswary - 32 years
2. Mrs. Kathirgamathamby Kannakai - 45 years
3. Mrs. Sambapody Pakkiam - 35 years
4. Miss. Soundary Bavany - 16 years
5. Vellakutty Gnaneseelan - 28 years
6. Aliyar Abdul Rahuman - 27 years

Those injured in the same incident were:

1. Mrs. Thangarasa Ranjani - 22 years
2. Miss. Ariyaratnam Mallika - 17 years

19-05-95:

Vanniasingham - released from prison only recently was shot dead by soldiers from the Pankudavely army near his house.

Disappearances

1. Shanmugam Vijeyakumar taken into custody by the STF from the Kaluwanchikudy camp on 28-04-95 at Kaluwanchikudy from his residence at 7.30 am still remains missing.

9-06-95:

1. Rasanayagam Satkunam (A/L/ student - Kalmunai Ramakrishna Mission School)
2. Samithamby Nadarajah (A/L/ student at Kalmunai Fathima College)

Both were taken into custody at Thuraineelavanai by the STF and remain still missing.

A BOLD POLITICAL LEADERSHIP NEEDED TO ENSURE THE RIGHTS OF ALL THE PEOPLE.

Gunning down of two aircrafts by the use of heat-seeking surface-to-air missiles has changed the character of the war between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government. All strategic thinking on the final resolution of the ethnic crisis affecting the Tamil people need necessarily to change keeping with the transformation of attitudes and perceptions following these incidents. The relationship between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government has lapsed into a bloody and a protracted war. The resolution of the ethnic crisis on the other hand calls for a bold political approach guaranteeing equal rights to all citizens irrespective of the communities they belong to.

The military conflict has now brought the country to the brink of a disaster of the proportions of Bosnia and Cambodia. Many observers who have expressed their views following the recent incidents have expressed the possibility of such a danger. Following these incidents there had been a significant national awakening to the unprecedented disaster that may befall on Sri Lanka.

The Previous government deliberately avoided to inform and educate the people on the implications of the ethnic crisis for the entire nation. Instead, it followed a blind military approach and used the "war" for its own economic and political ends. Such is the common criticism that is made against the former government through out the country now.

While the new government that came into power advocated a political solution to the crisis, it did not pursue this aim with a comprehensive plan for guaranteeing equal rights to all citizens, with particular emphasis on the minorities.

The government instead followed a limited program of managing the

Statement issued by Asian Human Rights Commission on the present situation in Sri Lanka - 1 May 1995

crisis by attempting a deal with the LTTE. The government's political approach is being seen purely as an attempt to isolate LTTE and to fight the war through political means. It was not an attempt to resolve the fundamental political issues underlying the ethnic crisis. Thus, when the LTTE unilaterally brought the cessation of hostilities to an end, the situation deteriorated to a position much worse than ever before. In the military front it has now reached a position of no return. The pursuit of

the war will not only mean the destruction of North and the East but also rest of the country. The North is heavily mined already. This situation is no different to some parts of Cambodia. Much of what existed earlier has been destroyed. The intelligensia have fled away from the territory and many others too who could afford to leave has left. A militaristic culture has replaced every other form of social expression including veneration of the dead.

We ask the International Community to press the Government to uphold the demands above and also urge the LTTE to come for talks on the clear understanding that these talks would be first and foremost on the political solution. The LTTE should further be pressed to allow democratic space for the Tamil people to articulate their interests without fear of persecution.

Finally, we appeal to the Sinhalese community to have the strength and character to withstand the crisis, as well as try to understand the Tamil people's predicament. They should moreover not fall for the chauvinist rhetoric of those who seek short term political gain from this shared crisis of the entire country. The spate of tragedies over the last dozen years and the assassinations should have taught us that this is not a phenomenon to play game with. It can be confronted only through a dedication to clear moral principles.

TIC ACCESSION LIST

A selection of documents received by the Centre in May/June 1995

SHR 3549

A research study on the health status of women plantation workers in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Congress Labour; 30th September 1989
25p

DESCRIPTORS: Women / Medical Facilities / UP-Country Tamils / Statistics

SHR 3551

Words into Action: censorship and media reform in Sri Lanka
London: Article 19; March 1995
22p

DESCRIPTORS: Media / Freedom of Expression / Sri Lankan Government

SHR 3555

Sri Lanka: new report calls for urgent reforms to end censorship
London: Article 19; 31st October 1994

DESCRIPTORS: Freedom of Expression / Sri Lanka / Media

SHR 3557

Sri Lanka: report of article 19 investigative visit
London: The Article 19 Bulletin; July 1994

1p.
DESCRIPTORS: Freedom of Expression / Sri Lanka / Visit Report

SHR 3558

An overview of the Human Rights situation in Sri Lanka 1994
Colombo: INFORM; 15th February 1995
12p.

DESCRIPTORS: Election / Eastern Province / Parliament / Human Rights Violation / Freedom of Expression / Emergency Regulations / Commission on of Inquiry / Detention / Rehabilitation / Sri Lanka

SHR 3559

Press Release: text of a statement made by the political section of the LTTE in Jaffna
Tamil Eelam: LTTE Headquarters; 23rd April 1995

3p.
DESCRIPTORS: Statement / LTTE / Peace Initiative

SHR 3560

Press Release: National Peace Council
Colombo: National Peace Council; 25th April 1995

1p
DESCRIPTORS: Statement / Peace Initiative / LTTE / Appeal

SHR 3561

Health care in the North-Eastern provincial area (NEP) Sri Lanka
London: 29th May 1995

6p.
DESCRIPTORS: Visit Report / Health Facilities / Situation Report / Jaffna District

SHR 3563

Reconstruction master plan for the city of Jaffna: design proposals
Jaffna: Engineering Consultancy Bureau; July 1992

30p.
DESCRIPTORS: Development / Jaffna District

SHR 3564

Sri Lanka: Report of extrajudicial executions during May 1995
London: Amnesty International; June 1995

