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NEED OF THE HOUR

It is needless to describe the enormity and the extent of the suffering of the Tamil speaking people since the commencement of war between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and Sri Lankan Government after the withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) from Sri Lanka.

The perpetrators of this orgy of violence seem to be looking for only opportunities for bloodshed. It is a see-saw battle in which the people of North East are also pitted against one another.

As a daily routine the wail of the people at the premature loss of their beloved ones, their cry of anguish and agony pervades throughout the North East of Sri Lanka. How many more killings, how many more deaths and destruction have to take place before we come to our senses ?

The Tamil speaking people, and for that matter anyone who has an iota of human concern do not want this never ending war in which there is no clear and realistic political objective but only an irrepressible desire for an orgy of violence.

The time has come for the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE to declare their political objectives in definite terms. The Sri Lankan Government must state clearly their solution for the Tamil National Question instead of finding excuses and pretending to act upon a grand strategy to preserve the "unity, integrity and sovereignty" of the country. If there is a just and realistic solution to the Tamil National Question the people of Sri Lanka Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims are capable and mature enough to preserve the unity and sovereignty of the country.

Equally, LTTE should state their specific political objectives instead of their empty rhetoric of "separation". If LTTE's political objective is separation, was this conceded by the Government of Sri Lanka during their negotiations after the withdrawal of the IPKF ? What was the political solution that the leadership of LTTE placed during their discussion with President Premadasa and his government representatives ?

What was the basis on which LTTE intended to negotiate when they unilaterally declared the ceasefire in December 1990 ?

On what specific points do the LTTE differ from the political solutions placed by the other Tamil political parties ?

If LTTE was prepared to enter into dialogue and discussion with their "sworn enemy" the Sri Lankan

government, what prevents them from entering into a discussion and dialogue with the other Tamil groups? The Tamil speaking people for whom this savage war is claimed to be waged, have the right to demand answers to these questions and LTTE has the burden of responsibility to place honest and frank answers before the people.

One thing should be clear to everyone: There is no room for hollow rhetoric now. The experience of the leadership of the Tamil speaking people should induce realism in its diplomacy and in decision making. We, Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), have been clear in our political objectives and have placed political solution based on realities that confront our people. Our policies are based on objective balance and principled examination of all issues on their merits.

We have always recognised that there are differing political positions within Tamil polity that are represented by different political parties. We have always insisted that the unity of the Tamil speaking people is paramount in our struggle to achieve our political goals. Despite the massacre of countless of our cadres by LTTE, despite their persistent campaign of insinuations and intimidation, we are always ready for a dialogue even with them, if they are prepared to accept political pluralism and basic norms of democracy.

How long is LTTE leadership going to sacrifice the interests of the Tamil speaking people for the sake of their desire for absolute power ? Show of force, terrorism and elimination of other shades of opinion and political groups through violence will only deepen the divisions and pave the way for the disintegration of our society and reduce us as unwanted refugees wandering from place to place at home and abroad. The majority of the Tamil speaking people do not accept this humiliation which is a direct result of the LTTE's approach but only suffer silently because of fear of retribution.

The Tamil speaking people should pressurise the LTTE to take effective measures to end this carnage, this political gangsterism and to establish common purpose and channels of communication with the other political parties. The Tamil speaking people must resolve to repudiate those who claim to act on behalf of them but have no real mandate and make a mockery of humanity.

What is needed now more than ever is the participation of LTTE in open and frank discussion with other Tamil and Muslim political parties to save our people from the devastating consequences of not doing so. Those who have made mistakes should have the courage to accept that it is our internal strife that has caused the present catastrophe, the split of our ranks, the loss of civilian lives, the collapse of our society and the destruction of our homeland.

It must be firmly set in our mind that our political objectives cannot be achieved through the barrel of a gun and the most desirable thing at this juncture is to pursue negotiations. The only hope for the people to avoid the disaster that they are faced with, to restrain Sri Lankan forces from persisting with their barbaric onslaught, is for the Tamil Muslim political groups to unite on a common programme. We reaffirm the need to find a political solution and the necessity to accelerate the process towards a negotiated settlement with the participation of all parties concerned.