6p.
DESCRIPTORS: Killing / Civilians / Arrest / Disappearance

SHR 3565

Disappearances
London: Amnesty International; 15th June 1995

6p.
DESCRIPTORS: Disappearances / Arrest / Eastern Province / Sri Lankan Tamil

PC 4805

The return of the JVP
The Sunday Leader; 19th February 1995

1p.
DESCRIPTORS: JVP / Sri Lanka

PC 4708

Embargo re-imposed
Daily News; 20th April 1995

1p
DESCRIPTORS: Economic Blockade / Northern Province / Sri Lanka

SER

UNHCR and refugee children
Geneva: Refugee; May 1995

1p.
DESCRIPTORS: Children / Refugee / UNHCR

OHR 316

Collection of International Instruments concerning refugees
Geneva: UNHCR; 1997

Pages varied
DESCRIPTORS: Refugees / UN-Convention / UNHCR

OHR 318

Repatriation treaties for asylum seekers who have been refused: a minimum standard
Nederland: Standing Committee of Experts on International Immigration, Refugee and Criminal Law; 24th March 1995

3p.
DESCRIPTORS: Repatriation / Refugees / Nederland / Immigration Laws

OHR 319

Who we are: a study of the backgrounds of some of Bolton's minority communities
Bolton: A Fairness Team Publication; March 1995

149p.
DESCRIPTORS: United Kingdom / Ethnic Minorities / Culture / Immigration / Maps / Statistics

SGN 412

Unavut tevaiyum utpatti ilakkukalum
Tamil Eelam: TEEDOR; June 1992

28p(text in Tamil)
DESCRIPTORS: Population / Northern Province / Statistics / Basic Needs / Economy / Development / Resources

SGN 413

Thamileelathin pullivipara tharavukal
Tamil Eelam: TEEDO; December 1993

252p. (text in Tamil)
DESCRIPTORS: Economy / Tamil Eelam / Statistics

VISIT PROGRAMME FOR DOCTORS

As a follow up of the International Conference on Health held in London on 17 & 18 September 94 jointly organised by Medical Institute Of Tamils, Tamil Information Centre and Tamil Refugee Relief Organisation, an expertise input was made to meet some medical needs of the North-East.

Dr. Jerry Erlich spent 2 weeks in Batticaloa where he had served 3 years earlier too. His words on returning to US were, "there are shortages in everything - medical supplies and equipment - but the shortage of man-power is mind boggling. It is unimaginable that the doctors there could see 300-400 patients a day". As to imparting his expertise to those on the ground he had the succinct words, "it was a two way street, they did for me more than what I did for them". His advice to medical personnel living abroad is- "spend your summer holidays there".

Dr. Navabalachandran from the US and 2 doctors from UK gave

their services to the Jaffna area. The medical faculty of the Jaffna University, the Nursing School and the Teaching Hospital Jaffna benefited from the short stay of these medical personnel. Two organizations dealing with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder - Shantheeham and Thotpakam came in for high praise due to their invaluable efforts at coping with the large numbers suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder resulting from the constant shelling and bombing by the Sri Lanka and security forces.

The pitiful state of the Jaffna Hospital has been highlighted in one of the reports submitted by a doctor. Lack of staff, electricity supply and telephones, a collapsed sewage system parlous state of the building and disused equipment are the basic causes for the ailing health care, says the report. Two or three oxygen concentrators have been identified as an urgent priority for Jaffna hospital.

The over-riding health need in the North-East, however, according to the visiting and local doctors is medical personnel. The attitude of the Sri Lankan government towards the North-East population is calculated apathy and it is only the Tamil

medical fraternity abroad that can fill the prime need for medical personnel.

To facilitate this vital input to the health care service in the North-East a

"Short Visit Program for Doctors"

-has been arranged by a group in the US.

Details of this programme are

1) Transportation will be arranged from Colombo under the auspices of the Red Cross or other organizations. Board and Lodging will be provided during the stay in Eelam.

2) These institutions need specialists in Surgery, Anesthesia, Psychiatry, Pediatrics and Internal Medicine, but other specialists are welcome to use this opportunity.

3) Minimum stay required - 2 weeks.

Those interested should contact

K.Arulanantham - (805) 942 0120
C.Harischandran (805) 772 0268
N.Jeyalingam (914) 565 6895
S.Navabalachandran (301) 729 2989
R.Sriskandarajah (914) 485 2084

RECEPTION HALL UNDER THREAT

A reception hall where social functions among Tamils are held situated at the Inner Harbour Road in Trincomalee faces closure in view of plans to base a security forces camp there. Commonly referred to as the Wedding Hall is situated in a built up area and its location as a security camp is bound to result in large scale displacement of Tamils in the area voluntarily and involuntarily.

Trincomalee MP Chandrakumar lodged a strong protest at the proposed siting of the camp to the Deputy Defence Minister Col. A.Ratwatte.

PROLONGED DETENTION IN POLICE STATION

Nachchiyappan Sivanadiyan (65 yrs) from Dickoya in the Nuwara-Eliya District was arrested from his residence by Pathana police on 13 February 95 on suspicion.

Following his indefinite detention at the Pathana Police station his wife Anandamany filed a habeas corpus application at the Court of Appeal

for his release or trial. Court allowed time till 31 May for the respondents to file answer.

Respondents cited in the application are Officers-in-Charge of the Nuwara-Eliya and Pathana police stations, Inspector General of Police, Director- CID and the Attorney General.

MAY DIARY

MAY 01

MUSLIM CIVILIAN KILLED:

Abdul Manab was taken out of his residence at Pulmoddai in Trincomalee District by troops who then shot him dead.

MYSTERIOUS KILLING IN VAVUNIYA:

Police reported the death by gunshot wounds of three Tamils during the nights. The bodies were recovered at Sambalhattam, Koomankulam junction and Kidiyiruppu.

MAY 02

ABDUCTION IN VAVUNIYA: Five armed men abducted Jeyaram on guard duty in the night at the Telecom office in Vavuniya.

MAY 03

MASS ARREST OF TAMILS IN COLOMBO:

Dawn raids in and around Colombo by Police and army personnel resulted in the arrest of many Tamils - 75 at Wellawatte, 60 at Dehiwela, 40 at Pettah and 10 at Wattala.

TAMIL WOMEN ARRESTED IN PETTAH:

Police arrested 20 Tamil women at Pettah in central Colombo on suspicion.

MAY 05

TAMIL VILLAGES SEARCHED:

Tamil villages around Nintavur in Amparai District were surrounded by the Special Task Force who carried out a search of all persons and residences.

MAY 06

ARREST IN PLANTATIONS:

Three tea estates at Lunugala in Badulla District were subjected to a search by 300 policemen who made four arrests on suspicion.

TAMIL ARRESTS IN COLOMBO:

The owner of lodging house at Hulftsdorf in central Colombo was arrested on suspicion by police along with 7 Tamil women lodgers.

MAY 07

DETENTION IN AMPARAI: Nine Tamils were detained at the Karaitivu army camp after a search of the

Paandiruppu village in Amparai District.

MAY 08

TAMIL ARRESTS IN KANDY: In a search commencing at 3 am of only Tamil residences in the Kandy Police area ten Tamils were arrested on suspicion.

MAY 09

KILLING AT SEA: Army sources reported the killing of a suspected LTTE member in a boat at 6.30 am off the coast of Kaluvankerni in Batticaloa District.

MAY 10

TAMIL ARRESTS IN MATALE: Up - Country Tamils R.Thurairajah, V.Chandramohan, V.Sivaperumal, S.Sinnarajah and S.Velautham were arrested in Matale by police on suspicion. The first two are employed in Matale there while the other three are from Nuwara Eliya District.

POLICE CASUALTIES:

Kattupuliyankulam Police post in Anuradhapura District was targeted by the LTTE resulting in the death of 15 policemen, four Home Guards and two civilians including the wife of a policeman.

MAY 11

FORCES EVICT TAMIL FAMILIES:

Sailors from the naval camp adjoining Manaiyaveli in Trincomalee District evicted 13 Tamil families from the villege considering them a security threat. Sinhalese families continue to remain in the villege.

TAMIL WOMEN ARRESTED:

Police from Kohuwela, a suburb of Colombo, arrested 14 Tamils including two women in a search of residences between 4 am and 6am.

MAY 12

KILLING IN BATTICALOA: A member of the Tamil group TELO was shot dead in Batticaloa town allegedly by the LTTE.

MAY 13

50 TAMILS DETAINED: A security forces search of Siththandy village in Batticaloa District led to the arrest of 50 Tamils on suspicion.

MAY 14

SHELL FIRE IN THE NORTH:

Army camp at Palaly in Jaffna District trained shell fire on Atchuvvely from 9.00 pm. Sivalingam(50 yrs) was killed by an exploding shell and two others were injured.

HEAVY CASUALTIES:

Operational Headquarters of the Defence Ministry disclosed in a statement that 15 LTTE cadres were killed in a confrontation at Poonanai in Batticaloa District. Four soldiers were also killed and 14 were injured in the same incident. Another confrontation at Kumburupitty in Trincomalee District claimed the lives of 28 LTTE cadres and 5 soldiers, the statement further added.

MAY 15

REHABILITATION OF NORTH SHELVED:

Presidential Task Force for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the North set up under Cabinet Minister R.Wickremanayake was disbanded with the Government deciding to cancel all such plans for the North.

MAY 16

TELO MEMBER KILLED:

Sriyathayaparan of the TELO Group was shot dead by unidentified persons at Eravur in Batticaloa District.

COMBATANTS SUFFER:

Two soldiers died when attacked by the LTTE at Elephant Pass in Kilinochchi District while a LTTE member was killed at Vammiyadithivu in Batticaloa District

MAY 17

CIVILIANS DISPLACED BY SHELL FIRE:

Palaly army camp in Jaffna District targeted Atchuvvely for intense shell fire resulting in 300 families being displaced and several buildings being damaged.

MAY DIARY

A PRESIDENT'S PROMISE:

Meeting representatives of 5 Tamil parties along with Ministers of Justice and Media, President Chandrika Kumaratunge said she would announce the Government's proposals to solve the ethnic problem within two weeks. According to her the provinces would have more powers than those allocated to the States in India.

MAY 18

BOMBING BY NIGHT: Air Force bombers targeted Thodaimanaru in Jaffna District at night. Three civilians sustained burn injuries and 6 others suffered minor injuries.

EUROPEAN UNION'S CONCERN:

The European Parliament in a resolution condemned the repudiation of truce by the LTTE and called on the Government and LTTE to resume talks aimed at reaching a ceasefire.

ARMY CONSOLIDATION IN

NORTH: Brig. Munasinghe of the JOC informed the press that troops at Palaly had gained control of Thondaimanaru, Paththaimeni, Idaikkadu and Atchuvveli areas in Jaffna District with injuries to 28 soldiers.

MAY 19

DEATH SQUADS AGAIN: The body of Colombo Open University Undergraduate Jeyanthan (23 yrs) from Vaddukottai in Jaffna District was recovered from the Mutwal coast in Colombo early in the morning. His legs had been tied and blood from the gun shot wound at the back of the head had not dried when the body was found.

MAY 20

OVERALL FORCES COMMANDER CHANGED: Deputy Minister of Defence Col. A. Ratwatte removed Maj. Gen. A.M.U. Seneviratne from the post of Overall Forces Commander for the North-East and replaced him with Maj. Gen. Daluwatte. The latter had been reprimanded by the Commission of Inquiry into the Poonahari debacle in November 1993.

MAY 21

TAMIL ARRESTS IN COLOMBO:

In a search of the Pettah area in Colombo, sailors from the Navy arrested eight Tamil youths including three females on suspicion of links with the LTTE.

MAY 22

MORE TAMIL ARRESTS: Police arrested 10 Tamil youths on suspicion from lodging houses in Maradana area of Colombo.

MAY 23

DIRTY TRICKS OF SECURITY FORCES: Foreign correspondent Suzanne Goldenberg in Batticaloa revealed the brutal killing of three Tamil youths by security force personnel attached to the Vijithapuram Police Station and critical injuries to another who escaped feigning death. Mrs. Tharmalingam Malathi (45 yrs) returning from the same Police Station making inquiries after her son arrested the previous day, was shot dead by a policeman at the gates.

MAY 24

PASSENGER BUS ATTACKED: A passenger bus came under LTTE fire at Puthukkudiyiruppu in Batticaloa District and resulted in the killing of two STF policemen and three passengers.