The need of the hour is unity, all the Tamil and Muslim parties should recognise their responsibility and endeavour to fulfill their obligation towards the people to promote the interests of the people. No one can and should assume that they are the paragon of probity and piety. It is the people who should decide on their own free will. All of us must work with common responsibility to alleviate the suffering of the Tamil speaking people. The need for this is greater than at any time. The Tamil speaking people must resolve to politically isolate any group which does not come forward for dialogue, for discussion for political settlement. With a new vision, we should be able to eliminate our weakness and go forward as one entity. In this difficult hour of our history, let us heed to the cry of our people for an end to their suffering, for an end to their unprecedented chaos and confusion they are faced with. Let us not embark on adventurism which will only be self-destructive. Let us heed to the voice of the people who are yearning for the return of their normal life.

If at this hour, we allow ourselves to be drawn in political games, hell bent on extracting maximum political mileage regardless of the larger interests of the Tamil speaking people and indulge in juvenile game of up-manship, the collapse of our cause and with it the Tamil nation is inevitable.

A POINT OF VIEW

By Keerthi Ranjan Shah.

President Premadasa's call to the LTTE at the opening of the new Parliament, to come to the negotiating table is seen here as the revival of the Government's old strategy prior to June 1990, of using the LTTE to contain the Tamil struggle, rather than resolving it.

It is well known that there was a secret understanding and agreement between the President and the LTTE and it was kept as a secret on the request of the LTTE. The hawkish sections of the Sri Lankan security forces who disagree with this plan derailed it earlier and now the President's call for negotiations serves a warning to those sections to fall in line.

It also serves the warning to those Tamil militant factions who threw themselves lock, stock and barrel with the Government that their honeymoon is going to be ended abruptly.

President Premadasa's enthusiasm to strike a deal with the LTTE before the results of the Indian elections is understandable from his point of view. It is expected that the elections in India will produce a stable Government that in turn will use its good offices to ensure the implementation of the Indo-Lanka accord of July 1987, in its letter and spirit.

President is opposed to the Provincial council system since its inception. His intentions of weakening it and eventually dismantling it is becoming more and more evident by his presidential decrees and administrative directives to boost the powers and functions of the Pradeshiya Sabhas. These are units consisting of AGA divisions throughout the country and envisaged as an instrument to decentralise the administration. President is also planning to set up a unified Pradeshiya Sabha at the Provincial level which will not have any legislative powers. This unified body backed

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up by the existing administrative structures will render the Provincial Councils irrelevant and thus bypass the central question of devolution of powers to the Tamil Speaking people.

Recent rejection by the Muslim parties of the proposals of PLOTE, TELO, ACTC, and EPRLF is also said to be instigated by the Presidential secretariat. President wants both Tamil and Muslim parties to engage in unproductive talks till he renews his deal with LTTE. The disagreement between Tamil and Muslim parties will also provide him with the much needed reason to his intended dismantling of the Provincial council system.

SRI LANKAN ARMS BUILD UP

Colombo, Feb. 13th (LANS)

Sri Lanka will get a huge quantity of arms and ammunition from China and Pakistan, senior Defence sources say. While heavy armour including fighter bombers, transport planes, patrol boats and armoured cars will be acquired from China on commercial basis, a large number of guns and ammunition will be obtained from Pakistan. According to senior Defence officials, a good part of the military supplies from Pakistan will be an outright grant. For the first time, the country will acquire two fighter bombers. Two Chinese built Nanhang A5M fighter bombers are expected to arrive shortly. So far, the Air Force depended on Italian made Sia Marchetti light aircraft for its aerial attacks.

The A5M fighter bomber is a dedicated ground attack aircraft with a secondary capability as an interceptor. The Sri Lankan Air Force pilots who trained on the A5M in China have now returned and the aircraft will arrive shortly. The air force will get three Y-12 transport planes from China. The country will also acquire Bell helicopters from Asian Bell Corporation (Asian counterpart of the American Bell Company in Singapore.)

The army is to gradually reduce its dependence on British Saladin armoured cars by getting light tanks and infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) from China. The models selected by army officers who visited China are T85 light tanks with tracks and YW531 IFVs with wheels, T85 will be the first tracked tanks the Sri Lankan army possessed.