MAY 25

NOVEL CURFEW: The Government announced that the Government Agent had been informed of a curfew in some LTTE controlled areas in Jaffna District effective from 6 pm to 6 am. He was instructed to inform his assistants in the specified areas.

MAY 26

CIVILIANS MASSACRED: Leading Buddhist monk Rev. Matara Kithalagama Seelalankara who was a leading figure in the Sinhalese colonisation of Veli Oya areas, was shot dead at 7.15 am while travelling in a Pickup Truck at Niliella in Trincomalee District. Forty two Sinhalese villagers at Kallarawa in Trincomalee District were gunned down and five escaped with serious injuries. Security sources blamed the

LTTE for both these killings.

MAY 27

DISAPPEARANCE IN EAST: R. Tharmalingam (41 yrs) from Meeraavodai in Batticaloa District was reported missing from home under mysterious circumstances.

MAY 28

MILITARY CAMP OVERRUN: The army camp at Tharavaikulam in Batticaloa District was overrun by the LTTE and resulted in the killing of 40 soldiers and 16 LTTE cadres.

COMMUNICATIONS SEVERED:

Telecommunication links to Vavuniya the northern - most town where such a facility is available, were severed when the communication tower was destroyed in an explosion.

MAY 29

SKIRMISHES IN EAST: Operational Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence reported that one LTTE cadre was killed at 1 pm at Seradimunai and another at Kokkaddichcholai in Batticaloa District. One soldier was injured in the latter incident.

MAY 30

TULF MEETS PRESIDENT: President Chandrika Kumaratunge met members of the TULF for exploratory talks on the ethnic problem but failed to present the Government's devolution proposals.

FLOATING BODIES IN LAKE:

Police recovered two floating bodies from the Bolgoda lake at Panadura in Kalutara District. The highly decomposed bodies were aged between 35 and 40 according to the police.

MAY 31

CHILD DIES IN ARMY FIRE: Four year-old N. Krishanthi died of gunshot wounds following army fire in response to a grenade exploding near a foot patrol at Peithalai in Batticaloa District.

JUNE DIARY

JUNE 01

ARSON ATTACKS: Twenty four shops most of them belonging to Tamils were looted and burnt by a mob at Galle. Two Tamils were stabbed in their residences at Makuluwelapalam a.

FLOATING BODIES IN LAKE:

Two decomposed bodies of males around 30 years were found floating on the Bolgoda lake close to Panadura. Two Tamils were stabbed in their residences at Makulowelapalama.

JUNE 02

ATTACK ON TROOPS: Four soldiers were killed when a troop patrol was attacked by the LTTE at Sun village in Mannar District.

ALL TAMILS SUSPECT:

Canadian Associate Minister for Foreign Affairs Raymond Shan disclosed in Colombo that all Tamils are looked upon with suspicion and even some Canadian Tamils had been subjected to interrogation while in Sri Lanka.

JUNE 03

TAMIL ARRESTS IN PUTTALAM: In a search operation begun at 4 am security forces arrested 28 Tamils on suspicion.

JUNE 04

POLICE REPRISAL: Women, children and bus passengers near the police guard post at Eravur in Batticaloa District were clubbed by policemen following a colleague being injured in an attack by the LTTE.

TAMIL ARRESTS: In a search operation at Udappu in Puttalam District police arrested fifteen Tamils on suspicion.

JUNE 05

KILLINGS IN EAST: School Principal and Peace Committee Chairman A.Devanayagam(40 yrs) was shot dead in the night by unidentified persons at his residence at Periyaneelaavanai in Batticaloa

District. K.Suntharalingam (23yrs) also from nearby Kallar village was killed in similar circumstances.

DISCRIMINATION IN POLICE

SEARCH: After a search of only Tamil residences at Dunbar town in Nuwara-Eliya District police directed that all Tamil residents should register their names at the police station.

JUNE 06

ANOTHER KILLING:

Mudiyanselage Piyadasa (48yrs), a Sinhalese married to a Tamil was shot dead at Murakkottanchenai in Batticaloa district by unidentified persons.

POLICE RESERVIST KILLED:

Reserve Sub-Inspector M.Ravidas from Navatkadu in Amparai District was taken out from his residence at 9.30 pm by unidentified persons. His body with gun shot wounds was recovered the following day.

JUNE 07

TAMIL ARRESTS IN

KEGALLE: Four Tamil youths including two who had returned from Switzerland in April were arrested at the Mawanella public bus stand in Kegalle District.

JUNE 08

COST OF WAR: Deputy Minister of Finance Prof. G.L.Pieris announced government's plans to raise Rs.400 Million for its war effort. Among other measures, the Defence Levy is being raised from 3.5% to 4.5%

TAMIL ARRESTS IN MATALE:

Eight Tamil youths from the Upcountry working in a rice mill at Udupitiya in Matale since January were arrested on suspicion by police.

JUNE 09

ROCKET ATTACK: Attack aircraft of the Airforce fired rockets towards Vadamaradchy east in Jaffna District injuring a woman as they landed in fields.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

EXTENDED: Parliament extended the State of Emergency by a majority of forty votes. All Tamil MPs other than those from the TULF voted infavour. TULF abstained from voting.

JUNE 10

AERIAL BOMBING: A 250 Kg. bomb dropped on Mulangaavil in Mannar District destroyed 2 houses and injured a woman.

GOVERNMENT PUTS LID ON

ETHNIC SOLUTION: Justice Minister Prof. G.L.Pieris announced that no proposals would be unveiled by the government to solve the ethnic problem until a consensus is reached with all concerned parties.

JUNE 11

LOCAL COUNCILLOR

KILLED: R.Pathmanathan (31 yrs), President of the Thirukkivil Regional Council was shot dead while attending a religious festival at Thambuluvil in Batticaloa District.

JUNE 12

HEAVY CASUALTIES: In a clash between troops and LTTE at Pondukulchenai in Batticaloa District at 5.45 pm 18 soldiers were killed and 7 injured. Report of the security forces added that at least 20 LTTE cadres also would have been killed.

JUNE 13

MASS ARREST OF TAMILS: Following an explosion of a grenade near the Batticaloa hospital over 100 Tamils in the vicinity were indiscriminately arrested by troops.

POLICE POST ATTACKED:

The forward sentry post at Chettippalayam Police station in Batticaloa District was targeted in a LTTE attack and resulted in the death of two policemen.