The T85 and YW531 IFVs will be mounted with 73 MM cannon and coaxial machine guns. It will also have an anti-tank missile launching pad atop the gun barrel. The IFV can carry at least eight infantrymen who can fire from inside the vehicle through firing ports in the hull. It has a three men crew of commander, gunner and driver. The T85s and IFVs are being built at the Chinese state armaments corporation known as Norinco.

Sri Lanka will get a huge quantity of ammunition from Pakistan. The first batch of it comprising 6.2 tonnes was off loaded recently. The army will also get a large stock of 106MM RCL guns from Pakistan, sources told India Abroad News Service.

The Sri Lankan navy will get patrol boats from South Korea and China. Although the navy is familiar with the Israeli Dvoras, the Tel Aviv government is reluctant to supply any more Dvoras because of President Premadasa's decision last April to close down the Israeli interest section in Colombo. In addition some patrol boats will be manufactured locally at the Colombo Dockyard Ltd.

The Sri Lankan Army, which was just a ceremonious army a decade ago is being expanded rapidly. By the end of this year, the army will consist of four divisions each with three brigades with three battalions each. Apart from this, there will be an independent brigade with two special forces regiments, two armoured regiments, four artillery regiments, four engineers regiments and two signals regiments. With support services, the total strength of the army will go upto 120,000 by the end of this year.

(Courtesy HINDUSTAN TIMES FEBRUARY 14th 1991)

EXTRACTS FROM ISLAND

An extract from an article written by Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar a leading member of the Congress (I), published in the Sunday Island of 14th April 1991.

"The point of departure of such a strategy must necessarily be the unambiguous reaffirmation by the Government of India, (to make up for the lapse of the last months) of the need to honour and implement the 1987 India-Sri Lanka Agreement. Sri Lanka must be persuaded, cajoled, bullied, bribed and threatened, in whatever combination circumstances merit, into fulfilling its Treaty obligations. For the obligations of the

1987 Agreement are as binding on them as they are on us. There is no scope in international law for unilateral renegeing. The Agreement saved Sri Lanka's unity. The Agreement secured for the Tamils a place of honour in Sri Lanka's modern nationhood. It is the Premadasa - V.P. Singh backtracking on the Agreement that has resulted in the rivers of blood that have flowed in that unfortunate isle the thousands of innocent Tamils strafed from the air, the resurgence of LTTE fascism, the collapse of provincial autonomy and institutions of provincial government and the exodus of refugees to the camps in Mandapam and elsewhere in India. V.P.Singh is gone, thank God! Premadasa... thank the other side.... remains. To bring him back to the path of reason and good sense is the duty that devolves on the new Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister he has chosen. Next is a time-table for talks, progressing in stages, from bringing the LTTE and non-LTTE groups separately to Delhi for talks with the Central government, followed in due course, after a number of preliminaries are cleared, for direct talks between the LTTE and non-LTTE, leading to an evolution of a Tamil consensus that can provide the basis for an interim settlement between the Sri Lanka government and the Tamils, guaranteed by the Government of India."

THE END GAME IN SRI LANKA

Extracts from an article from 'The Hindu' of 21st March 1991.

Today Eastern Muslim leaders not only scoff at the claims made on them by virtue of their common language with the Tamils, but become agitated at the mere mention of a permanent merger. Instead, one and all are demanding a Muslim ethnic council in the east that will significantly, be directly under Colombo and not under the North-Eastern council.

It is not even certain that the Eastern Tamils will vote for a merger if the combined Provinces is to be controlled by the LTTE. To begin with, there are differences between the Tamils of the north and the east that are too often overlooked. But what is more important is the LTTE's absolute refusal to consider any form of democratic setup in the combined Province. This led not only to the failure of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord to deliver peace, but to endless bloody battles

between the LTTE and the EPRLF and other Tamil organisations.

Colombo's strategy in the coming months is, therefore, a nearly foregone certainty; it will seek to attack the LTTE relentlessly in the east where, Batticaloa having been largely cleared, it will now concentrate on Trincomalee. At the same time, it will attack the LTTE in its jungle hideouts in the North and North-East, denying them sanctuary in the refugee camps wherever possible. The goal is likely to be the more manageable one of clearing the East and pushing the LTTE into the Jaffna peninsula. This is being backed by a political strategy of involving the other Tamil groups increasingly in the democratic process.