JUNE DIARY

TAMIL YOUTHS ARRESTED:

Two Tamil youths employed at a rice mill in Polonnaruwa were arrested at the rail station, Polonnaruwa where they had come to see a colleague off. The whereabouts of Letchumanan Krishnakumar (18 yrs) and Kandasamy Thiraviyakumar (20 yrs) both from Kiran in Batticaloa District were not known after arrest.

JUNE 14

TAMIL ARRESTS IN MATALE:

In a morning cordon and search of the Matala Municipal limits police arrested 4 Tamils including a female for not being in possession of Identity cards.

JUNE 15

SHELL FIRE VICTIM: The shattered body of K. Pulendrarasa (16 yrs) from Vaakaneri in Batticaloa District was recovered when he was killed in sleep by a shell fired from the army camp in the village which exploded within the house.

JUNE 16

TAMILS DISPLACED: The army commenced operation *Lightning Strike* from Palaly airbase in Jaffna District and the artillery regiment advanced towards Atchuvvely with air cover. Aerial bombing of Atchuvvely and Pandatharippu areas led to the displacement of over 4,000 families.

JUNE 17

SKIRMISH IN POONAHARI:

Three LTTE cadres and one soldier were killed in a clash around the Poonahari army camp in Kilinochchi District.

JUNE 18

PATROL AMBUSHED: A troop patrol was ambushed at 8.30 am by the LTTE at Arunapura in Polonnaruwa District and 8 soldiers were killed.

JUNE 19

ANOTHER AMBUSH: A troop patrol came under LTTE attack in the early hours at Kokkuthoduwai in

Mullaitivu District. Four soldiers were killed and 15 were injured. It was reported that 9 LTTE cadres were also killed and 8 were wounded.

JUNE 20

FLOATING BODIES: Four bodies of males floating in the Bolgoda at Panadura were recovered by Police. The total number of such bodies recovered from the lake has risen to 8 with this incident.

AMNESTY ENDS: Amnesty granted by the army to its 24,000 deserters for returning to service without punishments ended today.

JUNE 21

PEACE BY COERCION: Foreign Minister Kathirgamar speaking to the press in Colombo claimed that military operations were designed to coerce the LTTE to opt for peace.

GOVERNMENT ACTING

AGAINST TAMILS: Speaking in Parliament over the Defence Levy Batticaloa MP K. Selvarajah alleged that at least in Batticaloa District government forces were acting against all Tamils although claiming that they were directed at the LTTE.

JUNE 22

BODY BURNED ON TYRE: Police recovered a body that had been left to burn on a rubber tyre at Bulathsinhala bus stand in Kalutara District.

JUNE 23

ECONOMIC BLOCKADE ENHANCED: Troops at the Thandikulam, the northern most government checkpoint in Vavuniya decreed that no more than 2 Kg. of sugar or milk powder could be taken by north-bound Tamils.

JUNE 24

ATTACK ON GUARD POST: Four soldiers were killed when the army guard post at Panmadawachi in Trincomalee District came under LTTE attack.

25 JUNE

PRIEST ABDUCTED:

Mannampitiya Zion Church priest Rev. T. Jeevaraj was abducted from the Church at night by unidentified persons.

JUNE 26

SKIRMISH IN EAST:

Kaayaamkerni army camp in Batticaloa District came under LTTE attack at dawn and 5 soldiers were killed and 9 injured. It was also reported that 8 LTTE cadres were killed and an unspecified number were injured.

JUNE 27

TELO MEMBER KILLED:

K. Thurairajah (28 yrs), a member of the TELO Group assisting security forces was shot dead at Sandiveli in Batticaloa District by unidentified persons.

JUNE 28

HEAVY LOSSES FOR

FORCES: Mandaitivu army camp in Jaffna District was overrun by the LTTE in a dawn attack. Over 100 inmates of the camp were killed and 45 were injured. Eight policemen were killed in a landmine explosion at Kebbetigollawa in Anuradhapura District.

JUNE 29

MUSLIM KILLED IN POLICE

FIRE: Muslims protesting in a play ground adjoining the police station at Eravur in Batticaloa District against the killing of a Muslim woman and a youth under suspicious circumstances were fired upon by police resulting in the death of one person.

JUNE 30

MORE FLOATING BODIES:

Bodies of four males and a female were found floating under a culvert at Alawwa in Kegalle District. Bodies of two women blindfolded were found in a field at Narammala in Kurunegala District. The bodies appeared to have been brought from far according to the police and all were aged between 25 and 30.

Unbroken Chains

- A Book Review

Several critiques of the dowry system have appeared among the Tamils over the period of time but society has upto now managed to shake them off and maintain this age old custom. The feeble in the society feel that the best means of treating this system is to ignore its existence. But the strong sentiments raised by the Women's League of the LTTE and their effectiveness have helped establish everlasting changes in the society. Adele Ann's "Unbroken Chains" is set against this changing scenario and inescapably is influenced by the emerging trend and is also giving a new impetus to this new development.

In its totality the book brings out succinctly how Jaffna society has over the centuries tolerated this immense sin camouflaging it in grandeur as tradition, culture and Thesavalamai (The practice of the land). That the unbroken bondage dowry system has with history long past has retarded social change is also well reasoned out in the book. Identifying the links between the dowry system, the caste system and the Thesavalamai is only one part in the book. The compelling part of the book is the antidote unveiled to treat this malady.

The abstractness commonly associated with a treatise on sociology is conspicuous in the book by its absence. The prose is lively and the choice of words with a common touch also make the book a compelling reading. The political impact in present day Jaffna society is clearly evident in this work.

The brevity of the messages in the book is no damper as they firmly remain in the mind to propel discussion and later day development. That the book will create controversies is inescapable as the author had definitely raised a hornet's nest by assailing a long entrenched social system. It is established that a dowry is not a mere endowment passed on at matrimony to a daughter from her mother. The deeper implications of this innocuous looking dowry system is akin to the tip of the iceberg, according to the author herself. The iceberg itself is the feminine oppression that is facilitated by the shackles surrounding the dowry system and the author endeavours to demolish these shackles that would ultimately ensure feminine emancipation in Jaffna society.

In tracing the origins of the dowry system the book dwells on the adoption of the local Thesavalamai by the Dutch and British colonial rulers as a means of maintaining their hold on the populace. How the dowry system reflects the proprietary rights of the peasant caste in the feudal set up which mingled the caste system with ownership of property is also well brought out. The contradiction inherent between the endowments to a son and daughter under Thesavalamai law is also adequately dealt with to establish the clamour for gender equality.

The author does not accept that the dowry system in Jaffna is a derivation from either the endow-

ment practice of the Malayalis of Kerala identified as maternal domain or the Aryan endowment practice identified as "Sthritanam" or wealth of the female.

Economic deprivation following political oppression of the Tamils by the majority Sinhalese led to the dowry system in Jaffna taking the twist as a cash endowment too to the bridgeroom's family, claims the author. A cash endowment is never found in Thesavalamai although now in practice - yet another version of feminine oppression in Jaffna society.

The physical prowess lacking in the female is made an excuse to justify the assumed inability to make decisions without consent from the male, according to the author. She does not accept even the disparity in physical prowess and cites a few examples too.

Also questioned is the contradiction in Tamil culture which exalts the virtues of the female and the married woman with child, while at the same time burdening the female with the oppressing dowry system. An explanation for demeaning the role of women is given and that is the unquantified value in economic terms of the domestic functions performed by the female.

The book is a rude awakening for both the male and the female in Jaffna society and this is bound to reverberate in the entire society and may well be the catalyst for dismantling the present dowry system.

Reviewed by
- V.Balakumaran

Situation Report

TAMIL RESIDENCES DEMOLISHED

Residences of Tamils on either side of the road leading from Salippai Aru bridge towards Kuchchaveli village in Trincomalee District have been demolished by troops. A bulldozer was used to clear the area of the houses on 31 May. According to the army this was a measure to secure the area from rebel activity.

Local TULF leader Sampanthan called upon the Deputy Minister of Defence Col. Ratwatte to restore the houses.

PREDOMINANCE TO MILITARISM

With the on-set of hostilities the dormant forces of ultra nationalism have raised their heads dwarfing the liberals who made a plea for peace and reconciliation to be given a chance to foster ethnic harmony in the country. The High Priest of the Siam sect of Buddhism voiced this strident trend in the first week of June. Rev. Rambukwelle Sri Dharma-kista Vipassi told the visiting Home Affairs Deputy Minister Lakshman Kiriella that all constitutional reforms should be put off until a military victory over the LTTE is achieved.

Even retired Judge R. Wanasundara who was not appointed as Chief Justice by President Jayawardene over a question of his loyalty to the establishment came out openly against any devolution of power that President Chandrika had mentioned as a possibility for ushering in ethnic peace. He resigned from a prestigious assignment handed down by the President to register his protest and joined other academics in calling for the total rejection of a federal concept under whatever name.

ARMS SUPPLY FOR ENSURING CONFLICT

The British based Campaign Against Arms Trade which is a powerful lobby group campaigning for a weapons-free world has included a trade deal in weapons to Sri Lanka in its June publication - *NEWS*. This organisation has reported the sale of "Surplus Ammunition" to Sri Lanka by the Ministry of Defence.

The Sri Lankan President who castigated the previous regime on its arms purchases and alleged malpractices over them has now opted for urgent purchases and sent missions to several regular arms supplying countries. Russia, Ukraine, China and Israel have gained the most from this buying spree.

Australia which refused the supply of grenades to the previous regime has been emulated by South Africa under President Mandela. The South African government has refused to supply spares to the equipment supplied earlier in view of the civil war and the oppression against the Tamils. Bishop Desmond Tutu has also faulted the Sri Lankan government on its treatment of the Tamils. This decision has been made in spite of the impact such a step will have on the weapons industry of South Africa which is in need of foreign exchange earnings.

The supply of ammunitions by Britain is seen by observers as a step towards the escalation of violence and human rights abuses in Sri Lanka.

PRICES OF ESSENTIAL ITEMS SOAR

The effect of the government's *economic embargo* on the North augmented from 19 April has tightened the noose around the ordinary Tamil consumers there. Consequently prices of essential commodities have escalated manifold.

By the end of May a litre of kerosene, the only source for lighting fetched Rs. 125.00 in Jaffna and this was beyond the reach of the majority of the households. This has made learning after dark an impossibility for all students with disastrous long-term effects on educational standards in the North.

A kilogram of sugar was hardly available even at Rs. 75.00. In the absence of nutritious food sugar is the ready source of energy and its scarcity leads to inactivity and listlessness among those affected.

Wheat flour is not available except under the rationed allocation per household. Large scale displacement of families every now and then as a result of security operations throws the ration system out of gear thereby making wheat flour too a luxury in the North.

INCIDENT IN ARMY CONTROLLED KAYTS

Operational Headquarters of the Defence Ministry reported the killing of a soldier by the LTTE in an incursion at Kayts in Jaffna District on 05 June.

Situation Report

MILITANT BUDDHISM

Recruitment to the army at 15 centres throughout the country took place in early May. It was hoped to induct 10,000 soldiers with a nine month training at Rs. 3,295 as monthly wages. Two Buddhist monks in saffron robes also presented themselves for enrollment into the military. One of them was identified as Rev. Dharmaratne (21 yrs) from Dematagoda in Colombo who had declared that he would discard the cleric's robes and name to assume the civilian name of Ananda Kumara Senarat Banda.

Militancy among Buddhist monks has long roots in the country as evidenced by the first political assassination being the work of Rev. Somarama and the victim being the then Prime Minister W.R.D. Bandaranaike, the father of President Chandrika Kumaratunge. But the attempts by two monks in robes to join the forces and engage openly in war surpasses all past militancy and is a turning point in the practice of Buddhism.

DEATH FROM DYSENTERY

Bacillary dysentery has caused the death of 7 persons in the Nedunkerni area of Mullaitivu District by the middle of June. Mostly children have been afflicted by this ailment. Three of the those dead are students from the Olumadu, Keerisuttan and Thattamalai villages.

Lack of drugs and medical personnel has been blamed for this deprivation of the population already hit by the economic blockade. The local medical staff has appealed to the ICRC for assistance.