This attempt is only in its infancy and most of the Tamil groups deeply distrust the President, Mr Premadasa. They point out that the devolution envisaged under the Indo-Sri Lanka accord is not being implemented. In particular, land colonisation by the Sinhala is continuing around Trincomalee and Amparai. Bitterness runs especially deep in the EPRLF and the ENDLF who feel with reason that Mr Premadasa's Government fed them to the wolves of the LTTE. One EPRLF leader quoted a Sri Lankan colonel as having remarked to him that "We gave the LTTE enough arms to wipe out the Sinhala race, now we have to fight them."

But there is another side to the coin. All the Tamil parties except the LTTE have accepted the need to solve their problems with Colombo democratically around a conference table. All of them except the EPRLF, are taking part in discussions with the Government on the future of the country. The consensus among the Sinhalese in favour of devolution is now very wide and even the most ardent Sinhala cultural nationalists admit freely that attempting to push Sinhala down the throats of the Tamils in 1956 was a grave error, one that the Government is working overtime to repair.

Even the EPRLF is not outside the political mainstream any longer, because it and the TULF (Tamil United Liberation Front) are now part of the 14 party Opposition alliance headed by Mr Anura Bandaranaike, the son of Mrs Srimavo Bandaranaike, that was formed in February.

De-Communalisation

The overall result has been a gradual de-communalisation of Sri Lankan politics, which must be counted as the most abiding contribution of the Indo-Sri Lanka accord and equally importantly of the IPKF'S readiness to do battle against the LTTE and its prompt withdrawal once it became clear that the Sri Lankan Government wanted it to go home.

On the one hand, the accord divided the Tamils from the LTTE in the Sinhala mind, and the fact that fully 52 per cent of the Tamils of Sri Lanka live in the Sinhala dominated areas acquired a new significance. On the other, it separated India from Tamil Nadu in their minds. The age old fear of a vast undifferentiated India, bearing down on little Sri Lanka through its Tamil outriders, has been laid to rest, perhaps forever.

Fears of Tamil Nadu Interference

Fears of Tamil Nadu's interference in the affairs of Sri Lanka still abound, but the Indian Government is not distrusted any longer. Instead, the constant gnawing anxiety among politicians and bureaucrats is that political instability at the Centre may continue to throw up weak Governments that will not be able to discipline the politicians of Tamil Nadu.

In this new atmosphere, Sri Lanka will be able to survive as a multiracial State, even if a part of it is in LTTE control. Sri Lankans point out that key points in the Jaffna peninsula such as Point Pedro, the airport and the port will remain in Army hands. If the LTTE continues to control the rest, it will not be too great a price to pay for peace.

But economic forces will not let this equilibrium last. When the balance tilts it will be towards Colombo and not Jaffna. While Sri Lanka without Jaffna is a perfectly viable economy and is showing signs of a healthy revival of growth, Jaffna, without the rest of Sri Lanka, or without at least the north and the east, will wither and die.

NEWS

NORTH EAST KILLINGS

- **The manager of Valaichchanai paper mill corporation Mr. Kanapathipillai reported that 24 employees of the corporation have become the victims of the war since June 1990. Among the 24, twelve were killed either by the LTTE or the Government forces and the remaining twelve are missing.**
- **Bus driver Mr R.K. Gunadasa was killed and many passengers were injured, some of them critically when the bus in which they were travelling came under gunfire from LTTE gunmen. This incident took place at the 126th mile post, Horawapothana-Trinco road on the 13th of March 1991.**
- **Sahul Hameed, a fisherman from Uppuvelli Trinco District was kidnapped by the LTTE and latter found dead on the street.**
- **During an air raid in Thevakulam, Vavuniya District, Mr Sri Pathmanathan (35), his wife Mala (28), a school teacher, and his mother Mrs Balasundram (53) were killed and their two young daughters were injured. Mr. Sri Pathmanathan with his family moved to Thevakulam from Sasthirikoolangkulam to escape continuous air raid there.**
- **In an army ambush in Punnankudah, Batticoloa District, ten people were killed. It is believed that these innocent people were mistaken for LTTE. This incident took place on 20th March 1991 and the army neither accept nor deny any involvement in the incident.**
- **A bomb exploded in Akaraipattu market at about 10 a.m. on 24th of March 1991. In this incident eight people were killed and thirteen others were injured most of the victims were Muslims. Following this incident several Tamil youths were kidnapped by the Muslim home guards and later "disappeared". Ten Tamil youths were kidnapped from a rice mill in Kalmunaikudi and three passengers were taken out of a bus when it stopped at Oluvil. Unconfirmed reports also say another ten Tamil Youths are missing from the villages bordering Akaraipattu.**