HIDDEN HAND IN ARSON ATTACKS

In the first week of June arsonists were active in southern Sri Lanka. Worst affected was the Galle District and the bulk of the victims were Upcountry Tamils. Arson attacks in the Galle bazaar area where there is a heavy police presence has led to the authorities being blamed for inaction in the face of impending trouble. Plantation areas also suffered with many dwellings being targeted resulting in deaths too.

The opposition UNP elements were blamed by government spokesmen, though vehemently denied by the UNP. A sinister twist to the accusations has been given by the arrest of a soldier over the incidents in the south. Private Kumarakannankarage from the Sinha Regiment of the army is one of 14 suspects charged by the police in connection with the incidents at Nagathanne in Elpitiya. The Elpitiya magistrate ordered that the accused be held in remand custody until trial.

REFUGEES IN STARVATION

Tamil refugees at the Peththalai village in Batticaloa District have not been issued with their food rations for May and June even by the end of June. Most of the refugees have been denied access to their villages because of the security situation and have no opportunities for earning a living of their own.

Due to the denial of the food rations starvation is rampant in the refugee camp and all appeals to the authorities have failed to bring relief.

CIVILIAN PAWNS IN MILITARY PLOYS

Several instances of civilians in areas of conflict being used as a buffer by the forces have been reported in May.

Following an attack by the LTTE on a Police Station in the Annuradhapura District the Sinhalese occupants of Horowapothana, Diyakithawewa and Parangi Aavadiya were issued with archaic rifles. Superintendent of Police Ilangoe made this move on the orders of the Deputy Minister of Industrial Development B.P. Dissanayake who toured the area.

Tamil civilians led in front as a human shield for troops proceeding to Palanthady camp from Kiran in Batticaloa District were rescued by ICRC officials who happened to pass by in a vehicle and to whom the civilians had pleaded for humanitarian intervention. Troops at Kiran camp had also commandeered farm hands to put up guard posts at the outer perimeters without themselves venturing out.

Troops made announcements on amplifiers for Tamil menfolk of Kokkaddichchola and Mahiladithivu in Batticaloa District to present themselves for jungle clearing around their camps on Sundays.

Villagers around the Kattumuruvikulam army camp who fled the area following an attack on 22 April were provided food by the Church in Valaichchenai where they had taken refuge. With the restoration of the army camp these displaced Tamils are being compelled to return to their homes to serve as a buffer against attacks on the camp by the LTTE. Though denied of any food rations by the authorities these displaced villagers have resisted moves to force their return as they fear reprisal attacks by the troops at the camp.

FOOD AS A WEAPON IN WAR

Food supplies to the Tamils in the North - East have been construed as a matter that decides the capability of the security forces in their fight against the LTTE. While the general economic embargo against the Northern Tamils has never been removed since the fuel embargo imposed in 1984 by the then Minister of National Security Lalith Athulathmudali, food supplies allowed by the authorities have been held up by the security forces at border areas to enhance their chances of success.

This strategy of the forces executed on their own will was

clearly evident in the first weeks in May. Ships Lanka Maho and Lanka Muditha carrying essential food supplies to Point Pedro were disallowed from discharging their cargo by the security forces. In the same week over 200 food lorries with essential food supplies for the Wann, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts on the mainland were debarred from proceeding beyond the Eerapperiya - kulam army camp in Vavuniya. These vehicles were held up thus cutting off food supplies to the Tamils in the affected districts. Kilinochchi District was the worst affected as no supplies reached it even by the last week in May leading

to a severe shortage of rice, wheat flour and fuel.

Severe restrictions on the carriage of food items and kerosene oil were imposed by the security forces in Batticaloa district on the residents of Vaharai area in particular. With agricultural activities disrupted by villagers being denied free access to their fields by the soldiers and with the government's ban on fishing the villagers are compelled to purchase all their requirements of food outside Vaharai. Restrictions even on the carriage of essential items from outside has led to severe deprivation among the villagers in the area.

PUTTING PEACE BACK ON THE AGENDA

With the two leaders President Chandrika Kumaratunge and LTTE leader Pirabakaran who signed an accord in the first week of January to cease hostilities now bent on settling the outstanding issues through a recourse to military means, the people of Sri Lanka are paying a heavy price in lives lost and damage to property. The initial agreement envisaged a fortnight of peace but resulted in an extended peace and this fact has not been lost sight of by the peace lobby.

The NGO Forum on Sri Lanka on 04 May proposed a four week cessation of hostilities to restart the stalled peace process. It suggested that mediation efforts should be through the auspices of the Com-

monwealth. As a peoples' participation in the peace pursuit, 25,000 Catholics from Mannar urged both the government and the LTTE to bring relief to those affected by the resumption of war.

Canada's Associate Minister for Foreign Affairs Raymond Shan spent some days in Colombo in early June discussing the ethnic problem with interested parties and made public his views on 02 June. According to him peace negotiations and constitutional changes are central to ensure a situation where all communities could live in amity. He reiterated that the ethnic problem prevailing in the country could never be solved militarily and that there is no recorded history also where such a

means had succeeded in providing the desired solution. The importance of establishing a concerted devolution of powers in a multi-ethnic society that could lead to an understanding of the rights of all communities was also stressed by the Canadian visitor. In fact it is a sine qua non for lasting peace according to him. Canada was willing, he said, to mediate if called upon to do so by both the government and the LTTE.

The futility of a military approach to the ethnic problem has been expressed to by the governments of Japan, Australia and United Kingdom too and what is now needed is a concerted action by this wide peace lobby to give substance to its wishes.

THE PATH TO PEACE

Speech delivered by Dr.Arjuna Sittampalam on 18 June in London at a Symposium on the Tamil National Question hosted by International Tamil Foundaton

I must start by saying that there is no single path to peace. In fact, peace itself comes in several varieties and there is little point about talking of a path without first identifying the destination. We must talk about what type of peace we have in mind distinguishing between the peace which we like and the peace which is likely.

The simplest type of peace is the peace of victory and defeat, or the peace of surrender and conquest. It is the peace of exhaustion. This peace arises because one or both of the parties become weary with the war and are no longer willing to pay the price of fighting. The American loss in Vietnam was of this category. History is full of such examples where either the attacker or defender just gives up because the costs of continuing are seen as excessive.