- **Four Muslim youths were kidnapped by the LTTE and their bodies were found later in a nearby lake. This incident took place in Puthukudiyiruppu, Akaraipattu on 23rd March 1991.**
- **Three policemen were slightly injured in a LTTE sniper fire at Arasady junction in Batticaloa on 24th March 1991. An overhead cable carrying electricity was severed in this incident and the following day a civilian was electricuted when he accidentally stepped on it.**
- **Five villagers were killed and two more were seriously wounded when LTTE gunmen opened fire in a Sinhala village on 27th of March 1991.**
- **Twelve people were killed by plain clothed policemen in Iruthayapuram Batticaloa District in a revenge attack on 30th of March 1991. Earlier the same day a policeman was killed by LTTE in the same area.**
- **Eleven Sinhala fishermen were killed and nine seriously wounded when LTTE gunmen opened fire on them in the early hours of 3rd April 1991 at Samboor in Trincomalee District.**
- **Three headless bodies were found by the villagers in Mandoor, Ampara District on 4th of April 1991. This is believed to be part of the terror campaign launched by the para-military forces operating with the security forces in the Eastern Province.**
- **Three volunteer teachers, Miss Viji Veluppilai (24), Miss Subashini Thambiah (22), Miss Kalarani Kanapathipillai (23), all from Malayadichchankulam in Omanthai were abducted from their homes, accused of being informers of the Government forces. Later their bodies were found on the street with signs of torture and possible rape. According to the local people these young teachers have nothing to do with the security forces but were critical of the ongoing war and raised their voice in private conversations against LTTE for the present plight of the people.**
- **Mr. Thambirajah Sornalingam (35) from Vavuniya, the owner of a tractor (35 SRI 1505) was kidnapped by the LTTE on 20th March 1991 in Vavuniya for ransom. Mr Thambirasa who purchased the tractor with the help of a bank loan was unable to pay the ransom and his body was later found near Poovarasankulam.**
- **The father of an EPRLF member was shot dead by the LTTE on the 8th of April 1991 in Kolavil, Akaraipattu.**
- **Despite the security threat from the shadowy para-military groups operating in Colombo and the LTTE, the Members of Parliament of EPRLF have not failed to raise their voice and concern about the plight of the people of the North-Eastern Province.**
- **EPRLF MP for Vanni District Mr K.R. Kuganeswaran visited the Wellekade prison and met the Tamil and Muslim youths detained there without any charges. After the visit he appealed to the Deputy Defence Minister and the President saying that most of those detained have no connection whatsoever with any organisation or Party and should be released without any delay. Following his request twelve youths from Jaffna and Vanni District were released on 23rd of March 1991.**
- **EPRLF MP Mr Emmanuel Silva has sent a letter to the Health Minister Mrs Renuka Hearath explaining the shortages of staff and essential medicines in the base hospital of Mannar. He urged the Minister to take appropriate action to remove the difficulties faced by the patients.**
- **Mr. K.R. Kuganeswaran sent an urgent letter to the Education Services Commission urging them to postpone the training programme scheduled to be held during April because it coincides with the G.C.E. (A.L.) examinations due to take place in the same time in the North-Eastern Province.**
- **According to a report by NGOS working in Batticaloa District, there are 110,546 refugees since the outbreak of war until 1st of April 1991. It further stated, among them 40,698 are in 47 welfare centres throughout the District and 69,848 are temporarily staying with relatives and friends.**
- **According to a report by the Department of Education in Batticaloa 45 schools were completely demolished and 167 schools were damaged since the war started in June 1991. It is estimated that the department needs 4,642,000 Rupees to repair the buildings and 20 Million Rupees for the equipment and furniture. There are also 1203 places for teachers which have become vacant which need to be filled.**

WITHOUT COMMENT:

THE SUSPECT VANISHES

(Ashwani Talwar in Trincomalee reports on Sri Lankan soldiers' bizarre operation against Tamil suspects).

It is not always fun and games at Trincomalee's main stadium. One day in January it was packed with about 25,000 Tamil men and women, brought there by the army in a massive screening exercise to weed out the militants.

The operation had begun early in the morning. Sri Lankan soldiers cordoned off areas in the town, searched houses and sent the inmates to the grounds. Some leading Trincomalee citizens and relief workers were invited to watch the "identification parade" at the stadium. As people waited in rows, three or four men, their faces covered under hoods, moved among them. Every now and then a hooded man would stop and nod, identifying a "suspect". The man nodded at would be immediately whisked away for questioning.

Only a couple of round-ups on the scale of the stadium identification parade have taken place in Sri Lanka's Eastern district of Trincomalee since the Eelam war began again last June. But reports and rumours persist of people being picked up from their homes and from refugee camps in the district, never to be seen again. There is a dearth of information, but people speak of a small group of men, with or without hoods, in plain clothes in black T-shirts or in army uniforms, taking away people who would then "disappear".

The experience seems to be similar to what the people of the Sinhala South went through when Sri Lankan security forces were ruthlessly crushing the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). When the war between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) erupted again last June history started repeating itself, in the East. There was a spate of "disappearances" in the first few months of the new war. Many relief workers give the credit of bringing down the rate of disappearance in the district to Brigadier Lucky Wijeratne, a co-ordinating officer of the district who was blown up in a land-mine blast three months ago. There seems to have been a relapse after the Brigadier's death. "It is getting to be nasty again," a relief worker said.

Brigadier Siri Peiris, who took over about a month ago, admits he has heard about the disappearances, but denies that the army could be involved. His men only conduct above board cordon and search operations to fish for the LTTE and those who provide support to it. "A fish cannot live without water. So the water has to be drained out before we get the fish," he says.

Among the "fish" the army is holding on for the moment are three members of the domestic staff of the

Trincomalee delegation of Medicins Sans Frontieres (MSF) - French relief agency. Although it had been more than a week since the young men had been arrested, MSF have not been able to visit them.

About a month earlier, MSF got a bigger jolt. Traveling on their prominently marked vehicle, an MSF team came across an army patrol south of Echalam-pattu. The patrol fired at the MSF pick-up, reportedly getting several bullets into it. Nobody was hurt. Brigadier Siri Peiris said it was a mistake. The patrol from neighbouring Batticaloa district had intelligence that an LTTE group was moving about in a white pick-up exactly the vehicle on which the doctors were traveling.

The Brigadier said he was still awaiting a list of the people who had "disappeared" in the district since June from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The local citizens' committee too had not tabulated the complaints that have reached them. But even during a brief trip of Trincomalee, one comes across many cases of missing people whose whereabouts are not known. At the Clappenburg refugee camp, a woman handed over a copy of a memorandum she has posted to officials and politicians. There had been no word about her husband who was reportedly taken into custody by the army months ago. She expected this reporter to find the whereabouts of her husband from authorities in Colombo and then write back to her. Another woman who knew English scribbled a list of half a dozen women "abducted" the same day from her village.

At the Clappenburg camp, many refugees are housed in disused airforce hangars. At night the refugees, who have put up shanties in the hangars, are confined in the enclosed space. The gates of the hangars are clanged shut, making it an uncomfortably hot place - "for their own safety" because there had been complaints that groups of unidentified men were picking up "suspects" from the hangars. In a refugee cluster a few kilometres outside Trincomalee town of 600 families, about 50 people are reported missing by the relief workers.

A refugee who had been picked up from a camp in the district about six months ago, said he was detained by the army for about a week. Six of the 30 who were taken into custody along with him have not been heard about. "That means they are not living," he felt.

Brigadier Siri Peiris however is categorical that no army squads operate in his district, picking up people. All army detentions are on-the-record, he maintains. The squads which figure in rumours and complaints must be "civilians", perhaps Muslims, according to him. Tamil-Muslim relations in the East have worsened during the government-LTTE war, but it is unlikely that "civilian" Muslims would organise groups to abduct people from Tamil villages. The Muslim Home Guard set up to protect the Muslims from the LTTE, however, has a bad reputation.