We then have the peace based on illusion and false hope. In this case one particular party deludes the other or itself and peace established. Often such a peace is temporary as the underlying reality forces its way through. The peace following Chamberlain's notorious Munich agreement was indeed a peace of this type. In that case war started quite quickly.

Another is the peace of harmony where with both parties reason prevails leading to the realisation that the war is superfluous. This type of peace is very rare as pride and bitterness often get in the way. There are many sings that Northern Ireland has actually embarked upon such a peace.

The final type of peace I would like to talk about is the peace based on stalemate or a balance of power. Both parties realise they cannot make further headway but are able

to keep each other at bay with a deterrent military force. The forty years of cold war we have just gone through was of this type. For this peace to prevail, it is important that both parties appreciate each other's strengths and their own inability to defeat the other. If either party misreads the other's capacity the peace could break down until the recognition of the balance is restored.

Let us now talk about the Eelam war. It is important to note that peace is likely only when both parties have the same type of peace in mind. Where one party believes for instance that military conquest is achievable and desirable, then no willingness to compromise on the other side can in general lead to peace. There has to be a gradual convergence of attitudes on both sides. Otherwise, the word 'peace' becomes just a platitude.

When we talk about peace by conquest, we must note that the Tigers' aims are limited. They cannot hope to conquer the Sri Lankan government in the way that the allied forces entered Berlin in 1945. Realistically all they can do is to induce weariness in the government - hence the conquest scenario is one-side. Hawks on the Sri Lankan side do believe that the government can smash the LTTE militarily.

The major problem militating against peace in Sri Lanka has been the lack of appreciation by the Sinhalese of the Tamil position. Implicitly what the Sinhalese have in mind is the peace of victory and defeat. They have always had this in mind. There is the well known story of a military commander continuously retreating before the enemy until his force came up against a

river which they could not cross. Then he said "With the river behind and the enemy in front, we have no choice but to fight".

The Tamils of Eelam are in this situation. They know that peace of harmony is just not possible at the moment. Illusory assumptions of peace with harmony made a major contribution in recent months to the collapse of the cease-fire. Even at the height of peace euphoria in the closing months of 1994, even amongst the so called peace loving supporters of Chandrika there was no great love and goodwill shown towards the Tamils. Their desire for peace was solely motivated by their frustrations with war. There has been no sign of contrition for past Sinhalese atrocities against peaceful Tamils. If the Tamils give up their defence capability which they now enjoy, courtesy of the Tigers, the odds are that the Sinhalese will resume their bad ways in double quick time given their basic mindset that minorities have no rights, only grace and favour privileges. If the Tamils achieve peace by giving up their armed security, it will be a Munich type peace. It will be a peace which in the long-term again holds the promise of burnt libraries and slaughtered innocents.

It is not for us here to dictate what the Eelam Tamils want. What is obvious are the available choices. It is either peace with security or the peace of surrender. Many Tamils do not like everything that the Tigers do and accordingly withhold their support. The Tigers certainly do not always hold the high moral ground as many idealists amongst us would wish. However, from Tamils' perspective this high moral ground is a foolish yardstick to judge them by. Tamils have to choose between the Tigers, however flawed, who represent hope and the Sinhalese

polity who show no repentance of the past and therefore are almost certain to resume their repressive habits.

If this is realised by all Tamils and Sinhalese the prospects for peace improves measurably. Currently too many Tamils aid and abet the illusions and misconceptions of the Sinhalese. The only types of peace now possible are peace based on Sinhalese exhaustion, Tamil surrender of guaranteed Tamil security based on mutual balance. The outlook has been temporarily clouded by the Sinhalese talking themselves into a belief that it is the Tamils who are weary of war. What is very clear is that the Tigers have drawn and are continuing to draw sustenance from the population at large. Their very enemies attest to this. The Tigers' current strength must imply continued support by the population though they might well

grumble and complain at specific issues. The conclusion which we must draw is that barring surrender or defeat the main hopes of peace lie in Sinhalese exhaustion or recognition of the balance of power in the form of permanent guarantees of Tamil armed security.

What is the path to peace? Short of surrender or outright defeat, given their need for justice and security, Tamils have very little room for manoeuvre. Many in the Sri Lankan military prefer the continuance of the war. The promise of peace has broken down because Chandrika and the other former peace lovers of this government have not been sufficiently strong and wise to overcome military manoeuvring. The key question is whether she would have enough strength and will to climb out of the military trap because otherwise the war is destined to continue until its price

becomes even more painfully obvious to the Sinhalese.

It is now up to Chandrika whether she has the political skills and courage to deliver what she promised. She needs to put the interests of her own political future above the chauvinistic pride of the Colombo based establishment many of whom wax prosperous on the back of the struggle. Tamils for their part should emphasise peace less and justice and security much more. Willingness to negotiate must never be confused with peace at any price. Whenever we mention peace without qualifying it, the Sinhalese interpret it as a return to their old unfettered power to do as they please with us. On the other hand, if they accept our entitlement to justice and security, peace will follow. Otherwise surrendering or fighting are the only options.

CAFOD CALLS FOR ARMS EMBARGO ON SRI LANKA

Catholic Fund for (CAFOD) Overseas Development one of the leading UK aid organisations has called on the British government to end arms export to Sri Lanka in protest at the recent upsurge in attacks on civilians by the Sri Lankan government forces.

Julian Filochowski, Director of CAFOD, has written to Malcolm Rifkind, the new Foreign Secretary, expressing deep concern about the current violence in Sri Lanka. The letter draws particular attention to the recent bombing of St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church where many of those massacred were women and

children. Calling on the government to express its concern to the Sri Lankan government, Julian Filochowski says

“Although we in no way condone the actions of the LTTE, we nevertheless feel that the conduct of the war by the Sri Lankan government

falls well short of accepted norms of behaviour.”

CAFOD has also committed £30,000 to the relief effort in Sri Lanka. Some of this money will go to help the 250,000 people displaced since the government offensive began on 9 July 1995.

CAFOD's partners in the Catholic church in Jaffna have written a strongly worded letter to the President of Sri Lanka calling for an immediate end to the operation which has already claimed the lives of 220 people and left another 375 with terrible injuries.

STOP PRESS

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